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**THE WORKS OF
H. G. WELLS
ATLANTIC EDITION
VOLUME XXIV**



F. W. SANDERSON

JOAN AND PETER

II

THE STORY OF
A GREAT SCHOOLMASTER

BY
H. G. WELLS



LONDON
T. FISHER UNWIN, LTD.
MCMXXVII



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PREFACE TO VOLUME XXIV

IN this volume the reader will find the latter half of "Joan and Peter" and something more. There is a great and obvious gap in that story; there is no account of Peter's school life. The book had already grown to such inconvenient proportions that the inclusion of an adequate discussion of his schooling would have passed the endurance of both publisher and public at that time.

The writer has since produced a study of the work of his close friend, Sanderson of Oundle, who was at the back of his mind when he sketched the headmaster of Caxton, and it fits into this twenty-fourth volume very conveniently. Caxton was such a school as Oundle. It was more conventional and typical than that school. Oundle was not so much a public school as a happy and all too brief lapse of a public school into education. Since Sanderson's death the broken ranks of the public schoolmasters have been restored. But because of the Oundlelike qualities of Caxton, Peter escaped becoming a typical public-school man. He remained expressive and with some originality of mind.

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JOAN AND PETER

II

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH

THE WORLD ON THE EVE OF WAR

§ 1



SWALD sat in the March sunshine that filled and warmed his little summer-house, and thought about Joan and Peter. . . .

His sudden realisation of Joan's mental maturity, the clear warning it brought to him that the task and opportunity of education was passing out of his hands, that already the reckoning of consequences was beginning for both his wards, set his mind searching up and down amidst the memories of his effort, to find where he could have slipped, where blundered and failed. He perceived now how vague had been the gesture with which he had started, when he proclaimed his intention to give them "the best education in the world."

The best education in the world is still to seek, and while he had been getting such scraps of second-best for them as he could, the world itself, nature, tradition, custom, suggestion, example, and accident, had moulded them and made them. When he measured what had been done upon these youngsters by these outward things and compared it with their deliberate education, the schoolmaster seemed to him to be still no more than a half-hearted dwarf who would snare

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the white horses of a cataract with a noose of pack-thread.

“The generations running to waste—like rapids.”

But there are stronger harnessings than pack-threads, and there are already engineers in the world who, by taking thought and patient work, can tame the maddest torrent that ever overawed the mind of man. In the end perhaps all torrents will be tamed, and knowledge and purpose put an end to aimless adventure. The schoolmaster will not always be a dwarf. . . .

As our children grow beyond our control we begin to learn something of the reality of education. The world had Joan and Peter now; at the most Oswald could run and shout advice from the bank as they went down the rush. But he knew that he could have done more for them, and that with a different world he could have done infinitely more for them in their receptive years. They were the children of an age; their restless fever of impulse was but their individual share in a great fever. The whole world now was restless, out of touch with any standards, and manifestly drifting towards great changes.

Neither Joan nor Peter seemed to have any definite purpose in life. Their impulses were not focussed. They were drawn hither and thither. That was the essential failure of their adolescence. Their education had done many good things for them, but it had left their wills as spontaneous, indefinite, and unso- cial as the will of a criminal. Physically, Oswald and the world had done well by them; they were clean-blooded, well-grown, well-exercised animals; they

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belonged to a generation of youth measurably taller, finer, and more beautiful than any generation before them. They were swift-footed and nimble. Mentally, too, they were swift and clear. It was not that their ideas were confused but their wills. Each of them could speak and read and write three languages quite well, they could draw well and Peter could draw brilliantly, they were alive to art and music, they read widely, they had the dispassionate, wide, scientific vision of the world. But being so fine and clean it was all the more distressing to realise that these two young people now faced the world with no clear will in them about it or themselves, that Joan seemed consumed with discontents and this dark personal quarrel with Peter, and that Peter could be caught and held by a mere sensual adventure. Hetty Reinhart kept him busy with notes and situations; having created a necessity she went on to create a jealous rivalry. He would be sometimes excited and elated, sometimes manifestly angry and sulky; and his work at Cambridge, which for two years had been conspicuously brilliant, was falling away.

Until Joan's angry outspokenness had forced these facts upon his attention, Oswald had shirked their realisation. He had seen with his one watchful eye, but he had not willed to see. A score of facts had lain, like disagreeable letters that one hesitates to answer, uncorrelated in his mind. The disorders of the Christmas party had indeed left him profoundly uneasy. With the new year he went with Peter on a trip to Russia. He wanted the youngster to develop a vision of the European problem, for Peter seemed

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blind to the importance of international things. They had crossed to Flushing, travelled straight through to Berlin, gone about Berlin for a few days, run on to St. Petersburg—it was not yet Petrograd—visited a friendly house near the Valdai Hills, spent a busy week in and about Moscow, and returned by way of Warsaw. They saw Germany already trained like an athlete for the adventure of the coming war, and Russia great and disorderly, destined to be taken unawares. Then they returned to England to look again at their own country with eyes refreshed by these contrasts. And all the time Oswald watched Peter and speculated about the thoughts and ideas hidden in Peter's head.

§ 2

This Russian trip had been precipitated by a sudden opportunity. Originally, Oswald had planned a Russian tour for his wards on a more considerable scale. Among the unsolved difficulties of this scheme had been his ignorance of Russian. He had thought of employing a courier—but a courier can be a tiresome encumbrance. His friend Bailey, who was an enthusiast for Russia and spoke Russian remarkably well for an Englishman, wrote from Petrograd offering to guide Oswald and Peter about that city, suggesting a visit to a cousin who had married a Russian landowner in Novgorod, and a week or so in Moscow, where some friends of Bailey's would keep a helpful eye on the travellers. It was too good a chance to lose. There was some hasty buying of fur-lined

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gloves, insertion of wadding under the fur of Oswald's fur coat, and the purchase of a suitable outfit for Peter.

Bailey had his misogynic side, Oswald knew; he thought women troublesome millinery to handle; and he did not include Joan in the invitation. On the whole Oswald did not regret that omission, because it gave him so excellent a chance of being alone with Peter for long spells, and getting near his private thoughts.

It was an expedition that left a multitude of vivid impressions upon the young man's memory; the still, cold, starry night of the departure from Harwich, the lit decks, the black waters, the foaming wake caught by the ship's lights, the neat Dutch landscape with its black-and-white cows growing visible as day broke, shivering workers under a chill, red-nosed dawn pouring down by a path near the railway into the factories of some industrial town; the long flat journey across Germany; the Sieges-Allée and the war trophies and public buildings of Berlin; the Sunday-morning crowd upon Unter den Linden; the large prosperity of the new suburbs of Berlin; north Germany under an iron frost, a crowd of children sliding and skating near Königsberg; the dingier, vaster effects of Russia, streets in Petrograd with the shops all black-and-gold and painted with shining pictures of the goods on sale to a population of illiterates, the night crowd in the People's Palace; a sledge drive of ten miles along the ice of a frozen river, a wooden country house behind a great stone portico, and a merry house-party that went scampering out after supper to lie on

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the crisp snow and see the stars between the tree-boughs; the chanting service in a little green-cupolaed church and a pretty village schoolmistress in peasant costume; the great red walls of the Kremlin rising above the Moskva and the first glimpse of that barbaric caricature, the cathedral of St. Basil; the painted magnificence of the Troitzkaya monastery; a dirty, evil-smelling tramp with his bundle and kettle, worshipping unabashed in the Uspenski cathedral; endless bearded priests, Tartar waiters with purple sashes, a whole population in furs and so looking absurdly wealthy to an English eye; a thousand such pictures, keen, bright, and vivid against a background of white snow. . . .

The romanticism of the late Victorians still prevailed in Oswald's mind. The picturesqueness of Russia had a great effect upon him. From the passport office at Wirballen with its imposing green-uniformed guards and elaborate ceremonies onward into Moscow, he marked the contrast with the trim modernity of Germany. The wild wintry landscape of the land with its swamps and unkempt thickets of silver birch, the crouching timber villages with their cupolaed churches, the unmade roads, the unfamiliar lettering of the stations, contributed to his impression of barbaric greatness. After the plainly ugly, middle-class cathedral of Berlin he rejoiced at the dark splendours, the green serpentine and incense, of St. Isaac's; he compared the frozen Neva to a greater Thames and stood upon the Troitzki Bridge rejoicing over the masses of the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul. In Petrograd he said, "away from here to the North

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Pole is Russia and the Outside, the famine-stricken north, the frozen fen and wilderness, the limits of mankind." Moscow made him talk of the mingling of East and West, western and eastern costumes jostled in the streets. He was surprised at the frequency of Chinamen. "Away from here to Vladivostok," he said, "is Russia and all Asia. North, West, East, and South there is limitless land. We are an island people. But here one feels the land masses of the earth."

Peter was preoccupied with a gallant attempt to master colloquial Russian in a fortnight by means of a "Russian Self-Taught" he had bought in London; he did not thrust his conversation between Bailey and Oswald, but sometimes when he was alone with his guardian and the mood took him he would talk freely and rather well. He had been reading abundantly and variously; it was evident that at Cambridge he belonged to a talking set. If he had no directive form in his mind he had at any rate something like a systematic philosophy.

It was a profoundly sceptical philosophy. There were moments when Oswald was reminded of Beresford's "Hampdenhire Wonder," who read through all human learning and literature before the age of five, and turned upon its instructor with "Is this *all?*" Peter looked at the world into which he had come, at the Kings and Kaisers demanding devotion to "our person," at the gentlemen waving flags and talking of patriotism and service to empires and races and "nationality," at the churches and priests pursuing their "policies," and in effect he turned to

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Oswald with the same question. In the background of his imagination it was only too manifest that the nymphs—with a general family resemblance to Hetty Reinhart—danced, and he heard that music of the senses which the decadent young men of the *fin de siècle* period were wont to refer to as “the pipes of Pan.”

He and Oswald looked together at Moscow in the warm light of sunset. They were in the veranda of a hillside restaurant which commanded the huge bend of the river between the Borodinski and the Kruimski bridges. The city lay, wide and massive, along the line of the sky, with little fields and a small church or so in the foreground. The six glittering domes of the great Church of the Redeemer rose in the centre against the high red wall and the clustering palaces and church cupolas of the Kremlin. Left and right of the Kremlin the city spread, a purple sea of houses and walls, flecked with snowy spaces and gemmed with red reflecting windows, through which the river twisted like a silver eel. Moscow is a city of crosses, every church has its bulbous painted cupola and some have five or six, and every cupola carries its brightly gilded two-armed cross. The rays of the setting sun were now turning all these crosses to pale fire.

Oswald, in spite of his own sceptical opinions, was a little under the spell of the “Holy Russia” legend. He stood with his foot on a chair and rested his jaw on his hand, with the living side of his face turned as usual towards his ward, and tried to express the confused ideas that were stirring in his mind. “This

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isn't a city like the cities of western Europe, Peter," he said. "This is something different. Those western cities, they grow out of the soil on which they stand; they are there for ever like the woods and hills; there is no other place for London or Rouen or Rome except just where it stands; but this, Peter, is a Tartar camp, frozen. It might have been at Nijni-Novgorod or Yaroslav or Kazan. It might be anywhere upon the Russia plain; only it happens to be here. It's a camp changed to wood and brick and plaster. That's the headquarters camp there, the Tsar's pavilions. And all these crosses everywhere are like the standards outside the tents of the captains."

"And where is it going?" said Peter, looking at Moscow over his fur collar, with his hands deep in his overcoat pockets.

"Asia advancing on Europe—with a new idea. . . . One understands Dostoevsky better when one sees this. One begins to realise this Holy Russia, as a sort of epileptic genius among nations—like his Idiot, insisting on moral truth, holding up the cross to mankind."

"*What* truth?" asked Peter.

"They seem to have the Christian idea. In a way we Westerns don't. Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and their endless schools of dissent have a character in common. Christianity to a Russian means Brotherhood."

"If it means anything," said Peter.

The youngster reflected.

"I wonder, is there really this Russian idea? I don't believe very much in these national ideas."

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“Say national character then. This city with its endless crosses is so in harmony with Russian music, Russian art, Russian literature.”

“Any city that had to be built here would have to look more or less like this,” said Peter.

“If it were built by Americans?”

“If they’d lived here always,” said Peter. “But we’re arguing in a circle. If they’d lived here always the things that have made the Russians Russians, would have made them Russians. I’ve gone too far. Of course there *is* a Russian character. They’re wanderers, body and brain. Men of an endless land. But——”

“Well?”

“Not much of a Russian idea to it. . . . I don’t believe a bit in all these crosses.”

“You mean as symbols of an idea?”

“Yes. Of course the cross has meant *something* to people. It must have meant tremendous things to some people. But men imitate. One sticks up a cross because it means all sorts of deep things to him. Then the man down the road thinks he will have a cross too. And the man up the road doesn’t quite see what it’s all about but doesn’t like to be out of it. So they go on, until sticking up crosses becomes a habit. It becomes a necessity. They’d be shocked to see a new church without four or five crosses on it. They organise a business in golden crosses. Everybody says, ‘You *must* have a cross.’ Long ago every one has forgotten that deep meaning. . . .”

“H’m,” said Oswald, “you think that?”

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"It's just a crowd," said Peter, thinking aloud. "Underneath the crosses it's just a swarming and breeding of men. . . . Like any other men."

"But don't you think that all that million odd down there is held together by a distinctive idea? Don't you feel sometimes the Russian idea about you—like the smell of burned wood on the breeze?"

"Well, call it a breeze," said Peter. "It's like a breeze blowing over mud. It blows now and then. It's forgotten before it is past. What does it signify?"

He was thinking as he talked. Oswald did not want to interrupt him, and just smiled slightly and looked at Peter for more.

"I don't think there are any great essential differences between cities," said Peter. "It's easy to exaggerate that. Mostly the differences are differences of scenery. Beneath the differences it's the same story everywhere; men shoving about and eating and squabbling and multiplying. We might just as well be looking at London from Hampstead bridge so far as the human facts go. Here things are done in red and black and gold against a background of white snow; there they are done in drab and grey and green. This is a land of dull tragedy instead of dull comedy, gold crosses on green onions instead of church spires, extremes instead of means, but it's all the same old human thing. Even the King and Tsar look alike, there's a state church here, dissenters, landowners. . . ."

"I suppose there is a sort of parallelism," Oswald conceded. . . .

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"We're not big enough yet for big ideas, the Russian idea, or the Christian idea or any such idea," said Peter. "Why pretend we have them?"

"Now that's just it," said Oswald, coming round upon him with an extended finger. "Because we want them so badly."

"Does every one?"

"Yes. Consciously or not. That's where you and I are at issue, Peter."

"Oh, I don't *see* the ideas at work!" cried Peter. "Except as a sort of flourish of the mind. But look at the every-day life. Wherever we have been—in London, Paris, Italy, Berlin, here, we see every man who can afford it making for the restaurants and going where there are women to be got. Hunger, indulgence, and sex, sex, sex, sex." His voice was suddenly bitter. He turned his face to Oswald for a moment. "We're too little. These blind impulses—I suppose there's a sort of impulse to Beauty in it. Some day perhaps these forces will do something—drive man up the scale of being. But as far as *we've* got——!"

He stared at Moscow again.

He seemed to have done.

"You think we're oversexed?" said Oswald after a pause.

The youngster glanced at his guardian.

"I'm not blind," he fenced.

Then he laughed with a refreshing cheerfulness. "It's youthful pessimism, Nobby. My mind runs like this because it's the fashion. We get so dosed with Schopenhauer and Nietzsche—usually at sec-

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ond-hand. We all *try* to talk like this. Don't mind me."

Oswald smiled back.

"Peter, you drive my spirit back to the Victorians," he said. "I want to begin quoting Longfellow to you. 'Life is real, life is earnest——'"

"No!" Peter countered. "But it ought to be."

"Well, it becomes so. We have Science, and out of Science comes a light. We shall see the Will plainer and plainer."

"The Will?" said Peter, turning it over in his mind.

"Our own will then," said Oswald. "Yours, mine, and every right sort of man's."

Peter seemed to consider it.

"It won't be a national will, anyhow," he said, coming back to Moscow. "It won't be one of these national ideas. No Holy Russia—or Old England for the matter of that. They're just—human accumulations. No. I don't know of this Will at all—*any* will, Nobby. I can't see or feel this Will. I wish I could. . . ."

He had said his say. Oswald turned again to the great spectacle of the city. Did all those heavenward crosses now sinking into the dusk amount to no more than a glittering emanation out of the fen of life, an unmeaning *ignis fatuus*, born of a morass of festering desires that had already forgotten it? Or were these crosses indeed an appeal and a promise? Out of these millions of men would Man at last arise? . . .

Slowly, smoothly, unfalteringly, the brush of the twilight had been sweeping its neutral tint across the

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spectacle, painting out the glittering symbols one by one. A chill from outer space fell down through the thin Russian air, a dark transparent curtain. Oswald shivered in his wadded coat. Abruptly down below, hard by a ghostly white church, one lamp and then another pricked the deepening blue. A little dark tram-car that crept towards them out of the city ways to fetch them back into the city, suddenly became a glowworm. . . .

§ 3

Twenty years before Oswald would not have talked in this fashion of the Will. Twenty years before, the social and political order of the world had seemed so stable to an English mind that the thought of a sustaining will was superfluous. Queen Victoria and the whole system had an air of immortal inertia. The scientific and economic teachings under which Oswald's ideas had been shaped recognised no need for wilfully co-ordinated efforts. The end of education, they indicated, was the Diffusion of Knowledge. Victorian thought in England took good motives for granted, seemed indeed disposed to regard almost any motive as equally good for the common weal. Herbert Spencer, that philosopher who could not read Kant, most typical of all English intelligences in those days, taught that if only there were no regulation, no common direction, if every one were to pursue his own individual ends unrestrained, then by a sort of magic, chaos, freed from the interference of any collective direction, would produce order. His supreme

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gift to a generation of hasty profiteers was the discovery that the blind scuffle of fate could be called "Evolution," and so given an air of intention altogether superior to our poor struggles to make a decent order out of a greedy scramble. For some decades, whatever sections of British life had ceased to leave things to Providence and not bother—not bother—were leaving them to Evolution—and still not bothering. . . .

It was because of Oswald's discovery of the confused and distressed motives of Joan and Peter and under the suggestions of the more kinetic German philosophy that was slowly percolating into English thought, that his ideas were now changing their direction. Formerly he had thought of nations and empires as if they were things in themselves, loose shapes which had little or nothing to do with the individual lives they contained; now he began to think that all human organisations, large and small alike, exist for an end; they are will-forms; they present a purpose that claims the subordination of individual aims. He began to see states and nations as things of education, beings in the minds of men.

The parallelism of Russia and Britain which Peter had made, struck Oswald as singularly acute. They had a closer parallelism with each other than with France or Italy or the United States or Germany or any of the great political systems of the world. Russia was Britain on land. Britain was Russia in an island and upon all the seas of the globe. One had the dreamy lassitude of an endless land horizon, the other the hard-bitten practicality of the salt seas.

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One was deep-feeling, gross, and massively illiterate, the other was pervaded by a cockney brightness. But each was trying to express and hold on to some general purpose by means of forms and symbols that were daily becoming more conspicuously inadequate. And each appeared to be moving inevitably towards failure and confusion.

One afternoon during their stay in Petrograd, Bailey took Oswald and Peter to see a session of the Duma. They drove in a sledge down the Nevski Prospekt and by streets of ploughed-up and tumbled snow, through which struggled an interminable multitude of sledges bringing firewood into the city, to the old palace of the favourite Potemkin, into which the Duma had in those days been thrust. The Duma was sitting in a big adapted conservatory, and the three visitors watched the proceedings from a little low gallery wherein the speakers were almost inaudible. Bailey pointed out the large proportion of priests in the centre and explained the various party groups; he himself was very sympathetic with the Cadets. They were Anglomaniac; they idealised the British constitution and thought of a limited monarchy—in the land of extremes. . . .

Oswald listened to Bailey's exposition, but the thing that most gripped his attention was the huge portrait of the Tsar that hung over the gathering. He could not keep his eyes off it. There the figure of the autocrat stood, with its sidelong, unintelligent visage, four times as large as life, dressed up in military guise and with its big cavalry boots right over the head of the president of the Duma. That portrait was as

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obvious an insult, as outrageous a challenge to the self-respect of Russian men, as a gross noise or a foul gesture would have been.

“You and all the empire exist for *ME*,” said that foolish-faced portrait, with its busby a little on one side and its weak hand on its sword hilt. . . .

It was to that figure they asked young Russia to be loyal.

That dull-faced Tsar and the golden crosses of Moscow presented themselves as Russia to the young. A heavy-handed and very corrupt system of repression sustained their absurd pretensions. They had no sanction at all but that they existed—through the acquiescences of less intelligent generations. The aged, the prosperous, the indolent, the dishonest, the mean and the dull supported them in a vast tacit conspiracy. Beneath such symbols could a land under the sting of modern suggestions ever be anything but a will welter, a confusion of sentiments and instincts and wilfulness? Was it so wonderful that the world was given the stories of Artzibachev as pictures of the will forms of the Russian young?

§ 4

Through all that journey Oswald was constantly comparing Peter with the young people he saw. On two occasions he and Peter went to the Moscow Art Theatre. Once they saw “Hamlet” in Russian, and once Tchekhov’s “Three Sisters”; and each was produced with a completeness of ensemble, an excellence

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of mechanism and a dramatic vigour far beyond the range of any London theatre. Here in untidy, sprawling, slushy Moscow shone this diamond of co-operative effort and efficient organisation. It set Oswald revising certain hasty generalisations about the Russian character. . . .

But far more interesting than the play to him was the audience. They were mostly young people, and some of them were very young people; students in uniform, bright-faced girls, clerks, young officers, and soldiers, a sprinkling of intelligent-looking older people of the commercial and professional classes; each evening showed a similar gathering, a very full house, intensely critical and appreciative. It was rather like the sort of gathering one might see in the London Fabian Society, but there were scarcely any earnest spinsters and many more young men. The Art Theatre, like a magnet, had drawn its own together out of the vast barbaric medley of western and Asiatic, of peasant, merchant, priest, official, and professional, that thronged the Moscow streets. And they seemed very delightful young people.

His one eye wandered from the brightly lit stage to the rows and rows of faces in the great dim auditorium about him, rested on Peter, and then went back to those others. This, then, must be a sample of the Intelligentsia. These were the youth who figured in so large a proportion of recent Russian literature. How many bright keen faces were there! What lay before them? . . .

A dark premonition crept into his mind of the tragedy of all this eager life, growing up in the clutch

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of a gigantic political system that now staggered to its end. . . .

This youth he saw here was wonderfully like the new generation that was now dancing its way into his house at Pelham Ford. . . .

It was curious to note how much more this big dim houseful of young Muscovites was like a British or an American audience than it was to a German gathering. Perhaps there were rather more dark types, perhaps more high cheek-bones; it was hard to say. . . .

But all the other north temperate races, it seemed to Oswald, as distinguished from the Germans, had the same suggestion about them of unco-ordinated initiatives. Their minds moved freely in a great old system that had lost its hold upon them. But the German youths were co-ordinated. They were tremendously co-ordinated. Two Sundays ago he and Peter had been watching the Sunday-morning parade along Unter den Linden. They had gone to see the white-trousered guards kicking their legs out ridiculously in the goose-step outside the Guard-House that stands opposite the Kaiser's Palace, they had walked along Unter den Linden to the Brandenburger Tor, and then, after inspecting that vainglorious trophy of piled cannon outside the Reichstag, turned down the Sieges-Allée, and so came back to the Adlon by way of the Leipziger Platz. Peter had been alive to many things, but Oswald's attention had been concentrated almost exclusively on the youngsters they were passing, for the most part plump, pink-faced students in corps caps, very erect in their bear-

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ing and very tight in their clothes. They were an absolutely distinct variety of the young human male. A puerile militarism possessed them all. They exchanged salutations with the utmost punctilio. While England had been taking her children from the hands of God, and not so much making them as letting them develop into notes of interrogation, Germany without halt or hesitation had moulded her gift of youth into stiff, obedient, fresh soldiers.

There had been a moment like a thunderclap while Oswald and Peter had been near the Brandenburger Tor. A swift wave of expectation had swept through the crowd; there had been a galloping of mounted policemen, a hustling of traffic to the side of the road, a hasty lining up of spectators. Then with melodious tootlings and amidst guttural plaudits, a big white automobile carrying a glitter of uniforms had gone by, driven at a headlong pace. "*Der Kaiser!*" Just for a moment the magnificence hung in the eye—and passed.

What had they seen? Cloaks, helmets, hard visages, one distinctive pallid face; something melodramatic, something eager and in a great hurry, something that went by like the sound of a trumpet, a figure of vast enterprise in shining armour, with mailed fist. This was the symbol upon which these young Germans were being concentrated. This was the ideal that had gripped them. Something very modern and yet romantic, something stupendously resolute. Going whither? At any rate, going magnificently somewhere. That was the power of it. It *was* going somewhere. For good or bad it was an

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infinitely more attractive lead than the cowardly and oppressive Tsardom that was failing to hold the refractory minds of these young Russians, or the current edition of the British imperial ideal, twangling its idiotic banjo and exhorting Peter and his generation to "tax the foreigner" as a worthy end and aim in life.

Oswald, with his eye on the dim, preoccupied audience about him, recalled a talk that he and Peter had had with a young fellow traveller in the train between Hanover and Berlin. It had been a very typical young German, glasses and all; and his clothes looked twice as hard as Peter's, and he sat up stiffly while Peter slouched on the seat. He evidently wanted to air his English, while Peter had not the remotest desire to air his German, and only betrayed a knowledge of German when it was necessary to explain some English phrase the German didn't quite grasp. The German wanted to know whether Oswald and Peter had been in Germany before, where they were going, what they thought of it, what they were going to think of Berlin.

Responding to counter-questions he said he had been twice to England. He thought England was a great country. "Yes—but not systematic. No!"

"You mean undisciplined?"

Yes, it was perhaps undisciplined he meant.

Oswald said that as a foreigner he was most struck by the tremendous air of order in north Germany. The Germans were orderly by nature. The admission proved an attractive gambit.

The young German questioned Oswald's view that

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the Germans were naturally orderly. Hard necessity had made them so. They had had to discipline themselves, they had been obliged to develop a Kultur—encircled by enemies. Now their Kultur was becoming a second nature. Every nation, he supposed, brought its present to mankind. Germany's was Order, System, the lesson of Obedience that would constantly make her more powerful. The Germans were perforce a thorough people. Thorough in all they did. Although they had come late into modern industrialism they had already developed social and economic organisation far beyond that of any other people. Nicht wahr? Their work was becoming necessary to the rest of mankind. In Russia, for example, in Turkey, in Italy, in South America, it was more and more the German who organised, developed, led. "Though we are fenced round," he said, "still—we break out."

There was something familiar and yet novel in all this to Oswald. It was like his first sensation upon reading Shakespear in German. It was something very familiar—in an unfamiliar idiom. Then he recognised it. This was exactly his own Imperialism—Teutonised. The same assertion of an educational mission. . . .

"Everywhere we go," said the young German, "our superior science, our higher education, our better method prevails. Even in your India——"

He smiled and left that sentence unfinished.

"But your militarism, your sabre rule here at home; this Zabern business; isn't that a little incompatible with this idea of Germany as a great civilising influence permeating the world?"

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“Not at all,” said the young German, with the readiness of a word-perfect actor. “Behind our missionaries of order we must have ready the good German sword.”

“But isn’t the argument of force apt to be a little—decivilising?”

The young German did not think so. “When I was in England I said, there are three things that these English do not properly understand to use, they are the map or index, the school, and—the sword. Those three things are the triangle of German life. . . .”

That hung most in Oswald’s mind. He had gone on talking to the young German for a long time about the differences of the British and the German way. He had made Peter and the youngster compare their school and college work, and what was far more striking, the difference in pressure between the two systems. “You press too hard,” he said. “In Alsace you have pressed too hard—in Posen.”

“Perhaps we sometimes press—I do not know,” said the young German. “It is the strength of our determination. We are impatient. We are a young people.” For a time Oswald had talked of the methods of Germany in the Cameroons and of Britain on the Gold Coast, where the German had been growing cacao by the plantation system, turning the natives into slaves, while the British, with an older experience and a longer view, had left the land in native hands and built up a happy and loyal free cultivation ten times as productive mile for mile as the German. It seemed to him to be one good instance of his general conception of Germany as the land of undue urgency. “Your Wissmann in East Africa was

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a great man—but everywhere else you drive too violently. You antagonise.” North Germany everywhere, he said, had the same effect upon him of a country “going hard.”

“Germany may be in too much of a hurry,” he repeated.

“We came into world-politics late,” said the young German, indorsing Oswald’s idea from his own point of view. “We have much to overtake yet.” . . .

The Germans had come into world-politics late. That was very true. They were naïve yet. They could still feed their natural egotism on the story of a world mission. The same enthusiasms that had taken Russia to the Pacific—and to Grand Ducal land speculation in Manchuria—and the English to the coolie slavery of the Rand, was taking these Germans now—whither? Oswald did not ask what route to disillusionment Germany might choose. But he believed that she would come to disillusionment. She was only a little later in phase than her neighbours; that was all. In the end they would see that that white-cloaked heroic figure in the automobile led them to futility as surely as the skulking Tsar. Not that way must the nations go. . . .

Oswald saw no premonition of a world catastrophe in this German youngster’s devotion to an ideal of militant aggression, nor in the whole broad spectacle of straining preparation across which he and Peter travelled that winter from Aix to Wirballen. He was as it were magically blind. He could stand on the Hanover platform and mark the largeness of the station, the broad-spreading tracks, the endless sid-

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ings, the tremendous transport preparations, that could have no significance in the world but military intention, and still have no more to say than, "These Germans give themselves elbow-room on their railways, Peter. I suppose land is cheaper." He could see nothing of the finger of fate pointing straight out of all this large, tidy preparedness at Peter and their fellow passengers and all the youth of the world. He thought imperialistic monarchy was an old dead thing in Russia and in Britain and in Germany alike.

In Berlin indeed in every photographer's was the touched-up visage of the Kaiser, looking heroic, and endless post-cards of him and of his sons and of the Kaiserin and the imperial grandchildren and the like; they were as dull and dreary-looking as any royalties can be, and it was inconceivable to Oswald that such figures could really rule the imagination of a great people. He did not realise that all the tragedy in the world might lie behind the words of that young German, "we came into world-politics late," behind the fact that the German imperialist system was just a little less decayed, a little less humorous, a little less indolent and disillusioned than either of its great parallels to the east and west. He did not reflect that no system is harmless until its hands are taken off the levers of power. He could still believe that he lived in an immensely stable world, and that these vast forms of kingdom and empire, with their sham reverences and unmeaning ceremonies and obligations, their flags and militancy and their imaginative senility, threatened nothing beyond the negative evil of uninspired lives running to individual waste. That

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was the thing that concerned him. He saw no collective fate hanging over all these intent young faces in the Moscow Art Theatre, or over the strutting innocents of patriotic Berlin; he had as yet no intimation of the gigantic disaster that was now so close at hand, that was to torment and shatter the whole youth of the world, that was to harvest the hope and energy of these bright swathes of life. . . .

He glanced at Peter, intent upon the stage.

Peter lay open to every impulse. That was Oswald's supreme grievance then against Tsars, Kings, and Churches. They had not been good enough for Peter. That seemed grievance enough.

He did not imagine yet that they could murder the likes of Peter by the hundred thousand, without a tremor.

He loved the fine lines of the boy's profile, he marked his delicate healthy complexion. Peter was like some wonderful new instrument in perfect condition. And all these other youngsters, too, had something of the same clean fire in them. . . .

Was it all to be spent upon love-making and pleasure-seeking and play? Was this exquisite hope and desire presently to be thrown aside, rusted by base uses, corroded by self-indulgence, bent or broken? "The generations running to waste—like rapids. . . ."

He still thought in that phrase. The Niagara of Death so near to them all now to which these rapids were heading, he still did not hear, did not suspect its nearness. . . .

And Joan—— From Peter his thoughts drifted

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to Joan. Joan apparently could find nothing better to do in life than dance. . . .

Suddenly Peter took a deep breath, sat back, and began to clap. The whole house broke out into a pelting storm of approval.

“Ripping!” said Peter. “Oh! ripping.”

He turned his bright face to Oswald. “They do it so well,” he said, smiling. “I had forgotten it was in Russian. I seemed to understand every word.”

Oswald turned his eye again to “Hamlet” in Gordon Craig’s fantastic setting—which Moscow in her artistic profusion could produce when London was too poor to do so.

§ 5

Very similar were the thoughts in Oswald’s mind three months later, three months nearer the world catastrophe, as he sat in his summer-house after Joan had told him of her quarrel with Peter.

Her denunciation of Peter had had the curious effect upon him of making him very anxious about her. So far as Peter went, what she had told him had but confirmed and made definite what he had known by instinct since the Christmas party. His mind was used now to the idea of Peter being vicious. But he was very much shocked indeed at the discovery that Joan was aware of Peter’s vices. That was a new jolt to his mind. In many things Joan and Peter had changed his ideas enormously, but so far he had retained not only his wardroom standards with regard to the morals of a youth, but also his romantic ideals of feminine purity with regard to a girl. He still

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thought of his own womenkind as of something innocent, immaculate, and untouchable, beings in a different world from the girls who "didn't mind a bit of fun" and the women one made love to boldly.

But now he had to face the fact—Joan had forced it upon him—this new feminine generation wasn't divided in that obvious way. The clean had knowledge, the bold were not outcast and apart. The new world of women was as mixed as the world of men. He sat in his summer-house thinking of his Joan's flushed face, her indignant eyes, her outspoken words.

"It was a *woman's* face," he whispered. . . .

And he was realising too how much more urgent the ending of adolescence was becoming with a girl than it could ever be with a boy. Peter might tumble into a scrape or so and scramble out again, not very much the worse for it, as he himself had done. But Joan, with all the temerity of a youth, might be making experiments that were fatal. He had not been watching her as he had watched Peter. Suddenly he woke up to this realisation of some decisive issue at hand. Why was she so whitely angry with Peter? Why did she complain of having to "stand too much" from Peter? Her abuse of his friends had the effect of a counter-attack. Was there some mischief afoot from which Peter restrained her? What men were there about in Joan's world?

There was something slimy and watchful about this fellow Huntley. Could there be more in that affair than one liked to think? . . . Or was there some one unknown in London or in Cambridge?

She and Peter were quarrelling about the Easter

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party. It would apparently be impossible to have any Easter party this year, since both wanted to bar out the other one's friends. And anyhow there mustn't be any more of this Hetty Reinhart business at Pelham Ford. That must stop. It ought never to have happened. . . . He would take Peter over to Dublin. They could accept an invitation he had had from Graham Powys out beyond Foxrock, and they could motor into Dublin and about the country, and perhaps the Irish situation might touch the boy's imagination. . . .

Joan could go to her aunts at The Ingle-Nook. . . .

Should he have a talk to Aunt Phyllis about the girl?

It was a pity that Aunt Phyllis always lost her breath and was shaken like an aspen leaf with fine feeling whenever one came to any serious discussion with her. If it wasn't for that confounded shimmer in her nerves and feelings, she would be a very wise and helpful woman. . . .

§ 6

Oswald's thoughts ranged far and wide that morning.

Now he would be thinking in the most general terms of life as he conceived it, now he would be thinking with vivid intensity about some word or phrase or gesture of Joan or Peter.

He was blind still to the thing that was now so close to all his world; nevertheless a vague uneasiness about the trend of events was creeping into his

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mind and mixing with his personal solitudes. Many men felt that same uneasiness in those feverish days—as if Death cast his shadow upon them before he came visibly into their lives.

Oswald belonged to that minority of Englishmen who think systematically, whose ideas join on. Most Englishmen, even those who belong to what we call the educated classes, still do not think systematically at all; you cannot understand England until you master that fact; their ideas are in slovenly detached little heaps, they think in ready-made phrases, they are honestly capable therefore of the most grotesque inconsistencies. But Oswald had built up a sort of philosophy for himself, by which he did try his problems and with which he fitted in such new ideas as came to him. It was a very distinctive view of life he had; a number of influences that are quite outside the general knowledge of English people had been very powerful in shaping it. Biological science, for example, played a quite disproportionate part in it. Like the countrymen of Metchnikoff, most of the countrymen of Darwin and Huxley believe firmly that biological science was invented by the devil and the Germans to undermine the Established Church. But Oswald had been exceptional in the chances that had turned his attention to these studies. And a writer whose suggestions had played a large part in shaping his ideas about education and social and political matters was J. J. Atkinson. He thought Atkinson the most neglected of all those fine-minded Englishmen England ignores. He thought Lang and Atkinson's "Social Origins" one of the most illumi-

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nating books he had ever read since Winwood Reade's "Martyrdom of Man." No doubt it will be amusing to many English readers that Oswald should have mixed up theories of the origins and destinies of mankind with his political views and his anxieties about Joan's behaviour and Peter's dissipations; but he did. It was the way of his mind. He perceived a connection between these things.

The view he had developed of human nature and human conditions was saturated with the idea of the ancestral ape. In his instincts, he thought, man was still largely the creature of the early Stone Age, when, following Atkinson, he supposed that the human herd, sex linked, squatted close under the dominion of its Old Man, and hated every stranger. He did not at all accept the Aristotelian maxim that man is "a political animal." He was much more inclined to Schopenhauer's comparison of human society to a collection of hedgehogs driven together for the sake of warmth. He thought of man as a being compelled by circumstances of his own inadvertent creation to be a political animal in spite of the intense passions and egotisms of his nature. Man he judged to be a reluctant political animal. Man's prehensile hand has given him great possibilities of experiment; he is a restless and curious being, knowledge increases in him and brings power with it. So he jostles against his fellows. He becomes too powerful for his instincts. The killing of man becomes constantly more easy for man. The species must needs therefore become political and religious, tempering its intense lusts and greeds and hostilities, if it is to save itself from self-

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destruction. The individual man resists the process by force and subterfuge and passivity at every step. Nevertheless necessity still finds something in the nature of this fiercest of its creatures to work upon. In the face of adult resistance necessity harks back to plastic immaturity. Against the narrow and intense desires of the adult man, against the secretive cunning and dispersiveness of our ape heredity, struggle the youthful instincts of association. Individualism is after all a by-path in the history of life. Every mammal begins by being dependent and social; even the tiger comes out of a litter. The litter is brotherhood. Every mother is a collectivist for her brood. A herd, a tribe, a nation, is only a family that has delayed dispersal, stage by stage, in the face of dangers. All our education is a prolongation and elaboration of family association, forced upon us by the continually growing danger of the continually growing destructiveness of our kind.

And necessity has laid hold of every device and formula that will impose self-restraint and devotion upon the lonely savagery of man, that will help man to escape race-suicide. In spite of ever more deadly and far-reaching weapons, man still escapes destruction by man. Religion, loyalty, patriotism, those strange and wonderfully interwoven nets of superstition, fear, flattery, high reason, and love, have subjugated this struggling egotistical ape into larger and larger masses of co-operation, achieved enormous temporary securities. But the ape is still there, struggling subtly. Deep in every human individual is a fierce scepticism of and resentment against the laws

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that bind him, and the weaker newer instincts that would make him the servant of his fellow man.

Such was Oswald's conception of humanity. It marched with all his experiences of Africa, where he had struggled to weave the net of law and teaching against warrior, slave-trader, disease, and greed. It marched now with all the appearances of the time. So it was he saw men.

It seemed to him that the world that lay behind the mask of his soft, sweet Hertfordshire valley, this modern world into which Joan and Peter had just rushed off so passionately, was a world in which the old nets of rule and convention which had maintained a sufficiency of peace and order in Europe for many generations of civilisation, were giving way under the heavy stresses of a new time. Peoples were being brought too closely together, too great a volume of suggestions poured into their minds, criticism was vivid and destructive; the forms and rules that had sufficed in a less crowded time were now insufficient to hold imaginations and shape lives. Oswald could see no hope as yet of a new net that would sweep together all that was bursting out of the old. His own generation of the eighties and nineties, under a far less feverish urgency, had made its attempt to patch new and more satisfactory network into the rotting reticulum, but for the most part their patches had done no more than afford a leverage for tearing. He had built his cosmogony upon Darwin and Winwood Reade, his religion upon Cotter Morrison's "Service of Man"; he had interwoven with that a conception of the Empire as a great civilising service. That much

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had served him through the trying years at the end of adolescence, had in spite of strong coarse passions made his life on the whole a useful life. King, church, and all the forms of the old order he had been willing to accept as a picturesque and harmless paraphernalia upon these structural ideas to which he clung. He had been quite uncritical of the schoolmaster. Now with these studies of education that Joan and Peter had forced upon him, he was beginning to realise how encumbering and obstructive the old paraphernalia could be, how it let in indolence, stupidity, dishonesty, and treachery to the making of any modern system. A world whose schools are unreformed is an unreformed world. Only in the last year or so had he begun to accept the fact that for some reason these dominant ideas of his, this humanitarian religion which had served his purpose and held his life and the lives of a generation of liberal-minded Englishmen together, had no gripping power upon his wards. This failure perplexed him profoundly. Had his Victorian teachers woven prematurely, or had they used too much of the old material? Had they rather too manifestly tried to make the best of two worlds—leaving the schools alone? Must this breaking down of strands that was everywhere apparent, go still further? And if so, how far would the breaking down have to go before fresh nets could be woven?

If Oswald in his summer-house in the spring of 1914 could see no immediate catastrophe ahead, he could at least see that a vast disintegrative process had begun in the body of European civilisation. This

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disintegration, he told himself, was a thing to go on by stages, to be replaced by stages; it would give place to a new order, a better order, "some day"; everything just and good was going to happen some day, the liberation of India, the contentment of Ireland, economic justice, political and military efficiency. It was all coming—always coming and never arriving, that new and better state of affairs. What did go on meanwhile was disintegration. The British mind hates crisis; it abhors the word "Now." It believes that you can cool water for ever and that it will never freeze, that you can saw at a tree for ever and that it will never fall, that there is always some sand left above in the hour-glass. When the English Belshazzar sees the writing on the wall, he welcomes the appearance of a new if rather sensational form of publication, and he sits back to enjoy it at his leisure. . . .

The nets were breaking, but they would never snap. That in effect was Oswald's idea in 1913. The bother, from his point of view, was that they had let out Joan and Peter to futility.

There is a risk that the catastrophic events of 1914 may blind the historian to the significance of the spinning straws of 1913. But throughout Europe the sands were trickling before the avalanche fell. The arson of the suffragettes, the bellicose antics of the Unionist leaders in Ulster, General Gough's Curragh mutiny, were all parts of the same relaxation of bonds that launched the grey-clad hosts of Germany into Belgium. Only the habits of an immense security could have blinded Oswald to the scale and immi-

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nence of the disaster. The world had outgrown its ideas and its will.

Already people are beginning to forget the queer fevers that ran through the British community in 1913. For example there was the violent unrest of the women. That may profoundly exercise the historian in the future. Probably he will question the facts. Right up to the very outbreak of the war there was not a week passed without some new ridiculous outrage on the part of the militant suffragettes. Now it was a fine old church would be burned, now a well-known country house; now the mania would take the form of destroying the letters in pillar-boxes, now the attack was upon the greens of the golf-links. Public meetings ceased to be public meetings because of the endless interruptions by shrill voices crying "Votes for women!" One great triumph of the insurgents was a raid with little hammers upon the West End shop-windows. They burned the tea pavilion in Kew Gardens, set fire to unoccupied new buildings, inaugurated a campaign of picture-slashing at the public exhibitions. For a time they did much mischief to the cushions and fittings of railway-carriages. Churches had to be locked up and museums closed on account of them. Poor little Pelham Ford church had had to buy a new lock against the dangers of some wandering feminist. And so on and so on. But this revolt of the women was more than a political revolt. That concentration upon the Vote was the concentration of a vast confused insurgence of energy that could as yet find no other acceptable means of expression. New conditions had robbed whole strata of women

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of any economic importance, new knowledge had enormously diminished the need for their domestic services, the birth-rate had fallen, the marriage age had risen, but the heedless world had made no provision for the vitality thus let loose. The old ideals of a womanly life showed absurd in the light of the new conditions. Why be pretty and submissive when nobody wants you? Why be faithful with no one to be faithful to? Why be devoted in a world which has neither enough babies nor lovers nor even its old proportion of helpless invalids to go round? Why, indeed, to come to the very heart of the old ideal, keep chaste when there is no one to keep chaste for? Half the intelligent women in that world had stood as Joan had done, facing their own life and beauty and asking desperately "What is the Good of it?"

But while the old nets rotted visibly, there were no new nets being woven. There was everywhere the vague expectation of new nets, of a new comprehensiveness, a new way of life, but there was no broad movement towards any new way of life. Everywhere the old traditions and standards and institutions remained, discredited indeed and scoffed at, but in possession of life. Energetic women were reaching out in a mood of the wildest experiment towards they knew not what. It was a time of chaotic trials. The disposition of the first generation of released women had been towards an austere sexlessness, a denial of every feminine weakness, mental and physical, and so by way of Highmorton and hockey to a spinsterish, bitter competition with men. A few still bolder spirits, and Aunt Phoebe Stubland was among these

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pioneers, carried the destructive "why not?" still further. Grant Allen's "Woman Who Did" and Arthur's infidelities were but early aspects of a wide wave of philoprogenitive and eugenic sentimentality. The new generation carried "why not?" into the sphere of conduct with amazing effect.

Women are the custodians of manners, and mothers and hostesses who did not dream of the parallelism of their impulse with militancy were releasing the young to an unheard-of extravagance of dress and festival. Joan could wear clothes at a Chelsea dance that would have shocked a chorus girl half a century before; she went about London in the small hours with any casual male acquaintance; so far as appearances went she might have been the most disreputable of women. She yielded presently to Huntley's persistence and began dancing the tango with him. It was the thing to slip away from a dance in slippers and a wrap, and spend an hour or so careering about London in a taxi or wandering on Hampstead Heath. Joan's escapades fretted the sleeping tramps upon the Thames Embankment. London, which had hitherto dispersed its gatherings about eleven and got to bed as a rule by midnight, was aspiring in those days to become nocturnal. The restaurants were obliged to shut early, but a club was beyond such regulations. Necessity created the night club, which awoke about eleven and closed again after a yawning breakfast of devilled bones.

A number of night clubs were coming into existence, to the particular delight of young Winterbaum. His boyish ambition for Joan was returning. He had seen

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her dance and heard her dancing praised. Vulgar people made wild vulgar guesses in his hearing at what lay behind her grave and sometimes sombre prettiness. He pretended to be very discreet about that. It became the pride of his life to appear at some crowded night club in possession of Joan; he did not know what people thought of her or of him but he hoped for the worst. He wore the most beautiful buttons on his white waistcoat and the most delicate gold chain you can imagine. In the cloak-room he left a wonderful overcoat and a wonderful cane. Sometimes he encouraged the ringlets in his hair and felt like Disraeli, and sometimes he restrained them and felt like a cold, cynical Englishman of the darker sort. He would sit swelling with pride beside Joan, and nod to painted women and heavy men; he knew no end of people. He did not care what sort of people they were so long as he knew them. It was always his ambition to be seen drinking champagne with Joan. Joan had no objection in the world, but she could not bring herself to swallow a drink that tasted, she thought, like weak vinegar mixed with a packet of pins and that went up your nose and made your brain swing slowly to and fro on its axis for the rest of the evening. So she just drank *nothing at all*.

She would sit at her table with her pretty bare arms folded under her like the paws of a little cat, with her face, that still had the delicacy and freshness of a child's, as intent as any intelligent child's can be on the jumble of people before her, and her sombre eyes, calm and beautiful, looking at smart

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London trying at last to take its pleasures gaily. Perhaps some fortunate middle-aged gentleman of Winterbaum's circle would be attempting to charm her by brilliant conversation, as, for instance, Sir Joseph Lystrom, with a full-mouthed German flavour in his voice, in this style: "Pretty cheap here this evening somehow, eh? *What?*" Somewhere in the back of Sir Joseph's mind was the illusion that by barking in this way and standing treat profusely, lay the road to a girl's young love. Somewhen perhaps—who knows?—he may have found justification for that belief. Joan had long since learned how to turn a profile to these formal attentions, and appear to be interested without hearing or answering a word.

Or sometimes it would be Huntley. Huntley had lately taken to dodging among the night clubs to which he had access, when Joan was in London. Usually such nights ended in futility, but occasionally he was lucky and found Joan. Then he would come and talk and suggest ideas to her. He still remained the most interesting personality in her circle. She pretended to Winterbaum and herself to be bored by his pursuit, but indeed she looked for it. Except for Winterbaum and Huntley and Winterbaum's transitory introductions, she remained a detached figure in these places. Sometimes quite good-looking strangers sat a little way off and sought to convey to her by suitable facial expression the growth of a passionate interest in her. She conveyed to them in return that they were totally invisible to her, resisting at times a macabre impulse to take sights at them suddenly and amazingly or put out her tongue.

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Sometimes women of the great Winterbaum circle would make a fuss of her. They called her a "dear child." They would have been amazed at the complete theoretical knowledge a dear child of unrestricted reading could possess of them and their little ways.

"So this is the life of pleasure," thought the dear child. "*Well!*"

And then that same question that Peter seemed always to be asking of Oswald: "Is this *all?*"

When she danced in these places she danced with a sort of contempt. And the sage, experienced men who looked at her so knowingly never realised how much they imagined about her and how little they knew.

She would sit and think how indecent it was to be at the same time old and dissipated. Some of these women here, she perceived, were older than her aunts Phœbe and Phyllis, years older. Their faces were painted and done most amazingly—Joan knew all about facial massage and the rest of it—and still they were old faces. But their poor bodies were not nearly so old as their faces, that was the tragedy of them. Joan regarded the tremendous V decolletage of a lively grandmother before her, and the skin of the back shone as young as her own. The good lady was slapping the young gentleman next to her with a quite smooth and shapely arm. Joan speculated whether the old fashion of the masked ball and the Venetian custom of masks which she had been reading about that day in Voltaire's "*Princesse de Babylon*" might not have something to do with that. But

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—she reverted—only young people ought to make love at all. Her aunts didn't; Oswald didn't. And Oswald was years younger than some of the men here, and in Joan's eyes at least far more presentable. He had a scarred face indeed but a clean skin; some of the old men here had skins one would shiver to touch, and the expressions of evil gargoyles. She let her thoughts dwell—not for the first time—on Oswald and a queer charm he had for her. Never in all her life had she known him do or say a mean, dishonest, unjust, or unkind thing. In some ways he was oddly like Peter, but wise and gentle—and not exasperating. . . .

But all this playing with love in London was detestable, all of it. This was really a shameful place. It was shameful to be here. Love—mixed up with evening dress and costly clothes and jewellery and nasty laughter and cigars, strong cigars and drink that slopped about. It was disgusting. These people made love after their luncheons and dinners and suppers. Pigs! They were all pigs. They looked like pigs. If ever she made love it should be in the open air, in some lovely place with blue mountains in the distance, where there were endless wild flowers, where one could swim. No man she had ever talked with of love had really understood anything of the beauty of love and the cleanness of love—except Mir Jelaluddin. And he had a high-pitched voice and a staccato accent—and somehow . . . One ought not to be prejudiced against a dark race, but somehow it was unthinkable. . . .

Joan sat in the night club dreaming of a lover, and

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the men about her glanced furtively at her face, asking themselves, "Can it be I?" men with red ears, men with greasy hair, men with unpleasing necks and clumsy gestures; bald men, fat men, watery-eyed men, cheats, profiteers, usurers, snobs, toadies, successful old men of every sort and young men who had done nothing and for the most part never would. "Can it be I?" they surmised dimly, seeing her pensive eyes. And she was dreaming of a lithe, white, slender figure, strong and clean. He would hunt among the mountains, he would swim swift rivers; he would never drink strong drink nor reek of smoke. . . .

At this moment young Winterbaum became urgent with his beautiful gold cigarette-case. Joan took a cigarette and lighted it, and sat smoking with her elbows side by side on the table.

"You're not bored?" said young Winterbaum.

"Oh, no. I'm watching people. I don't want to talk."

"Oh! not at all?" said young Winterbaum.

"So long as one has to talk," he said after reflection and with an air of cleverness, "one isn't really friends."

"Exactly," said Joan, and blew smoke through her nose.

What was it she had been thinking about? She could not remember, the thread was broken. She was sorry. She had a vague memory of something pleasant. . . . She fell into a fresh meditation upon Jews. All Jews, she thought, ought to grow beards. At least after they were thirty. They are too dark

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to shave, and besides there is a sort of indignity about their beaked shaven faces. A bearded old Jew can look noble, a moustached old Jew always looked like an imitation of a Norman gentleman done in cheaper material. But that of course was exactly what he was. . . .

Why did men of forty or fifty always want to dance with and make love to flappers? Some of these girls here must be two or three years younger than herself. What was the interest? They couldn't talk; they weren't beautiful; one could see they weren't beautiful. And they laughed, good God! how they laughed! Girls ought to be taught to laugh, or at any rate taught not to laugh offensively. Laughter ought to be a joyful, contagious thing, jolly and kind, but these shrieks! How few of these people looked capable of real laughter! They just made this loud chittering sound. Only human beings laugh. . . .

In this manner the mind of Joan was running on the evening when she saw Peter and Hetty come into the club which tried to live up to the name of "The Nest of the Burning Phoenix." Some tango experts had just relinquished the floor and there was a space amidst the throng when Hetty made her entry. Hetty had made a great effort, she was in full London plumage, and her effect was tremendous.

About her little bold face was a radiant scheme of peacock's feathers, her slender neck carried a disc a yard and a quarter wide; her slender, tall body was sheathed in black and peacock satin; she wore enormous earrings and a great barbaric chain. Her arms were bare except for a score of bangles, and she had

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bare sandalled feet. She carried her arrow-point of a chin triumphantly. Peter was not her only attendant. There was also another man in her train whom every one seemed to recognise, a big, square-faced, handsome man of thirty-five or so who made Peter look very young and flimsy. "She's got Fred Beevor!" said Winterbaum with respect, and dropped the word "Million." Peter's expression was stony, but Joan judged he was not enjoying himself.

There were very few unoccupied chairs and tables, but opposite Joan were two gilt seats and another disengaged at a table near at hand. Hetty was too busy with her triumph to note Joan until Beevor had already chosen this place. With a slight awkwardness the two parties mingled. Young Winterbaum at least was elated. Beevor after a few civilities to Joan let it appear that Hetty preoccupied him. Peter was evidently not enjoying himself at all. Joan found him seated beside her and silent.

Joan knew that it is the feminine rôle to lead conversation, but it seemed to her rather fun to have to encourage a tongue-tied Peter. A malicious idea came into her head.

"Well, Petah," she said; "why don't you say I oughtn't to be here?"

Peter regarded her ambiguously. He had an impulse.

"No decent people ought to be here," he said quietly. "Let's go home, Joan."

Her heart jumped at the suggestion. All her being said yes. And then she remembered that she had as much right to have a good time as Peter. If she went

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back with him it would be like giving in to him; it would be like admitting his right to order her about. And besides there was Hetty. He wasn't really disgusted. All he wanted to do really was to show off because he was jealous of Hetty. He didn't want to go home with Joan. She wasn't going to be a foil for Hetty anyhow. And finally, once somewhere he had refused her almost exactly the same request. She checked herself and considered gravely. A little touch of spite crept into her expression.

"No," she said slowly. "No. . . . I've only just come, Petah."

"Very well," said Peter. "*I don't mind. If you like this sort of thing—*"

He said no more, sulking visibly.

Joan resolved to dance at the first opportunity, and to dance in a bold and reckless way—so as thoroughly to exasperate Peter. She looked about the room through the smoke-laden atmosphere in the hope of seeing Huntley. . . .

She and Peter sat side by side, feeling very old and experienced and worldly and up-to-date. But indeed they were still only two children who ought to have been packed off to bed hours before.

§ 7

The disorder in the world of women, the dissolution of manners and restraints, was but the more intimate aspect of a universal drift towards lawlessness. The world of labour was seething also with the same spirit of almost aimless insurrection. In a world of

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quickenings apprehensions and increasing stimulus women were losing faith in the rules of conduct that had sufficed in a less exacting age. Far profounder and more dangerous to the established order were the scepticisms of the workers. The pretensions of the old social system that trade-unionism had scarcely challenged were now being subjected throughout all western Europe to a pitiless scrutiny by a new and more educated type of employee.

The old British trade-unionism had never sought much more than increased wages and a slightly higher standard of life; its acceptance of established institutions had been artlessly complete; it had never challenged the authority nor the profits of the proprietor. It had never proposed more than a more reasonable treaty with the masters, a fairer sharing of the good gifts of industry. But infatuated by the evil teachings of an extreme individualism, a system of thought which was indeed never more than a system of base excuses dressed up as a philosophy, the directing and possessing classes had failed altogether to agree with their possible labour adversary quickly while they were yet in the way with him. They had lacked the intelligence to create a sympathetic industrial mentality, and the conscience to establish a standard of justice. They left things alone until the grit of a formless discontent had got into every cog of the industrial machinery. Too late, the employers were now conceding the modest demands that labour had made in the eighties and nineties, they were trying to accept the offers of dead men; they found themselves face to face with an entirely less accommodating gen-

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eration. This new labour movement was talking no longer of shorter hours and higher pay but of the social revolution. It did not demand better treatment from the capitalist; it called him a profiteer and asked him to vanish from the body politic. It organised strikes now not to alter the details of its working conditions as its predecessor had done, but in order to end the system by making it impossible. In Great Britain as on the Continent, the younger generation of labour was no longer asking to have the harness that bound it to the old order made easier and lighter; it was asking for a new world.

The new movement seemed to men of Oswald's generation to come as thunder-storms will sometimes come, as the militant suffragette had seemed to come, suddenly out of a clear sky. But it was far more ominous than the suffragette movement, for while that made one simple explicit demand, this demanded nothing short of a new economic order. It asked for everything and would be content with nothing. It was demanding from an old habitual system the supreme feat of reconstruction. Short of that vague general reconstruction it promised no peace. Higher wages would not pacify it; shorter hours would not pacify it. It threatened sabotage of every sort, and a steady, incessant broadening antagonism of master and man. Peter, half sympathetic and half critical, talked about it to Oswald one day.

"They all say, 'I'm a Rebel!'" said Peter.
" 'Rebel' is their cant word."

"Yes, but rebel against what?"

"Oh! the whole system."

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“They have votes.”

“They get humbugged, they say. They do, you know. The party system is a swindle, and everybody understands that. Why don't we clean it up? P. R.'s the only honest method. They don't understand how it is rigged, but they know it is rigged. When you talk about Parliament they laugh.”

“But they have their Unions.”

“They don't trust their leaders. They say they are got at. They say they are old-fashioned and bluffed by the politicians. . . . They are. . . .”

“Then what do they want?”

“Just to be out of all this. They are bored to tears by their work, by the world they have to live in, by the pinched mean lives they have to lead—in the midst of plenty and luxury—bored by the everlasting dulness and humbug of it all.”

“But how are they going to alter it?”

“That's all vague. Altogether vague. Cole and Mellor and those Cambridge chaps preach Guild Socialism to them, but I don't know how far they take it in—except that they agree that profit is unnecessary. But the fundamental fact is just blind boredom and the desire to smash up things. Just on the off chance of their coming better. The employer has been free to make the world for them, and this is the world he has made. Damn him! That's how they look at it. They are bored by his face, bored by his automobile, bored by his knighthood, bored by his country house and his snob of a wife——”

“But what can they do?”

“Make things impossible.”

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“They can’t run things themselves.”

“They aren’t convinced of that. Anyhow if they smash up things the employer goes first, and he’s the chap they seem to be principally after——”

Peter reflected. Then he gave a modern young Englishman’s view of the labour conflict. “The employers have been pretty tidy asses not to see that their work-people get a better, more amusing life than they do. It was their business and their interest to do so. It could have been managed easily. But they’re so beastly disloyal. And so mean. They not only sweat labour themselves but they won’t stir a finger to save it from jerry-built housing, bad provisioning, tally-men, general ugliness, bad investments, rotten insurance companies—every kind of rotten old thing. Any one may help kill *their* sheep. They’ve got no gratitude to their workers. They won’t even amuse them. Why couldn’t they set up decent theatres for them, and things like that? It’s so stupid of them. These employers are the most dangerous class in the community. There’s enough for every one nowadays and over. It’s the first business of employers to see work-people get their whack. What good are they if they don’t do that? But they never have. Labour is convinced now that they never will. They run about pretending to be landed gentry. They’ve got their people angry and bitter now, they’ve destroyed public confidence in their ways, and it serves them jolly well right if the workmen make things impossible for them. I think they will. I hope they will.”

“But this means breaking up the national indus-

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tries," said Oswald. "Where is this sort of thing going to end?"

"Oh! things want shaking up," said Peter.

"Perhaps," he added, "one *must* break up old things before one can hope for new. I suppose the masters won't let go while they think there's a chance of holding on. . . ."

He had not a trace left of the Victorian delusion that this might after all be the best of all possible worlds. He thought that our politicians and our captains of industry were very poor muddlers indeed. They drifted. Each one sat in his own works, he said, and ran them for profit without caring a rap whither the whole system was going. Compared with Labour even their poverty of general ideas was amazing. Peter, warming with his subject, walked to and fro across the Pelham Ford lawn beside Oswald, proposing to rearrange industrialism as one might propose to reshuffle a pack of cards.

"But suppose things smash up," said Oswald.

"Smash up" did not seem to alarm Peter.

"Nowadays," said Peter, "so many people read and write, so much has been thought out, there is so big a literature of ideas in existence, that I think we could recover from a very considerable amount of smashing. I'm pro-smash. We have to smash. What holds us back are fixed ideas. Take Profit. We're used to Profit. Most business is done for profit still. But why should the world tolerate profit at all? It doesn't stimulate enterprise; it only stimulates knavery. And Capital, Financial Capital is just blackmail by gold—gold rent. We think the state

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itself even can't start a business going or employ people without first borrowing money. Why should it borrow money? Why not, for state purposes, create it? Yes. No money would be any good if it hadn't the state guarantee. Gold standard, fixed money fund, legitimate profits and so on; that's the sort of fixed idea that gets in the way nowadays. It won't get out of the way just for reason's sake. The employers keep on with these old fixed ideas, naturally, because so it is they have been made, but the work-people believe in them less and less. There must be a smash of some sort—just to shake ideas loose. . . .”

Oswald surveyed his ward. So this was the young man's theory. Not a bad theory. Fixed Ideas!

“There's something to be said for this notion of Fixed Ideas,” he said. “Yes. But isn't this ‘I'm a Rebel’ business, isn't that itself a Fixed Idea?”

“Oh certainly!” said Peter cheerfully. “We poor human beings are always letting our ideas coagulate. That's where the whole business seems to me so hopeless. . . .”

§ 8

In the eighties and nineties every question had been positive and objective. “People,” you said, “think so and so. *Is it right?*” That seemed to cover the grounds for discussion in those days. One believed in a superior universal reason to which all decisions must ultimately bow. The new generation was beginning where its predecessors left off, with what had been open questions decided and carried

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beyond discussion. It was at home now on what had once been battle-fields of opinion. The new generation was reading William James and Bergson and Freud and becoming more and more psychological. "People," it said, "think so and so. Why do they do so?"

So when at last Oswald carried off Peter to Dublin—which he did not do at Easter as he had planned but at Whitsuntide for a mere long week-end—to see at close hand this perplexing Irish Question that seemed drifting steadily and uncontrollably towards bloodshed, he found that while he was asking "who is in the right and who is in the wrong here? Who is most to blame and who should have the upper hand?" Peter was asking with a terrible impartiality, "Why are *all* these people talking nonsense?" and "Why have they got their minds and affairs into this dangerous mess?" Sir Horace Plunkett, Peter had a certain toleration for; but it was evident he suspected A. E. Peter did not talk very much, but he listened with a bright scepticism to brilliant displays of good talk—he had never heard such good anecdotal talk before—and betrayed rather than expressed his conviction that Nationalism, Larkinism, Sinn Feinism, Ulsterism, and Unionism were all insults to the human intelligence, material for the alienist rather than serious propositions.

It wasn't that he felt himself to be in possession of any conclusive solution, or that he obtruded his disbelief with any sense of superiority. In spite of his extreme youth he did not for a moment assume the *attitude* of a superior person. Life was evidently

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troubling him profoundly, and he was realising that there was no apparent answer to many of his perplexities. But he was at least trying hard to get an answer. What shocked him in the world of Dublin was its manifest disinclination to get any answer to anything. They jeered at people who sought solutions. They liked the fun of disorder; it gave more scope for their irrepressible passion for character study. He began to recognise one particular phrase as the key-note of Dublin's animation: "Hev ye hurrd the letest?"

On the Sunday afternoon of their stay in Dublin, Powys motored them through the city by way of Donnybrook and so on round the bay to Howth to see the view from Howth Head. Powys drove with a stray guest beside him. Behind, Peter imparted impressions to Oswald.

"I don't like these high walls," he said. "I've never seen such a lot of high walls. . . . It's just as if they all shut themselves in from one another."

"Fixed Ideas, Peter?"

"They *are* rather like Fixed Ideas. I suppose high walls are fun to climb over and throw things over. But—it's uncivilised.

"Everybody," grumbled Peter, "is given to fixed ideas, but the Irish have 'em for choice. All this rot about Ireland a Nation and about the Harp, which isn't properly their symbol, and the dear old Green Flag which isn't properly their colour! . . . They can't believe in that stuff nowadays. . . . But *can* they? In our big world? And about being a Black Protestant and pretending Catholics are poison, or

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the other way round. What are Protestants and Catholics now? . . . Old dead squabbles. . . . Dead as Druids. . . . Keeping up all that bickering stuff, when a child of eight ought to know nowadays that the Christian God started out to be a universal, charitable God. . . . If Christ came to Dublin the Catholics and Protestants would have a free fight to settle which was to crucify Him. . . .”

“It’s the way with them,” said Oswald. “We’ve got to respect Irish opinion.”

“It doesn’t respect itself. Everywhere else in the world, wherever we have been, there’s been at least something like the germ of an idea of a new life. But here! When you get over here you realise for the first time that England is after all a living country trying to get on to something—compared with this merry-go-round. . . . It’s exactly like a merry-go-round churning away. It’s the atmosphere of a country fair. An Irishman hasn’t any idea of a future at all, so far as I can see—except that perhaps his grandchildren will tell stories of what a fine fellow he was. . . .”

The automobile halted for a moment at cross-roads, and the finger-post was in Erse characters.

“Look at *that!*” said Peter with genuine exasperation. “And hardly a Dubliner knows fifty words of the language! It’s foolery. If we were Irish I suppose we should smother London with black-letter. We should go on pretending that we, too, were still Catholics and Protestants. The pseudo-Protestants would hang Smithfield with black on account of the martyrs, and the pseudo-Catholics would come and

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throw the meat about on Fridays. Chesterton and Belloc would love it anyhow. . . .”

Oswald was not sure of the extent of Peter's audience. “The susceptibilities of a proud people, Peter,” he whispered, with his eye on the back of their host.

“Bother their susceptibilities. Much they care for *our* susceptibilities. The worst insult you can offer a grown-up man is to humour him,” said Peter. “What's the good of pretending to be sympathetic with all this Wearing of the Green. It's like our White Rose League. Let 'em do it by all means if they want to, but don't let's pretend we think it romantic and beautiful and all the rest of it. It's just posing and dressing up, and it's a nuisance, Nobby. All Dublin is posing and dressing up and playing at rebellion, and so is all Ulster. The Volunteers of the eighteenth century all over again. It's like historical charades. And they've pointed loaded guns at each other. Only idiots point loaded guns. Why can't we English get out of it all, and leave them to pose and dress up and then tell anecdotes and anecdotes and anecdotes about it until they are sick of it? If ever they are sick of it. Let them have their Civil War if they want it; let them keep on with Civil Wars for ever; what has it got to do with us?”

“You're a Home Ruler then,” said Oswald.

“I don't see that we English do any good here at all. What are we here for anyhow? The Castle's just another Fixed Idea, something we haven't the mental vigour to clear away. Nobody does any good here. We're not giving them new ideas, we're not

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unifying them, we're not letting Ireland out into the world—which is what she wants—we're not doing anything but just holding on."

"What's that?" said Powys suddenly over his shoulder.

"Peter's declaring for Home Rule," said Oswald.

"After his glimpse of the slums of Dublin?"

"It's out of malice. He wants to leave Irishmen to Irishmen."

"Ulster says *No!*" said Powys. "Tell him to talk to Ulster," and resumed a conversation he had interrupted with the man beside him.

At the corner where Nassau Street runs into Grafton Street they were held up for some lengthy minutes by a long procession that was trailing past Trinity College and down Grafton Street. It had several bands, and in the forefront of it went National Volunteers in green uniforms, obviously for the most part old soldiers; they were followed by men with green badges, and then a straggle of Larkinites and various Friendly Societies with their bands and banners, and then by a long dribble of children and then some work girls, and then a miscellany of people who had apparently fallen in as the procession passed because they had nothing else to do. As a procession it was tedious rather than impressive. The warm afternoon—it was the last day in May—had taken the good feeling out of the walkers. Few talked, still fewer smiled. The common expression was a long-visaged discontent, a gloomy hostile stare at the cars and police cordon, an aimless disagreeableness. They were all being very stern and resolute about they did not

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quite know what. They meant to show that Dublin could be as stern and resolute as Belfast. Between the parts of the procession were lengthy gaps. It was a sunshiny, dusty afternoon, and the legs of the processionists were dusty to the knees, their brows moist, and their lips dry. There was an unhurried air about them of going nowhere in particular. It was evident that many of their banners were heavy. "What's it all about?" asked Oswald.

"Lord knows," said Powys impatiently. "It's just a demonstration."

"Is that all? Why don't we cut across now and get on?"

"There's more coming. Don't you hear another band?"

"But the police could hold it up for a minute and let all these tram-cars and automobiles across."

"There'd be a fight," said Powys. "They daren't. . . ."

"And I suppose this sort of thing is going on in the north too?" asked Oswald after a pause.

"Oh! everywhere," said Powys. "Orange or Green. But they've got more guns up north."

"These people don't really want Ireland a Nation and all the rest of it," said Peter.

"Oh?" said Powys, staring at him.

"Well, look at them," said Peter. "You can see by their faces. They're just bored to death. I suppose most people *are* bored to death in Ireland. There's nothing doing. England just holds them up, I suppose. And it's an island—rather off the main line. There's nothing to get people's minds off these

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endless, dreary old quarrels. It's all they have. But they're bored by it. . . ."

"And that's why we talk nothing but anecdotes, Peter, eh?" Powys grinned.

"Well, you *do* talk a lot of anecdote," said Peter, who hadn't realised the sharpness of his host's hearing.

"Oh! we do. I don't complain of your seeing it. It isn't your discovery. Have you read or heard the truest words that were ever said of Ireland—by that man Shaw? In 'John Bull's Other Island.' . . . That laughing scene about the pig. 'Nowhere else could such a scene cause a burst of happiness among the people.' That's the very guts of things here; eh?"

"It's his best play," said Oswald, avoiding too complete an assent.

"It gets there," Powys admitted, "anyhow. The way all them fools come into the shanty and snigger. . . ."

The last dregs of the procession passed reluctantly out of the way. It faded down Grafton Street into a dust cloud and a confusion of band noises. The policemen prepared to release the congested traffic. Peter leaned out to count the number of trams and automobiles that had been held up. He was still counting when the automobile turned the corner.

They shook off Dublin and spun cheerfully through the sunshine along the coast road to Howth. It was a sparkling bright afternoon, and the road was cheerful with the prim happiness of many couples of Irish lovers. But that afternoon peace was the mask worn by one particular day. If the near future could have

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cast a phantom they would have seen along this road a few weeks ahead of them the gun-runners of Howth marching to the first foolish bloodshed in Dublin streets. . . .

They saw Howth Castle, made up now by Lutyens to look as it ought to have looked and never had looked in the past. The friend Powys had brought wanted to talk to some of the castle people, and while these two stayed behind Oswald and Peter went on between high hedges of clipped beech and up a steep, winding path amidst great bushes of rhododendron in full flower to the grey rock and heather of the crest. They stood in the midst of one of the most beautiful views in the world. Northward they looked over Ireland's Eye at Lambay and the blue Mourne mountains far away; eastward was the lush green of Meath, southward was the long beach of the bay sweeping round by Dublin to Dalkey, backed by more blue mountains that ran out eastward to the Sugar Loaf. Below their feet the pale castle clustered amidst its rich greenery, and to the east, the level blue sea sustained one single sunlit sail. It was rare that the sense of beauty flooded Peter, as so often it flooded Joan, but this time he was transported.

"But this is altogether beautiful," he said, like one who is taken by surprise.

And then as if to himself: "How beautiful life might be! How splendid life might be!"

Oswald was standing on a ledge below Peter, and with his back to him. He waited through a little interval to see if Peter would say any more. Then he pricked him with "only it isn't."

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“No,” said Peter, with the sunlight gone out of his voice. “It isn’t.”

He went on talking after a moment’s reflection.

“It’s as if we were hypnotised and couldn’t get away from mean things, beastly suspicions, and stale quarrels. I suppose we are still half apes. I suppose our brains *set* too easily and rapidly. I suppose it’s easy to quarrel yet and still hard to understand. We take to jealousy and bitterness as ducklings take to water. Think of that stale, dusty procession away there!”

Oswald’s old dream vision of the dark forest came back to his mind. “Is there no way out, Peter?” he said.

“If some great idea would take hold of the world!” said Peter. . . .

“There have been some great ideas,” said Oswald. . . .

“If it would take hold of one’s life,” Peter finished his thought. . . .

“There has been Christianity,” said Oswald.

“Christianity!” Peter pointed at the distant mist that was Dublin. “Sour Protestants,” he said, “and dirty priests setting simple people by the ears.”

“But that isn’t true Christianity.”

“There isn’t true Christianity,” said Peter compactly. . . .

“Well, there’s love of country then,” said Oswald.

“That Dublin corporation is the most patriotic and nationalist in the world. Fierce about it. And it’s got complete control there. It’s green in grain. No English need apply. . . . From the point of view

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of administration that town is a muck-heap—for patriotic crowings. Look at their dirty, ill-paved streets. Look at their filthy slums! See how they let their blessed nation's children fester and die!"

"There are bigger ideas than patriotism. There are ideas of empire, the Pax Britannica."

"Carson smuggling guns."

"Well, is there nothing? Do *you* know of nothing?"

Oswald turned on his ward for the reply.

"There's a sort of idea, I suppose."

"But what idea?"

"There's an idea in our minds."

"But what is it, Peter?"

"Call it Civilisation," Peter tried.

"I believe," he went on, weighing his words carefully, "as you believe really, in the Republic of Mankind, in universal work for a common end—for freedom, welfare, and beauty. Haven't you taught me that?"

"*Have* I taught you that?"

"It seems to me to be the common-sense aim for all humanity. You're awake to it. You've awakened me to it and I believe in it. But most of this world is still deep in its old Fixed Ideas, walking in its sleep. And it won't wake up. It won't wake up. . . . What can we *do*? We've got to a sort of idea, it's true. But here are these Irish, for example, naturally wittier and quicker than you or I, hypnotised by Orange and Green, by Protestant and Catholic, by all these stale things—drifting towards murder. It's murder is coming here. You can smell the bloodshed coming

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on the air—and we can't do a thing to prevent it. Not a thing. The silliest bloodshed it will be. The silliest bloodshed the world has ever seen. We can't do a thing to wake them up. . . .

“We're *in* it,” said Peter in conclusion. “We can't even save ourselves.”

“I've been wanting to get at your political ideas for a long time,” said Oswald. “You really think, Peter, there might be a big world civilisation, a world republic, did you call it?—without a single slum hidden in it anywhere, with the whole of mankind busy and happy, the races living in peace, each according to its aptitudes, a world going on—going on steady and swift to still better things.”

“How can one believe anything else? Don't you?”

“But how do we get there, Peter?”

“Oh, how do we get there?” echoed Peter. “How do we get there?”

He danced a couple of steps with vexation.

“I don't *know*, Nobby,” he cried. “I don't know. I can't find the way. I'm making a mess of my life. I'm not getting on with my work. You *know* I'm not. . . . Either we're mad or this world is. Here's all these people in Ireland letting a solemn humbug of a second-rate lawyer with a heavy chin and a lumpish mind muddle them into a civil war—and *that's* reality! That's life! The solemn League and Covenant—copied out of old history books! That's *being serious*! And over there in England, across the sea, muddle and muck and nonsense indescribable. Oh! and we're *in* it!”

“But aren't there big movements afoot, Peter,

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social reform, the labour movement, the emancipation of women, big changes like that?"

"Only big discontents."

"But doesn't discontent make the change?"

"It's just boredom that's got them. It isn't any disposition to *make*. Labour is bored, women are bored, all Ireland is bored. I suppose Russia is bored and Germany is getting bored. She is boring all the world with her soldiering. How bored they must be in India too—by us! The day bores its way round the earth now—like a mole. Out of sight of the stars. But boring people doesn't mean making a new world. It just means boring on to decay. It just means one sort of foolish old fixed idea rubbing and sawing against another, until something breaks down. . . . Oh! I want to get out of all this. I don't *like* this world of ours. I want to get into a world awake. I'm young and I'm greedy. I've only got one life to live, Nobby. . . . I want to spend it where something is being made. Made for good and all. Where clever men can do something more than sit overlong at meals and tell spiteful funny stories. Where there's something better to do than play about with one's brain and viscera! . . ."

§ 9

In the days when Peter was born the Anglican system held the Empire with apparently invincible feelings of security and self-approval; it possessed the land, the church, the army, the foreign office, the court. Such people as Arthur and Dolly were of no

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more account than a stray foreign gipsy by the way-side. When Peter came of age the Anglican system still held on to army, foreign office, court, land, and church, but now it was haunted by a sense of an impalpable yet gigantic antagonism that might at any time materialise against it. It had an instinctive perception of the near possibility of a new world in which its base prides could have no adequate satisfaction, in which its authority would be flouted, its poor learning despised, and its precedents disregarded. The curious student of the history of England in the decade before the Great War will find the clew to what must otherwise seem a hopeless tangle in the steady, disingenuous, mischievous antagonism of the old Anglican system to every kind of change that might bring nearer the dreaded processes of modernisation. Education, and particularly university, reform was blocked, the most necessary social legislation fought against with incoherent passion, the lightest, most reasonable taxation of land or inheritance resisted.

Wherever the old system could find allies it snatched at them and sought to incorporate them with itself. It had long since taken over the New Imperialism with its tariff schemes and its spirit of financial adventure. It had sneered aloof when the new democracy of the elementary schools sought to read and think; it had let any casual adventurer supply that reading; but now the creator of *Answers* and *Comic Cuts* ruled *The Times* and sat in the House of Lords. It was a little doubtful still whether he was of the new order or the old, whether he was not himself an instalment of revolution, whether the

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Tories had bought him or whether he had bought them, but at any rate he did for a time seem to be serving the ends of reaction.

To two sources of strength the Anglicans clung with desperate resolution, India and Ulster. From India the mass of English people were shut and barred off as completely as any foreigners could have been. India was the preserve of the "ruling class." To India the good Anglican, smitten by doubts, chilled by some disrespectful comment or distressed by some item of progress achieved, could turn, leaving all thoughts of new and unpleasant things behind him; there in what he loved to believe was the "unchanging East" he could recover that sense of walking freely and authoritatively upon an abundance of inferior people which was so necessary to his nature, and which was being so seriously impaired at home. The institution of caste realised his secret ideals. From India he and his womankind could return refreshed, to the struggle with Liberalism and all the powers of democratic irreverence in England. And Ulster was a still more precious stronghold for this narrow culture. From the fastness of Ulster they could provoke the restless temperament of the Irish to a thousand petty exasperations of the English, and for Ulster, "loyal Ulster," they could appeal to the generous partisanship of the English against their native liberalism. More and more did it become evident that Ulster was the keystone of the whole Anglican ascendancy; to that they owed their grip upon British politics, upon army, navy, and education; they traded—nay! they existed—upon the open Irish sore. With Ire-

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land healed and contented England would be lost to them. England would democratise, would Americanise. The Anglicans would vanish out of British life as completely as the kindred Tories vanished out of America at the close of the eighteenth century. And when at last, after years of confused bickering, a Home Rule Bill became law, and peace between the two nations in Ireland seemed possible, the Anglicans stepped at once from legal obstruction to open treason and revolt. The arming of Ulster to resist the decision of Parliament was incited from Great Britain, it was supported enthusiastically by the whole of the Unionist party in Great Britain, its headquarters were in the West End of London, and the refusal of General Gough to carry out the precautionary occupation of Ulster was hailed with wild joy in every Tory home. It was not a genuine popular movement, it was an artificial movement for which the landowning church people of Ireland and England were chiefly responsible. It was assisted by tremendous exertions on the part of the London yellow press. When Sir Edward Carson went about Ulster in that warm June of 1914, reviewing armed men, promising "more Mausers," and pouring out inflammatory speeches, he was manifestly preparing bloodshed. The old Tory system had reached a point where it had to kill men or go.

And it did not mean to go; it meant to kill. It meant to murder men.

If youth and the new ideas were to go on with the world, the price was blood.

Ulster was a little country; altogether the dispute

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did not affect many thousands of men, but except for the difference in scale there was indeed hardly any difference at all between this scramble towards civil conflict in Ireland and the rush, swift and noiseless, that was now carrying central Europe towards immeasurable bloodshed. To kill and mutilate and waste five human beings in a petty riot is in its essence no less vile a crime than to kill and mutilate and waste twenty millions. While the British Tories counted their thousands, the Kaiser and his general staff reckoned in millions; while the British "loyalists" were smuggling a few disused machine-guns from Germany, Krupp's factories were turning out great guns by the hundred. But the evil thing was the same evil thing; a system narrow and outworn, full of a vague fear of human reason and the common sense of mankind, full of pride and greed and the insolent desire to trample upon men, a great system of false assumptions and fixed ideas, oppressed by a thirsty necessity for reassurance, was seeking the refreshment of loud self-assertion and preparing to drink blood. The militarist system that centred upon Potsdam had clambered to a point where it had to kill men or go. The Balkans were the Ulster of Europe. If once this Balkan trouble settled down, an age of peace might dawn for Europe, and how would Junkerdom fare then, and where would Frau Bertha sell her goods? How would the War Lord justify his glories to the social democrat? . . .

But Oswald, like most Englishmen, was not attending very closely to affairs upon the Continent. He was preoccupied with the unreason of Ulster.

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Recently he had had a curious interview with Lady Charlotte Sydenham, and her white excited face and blazing blue eyes insisted now upon playing the part of mask to the Ulster spirit in his thoughts. She had had to call him in because she had run short of ready money through oversubscription to various schemes for arming the northern patriots. She had sat at her writing-desk with her cap a little over one eye, as though it was a military cap, and the tuft of reddish hair upon her cheek more like bristles than ever, and he had walked about the room contriving disagreeable things to say to her after his wont. He was disinclined to let her have more money, he confessed; she ought to have had more sense, he said, than to write off big cheques, cheques beyond her means, in support of this seditious mischief. If she asked these people who had taken her money, probably they would let her have some back to go on with.

This enraged her nicely, as he had meant it to do. She scolded at him. A nice Sydenham he was, to see his King insulted and his country torn apart. He who had once worn the Queen's uniform. Thank God! she herself was a Parminter and belonged to a sounder strain!

"It's you who are insulting the King," Oswald interpolated, "trying to defy his Acts in Parliament."

"*Oh!*" cried Lady Charlotte, banging the desk with her freckled fist. "Oh! Parliament! I'd shoot 'em down! First that vile Budget, then the attack on the Lords."

"They passed the Parliament Act," said Oswald.

"To save themselves from being swamped in a

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horde of working-men peers—sitting there in their caps with their dirty boots on the cushions. Lord Keir Hardie! You'll want Lord Chimneysweep and Viscount Cats-meatman next. . . . Then came that abominable Insurance Act—one thing worse than another! Setting class against class and giving them ideas! Then we gave up South Africa to the Boers again! What did we fight for? Didn't we buy the country with our blood? Why, my poor cousin Rupert Parminter was a prisoner in Pretoria for a whole year—thirteen weary months! For nothing! And now Ireland is to be handed over to priests and rebels. To *Irishmen!* And I—I am not to lift a finger, not a finger, to save my King and my Country and my God—when they are all going straight to the Devil!”

“H'm,” said Oswald, rustling the counterfoils in his hand. “But you *have* been lifting your finger, you know!”

“If I could give more——”

“You *have* given more.”

“I'd give it.”

“Won't Grimes make a friendly advance? But I suppose you're up to the neck with Grimes. . . . I wonder what interest that little swindler charges you.”

The old lady could not meet the mild scrutiny of his eye. “You come here and grin and mock while your country is being handed over to a gang of God-knows-whos!” she said, staring at her ink-pot.

“To whom probably it belongs as much as it does to me,” said Oswald.

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“Thank God the army is sound,” said Aunt Charlotte. “Thank God this doesn’t end with your Parliaments! Mark my words, Oswald! On the day they raise their Home Rule flag in Ireland there will be men shot down—men shot down. A grim lesson.”

“Some perhaps killed by your own particular cheques,” said Oswald. “Who knows?”

“I hope so,” said Lady Charlotte, with a quiver of deep passion in her voice. “I hope so sincerely. If I could think I had caused the death of one of those traitors. . . . If it could be Lloyd George!” . . .

But that was too much apparently even for Lady Charlotte to hope for.

Oswald, when he had come to her, had fully intended to let her have money to go on with, but now he was changing his mind. He had thought of her hitherto just as a grotesque figure in his life, part of the joke of existence, but now with this worry of the Irish business in his mind he found himself regarding her as something more than an individual. She seemed now to be the accentuated voice of a whole class, the embodiment of a class tradition. He strolled back from the window and stood with his hands deep in his trouser pockets—which always annoyed her—and his head on one side, focussing the lady.

“My dear Aunt,” he said, “what right have you to any voice in politics at all? You know, you’re pretty—ungracious. The world lets you have this money—and you spend it in organising murder.”

“*The world lets me have this money!*” cried Lady Charlotte, amazed and indignant. “Why!” she roared, “it’s MY money!”

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In that instant the tenets of socialism, after a siege lasting a quarter of a century, took complete possession of Oswald's mind. In that same instant she perceived it. "Any one can see you're a Liberal and a Socialist yourself," she cried. "You'd shake hands with Lloyd George to-morrow. Yes, you would. Why poor foolish Vincent made *you* trustee—! He might have known! *You* a sailor! A faddy invalid! Mad on blacks. I suppose you'd give your precious Baganda Home Rule next! And him always so sound on the treatment of the natives! Why! he kicked a real judge—a native judge—Inner Temple and all the rest of it—out of his railway compartment. Kicked him. Bustled him out neck and crop. Awayed with him! Oh, if he could see you now! Insulting me! Standing up for all these people, blacks, Irishmen, strikers, anything. Sneering at the dear old Union Jack they want to tear to pieces."

"Well," said Oswald as she paused to take breath. "You've got yourself into this mess and you must get along now till next quarter-day as well as you can. I can't help you and you don't deserve to be helped."

"You'll not let me spend my own money?"

"You've fired off all the money you're entitled to. You'll probably kill a constable—or some decent little soldier boy from Devon or Kent. . . . Good God! Have you *no* imagination? . . ."

It was the most rankling encounter he had ever had with her. Either he was losing tolerance for her or she was indeed becoming more noisy and ferocious. She haunted his thoughts for a long time, and his

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thoughts of her, so intricate is our human composition, were all mixed up with sympathy and remorse for the petty cash troubles in which he had left her. . . .

But what a pampered, evil soul she had always been! Never in all her life had she made or grown or got one single good thing for mankind. She had lived in great expensive houses, used up the labour of innumerable people, bullied servants, insulted poor people, made mischief. She was like some gross pet idol that mankind out of whim kept for the sake of its sheer useless ugliness. He found himself estimating the weight of food and the tanks of drink she must have consumed, the carcasses of oxen and sheep, the cartloads of potatoes, the pyramids of wine bottles and stout bottles she had emptied. And she had no inkling of gratitude to the careless acquiescent fellow creatures who had suffered her so long and so abundantly. At the merest breath upon her clumsy intolerable dignity she clamoured for violence and cruelty and killing, and would not be appeased. An old idol! And she was only one of a whole class of truculent, illiterate harridans who were stirring up bad blood in half the great houses of London, and hurrying Britain on to an Irish civil war. No! She wasn't as funny as she seemed. Not nearly so funny. She was too like too many people for that. Too like most people?

Did that go too far?

After all there was a will for good in men; even this weary Irish business had not been merely a conflict of fixed ideas, there had been, too, real efforts on the

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part of countless people to get the tangle straightened out. There were creative forces at work in men—even in Ireland. And also there was youth.

His thoughts came back to the figure of Peter, standing on the head of Howth and calling for a new world.

“I’ll pit my Peter,” he said, “against all the Aunt Charlottes in creation. . . . In the long run, that is.”

He was blind—was not all Europe blind?—to the vast disaster that hung over him and his and the whole world, to the accumulated instability of the outworn social and political façade that now tottered to a crash. Massacre, famine, social confusion, world-wide destruction, long years of death and torment were close at hand; the thinnest curtain of time, a mere month of blue days now, hung between him and the thunderous overture of the world disaster.

“I pit my Peter,” he repeated, “against all the Aunt Charlottes in creation.”

§ 10

All novels that run through the years of the Great War must needs be political novels and fragments of history. In August, 1914, that detachment of human lives from history, that pretty picaresque disorder of experiences, that existence like a fair with ten thousand different booths, which had gone on for thousands of years, came to an end. We were all brought into a common drama. Something had happened so loud and insistent that all lives were focussed upon it; it became a leading factor in every life, the plot of

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every story, the form of all our thoughts. It so thrust itself upon mankind that the very children in the schools about the world asked "why has this thing happened?" and could not live on without some answer. The Great War summoned all human beings to become political animals, time would brook no further evasion. August, 1914, was the end of adventure and mental fragmentation for the species; it was the polarisation of mankind.

Other books have told, innumerable books that have yet to come will tell, of the rushing together of events that culminated in the breach of the Belgian frontier by the German hosts. Our story has to tell only of how that crisis took to itself and finished and crowned the education of these three people with whom we are concerned. Of the three, Oswald and Joan spent nearly the whole of July at Pelham Ford. Peter came down from Cambridge for a day or so and then, after two or three days in London for which he did not clearly account, he went off to the Bernese Oberland to climb with a party of three other Trinity men. There was a vague but attractive project at the back of his mind, which he did not confide to Oswald or Joan, of going on afterwards into north Italy to a little party of four or five choice spirits which Hetty was to organise. They could meet on the other side of the Simplon. Perhaps they would push on into Venezia. They would go for long tramps amidst sweet chestnut-trees and ripening grapes, they would stay in the vast, roomy, forgotten inns of sleepy towns whose very stables are triumphs of architecture, they would bathe amidst the sunlit rocks of

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quiet lakes. Wherever they went in that land the snow and blue of the distant Alps would sustain the sweet landscape as music sustains a song.

Hetty had made it all fantastically desirable. She had invented it and woven details about it one afternoon in her studio. She knew north Italy very well; it was not the first amusing journey in that soft, delicious land that she had contrived. Peter was tremendously excited to think of the bright possibilities of such an adventure, and yet withal there was a queer countervailing feeling gnawing amidst his lusty anticipations. Great fun it would be, tremendous fun, with a little spice of sin in it, and why not? Only somehow he had a queer unreasonable feeling that Joan ought to share his holidays. Old Joan who looked at him with eyes that held a shadow of sorrow; who made him feel that she knew more than she could possibly know. He wished Joan, too, had some spree in contemplation—not of course quite the same sort of spree. A decent girl's sort of spree. Just the tramp part. He wished he could tell Joan of what was in hand, that there wasn't this queer embarrassment between them. Joan had her car of course. . . .

Oswald had recently bought Joan a pretty little ten-horse-power Singer car, a two-seater, in which she was to run about the country at her own free will. It was one of several attempts he had recently made to brighten life for Joan. He was beginning to watch her very closely; he did not clearly understand the thoughts and imaginations that made her so grave and feverish at times, but he knew that she was troubled. The girl's family resemblance to his

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Dolly had caught his mind. He thought she was more like Dolly than she was because her image constantly before him was steadily replacing Dolly's in his mind. And he liked very much to sit beside her and watch her drive. At five-and-forty miles an hour her serene profile was divine. She had a good mechanical intelligence and her nerve was perfect; the little car lived in her hands and had the precision of movement of an animal.

They ran across country to Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon, and slept the night in Warwick; they went to Newmarket and round to Chelmsford and Dovercourt, which was also an overnight excursion. These were their longer expeditions. They made afternoon runs to St. Albans, Hitchin, Baldock, Bedford, Stevenage and Royston. Almost every fine day they made some trip. While she drove or while they walked about some unfamiliar town the cloud seemed to lift from Joan's mind, she became as fresh and bright as a child. And she talked more and more freely to Oswald. She talked more abundantly than Peter and much less about ideas. She talked rather of scenery and customs and atmospheres. She seemed to have a far more concrete imagination than Peter, to accept the thing that was with none of his reluctance. She would get books about Spain, about the South Sea Islands, about China, big books of travel and description, from the London Library, and so assimilate them that she seemed to be living imaginatively for days together in these alien atmospheres. She wanted to know about Uganda. She was curious about the native King. There were times

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when Oswald was reminded of some hungry and impatient guest in a restaurant reading over an overcrowded and perplexing menu.

She did not read many plays or novels nor any poetry. She mentioned casually one day to Oswald that such reading either bored her or disturbed her. She read a certain amount of philosophy, but manifestly now as a task. And she was incessantly restless. She had no mother nor sisters, no feminine social world about her; she suffered from a complete lack of all those distracting and pacifying routines and all those restraints of habit and association that control the lives of more normally placed girls. Her thoughts, stimulated by her uncontrolled reading, ran wild. One morning she was up an hour before dawn, and let herself out of the house and walked over the hills nearly to Newport before breakfast, coming back with skirts and shoes wet with dew and speckled with grass-seeds and little burs. She spent that afternoon asleep in the hammock. And she would play fitfully at the piano or the pianola after dinner and then wander out, a restless white sprite, into the garden. One night early in the month she persuaded Oswald to go for a long moonlight walk with her along the road to Ware.

There was a touch of dream quality in that walk for both of them. They had never been together in moonlight before. She ceased to be Joan and became at once something very strange and wonderful and very intimate, a magic phantom of womanhood, a creature no longer of flesh and blood but of pallor and shadow, whose hair was part of the universal

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dusk and her eyes two stars. And he, too, walking along and sometimes talking as if he talked to the lonely sky, and sometimes looking down out of the dimness closely at her, he had lost his age and his scars and become the utmost dignity of a man. They walked sometimes on a road of misty brightness and sometimes through deep pools of shadow and sometimes amidst the black bars and lace cast by tree stems and tree branches, and she made him talk of the vast spaces of Africa and the long trails through reed and forest, and of great animals standing still and invisible close at hand, hidden by the trickery of their colourings, and how he had gone all alone into the villages of savage people who had never before set eyes on a European. And she talked with a whisper and sigh in her voice of how she, too, would like to go into wild and remote lands—"if I could go off with a man like you." And it seemed to him for a time that this sweet voice beside him was not truly Joan's but another's, and that he walked once more with the dearest wish he had ever wished in his life.

He talked to her of moonlight and starlight in the tropics, of a wonderful pale incandescence that shines out above the grave of the sunset when the day has gone, of fireflies and of phosphorescent seas, and of the distant sounds of drumming and chanting and the remote blaze of native bonfires seen through black tree stems in the night. He talked, too, of the howling of beasts at night, and of the sudden roaring of lions, and at that she drew closer to him.

When at last it was time for her to turn she did not want to turn. "I have been happy," she said. "I

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have been happy. Let us go on. Why should we go back?"

As if she was not always happy. She pulled at his arm like a child. . . .

And as they came home she came close to him, and for long spaces they said not a word to one another.

But at the water splash in the village she had a queer impulse. The water splash appeared ahead of them, an incessant tumult of silver in which were set jewels of utter blackness and shining diamonds. She looked and tugged him by the arm.

"Let us walk through the water, dear Nobby!" she said. "I want to feel it about my feet. Do! Do! Do! It will hardly cover our shoes. . . ."

A queer impulse that was of hers but, what was queerer, it found the completest response in him. "All right," he said, as though this was the most commonplace suggestion possible; and very gravely, and as if it was some sort of rite, he let her lead him through the water. They were indeed both very grave. . . .

They walked up to the house in silence. . . .

"Good night, Nobby dear," said Joan, leaning suddenly over by the newel of the stairs, and kissed him, as the moonlight kisses, a kiss as soft and cool as ever awakened Endymion. . . .

Life was at high tide in Joan that July, and everything in her was straining at its anchors. All her being was flooded with the emotional intimations that she was a woman, that she had to be beautiful and hasten to meet exquisite and profoundly significant experiences; none of her instincts told her that the affairs

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of the world drew to an issue that would maim and kill half the youths she knew and torment and alter her own and every life about her. She was haunted and distressed day and night—for the trouble got into her dreams—by Peter's evident love-making with Hetty and Huntley's watchful eyes, and she saw nothing of the red eyes of war and the blood-lust that craved for all her generation. Peter was making love—making love to Hetty. Peter was making love to Hetty. And Joan was left at home in a fever of desertion. Her brotherhood with Peter which had been perhaps the greatest fact of her girlhood was breaking down under the exasperation of their separation and her jealousy, and Huntley was steadily and persistently invading her imagination. . . .

Women and men alike are love-hungry creatures; women even more so than men. It is not beauty nor strength nor goodness that hearts go to so much as attention. To know that another human being thinks of us, esteems us above all our secret estimates, has a steadfast and consuming need of us, is the supreme reassurance of life. And when women's hearts are distressed by vague passions and a friendless insecurity they will go out very readily even to a cripple who watches and waits.

Huntley was one of those men for whom women are the sole interest in life. If he had been obliged to master a mathematical problem he would have thought he struggled with a Muse and so achieved it. He watched them and waylaid them for small and great occasions. He understood completely these states of wild impatience that possess the feminine

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mind. He had no brotherliness nor fatherliness in his composition: his sole conception of this trouble of the unmated was of an opportunity for himself. A little patience, a little thought—and it was very delightful thought, a little pleasant skill, and all this vague urgency would become a gift for him.

But never before had Huntley met any one so fresh and youthfully beautiful as Joan. There were times when he could doubt whether he was the magnetiser or the magnetised. He had kissed her but he was not sure that she had kissed him. Some day she should kiss him of her own free will. He thought now almost continuously of Joan. The only work he could get on with was a novel into which he put things he had imagined about Joan. He wrote her long letters and planned for days to get an hour's conversation with her. And he would go for long walks and spend all the time composing letters or scheming dramatic conversations that never would happen in reality because Joan missed all her cues.

It was rather by instinct than by any set scheme that he did his utmost to convert her vague unrest into a discontent with all her circumstances, to shape her thoughts to the idea that her present life was a prison-house of which he held the key of escape. He suggested in a score of different ways to her mind that outside her present prison was a wonderland of beauty and excitement. He was clever enough to catch from her talk her love of the open, of fresh air and sunlight. He had more than a suspicion of Hetty Reinhart's plans; he conveyed them by shadowy hints. Why should not Joan too defy convention?

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She could tell Oswald a story of a projected walk with some other girl at Cambridge, and slip away to Huntley. They had always been the best of companions. Why shouldn't they take a holiday together?

And why not?

What was there to fear? Couldn't she trust Huntley? Couldn't she trust herself?

To which something deep in Joan's composition replied that this was but playing with passion and romance, and she wanted passion and romance. She wanted a reality—unendurably. And it was clear as day to her that she did not want passion and romance with Huntley. He was a strange being to her really, not differing as man does from woman but as dog does from cat; hidden deep down perhaps was some mysterious difference of race; he could amuse her and interest her because he was queer and unexpected, but he was not of her kind. Like to like was the way of the Sydenham blood. He offered and pointed to all that seemed to her necessary to make life right and to end this aching suspense—except that he was a stranger. . . .

The long sunny days of June dragged by. Suppose after all she were to slip away to Huntley. It would be a spree, it would be an excitement. Did he matter so much after all? . . .

Peter sent a post-card and said he thought he would go on "with some people into Italy."

She had known—all along—that that was coming.

She went out the night after that post-card came into the garden alone. It was a still and sultry evening, and she stifled even in the open air. She wanted

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to go up into the arbour and to sit there and think. She could not understand the quiver of anger that ran through her being like the shiver of the current on the surface of a stream. All the trees and bushes about her were dark and shapeless lumps of blackness and as she went up the path she trod on two snails.

"Damn them!" she said at the second scrunch. "Phew! What a night. Full of things that crawl about in the darkness. Full of *bestly* things. . . ."

A little owl mewed and mocked wickedly among the trees.

There was no view out of the black arbour, only the sense of a darkened world. A thin ineffectual moon crescent was sinking westward, and here and there were spiritless stars. A strange, huge shape of clouds, a hooded figure of the profoundest blue, brooded in a sky of luminous pale yellow over the land to the south and east, and along the under fringe of its skirts ever and again there ran a flicker of summer lightning. "And I am to live here! I am to live here while life runs by me," she said.

She would go to Huntley. No brother and sister business though! She would go to Huntley and end all this torment.

But she couldn't! . . .

"Why have I no will?" she cried harshly.

She did not love Huntley. That did not matter. She would *make* herself love Huntley. . . .

She went out upon the terrace and stood very still, looking down upon the house and thinking hard.

Could she love no one? If so, then it might as well be Huntley she went to as any one? All these boys,

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Troop, Winterbaum, Wilmington—they were nothing to her. But she wanted to live. Was it perhaps that she did love some one—who stood, invisible and unregarded, possessing her heart?

Her mind halted on that for a time and then seemed to force itself along a certain line that lay before it. Did she love Oswald? She did. More than any of them—far more. The other night most certainly she had been in love with him. When he walked through the water with her—absurdly grave—! She could have flung her arms about him then. She could have clung to him and kissed him. Of course she must be in love with him. . . . But he was not in love with her! . . . And yet that moonlit evening it seemed——?

Suppose it were Oswald and not Huntley who beckoned.

Love for Huntley—love him where you would—though you loved him in the most beautiful scenery in the world—would still be something vulgar, still be this dirty love of the studios, still a trite disobedience, a stolen satisfaction, after the fashion of the Reinhart affair. But Oswald was a great man, a kind and noble giant, who told no lies, who played no tricks. . . .

If he were to love one——! . . .

She stood upon the terrace looking down upon the lit house, trembling with this thought that she loved Oswald and holding fast to it—for fear of another thought that she dared not think, that lay dark and waiting outside her consciousness, a poor exile thought, utterly forbidden.

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§ 11

Joan stood in the darkness on the turf outside Oswald's open window, and watched him.

He was so deep in thought that he had not noted the soft sounds of her approach. The only light in the room was his study lamp, and his face was in shadow while his hands rested on the open Atlas in front of him and were brightly lit. They were rather sturdy white hands with broad thumbs, exactly like Peter's. Presently he stirred and pulled the Atlas towards him, and turned the page over to another map. The fingers of his left hand drummed on the desk.

He looked up abruptly, and she came to the window and leaned forward into the room, with her arms folded on the sill.

"You're as still as the night, Joan," he said.

"There's thunder brewing."

"There's war brewing, Joan."

"Why do you sit poring over that map?"

"Because there are various people called Croats and Slovenes and Serbs and they are beginning to think they are one people and ought to behave as one people, and some of them are independent and some are under the Austrians and some are under the Italians."

"What has that got to do with us?" said Joan.

She followed her question up with another. "Is it a fresh Balkan war?"

"Something bigger than that," said Oswald. "Something very much bigger—unless we are careful."

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His tone was so grave that Joan caught something of his gravity. She stepped in through the window. "Where are all these people?" she said. She thought it was characteristic of him to trouble about these distant races and their entanglements. But she wished he could have a keener sense of the perplexities that came nearer him. She came and leaned over him while he explained the political riddle of Austria and eastern Europe to her. . . .

"We are too busy with the Irish trouble," he said. "I am afraid of Germany. If that fool Carson and these Pankhurst people had been paid to distract our minds from what is happening, they could not do the work better. Big things are happening—oh! big things."

She tried to feel their bigness. But to her all such political talk was still as unreal as things one reads about in histories, something to do with maps and dates, something you can "get up" and pass examinations in, but nothing that touches the warm realities of personal life and beauty. Yet it pleased her to think that this Oswald she loved could reach up to these things, so that he partook of the nature of the great beings who cared for them like Gladstone or Lincoln, and was not simply a limited real person like Troop or Wilmington or Peter. (He was really like a great Peter, like what Peter ought to be.) He seemed preoccupied as if he did not feel how close she was about him, how close her beauty came to him. She sat now on the arm of his chair behind him, with her face over his shoulder. Her body touched his shoulders, by imperceptible degrees she brought her

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cheek against his crisp hair, where it pressed no heavier than a shadow.

She had no suspicion how vividly he was aware of her nearness.

As he discoursed to her upon the text of the maps before them, a deep undercurrent of memories and feelings of quite a different quality ran contrariwise through his mind. "We are getting nearer than we have ever been to a big European war, a big break-up! People do not understand, do not begin to dream of the smash-up that that would be. There is scarcely a country that may not be drawn in."

So he spoke. And below that level of thought he was irritated to feel that such thought could not wholly possess him. Far more real to him were the vague suggestions of love and the summer night and the dusky nearness of this Joan, this phantom of Dolly, for more and more were Joan and Dolly blending together in his emotional life, this dearness and sweetness that defied all reasoning and explanation. And cutting across both these streams of thought and feeling came a third stream of thought. Joan's intonations in every word she spoke betrayed her indifference to the great net of political forces in which the world struggled. She was no more deeply interested than if he had been discussing some problem at chess or some mathematical point. She was not deeply interested and he was not completely interested, and yet this question that was slipping its hold on their attention might involve the lives and welfare of millions. . . .

He struggled with his conception of a world being

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hauled to its destruction in a net of vaguely apprehended ideas, of ordinary life being shattered not by the strength but by the unattractive feebleness of its political imaginings. "People do not understand," he repeated, trying to make this thing real to himself. "All Europe is in danger."

He turned upon her with a betrayal of irritation in his voice. "You think all this matters nothing to us," he said. "But it does. If Austria makes war in Serbia, Russia will come in. If Russia comes in, France comes in. That brings in Germany. We can't see France beaten again. We can't have that."

But Joan had still the child's belief that somewhere, somehow, behind all the ostensible things of the world, adults wise in its interests have the affairs of mankind under control. "They won't let things go as far as that," she said.

Oswald reflected upon that. How sure this creature was of her world!

"Until Death and Judgment come, Joan," he said, "there is neither Death nor Judgment."

That saying and his manner of saying it struck hard on her mind. Before she went to sleep that night she found herself trying to imagine what war was really like. . . .

And next day she was thinking of war. Would Peter perhaps have to be a soldier if there was a real great war? Would all her young men go soldiering? Would Oswald go? And what was there for a girl to do in war-time? She hated the idea of nursing, but she supposed she would have to nurse. Far rather would she go under fire and rescue wounded men.

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Had modern war no use for a Joan of Arc? . . . She sank to puerile visions of a girl in a sort of Vivandière uniform upholding a tattered flag under a heavy fire. . . . It couldn't last very long. . . . It would be exciting. . . . But all this was nonsense; there would be no war. There would be a conference or an arbitration or something dull of that sort, and all this stir and unrest would subside and leave things again—as they had been. . . .

Swiftly and steadfastly now the world was setting itself to tear up all the scenery of Joan's world and to smash and burn its every property. If it had not been for the suggestion of Oswald's deepening preoccupation one may doubt whether Joan would have heeded the huge rush of events in Europe until the moment of the crash. But because of him she was drawn into the excitement. From the twenty-fifth of July, which was the day when the news of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia appeared in the English newspapers, through the swift rush of events that followed, the failure of the Irish Conference at Buckingham Palace to arrive at any settlement upon the Irish question, the attempts of Sir Edward Grey to arrest the march of events in eastern Europe, the unchallenged march of five thousand men with machine-guns through Belfast, the shooting upon the crowd in Dublin after the Howth gun-running, the consequent encouragement of Germany and Austria to persist in a stiff course with Russia because of the apparent inevitability of civil war in Ireland, right up to the march of the Germans into Luxembourg on the first of August, Joan followed with an interest

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that had presently swamped her egotistical eroticism altogether.

The second of August was a Sunday and brought no papers to Pelham Ford, but Joan motored to Bishop's Stortford to get an *Observer*. Monday was Bank Holiday; the belated morning paper brought the news of the massacre of Belgian peasants by the Germans at Visé. The Germans were pouring into Belgium, an incredible host of splendidly armed men. Tuesday was an immense suspense for Oswald and Joan. They were full of an uncontrollable indignation against Germany. They thought the assault on Belgium the most evil thing that had ever happened in history. But it seemed as though the Government and the country hesitated. *The Daily News* came to hand with a whole page advertisement in great letters exhorting England not to go to war for Belgium.

"But this is Shame!" cried Oswald. "If once the Germans get Paris—! It is Shame and Disaster!"

The postman was a reservist and had been called up. All over the country the posts were much disorganised. It was past eleven on the sunniest of Wednesdays when Joan, standing restless at the gates, called to Oswald, who was fretfully pacing the lawn, that the papers were coming. She ran down the road to intercept the postman, and came back with a handful of letters and parcels. Newspapers were far more important than any personal letters that morning. She gave Oswald the newspaper package to tear open, and snatched up *The Daily News* as it fell out of the enveloping *Times*.

There was a crisp rustling of the two papers.

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Oswald's fear of his country's mental apathy, muddle-headedness, levity, and absolute incapacity to grasp any great situation at all, had become monstrous under the stresses of these anxious days. Up to the end he feared some politicians' procrastination, some idiot dishonesty and betrayal, weak palterings with a challenge as high as heaven, with dangers as plain as daylight. . . .

"Thank God!" he cried. "It is War!"

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH

JOAN AND PETER GRADUATE

§ 1

So it was, with a shock like the shock of an unsuspected big gun fired suddenly within a hundred yards of her, that the education of Joan and her generation turned about and entered upon a new and tragic phase. Necessity had grown impatient with the inertia of the Universities and the evasions of politicians. Mankind must learn the duties of human brotherhood and respect for the human adventure, or waste and perish; so our stern teacher has decreed. If in peace-time we cannot learn and choose between those alternatives, then through war we must. And if we will in no manner learn our lesson, then— The rocks are rich with the traces of ineffective creatures that the Great Experimenter has tried and thrown aside. . . .

All these young people who had grown up without any clear aims or any definite sense of obligations, found themselves confronted, without notice, without any preparation, by a world crisis that was also a crisis of life or death, of honour or dishonour for each one of them. They had most of them acquired the habit of regarding the teachers and statesmen and authorities set up over their lives as people rather on the dull side of things, as people addicted to muddling and disingenuousness in matters of detail; but they

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had never yet suspected the terrific insecurity of the whole system—until this first thunderous crash of the downfall. Even then they did not fully realise themselves as a generation betrayed to violence and struggle and death. All human beings, all young things, are born with a conviction that all is right with the world. There is mother to go to and father to go to, and behind them the Law; for most of the generation that came before Joan and Peter the delusion of a great safety lasted on far into adult life; only slowly, with maturity, came the knowledge of the flimsiness of all these protections and the essential dangerousness of the world. But for this particular generation the disillusionment came like an unexpected blow in the face. They were preparing themselves in a leisurely and critical fashion for the large, loose prospect of unlimited life, and then abruptly the world dropped its mask. That pampered and undisciplined generation was suddenly challenged to be heroic beyond all the precedents of mankind. Their safety, their freedom ended, their leisure ended. The first few days of August, 1914, in Europe, was a spectacle of old men planning and evading, lying and cheating, most of them so scared by what they were doing as completely to have lost their heads, and of youth and young men everywhere being swept from a million various employments, from a million divergent interests and purposes, which they had been led to suppose were the proper interests and purposes of life, towards the great military machines that were destined to convert, swiftly and ruthlessly, all their fresh young life into rags and blood and rotting flesh. . . .

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But at first the young had no clear sense of the witless futility of the machine that was to crush their lives. They did not understand that there was as yet no conception of a world order anywhere in the world. They had taken it for granted that there was an informal, tacitly understood world order, at which these Germans—confound them!—had suddenly struck.

Peter and his friends were so accustomed to jeer at the dignitaries of church and state and at kings and politicians that they could not realise that such dwarfish and comic characters could launch disaster upon a whole world. They sat about a little table in a twilight arbour on the way down from Bel-alp—Peter was to leave the climbers and join the Italian party at Brigue—and devoured omelette and veal and drank Yvorne, and mocked over the Swiss newspapers.

“Another ultimatum!” said one cheerful youth. “Holland will get it next.”

“He’s squirting ultimatums. Like a hedgehog throwing quills.”

“I saw him in Berlin,” said Peter. “He rushed by in an automobile. He isn’t a human being. He’s more like Mr. Toad in ‘The Wind in the Willows.’ . . .”

“All the French have gone home; all the Germans,” said Troop. “I suppose we ought to go.”

“I’ve promised to go to Italy,” said Peter.

“War is war,” said Troop, and stiffened Peter’s resolution.

“I’m not going to have my holidays upset by a theatrical ass in a gilt helmet,” said Peter.

He got down to Brigue next day, and the little town was bright with uniforms, for the Swiss were

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mobilising. He saw off his mountaineering friends in the evening train for Paris. "You'd better come," said Troop gravely, hanging out of the train.

Peter shook his head. His was none of your conscript nations. No. . . .

He dined alone; Hetty and her two friends were coming up from Lausanne next day. In the reading-room he found *The Times* with the first news of the invasion of Belgium. Several of the villagers of Visé had turned out with shotguns, and the Germans had performed an exemplary massacre for the discouragement of franc-tireurs. Indignation had been gathering in Peter during the day. He swore aloud and flung down the paper. "Is there no one sane enough to assassinate a scoundrel who sets things loose like this?" he said. He prowled about the little old town in the moonlight, full of black rage against the Kaiser. He felt he must go back. But it seemed to him a terrible indignity that he should have to interrupt his holiday because of the ambition of a monarch. "Why the devil can't the Germans keep him on his chain?" he said, and then, "Shooting the poor devils—like rabbits!"

Hetty and her friends arrived in the early train next morning, all agog about the war. They thought it a tremendous lark. They were not to get out at Brigue, it was arranged; Peter was to be on the platform with his rucksack and join them. He kept the appointment, but he was a very scowling Peter in spite of the fact that Hetty was gentle and tremulous at the sight of him in her best style. "This train is an hour late," said Peter, sitting down beside her. "That

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accursed fool at Potsdam is putting all our Europe out of gear. . . .”

For three days he was dark, preoccupied company. “Somebody ought to assassinate him,” he said, harping on that idea. “Have men no self-respect at all?”

He felt he ought to go back to England, and the feeling produced a bleak clearness in his mind. It was soft sunshine on the lake of Orta, but east wind in Peter’s soul. He disliked Hetty’s friends extremely; he had never met them before; they were a vulgar brace of sinners he thought, and they reflected their quality upon her. The war they considered was no concern of theirs; they had studio minds. The man was some sort of painter, middle-aged, contemptuous, and with far too much hair. He ought to have been past this sort of spree. The girl was a model and had never been in Italy before. She kept saying, “O, the *sky!*” until it jarred intolerably. The days are notoriously longer on the lake of Orta than anywhere else in the world; from ten o’clock in the morning to lunch-time is about as long as a week’s imprisonment; from two to five is twice that length; from five onward the course of time at Orta is more normal. Hetty was Hetty, in the tradition of Cleopatra, but could Cleopatra hold a young man whose mind was possessed by one unquenchable thought: that he had been grossly insulted and deranged by an exasperating potentate at Potsdam who was making hay of his entire world, and that he had to go at once and set things right, and that it was disgraceful not to go?

He broached these ideas to Hetty about eleven

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o'clock on their first morning upon the lake. They were adrift in a big tilted boat in the midst of a still, glassy symmetry of mountain-backed scenery and mountain-backed reflections, and the other couple was far away, a little white dot at the head of a V of wake, rowing ambitiously to the end of the lake.

"You can't go," said Hetty promptly. . . .

"But I have come all the way to Italy for you!" cried Hetty. . . .

This was a perplexing problem for the honour of a young man of one-and-twenty. He argued the case—weakly. He had an audience of one, a very compelling one. He decided to remain. In the night he woke up and thought of Troop. Old Troop must be in England by now. Perhaps he had already enlisted. Ever since their school-days he and Troop had had a standing dispute upon questions of morals and duty. There was something dull and stiff about old Troop that drove a bright antagonist to laxity, but after all—? Troop had cut off clean and straight to his duty. . . . Because Troop wasn't entangled. He had kept clear of all this love-making business. . . . There was something to be said for Troop's point of view after all. . . .

The second day Peter reopened the question of going as they sat on a stone seat under the big, dark trees on the Sacro Monte, and looked out under the drooping boughs upon the lake, and Hetty had far more trouble with him. He decided he could not leave her. But he spent the hours between tea and dinner in reading all the war news he could find—translating the Italian with the aid of a small con-

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versation dictionary. Something had happened in the North Sea, he could not make out exactly what it was, but the Germans had lost a ship called the *Königin Luise*, and the British a battleship—was it a battleship?—the *Amphion*. Beastly serious that!—a battleship. There was something vague, too, about a fleet encounter, but no particulars. It was a bore getting no particulars. Here close at hand in the Mediterranean there had been, it was said, a naval battle in the Straits of Messina also; the *Panther* was sunk; and the Germans had had a great defeat at Liège. The British army was already landing in France. . . .

Upon his second decision to remain Peter reflected profoundly that night.

The standing dispute between him and Troop upon the lightness or seriousness of things sexual returned to his mind. Troop, Peter held, regarded all these things with a portentous solemnity, a monstrous sentimentality. Peter, Troop maintained, regarded them with a dangerous levity. Troop declared that love, "true love," was, next to "honour," the most tremendous thing in life; he was emphatic upon "purity." Peter held that love was as light and pleasant and incidental a thing as sunshine. You said, "Here's a jolly person!" just as you said, "Here's a pretty flower!" There had been, he argued, a lot of barbaric "Taboos" in these matters, but the new age was dropping all that. He called Troop's idea of purity "ceremonial obsession." Both talked very freely of "cleanness" and meant very different things: Troop chiefly abstinence and Peter baths. Peter had

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had the courage of his opinions; but once or twice he had doubted secretly whether, after all, there weren't defilements beyond the reach of mere physical cleansing. One dismissed that sort of thing as "reaction." All these disputes were revived now in his memory in the light of this one plain, disconcerting fact: Troop had gone straight home to enlist and he himself was still in Italy. Weakening of moral fibre? Loss of moral fibre?

The next day, in the boat, Peter reopened the question of his departure.

"You see, Hetty," he said, "if there was conscription in England—I shouldn't feel so bound to go."

"But then you would be bound to go."

"Well, then I could be a decent deserter—for love's sake. But when your country leaves it to you to come back or not as you think fit—then, you know, you're bound—in honour."

Hetty dabbled her hand over the side of the boat. "Oh—go!" she said.

"Yes," said Peter over the oars, and as if ashamed, "I must go—I must. There is a train this afternoon which catches the express at Domo d'Ossola."

He rowed for a while. Presently he stole a glance at Hetty. She was lying quite still on her cushion under the tilt, staring at the distant mountains, with tears running down her set face. They were real tears. "Three days," she said choking, and at that rolled over to weep noisily upon her arms.

Peter sat over his oars and stared helplessly at her emotion.

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A familiar couplet came into his head, and remained unspoken because of its striking inappropriateness:

“I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more.”

Presently Hetty lay still. Then she sat up and wiped at a tear-stained face.

“If you must go,” said Hetty, “you must go. But why you didn’t go from Brigue——!”

That problem was to exercise Peter’s mind considerably in the extensive reflections of the next few days and nights.

“And I have to stick in Italy with those two Bores!” . . .

But the easy flexibility of Hetty’s temperament was a large part of her charm.

“I suppose you ought to go, Peter,” she said, “really. I had no business to try and keep you. But I’ve had so little of you. And I love you.”

She melted. Peter melted in sympathy. But he was much relieved. . . .

She slipped into his bedroom to help him pack his rucksack, and she went with him to the station. “I wish I was a man, too,” she said. “Then I would come with you. But wars don’t last for ever, Peter. We’ll come back here.”

She watched the train disappear along the curve above the station with something like a sense of desolation. Then being a really very stout-hearted young woman, she turned about and went down to the telegraph office to see what could be done to salvage her rent and shattered holiday.

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And Peter, because of these things, and because of certain delays at Paris and Havre, for the train and Channel services were getting badly disorganised, got to England six whole days later than Troop.

§ 2

This passion of indignation against Germany in which Peter enlisted was the prevailing mood of England during the opening months of the war. The popular mind had seized upon the idea that Europe had been at peace and might have remained at peace indefinitely if it had not been for the high-handed behaviour, first of Austria with Serbia, and then of Germany with Russia. The belief that on the whole Germany had prepared for and sought this war was no doubt correct, and the spirit of the whole nation rose high and fine to the challenge. But that did not so completely exhaust the moral factors in the case as most English people, including Peter, supposed at that time.

Neither Peter nor Joan, although they were members of the best educated class in the community and had been given the best education available for that class, had any but the vaguest knowledge of what was going on in the political world. They knew practically nothing of what a modern imperial system consisted, had but the vaguest ideas of the rôle of Foreign Office, Press, and Parliament in international affairs, were absolutely ignorant of the direction of the army and navy, knew nothing of the history of Germany or Russia during the previous half-century,

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or the United States since the Declaration of Independence, had no inklings of the elements of European ethnology, and had scarcely ever heard such words, for example, as Slovene, or Slovak, or Ukrainian. The items of foreign intelligence in the newspapers joined on to no living historical conceptions in their minds. Between the latest history they had read and the things that happened about them and in which they were now helplessly involved, was a gap of a hundred years or more; the profound changes in human life and political conditions brought about during that hundred years by railways, telegraphs, steam shipping, steel castings, and the like, were all beyond the scope of their ideas. For Joan history meant stories about Joan of Arc, Jane Shore, the wives of Henry the Eighth, James I. and his Steenie, Charles the Second, and suchlike people, winding up with the memoirs of Madame d'Arblay; Peter had ended his historical studies when he went on to the modern side at Caxton—it would have made little difference so far as modern affairs were concerned if he had taken a degree in history—and was chiefly conversant with such things as the pedigree of the Electress Sophia of Hanover, the Constitutions of Clarendon, the statute of Mortmain, and the claims of Edward the Third and Henry the Fifth to the crown of France. Neither of them knew anything at all of India except by way of Kipling's stories and the Coronation Durbar pictures. If the two of them had rather clearer ideas than most of their associates about the recent opening up and partition of Africa it was because Oswald had talked about those things.

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But the jostling for empire that had been going on for the past fifty years all over the world, and the succession of Imperialist theories from Disraeli to Joseph Chamberlain and from Bismarck to Treitschke, had no place in their thoughts. The *entente cordiale* was a phrase of no particular significance to them. The State in which they lived had never explained to them in any way its relations to them nor its fears and aims in regard to the world about it. It is doubtful, indeed, if the State in which they lived possessed the mentality to explain as much even to itself.

How far the best education in America or Germany or any other country was better, it is not for us to discuss here, nor how much better education might be. This is the story of the minds of Joan and Peter and of how that vast system of things hidden, things unanalysed and things misrepresented and obscured, the political system of the European "empires" burst out into war about them. The sprawling, clumsy, heedless British State, which had troubled so little about taking Peter into its confidence, displayed now no hesitation whatever in beckoning him home to come and learn as speedily as possible how to die for it.

The tragedy of youth in the Great War was a universal tragedy, and if the German youths who were now, less freely and more systematically, beating Peter by weeks and months in a universal race into uniform, were more instructed than he, they were also far more thoroughly misinformed. If Peter took hold of the war by the one elemental fact that Belgium had been invaded most abominably and peace-

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ful villagers murdered in their own fields, the young Germans on the other hand had been trained to a whole system of false interpretations. They were assured that they fought to break up a ring of threatening enemies. And that the whole thing was going to be the most magnificent adventure in history. Their minds had been prepared elaborately and persistently for this heroic struggle—in which they were to win easily. They had been made to believe themselves a race of blond aristocrats above all the rest of mankind, entitled by their moral and mental worth to world dominion. They believed that now they did but come to their own. They had been taught all these things from childhood; how could they help believing them?

Peter arrived, tired and dirty, at Pelham Ford in the early afternoon. Oswald and Joan were out, and he bathed and changed while Mrs. Moxton got him a belated lunch. As he finished this Joan came into the dining-room from a walk.

“Hullo, Petah,” she said, with no display of affection.

“Hullo, Joan.”

“We thought you were never coming.”

“I was in Italy,” said Peter.

“H’m,” said Joan, and seemed to reckon in her mind.

“Nobby is in London,” she said. “He thinks he might help about East Africa. It’s his country practically. . . . Are you going to enlist?”

“What else?” said Peter, tapping a cigarette on the table. “It’s a beastly bore.”

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"Bunny's gone," said Joan. "And Wilmington."

"They've written?"

"Willy came to see me."

"Heard from any of the others?"

"Oh! . . . Troop."

"Enlisted?"

"Cadet."

"Any one else?"

"No," said Joan, and hovered whistling faintly for a moment and then walked out of the room. . . .

She had been counting the hours for four days, perplexed by his delay; his coming had seemed the greatest event in the world, for she had never doubted he would come back to serve, and now that he had come she met him like this!

§ 3

They dressed for dinner that night because Oswald came back tired and vexed from London and wanted a bath before dining. "They seemed to be sending everybody to East Africa on the principle that any one who's been there before ought not to go again," he grumbled. "I can't see any other principle in it." He talked at first of the coming East African campaign because he hesitated to ask Peter what he intended to do. Then he went on to the war news. The Germans had got Liège. That was certain now. They had smashed the forts to pieces with enormous cannon. There had been a massacre of civilians at Dinant. Joan did not talk very much, but sat and watched Peter closely with an air of complete indifference.

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There was a change in him, and she could not say exactly what this change was. The sunshine and snow glare and wind of the high mountains had tanned his face to a hard bronze and he was perceptibly leaner; that made him look older perhaps; but the difference was more than that. She knew her Peter so well that she could divine a new thought in him.

"And what are you going to do, Peter?" said Oswald, coming to it abruptly.

"I'm going to enlist."

"In the ranks, you mean?" Oswald had expected that.

"Yes."

"You ought not to do that."

"Why not?"

"You have your cadet corps work behind you. You ought to take a commission. We shan't have too many officers."

Peter considered that.

"I want to begin in the ranks. . . . I want discipline."

(Had some moral miracle happened to Peter? This was quite a new note from our supercilious foster-brother.)

"You'll get discipline enough in the cadet corps."

"I want to begin right down at the bottom of the ladder."

"Well, if you get a rotten drill sergeant, I'm told, it's disagreeable."

"All the better."

"They'll find you out and push you into a commission," said Oswald. "If not, it's sheer waste."

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“Well, I want to feel what discipline is like—before I give orders,” said Peter. “I want to be told to do things and asked why the devil I haven’t done ’em smartly. I’ve been going too easy. The ranks will brace me up.”

(Yes, this was a new note. Had that delay of four or five days anything to do with this? . . . Joan, with a start, discovered that she was holding up the dinner, and touched the electric bell at her side for the course to be changed.)

“I suppose we shall all have to brace up,” said Oswald. “It still seems a little unreal. The French have lost Mülhausen again, they say, but they are going strong for Metz. There’s not a word about our army. It’s just crossed over and vanished. . . .”

(Queer to sit here, dining in the soft candlelight, and to think of the crowded roads and deploying troops, the thudding guns and bursting shells away there behind that veil of secrecy—millions of men in France and Belgium fighting for the world. And Peter would go off to-morrow. Presently he would be in uniform; presently he would be part of a marching column. He would go over—into the turmoil. Beyond that her imagination would not pass.)

“I wish I could enlist,” said Joan.

“They’re getting thousands of men more than they can handle as it is,” said Oswald. “They don’t want you.”

“You’d have thought they’d have had things planned and ready for this,” said Peter.

“Nothing is ready,” said Oswald. “Nothing is

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planned. This war has caught our war office fast asleep. It isn't half awake even now."

"There ought to be something for women to do," said Joan.

"There ought to be something for every one to do," said Oswald bitterly, "but there isn't. This country isn't a State; it's a crowd adrift. Did you notice, Peter, as you came through London, the endless multitudes of people just standing about? I've never seen London like that before. People not walking about their business, but just standing. . . ."

Peter told of things he had seen on his way home. "The French are in a scowling state. All France scowls at you, and Havre is packed with bargains in touring-cars—just left about—by rich people coming home. . . ."

So the talk drifted. And all the time Joan watched Peter as acutely and as unsuspectedly as a mother might watch a grown-up son. To-morrow morning he would go off and join up. But it wasn't that which made him grave. New experiences always elated Peter. And he wouldn't be afraid; not he. . . . She had been let into the views of three other young men who had gone to war already; Troop had written, correctly and consciously heroic, "*Some of the chaps seem to be getting a lot of emotion into it,*" said Troop. "*It's nothing out of the way that I can see. One just falls into the line of one's uncles and cousins.*"

Wilmington had said: "I just wanted to see you, Joan. I'm told I'll be most useful as a gunner because of my mathematics. When it comes to going over, you won't forget to think of me, Joan?"

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Joan answered truthfully. "I'll think of you a lot, Billy."

"There's nothing in life like you, Joan," said Wilmington in his white expressionless way. "Well, I suppose I'd better be going."

But Bunny had discoursed upon fear. "*I've enlisted,*" he wrote, "*chiefly because I'm afraid of going Pacifist right out—out of funk. But it's hell, Joan. I'm afraid in my bones. I hate bangs, and they say the row of modern artillery is terrific. I've never seen a dead body, a human dead body, I mean, ever. Have you? I would go round a quarter of a mile out of my way any time to dodge a butcher's shop. I was sick when I found Peter dissecting a rabbit. You know, sick, à la Manche. No metaphors. I shall run away, I know I shall run away. But we've got to stop these beastly Germans anyhow. It isn't killing the Germans I shall mind—I'm fierce on Germans, Joan; but seeing the chaps on stretchers or lying about with all sorts of horrible injuries.*"

Sheets of that sort of thing, written in an unusually bad handwriting—apparently rather to comfort himself than to sustain Joan.

Well, it wasn't Peter's way to think beforehand of being "on stretchers or lying about," but Bunny's scribblings had got the stretchers into Joan's thoughts. And it made her wish somehow that Peter, instead of being unusually grave and choosing to be a ranker, was taking this job with his usual easy confidence and going straight and gaily for a commission.

After dinner they sat in garden chairs outside the

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library window, and had their coffee and smoked. Joan got her chair and drew it close to Peter's. Two hundred miles away and less was battle and slaughter, perhaps creeping nearer to them, the roaring of great guns, the rattle of rifle fire, the hoarse shouts of men attacking, and a gathering harvest of limp figures "on stretchers and lying about"; but that evening at Pelham Ford was a globe of golden serenity. Not a leaf stirred, and only the little squeaks and rustlings of small creatures that ran and flitted in the dusk ruffled the quiet air.

Oswald made Peter talk of his climbing. "My only mountain is Kilimanjaro," he said. "No great thing so far as actual climbing goes." Peter had begun with the Dolomites, had gone over to Adelboden, and then worked round by the Concordia Hut to Bel-alp. "Was it very beautiful?" asked Joan softly under his elbow.

"You could have done it all. I wish you had come," said Peter.

There was a pause.

"And Italy?" said Joan, still more softly.

"Where did you go in Italy, Peter?" said Oswald, picking up her question.

Peter gave a travel-book description of Orta and the Isle of San Giulio.

Joan sat as still and watchful as a little cat watching for a mouse. (Something had put Peter out in Italy.)

"It's off the main line," said Peter. "The London and Paris papers don't arrive, and one has to fall back on the *Corriere della Sera*."

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“Very good paper too,” said Oswald.

“News doesn’t seem so real in a language you don’t understand.”

He was excusing himself. So he was ashamed to that extent. That was what was bothering him. One might have known he wouldn’t care for—those other things. . . .

Late that night Joan sat in her room thinking. Presently she unlocked her writing-desk and took out and reread a letter. It was from Huntley in Cornwall, and it was very tender and passionate. “*The world has gone mad, dearest,*” it ran; “*but we need not go mad. The full moon is slipping by. I lay out on the sands last night praying for you to come, trying to will you to come. Oh—when are you coming? . . .*”

And much more to the same effect. . . .

Joan’s face hardened. “Po’try,” she said. She took a sharpened pencil from the glass tray upon her writing-table and regarded it. The pencil was finely pointed—too finely pointed. She broke off the top with the utmost care and tested the blunt point on her blotting-paper to see if it was broad enough for her purpose. Then she scrawled her reply across his letter—in five words: “*You ought to enlist. Joan,*” and addressed an envelope obliquely in the same uncivil script.

After which she selected from her desk sundry other letters and a snap-shot giving a not unfavourable view of Huntley, and having scrutinised the latter for an interval, tore them all carefully into little bits and dropped them into her waste-paper basket. She stood regarding these fragments for some time. “I

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might have gone to him," she whispered at last, and turned away.

She blew out her candle, hesitated by her bedside, and walked to the open window to watch the moon rise.

She sat upon her window-sill like a Joan of marble for a long time. Then she produced one of those dark sayings with which she was wont to wrap rather than express her profounder thoughts.

"Queer how suddenly one discovers at last what one has known all along. . . . Queer. . . ."

"Well, *I* know anyhow. . . ."

She stood up at last and yawned. "But I don't like war," said Joan. "Stretchers! Or lying about! Groaning. In the darkness. Boys one has danced with. Oh! beastly. *Beastly!*"

She forgot her intention of undressing, put her foot on the sill, and rested chin on fist and elbow on knee, scowling out at the garden as though she saw things that she did not like there.

§ 4

So it was that Joan saw the beginning of the great winnowing of mankind, and Peter came home in search of his duty.

Within the first month of the war nearly every one of the men in Joan's world had been spun into the vortex; hers was so largely a world of young or unattached people, with no deep roots in business or employment to hold them back. Even Oswald at last, in spite of many rebuffs, found a use for himself

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in connection with a corps of African labourers behind the front, and contrived after a steady pressure of many months towards the danger-zone, to get himself wounded while he was talking to some of his dear Masai at an ammunition dump. A Hun raider dropped a bomb, and some flying splinters of wood cut him deeply and extensively. The splinters were vicious splinters; there were complications; and he found himself back at Pelham Ford before the end of 1916, aged by ten years. The Women's Legion captured Joan from the date of its formation, and presently had her driving a car for the new Ministry of Munitions, which came into existence in the middle of 1915.

Her career as a chauffeuse was a brilliant one. She lived, after the free manner of the Legion, with Miss Jepson at Hampstead; she went down every morning to her work, she drove her best and her best continually improved, so that she became distinguished among her fellows. The Ministry grew aware of her and proud of her. A time arrived when important officials quarrelled to secure her for their journeys. Eminent foreign visitors invariably found themselves behind her.

"But she drives like a man," they would say, a little breathlessly, after some marvellously skidded corner.

"All our girls drive like this," the Ministry of Munitions would remark, carelessly, loyally, but untruthfully.

Joan's habitual wear became khaki; she had puttees and stout boots and little brass letterings upon

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her shoulders and sleeves, and the only distinctive touches she permitted herself were the fur of her overcoat collar and a certain foppery about her gauntlets. . . .

Extraordinary and profound changes of mood and relationship occurred in the British mind during those first two years of the war, and reflected themselves upon the minds of Joan and Peter. To begin with, and for nearly a year, there was for the British a quality of spectacularity about the war. They felt it to be an immense process and a vitally significant process; they read, they talked, they thought of little else; but it was not yet felt to be an intimate process. The habit of detachment was too deeply ingrained. Great Britain was an island of onlookers. To begin with the war seemed like something tremendous and arresting going on in an arena. "Business as usual," said the business man, putting up the price of anything the country seemed to need. There was a profound conviction that British life and the British community were eternal things; they might play a part—a considerable part—in these foreign affairs; they might even have to struggle, but it was inconceivable that they should change or end. September and October in 1914 saw an immense wave of volunteer enthusiasm—enthusiasm for the most part thwarted and wasted by the unpreparedness of the authorities for anything of the sort, but it was the enthusiasm of an audience eager to go on the stage; it was not the enthusiasm of performers in the arena and unable to quit the arena, fighting for life or death. To secure any sort of official work was to step out

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of the undistinguished throng. In uniform one felt dressed up and part of the pageant. Young soldiers were self-conscious in those early days, and inclined to pose at the ordinary citizen. The ordinary citizen wanted to pat young soldiers on the back and stand them drinks out of his free largesse. They were "in it," he felt, and he at most was a patron of the affair.

That spectacularity gave way to a sense of necessary participation only very slowly indeed. The change began as the fresh, bright confidence that the Battle of the Marne had begotten gave place to a deepening realisation of the difficulties on the road to any effective victory. The persuasion spread from mind to mind that if Great Britain was to fight this war as she had lived through sixty years of peace, the gentleman amateur among the nations, she would lose this war. The change of spirit that produced its first marked result in the creation of the Ministry of Munitions with a new note of quite unofficial hustle, and led on through a series of inevitable steps to the adoption of conscription, marks a real turning about of the British mind, the close of a period of chaotic freedom almost unprecedented in the history of communities. It was the rediscovery of the State as the necessary form into which the individual life must fit.

To the philosophical historian of the future the efforts of governing and leading people in Great Britain to get wills together, to explain necessities, to supplement the frightful gaps in the education of every class by hastily improvised organisations, by speeches, press-campaigns, posters, circulars, cinema

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shows, parades and proclamations; hasty, fitful, ill-conducted and sometimes dishonestly conducted appeals though they were, will be far more interesting than any story of battles and campaigns. They remind one of a hand scrambling in the dark for something long neglected and now found to be vitally important; they are like voices calling in a dark confusion. They were England seeking to comprehend herself and her situation after the slumber of two centuries. But to people like Joan and Peter, who were not philosophical historians, the process went on, not as a process, but as an apparently quite disconnected succession of events. Imperceptibly their thoughts changed and were socialised. Joan herself had no suspicion of the difference in orientation between the Joan who stood at her bedroom window in August, 1914, the most perfect spectator of life, staring out at the darkness of the garden, dumbly resenting the call that England was making upon the free lives of all her friends, and the Joan of 1917, in khaki and a fur-collared coat, who slung a great car with a swift, unerring confidence through the London traffic and out to Woolwich or Hendon or Waltham or Aldershot or Chelmsford or what not, keen and observant of the work her passengers discussed, a conscious part now of a great and growing understanding and criticism and will, of a rediscovered unity, which was England—awakening.

Youth grew wise very fast in those tremendous years. From the simple and spectacular acceptance of every obvious appearance, the younger minds passed very rapidly to a critical and intricate ex-

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amination. In the first blaze of indignation against Germany, in the first enthusiasm, there was a disposition to trust and confide in every one in a position of authority and responsibility. The War Office was supposed—against every possibility—to be planning wisely and acting rapidly; the wisdom of the Admiralty was taken for granted, the politicians now could have no end in view but victory. It was assumed that Sir Edward Carson could become patriotic, Lord Curzon self-forgetful, Mr. Asquith energetic, and Mr. Lloyd George straightforward. It was indeed a phase of extravagant idealism. Throughout the opening weeks of the war there was an appearance, there was more than an appearance, of a common purpose and a mutual confidence. The swift response of the Irish to the call of the time, the generous loyalty of India, were like intimations of a new age. The whole Empire was uplifted; a flush of unwonted splendour suffused British affairs.

Then the light faded again. There was no depth of understanding to sustain it; habit is in the long run a more powerful thing than even the supremest need. In a little time all the inglorious characteristics of Britain at peace, the double-mindedness, the slackness, were reappearing through the glow of warlike emotion. Fifty years of under-education are not to be atoned for in a week of crisis. The men in power were just the same men. The inefficient were still inefficient; the individualists still self-seeking. The party politicians forgot their good resolutions, and reverted to their familiar intrigues and manœuvres. Redmond and Ireland learned a bitter lesson of the

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value of generosity in the face of such ignorant and implacable antagonists as the Carsonites. Britain, it became manifest, had neither the greatness of education nor yet the simplicity of will to make war brilliantly or to sustain herself splendidly. At every point devoted and able people found themselves baffled by the dull inertias of the old system. And the clear flame of enthusiasm that blazed out from the youth of the country at the first call of the war was coloured more and more by disillusionment as that general bickering which was British public life revived again, and a gathering tale of waste, failure, and needless suffering mocked the reasonable expectation of a swift and glorious victory.

The change in the thought and attitude of the youth of Britain is to be found expressed very vividly in the war poetry of the successive years. Such glowing young heroes as Julian Grenfell and Rupert Brooke shine with a faith undimmed; they fight consciously, confident of the nearness of victory; they sing and die in what they believe to be a splendid cause and for a splendid end. An early death in the Great War was not an unmitigated misfortune. Three years later the young soldier's mind found a voice in such poetry as that of young Siegfried Sassoon, who came home from the war with medals and honours only to denounce the war in verse of the extremest bitterness. His song is no longer of picturesque nobilities and death in a glorious cause; it is a cry of anger at the old men who have led the world to destruction; of anger against the dull, ignorant men who can neither make war nor end war; the men who

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have lost the freshness and simplicity but none of the greed and egotism of youth. Germany is no longer the villain of the piece. Youth turns upon age, upon laws and institutions, upon the whole elaborate rottenness of the European system, saying: "*What is this to which you have brought us? What have you done with our lives?*"

No story of these years can ever be true that does not pass under a shadow. Of the little group of youths and men who have figured in this story thus far, there was scarcely one who was not either killed outright or crippled or in some way injured in the Great War—excepting only Huntley. Huntley developed a deepening conscience against warfare as the war went on, and suffered nothing worse than some unpleasant half-hours with Tribunals and the fatigues of agricultural labour. Death, which had first come to Joan as a tragic end to certain "kittays," was now the familiar associate of her every friend. Her confidence in the safety of the world, in the wisdom of human laws and institutions, in the worth and dignity of empires and monarchs, and the collective sanity of mankind was withdrawn as a veil is withdrawn, from the harsh realities of life.

Wilmington, with his humourless intensity, was one of the first to bring home to her this disillusionment and tragedy of the youth of the world. He liked pure mathematics; it was a subject in which he felt comfortable. He had worked well in the first part of the mathematical tripos, and he was working hard in the second part when the war broke out. He fluctuated for some days between an utter re-

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pudding of all war and an immediate enlistment, and it was probably the light and colour of Joan in his mind that made Wilmington a warrior. War was a business of killing, he decided, and what he had to do was to apply himself and his mathematics to gunnery as efficiently as possible, learning as rapidly as might be all that was useful about shells, guns, and explosives, and so get to the killing of Germans thoroughly, expeditiously, and abundantly. He was a particularly joyless young officer, white-faced and intent, with an appearance of scorn that presently developed from appearance into reality, for most of his colleagues. He was working as hard and as well as he could. At first with incredulity and then with disgust he realised that the ordinary British officer was not doing so. They sang songs, they ragged, they left things to chance, they thought blunders funny, they condoned silliness and injustice in the powers above. He would not sing nor rag nor drink. He worked to the verge of exhaustion. But this exemplary conduct, oddly enough, did not make him unpopular either with the junior officers or with his seniors. The former tolerated him and rather admired him; the latter put work upon him and sought to promote him.

In quite a little while as it seemed—for in those days, while each day seemed long and laborious and heavy, yet the weeks and months passed swiftly—he was a captain in France, and before the end of 1915 he wrote to say that his major had left him practically in command of his battery for three weeks. He had been twice slightly wounded by that time,

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but he got little leisure because he was willing and indispensable.

He wrote to Joan very regularly. He was a motherless youth, and Joan was not only his great passion but his friend and confidante. His interest in his work overflowed into his letters; they were more and more about gunnery and the art of war, which became at last, it would seem, a serious rival to Joan in his affections. He described ill, but he would send her reasoned statements of unanswerable views. He could not understand why considerations that were so plain as to be almost obvious were being universally disregarded by the Heads and the War Office. He appealed to Joan to read what he had to say, and tell him whether he or the world was mad. When he came back on leave in the spring of 1916, she was astonished to find that he was still visibly as deeply in love with her as ever. The fact of it was he had words for his gunnery and military science, but he had no words, and that was the essence of his misfortune, for his love for Joan.

But the burthen of his story was bitter disillusionment at the levity with which his country could carry on a war that must needs determine the whole future of mankind. He would write out propositions of this sort:

“It is manifest that success in warfare depends upon certain primary factors, of which generalship is one. No country resolute to win a war will spare any effort to find the *best men*, and make them its generals and leaders irrespective of every other consideration. No honourable patriots will permit generals

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to be appointed by any means except the *best selective methods*, and no one who cares for his country will obstruct (1) the *promotion*, (2) *trying over*, and (3) *prompt removal*, if they fail to satisfy the most exacting tests, of all possible men. And next consider what sort of men will be the best commanders. They must be *fresh-minded young men*. All the great generals of the world, the supreme cases, the Alexanders, Napoleons, and so on, have shown their quality before thirty even in the days when strategy and tactics did not change very greatly from year to year, and now when the material and expedients of war make warfare practically a *new thing* every few years, the need for fresh young commanders is far more urgent than ever it has been. But the British army is at present commanded by oldish men who are manifestly of not more than mediocre intelligence, and who have no knowledge of this new sort of war that has arisen. It is a war of guns and infantry—with aeroplanes coming in more and more—and most of the higher positions are held by cavalry officers; the artillery is invariably commanded by men unused to the handling of such heavy guns as we are using, who stick far behind our forward positions and decline any practical experience of our difficulties. They put us in the wrong positions, they move us about absurdly; young officers have had to work out most of the problems of gun-pits and so forth for themselves—against resistance and mere stupid interference from above. The Heads have no idea of the kind of work we do or of the kind of work we could do. They are worse than amateurs; they are unteachable fossils. But

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why is this so? If the country is serious about the war, why does it permit it? If the Government is serious about the war, why does it permit it? If the War Office is serious about the war, why does it permit it? If G. H. Q. is serious about the war, why does it permit it? What is wrong? There is a hitch here I don't understand. Am I overserious, and is all this war really some sort of gross, grim joke, Joan? Do I take life too seriously?

“Joan, in this last push this battery did its little job *right*; we cut all the wire opposite us and blew out every blessed stake. We made a nice tidy clean-up. It was quite easy to do, given hard work. If I hadn't done it I ought either to have been shot for neglect or dismissed for incapacity. But on our left it wasn't done. Well, there were at least a hundred poor devils of our infantrymen on that wire, a hundred mothers' sons, hanging like rags on it or crumpled up below. I saw them. It made me sick. And I saw the chap who was chiefly responsible for that, Major Clutterwell, a little bit screwed, being the life and soul of a little party in Hazebrouck three days after! He ought to have been the life and soul of a harakiri party, but either he is too big a cad or too big a fool—or both. The way they shy away our infantrymen over here is damnable. They are the finest men in the world, I'm convinced; they will go at anything, and the red tabs send them into impossible jobs, fail to back them up—always they fail to back them up; they neglect them, Joan; they neglect them even when they are fighting and dying! There are men here, colonels, staff-officers, I would like to beat about the head with an iron bar. . . .”

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This was an unusually eloquent passage. Frequently his letters were mainly diagram to show for example how we crowded batteries to brass away at right angles to the trenches when we ought to enfilade them, or some such point. Sometimes he was trying to establish profound truths about the proper functions of field-guns and howitzers. For a time he was gnawing a bitter grievance. "I was told to shell a line I couldn't reach. The contours wouldn't allow of it. You can do a lot with a shell, but you cannot make it hop slightly and go round a corner. There is a definite limit to the height to which a gun will lob a shell. I tried to explain these elementary limitations of gun-fire through the telephone, and I was told I should be put under arrest if I did not obey orders. I wasn't up against a commander, I wasn't up against an intelligence; I was up against a silly old man in a temper. So I put over a barrage about fifty yards beyond the path—the nearest possible. Every one was perfectly satisfied—the Boche included. Thus it is that the young officer is subdued to the medium he works in."

At times Wilmington would embark on a series of propositions to demonstrate with mathematical certitude that if the men and material wasted at Loos had been used in the Dardanelles, the war would have been decided by the end of 1915. But the topic to which his mind recurred time after time was the topic of efficient leadership. "Modern war demands continuity of idea, continuity of will, and continuous progressive adaptation of means and methods," he wrote—in two separate letters. In the second of these he had got on to a fresh notion. "Education in Eng-

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land is a loafer education; it does not point to an end; it does not drive through; it does not produce *minds that can hold out* through a long effort. The young officers come out here with the best intentions in the world, but one's every-day life is shaped not by our intentions but our habits. Their habits of mind are loafing habits. They learned to loaf at school. Caxton, I am now convinced, is one of the best schools in England; but even at Caxton we did not fully acquire the *habit of steadfast haste* which modern life demands. Everything that gets done out here is done by a spurt. With the idea behind it of presently doing nothing. The ordinary state of everybody above the non-commissioned ranks is loafing. At the present moment my major is shooting pheasants; the batteries to the left of us are cursing because they have to shift—it holds up their scheme for a hunt. Just as though artillery work wasn't the most intense sport in the world—especially now that we are going to have kite balloons and do really scientific observing. Even the conscientious men of the Kitchener-Byng school don't really seem to me to *get on*; they work like Trojans at established and routine stuff but they don't keep up inquiry. They are human, all too human. Man is a sedentary animal, and the schoolmaster exists to prevent his sitting down comfortably." This from Wilmington without a suspicion of jesting. "This human weakness for just living can only be corrected in schools. The more I scheme about increasing efficiency out here, the more I realise that it can't be done here, that one has to go right back to the schools and begin with *a more continuous*

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urge. When this war is over I shall try to be a schoolmaster. I shall hate it most of the time, but then I hate most things. . . .”

But Wilmington never became a schoolmaster. He got a battery of six-inch guns just before the Somme push in 1916, and he went forward with them into positions he chose and built up very carefully, only to be shifted against his wishes almost at once to a new and, he believed, an altogether inferior position. He was blown to nothingness by a German shell while he was constructing a gun-pit.

§ 6

Wilmington was not the first of Joan's little company to be killed. Joan had the gift of friendship. She was rare among girls in that respect. She was less of an artist in egotism than most of her contemporaries; there were even times when she could be self-forgetful to the pitch of untidiness. Two other among that handful of young soldiers who were killed outright and who had been her friends, wrote to her with some regularity right up to the times of their deaths, and found a comfort in doing so. They wrote to her at first upon neat note-paper adorned with regimental crests, but their later letters as they worked their slow passages towards the place of death were pencilled on thin paper. She kept them all. She felt she could have been a good sister to many brothers.

One of these two who died early was Winterbaum. She did not hear from this young man of the world

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for some weeks after the declaration of war. Then came a large photograph of himself in cavalry uniform, and a manly, worldly letter strongly reminiscent of Kipling and anticipatory of Gilbert Frankau. "There is something splendid about this life after all," he wrote. "It's good to be without one's little luxuries for a space, democratically undistinguished among one's fellows. It's good to harden up until nothing seems able to bruise one any more. I bathed yesterday, without water, Joan—just a dry towel, and that not overclean—was all that was available. After this is all over I shall have such an appetite for luxury—I shall be fierce, Joan."

Those early days were still days of unrestricted plenty, and the disposition of the British world was to pet and indulge everything in khaki. Young Winterbaum wore his spurs and the most beautiful riding-breeches to night clubs and great feasts in the more distinguished restaurants. He took his car about with him, his neat little black-and-white car, fitted with ivory fopperies. He tried hard to take it with him to France. From France his scribbled letters became more and more heroic in tone. "Poor David has been done in," he said. "I am now only three from the Contango peerage. Heaven send I get no nearer! No Feudal dignities for me. I would give three gilded chambers at any time for one reasonably large and well-lit studio. And—I have a kind of affection for my cousins."

His prayer was answered. He got no nearer to the Contango peerage. The powers above him decided that a little place called Loos was of such strategic

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value to the British army as to be worth the lives of a great number of young men, and paid in our generous British fashion even more than the estimate. Winterbaum was part of the price. No particulars of his death ever came to Joan and Peter. The attack began brightly, and then died away. There was a failure to bring up reserves and grasp opportunity. Winterbaum vanished out of life in the muddle—one of thousands. He was the first of the little company of Joan's friends to be killed.

Bunny Cuspard spread a less self-conscious, more western, and altogether more complicated psychology before Joan's eyes. Like Wilmington he had faltered at the outset of the war between enlistment and extreme pacifism, but unlike Wilmington he had never reconciled himself to his decision. Bunny was out of sympathy with the fierceness of mankind; he wanted a kindly, prosperous, rather funny world where there is nothing more cruel than gossip; that was the world he was fitted for. He repeated in his own person and quality the tragedy of Anatole France. He wanted to assure the world and himself that at heart everything was quite right and magnificent fun, to laugh gaily at everything, seeing through its bristling hostilities into the depth of genial absurdity beneath.

And so often he could find no genial absurdity.

He had always pretended that discovering novel sorts of cakes for his teas or new steps for dances was the really serious business of life. One of his holiday amusements had been "Little Wars," which he played with toy soldiers and little model houses and miniature woods of twigs and hills of boarding in a

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big room at his Limpsfield home. He would have vacation parties for days to carry out these wars, and he and his guests conducted them with a tremendous seriousness. He had elaborated his miniature battle scenery more and more, making graveyards, churches, inns, walls, fences—even sticking absurd notices and advertisements upon the walls, and writing epitaphs upon his friends in the graveyard. He had loved the burlesque of it. He had felt that it brought history into a right proportion to humour. But one of the drawbacks had always been that as the players lay upon the floor to move their soldiers and guns about they crushed down his dear little toy houses and woods. . . .

His mind still fought desperately to see the war as a miniature.

He got to a laugh ever and again by a great effort, but some of the things that haunted his imagination would not under any circumstances dissolve in laughter. Things that other people seemed to hear only to dismiss remained to suppurate in his mind. One or two of the things that were most oppressive to him he never told Joan. But she had a glimpse now and then of what was there, through the cracks in his laughter.

He had heard a man telling a horrible story of the opening bombardment of Ypres by the Germans. The core of the story was a bricked tunnel near the old fortifications of the town, whither a crowd of refugees had fled from the bombardment, and into which a number of injured people had been carried. A shell exploded near the exit and imprisoned all

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those people in a half-light without any provisions or help. There was not even drinking-water for the wounded. A ruptured drain poured a foul trickle across the slimy floor on which the wounded and exhausted lay. Now quite near and now at a distance the shells were still bursting, and through that thudding and uproar, above all the crouching and murmuring distresses of that pit of misery sounded the low, clear, querulous voice of a little girl who was talking as she died, talking endlessly of how she suffered, of how her sister could not come to help her, of her desire to be taken away; a little, scolding indignant spirit she was, with a very clear explicit sense of the vast impropriety of everything about her.

"Why does not some one come?"

"Be tranquil," an old woman's voice remonstrated time after time. "Help will come."

But for most of the people in the tunnel help never came. Through a slow, unhurrying night of indescribable pain and discomfort, in hunger, darkness, and an evil stench, their lives ebbed away one by one. . . .

That dark, dreadful, stinking place, quivering to the incessant thunder of guns, sinking through twilight into night, lit by flashes and distant flames, and passing through an eternity of misery to a cold, starving dawn, threaded by the child's shrill voice, took a pitiless grip upon Bunny's imagination. He could neither mitigate it nor forget it.

How could one laugh at the Kaiser with this rankling in his mind? He could not fit it into any merry

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scheme of things, and he could not bear any scheme that was not merry; and not to be able to fit dreadful things into a scheme that does at last prevail over them was, for such a mind as Bunny's, to begin to drift from sanity.

The second story that mutely reinforced the shrill indictment of that little Belgian girl was a description he had heard of some poor devil being shot for cowardice at dawn. A perplexed, stupid youth of two or three and twenty, with little golden hairs that gleamed on a pallid cheek, was led out to a heap of empty ammunition boxes in a desolate and mutilated landscape of mud and splintered trees under a leaden sky, and set down on a box to die. It was as if Bunny had seen that living body with his own eyes, the body that jumped presently to the impact of the bullets and lurched forward, and how the officer in command—who had been himself but a little child in a garden a dozen years or more ago—came up to the pitiful prostrate form and put his revolver to the head behind the ear that would never hear again and behind the eye that stared and glazed, and pulled the trigger “to make sure.”

Bunny could feel that revolver behind his own ear. It was like a dental instrument in the mouth.

“Oh, my God!” cried Bunny; “oh, my God!” starting up from his sack of straw on the floor in his billet in the middle of the night.

“Oh! *shut* it!” said the man who was trying to sleep beside him.

“Sorry!” said Bunny.

“You keep it for the Germans, mate.”

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"Oh! Oh! If I could kill this damned Kaiser with ten thousand torments!" whispered Bunny, quieting down. . . .

These were not the only stories that tormented Bunny's mind, but they were the chief ones. Others came in and went again—stories of the sufferings of wounded men, of almost incredible brutalities done to women and children and helpless people, and of a hundred chance reasonless horrors; they came in with an effect of support and confirmation to these two principal figures—the shrill little girl making her bitter complaint against God and the world which had promised to take care of her, and had scared her horribly and torn her limbs and thrust her, thirsty and agonised, into a stinking drain to die; and the poor puzzled lout, caught and condemned, who had to die so dingily and submissively because his heart had failed him. Against the grim instances of their sombre and squalid fates the soul of Bunny battled whenever, by night or day, thought overtook him in his essential and characteristic resolve to see life as "fun"—as "great fun."

These two fellow sufferers in life took possession of his imagination because of their intense kindred with himself. So far as he got his riddle clear it was something after this fashion: "Why, if the world is like this, why are we in it? What am I doing in this nightmare? Why are there little girls and simple louts—and me?"

The days drew near when he would have to go to the front. He wrote shamelessly to Joan of his dread of that experience.

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"It's the mud and dirtiness and ugliness," he said. "I am a domestic cat, Joan—an indoor cat. . . .

"I've got a Pacifist temperament. . . .

"All the same, Joan, the Germans started this war. If we don't beat them, they will start others. They are intolerable brutes—the Junkers, anyhow. Until we get them down they will go on kicking mankind in the stomach. It is their idea of dignified behaviour. But we are casting our youth before swine. . . . Why aren't there more assassins in the world? Why can't we kill them by machinery—painlessly and cleanly? We ought to be cleverer than they are."

There was extraordinarily little personal fear in Bunny. He was not nearly so afraid of the things that would happen to him as of the things that would happen about him. He hated the smashing even of inanimate things; a broken-down chair or a roofless shed was painful to him. Whenever he thought of the trenches he thought of treading and slipping in the dark on a torn and still living body. . . .

He stuck stoutly to his reasoning that England had to fight and that he had to fight; but hidden from Joan, hidden from every living soul, he kept a secret resolve. It was, he knew, an entirely illogical and treasonable resolve, and yet he found it profoundly comforting. He would never fire his rifle so that it would hurt any one even by chance, and he would never use his bayonet. He would go over the top with the best of them, and carry his weapons and shout.

If it came to close fighting he would go for a man with his hands and try to disarm him.

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But this resolve was never put to the test. The Easter newspapers of 1916 arrived with flaming headlines about an insurrection in Dublin and the seizure of the Post-Office by the rebels. Oddly enough, this did not shock Bunny at all. It produced none of the effect of horror and brutality that the German invasion of Belgium had made upon his mind. It impressed him as a "rag"; as the sort of rag that they got up to at Cambridge during seasons of excitement. He was delighted by the seizure of the Post-Office, by the appearance of a revolutionary flag and the issue of Republican stamps. It was as good as "Little Wars"; it was "Little Revolutions." He didn't like the way they had shot a policeman outside Trinity College, but perhaps that report wasn't true. The whole affair had restored that flavour of adventure and burlesque that he had so sadly missed from the world since the war began.

He had always idealised the Irish character as the pleasantest combination of facetiousness and generosity. When he found himself part of a draft crossing to Dublin with his back to the grim war front, his spirits rose. He could forget that nightmare for a time. He was going to a land of wit and laughter which had rebelled for a lark. He felt sure that the joke would end happily and that he would be shaking hands with congenial spirits still wearing Sinn Fein badges before a fortnight was out. Perhaps he would come upon Mrs. O'Grady or Patrick Lynch, whom he had been accustomed to meet at the Sheldricks'. He had heard they were in it. And when the whole business had ended brightly and cheerfully

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then all those clever and witty people would grow grave and helpful, and come back with him to join in that temporarily neglected task of fighting on the western front against an iron brutality that threatened to overwhelm the world.

He was still in this cheerful vein two days later as he was crossing St. Stephen's Green. His quaint, amiable face was smiling pleasantly and he was marching with a native ungainliness that no drill-sergeant could ever overcome, when something hit him very hard in the middle of the body.

He knew immediately that he had been shot.

He was not dismayed or shocked by this, but tremendously interested.

All other feelings were swamped in his surprise at a curious contradiction. He had felt hit behind, he was convinced he had been hit behind, but what was queer about it was that he was spinning round as though he had been hit in front. It gave him a preposterous drunken feeling. His head was quite clear, but he was altogether incapable of controlling these spinning legs of his, which were going round backward. His facile sense of humour was aroused. It was really quite funny to be spinning backward in this way. It was like a new step in dancing. His hilarity increased. It was like the maddest dancing they had ever had at Hampstead or Chelsea. The "backward step." He laughed. He had to laugh; something was tickling his ribs and throat. His whole being laughed. He laughed a laugh that became a rush of hot blood from his mouth. . . .

The soul of Bunny, for all I know, laughs for ever

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among the stars; but it was a dead young man who finished those fantastic gyrations.

He paused and swayed and dropped like an empty sack, and lay still in St. Stephen's Green, the modest contribution of one happy Sinn Fein sniper to the Peace of Mankind.

Perhaps Bunny was well out of a life where there can be little room for Bunnyism for many years to come, and lucky to leave it laughing. And as an offset to his loss we have to count the pleasant excitement of Ireland in getting well back into the limelight of the world's affairs, and the bright and glowing gathering of the armed young heroes who got away, recounting their deeds to one another simultaneously in some secure place, with all the rich, tumultuous volubility of the Keltic habit.

"Did ye see that red-haired fella I got in the square, boys? . . . Ah, ye should have seen that fella I got in the square."

§ 7

But not all the world of Joan was at war. The Sheldrick circle, for example, after some wide fluctuations during which Sydney almost became a nurse and Babs nearly enlisted into the Women's Legion, took a marked list under the influence of one of the sons-in-law towards pacifism. Antonia, who had taken two German prizes at school, was speedily provoked by the general denunciation of "Kultur" into a distinctly pro-German attitude. The Sheldrick circle settled down on the whole as a pro-German circle, with a poor opinion of President Wilson, a marked

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hostility to Belgians, and a disposition to think the hardships of drowning by U-boats much exaggerated.

The Sheldricks were like seedlings that begin flourishing and then damp off. From amusing school-fellows they had changed into irritating and disappointing friends. Energy leaked out of them at adolescence. They seemed to possess the vitality for positive convictions no longer, they displayed an instinctive hostility to any wave of popular feeling that threatened to swamp their weak but still obstinate individualities. Their general attitude towards life was one of protesting refractoriness. Whatever it was that people believed or did, you were given to understand by undertones and abstinences that the Sheldricks knew better, and for the most exquisite reasons didn't. All their friends were protesters and rebels and seceders, or incomprehensible poets or inexplicable artists. And from the first the war was altogether too big and strong for them. Confronted by such questions as whether fifty years of belligerent preparation, culminating in the most cruel and wanton invasion of a peaceful country it is possible to imagine, was to be resisted by mankind or condoned, the Sheldricks fell back upon the counter-statement that Sir Edward Grey, being a landowner, was necessarily just as bad as a German Junker, or that the Government of Russia was an unsatisfactory one.

In a few months it was perfectly clear to the Sheldricks that they would have nothing to do with the war at all. They were going to ignore it. Sydney just went on quietly doing her little statuettes that nobody would buy, little portrait busts of her sisters

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and suchlike things; now and then her mother contrived to get her a commission. Babs kept on trying to get a part in somebody's play; Antonia continued to produce djibbahs in chocolate and grocer's blue and similar tints. One saw the sisters drifting about London in costumes still trailingly pre-Raphaelite when all the rest of womankind was cutting its skirts shorter and shorter, their faces rather pained in expression and deliberately serene, ignoring the hopes and fears about them, the stir, the huge effort, the universal participation. It was not their affair, thank you. They were not going to wade through this horrid war; they were going round.

Every time Joan went to see them, either they had become more phantomlike and incredible, or she had become coarser and more real. Would they ever get round? she asked herself; and what would they be like when at last they attempted, if ever they attempted, to rejoin the main stream of human interests again?

They kept up their Saturday evenings, but their gatherings became thinner and less and less credible as the war went on. The first wave of military excitement carried off most of the slightly young men, and presently the more capable and enterprising of the women vanished one after another to nurse, to join the Women's Legion, to become substitute clerks and release men to volunteer, to work in canteens and so forth. There was, however, a certain coming and going of ambiguous adventurers, who in those early days went almost unchallenged between London and Belgium on ambulance work, on mysterious missions

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and with no missions at all. Belgian refugees drifted in and, when they found a lack of sympathy for their simple thirst for the destruction of Germans under all possible circumstances, out again. Then Ireland called her own, and Patrick Lynch went off to die a martyr's death with arms in his hands after three days of the most exhilarating mixed shooting in the streets of Dublin. Antonia discovered passionate memories as soon as he was dead, and nobody was allowed to mention the name of Bunny in the Sheldrick circle for fear of spoiling the emotional atmosphere. Hetty Reinhart, after some fluctuations, went khaki, flitted from one ministry to another in various sorts of clerical capacities, took such opportunities as offered of entertaining young officers lonely in our great capital, and was no more seen in Hampstead. What was left of this little group in the Hampstead *Quartier Latin* drew together into a band of resistance to the creeping approach of compulsory service.

Huntley's lofty scorn of the war had intensified steadily; the harsh disappointment of Joan's patriotism had stung him to great efforts of self-justification, and he became one of the most strenuous writers in the extreme Pacifist press. Not an act or effort of the Allies, he insisted, that was not utterly vile in purpose and doomed to accelerate our defeat. Not an act of the enemy's that was not completely thought out, wisely calculated, and planned to give the world peace and freedom on the most reasonable terms. He was particularly active in preparing handbills and pamphlets of instruction for lifelong Conscientious Objectors to war service who had not hitherto

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thought about the subject. Community of view brought him very close in feeling to both Babs and Sydney Sheldrick. There was much talk of a play he was to write which was to demonstrate the absurdity of Englishmen fighting Germans just because Germans insisted upon fighting Englishmen, and which was also to bring out the peculiarly charming Babs-iness of Babs. He studied her thoroughly and psychologically and physiologically and intensively and extensively.

By a great effort of self-control he abstained from sending his writings to Joan. Once however they were near meeting. On one of Joan's rare calls Babs told her that he was coming to discuss the question whether he should go to prison and hunger-strike, or consent to take up work of national importance. Babs was very full of the case for each alternative. She was doubtful which course involved the greatest moral courage. Moral courage, it was evident, was being carried to giddy heights by Huntley. It would be pure hypocrisy, he felt, to ignore the vital value of his writings, and while he could go on with these quite comfortably while working as a farm-hand, with a little judicious payment to the farmer, their production would become impossible in prison. He must crucify himself upon the cross of harsh judgments, he felt, and take the former course. He wanted to make his views exactly clear to every one, to avoid misunderstanding.

Joan hesitated whether she should stay and insult him or go, and chose the seemlier course.

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§ 8

Joan was already driving a car for the Ministry of Munitions when Peter got himself transferred from the ranks of the infantry to the Royal Flying Corps. Peter's career as an infantryman never took him nearer to the western front than Liss Forest. Then he perceived the error of his ways and decided to get a commission in the Royal Flying Corps. In those days the Flying Corps was still a limited and inaccessible force with a huge waiting-list, and it needed a considerable exertion of influence to secure a footing in that select band. . . . But at last a day came when Peter, rather self-conscious in his new leather coat and cap, walked out from the mess past a group of chatting young pilots towards the aeroplane in which he was to have his first experience of flight.

He had a sense of being scrutinised, but indeed hardly any one upon the aerodrome noted him. This sense of an audience made him deliberately casual in his bearing. He saluted his pilot in a manner decidedly offhand. He clambered up through struts and wire to the front seat as if he was a clerk ascending the morning omnibus, and strapped himself in as if it hardly mattered whether he was strapped in or not.

"Contact, sir," said the mechanic. "Contact," came the pilot's voice from behind. The engine roared, a gale swept backward, and Peter vibrated like an aspen leaf.

The wheels were cleared, the mechanics jumped aside, and Peter was careering across the grass in a

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series of light leaps, and then his progress became smoother. He did not perceive at first the reason for this sudden steadying of the machine. He found himself tilting upward. He was off the ground. He had been off the ground for some seconds. He looked over the side and saw the grass fifty feet below, and the black shadow of the aeroplane, as if it fled before them, rushing at a hedge, doubling up at the hedge, and starting again in the next field. And up he went.

Peter stared at fields, hedges, trees, sheds, and roadways growing small below him. He noted cows in plan and an automobile in plan, in a lane, going it seemed very slowly indeed. It was a stagnant world below in comparison with his own forward sweep. His initial nervousness and self-consciousness had passed away. He was enormously interested and delighted. He was trying to remember when it was that Nobby had said: "I doubt if we'll see that in my lifetime—or yours." It was somewhen long ago at Limpsfield. Quite early. . . .

And then abruptly Peter was clutching the side with his thick-gloved hand; the aeroplane was coming round in a close curve and banking steeply, very steeply. For a moment it seemed as though there was nothing at all between him and England below. If he fell out——!

He looked over his shoulder and met the hard regard of a pair of steel-blue eyes.

He remembered that after all he was under observation. This was no mere civilian's joy ride. He affected a concentration upon the scenery. The

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aeroplane swung slowly back again to the level, and his hand left the side. . . .

They were going up very rapidly now. The world seemed to be rolling in at the edges of a great circle that grew constantly larger. Away to the left were broad spaces of brown sand, and grey rippled and smooth shining water channels, and beyond, the sapphire sea; beneath and to the right were fields, houses, villages, woods, and a distant range of hills that seemed to be coming nearer. The scale was changing and everything was becoming maplike. Cows were little dots now and men scarcely visible. . . . And then suddenly all the scenery seemed to be rushing upward before Peter's eyes and he had a feeling like the feeling one has in a lift when it starts—a down-borne feeling. He affected indifference, and gave the pilot his whistling profile. Down they swept, faster than a luge on the swiftest ice run, until one could see the ditches in the shadows beneath the hedges and cows were plainly cows again, and then once more they were heeling over and curving round. But Peter had been ready for that this time; he had been telling himself over and over again that he was strapped in. He betrayed no surprise. He was getting more and more exhilarated.

And then they were climbing again and soaring straight out towards the sea. Up went this roaring dragon-fly in which Peter was sitting, at a hundred and twenty miles or so per hour, leaving the dwindling land behind.

Up they went and up, until the world seemed nearly all sea and the coast was far away; they mounted at

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last above a little white cloud puff and then above a haze of clouds, and when Peter looked down he saw at a vast distance below, through a clear gap in that filmy cloud fabric, three ships smaller than any toys. Of the men he could distinguish nothing. How sweet the cold clear air had become!

And high above the world, in the lonely sky above the cloud fleece, the pilot saw fit to spring a surprise upon Peter.

He was not of the genial and considerate order of teachers; he believed in weeding out duds as swiftly as possible. He had an open mind as to whether this rather overintelligent-looking beginner might not, under certain circumstances, squeal. So he just tried him and, without a note of preparation, looped the loop with him.

The propeller that span before the eyes of Peter dipped. Peter bowed in accord with it. It dipped more and more steeply, until the machine was almost nose down, until Peter was looking at the sea and the land as one sits and looks at a wall. He was tilted down and down until he was face downward. And then as abruptly he was tilted up; it was like being in a swing; the note of the engine altered as if a hand swept up a scale of notes; the sea and the land seemed to fall away below him as though he left them for ever, and the blue sky swept down across his field of vision like a curtain; he was, so to speak, on his back now with his legs in the air, looking straight at the sky, at nothing but sky, and expecting to recover. For a vast second he waited for the swing to end. This was surely the end of the swing. . . .

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Only—most amazingly—he didn't recover! He wanted to say, "Ouch!" He was immensely surprised—too surprised to be frightened. He went over backward—in an instant—and the sea and the land reappeared above the sky and also came down like curtains, too, and then behold! the aeroplane was driving down and the world was in its place again far below.

"The Loop!" whispered Peter, a little dazed, and glanced back at his pilot and smiled. This was no perambulator excursion. "The Loop—first trip!"

The blue eyes seemed a little less hard, the weathered face was smiling faintly.

Then gripped by an irresistible power, Peter found himself going down, down, down almost vertically. The pilot had apparently stopped the engine. . . .

Peter watched the majestic expansion of the landscape as they fell. They had come back over the land. Far away he could see the aerodrome like a scattered collection of little toy huts, and growing bigger and bigger every instant. He sat quite still, for it was all right—it must be all right. But now they were getting very near the ground, and it was still rushing up to meet them, and pouring outwardly as it rose. A cat now would be visible. . . .

It *was* all right. The engine picked up with a roar like a score of lions, and the pilot levelled out a hundred feet above the trees. . . .

Then presently they were dropping to the aerodrome again; down until the hedges were plain and the grazing cattle close and distinct; and then, with a sense of infinite regret, Peter perceived that they

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were back on the turf again and that the flight was over. They danced lightly over the turf. Their rush slowed down. They taxied gently up to the hangar and the engine shuddered and, with a pathetic drop to silence, stopped. . . .

A little stiffly, Peter unbuckled himself and stretched and set himself to clamber to the ground.

His weather-bitten senior nodded to him and smiled faintly. . . .

Peter walked towards the mess. It was wonderful—and intensely disappointing in that it was so soon over. There were still great pieces of the afternoon left. . . .

§ 9

The aerodrome was short of machines and instructors, and he had to wait a couple of weeks before he could get into the air a second time.

He worked sedulously to gather knowledge during that waiting interval, and his first real lesson found him a very alert and ready pupil. This time the dual control was at his disposal, and for a straight or so the pilot left things to him altogether. Came half a dozen other lessons, and then Peter found himself sitting alone in a machine outside the great sheds, watched closely by a knot of friendly rivals, and, for the first time on his own account, conducting that duologue he had heard now so often on other lips. "Switch off." . . . "Suck in." "Contact!"

He started across the ground. His first sensations bordered on panic. Hitherto the machines he had flown in had been just machines; now this one, this

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one was an animal; it started out across the aerodrome like a demented ostrich, swerving wildly and trying to turn round. Always before this, the other man had done the taxi business on the ground. It had never occurred to Peter that it involved any difficulty. Peter's heart nearly failed him in that opening twenty seconds; he was convinced he was going to be killed; and then he determined to get up at any cost. At any rate he wouldn't smash on the ground. He let out the accelerator, touched his controls, and behold he was up—he was up! Instantly the machine ceased to resemble a floundering ostrich, and became a steady and dignified carinate, swaying only slightly from wing to wing. Up he went over the hedges, over the trees, beyond, above the familiar field of cows. The moment of panic passed, and Peter was himself again.

He had got right outside the aerodrome and he had to bank and bring her round. Already he had done that successfully a number of times with an instructor to take care of him. He did it successfully now. His confidence grew. Back he buzzed and droned, a hundred feet over the aerodrome. He made three complete circuits, rose outside the aerodrome and came down, making a good landing. He was instantly smitten with the intensest regret that he had not made eight or nine circuits. It was a mere hop. Any man of spirit would have gone on. There were four hours of daylight yet. He might have gone up; he might have tried a spiral. . . . *Damn!*

But the blue eyes of the master approved him.

“Couldn't have made a better landing, Stubland,”

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said the master. "Try again to-morrow. Follow it up close. Short and frequent doses. That's the way."

Peter had made another stage on his way to France.

Came other solo flights, and flights on different types of machines, and then a day of glory and disobedience when, three thousand feet above the chimneys of a decent farmhouse, Peter looped the loop twice. He had learned by that time what it was to sideslip, and what air pockets can do to the unwary. He had learned the bitter consequences of coming down with the engine going strong. He had had a smash through that all too common mistake, but not a bad smash; a few struts and wires of the left wing were all that had gone. A hedge and a willow-tree had stopped him. He had had a forced landing in a field of cabbages through engine stoppage, and half an hour in a snow-storm when he had had doubts in an upward eddy whether he might not be flying upside down. That had been a nasty experience—his worst. He had several times taken his hands off the controls and let the old 'bus look after herself, so badly were the snowflakes spinning about in his mind. He dreamt a lot about flying, and few of his dreams were pleasant dreams. And then this fantastic old world of ours, which had so suddenly diverted his education to these things, and taught him to fly with a haste and intensity it had never put into any teaching before, decided that he was ripe for the air war, and packed him off to France. . . .

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§ 10

Now, seeing that Joan had at last discovered that she was in love with Peter, it would be pleasantly symmetrical to record that Peter had also discovered by this time that he was in love with Joan.

But as a matter of fact he had discovered nothing of the sort. He had been amazed and humiliated by his three days of hesitation and procrastination at Orta; the delay was altogether out of keeping with his private picture of himself; and he discovered that he was not in love with any one and that he did not intend again to be lured into any dangerous pretence that he was. He had done with Hetty, he was convinced; he did not mean to see her any more, and he led a life of exasperated puritanism for some months, refusing to answer the occasionally very skilful and perplexing letters, with amusing and provocative illustrations, that she wrote him.

The idea of "relaxing moral fibre" obsessed him, and our genial Peter for a time abandoned both smoking and alcohol, and was only deterred from further abstinences by their impracticability. The ordinary infantry mess, for example, caters ill and resentfully for vegetarians. . . . Peter's days in the ranks were days of strained austerity. He was a terribly efficient recruit, a fierce soldier, a wonderful influence on slackers, stripes gravitated towards him, and a prophetic corporal saw sergeant-major written on his forehead. Occasionally, when his imagination got loose or after a letter from Hetty, he would indulge privately in fits of violent rage, finding great

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relief in the smashing of light objects and foul and outrageous language. He found what he considered a convenient privacy for this idiosyncrasy in a disused cowshed near the camp, and only realised that he had an audience when a fellow recruit asked anxiously, "And how's Miss Blurry 'Etty?" Whereupon Peter discovered a better outlet for pent-up nervous energy in a square fight.

Joan saw hardly anything of him during those early and brutal days, but she thought about him mightily. She shared Oswald's opinion that he wasn't in his right place, and she wrote to him frequently. He answered perhaps half her letters. His answers struck her as being rather posed. The strain showed through them. Peter was trying very hard not to be Peter. "I'm getting down to elementals," was one of his experiments in the statement of his moral struggle.

Then quite abruptly came his decision to get into the Royal Flying Corps.

Neither Oswald nor Joan ventured any comment on this, because both of them had a feeling that Peter had, in a sense, climbed down by this decision to go up. . . .

In the Royal Flying Corps Peter's rather hastily conceived theories of moral fibre came into an uncongenial atmosphere. The Royal Flying Corps was amazingly young, swift, and confident, and "moral fibre" based on abstinence and cold self-control was not at all what it was after. The Royal Flying Corps was much more inclined to scrap with soda-water siphons and rag to the tunes of a gramophone. It

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was a body that had had to improvise a tradition of conduct in three or four swift years, and its tradition was still unstable. Mainly it was the tradition of the games and sports side of a public school, roughly adapted to the new needs of the service; it was an essentially boyish tradition, even men old enough to have gone through the universities were in a minority in it, and Peter at one-and-twenty was one of the more elderly class of recruits. And necessarily the tradition of the corps still varied widely with the dominant personalities and favourite heroes of each aerodrome and mess and squadron. It was a crowd of plastic boys, left amazingly to chance leads. Their seniors had no light for them, and they picked up such hints as they could from Kipling and the music-halls, from overheard conversations, and one another.

Is it not an incredible world in which old men make wars and untutored young men have to find out how to fight them; in which tradition and the past are mere entanglements about the feet of the young? The flying services took the very flower of the youth of the belligerent nations; they took the young men who were most manifestly fitted to be politicians, statesmen, leaders of men, masters in industry, and makers of the new age; the boys of nerve, pluck, imagination, invention, and decision. And there is not a sign of any realisation on the part of any one of the belligerent states of the fact that a large proportion of this most select and valuable mass of youth was destined to go on living after the war and was going to matter tremendously and be the backbone of the race after the war. They let all these boys

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specialise as jockeys specialise. The old men and rulers wanted these youngsters to fight and die for them; that any future lay beyond the war was too much for these scared and unteachable ancients to apprehend. The short way to immediate efficiency was to back the tradition of recklessness and gallantry, and so the short way was taken; if the brave lads were kept bold and reckless by women, wine, and song, then by all means, said their elders, let them have these helps. "A short life and a merry one," said the British Empire to these lads of eighteen and nineteen encouragingly. "A short life and a merry one," said the Empire to its future.

If the story of the air forces is a glorious and not a shameful thing it is because of the enduring hope of the world—the incessant gallantry of youth. These boys took up their great and cardinal task with the unquenchable hopefulness of boyhood and with the impudence and humour of their race. They brought in the irreverence and the Spartanism of their years. They made a language for themselves, an atrocious slang of facetious misnomers; everything one did was a "stunt"; everything one used was a "gadget"; the machines were "buses" and "camels" and "pups"; the older men were perpetually pleading in vain for more dignity in the official reports. And these youngsters worked out their moral problems according to their own generous and yet puerile ideas. They argued the question of drink. Could a man fly better or worse if he was "squiffy"? Does funk come to the thoughtful? And was ever a man gallant without gallantries? After the death of Lord Kitchener there

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survived no man in Britain of the quality to speak plainly and authoritatively and honestly about chastity and drink to the young soldier. The State had no mind in these matters. In most matters indeed the State had no mind; it was a little old silly State. And the light side of the feminine temperament flamed up into shameless acquiescences in the heroic presence of the flying man. Youth instinctively sets towards romantic adventures, and the scales of chance for a considerable number of the flying men swung between *mésalliance* and *Messalina*.

The code and the atmosphere varied from mess to mess and from squadron to squadron; young men are by nature and necessity hero-worshippers and imitative. Peter's lines fell among pleasant men of the "irresponsible" school. The two best flyers he knew, including him of the hard blue eyes who had first instructed him, were men of a physique that defied drink and dissipation. Vigours could smoke, drink, and dance in London, catch the last train back with three seconds to spare, and be flying with an unshaken nerve by half past six in the morning; Vincent would only perform stunts when he was "tight," and then he seemed capable of taking any risk with impunity. He could be funny with an aeroplane then a thousand feet up in the air. He could make it behave as though it was drunk, as though it was artful; he could make it mope or wag its tail. Men went out to watch him. The mess was decorated with pictures from *La Vie Parisienne*, and the art and literature of the group was *Revue*. Now seeing that Peter's sole reason for his puritanism was the pres-

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ervation of efficiency, this combination of a fast life and a fine record in the air was very disconcerting to him.

If he had been naturally and easily a first-class flying man he might have stuck to his line of high austerity, but he was not. He flew well, but he had to fly with care; like many other airmen, he always felt a shadow of funk before going up, on two or three bad mornings it was on his conscience that he had delayed for ten minutes or so, and he was more and more inclined to think that he would fly better if he flew with a less acute sense of possibilities. It was the start and the uneventful flying that irked him most; hitherto every crisis had found him cool and able. But the slap-dash style, combined with the exquisite accuracy of these rakes, Vigours and Vincent, filled him with envious admiration.

In the mess Peter met chiefly youths of his own age or a year or so younger; he soon became a master of slang; his style of wit won its way among them. He ceased to write of "getting down to elementals" to Joan, and he ceased to think of all other girls and women as inventions of the devil. Only they must be kept in their places. As Vigours and Vincent kept them. Just as one kept drink in its place. One must not, for example, lose trains on account of them. . . .

Through these months Joan maintained a strained watch upon the development and fluctuations of Peter. He wrote—variously; sometimes offhand duty notes and sometimes long and brotherly letters—incurably brotherly. Every now and then she had glimpses of him when he came to London on leave.

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Manifestly he liked her company and trusted her—as though she was a man. It was exasperating. She dressed for Peter as she had never dressed for any one, and he would take her out to dine at the *Rendezvous* or the *Petit Riche* and sit beside her and glance at common scraps of feminine humanity, at dirty little ogling bare-throated girls in patched-up raiment and with harsh and screaming voices, as though they were the most delicious of forbidden fruits. And he seemed to dislike being alone with her. If she dropped her hand to touch his on the table, he would draw his away.

Was the invisible barrier between them invincible?

For a time during his infantry phase he had shown a warm affection. In his early days in the flying corps it seemed that he drew still closer to her. Then her quick, close watch upon him detected a difference. Joan was getting to be a very shrewd observer nowadays, and she felt a subtle change that suddenly made him a little shamefaced in her presence. There had been some sort of spree in London with two or three other wild spirits, and there had been “girls” in the party. Such girls! He never told her this, but something told her. I am inclined to think it was her acute sense of smell detected a flavour of face-powder or cheap scent about Peter when he came along one day, half an hour late, to take her to the Ambassadors. She was bad company that night for him.

For a time Joan was bad company for any one.

She was worse when she realised that Hetty was somehow reinstated in Peter’s world. That, too, she knew by an almost incredible flash of intuition. Miss

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Jepson was talking one evening to Peter, and Peter suddenly displayed a knowledge of the work of the London Group that savoured of studio. This was the first art criticism he had talked since the war began. It was clear he had been to a couple of shows. Not with Joan. Not alone. As he spoke, he glanced at Joan and met her eye.

It was astonishing that Miss Jepson never heard the loud shout of "Hetty" that seemed to fill the room.

It was just after this realisation that an elderly but still gallant colonel, going on an expedition for the War Office with various other technical authorities to suppress some disturbing invention that the Ministry of Munitions was pressing in a troublesome manner, decided to come back from Longmore to London on the front seat beside Joan. His conversational intentions were honourable and agreeable, but he shared a common error that a girl who wears *khaki* and drives a car demands less respect from old gentlemen and is altogether more playful than the Victorian good woman. Possibly he was lured on to his own destruction.

When he descended at the Ministry, he looked *pinched* and aged. He was shaken to the pitch of confidences. "My word," he whispered. "That girl drives like the devil. But she's a vixen . . . snaps your head off. . . . Don't know whether this sort of thing is good for women in the long run.

"Robs 'em of Charm," he said.

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§ 11

It was just in this phase of wrath and darkness that Wilmington came over to London for his last leave before he was killed, and begged Joan for all the hours she had to spare. She was quite willing to treat him generously. They dined together and went to various theatres and music-halls and had a walk over Hampstead Heath on Sunday. He was a silent, persistent companion for most of the time. He bored her, and the more he bored her the greater her compunction and the more she hid it from him. But Wilmington, if he had a slow tongue, had a penetrating eye.

The last evening they had together was at the Criterion. They dined in the grill-room, a dinner that was interspersed with brooding silences. And then Wilmington decided to make himself interesting at any cost upon this last occasion.

"Joan," he said, knocking out a half-consumed cigarette upon the edge of his plate.

"Billy?" said Joan, waking up.

"Queer, Joan, that you don't love me when I love you so much."

"I'd trust you to the end of the earth, Billy."

"I know. But you don't love me."

"I think of you as much as I do of any one."

"No. Except—*one*."

"Billy," said Joan weakly, "you're the straightest man on earth."

Wilmington's tongue ran along his white lips. He spoke with an effort.

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"You've loved Peter since you were six years old. It isn't as though—you'd treated me badly. I can't grumble that you've had no room for me. He's always been there."

Joan, after an interval, decided to be frank.

"It's not much good, Billy, is it, if I do?"

Wilmington said nothing for quite a long time. He sat thinking hard. "It's not much good pretending I don't hate Peter. I do. If I could kill him—and in your memory too. . . . He bars you from me. He makes you unhappy. . . ."

His face was a white misery. Joan glanced round at the tables about her, but no one seemed to be watching them. She looked at him again. Pity, so great that it came near to love, wrung her. . . .

"Joan," he said at last.

"Yes?"

"It's queer. . . . I feel mean. . . . As though it wasn't right. . . . But look here, Joan." He tapped her arm. "Something—something that I suppose I may as well point out to you. Because in certain matters—in certain matters you are being a fool. It's astonishing— But absolutely—a fool."

Joan perceived he had something very important to say. She sat watching him, as with immense deliberation he got out another cigarette and lit it.

"You don't understand this Peter business, Joan. I—I do. Mostly when I'm not actually planning out or carrying out the destruction of Germans, I think of you—and Peter. And all the rest of it. I've got nothing else much to think about. And I think I see

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things you don't see. I know I do. . . . Oh damn it! Go to hell!"

This last was to the waiter, who was making the customary warning about liqueurs on the stroke of half past nine.

"Sorry," said Wilmington to Joan, and leaned forward over his folded arms and collected his thoughts with his eyes on the flowers before them.

"It's like this, Joan. Peter isn't where we are. I—I'm very definite and clear about my love-making. I fell in love with you, and I've never met any other woman I'd give three minutes of my life to. You've just got me. As if I were the palm of your hand. I wish I were. And—oh! what's the good of shutting my eyes?—Peter has you. You've been thinking of Peter half the time we've been together. It's true, Joan. You've grown up in love. Buh! But Peter, you've got to understand, isn't in love. He doesn't know what love means. Perhaps he never will. Love with you and me is a thing of flesh and bone. He takes it like some skin disease. He's been spoiled. He's so damned easy and good-looking. He was got hold of. I——"

Wilmington flushed for a moment. "I'm a chaste man, Joan. It's a rare thing. Among our sort. But Peter— Loving a woman body and soul means nothing to him. He thinks love-making is a kind of amusement— Casual amusement. Any woman who isn't repulsive. You know, Joan, that's not the natural way. The natural way is love of soul and body. He's been perverted. But in this crowded world—like a monkey's cage . . . artificially heated . . . the

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young men get made miscellaneous. . . . Lots of the girls even are miscellaneous. . . .”

He considered the word. “Miscellaneous? Promiscuous, I mean. . . . It hasn’t happened to us. To you and me, I mean. I’m unattractive somehow. You’re fastidious. He’s neither. He takes the thing that offers. To grave people sex is a sacrament, something—so solemn and beautiful——”

The tears stood in his eyes. “If I go on,” he said. . . . “I can’t go on. . . .”

For a time he said no more, and pulled his unconsumed cigarette to pieces over the ash-tray with trembling fingers. “That’s all,” he said at last.

“All this is—rather true,” said Joan. “But——!”

“What does it lead up to?”

“Yes.”

“It means Peter’s the ordinary male animal. Under modern conditions. Lazy. Affectionate and all that, but not a scrap of emotion or love—yet anyhow. Not what you and I know as love. You may dress it up as you like, but the fact is that the woman has to make love to him. That’s all. Hetty has made love to him. He has never made love to anybody—except as a sort of cheerful way of talking, and perhaps he never, never will. . . . He respects you too much to make love to you. . . . But he’d hate the idea of any one else—making love to you. . . . It’s an idea— It’s outside of his conception of you. . . . He’ll never think of it for himself.”

Joan sat quite still. After what seemed a long silence she looked up at him.

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Wilmington was watching her face. He saw she understood his drift.

“You could cut her out like *that*,” said Wilmington, with a gesture that gained an accidental emphasis by knocking his glass off the table and smashing it.

The broken glass supplied an incident, a distraction with the waiters to relieve the tension of the situation.

“That’s all I had to say,” said Wilmington when that was settled. “There’s no earthly reason why two of us should be unhappy.”

“Billy,” she said, after a long pause, “if I could only love *you*——”

The face of gratitude that looked at him faded to a mask.

“You’re thinking of Peter already,” said Wilmington, watching her.

It was true. She started, detected.

He speculated cheerlessly.

“You’ll marry me some day perhaps. When Peter’s thrown you over. . . . It’s men of my sort who get things like that. . . .”

He stood up and reached for her cloak. She, too, stood up.

Then, as if to reassure her, he said: “I shall get killed, Joan. So we needn’t worry about that. I shall get killed. I know it. And Peter will live. . . . I always have taken everything too seriously. Always. . . . I shall kill a lot of Germans yet, but one day they will get me. And Peter will be up there in the air, like a cheerful midge—with all the Archies missing him. . . .”

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§ 12

This conversation was a cardinal event in Joan's life. Wilmington's suggestions raised out of the grave of forgetfulness and incorporated with themselves a conversation she had had long ago with Adela—one Christmas at Pelham Ford when Adela had been in love with Sopwith Greene. Adela too had maintained that it was the business of a woman to choose her man and not wait to be chosen, and that it was the woman who had to make love. "A man's in love with women in general," had been Adela's idea, "but women fall in love with men in particular." Adela had used a queer phrase, "It's for a woman to find her own man and keep him and take care of him." Men had to do their own work; they couldn't think about love as women were obliged by nature to think about love. "Love's just a trouble to a real man, like a mosquito singing in his ear, until some woman takes care of him."

All those ideas came back now to Joan's mind, and she did her best to consider them and judge them as generalisations. But indeed she judged with a packed court, and all her being clamoured warmly for her to "get" Peter, to "take care"—most admirable phrase—of Peter. Her decision was made, and still she argued with herself. Was it beneath her dignity to set out and capture her Peter?—he was her Peter. Only he didn't know it. She tried to generalise. Had it ever been dignified for a woman to wait until a man discovered her possible love? Was that at best anything more than the dignity of the mannequin?

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Three-quarters at least of the art and literature of the world is concerned with the relations of the sexes, and yet here was Joan, after thirty centuries or so of human art and literature, still debating the elementary facts of her being. There is so much excitement in our art and literature and so little light. The world has still to discover the scope and vastness of its educational responsibilities. Most of its teaching in these matters hitherto has been less in the nature of enlightenment than strategic concealment; we have given the young neither knowledge nor training, we have restrained and baffled them and told them lies. And then we have inflamed them. We have abused their instinctive trust when they were children with stories of old Bogey designed to save us the bother that unrestrained youthful enterprise might cause, and with humorous mockery of their natural curiosity. Jocularities about storks and gooseberry-bushes, sham indignations at any plainness of speech, fierce punishments of imperfectly realised offences, this against a background of giggles, knowing innuendo, and careless, exciting glimpses of the mystery, have constituted the ordinary initiation of the youth of the world. Right up to full age, we still fail to provide the clear elemental facts. Our young men do not know for certain whether continence is healthy or unhealthy, possible or impossible; the sex is still assured with all our power of assurance, that the only pure and proper life for it is a sexless one. Until at last the brightest of the young have been obliged to get down to the bare facts in themselves and begin again at the beginning. . . .

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So Joan, co-Heiress of the Ages with Peter, found that because of her defaulting trustees, because we teachers, divines, writers, and the like have shirked what was disagreeable and difficult and unpopular, she inherited nothing but debts and dangers. She had not even that touching faith in Nature which sustained the generation of Jean Jacques Rousseau. She had to set about her problem with Peter as though he and she were Eve and Adam in a garden overrun with weeds and thorns into which God had never come.

Joan was too young yet to have developed the compensating egotism of thwarted femininity. She saw Peter without delusions. He was a bigger and cleverer creature than herself; he compelled her respect. He had more strength, more invention, more initiative, and a relatively tremendous power of decision. And at the same time he was weak and blind and stupid. His flickering, unstable sensuousness, his light adventurousness and a certain dishonesty about women, filled her with a comprehensive pity and contempt. There was a real difference not merely in scale but in nature between them. It was clear to her now that the passionate and essential realities of a woman's life are only incidental to a man. But on the other hand there were passionate and essential realities for Peter that made her own seem narrow and self-centred. She knew far more of his mental life than Oswald did. She knew that he had an intense passion for clear statement, he held to scientific and political judgments with a power altogether deeper and greater than she did; he cared for them and criticised them

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and polished them, like weapons that had been intrusted to him. Beneath his debonair mask he was growing into a strong and purposeful social and mental personality. She perceived that he was only in the beginning of his growth—if he came on no misadventure, if he did not waste himself. And she did not believe that she herself had any great power of further growth except through him. But linked to him she could keep pace with him. She could capture his senses, keep his conscience, uphold him. . . .

She had convinced herself now that that was her chief business in life.

Her mind was remarkably free from doubts about the future if once she could get at her Peter. Mountains and forests of use and wont separated them, she knew. Peter had acquired a habit of not making love to her and of separating her from the thought of love. But if ever Peter came over these mountains, if ever he came through the forest to her— In the heart of the forest, she would keep him. She wasn't afraid that Peter would leave her again. Wilmington had been wrong there. That he had suggested in the bitterness of his heart. Men like Huntley and Winterbaum were always astray, but Peter was not "looking for women." He was just a lost man, distracted by desire, desire that was strong because he was energetic, desire that was mischievous and unmeaning because he had lost his way in these things.

"I don't care so very much how long it takes, Peter; I don't care what it costs me," said Joan, getting her rôle clear at last. "I don't even care—not vitally anyhow—how you wander by the way.

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No. Because you're my man, Peter, and I am your woman. Because so it was written in the beginning. But you are coming over those mountains, my Peter, though they go up to the sky; you are coming through the forests though I have to make a path for you. You are coming to my arms, Peter . . . coming to me. . . ."

So Joan framed her schemes, regardless of the swift approach of the day of battle for Peter. She was resolved to lose nothing by neglect or delay, but also she meant to do nothing precipitate. To begin with she braced herself to the disagreeable task of really thinking—instead of just feeling—about Hetty. She compared herself deliberately point by point with Hetty. Long ago at Pelham Ford she had challenged Hetty—and Peter had come out of the old library in spite of Hetty to watch her dancing. She was younger, she was fresher and cleaner, she was a ray of sunlight to Hetty's flames. Hetty was good company—perhaps. But Peter and Joan had always been good company for each other, interested in a score of common subjects, able to play the same games and run abreast. But Hetty was "easy." There was her strength. Between her and Peter there were no barriers, and between Joan and Peter was a blank wall, a stern taboo upon the primary among youthful interests, a long habit of aloofness, dating from the days when "soppy" was the ultimate word in the gamut of human scorn.

"It's just like that," said Joan.

Those barriers had to be broken down, without a shock. And before that problem Joan maintained a

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frowning, unsuccessful siege. She couldn't begin to flirt with Peter. She couldn't make eyes at him. Such things would be intolerable. She couldn't devise any sort of signal. And so how the devil was this business ever to begin? And while she wrestled vainly with this perplexity she remained more boyish, more good-fellow and companion with Peter than ever. . . .

And while she was still meditating quite fruitlessly on this riddle of changing her relationship to Peter, he was snatched away from her to France.

The thing happened quite unexpectedly. He came up to see her at Hampstead late in the afternoon—it was by a mere chance she was back early. He was full of pride at being chosen to go so soon. He seemed brightly excited at going, keen for the great adventure, the most lovable and animated of Peters—and he might be going to his death. But it was the convention of the time never to think of death, and anyhow never to speak of it. Some engagement held him for the evening, some final farewell spree; she did not ask too particularly what that was. She could guess only too well. Altogether they were about five-and-twenty minutes together, with Miss Jepson always in the room with them; for the most part they talked air shop; and then he prepared to leave with all her scheming still at loose ends in the air. "Well," he said, "good-bye, old Joan," and held out his hand.

"No," said Joan, with a sudden resolution in her eyes. "This time we kiss, Peter."

"Well," said Peter, astonished.

She had surprised him. He stared at her for an

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instant with a half-framed question in his eyes. And then they kissed very gravely and carefully. But she kissed him on the mouth.

For some seconds solemnity hung about them. Then Peter turned upon Miss Jepson. "Do you want a kiss?" said Peter. . . .

Miss Jepson was all for kissing, and then with a laugh and an effect of escape Peter had gone . . . into the outer world . . . into the outer air. . . .

§ 13

He flew to France the next day, above the grey and shining stretches of water and two little anxious ships, and he sent Joan a cheerful message on a picture post-card of a shell-smashed church to tell of his safe arrival.

Joan was dismayed. In war-time we must not brood on death, one does not think of death if one can help it; it is the chance that wrecks all calculations; but the fear of death had fallen suddenly upon all her plans. And what was there left now of all her plans? She might write him letters.

Death is more terrible to a girl in love than to any other living thing. "If he dies," said Joan, "I am killed. I shall be worse than a widow—an Indian girl widow. Suttee; what will be left of me but ashes? . . . Some poor dregs of Joan carrying on a bankrupt life. . . . No me. . . ."

There was nothing for it but to write him letters. And Joan found those letters incredibly difficult to write. All lightness had gone from her touch. After

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long and tiring days with her car she sat writing and tearing up and beginning again. It was so difficult now to write to him, to be easy in manner and yet insidious. She wanted still to seem his old companion, and yet to hint subtly at the new state of things. "There's a dull feeling now you've gone out of England, Peter," she wrote. "I've never had company I cared for in all the world as I care for yours." And, "I shall count the days to your leave, Peter, as soon as I know how many to count. I didn't guess before that you were a sort of necessity to me." Over such sentences, sentences that must have an edge and yet not be too bold, sentences full of tenderness and above all suspicion of "soppiness," Joan pondered like a poet writing a sonnet. . . .

But letters went slowly, and life and death hustled along together very swiftly in the days of the Great War. . . .

§ 14

Joan's mind was full of love and life and the fear of losing them, but Peter was thinking but little of love and life; he was secretly preoccupied with the thought, the forbidden thought, of death, and with the strangeness of war and of this earth seen from an aeroplane ten thousand feet or so above the old battle-fields of mankind. He was seeing the world in plan, and realising what a flat and shallow thing it was. On clear days the circuit of the world he saw had a circumference of hundreds of miles, night flying was a journey amidst the stars with the little black planet far away; there was no former achieve-

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ment of the race that did not seem to him now like a miniature toy set out upon the floor of an untidy nursery. He had beaten up towards the very limits of life and air, to the clear thin air of twenty-two or twenty-three thousand feet; he had been in the blinding sunlight when everything below was still asleep in the blue of dawn.

And the world of history and romance, the world in which he and all his ancestors had believed, a world seen in elevation, of towering frontages, high portals, inaccessible dignities, giddy pinnacles and frowning reputations, had now fallen as flat, it seemed as the façade of the Cloth Hall at Ypres. (He had seen that one day from above, spread out upon the ground.) He was convinced that high above the things of the past he droned his liquid way towards a new sort of life altogether, towards a greater civilisation, a world-wide life for men with no boundaries in it at all except the emptiness of outer space, a life of freedom and exaltation and tremendous achievement. But meanwhile the old things of the world were trying most desperately to kill him. Every day the enemy's anti-aircraft guns seemed to grow more accurate; and high above the little fleecy clouds lurked the braggart Markheimer and the gallant von Papen and suchlike German champions, with their decoys below, ready to swoop and strike. Never before had the world promised Peter so tremendous a spectacle as it seemed to promise now, and never before had his hope of living to see it been so insecure.

When he had enlisted, and even after he had been transferred to the flying corps, Peter had thought

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very little of death. The thought of death only became prevalent in English minds towards the second year of the war. It is a hateful and unnatural thought in youth, easily dismissed altogether unless circumstances press it incessantly upon the attention. But even before Peter went to France two of his set had been killed under his eyes in a collision as they came down into the aerodrome, and a third he had seen two miles away get into a spiral nose dive, struggle out of it again, and then go down to be utterly smashed to pieces. In one day on Salisbury Plain he had seen three accidents, and two, he knew, had been fatal and one had left a legless thing to crawl through life. The messes in France seemed populous with young ghosts; reminiscences of sprees, talk of flying adventures were laced with, "dear old boy! he went west last May." "Went west" was the common phrase. They never said "killed." They hated the very name of death. They did their best, these dear gallant boys, to make the end seem an easy and familiar part of life, of life with which they were so joyously in love. They all knew that the dice were loaded against them, and that as the war went on the adverse chances grew. The first day Peter was out in France he saw a man hit and brought down by a German Archie. Two days after, he found himself the centre of a sudden constellation of whoofing shells that left inky cloudbursts over him and under him and round about him; he saw the fabric of his wing jump and quiver, and dropped six hundred feet or so to shake the gunner off. But *whuff* . . . *whuff* . . . *whuff*, like the bark of a monstrous dog . . . the beast was on him

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again within a minute, and Peter did two or three loops and came about and got away with almost indecent haste. He was trembling; he hated it. And he hated to tremble.

In the mess that evening the talk ran on the "Pigeon-shooter." It seemed that there was this one German gunner far quicker and more deadly than any of his fellows. He had a knack of divining what an airman was going to do. Peter admitted his near escape and sought counsel.

Peter's colleagues watched him narrowly and unostentatiously when they advised him. Their faces were masks and his face was a mask, and they were keen for the faintest intonation of what was behind it. They all hated death, they all tried not to think of death; they all believed that there were Paladins, other fellows, who never thought of death at all. When the tension got too great they ragged; they smashed great quantities of furniture and made incredible volumes of noise. Twice Peter got away from the aerodrome to let things rip in Amiens. But such outbreaks were usually followed by a deep depression of spirit. In the night Peter would wake up and find the thought of death sitting by his bedside.

So far Peter had never had a fight. He had gone over the enemy lines five times, he had bombed a troop train in a station and a regiment resting in a village, he believed he had killed a score or more of Germans on each occasion and he felt not the slightest compunction, but he had not yet come across a fighting Hun plane. He had very grave doubts about the issue of such a fight, a fight that was bound to

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come sooner or later. He knew he was not such a quick pilot as he would like to be. He thought quickly, but he thought rather too much for rapid, steady decisions. He had the balancing, scientific mind. He knew that none of his flights were perfect. Always there was a conflict of intention at some point, a hesitation. He believed he might last for weeks or months, but he knew that somewhen he would be found wanting—just for a second perhaps, just in the turn of the fight. Then he would be killed. He hid quite successfully from all his companions, and particularly from his squadron commander, this conviction, just as he had previously hidden the vague funk that had invariably invaded his being whenever he walked across the grounds towards the machine during his days of instruction, but at the back of his mind the thought that his time was limited was always present. He believed that he had to die; it might be to-morrow or next week or next month, but somewhen within the year.

When these convictions became uppermost in Peter's mind a black discontent possessed him. There are no such bitter critics of life as the young; theirs is a magnificent greed for the splendour of life. They have no patience with delays; their blunders and failures are intolerable. Peter reviewed his two-and-twenty years—it was now nearly three-and-twenty—with an intense dissatisfaction. He had wasted his time, and now he had got into a narrow way that led down and down pitilessly to where there would be no more time to waste. He had been aimless and the world had been aimless, and then it had suddenly

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turned upon him and caught him in this lobster-trap. He had wasted all his chances of great experience. He had never loved a woman or had been well loved because he had frittered away that possibility in a hateful sex excitement with Hetty—who did not even pretend to be faithful to him. And now things had got into this spin to death. It was exactly like a spin—like a spinning nose dive—the whole affair, his life, this war. . . .

He would lie and fret in his bed, and fret all the more because he knew his wakefulness wasted the precious nervous vigour that might save his life next day.

After a black draught of such thoughts Peter would become excessively noisy and facetious in the mess tent. He was recognised and applauded as a wit and as a devil. He was really very good at Limericks, delicately indelicate, upon the names of his fellow officers and of the villages along the front—that was no doubt heredity, the gift of his Aunt Phyllis—and his caricatures adorned the mess. It was also understood that he was a rake. . . .

Peter's evil anticipations were only too well justified. He was put down in his very first fight, which happened over Dompierre. He had bad luck; he was struck by von Papen, one of the crack German fliers on that part of the front. He was up at ten thousand feet or so, more or less covering a low-flying photographer, when he saw a German machine coming over half a mile perhaps or more away as though it was looking for trouble. Peter knew he might funk a fight, and to escape that moral disaster, headed

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straight down for the German, who dropped and made off southward. Peter rejoicing at this flight, pursued, his eyes upon the quarry. Then from out of the sun came von Papen, swiftly and unsuspected, upon Peter's tail, and announced his presence by a whiff of bullets. Peter glanced over his shoulder to discover that he was caught.

"Oh damn!" cried Peter, and ducked his head, and felt himself stung at the shoulder and wrist. Splinters were flying about him.

He tried a side-slip, and as he did so he had an instant's vision of yet another machine, a Frenchman this time, falling like a bolt out of the blue upon his assailant. The biter was bit.

Peter tried to come round and help, but he turned right over sideways and dropped, and suddenly found himself with the second Hun plane coming up right ahead of him. Peter blazed away, but God! how his wrist hurt him! He cursed life and death. He blazed away with his machine going over more and more, and the landscape rushing up over his head and then getting in front of him and circling round. For some seconds he did not know what was up and what was down. He continued to fire, firing earthward for a long second or so after his second enemy had disappeared from his vision.

The world was spinning round faster and faster, and everything was moving away outward, faster and faster, as if it was all hastening to get out of his way. . . .

This surely was a spinning nose dive, the spinning nose dive—from within. Round and round. Confus-

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ing and giddy! Just as he had seen poor old Gordon go down. . . . But one didn't feel at all—as Peter had supposed one must feel—like an egg in an egg-whisk! . . .

Down spun the aeroplane, as a maple fruit in autumn spins to the ground. Then this still living thing that had been Peter, all bloody and broken, made a last supreme effort. And his luck seconded his effort. The spin grew slower and flatter. Control of this lurching, eddying aeroplane seemed to come back, escaped again, mocked him. The ground was very near. *Now!* The sky swung up over the whirling propeller again and stayed above it, and again the machine obeyed a reasonable soul.

He was out of it! Out of a nose dive! Yes. Steady! It is so easy when one's head is whirling to get back into a spin again. Steady! . . .

He talked to himself. "Oh! good Peter! *Good Peter! Clever Peter.* Wonderful Mr. Toad! Stick it! Stick it!" But what a queer right hand it was! It was covered with blood. And it crumpled up in the middle when he clinched it! Never mind!

He was in the lowest story of the air. The Hun and the Frenchman up there were in another world.

Down below, quite close—not five hundred feet now—were field-greys running and shooting at him. They were counting their chicken before he was hatched—no, smashed. . . . He wasn't done yet! Not by any manner of means! A wave of great cheerfulness and confidence buoyed up Peter. He felt equal to any enterprise. Should he drop and let the bawling Boche have a round or so?

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And there was a Hun machine smashed upside down on the ground. Was that the second fellow?

Flick! a bullet!

Wiser counsels came to Peter. This was no place for a sick and giddy man with a smashed and bleeding wrist. He must get away.

Up! Which way was west? West? The sun rises in the east and sets in the west. But where had the sun got to? It was hidden by his wing. Shadows! The shadows would be pointing north-east, that was the tip. . . . Up! There were the Boche trenches. No, Boche reserve trenches. . . . Going west, going west. . . . Rip! Snap! Bullet through the wing, and a wire flickering about. He ducked his head. . . . He put the machine up steeply to perhaps a thousand feet. . . .

He had an extraordinary feeling that he and the machine were growing and swelling, that they were getting bigger and bigger, and the sky and the world and everything else smaller. At last he was a monstrous man in a vast aeroplane in the tiniest of universes. He was as great as God.

That wrist! And this blood! Blood! And great, glowing spots of blood that made one's sight indistinct. . . .

He coughed, and felt his mouth full of blood, and spat it out and retched. . . .

Then in an instant he was a little thing again, and the sky and the world were immense. He had a lucid interval.

One ought to go up and help that Frenchman. Where were they fighting? . . . *Up*, anyhow!

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This must be No Man's Land. That crumpled little thing was a dead body surely. Barbed wire. More barbed wire.

The engine was missing. Ugh! *That fairly put the lid on!*

Peter was already asleep and dreaming. The great blood spots had returned and increased, but now they were getting black, they were black, huge black blotches; they blotted out the world!

Peter, Peter as we have known him, discontinued existence. . . .

It was an automaton, aided by good luck, that dropped his machine half a mile behind the French trenches. . . .

§ 15

Peter had no memory of coming to again from his faint. For a long time he must have continued to be purely automatic. His flaming wrist was the centre of his being. Then for a time consciousness resumed, as abruptly as the thread of a story one finds upon the torn page of a novel.

He found himself in the midst of a friendly group of pale blue uniforms; he was standing up and being very lively in spite of the strong taste of blood in his mouth and a feeling that his wrist was burning as a match burns, and that the left upper half of his body had been changed into a lump of raw and bleeding meat. He was talking a sort of French. "*C'est sacré bon stuff, cet eau-de-vie Française,*" he was saying gaily and rather loudly.

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"Haf some more," said a friendly voice.

"Not half, old chap," said Peter, and felt at the time that this was not really good French.

He tried to slap the man on the shoulder, but he couldn't.

"*Bon!*" he said, "as we say in England," and felt that that remark also failed.

Some one protested softly against his being given more brandy. . . .

Then this clear fragment ended again. There was a kind of dream of rather rough but efficient surgery upon a shoulder and arm that was quite probably his own, and some genially amiable conversation. There was a very nice Frenchman with a black beard and soft eyes, who wore a long white overall, and seemed to be looking after him as tenderly as a woman could do.

But with these things mingled the matter of delirium. At one time the Kaiser prevailed in Peter's mind, a large, foolish, pompous person with waxed moustaches and distraught eyes, who crawled up to Peter over immense piles of white and grey and green rotting corpses, and began gnawing at his shoulder almost absent-mindedly. Peter struggled and protested. What business had this beastly German to come interfering with Peter's life? He started a vast argument about that, in which all sorts of people, including the nice-looking Frenchman in the white overall, took part.

Peter was now making a formal complaint about the conduct of the universe. "No," he insisted time after time, "I will not deal with subordinates. I

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insist on seeing the Head," and so at last he found himself in the presence of the Lord God. . . .

But Peter's vision of the Lord God was the most delirious thing of all. He imagined him in an office, a little office in a vast building, and so out of the way that people had to ask each other which was the passage and which the staircase. Old men stood and argued at corners with Peter's girl-guide whether it was this way or that. People were being shown over the building by girl-guides; it was very like the London War Office, only more so; there were great numbers of visitors, and they all seemed to be in considerable hurry and distress, and most of them were looking for the Lord God to lodge a complaint and demand an explanation, just as Peter was. For a time all the visitors became wounded men, and nurses mixed up with the girl-guides, and Peter was being carried through fresh air to an ambulance-train. His shoulder and wrist were very painful and singing, as it were, a throbbing duet together.

For a time Peter did seem to see the Lord God; he was in his office, a little brown, rather tired-looking man in a kepi, and Peter was on a stretcher, and the Lord God or some one near him was saying: "*Quel numéro?*" But that passed away, and Peter was again conducting his exploration of the corridors with a girl-guide who was sometimes like Joan and sometimes like Hetty—and then there was a queer disposition to loiter in the passages. . . . For a time he sat in deshabille while Hetty tried to explain God. . . . Dreams cross the scent of dreams.

Then it seemed to Peter's fevered brain that he

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was sitting, and had been sitting for a long time, in the little office of the Lord God of Heaven and Earth. And the Lord God had the likeness of a lean, tired, intelligent-looking oldish man, with an air of futile friendliness masking a fundamental indifference.

“My dear sir,” the Lord God was saying, “do please put that cushion behind your poor shoulder. I can’t bear to see you so uncomfortable. And tell me everything. Everything. . . .”

The office was the dingiest and untidiest little office it was possible to imagine. The desk at which God sat was in a terrible litter. On a side-table were some grubby test-tubes and bottles with which the Lord God had apparently been trying over a new element. The windows had not been cleaned for ages, they were dark with spiders’ webs, they crawled with a buzzing nightmare of horrible and unmeaning life. It was a most unbusinesslike office. There were no proper files, no card indexes; bundles of dusty papers were thrust into open fixtures, papers littered the floors, and there were brass-handled drawers— Peter looked again, and blood was oozing from these drawers and little cries came out of them. He glanced quickly at God, and God was looking at him. “But did you really make this world?” he asked.

“I *thought* I did,” said God.

“But why did you do it? *Why?*”

“Ah, *there* you have me!” said the Lord God with bonhomie.

“But why don’t you exert yourself?” said Peter, hammering at the desk with his sound hand. “Why don’t you exert yourself?”

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Could delirium have ever invented a more monstrous conception than this of Peter hammering on an untidy desk amidst old pen nibs, bits of sealing-wax, half-sheets of note-paper, returns of nature's waste, sample bones of projected animals, mineral samples, dirty little test-tubes, and the like, and lecturing the Almighty upon the dreadful confusion into which the world had fallen? "Here was I, sir, and millions like me, with a clear promise of life and freedom! And what are we now? Bruises, red bones, dead bodies! This German Kaiser fellow—an ass, sir, a perfect ass, gnawing a great hole in my shoulder! He and his son, stuffing themselves with a Blut-Wurst made out of all our lives and happiness! What does it mean, sir? Has it gone entirely out of your control? And it isn't as if the whole thing was ridiculous, sir. It isn't. In some ways it's an extraordinarily fine world—one has to admit that. That is why it is all so distressing, so unendurably distressing. I don't in the least want to leave it."

"You admit that it's fine—in places," said the Lord God, as if he valued the admission.

"But the management, sir! the management! *Yours*—ultimately. Don't you realise, sir—? I had the greatest trouble in finding you. Half the messengers don't know where this den of yours is. It's *forgotten*. Practically forgotten. The Head Office! And now I'm here I can tell you everything is going to rack and ruin, driving straight to an absolute and final smash and break-up."

"As bad as that?" said the Lord God.

"It's the appalling waste," Peter continued. "The

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waste of material, the waste of *us*, the waste of everything. A sort of splendour in it, there is; touches of real genius about it, that I would be the last to deny; but that only increases the bitterness of the disorder. It's a good enough world to lament. It's a good enough life to resent having to lose it. There's some lovely things in it, sir; courage, endurance, and oh! many beautiful things. But when one gets here, when one begins to ask for you and hunt about for you, and finds this, this muddle, sir, then one begins to understand. *Look* at this room, consider it—as a general manager's room. No decency. No order. Everywhere the dust of ages, muck indescribable, bacteria! And that!”

That was a cobweb across the grimy window-pane, in which a freshly entangled bluebottle fly was buzzing fussily. “That ought not to be here at all,” said Peter. “It really ought not to exist at all. Why does it? Look at that beastly spider in the corner! Why do you suffer all these cruel and unclean things?”

“You don't like it?” said the Lord God, without any sign either of apology or explanation.

“No,” said Peter.

“Then *change* it,” said the Lord God, nodding his head as who should say “got you there.”

“But how are we to change it?”

“If you have no will to change it, you have no right to criticise it,” said the Lord God, leaning back with the weariness of one who has had to argue with each generation from Job onward, precisely the same objections and precisely the same arguments.

“After all,” said the Lord God, giving Peter no

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time to speak further; "after all, you are three-and-twenty, Mr. Peter Stubland, and you've been pretty busy complaining of me and everything between me and you, your masters, pastors, teachers, and so forth, for the last half-dozen years. Meanwhile, is your own record good? Positive achievements, forgive me, are still to seek. You've been nearly drunk several times, you've soiled yourself with a lot of very cheap and greedy love-making—I gave you something beautiful there anyhow, and you knew that while you spoiled it—you've been a vigorous member of the consuming class, and really you've got nothing clear and planned, nothing at all. You complain of my lack of order; where's the order in your own mind? If I was the hot-tempered old autocrat some of you people pretend I am, I should have been tickling you up with a thunderbolt long ago. But I happen to have this democratic fad as badly as any one—Free Will is what they used to call it—and so I leave you to work out your own salvation. And if I leave you alone then I have to leave that other—that other Mr. Toad at Potsdam alone. He tries me, I admit, almost to the miracle pitch at times with the tone of his everlasting prepaid telegrams—but one has to be fair. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the Kaiser. I've got to leave you all alone if I leave one alone. Don't you see that? In spite of the mess you are in. So don't blame me. Don't blame me. There isn't a thing in the whole of this concern of mine that Man can't control if only he chooses to control it. It's arranged like that. There's a lot more system here than you suspect, only it's too ingenious for you

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to see. It's yours to command. If you want a card index for the world—well, get a card index. I won't prevent you. If you don't like my spiders, kill my spiders. I'm not conceited about them. If you don't like the Kaiser, hang him, assassinate him. Why don't you abolish Kings? You could. But it was your sort, with your cheap and quick efficiency schemes, who set up Saul—in spite of my protests—ages ago. . . . Humanity either makes or breeds or tolerates all its own afflictions, great and small. Not my doing. Take Kings and Courts. Take dung-heaps and flies. It's astonishing you people haven't killed off all the flies in the world long ago. They do no end of mischief, and it would be perfectly easy to do. They're purely educational. Purely. Even as you lie in hospital, there they are buzzing within an inch of your nose and landing on your poor forehead to remind you of what a properly organised humanity could do for its own comfort. But there's men in this world who want me to act as a fly-paper, simply because they are too lazy to get one for themselves. My dear Mr. Peter! if people haven't taught you properly, teach yourself. If they don't know enough, find out. It's all here. All here." He made a comprehensive gesture. "I'm not mocking you."

"You're not mocking me?" said Peter keenly. . . .

"It depends upon you," said the Lord God with an enigmatic smile. "You asked me why I didn't exert myself. Well—why don't *you* exert yourself?"

"Why don't *you* exert yourself?" the Lord God repeated almost rudely, driving it home.

"That pillow under your shoulder still isn't comfortable," said the Lord God, breaking off. . . .

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The buzzing of the entangled fly changed to the drone of a passing aeroplane, and the dingy office expanded into a hospital ward. Some one was adjusting Peter's pillows. . . .

§ 16

If his shoulder-blade was to mend, Peter could not be moved; and for a time he remained in the French hospital in a long airy room that was full mostly with flying men like himself. At first he could not talk very much, but later he made some friends. He was himself very immobile, but other men came and sat by him to talk.

He talked chiefly to two Americans, who were serving at that time in the French flying corps. He found it much easier to talk English than French in his exhausted state, for though both he and Joan spoke French far above the average public-school level, he found that now it came with an effort. It was as if his mind had for a time been pared down to its essentials.

These Americans amused and interested him tremendously. He had met hardly any Americans before so as to talk to them at all intimately, but they suffered from an inhibition of French perhaps more permanent than his own, and so the three were thrown into an unlimited intimacy of conversation. At first he found these Americans rather fatiguing, and then he found them very refreshing because of their explicitness of mind. Except when they broke into frothy rapids of slang they were never allusive; in serious talk they said everything. They laid a firm

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foundation for all their assertions. That is the last thing an Englishman does. They talked of the war and of the prospect of America coming into the war, and of England and America and again of the war, and of the French and of the French and Americans and of the war, and of Taft's League to Enforce Peace and the true character of Wilson and Teddy and of the war, and of Sam Hughes and Hughes the Australian, and whether every country has the Hughes it deserves and of the war, and of going to England after the war, and of Stratford-on-Avon and Chester and Windsor, and of the peculiarities of English people. Their ideas of England Peter discovered were strange and picturesque. They believed all Englishmen lived in a glow of personal loyalty to the Monarch, and were amazed to learn that Peter's sentiments were republican; and they thought that every Englishman dearly loved a lord. "We think that of Americans," said Peter. "That's our politeness," said they in a chorus, and started a train of profound discoveries in international relationships in Peter's mind.

"The ideas of every country about every country are necessarily a little stale. What England is, what England thinks, and what England is becoming, isn't on record. What is on record is the England of the eighties and nineties."

"Now that's very true," said the nearer American. "And you can apply it right away, with a hundred per cent. or so added, to all your ideas of America."

As a consequence both sides in this leisurely discussion found how widely they had been out in their

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ideas about each other. Peter discovered America as not nearly so commercial and individualistic as he had supposed; he had been altogether ignorant of the increasing part the universities were playing in her affairs; the Americans were equally edified to find that the rampant imperialism of Cecil Rhodes and his group no longer ruled the British imagination. "If things are so," said the diplomatist in the nearer bed, "then I seem to see a lot more coming together between us than I've ever been disposed to think possible before. If you British aren't so keen over this king business——"

"*Keen!*" said Peter.

"If you don't hold you are IT and unapproachable—in the way of Empires."

"The Empire is yours for the asking," said Peter.

"Then all there is between us is the Atlantic—and that grows narrower every year. We're the same people."

"So long as we have the same languages and literature," said Peter. . . .

From these talks onward Peter may be regarded as having a Foreign Policy of his own.

§ 17

And it was in this hospital that Peter first clearly decided to become personally responsible for the reconstruction of the British Empire.

This decision was precipitated by the sudden re-~~a~~pppearance in his world of Mir Jelalludin, the Indian

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whom he had once thought unsuitable company for Joan.

Peter had been dozing when Jelalludin appeared. He found him sitting beside the bed, and stared at the neat and smiling brown face, unable to place him, and still less able to account for the uniform he was wearing. For Jelalludin was wearing the uniform of the French aviator, and across his breast he wore four palms.

"I had the pleasure of knowing you at Cambridge," said Mir Jelalludin in his Indian staccato. "Cha'med I was of use to you."

An explanatory Frenchman standing beside the Indian dabbed his finger on the last of Jelalludin's decorations. "He killed von Papen after your crash," said the Frenchman.

"You were that Frenchman—?" said Peter.

"In your fight," said Mir Jelalludin.

"He'd have finished me," said Peter.

"I finished *him*," said the Indian, laughing with sheer happiness, and showing his beautiful teeth.

Peter contemplated the situation. He made a movement and was reminded of his bandages.

"I wish I could shake hands," he said.

The Indian smiled with a phantom malice in his smile.

Peter went bluntly to a question that had arisen in his mind. "Why aren't you in khaki?" he asked.

"The Brish' Gu'ment objects to Indian flyers," said Mir Jelalludin. "I tried. But Brish' Gu'ment thinks flying beyond us. And bad for Prestige. Pres-

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tige very important thing to Brish' Gu'ment. So I came to France."

Peter continued to digest the situation.

"Of course," said Jelalludin, "no commissions given in regular army to Indians. Brish' soldiers not allowed to salute Indian officers. Not part of the Great White Race. Otherwise hundreds of flyers could come from India, hundreds and hundreds. We play cricket—good horsemen. Many Indian gentlemen must be first-rate flying stuff. But Gu'ment says 'No.'"

He continued to smile more cheerfully than ever.

"Hundreds of juvenile Indians ready and willing to be killed for your Empire"—he rubbed it in—"but—No, Thank You. Indo-European people we are, Aryans, more consanguineous than Jews or Japanese. Ready to take our places beside you. . . . Well, anyhow, I rejoice to see that you are recovering to entire satisfaction. It was only when I descended after the fight that I perceived that it was you, and it seemed to me then that you were very seriously injured. I was anxious. And memories of otha days. I felt I must see you."

Peter and the young Indian looked at one another.

"Look here, Jelalludin," he said, "I must apologise."

"But why?"

"As part of the British Empire. No! don't interrupt. I do. But, I say, do they—do we really bar you—absolutely?"

"Absolutely. Not only from the air force, but from any commission at all. The lowest little bazaar

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clerk from Clapham, who has got a commission, is over our Indian officers—over our princes. It is an everlasting humiliation. Necessary for Prestige.”

“The French have more sense, anyhow.”

“They take us on our merits.

“If I *had* a British commission,” said Jelalludin, “I should be made very uncomfortable. It is the way with British officers and gentlemen. The French are not so—particular.”

“At present,” said Peter, “I can’t be moved.”

“You improve.”

“But when I get up this is one of the things I have to see to. You see, Jelalludin, this Empire of ours—yours and mine—has got into the hands of a gang of gory Old Fools. Partly my negligence—as God said.”

“God?” said Jelalludin.

“Oh, nothing! I mean we young men haven’t been given a proper grasp of the Indian situation. Or any situation. No. This business of the commissions—! after all that you fellows have done here in France! It’s disgraceful. You see, we don’t see or learn anything about India. Even at Cambridge——”

“You didn’t see much of us there,” smiled the Indian.

“I’m sorry,” said Peter.

“I didn’t come to talk about this,” said Jelalludin, “it came out.”

“I’m glad it came out,” said Peter.

A pause.

“I mustn’t tire you,” said Mir Jelalludin, and rose to go.

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Peter thanked him for coming.

“And your cha’ming sister?” asked the Indian, as if by an afterthought.

“Foster-sister. She drives a big car about London,” said Peter. . . .

Peter meditated profoundly upon that interview for some days.

Then he tried over the opinions of the Americans about India. But Americans are of little help to the British about India. Their simple uncriticised colour prejudice covers all “Asiatics” except the inhabitants of Siberia. They had a more than English ignorance of ethnology, and Oswald had at least imparted some fragments of that important science to his ward. Their working classification of mankind was into Anglo-Saxons, Frenchmen, Sheenies, Irishmen, Dutchmen, Dagoes, Chinks, Coloured People, and black Niggers. They esteemed Mir Jelalludin a Coloured Person. Peter had to fall back upon himself again.

§ 18

It contributed to the thoroughness of Peter’s thinking that it was some time before he could be put into a position to read comfortably. And it has to be recorded in the teeth of the dictates of sentiments and the most sacred traditions of romance that the rôle played by both Joan and Hetty in these meditations was secondary and incidental. It was an attenuated and abstract Peter who lay in the French hospital, his chief link of sense with life was a growing hunger;

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he thought very much about fate, pain, the nature of things, and God, and very little about persons and personal incidents—and so strong an effect had his dream that God remained fixed steadfastly in his mind as that same intellectual non-interventionist whom he had visited in the fly-blown office. But about God's rankling repartee, "Why don't *you* exert yourself?" there was accumulating a new conception, the conception of Man taking hold of the world, unassisted by God but with the acquiescence of God, and in fulfilment of some remote, incomprehensible planning on the part of God. Probably Peter in thinking this was following one of the most ancient and well-beaten of speculative paths, but it seemed to him that it was a new way of thinking. And he was Man. It was he who had to establish justice in the earth, achieve unity, and rule first the world and then the stars.

He lay staring at the ceiling, and quite happy now that healing and habituation had freed him from positive pain, thinking out how he was to release and cooperate with his India, which had invariably the face of Mir Jelalludin, how he was to reunite himself with his brothers in America, and how the walls and divisions of mankind, which look so high and invincible upon the ground and so trivial from twelve thousand feet above, were to be subdued to such greater ends.

It was only as the blood-corpuscles multiplied inside him that Peter ceased to be constantly Man contemplating his Destiny and Races and Empires, and for more and more hours in the day shrank to the dimensions and natural warmth of Mr. Peter

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Stubland contemplating convalescence in Blighty. He became eager first for the dear old indulgent and welcoming house at Pelham Ford, and then for prowls and walks and gossip with Joan and Oswald, and then, then for London and a little "fun." Life was ebbing back into what is understood to be the lower nature, and was certainly the most intimate and distinctive substance of Mr. Peter Stubland. His correspondence became of very great interest to him. Certain letters from Joan, faint but pursuing, had reached him, those letters over which Joan had sat like a sonneteer. He read them and warmed to them. He thought what luck it was that he had a Joan to be the best of sisters to him, to be even more than a sister. She was the best friend he had, and it was jolly to read so plainly that he was her best friend. He would like to do work with Joan better than with any man he knew. Driving a car wasn't half good enough for her. Some day he'd be able to show her how to fly, and he would. It would be great fun going up with Joan on a double control and letting her take over. There must be girls in the world who would fly as well as any man, or better.

He scribbled these ideas in his first letter to Joan, and they pleased her mightily. To fly with Peter would be surely to fly straight into heaven.

And mixed up with Joan's letters were others that he presently sorted out from hers and put apart, as though even letters might hold inconvenient communion. For the most part they came from Hetty Reinhart, and displayed the emotions of a consciously delicious female enamoured and enslaved by one of

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the heroes of the air. She had dreamt of him coming in through the skylight of her studio, Lord Cupid visiting his poor little Psyche—"but it was only the moonlight," and she thought of him now always with great overshadowing wings. Sometimes they were great white wings that beat above her, and sometimes they were thrillingly soft and exquisite wings, like the wings of the people in "Peter Wilkins." She sent him a copy of "Peter Wilkins," book beloved by Poe and all readers of the fantastic. Then came the news of his smash. She had been clever enough to link it with the death of von Papen, the Hun Matador. "Was that your fight, dear Peterkins? Did you *begin* on Goliath?" As the cordials of recovery raced through Peter's veins there were phases when the thought of visiting the yielding fair, Jovelike and triumphant in winged glory, became not simply attractive but insistent. But he wrote to Hetty modestly, "They've clipped one wing for ever."

And so in a quite artless and inevitable way Peter found his first leave, when the British hospital had done with him, mortgaged up to hilt almost equally to dear friend Joan and to Cleopatra Hetty.

The young man only realised the duplicity of his nature and the complications of his position as the hospital boat beat its homeward way across the Channel. The night was smooth and fine, with a high full moon which somehow suggested Hetty, and with a cloud scheme of great beauty and distinction that had about it a flavour of Joan. And as he meditated upon these complications that had been happening in his more personal life while his attention

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had been still largely occupied with divinity and politics, he was hailed by an unfamiliar voice and addressed as "Simon Peter." "Excuse me," said the stout young officer tucked up warmly upon the next deck chair between a pair of crutches, "but aren't you Simon Peter?"

Peter had heard that name somewhere before. "My name's Stubland," he said.

"Ah! Stubland! I forgot your surname. Of High Cross School?"

Peter peered and saw a round fair face that slowly recalled memories. "Wait a moment!" said Peter. . . . "Ames!"

"Guessed it in one. Probyn and I were chums."

"What have you got?" said Peter.

"Leg below the knee off, damn it!" said Ames. "One month at the front. Not much of a career. But they say they do you a leg now better than reality. But I'd have liked to have batted the pants of the unspeakable Hun a bit more before I retired. What have you got?"

"Wrist chiefly and shoulder-blade. Air fight. After six weeks."

"Does you out?"

"For flying, I'm afraid. But there's lots of ground j-obs. And anyhow—home's pleasant."

"Yes," said Ames. "Home's pleasant. But I'd like to have got a scalp of some sort. Doubt if I killed a single Hun. D'you remember Probyn at school?—a dark chap."

Peter found he still hated Probyn. "I remember him," he said.

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“He’s killed. He got the M. M. and the V. C. He wouldn’t take a commission. He was sergeant-major in my battalion. I just saw him, but I’ve heard about him since. His men worshipped him. Queer how men come out in a new light in this war.”

“How was he killed?” asked Peter.

“In a raid. He was with a bombing-party, and three men straggled up a sap and got cornered. He’d taken two machine-guns and they’d used most of the bombs, and his officer was knocked out, so he sent the rest of his party back with the stuff and went to fetch his other men. One had been hit and the other two were thinking of surrendering when he came back to them. He stood right up on the parados, they say, and slung bombs at the Germans, a whole crowd of them, until they went back. His two chaps got the wounded man out and carried him back, and left him still slinging bombs. He’d do that. He’d stand right up and bung bombs at them until they seemed to lose their heads. Then he seems to have spotted that this particular bunch of Germans had gone back into a sort of blind alley. He was very quick at spotting a situation, and he followed them up, and the sheer blank recklessness of it seems to have put their wind up absolutely. They’d got bombs and there was an officer with them. But they held up their hands—nine of them. Panic. He got them right across to our trenches before the search-lights found him, and the Germans got him and two of their own chaps with a machine-gun. That was just the last thing he did. He’d been going about for months doing stunts like that—sort of charmed

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life business. The way he slung bombs, they say, amounted to genius.

"They say he'd let his hair grow long—perfect golliwog. When I saw him it certainly *was* long, but he'd got it plastered down. And there's a story that he used to put white on his face like a clown with a great red mouth reaching from ear to ear— Yes, painted on. It's put the wind up the Huns something frightful. Coming suddenly on a chap like that in the glare of a search-light or a flare."

"Queer end," said Peter.

"Queer chap altogether," said Ames. . . .

He thought for a time, and then went on to philosophise about Probyn.

"Clever chap he was," said Ames, "but an absolute failure. Of course old High Cross wasn't anything very much in the way of a school, but whatever there was to be learned there he learned. He was the only one of us who ever got hold of speaking French. I heard him over there—regular fluent. And he'd got a memory like an encyclopædia. I always said he'd do wonders. . . ."

Ames paused. "Sex was his downfall," said Ames.

"I saw a lot of him altogether, off and on, right up to the time of the war," said Ames. "My people are furniture people, you know, in Tottenham Court Road, and his were in the public-house fitting line—in Highbury. We went about together. I saw him make three or four good starts, but there was always some trouble. I suppose most of us were a bit—well, *keen* on sex; most of us young men. But he was ravenous. Even at school. Always on it. Always

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thinking about it. I could tell you stories of him. . . . Rum place that old school was, come to think of it. They left us about too much. I don't know how far you—. . . . Of course you were about the most innocent thing that ever came to High Cross School," said Ames.

"Yes," said Peter. "I suppose I was."

"Curious how it gnaws at you once it's set going," said Ames. . . .

Peter made a noise that might have been assent.

Ames remained thinking for a time, watching the swish and surge of the black Channel waters. Peter pursued their common topic in silence.

"What's the sense of it?" said Ames, plunging towards philosophy.

"It's the system on which life goes—on this planet," Peter contributed, but Ames had not had a biological training, and was unprepared to take that up.

"Too much of it," said Ames.

"Oversexed," said Peter.

"Whether one ought to hold oneself in or let oneself go," said Ames. "But perhaps these things don't bother you?"

Peter wasn't disposed towards confidences with Ames. "I'm moderate in all things," he said.

"Lucky chap! I've worried about this business no end. One doesn't want to use up all one's life like a blessed monkey. There's other things in life—if only this everlasting want-a-girl want-a-woman would let one get at them."

His voice at Peter's shoulder ceased for a while,

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and then resumed. "It's the best chaps, seems to me, who get it worst. Chaps with imaginations, I mean, men of vitality. Take old Probyn. He could have done anything—anything. And he was eaten up. Like a fever. . . ."

Ames went down into a black silence for a couple of minutes or more, and came up again with an astonishing resolution. "I shall marry," he said.

"Got the lady?" asked Peter.

"Near enough," said Ames darkly.

"St. Paul's method," said Peter.

"I was talking to a fellow the other day," said Ames. "He'd got a curious idea. Something in it perhaps. He said that every one was clean-minded and romantic, that's how he put it, about sixteen or seventeen. Even if you've been a bit dirty as a school-boy you sort of clean up then. Adolescence, in fact. And he said you ought to fall in love and pair off then. Kind of Romeo and Juliet business. First love and all that."

"Juliet wasn't exactly Romeo's first love," said Peter.

"Young beggar!" said Ames. "But, anyhow, that was only by way of illustration. His idea was that we'd sort of put off marriage and all that sort of thing later and later. Twenty-eight. Thirty. Thirty-five even. And that put us wrong. We kind of curdled and fermented. Spoiled with keeping. Larked about with girls we didn't care for. Demi-vierge stunts and all that. Got promiscuous. Let anything do. His idea was you'd got to pair off with a girl and look after her, and she look after you. And keep faith.

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And stop all stray mucking about. 'Settle down to a healthy sexual peace,' he said."

Ames paused. "Something in it?"

"Ever read the Life of Lord Herbert of Cherbury?" asked Peter.

"Never."

"He worked out that theory quite successfully. Married before he went up to Oxford. There's a lot in it. Sex. Delayed. Fretting. Overflowing. Getting experimental and nasty. . . . But that doesn't exhaust the question. The Old Experimenter sits there——"

"*What* experimenter?"

"The chap who started it all. There's no way yet of fitting it up perfectly. We've got to make it fit."

Peter was so interested that he forgot his aversion from confiding in Ames. The subject carried him on.

"Any healthy young man," Peter generalised, "could be happy and contented with any pretty girl, so far as love-making goes. It doesn't strike you—as a particularly recondite art, eh? But you've got to be in love with each other generally. That's more difficult. You've got to talk together and go about together. In a complicated artificial world. The sort of woman it's easy and pleasant to make love to may not be the sort of woman you really think splendid. It's easier to make love to a woman you don't particularly respect, who's good fun, and all that. Which is just the reason why you wouldn't be tied up with her for ever. No."

"So we worship the angels and marry the flappers,"

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said Ames. . . . "I shan't do that, anyhow. The fact is, one needs a kind of motherliness in a woman."

"By making love too serious, we've made it not serious enough," said Peter with oracular profundity, and then in reaction, "Oh! *I don't know.*"

"*I don't know,*" said Ames.

"Which doesn't in the least absolve us from the necessity of going on living right away."

"I shall marry," said Ames, in a tone of unalterable resolve.

They lapsed into self-centred meditations. . . .

"Why! there's the coast," said Ames suddenly.

"Quite close, too. *Dark.* Do you remember, before the war, how the lights of Folkestone used to run along the top there like a necklace of fire?"

§ 19

The powers that were set over Peter's life played fast and loose with him in the matter of leave. They treated him at first as though he was a rare and precious hero—who had to be saved from his friends. They put him to mend at Broadstairs, and while he was at Broadstairs he had three visits from Hetty, whose days were free, and only one hasty Sunday glimpse of Joan, who was much in demand at the Ministry of Munitions. And Oswald could not come to see him because Oswald himself was a casualty mending slowly at Pelham Ford. Hetty and Joan and returning health fired the mind of Peter with great expectations of the leave that was to come. These expectations were, so to speak, painted in

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panels. Forgetful of the plain fact that a Joan who was not available at Broadstairs would also not be available at Pelham Ford, the panels devoted to the latter place invariably included Joan as a principal figure, they represented leave as a glorious escape from war to the space, the sunshine, the endlessness of such a summer vacation as only schoolboys know. He would be climbing trees with Joan, "mucking about" in the boats with Joan, lying on the lawn just on the edge of the cedar's shadow with Joan, nibbling stems of grass. The London scenes were narrower and more intense. He wanted the glitter and fun of lunching in the Carlton grill-room or dining at the Criterion in the company of a tremendous hat and transparent lace, and there were scenes in Hetty's studio, quite a lot of fantastic and elemental scenes in Hetty's studio.

But the Germans have wiped those days of limitless leisure out of the life of mankind. Even our schoolboys stay up in their holidays now to make munitions. Peter had scarcely clambered past the approval of a medical board before active service snatched him again. He was wanted urgently. Peter was no good as a pilot any more, it was true; his right wrist was doomed to be stiff and weak henceforth, and there were queer little limitations upon the swing of his arm, but the powers had suddenly discovered other uses for him. There was more of Peter still left than they had assumed at first. For one particular job, indeed, he was just the man they needed. They marked him down to join "balloons" at the earliest possible moment, for just then they were de-

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veloping kite balloons very fast for artillery observation, and were eager for any available men. Peter was slung out into freedom for one-and-twenty days, and then told to report himself for special instruction in the new work at Richmond Park.

One-and-twenty days! He had never been so inordinately greedy for life, free to live and go as you please, in all his days before. Something must happen, he was resolved, something bright and intense, on every one of those days. He snatched at both sides of life. He went down to Pelham Ford, but he had a little list of engagements in town in his pocket. Joan was not down there, and never before had he realised how tremendously absent Joan could be. And then at the week-end she couldn't come. There were French and British G. H. Q. bigwigs to take down to some experiments in Sussex, but she couldn't even explain that, she had to send a telegram at the eleventh hour: "*Week-end impossible.*" To Peter that seemed the most brutally offhand evasion in the world. Peter was disappointed in Pelham Ford. It was altogether different from those hospital dreams; even the weather, to begin with, was chilly and unsettled. Oswald had had a setback with his knee, and had to keep his leg up on a deck chair; he could only limp about on crutches. He seemed older and more distant from Peter than he had ever been before; Peter was obsessed by the idea that he ought to be treated with solicitude, and a further gap was opened between them by Peter's subaltern habit of saying "sir" instead of the old familiar "Nobby." Peter sat beside the deck chair through long and

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friendly, but very impatient hours; and he talked all the flying shop he could, and Oswald talked of his Africans, and they went over the war and newspapers again and again, and they reverted to Africa and flying shop, and presently they sat through several silences, and at the end of one of them Oswald inquired: "Have you ever played chess, Peter—or piquet?"

Now chess and piquet are very good pastimes in their way, but not good enough for the precious afternoons of a very animated and greedy young man keenly aware that they are probably his last holiday afternoons on earth.

Sentiment requires that Peter should have gone to London and devoted himself to adorning the marginal freedom of Joan's days. He did do this once. He took her out to dinner to Jules', in Jermyn Street; he did her well there; but she was a very tired Joan that day; she had driven a good hundred and fifty miles, and, truth to tell, in those days Peter did not like Joan and she did not like herself in London, and more especially in smart London restaurants. They sat a little aloof from one another, and about them all the young couples warmed to one another and smiled. She jarred with this atmosphere of meretricious ease and indulgence. She had had no time to get back to Hampstead and change; she was at a disadvantage in her uniform. It became a hair shirt, a Nessus shirt as the evening proceeded. It emphasised the barrier of seriousness between them cruelly. She was a policeman, a prig, the harshest thing in life; all those pretty little cocottes and flirts, with their little soft brightnesses and adornments, must be glancing at her coarse,

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unrevealing garments and noting her for the fool she was. She felt ugly and ungainly; she was far too much tormented by love to handle herself well. She could get no swing and forgetfulness into the talk. And about Peter, too, was a reproach for her. He talked of work and the war—as if in irony. And his eyes wandered. Naturally, his eyes wandered.

“Good night, old Peter,” she said when they parted.

She lay awake for two hours, exasperated, miserable beyond tears, because she had not said: “Good night, old Peter *dear*.” She had intended to say it. It was one of her prepared effects. But she was a weary and a frozen young woman. Duty had robbed her of the energy for love. Why had she let things come to this pass? Peter was her business, and Peter alone. She damned the Women’s Legion, Woman’s Part in the War, and all the rest of it, with fluency and sincerity.

And while Joan wasted the hours of sleep in this fashion Peter was also awake thinking over certain schemes he had discussed with Hetty that afternoon. They involved some careful and deliberate lying. The idea was that for the purposes of Pelham Ford he should terminate his leave on the fourteenth instead of the twenty-first, and so get a clear week free—for life in the vein of Hetty.

He lay fretting, and the hot greed of youth persuaded him, and the clean honour of youth reproached him. And though he knew the way the decision would go, he tossed about and damned as heartily as Joan.

He could not remember if at Pelham Ford he had

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set a positive date to his leave, but, anyhow, it would not be difficult to make out that there had been some sort of urgent call. . . . It could be done. . . . The alternative was piquet.

Peter returned to Pelham Ford and put his little fabric of lies upon Oswald without much difficulty. Then at the week-end came Joan, rejoicing. She came into the house tumultuously; she had caught a train earlier than the one they had expected her to come by. "I've got all next week. Seven days, Petah! Never mind how, but I've got it. I've got it!"

There was a suggestion as of some desperate battle away there in London from which Joan had snatched these fruits of victory. She was so radiantly glad to have them that Peter recoiled from an immediate reply.

"I didn't seem to see you in London somehow," said Joan. "I don't think you were really there. Let's have a look at you, old Petah. Tenshun! . . . Lift the arm. . . . Rotate the arm. . . . It isn't so bad, Petah, after all. Is tennis possible?"

"I'd like to try."

"Boats certainly. No reason why we shouldn't have two or three long walks. A week's a long time nowadays."

"But I have to go back on Monday," said Peter. Joan stood stock-still.

"Pity, isn't it?" said Peter weakly.

"But why?" she asked at last in a little flat voice.

"I have to go back."

"But your leave——?"

"Ends on Monday," lied Peter.

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For some moments it looked as though Joan meant to make that last week-end a black one. "That doesn't give us much time together," said Joan, and her voice which had soared now crawled the earth. . . . "I'm sorry."

Just for a moment she hung, a dark and wounded Joan, downcast and thoughtful; and then turned and put her arms akimbo, and looked at him and smiled awry. "Well, old Peter, then we've got to make the best use of our time. It's your Birt Day, sort of; it's your Bank Holiday, dear; it's every blessed thing for you—such time as we have together. Before they take you off again. I think they're greedy, but it can't be helped. Can it, Peter?"

"It can't be helped," said Peter. "No."

They paused.

"What shall we do?" said Joan. "The programme's got to be cut down. Shall we still try tennis?"

"I want to. I don't see why this wrist—" He held it out and rotated it.

"Good old arm!" said Joan, and ran a hand along it.

"I'll go and change these breeches and things," said Joan. "And get myself female. Gods, Peter! the craving to get into clothes that are really flexible and translucent!"

She went to the staircase and then turned on Peter.

"Peter," she said.

"Yes."

"Go out and stand on the lawn and tighten up the net. Now."

"Why?"

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"Then I can see you from my window while I'm changing. I don't want to waste a bit of you."

She went up four steps and stopped and looked at him over her shoulder.

"I want as much as I can get of you, Petah," she said.

"I wish I'd known about that week," said Peter stupidly.

"*Exactly!*" said Joan to herself, and flitted up the staircase.

§ 20

Joan, Mrs. Moxton perceived that afternoon, had a swift and angry fight with her summer wardrobe. Both the pink gingham and the white drill had been tried on and flung aside, and she had decided at last upon a rather jolly warm blue-figured voile with a belt of cherry-coloured ribbon that suited her brown skin and black hair better than those weaker supports. She had evidently opened every drawer in her room in a hasty search for white silk stockings.

When she came out into the sunshine of the garden Peter's eyes told her she had guessed the right costume.

Oswald was standing up on his crutches and smiling, and Peter was throwing up a racquet and catching it again with one hand.

"Thank God for a left-handed childhood!" said Peter. "I'm going to smash you, Joan."

"I forgot about that," said Joan. "But you aren't going to smash me, old Petah."

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When tea-time came they were still fighting the seventh vantage game, and Joan was up.

They came and sat at the tea-table, and Joan as she poured the tea reflected that a young man in white flannels, flushed and a little out of breath, with his white silk shirt wide open at the neck, was a more beautiful thing than the most beautiful woman alive. And her dark eyes looked at the careless and exhausted Peter, that urgent and insoluble problem, while she counted, "Twenty-four, thirty-six, forty-one—about forty-one hours. How the devil shall I do it?"

It wasn't to be done at tennis anyhow, and she lost the next three games running without apparent effort, and took Peter by the arm and walked him about the garden, discoursing on flying. "I must teach you to fly," said Peter. "Often when I've been up alone I've thought, 'Some day I'll teach old Joan.'"

"That's a promise, Petah."

"Sure," said Peter, who had not suffered next to two Americans for nothing.

"I've got it in writing," said Joan.

"I'd rather learn from you than any one," said she.

Peter discoursed of stunts. . . .

They spent a long golden time revisiting odd corners in which they had played together. They went down the village and up to the church and round the edge of the wood, and there they came upon and devoured a lot of blackberries, and then they went down to the mill pond and sat for a time

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in Baker's boat. Then they got at cross purposes about dressing for dinner. Joan wanted to dress very much. She wanted to remind Peter that there were prettier arms in the world than Hetty Reinhart's, and a better modelled neck and shoulders. She had a new dress of ivory silk with a broad belt of velvet that echoed the bright softness of her eyes and hair. But Peter would not let her dress. He did not want to dress himself. "And you couldn't look prettier, Joan, than you do in that blue thing. It's so *like* you."

And as Joan couldn't explain that the frock kept her a jolly girl he knew while the dress would have shown him the beautiful woman he had to discover, she lost that point in the game. And to-morrow was Sunday, when Pelham Ford after the good custom of England never dressed for dinner.

Afterwards she thought how easily she might have overruled him.

Joan's plans for the evening were dashed by this costume failure. She had relied altogether on the change of personality into something rich and strange, that the ivory dress was to have wrought. She could do nothing to develop the situation. Everything seemed to be helping to intensify her sisterliness. Oswald was rather seedy, and the three of them played Auction Bridge with a dummy. She had meant to sit up with Peter, but it didn't work out like that.

"Good night, Petah dear," she said outside her bedroom door with the candle-light shining red between the fingers of her hand.

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"Good night, old Joan," he said from his door-mat, with an infinite friendliness in his voice.

You cannot kiss a man good night suddenly when he is fifteen yards away. . . .

She closed the door behind her softly, put down her candle, and began to walk about her room and swear in an entirely unladylike fashion. Then she went over to the open window, wringing her hands. "How am I to *do* it?" she said. "How am I to *do* it? The situation's preposterous. He's mine. And I might be his sister!

"Shall I make a declaration?"

"I suppose Hetty did."

But all the cunning of Joan was unavailing against the invisible barriers to passion between herself and Peter. They spent a long Sunday of comradeship, and courage and opportunity alike failed. The dawn on Monday morning found a white and haggard Joan pacing her floor, half minded to attempt a desperate explanation forthwith in Peter's bedroom with a suddenly awakened Peter. Only her fear of shocking him and failing restrained her. She raved. She indulged in absurd soliloquies and still absurder prayers. "Oh, God, give me my Peter," she prayed. "*Give me my Peter!*"

§ 21

Monday broke clear and fine, with a September freshness in the sunshine. Breakfast was an awkward meal; Peter was constrained, Oswald was worried by a sense of advice and counsels not given;

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Joan felt the situation slipping from her helpless grasp. It was with a sense of relief that at last she put on her khaki overcoat to drive Peter to the station. "This is the end," sang in Joan's mind. "This is the end." She glanced at the mirror in the hall and saw that the fur collar was not unfriendly to her white neck and throat. She was in despair, but she did not mean to let it be an unbecoming despair—at least until Peter had departed. The end was still incomplete. She had something stern and unpleasant to say to Peter before they parted, but she did not mean to look stern or unpleasant while she said it. Peter, she noted with a gleam of satisfaction, was in low spirits. He was sorry to go. He was ashamed of himself, but also he was sorry. That was something, at any rate, to have achieved. But he was going—nevertheless.

She brought round the little Singer to the door. She started the engine with a competent swing and got in. The maids came with Peter's portmanteau and belongings. "This is the end," said Joan to herself, touching her accelerator and with her hand ready to release the brake. "All aboard?" said Joan aloud.

Peter shook hands with Oswald over the side of the car, and glanced from him to the house and back at him. "I wish I could stay longer, sir," said Peter.

"There's many days to come yet," said Oswald. For we never mention death before death in war-time; we never let ourselves think of it before it comes or after it has come.

"So long, Nobby!"

"Good luck, Peter!"

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Joan put the car into gear, and steered out into the road.

"The water-splash is lower than ever I've seen it," said Peter.

They ran down the road to the station almost in silence. "These poplars have got a touch of autumn in them already," said Peter.

"It's an early year," said Joan.

"The end, the end!" sang the song in Joan's brain. "But I'll tell him all the same. . . ."

But she did not tell him until they could hear the sound of the approaching train that was to cut the thread of everything for Joan. They walked together up the little platform to the end.

"I'm sorry you're going," said Joan.

"I'm infernally sorry. If I'd known you'd get this week——"

"Would that have altered it?" she said sharply.

"No. I suppose it wouldn't," he fenced, just in time to save himself.

The rattle of the approaching train grew suddenly loud. It was round the bend.

Joan spoke in a perfectly even voice. "I know you have been lying, Peter. I have known it all this weekend. I know your leave lasts until the twenty-first."

He stared at her in astonishment.

"There was a time. . . . It's to think of all this dirt upon you that hurts most. The lies, the dodges, the shuffling meanness of it. From *you*. . . . Whom *I love*."

A gap of silence came. To the old porter twelve

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yards off they seemed entirely well-behaved and well-disciplined young people, saying nothing in particular. The train came in with a sort of wink under the bridge, and the engine and foremost carriages ran past them up the platform.

"I wish I could explain. I didn't know— The fact is I got entangled in a sort of promise. . . ."

"*Hetty!*" Joan jerked out, and "There's an empty first for you."

The train stopped.

Peter put his hand on the handle of the carriage door.

"You go to London—like a puppy that rolls in dirt. You go to beastliness and vulgarity. . . . You'd better get in, Peter."

"But look here, Joan!"

"*Get in!*" she scolded to his hesitation, and stamped her foot.

He got in mechanically, and she closed the door on him and turned the handle and stood holding it.

Then still speaking evenly and quietly, she said: "You're a blind fool, Peter. What sort of love can that—that—that miscellany give you, that *I* couldn't give? Have I no life? Have I no beauty? Are you afraid of me? Don't you see—don't you *see*? You go off to *that!* You trail yourself in the dirt and you trail my love in the dirt. Before a female hack! . . ."

"*Look at me!*" she cried, holding her hands apart. "Think of me to-night. . . . *Yours!* Yours for the taking!"

The train was moving.

She walked along the platform to keep pace with

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him, and her eyes held his. "Peter," she said; and then with amazing quiet intensity: "You *damned* fool!"

She hesitated on the verge of saying something more. She came towards the carriage. It wasn't anything pleasant that she had in mind, to judge by her expression.

"Stand away please, miss!" said the old porter, hurrying up to intervene. She abandoned that last remark with an impatient gesture.

Peter sat still. The end of the station ran by like a scene in a panorama. Her Medusa face had slid away to the edge of the picture that the window framed, and vanished.

For some seconds he was too amazed to move.

Then he got up heavily and stuck his head out of the window to stare at Joan.

Joan was standing quite still with her hands in the side-pockets of her khaki overcoat; she was standing straight as a rod, with her heels together, looking at the receding train. She never moved. . . .

Neither of these two young people made a sign to each other, which was the first odd thing the old porter noted about them. They just stared. By all the rules they should have waved handkerchiefs. The next odd thing was that Joan stared at the bend for half a minute perhaps after the train had altogether gone, and then tried to walk out to her car by the little white gate at the end of the platform which had been disused and nailed up for three years. . . .

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§ 22

After Oswald had seen the car whisk through the gates into the road, and after he had rested on his crutches staring at the gates for a time, he had hobbled back to his study. He wanted to work, but he found it difficult to fix his attention. He was thinking of Joan and Peter, and for the first time in his life he was wondering why they had never fallen in love with each other. They seemed such good companions. . . .

He was still engaged upon these speculations half an hour or so later, when he heard the car return and presently saw Joan go past his window. She was flushed, and she was staring in front of her at nothing in particular. He had never seen Joan looking so unhappy. In fact so strong was his impression that she was unhappy that he doubted it, and he went to the window and craned out after her.

She was going straight up towards the arbour. With a slight hurry in her steps. She had her fur collar half turned up on one side, her hands were deep in her pockets, and something about her dogged walk reminded him of some long-forgotten moment, years ago it must have been, when Joan, in hot water for some small offence, had been sent indoors at **The Ingle-Nook**.

He limped back to his chair and sat thinking her over.

"I wonder," he said at last, and turned to his work again. . . .

There was no getting on with it. Half an hour

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later he accepted defeat. "Peter has knocked us all crooked," he said. "There's no work for to-day."

He would go out and prowl round the place and look at the roses. Perhaps Joan would come and talk. But at the gates he was amazed to encounter Peter.

It was Peter, hot and dusty from a walk of three miles, and carrying his valise with an aching left arm. There was a look of defiance in the eyes that stared fiercely out from under the perspiration-matted hair upon his forehead. He seemed to find Oswald's appearance the complete confirmation of the most disagreeable anticipations. Thoughts of panic and desertion flashed upon Oswald's mind.

"Good God, Peter!" he cried. "What brings you back?"

"I've come back for another week," said Peter.

"But your leave's up!"

"I told a lie, sir. I've got another week."

Oswald stared at his ward.

"I'm sorry, sir," said Peter. "I've been making a fool of myself. I thought better of it. I got out of the train at Standon and walked back here."

"What does it mean, Peter?" said Oswald.

Peter's eyes were the most distressed eyes he had ever seen. "If you'd just not ask, sir, now——"

It is a good thing to deal with one's own blood in a crisis. Oswald, resting thoughtfully on his crutches, leaped to a kind of understanding.

"I'm going to hop down towards the village, Peter," said Oswald, becoming casual in his manner.

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"I want some exercise. . . . If you'll tell every one you're back."

He indicated the house behind him by a movement of his head.

Peter was badly blown with haste and emotion. "Thank you, sir," he said shortly.

Oswald stepped past him and stared down the road.

"Mrs. Moxton's in the house," he said without looking at Peter again. "Joan's up the garden. See you when I get back, Peter. . . . Glad you've got another week, anyhow. . . . So long. . . ."

He left Peter standing in the gateway.

Fear came upon Peter. He stood quite still for some moments, looking at the house and the cedars. He dropped his valise at the front door and mopped his face. Then he walked slowly across the lawn towards the terraces. He wanted to shout, and found himself hoarse. Then on the first terrace he got out: "Jo-un!" in a flat croak. He had to cry again: "Jo-un!" before it sounded at all like the old style.

Joan became visible. She had come out of the arbour at the top of the garden, and she was standing motionless, regarding him down the vista of the central path. She was white and rather dishevelled, and she stood quite still.

Peter walked up the steps towards her.

"I've come back, Joan," he said, as he drew near. "I want to talk to you. . . . Come into the arbour."

He took her arm clumsily and led her back into the arbour out of sight of the house. Then he dropped her arm.

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“Joan,” he said, “I’ve been the damnedest of fools . . . as you said. . . . I don’t know why. . . .”

He stood before her awkwardly. He was trembling violently. He thought he was going to weep.

He could not touch her again. He did not dare to touch her.

Then Joan spread out her arms straight and stood like a crucifix. Her face, which had been a dark stare, softened swiftly, became radiant, dissolved into a dusky glow of tears and triumph. “Oh! Petah my *darling*,” she sobbed, and seized him and kissed him with tear-salt lips and hugged him to herself.

The magic barrier was smashed at last. Peter held her close to him and kissed her. . . .

It was the second time they had kissed since those black days at High Cross School. . . .

§ 23

Those were years of swift marryings, and Peter was a young married man when presently he was added to the number of that select company attached to sausage-shaped observation balloons who were sent up in the mornings and pulled down at nights along the British front. He had had only momentary snatches of matrimony before the front had called him back to its own destructive interests, but his experiences had banished any lingering vestiges of his theory that there is one sort of woman you respect and another sort you make love to. There was only one sort of woman to love or respect, and that was Joan. He was altogether in love with Joan, he

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was sure he had never been in love before, and he was now also extravagantly in love with life. He wanted to go on with it, with a passionate intensity. It seemed to him that it was not only beginning for him, but for every one. Hitherto Man had been living *down there*, down on those flats—for all the world is flat from the air. Now, at last, men were beginning to feel how they might soar over all ancient limitations.

Occasionally he thought of such things up in his basket, sitting like a spectator in a box at a theatre, with the slow vast drama of the western front spread out like a map beneath his eyes, with half Belgium and a great circle of France in sight, the brown, ruined country on either side of No Man's Land, apparently lifeless, with its insane tangle of trenches and communicating ways below, with the crumbling heaps of ruined towns and villages scattered among canals and lakes of flood water, and passing insensibly into a green and normal-looking landscape to the west and east, where churches still had towers and houses roofs, and woods were lumps and blocks of dark green, fields manifestly cultivated patches, and roads white ribbons barred by the purple poplar shadows. But these spectacular and speculative phases were rare. They came only when a thin veil of haze made the whole spacious prospect faint, so that beyond his more immediate circle Peter could see only the broad outlines of the land. Given worse conditions of the weather and he would be too uncomfortable for philosophy; given better and he would be too busy.

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He sat on a canvas seat inside the square basket with his instruments about him, or leaned over the side scrutinising the details of the eastward landscape. Upon his head, over his ears, he wore a telephone receiver, and about his body was a rope harness that linked him by a rope to the silk parachute that was packed neatly in a little swinging bucket over the side of his basket. Under his hand was his map-board, repeating the shapes of wood and water and road below. The telephone-wire that ran down his mooring-rope abolished any effect of isolation; it linked him directly to his winch on a lorry below, to a number of battery commanders, to an ascending series of headquarters; he could always start a conversation if he had anything practical to say. He was, in fact, an eye at the end of a tentacle thread, by means of which the British army watched its enemies. Sometimes he had an illusion that he was also a kind of brain. When distant visibility was good he would find himself hovering over the war as a player hangs over a chess-board, directing fire upon road movements or train movements, suspecting and watching for undisclosed enemy batteries, or directing counter-battery fire. Above him, green and voluminous, hung the great translucent lobes of his gas-bag, and the loose ropes by which it was towed and held upon the ground swayed and trailed about his basket.

It was on one of his more slack afternoons that Peter fell thinking of how acutely he now desired to live. The wide world was full of sunshine, but a ground haze made even the country immediately below him indistinct. The enemy gunners were inac-

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tive, there came no elfin voices through the telephone, only far away to the south guns butted and shivered the tranquil air. There was a faint drift in the air rather than a breeze, and the gas-bag had fallen into a long, lazy rhythmic movement, so that sometimes he faced due south and sometimes south by east and so back. A great patch of flooded country to the north-east, a bright mirror with a kind of bloom upon it, seemed trying with an aimless persistency to work its way towards the centre of his field of vision and never succeeding.

For a time Peter had been preoccupied with a distant ridge far away to the east, from which a long-range gun had recently taken to shelling the kite-balloons towards evening as they became clear against the bright western sky. Four times lately this new gun had got on to him, and this clear and windless afternoon promised just the luminous and tranquil sunset that favoured these unpleasant activities. It was five hours to sunset yet, but Peter could not keep his mind off that gun. It was a big gun, perhaps a forty-two centimetre; it was beyond any counter-battery possibility, and it had got a new kind of shell that the Germans seemed to have invented for the particular discomfort of Peter and his kind. It had a distinctive report, a loud *crack*, and then the "*whuff*" of high explosive, and at every explosion it got nearer and nearer to its target, with a quite uncanny certainty. It seemed to learn more than any gun should learn from each shot. It was this steadfast approach to a hit that Peter disliked. That and the long pause after the shell had started.

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Far away he would see the flash of the gun amidst the ridges in the darkling east. Then would come a long blank pause of expectation. For all he could tell this might get him. Then the whine of the shell would become audible, growing louder and louder and lower and lower in note; Phee-whooh! *Crack!* **WHOOOF!** Then Peter would get quite voluble to the men at the winch below. He could let himself up, or go down a few hundred feet, or they could shift his lorry along the road. Until it was dark he could not come down, for a kite-balloon is a terribly visible and helpless thing on the ground until it has been very carefully put to bed. To come down in the daylight meant too good a chance for the nearer German guns. So Peter, by instructing his winch to lower him or let him up or shift, had to dodge about in a most undignified way, up and down and backward and sideways, while the big gun marked him and guessed at his next position. Flash! "Oh, damn!" said Peter. "Another already!"

Silence. Anticipations. Then: Phee—eee—eee—*whoo.* *Crack!* **WHOOOF!** A rush of air would set the gas-bag swinging. That was a near one!

"Where *am* I?" said Peter.

But that wasn't going to happen for hours yet. Why meet trouble half-way? Why be tormented by this feeling of apprehension and danger in the still air? Why trouble because the world was quiet and seemed to be waiting? Why not think of something else? Banish this war from the mind. . . . Was he more afraid nowadays than he used to be? Peter was inclined to think that now he was more *systemati-*

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cally afraid. Formerly he had funked in streaks and patches, but now he had a steady, continuous dislike to all these risks and dangers. He was getting more and more clearly an idea of the sort of life he wanted to lead and of the things he wanted to do. He was ceasing to think of existence as a rather aimless series of adventures, and coming to regard it as one large consecutive undertaking on the part of himself and Joan. This being hung up in the sky for Germans to shoot at seemed to him to be a very tiresome irrelevance indeed. He and Joan and everybody with brains—including the misguided people who had made and were now firing this big gun at him—ought to be setting to work to get this preposterous muddle of a world in order. "This sort of thing," said Peter, addressing the western front, his gas-bag, and so much of the sky as it permitted him to see, and the universe generally, "is ridiculous. There is no sense in it at all. None whatever."

His dream of God, as a detached and aloof personage, had taken a very strong hold upon his imagination. Or, perhaps, it would be truer to say that his fevered mind in the hospital had given a caricature personality to ideas that had grown up in his mind as a natural consequence of his training. He had gone on with that argument; he went on with it now, with a feeling that really he was just as much sitting and talking in that queer, untidy, out-of-the-way office as swaying in a kite-balloon, six thousand feet above Flanders, waiting to be shot at.

"It is all very well to say 'exert yourself,'" said Peter. "But there is that chap over there exerting

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himself. And what he is doing with all his brains is just trying to wipe my brains out of existence. Just that. He hasn't an idea else of what he is doing. He has no notion of what he is up to or what I am up to. And he hasn't the sense or ability to come over here and talk about it to me. He's there—at that—and he can't help himself. And I'm here—and I can't help myself. But if I could only catch him within counter-battery range——!

“There's no sense in it at all,” summarised Peter, after some moments of grim reflection. “Sense hasn't got into it.

“Is sense ever going to get into it?”

“The curious thing about you,” said Peter, addressing himself quite directly to his Deity at the desk, “is that somehow, without ever positively promising it or saying anything plain and definite about it, you yet manage to convey in an almost irresistible manner that there *is* going to be sense in it. You seem to suggest that my poor brain up here and the brains of those chaps over there are, in spite of all appearance to the contrary, up to something jointly that is going to come together and make good some day. You hint it. And yet I don't get a scrap of sound, trustworthy reasoning to help me to accept that; not a scrap. Why should it be so? I ask, and you just keep on not saying anything. I suppose it's a necessary thing, biologically, that one should have a kind of optimism to keep one alive, so I'm not even justified in my half conviction that I'm not being absolutely fooled by life. . . .

“I admit that taking for example Joan, there is

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something about Joan that almost persuades me there must be something absolutely *right* about things—for Joan to happen at all. Yet isn't that again just another biologically necessary delusion? . . . There you sit silent. You seem to say nothing, and yet you soak me with a kind of answer, a sort of shapeless courage. . . ."

Peter's mind rested on that for a time, and then began again at another point.

"I wonder," said Peter, "if that chap gets me tonight, what I shall think—in the moment—after he has got me. . . ."

§ 24

But the German gunner never got Peter, because something else got him first.

He thought he saw a Hun aeroplane coming over very high indeed to the south of him, fifteen thousand feet up or more, a mere speck in the blue blaze, and then the gas-bag hid it and he dismissed it from his mind. He was thinking that the air was growing clearer, and that if this went on guns would wake up presently and little voices begin to talk to him, when he became aware of the presence and vibration of an aeroplane quite close to him. He pulled off his telephone receivers and heard the roar of an engine close at hand. It was overhead, and the gas-bag still hid it. At the same moment the British antiaircraft gunners began a belated fire. "Damn!" said Peter in a brisk perspiration, and hastened to make sure that his parachute rope was clear.

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“Perhaps he’s British,” said Peter, with no real hope.

“*Pap, pap, pap!*” very loud overhead.

The gas-bag swayed and billowed, and a wing with a black cross swept across the sky. “*Pap, pap, pap.*”

The gas-bag wrinkled and crumpled more and more, and a little streak of smoke appeared beyond its edge. The German aeroplane was now visible, a hundred yards away, and banking to come round. He had fired the balloon with tracer bullets.

The thing that Peter had to do and what he did was this. He had to step up on to a little wood step inside his basket. Then he had to put first one foot and then the other on to another little step outside his basket. This little step was about four inches wide by nine long. Below it was six thousand feet of emptiness, above the little trees and houses below. As he swayed on the step Peter had to make sure that the rope attached to his body was clear of all entanglements. Then he had to step off that little shelf, which was now swinging and slanting with the lurching basket to which it was attached, into the void, six thousand feet above the earth.

He had not to throw himself or dive headlong, because that might lead to entanglement with the rope. He had just to step off into pellucid nothingness, holding his rope clear of himself with one hand. This rope looped back to the little swinging bucket in which his fine silk parachute was closely packed. He had seen it packed a week ago, and he wished now, as he stood on his step holding to his basket with one

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hand, that he had watched the process more meticulously. He became aware that the Hun, having disposed of the balloon, was now shooting at him. He did not so much step off the little shelf as slip off as it heeled over with the swing of the basket. The first instants of a leap or fall make no impression on the mind. For some seconds he was falling swiftly, feet foremost, through the air. He scarcely noted the faint snatch when the twine, which held his parachute in its basket, broke. Then his consciousness began to register again. He kept his feet tightly pressed together. The air whistled by him, but he thought that dreams and talk had much exaggerated the sensations of falling. He was too high as yet to feel the rush of the ground towards him.

He seemed to fall for an interminable time before anything more happened. He was assailed by doubts—whether the twine that kept the parachute in its bucket would break, whether it would open. His rope trailed out above him.

Still falling. Why didn't the parachute open? In another ten seconds it would be too late.

The parachute was not opening. It was certainly not opening. Wrong packing? He tugged and jerked his rope, and tried to shake and swing the long silken folds that were following his fall. Why? Why the devil——?

The rope seemed to tighten abruptly. The harness tightened upon his body. Peter gasped, sprawled, and had the sensation of being hauled up back again into the sky. . . .

It was all right, so far. He was now swaying down

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earthward with a diminishing velocity beneath an open parachute. He was floating over the landscape instead of falling straight into it.

But the German had not done with Peter yet. He became visible beneath the edge of Peter's parachute, circling downward regardless of anti-aircraft and machine-guns. "*Pap, pap, pap, pap.*" The bullets burst and banged about Peter.

Something kicked Peter's knee; something hit his neck; something rapped the knuckles of his wounded hand; the parachute winced and went sideways, slashed and pierced. Peter drifted down faster, helpless, his angry eyes upon his assailant, who vanished again, going out of sight as he rose up above the edge of the parachute.

A storm of pain and rage broke from Peter.

"Done in!" shouted Peter. "Oh! my leg! my leg!"

"I'm shot to bits. I'm shot to bloody bits!"

The tree-tops were near at hand. The parachute had acquired a rhythmic swing and was falling more rapidly.

"And I've still got to land," wailed Peter, beginning to cry like a child.

He wanted to stop just a moment, just for one *little* moment, before the ground rushed up to meet him. He wanted time to think. He didn't know what to do with this dangling leg. It became a monstrous, painful obstacle to landing. How was he to get a spring? He was bleeding. He was dying. It was cruel. Cruel.

Came the crash. Hot irons, it seemed, assailed his leg and his shoulder and neck. He crumpled up on

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the ground in an agony, and the parachute, with slow and elegant gestures, folded down on the top of his floundering figure. . . .

The gunners who ran to help him found him, enveloped in silk, bawling and weeping like a child of four in a passion of rage and fear, and trying repeatedly to stand up upon a blood-streaked leg that gave way as repeatedly. "Damn!" cursed Peter in a stifled voice, plunging about like a kitten in a sack. "Damn you all! I tell you I *will* use my leg. I *will* have my leg. If I bleed to death. Oh! Oh! . . . You fool—you lying old *humbug!* You!"

And then he gave a leap upward and forward, and fainted and fell, and lay still, with his head and body muffled in the silk folds of his parachute.

CHAPTER THE FOURTEENTH

OSWALD'S VALEDICTION

§ 1

It was the third of April in 1918, the Wednesday after Easter, and the war had now lasted three years and eight months. It had become the aching habit of the whole world. Throughout the winter it had been for the most part a great and terrible boredom, but now a phase of acute anxiety was beginning. The "Kaiser's Battle" was raging in France; news came through sparingly; but it was known that General Gough had lost tens of thousands of prisoners, hundreds of guns, and vast stores of ammunition and railway material. It was rumoured that he had committed suicide. But the standards of Tory England differ from those of Japan. Through ten sanguinary days, in a vaster Inkerman, the common men of Britain, reinforced by the French, had fought and died to restore the imperilled line. It was by no means certain yet that they had succeeded. It seemed possible that the French and British armies would be broken apart, and Amiens and Paris lost. Oswald's mind was still dark with apprehension.

The particular anxieties of this crisis accentuated the general worry and inconveniences of the time, and deepened Oswald's conviction of an incredible incompetence in both the political and military leadership of his country. In spite of every reason

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he had to the contrary, he had continued hitherto to hope for some bright dramatic change in the course of events; he had experienced a continually recurring disappointment with each morning's paper. His intelligence told him that all the inefficiency, the confusion, the cheap and bad government by press and intrigue, were the necessary and inevitable consequences of a neglect of higher education for the past fifty years; these defects were now in the nature of things, almost as much as the bleakness of an English February or the fogs of a London November, but his English temperament had refused hitherto to accept the decision of his intelligence. Now for the first time he could see the possibility of an ultimate failure in the war. To this low level of achievement, he perceived, a steadfast contempt for thought and science and organisation had brought Britain; at this low level Britain had now to struggle through the war, blundering, talking, and thinking confusedly, suffering enormously—albeit so sound at heart. It was a humiliating realisation. At any rate she could still hope to struggle through; the hard-won elementary education of the common people, the stout heart and sense of the common people, saved her gentlefolk from the fate of their brother inefficient in Russia. But every day he fretted afresh at the costly and toilsome continuance of an effort that a little more courage and wisdom in high places on the allied side, a little more knowledge and clear thinking, might have brought to an entirely satisfactory close in 1917.

For a man of his age, wounded, disappointed, and a chronic invalid, there was considerable affliction in

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the steadily increasing hardships of the Fourth Year. A number of petty deprivations at which a healthy man might have scoffed, intensified his physical discomfort. There had been a complete restriction of his supply of petrol, the automobile now hung in its shed with its tires removed, and the railway service to London had been greatly reduced. He could not get up to London now to consult books or vary his moods without a slow and crowded and fatiguing journey; he was more and more confined to Pelham Ford. He had been used to read and work late into the night, but now his home was darkened in the evening and very cheerless; there was no carbide for the acetylene installation, and a need for economy in paraffin. For a time he had been out of coal, and unable to get much wood because of local difficulties about cartage, and for some weeks he had had to sit in his overcoat and read and write by candle-light. Now, however, that distress had been relieved by the belated delivery of a truck-load of coal. And another matter that may seem trivial in history was by no means trivial in relation to his moods. In the spring of 1918 the food-supply of Great Britain was at its lowest point. Lord Rhondda was saving the situation at the eleventh hour. The rationing of meat had affected Oswald's health disagreeably. He had long ago acquired the habit of living upon chops and cutlets and suchlike concentrated nourishment, and he found it difficult to adapt himself now to the bulky insipidity of a diet that was, for a time, almost entirely vegetarian. For even fish travels by long routes to Hertfordshire villages. The frequent air-raids of

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that winter were also an added nervous irritation. In the preceding years of the war there had been occasional Zeppelin raids, the Zeppelins had been audible at Pelham Ford on several occasions and once Hertford had suffered from their bombs; but those expeditions had ended at last in a series of disasters to the invaders, and they had never involved the uproar and tension of the Gotha raids that began in the latter half of 1917. These latter raids had to be met by an immense barrage of anti-aircraft guns round London, a barrage which rattled every window at Pelham Ford, lit the sky with star-shells, and continued intermittently sometimes for four or five hours. Oswald would lie awake throughout that thudding conflict, watching the distant star-shells and search-lights through the black tree-boughs outside his open window, and meditating drearily upon the manifest insanity of mankind. . . .

He was now walking up and down his lawn, waiting until it should be time to start for the station with Joan to meet Peter.

For Peter, convalescent again and no longer fit for any form of active service—he was lamed now as well as winged—was to take up a minor administrative post next week at Adastral House, and he was coming down for a few days at Pelham Ford before carrying his wife off for good to a little service flat they had found in an adapted house in the Avenue Road. They had decided not to live at The Ingle-Nook, although Arthur had built it to become Peter's home, but to continue the tenancy of Aunts Phyllis and Phœbe. They did not want to disturb those two

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ladies, whose nervous systems, by no means stable at the best of times, were now in a very shaken condition. Aunt Phyllis was kept busy restraining Aunt Phoebe from inflicting lengthy but obscure prophetic messages upon most of the prominent people of the time. To these daily activities Aunt Phoebe added an increasing habit of sleep-walking that broke the nightly peace of Aunt Phyllis. She would wander through the moonlit living-rooms gesticulating strangely, and uttering such phrases as "Blood! Blood! Seas of blood! The multitudinous seas incarnadine"; or "Murder most foul!"

She had a fixed idea that it was her business to seek out the Kaiser and either scold him or kill him—or perhaps do both. She held that it was the duty of women to assassinate. Men might fight battles, it was their stupid way; but surely women were capable of directer things. If some woman were to kill any man who declared war directly he declared war, there would be a speedy end to war. She could not, she said, understand the inactivity of German wives and mothers. She would spend hours over her old school German grammar, with a view to writing an "Open Letter to German Womankind." But her naturally rich and very allusive prose was ill adapted to that sort of translation.

Many oversensitive people were suffering more or less as Aunt Phoebe was suffering—from a sense of cruelty, wickedness, and disaster that staggered their minds. They had lived securely in a secure world; they could not readjust. Even for so sane a mind as Oswald's, hampered as it was by the new poison his

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recent wound had brought into his blood, readjustment was difficult. He suffered greatly from insomnia, and from a haunting apprehension of misfortunes. His damaged knee would give him bouts of acute distress. Sometimes it would seem to be well and he would forget it. Then it would become painfully lame by day and a neuralgic pain at night. His moods seemed always exaggerated now; either he was too angry or too sorrowful or too hopeful. Sometimes he experienced phases of blank stupidity, when his mind became unaccountably sluggish and clumsy. . . .

Joan was indoors now packing up a boxful of books that were to go with her to the new home.

He was feeling acutely—more acutely than he wanted to feel—that his guardianship was at an end. Joan, who had been the mistress of his house, and the voice that sang in it, the pretty plant that grew in it, was going now—to return, perhaps, sometimes as a visitor—but never more to be a part of it; never more to be its habitual presence. Peter, too, was severing the rope, a long rope it had seemed at times during the last three years, that had tethered him to Pelham Ford. . . .

Oswald did not want to think now of his coming loneliness. What he wanted to think about was the necessity of rounding off their relationship properly, of ending his educational task with some sort of account rendered. He felt he owed it to these young people and to himself to tell them of his aims and of what he considered the whole of this business of education amounted to. He had to explain what had

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helped and what had prevented him. "A Valediction," he said. "A Valediction." But he could not plan out what he had to say that morning. He could not arrange his heads, and all the while that he tried to fix his thoughts upon these topics, he was filled with uncontrollable self-pity for the solitude ahead of him.

He was ashamed at these personal distresses that he could not control. He disliked himself for their quality. He did not like to think he was thinking the thoughts in his mind. He walked up and down the lawn for a time like a man who is being pestered by uncongenial solicitations.

In spite of his intense affection for both of them, he was feeling a real jealousy of the happiness of these two young lovers. He hated the thought of losing Joan much more than he hated the loss of Peter. Once upon a time he had loved Peter far more than Joan, but by imperceptible degrees his affection had turned over to her. In these war years he and she had been very much together. For a time he had been—it was grotesque, but true—actually in love with her. He had let himself dream— It was preposterous to think of it. A moonlight night had made his brain swim. . . . At any rate, thank Heaven! she had never had a suspicion. . . .

She'd come now as a visitor—perhaps quite often. He wasn't going to lose his Joan altogether. But each time she would come changed, rather less his Joan and rather more a new Joan—Peter's Joan. . . .

Some day they'd have children, these two. Joan would sit over her child and smile down at it. He

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knew exactly how she would smile. And at the thought of that smile Joan gave place to Dolly. Out of the past there jumped upon him the memory of Peter bubbling in a cradle on the sunny veranda of The Ingle-Nook, and how he had remarked that the very sunshine seemed made for this fortunate young man.

“It *was* made for him,” Dolly had said, with that faintly mischievous smile of hers.

How far off that seemed now, and how vivid still! He could remember Dolly’s shadow on the rough-cast wall, and the very things he had said in reply. He had talked like a fool about the wonderful future of Peter—and of the world. How long was that ago? Five-and-twenty years? (Yes, Peter would be five-and-twenty in June.) How safe and secure the European world had seemed then! It seemed to be loitering, lazily and basely indeed, but certainly, towards a sort of materialist’s millennium. And what a vast sham its security had been! He had called Peter the “Heir of the Ages.” And the Heritage of the Ages had been preparing even then to take Peter away from the work he had chosen and from all the sunshine and leisure of his life and to splinter his shoulder-blade, smash his wrist, snap his leg-bones with machine-gun bullets, and fling him aside, a hobbling, stiff, broken young man to limp through the rest of life. . . .

§ 2

That was what his mind had to lay hold of, that was what he had to talk about, this process that had

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held out such fair hopes for Peter and had in the end crippled him and come near to killing him and wasting him altogether. He had to talk of that, of an enormous collapse and breach of faith with the young. The world which had seemed to be the glowing promise of an unprecedented education and upbringing for Peter and his generation, the world that had been, so to speak, joint guardian with himself, had defaulted. This war was an outrage by the senior things in the world upon all the hope of the future; it was the parent sending his sons through the fires to Moloch, it was the guardian gone mad, it was the lapse of all educational responsibility.

He had to keep his grasp upon that idea. By holding to that he could get away from his morbidly intense wish to be personal and intimate with these two. He loved them and they loved him, but what he wanted to say was something quite beyond that.

What he had to talk about was Education, and Education alone. He had to point out to them that their own education had been truncated, was rough-ended and partial. He had to explain why that was so. And he had to show that all this vast disaster to the world was no more and no less than an educational failure. The churches and teachers and political forms had been insufficient and wrong; they had failed to establish ideas strong and complete enough and right enough to hold the wills of men. Necessarily he had to make a dissertation upon the war. To talk of life now was to talk of the war. The war now was human life. It had eaten up all free and independent living.

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The war was an educational breakdown, that was his point; and in education lay whatever hope there was for mankind. He had to say that to them, and he had to point out how that idea must determine the form of their lives. He had to show the political and social and moral conclusions involved in it. And he had to say what he wanted to say in a large manner. *He had to keep his temper while he said it.*

Oswald, limping slowly up and down his lawn in the April sunshine, with a gnawing pain at his knee, had to underline, as it were, that last proviso in his thoughts. That was the extreme difficulty of these urgent and tragic times. The world was in a phase of intense, but swift, tumultuous, and distracting tragedy. The millions were not suffering and dying in stateliness and splendour but in a vast uproar, amidst mud, confusion, bickering, and incoherence indescribable. While it was manifest that only great thinking, only very clear and deliberate thinking, could give even the forms of action that would arrest the conflagration, it was nevertheless almost impossible for any one anywhere to think clearly and deliberately, so universal and various were the compulsions, confusions, and distresses of the time. And even the effort to see and state the issue largely, fevered Oswald's brain. He grew angry with the multitudinous things that robbed him of his serenity.

"Education," he said, as if he called for help; "education."

And then, collapsing into wrath: "A land of uneducated blockheads!"

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No! It was not one of his good mornings. In a little while his steps had quickened and his face had flushed. His hands clinched in his pockets. "A universal dulness of mind," he whispered. "Obstinacy. . . . Inadaptability. . . . Unintelligent opposition."

Broad generalisations slipped out of his mind. He began to turn over one disastrous instance after another of the shortness of mental range, the unimaginative stupidity, the baseness and tortuousness of method, the dull suspicions, class jealousies, and foolish conceits that had crippled Britain through three and a half bitter years. With a vast fleet, with enormous armies, with limitless wealth, with the loyal enthusiasm behind them of a united people and with great allies, British admirals and generals had never once achieved any great or brilliant success, British statesmen had never once grasped and held the fluctuating situation. One huge disappointment had followed another; now at Gallipoli, now at Kut, now in the air and now beneath the seas, the British had seen their strength ill applied and their fair hopes of victory waste away. No Nelson had arisen to save the country, no Wellington; no Nelson nor Wellington could have arisen; the country had not even found an alternative to Mr. Lloyd George. In military and naval as in social and political affairs the Anglican ideal had been—to blockade. On sea and land, as in Ireland, as in India, Anglicanism was not leading but obstruction. Throughout 1917 the Allied armies upon the western front had predominated over the German as greatly as the British fleet had predominated at sea, and the result on either element

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had been stagnation. The cavalry coterie who ruled upon land had demonstrated triumphantly their incapacity to seize even so great an opportunity as the surprise of the tanks afforded them; the Admiralty had left the Baltic to the Germans until, after the loss of Riga, poor Kerensky's staggering government had collapsed. British diplomacy had completed what British naval quiescence began; in Russia as in Greece it had existed only to blunder; never had a just cause been so mishandled; and before the end of 1917 the Russian débâcle had been achieved and the German armies, reinforced by the troops the Russian failure had released, began to concentrate for this last great effort that was now in progress in the west. Like many another anxious and distressed Englishman during those darker days of the German spring offensive in 1918, Oswald went about clinging to one comfort: "Our men are tough stuff. Our men at any rate will stick it."

In Oswald's mind there rankled a number of special cases which he called his "sores." To think of them made him angry and desperate, and yet he could scarcely ever think of education without reviving the irritation of these particular instances. They were his foreground; they blocked his vistas, and got between him and the general prospect of the world. For instance, there had been a failure to supply mosquito curtains in the East African hospitals, and a number of slightly wounded men had contracted fever and died. This fact had linked on to the rejection of the services he had offered at the outset of the war, and became a festering centre in his memory. Those mosquito curtains blew into every

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discussion. Moreover there had been, he believed, much delay and inefficiency in the use of African native labour in France, and a lack of proper organisation for the special needs of the sick and injured among these tropic-bred men. And a ship-load had been sunk in a collision off the Isle of Wight. He had got an irrational persuasion into his head that this collision could have been prevented. After his wound had driven him back to Pelham Ford he would limp about the garden thinking of his "boys" shivering in the wet of a French winter and dying on straw in cold cattle-trucks, or struggling and drowning in the grey channel water, and he would fret and swear. "Hugger mugger," he would say, "hugger mugger! No care. No foresight. No proper grasp of the problem. And so death and torment for the men."

While still so painful and feverish he had developed a new distress for himself by taking up the advocacy of certain novelties and devices that he became more and more convinced were of vital importance upon the western front. He entangled himself in correspondence, interviews, committees, and complicated quarrels in connection with these ideas. . . . He would prowl about his garden, a baffled man, trying to invent some way of breaking through the system of entanglements that held back British inventiveness from the service of Great Britain. More and more clearly did his reason assure him that no sudden blow can set aside the deep-rooted traditions, the careless, aimless education of a negligent century, but none the less he raged at individuals, at ministries, at coteries and classes.

His peculiar objection to the heads of the regular

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army, for example, was unjust, for much the same unimaginative resistance was evident in every branch of the public activities of Great Britain. Already in 1915 the very halfpenny journalists were pointing out the necessity of a great air offensive for the allies, were showing that in the matter of the possible supply of good air fighters the Germans were altogether inferior to their antagonists and that consequently they would be more and more at a disadvantage in the air as the air warfare was pressed. But the British mind was trained, so far that is as one can speak of it as being trained at all, to dread "overpressure." The western allies having won a certain ascendancy in the air in 1916 became so self-satisfied that the Germans, in spite of their disadvantages, were able to recover a kind of equality in 1917, and in the spring of 1918 the British, with their leeway recovered, were going easily in matters aerial, and the opinion that a great air offensive might yet end the war was regarded as the sign of a forward and revolutionary spirit.

The sea war had a parallel history. Long before 1914 Doctor Conan Doyle had written a story to illustrate the dangers of an unrestricted submarine attack, but no precaution whatever against such a possibility seemed to have been undertaken by the British Admiralty before the war at all; Great Britain was practically destitute of sea-mines in the October of 1914, and even in the spring of 1918, after more than a year and a half of hostile submarine activity, after the British had lost millions of tons of shipping, after the people were on short commons

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and becoming very anxious about rations, the really very narrow channel of the North Sea—rarely is it more than three hundred miles wide—which was the only way out the Germans possessed, was still unfenced against the coming and going of these most vulnerable pests.

It is hard not to blame individual men and groups when the affairs of a nation go badly. It is so much easier to change men than systems. The former satisfies every instinct in the fierce, suspicious hearts of men, the latter demands the bleakest of intellectual efforts. The former justifies the healthy, wholesome relief of rioting; the latter necessitates self-control. The country was at sixes and sevens because its education by school and college, by book and speech and newspaper, was confused and superficial and incomplete, and its education was confused and superficial and incomplete because its institutions were a patched-up system of traditions, compromises, and interests, devoid of any clear and single guiding idea of a national purpose. The only wrongs that really matter to mankind are the undramatic general wrongs; but the only wrongs that appeal to the uneducated imagination are individual wrongs. It is so much more congenial to the ape in us to say that if Mr. Asquith hadn't been lazy or Mr. Lloyd George disingenuous—! Then out with the halter—and don't bother about yourself. As though the worst of individuals can be anything more than the indicating pustule of a systemic malaise. For his own part Oswald was always reviling schoolmasters, as though they, alone among men, had the power to rise tri-

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umphant over all their circumstances—and wouldn't. He had long since forgotten Mr. Mackinder's apology.

He limped and fretted to and fro across the lawn in his struggle to get out of his jungle of wrathful thoughts, about drowned negroes and rejected inventions, and about the Baltic failure and about Gough of the Curragh and St. Quentin, to general and permanent things.

"Education," he said aloud, struggling against his obsessions. "Education! I have to tell them what it ought to be, how it is more or less the task of every man, how it can unify the world, how it can save mankind. . . ."

And then after a little pause, with an apparent complete irrelevance, "*Damn Aunt Charlotte!*"

§ 3

Nowadays quite little things would suddenly assume a tremendous and devastating importance to Oswald. In his pocket, not folded but crumpled up, was an insulting letter from Lady Charlotte Sydenham, and the thought of it was rankling bitterly in his mind.

The days were long past when he could think of the old lady as of something antediluvian in quality, a queer ungainly megatherium floundering about in a new age from which her kind would presently vanish altogether. He was beginning to doubt more and more about her imminent disappearance. She had greater powers of survival than he had supposed; he

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was beginning to think that she might outlive him; there was much more of her in England than he had ever suspected. All through the war she, or a voice indistinguishable from hers, had bawled unchastened in *The Morning Post*; on many occasions he had seemed to see her hard blue eye and bristling whisker glaring at him through a kind of translucency in the sheets of *The Times*; once or twice in France he had recognised her, or something very like her, in red tabs and gilt lace, at G. H. Q. These were sick fancies no doubt; mere fantastic intimations of the stout resistances the Anglican culture could still offer before it loosened its cramping grip upon the future of England and the world, evidence rather of his own hypersensitised condition than of any perennial quality in her.

The old lady had played a valiant part in the early stages of the war. She had interested herself in the persecution of all Germans not related to royalty, who chanced to be in the country; and had even employed private detectives in one or two cases that had come under her notice. She had been forced most unjustly to defend a libel case brought by a butcher named Sterne, whom she had denounced as of German origin and a probable poisoner of the community, in the very laudable belief that his name was spelled Stern. She felt that his indubitable British ancestry and honesty only enhanced the deception and made the whole thing more alarming, but the jury, being no doubt tainted with pacifism, thought, or pretended to think, otherwise. She had had a reconciliation with her old antagonists the Pankhurst section of the

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suffragettes, and she had paid twenty annual subscriptions to their loyal and outspoken publication *Britannia*, directing twelve copies to be sent to suitable recipients—Oswald was one of the favoured ones—and herself receiving and blue-pencilling the remaining eight before despatching them to such public characters as she believed would be most beneficially cowed or instructed by the articles she had marked. She also subscribed liberally to the British Empire Union, an organisation so patriotic that it extended its hostility to Russians, Americans, Irishmen, neutrals, President Wilson, the League of Nations, and similar infringements of the importance and dignity of Lady Charlotte and her kind. She remained at Chastlands, where she had laid in an ample store of provisions quite early in the war—two sacks of mouldy flour and a side of bacon in an advanced state of decomposition had been buried at night by Cashel—all through the Zeppelin raids; and she played a prominent rather than a pacifying part in the Red Cross politics of that part of Surrey. She induced several rich Jewesses of Swiss, Dutch, German or Austrian origin to relieve the movement of their names and, what was still better, of the frequently quite offensively large subscriptions with which they overshadowed those who had the right to lead in such matters. She lectured also in the National Economy campaign on several occasions—for like most thoughtful women of her class and type, she was deeply shocked by the stories she had heard of extravagance among our overpaid munition-workers. After a time the extraordinary meanness

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of the authorities in restricting her petrol obliged her in self-respect to throw up this branch of her public work. She was in London during one of the early Gotha raids, but she conceived such a disgust at the cowardice of the lower classes on this occasion that she left town the next day and would not return thither.

The increasing scarcity of petrol and the onset of food rationing, which threatened to spread all over England, drove her to Ulster—in spite of the submarine danger that might have deterred a less stout-hearted woman. She took a small furnished house in a congenial district, and found herself one of a little circle of ultrapatriotic refugees, driven like herself from England by un-English restrictions upon the nourishment of the upper classes and the spread of the pacifist tendencies of Lord Lansdowne. “If the cowards must make peace,” said Lady Charlotte, “at least give *me* leave to be out of it.”

Considering everything, Ulster was at that time as comfortably and honourably out of the war as any part of the world, and all that seemed needed to keep it safely out to the end was a little tactful firmness in the Dublin Convention. There was plenty of everything in the loyal province at that time—men, meat, butter, Dublin stout, and self-righteousness; and Lady Charlotte expanded again like a flower in the sun. She reverted to driving in a carriage; it was nice to sit once more behind a stout able-bodied coachman with a cockade, with a perfect excuse for neutrality, and she still did her best for old England from eleven to one and often from five to six by writing

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letters and dabbling in organisation. Oswald she kept in mind continually. Almost daily he would get newspaper cuttings from her detailing Sinn Fein outrages, or blue-marked leading articles agitating for a larger share of the munition industries for Belfast, or good hot stuff, deeply underlined, from the speeches of Sir Edward Carson. One dastardly Sinn Feiner, Oswald learned, had even starved himself to death in gaol, a most unnatural offence to Lady Charlotte. She warmed up tremendously over the insidious attempts of the Prime Minister and a section of the press to get all the armies in France and Italy under one supreme generalissimo and end the dislocated muddling that had so long prolonged the war. It was a change that might have involved the replacement of regular generals by competent ones, and it imperilled everything that was most dear to the old lady's heart. It was "*an insult to the King's uniform,*" she wrote. "*A revolution. I knew that this sort of thing would begin if we let those Americans come in. We ought not to have let them come in. What good are they to us? What can they know of war? A crowd of ignorant republican renegades! British generals to be criticised and their prospects injured by French Roman Catholics and Atheists and chewing, expectorating Yankees and every sort of low foreigner. What is the world coming to? Sir Douglas Haig has been exactly where he is for two years. Surely he knows the ground better than any one else can possibly do.*"

Once the theme of Lady Charlotte got loose in Oswald's poor old brain, it began a special worry of its own. He found his mind struggling with asser-

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tions and arguments. As this involved trying to remember exactly what she had said in this letter of hers, and as it was in his pocket, he presently chose the lesser of two evils and took it out to read over:

"I suppose you have read in the papers what is happening in Clare. The people are ploughing up grassland. It is as bad as that man Prothero. They raid gentlemen's houses to seize arms; they resist the police. That man Devil-era—so I must call him—speaks openly of a republic. Devil-era and Devil-in; is it a coincidence merely? All this comes of our ill-timed leniency after the Dublin rebellion. When will England learn the lesson Cromwell taught her? He was a wicked man, he made one great mistake for which he is no doubt answering to his Maker throughout all eternity, but he certainly did know how to manage these Irish. If he could come back now he would be on our side. He would have had his lesson. Your Bolshevik friends go on murdering and cutting throats, I see, like true Republicans. Happily the White Guards seem getting the upper hand in Finland. In the end I suppose we shall be driven to a peace with the Huns as the least of two evils. If we do, it will only be your Bolsheviks and pacifists and strikers and Bolos who will be to blame.

"The whining and cowardice of the East Enders disgusts me more and more. You read, I suppose, the account of the disgraceful panic during the air raid the other day in the East End, due entirely to foreigners of military age, mostly, no doubt, your Russian Bolsheviks. I am well away from such a rabble. I suffer from rheumatism here. I know it is rheumatism; what you say about gout is nonsense. In spite of its loyalty Ulster is

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damp. I pine more and more for the sun and warmth of Italy. Unwin must needs make herself very tiresome and peevish nowadays. These are not cheerful times for me. But one must do one's bit for one's country, I suppose, unworthy though it be.

“So Mr. Peter is back in England again wounded after his flying about in the air. I suppose he is tasting the delights of matrimony, such as they are! What an affair! Something told me long ago that it would happen. I tried to separate them. My instincts warned me, and my instincts were right. Breed is breed, and the servant strain came out in her. You can't say I didn't warn you. Why you let them marry I cannot imagine!!! I am sure the young lady could have dispensed with that ceremony!!!! I still think at times of that queer scene I passed on the road when I came to Pelham Ford that Christmas. A second string,—no doubt of it. But Peter was her great chance, of course, thanks to your folly. Well, let us hope that in the modern way they won't have any children, for nothing is more certain than that these interbreeding marriages are most harmful, and whether we like it or not you have to remember they are first cousins, if not in the sight of the law at any rate in the sight of God, which is what matters in this respect. Mr. Grimes, who has studied these things in his leisure time, tells me that there is a very great probability indeed that any child will be blind or malformed or consumptive, let us hope the latter, if not actually still-born, which, of course, would be the best thing that could possibly happen. . . .”

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§ 4

At this point Oswald became aware of Joan coming out of the house towards him.

He looked at his watch. "Much too early yet, Joan," he said.

"Yes, but I want to be meeting him," said Mrs. Joan. . . .

So they walked down to the station and waited for a long time on the platform. And Joan said very little to Oswald because she was musing pleasantly.

When the train came in neither Joan nor Peter took much notice of Oswald after the first greeting. I do not see what else he could have expected; they were deeply in love and they had been apart for a couple of weeks, they were excited by each other and engrossed in each other. Oswald walked beside them up the road—apart. "I've got some work," he said abruptly in the hall. "See you at lunch," and went into his study and shut the door upon them, absurdly disappointed.

§ 5

Peter came on Wednesday. It was not until Friday that Oswald found an opportunity to deliver his valediction. But he had rehearsed it, or rather he had been rehearsing experimental fragments of it for most of the night before. On Thursday night the cloudy malaise of his mind broke and cleared. Things fell into their proper places in his thoughts, and he could feel that his ideas were no longer distorted and confused. The valediction appeared, an ordered dis-

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course. If only he could hold out through a long talk he felt he would be able to make himself plain to them. . . .

He lay in the darkness putting together phrase after phrase, sentence after sentence, developing a long and elaborate argument, dipping down into parentheses, throwing off foot-notes, resuming his text. For the most part Joan and Peter remained silent hearers of this discourse; now his ratiocination glowed so brightly that they were almost forgotten, now they came into the discussion, they assisted, they said helpful and understanding things, they raised simple and obvious objections that were beautifully overcome.

“What is education up to?” he would begin.
“What is education?”

Then came a sentence that he repeated in the stillness of his mind quite a number of times. “Consider this beast we are, this thing man!” He did not reckon with Peter’s tendency to prompt replies.

He would begin in the broadest, most elementary way. “Consider this beast we are, this thing man!” so he framed his opening: “a creature restlessly experimental, mischievous and destructive, as sexual as a monkey, and with no really strong social instincts, no such tolerance of his fellows as a deer has, no such instinctive self-devotion as you find in a bee or an ant. A solitary animal, a selfish animal. And yet this creature has now made for itself such conditions that it *must* be social. Must be. Or destroy itself. Continually it invents fresh means by which man may get at man to injure him or help him.

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That is one view of the creature, Peter, from your biological end." Here Peter was to nod, and remain attentively awaiting the next development. "And at the same time, there grows upon us all a sense of a common being and a common interest. Biologically separate, we unify spiritually. More and more do men feel, 'I am not for myself! There is something in me—that belongs to a greater being than myself—of which I am a part.' . . . I won't philosophise. I won't say which may be in the nature of cause and which of effect here. You can put what I have said in a dozen different ways. We may say, 'The individual must live in the species and find his happiness there'—that is—Biologese. *Our* language, Peter. Or we can quote, 'I am the True Vine and ye are the Branches.' " Oswald's mind rested on that for a time. "That is not *our* language, Peter, but it is the same idea. Essentially it is the same idea. Or we can talk of the 'One and the Many.' We can say we all live in the mercy of Allah, or if you are a liberal Jew that we are all a part of Israel. It seems to me that all these formulæ are so much spluttering and variation over one idea. Doesn't it to you? Men can quarrel mortally even upon the question of how they shall say 'Brotherhood.' . . ." Here for a time Oswald's mind paused.

He embarked upon a great and wonderful parenthesis upon religious intolerance in which at last he lost himself completely.

"I don't see that men need fall out about religion," was his main proposition.

"There was a time when I was against all religions.

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I denounced priestcraft and superstition and so on. . . . That is past. That is past. I want peace in the world. . . . Men's minds differ more about *initial* things than they do about *final* things. Some men think in images, others in words and abstract ideas—but yet the two sorts can think out the same practical conclusions. A lot of these chapels and churches only mean a difference in language. . . . Difference in dialect. . . . Often they don't mean the same things, those religious people, by the same words, but often contrariwise they mean the same things by quite different words. The deaf man says the dawn is bright and red, and the blind man says it is a sound of birds. It is the same dawn. The same dawn. . . . One man says 'God' and thinks of a person who is as much of a person as Joan is, and another says 'God' and thinks of an idea more abstract than the square root of minus one. That's a tangle in the primaries of thought and not a difference in practical intention. One can argue about such things for ever. . . . One can make a puzzle with a bit of wire that will bother and exasperate people for hours. Is it any wonder, then, if stating what is at the root of life bothers and exasperates people? . . .

“Personally, I should say now that all religions are right, and none of them very happy in the words and symbols they choose. And none of them are calm enough—not calm enough. Not peaceful enough. They are all floundering about with symbols and metaphors, and it is a pity they will not admit it. . . . Why will people never admit their intellectual limitations in these matters? . . . All the great

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religions have this in common, this idea is common; they profess to teach the universal brotherhood of man and the universal reign of justice. Why argue about phrases? Why not put it in this fashion? . . .”

For a long time Oswald argued about phrases before he could get back to the main thread of his argument. . . .

“Men have to be unified. They are driven to seek Unity. And they are still with the individualised instincts of a savage. . . . See then what education always has to be! The process of taking this imperfectly social, jealous, deeply savage creature and socialising him. The development of education and the development of human societies are one and the same thing. Education makes the social man. So far as schooling goes, it is quite plainly that. You teach your solitary beast to read and write, you teach him to express himself by drawing, you teach him other languages perhaps, and something of history and the distribution of mankind. What is it all but making this creature who would naturally possess only the fierce, narrow sociability of a savage family in a cave, into a citizen in a greater community? That is how I see it. That primarily is what has been done to you. An uneducated man is a man who can talk to a few score familiar people with a few hundred words. You two can talk to a quarter of mankind. With the help of a little translation you can get to understandings with most of mankind. . . . As a child learns the accepted language and the accepted writing and the laws and rules of life it learns the community.

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Watching the education of you two has made me believe more and more in the idea that, over and above the enlargement of expression and understanding, education is the state explaining itself to and incorporating the will of the individual. . . .

“Yes—but what state? What state? Now we come to it. . . .”

Oswald began to sketch out a universal history. There is no limit to these intellectual enterprises of the small hours.

“All history is the record of an effort in man to form communities, an effort against resistance—against instinctive resistance. There seems no natural and proper limit to a human community. (That’s my great point, that. That is what I have to tell them.) That is the final teaching of History, Joan and Peter; the very quintessence of History; that limitlessness of the community. As soon as men get a community of any size organised, it begins forthwith to develop roads, wheels, writing, ship-building, and all manner of things which presently set a fresh growth growing again. Let that, too, go on. Presently comes steam, mechanical traction, telegraphy, the telephone, wireless, aeroplanes; and each means an extension of range, and each therefore demands a larger community. . . . There seems no limit to the growth of states. I remember, Peter, a talk we had; we agreed that this hackneyed analogy people draw between the life and death of animals and the life and death of states was bad and silly. It isn’t the same thing, Joan, at all. An animal, you see, has a limit of size; it develops no new organs for further

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growth when it has reached that limit, it breeds its successors, it ages naturally; when it dies, it dies for good and all and is cleared away. Exactly the reverse is true of a human community. Exactly? Yes, exactly. If it can develop its educational system steadily—note that—if it can keep up communications, a State can go on indefinitely, conquering, ousting, assimilating. Even an amoeba breaks up after growth, but a human community need not do so. And so far from breeding successors it kills them if it can—like Frazer's priest—where was it?—Aricia? The priest of Diana. The priest of 'The Golden Bough.' . . .”

Oswald picked up his thread again after a long, half-dreaming excursion in Frazer-land.

“It is just this limitlessness, this potential immortality of States that makes all the confusion and bloodshed of history. What is happening in the world to-day? What is the essence of it all? The communities of to-day are developing *range*, faster than ever they did: aeroplanes, guns, swifter ships, everywhere an increasing range of action. That is the most important fact to grasp about the modern world. It is the key fact in politics. From the first dawn of the human story you see man in a kind of a puzzled way—how shall I put it?—*pursuing the boundary of his possible community*. Which always recedes. Which recedes now faster than ever. Until it brings him to a fatal war and disaster. Over and over again it is the same story. If you had a coloured historical atlas of the world, the maps would be just a series of great dabs of empire, spreading, spreading—coming

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against resistances—collapsing. Each dab tries to devour the world and fails. There is no natural limit to a human community, no limit in time or space—except one.

“Genus *Homo*, species *Sapiens*, Mankind, that is the only limit.” (Peter, perhaps, might be led up to saying that.) . . .

“What has the history of education always been? A series of little teaching chaps trying to follow up and *fix* the fluctuating boundaries of communities”—an image came into Oswald’s head that pleased him and led him on—“like an insufficient supply of upholsterers trying to overtake and tack down a carpet that was blowing away in front of a gale. An insufficient supply of upholsterers . . . And the carpet always growing as it blows. That’s good. . . . They were trying to fix something they hadn’t clearly defined. And you have a lot of them still hammering away at their tacks when the edge of the carpet has gone on far ahead. . . . That was really the state of education in England when I took you two young people in hand; the carpet was in the air and most of the schoolmasters, schoolmistresses, writers, teachers, journalists, and all who build up and confirm ideas were hammering in tacks where the carpet had been resting the day before yesterday. . . . But a lot were not even hammering. No. They just went easy. Yes, that is what I mean when I say that education was altogether at loose ends. . . . But Germany was different; Germany was teaching and teaching in schools, colleges, press, everywhere, this new Imperialism of hers, a sort of patriotic melodrama, with

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Britain as Carthage and Berlin instead of Rome. They pointed the whole population to that end. They *taught* this war. All over the world a thousand other educational systems pointed in a thousand directions. . . .

“So Germany set fire to the Phoenix. . . .

“Only one other great country had any sort of state education. Real state education that is. The United States was also teaching citizenship, on a broader if shallower basis; a wider citizenship—goodwill to all mankind. Shallower. Shallower certainly. But it was there. A republican culture. Candour . . . generosity. . . . The world has still to realise its debt to the common schools of America. . . .

“This League of Free Nations, of which all men are dreaming and talking, this World Republic, is the rediscovered outline, the proper teaching of all real education, the necessary outline now of human life. . . . There is nothing else to do, nothing else that people of our sort can do at all, nothing but baseness, grossness, vileness, and slavery unless we live now as a part of that process of a world peace. Our lives have got to be political lives. All lives have to be made political lives. We can't run about *loose* any more. This idea of a world-wide commonwealth, this ideal of an everlasting world peace in which we are to live and move and have our being, has to be built up in every school, in every mind, in every lesson. ‘You belong. You belong. And the world belongs to you.’ . . .

“What ought one to teach when one teaches geography, for instance, but the common estate of man-

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kind? Here, the teacher should say, are mountains and beautiful cities you may live to see. Here are plains where we might grow half the food of mankind! Here are the highways of our common life, and here are pleasant byways where you may go! All this is your inheritance. Your estate. To rejoice in—and serve. But is that how geography is taught? . . .

“We used to learn lists of the British possessions, with their total exports and imports in money. I remember it as if it were yesterday. . . . Old Smugs—a hot New Imperialist—new then. . . .

“Then what is history but a long struggle of men to find peace and safety, and how they have been prevented by baseness and greed and folly? Is that right? No, folly and baseness—and hate. . . . Hate certainly. . . . All history is one dramatic story, of man blundering his way from the lonely ape to the world commonwealth. All history is each man’s adventure. But what teacher makes history much more than a dwarfish twaddle about boundaries and kings and wars? Dwarfish twaddle. History! It went nowhere. It did nothing. Was there ever anything more like a crowd of people getting into an omnibus without wheels than the History Schools at Oxford? Or your History Tripos?” . . . Oswald repeated his image and saw that it was good. . . .

“What is the teaching of a language again but teaching the knowledge of another people—an exposition of the soul of another people—a work of union? . . . But you see what I mean by all this; this idea of a great world of co-operating peoples; it

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is not just a diplomatic scheme, not something far off that Foreign Offices are doing; it is an idea that must revolutionise the lessons of a child in the nursery and alter the maps upon every schoolroom wall. And frame our lives altogether. Or be nothing. The World Peace. To that we all belong. I have a fancy—As though this idea had been hovering over the world, unsubstantial, unable to exist—until all this blood-letting, this torment and disaster gave it a body. . . .

“What I am saying to you the University ought to have said to you.

“Instead of Universities”—he sought for a phrase and produced one that against the nocturnal dark seemed brilliant and luminous. “Instead of the University *passant regardant*, we want the University militant. We want Universities all round and about the world, associated, working to a common end, drawing together all the best minds and the finest wills, a myriad of multicoloured threads, into one common web of a world civilisation.”

§ 6

Also that night Oswald made a discourse upon the English.

“Yours is a great inheritance, Joan and Peter,” he said to the darkness. “You are young; that is a great thing in itself. The world cries out now for the young to enter into possession. And also—do you ever think of it?—you are English, Joan and Peter. . . .

“Let me say something to you before we have done, something out of my heart. Have I ever canted patri-

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otism to you? No! Am I an aggressive Imperialist? Am I not a Home Ruler? For Ireland. For India. The best years of my life have been spent in saving black men from white—and mostly those white men were of our persuasion, men of the buccaneer strain, on the loot. But now that we three are here together with no one else to hear us, I will confess. I tell you there is no race and no tradition in the whole world that I would change for my English race and tradition. I do not mean the brief tradition of this little Buckingham Palace and Westminster system here that began yesterday and will end to-morrow, I mean the great tradition of the English that is spread all over the earth, the tradition of Shakespear and Milton, of Newton and Bacon, of Runnymede and Agincourt, the tradition of the men who speak fairly and act fairly, without harshness and without fear, who face whatever odds there are against them and take no account of Kings. It is in Washington and New York and Christchurch and Sydney, just as much as it is in Pelham Ford. . . . Well, upon us more than upon any other single people rests now for a time the burthen of human destiny. Upon us and France. France is the spear head but we are the shaft. If we fail, mankind may fail. We English have made the greatest empire that the world has ever seen; across the Atlantic we have also made the greatest republic. And these are but phases in our task. The better part of our work still lies before us. The weight is on us now. It was Milton who wrote long ago that when God wanted some task of peculiar difficulty to be done he turned to his Englishmen. And he turns

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to us to-day. Old Milton saw English shine clear and great for a time and then pass into the darkness. . . . He didn't lose his faith. . . . Church and crown are no part of the real England which we inherit. . . .

"We have no reason to be ashamed of our race and country, Joan and Peter, for all the confusion and blundering of these last years. Our generals and politicians have missed opportunity after opportunity. I cannot talk yet of such things. . . . The blunderings. . . . The slackness. . . . Hanoverian England with its indolence, its dulness, its economic uncleanness, its canting individualism, its contempt for science and system, has been an England darkened, an England astray— Young England has had to pay at last for all those wasted years—and has paid. . . . My God! the men we have expended already in fighting these Germans, the brave, beautiful men, the jesting common men, the fresh boys, so cheerful and kind and gallant! . . . And the happiness that has died! And the shame of following after clumsy, mean leadership in the sight of all the world! . . . But there rests no stain on our blood. For our people here and for the Americans this has been a war of honour. We did not come into this war for sordid or narrow ends. Our politicians when they made base treaties had to hide them from our people. . . . Even in the face of the vilest outrages, even now the English keep a balanced justice and will not hate the German common men for things they have been forced to do. Yesterday I saw the German prisoners who work at Stanton getting into the train and joking with their guard. They looked well fed

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and healthy and uncowed. One carried a bunch of primroses. No one has an ill word for these men on all the countryside. . . . Does any other people in the world treat prisoners as we treat them? . . .

“Well, the time has come for our people now to go on from Empire and from Monroe Doctrine, great as these ideas have been, to something still greater; the time has come for us to hold out our hands to every man in the world who is ready for a disciplined freedom. The German has dreamt of setting up a Cæsar over the whole world. Against that we now set up a disciplined world freedom. For ourselves and all mankind. . . .

“Joan and Peter, that is what I have been coming to in all this wandering discourse. Yours is a great inheritance. You and your generation have to renew and justify England in a new world. You have to link us again in a common purpose with our kind everywhere. You have to rescue our destinies, the destinies of the world, from these stale quarrels; you have to take the world out of the hands of these weary and worn men, these old and oldish men, these men who can learn no more. You have to reach back and touch the England of Shakespear, Milton, Raleigh, and Blake—and that means you have to go forward. You have to take up the English tradition as it was before church and court and a base imperialism perverted it. You have to become political. Now. You have to become responsible. Now. You have to create. Now. You, with your fresh vision, with the lessons you have learned still burning bright in your minds, you have to remake the world. Listen when

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the old men tell you facts, for very often they know. Listen when they reason, they will teach you many twists and turns. But when they dogmatise, when they still want to rule unquestioned, and, above all, when they say '*impossible*,' even when they say '*wait—be dilatory and discreet*,' push them aside. Their minds squat crippled beside dead traditions. . . . That England of the Victorian old men, and its empire and its honours and its court and precedences, it is all a dead body now, it has died as the war has gone on, and it has to be buried out of our way lest it corrupt you and all the world again. . . ."

§ 7

We underrate the disposition of youth to think for itself.

Oswald set himself to deliver this Valediction of his after dinner on Friday evening. . . .

Joan was hesitating between a game of Demon Patience with Peter—in which she always played thirteen to his eleven and usually won in spite of the handicap—and an inclination for Bach's "Passacaglia" upon the pianola in the study. Peter expressed himself ready for whatever she chose; he would play D. P. or read "Moll Flanders"—he had just discovered the delight of that greatest of all eighteenth-century novels. He was sitting on the couch in the library and Joan was standing upon the hearth-rug, regarding him thoughtfully, when Oswald came in. He stopped to hear what Peter was saying, with his one eye intent on Joan's pretty gravity.

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"No," he interrupted. "This is my evening.

"You see," he said, coming up to the fire; "I want to talk to you young people. I want to know some things— I want to know what you make of life. . . . I want . . . an exchange of views."

He stood with his back to the fire and smiled at Joan's grave face close to his own. "I've got to talk to you," he said, "very seriously. It's necessary."

Having paralysed them by this preface he sat down in his deep armchair, pulled it an inch or so towards the fire, and leaning forward, with his eye on the spitting coals, began.

"I wish I could talk better, Joan and Peter. . . . I know I've never been a good talker—it's been rather a loss between us all. And now particularly. . . . I want to talk. . . . You must let me get it out in my own way. . . ."

"You see," he went on after a moment or so to rally his forces, "I've been your guardian, I've had your education and your affairs in my hands, for fifteen years. So far as the affairs go, Sycamore, you know— We won't go into *that*. That's all plain sailing. But it's the education I want to talk about—and your future. You are now both of age. Well past. You're on the verge of twenty-five, Peter—in a month or so. You're both off now—housekeeping. You're dropping the pilot. It's high time, I suppose. . . ."

Joan glanced at Peter, and then sank noiselessly into a crouching attitude close to Oswald's knee. He paused to stroke her hair.

"I've been trying to get you all that I could get

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you. . . . Education. . . . I've had to blunder and experiment. I ought to tell you what I've aimed at and what I've done, take stock with you of the world I've educated you for and the part you're going to play in it. Take stock. . . . It's been a badly planned undertaking, I know. But then it's such a surprising and unexpected world. All the time I've been learning, and most things I've learned more or less too late to use the knowledge properly. . . ."

He paused.

Peter looked at his guardian and said nothing. Oswald patted the head at his knee in return for a caress. It was an evasive, even apologetic pat, for he did not want to be distracted by affection just then.

"This war has altered the whole world," he went on. "Life has become stark and intense, and when I took this on—when I took up the task of educating you—our world here seemed the most wrapped-up and comfortable and secure world you can possibly imagine. Comfortable to the pitch of stuffiness. Most English people didn't trouble a bit about the shape of human life; they thought it was—well, rather like a heap of down cushions. For them it was. For most of Europe and America. . . . They thought it was all right and perfectly safe—if only you didn't bother. And education had lost its way. Yes. That puts the case. *Education had lost its way.*"

Oswald paused again. He fixed his one eye firmly on a glowing cavity in the fire, as though that contained the very gist of his thoughts.

"What is education up to?" he asked. "What is education? . . ."

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Thereupon of course he ought to have gone on to the passage beginning, "Consider this beast we are, this thing man!" as he had already rehearsed it overnight. But Peter had not learned his part properly.

"I suppose it's fitting the square natural man into the round hole of civilised life," Peter threw out.

This reply greatly disconcerted Oswald. "Exactly," he said, and was for some moments at a loss.

"Yes," he said, rallying. "But what is civilised life?"

"Oh! . . . Creative activities in an atmosphere of helpful good-will," Peter tried in the brief pause that followed.

Oswald had a disagreeable feeling that he was getting to the end of his discourse before he delivered its beginning. "Yes," he said again. "Yes. But for that you must have a political form."

"The World State," said Peter.

"The League of Free Nations," said Oswald, "to enforce Peace throughout the earth."

The next remark that came from Peter was still more unexpected and embarrassing.

"Peace is nothing," said Peter.

Oswald turned his red eye upon his ward, in profound amazement.

Did they differ fundamentally in their idea of the human future?

"Peace, my dear Peter, is everything," he protested.

"But, sir, it's nothing more than the absence of war. It's a negative. In itself it's—vacuum. You can't live in a vacuum."

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"But I mean an active peace."

"That would be something more than peace. War is an activity. Peace is not. If you take war out of the world, you must have some other activity."

"But doesn't the organisation of the World Peace in itself constitute an activity?"

"That would be a diminishing activity, sir. Like a man getting himself morphia and taking it and going to sleep. A World Peace would release energy, and as the energy was released, if the end were merely peace, there would be less need for it. Until things exploded."

Great portions of Oswald's Valediction broke away and vanished for ever into the limbo of unspoken discourses.

"But would you have war go on, Peter?"

"Not in its present form. But struggle and unification, which is the end sought in all struggles, must go on in some form, sir," said Peter, "while life goes on. We have to get the World State and put an end to war. I agree. But the real question is what are you going to do with our Peace? What struggle is to take the place of war? What is mankind going to do? Most wars have come about hitherto because somebody was bored. Do you remember how bored we all were in 1914? And the rotten way we were all going on then? A World State or a League of Nations with nothing to do but to keep the peace will bore men intolerably. . . . That's what I like about the Germans."

"What you *like* about the Germans!" Oswald cried in horror.

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"They *did* get a move on, sir," said Peter.

"We don't want a preventive League of Nations," Peter expanded. "It's got to be creative or nothing. Or else we shall be in a sort of perpetual Coronation year—with nothing doing on account of the processions. Horrible!"

For a little while Oswald made no reply. He could not recall a single sentence of the lost Valediction that was at all appropriate here, and he was put out and distressed beyond measure that Peter could find anything to "like" about the Germans.

"A World Peace for its own sake is impossible," Peter went on. "The Old Experimenter would certainly put a spoke into that wheel."

"Who is the Old Experimenter?" asked Oswald.

"He's a sort of God I have," said Peter. "Something between theology and a fairy-tale. I dreamt about him. When I was delirious. He doesn't rule the world or anything of that sort, because he doesn't want to, but he keeps on dropping new things into it. To see what happens. Like a man setting himself problems to work out in his head. He lives in a little out-of-the-way office. That's the idea."

"You haven't told me about him," said Joan.

"I shall some day," said Peter. "When I feel so disposed. . . ."

"This is very disconcerting," said Oswald, much perplexed. He scowled at the fire before him. "But you do realise the need there is for some form of world state and some ending of war? Unless mankind is to destroy itself altogether."

"Certainly, sir," said Peter. "But we aren't going

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to do that on a peace proposition simply. It's got to be a positive proposal. You know, sir——"

"I wish you'd call me Nobby," said Oswald.

"It's a vice contracted in the army, this sir-ing," said Peter. "It's Nobby in my mind, anyhow. But you see, I've got a kind of habit, at night and odd times, of thinking over my little misadventure with that balloon and my scrap with von Papen. They are my stock dreams, with extra details worked in, nasty details some of them . . . and then I wake up and think about them. I think over the parachute affair more than the fight, because it lasted longer and I wasn't so active. I felt it more. Especially being shot in the legs. . . . That sort of dream when you float helpless. . . . But the thing that impresses me most in reflecting on those little experiences is the limitless amount of intelligence that expended itself on such jobs as breaking my wrist, splintering my shoulder-blade and smashing up my leg. The amount of ingenuity and good workmanship in my instruments and the fittings of my basket, for example, was extraordinary, having regard to the fact that it was just one small item in an artillery system for blowing Germans to red rags. And the stuff and intelligence they were putting up against me, that too was wonderful; the way the whole problem had been thought out, the special clock fuse and so on. Well, my point is that the chap who made that equipment wasn't particularly interested in killing me, and that the chaps who made my outfit weren't particularly keen on the slaughter of Germans. But they had nothing else to do. They were brought up in a pointless

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world. They were caught by a vulgar quarrel. What did they care for the Kaiser? Old ass! What they were interested in was making the things. . . .”

Peter became very earnest in his manner. “No peace, as we have known peace hitherto, offers such opportunities for good inventive work as war does. That’s my point, Nobby. There’s no comparison between the excitement and the endless problems of making a real live efficient submarine, for example, that has to meet and escape the intensest risks, and the occupation of designing a great big safe upholstered liner in which fat swindlers can cross the Atlantic without being seasick. War tempts imaginative, restless people, and a stagnant peace bores them. And you’ve got to reckon with intelligence and imagination in this world, Nobby, more than anything. They aren’t strong enough to control perhaps, but they will certainly upset. Inventive, restless men are the particular instruments of my Old Experimenter. He prefers them now to plague, pestilence, famine, flood, and earthquake. They are more delicate instruments. And more efficient. And they won’t *stand* a passive peace. Under no circumstances can you hope to induce the chap who contrived the clock fuse and the chap who worked out my gas-bag or the chap with a new aeroplane gadget, and me—me, too—to stop cerebrating and making our damnedest just in order to sit about safely in meadows joining up daisy chains—like a beastly lot of figures by Walter Crane. The Old Experimenter finds some mischief still for idle brains to do. He insists on it. That’s fundamental to the scheme of things.”

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"But that's no reason," interrupted Oswald, "why you and the inventors who were behind you, and the Germans who made and loaded and fired that shell, shouldn't all get together to do something that will grow and endure. Instead of killing one another."

"Ah, that's it!" said Peter. "But the word for that isn't Peace."

"Then what is the word for it?"

"I don't know," said Peter. "The Great Game, perhaps."

"And where does it take you?"

Peter threw out his hands. "It's an exploration," he said. "It will take man to the centre of the earth; it will take him to the ends of space, between the atoms and among the stars. How can we tell beforehand? You must have faith. But of one thing I am sure, that man cannot stagnate. It is forbidden. It is the uttermost sin. Why, the Old Man will come out of his office himself to prevent it! This war and all the blood and loss of it is because the new things are entangled among old and dead things, worn-out and silly things, and we've not had the vigour to get them free. Old idiot nationality, national conceit—expanding to imperialism, nationality in a state of megalomania, has been allowed to get hold of the knife that was meant for a sane generation to carve out a new world with. Heaven send he cuts his own throat this time! Or else there may be a next time. . . . I'm all for the one world state, and the end of flags and kings and custom-houses. But I have my doubts of all this talk of making the world safe—safe for democracy. I want the world made one for the adventure

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of mankind, which is quite another story. I have been in the world now, Nobby, for five-and-twenty years, and I am only beginning to suspect the wonder and beauty of the things we men might know and do. If only we could get our eyes and hands free of the old inheritance. What has mankind done yet to boast about? I despise human history—because I believe in God. Not the God you don't approve of, Nobby, but in my Old Experimenter, whom I confess I don't begin to understand, and in the far-off, eternal scheme he hides from us and which he means us to develop age by age. Oh! I don't understand him, I don't begin to explain him; he's just a figure for what I feel is the reality. But he is right, he is wonderful. And instead of just muddling about over the surface of his universe, we have to get into the understanding of it to the very limits of our ability, to live our utmost and do the intensest best we can."

"Yes," said Oswald; "yes." This was after his own heart, and yet it did not run along the lines of the Valedictory that had flowered with such Corinthian richness overnight. He had been thinking then of world peace; what Peter was driving at now was a world purpose; but weren't the two after all the same thing? He sat with his one eye reflecting the red light of the fire, and the phrases that had come in such generous abundance overnight now refused to come at all.

Peter, on the couch, continued to think aloud.

"Making the world safe for democracy," said Peter. "That isn't quite it. If democracy means that any man may help who can, that school and university

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will give every man and woman the fairest chance, the most generous inducement to help, to do the thing he can best do under the best conditions, then, *Yes*; but if democracy means getting up a riot and boycott among the stupid and lazy and illiterate whenever anything is doing, then I say *No!* Every human being has got to work, has got to take part. If our laws and organisation don't insist upon that, the Old Experimenter will. So long as the world is ruled by stale ideas and lazy ideas, he is determined that it shall flounder from war to war. Now what does this democracy mean? Does it mean a crowd of primitive brutes howling down progress and organisation? because if it does, I want to be in the machine-gun section. When you talk of education, Nobby, you think of highly educated people, of a nation instructed through and through. But what of democracy in Russia, where you have a naturally clever people in a state of peasant ignorance—who can't even read? Until the schoolmaster has talked to every one for ten or twelve years, can you have what President Wilson thinks of as democracy at all?"

"Now there you meet me," said Oswald. "That is the idea I have been trying to get at with you." And for some minutes the palatial dimensions of the lost Valedictory loomed out. Where he had said "peace" overnight, however, he now said progress.

But the young man on the couch was much too keenly interested to make a good audience. When presently Oswald propounded his theory that all the great world religions were on the side of this World

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Republic that he and Peter desired, Peter demurred.

“But is that true of Catholicism, for instance?” said Peter.

Oswald quoted, “I am the Vine and ye are the Branches.”

“Yes,” said Peter. “But look at the Church itself. Don’t look at the formula but at the practice and the daily teaching. Is it truly a growing Vine?” The reality of Catholicism, Peter argued, was a traditional, sacramental religion, a narrow fetich religion with a specialised priest, it was concerned primarily with another world, it set its face against any conception of a scheme of progress in this world apart from its legend of the sacrifice of the Mass.

“All good Catholics sneer at progress,” said Peter. “Take Belloc and Chesterton, for example; they *hate* the idea of men working steadily for any great scheme of effort here. They hold by stagnant standards, planted deep in the rich mud of life. What’s the Catholic conception of human life?—guzzle, booze, call the passion of the sexes unclean and behave accordingly, confess, get absolution, and at it again. Is there any recognition in Catholicism of the duty of keeping your body fit or your brain active? They’re worse than the man who buried his talent in a clean napkin; they bury it in wheezy fat. It’s a sloven’s life. What have we in common with that? Always they are harking back to the thirteenth century, to the peasant life amidst dung and chickens. It’s a different species of mind from ours, with the head and feet turned backward. What is the good of expecting the Pope, for instance, and his Church to help us in

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creating a League of Nations? His aim would be a world agreement to stop progress, and we want to release it. He wants peace in order to achieve nothing, and we want peace in order to do everything. What is the good of pretending that it is the same peace? A Catholic League of Nations would be a conspiracy of stagnation, another Holy Alliance. What real world unity can come through them? Every step on the way to the world state and the real unification of men will be fought by the stagnant men and the priests. Why blind ourselves to that? Progress is a religion in itself. Work and learning are our creed. We cannot make terms with any other creed. The priest has got his God and we seek our God for ever. The priest is finished and completed and self-satisfied, and we—we are beginning. . . .”

§ 8

There were two days yet before Peter went back to his work in London. Saturday dawned blue and fine, and Joan and he determined to spend it in a long tramp over the Hertfordshire hills and fields. He meant to stand no nonsense from his foot. “If I can’t walk four miles an hour then I must do two,” he said. “And if the pace is too slow for you, Joan, you must run round and round me and bark.” They took a long route by field and lane through Albury and Furneaux Pelham to the little inn at Stocking Pelham, where they got some hard biscuits and cheese and shandygaff, and came home by way of

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Patmore Heath, and the golden oaks and the rivulet. And as they went Peter talked of Oswald.

"Naturally he wants to know what we are going to do," said Peter, and then, rather inconsequently, "He's ill.

"This war is like a wasting fever in the blood and in the mind," said Peter. "All Europe is ill. But with him it mixes with the old fever. That splinter at Fricourt was no joke for him. He oughtn't to have gone out. He's getting horribly lean, and his eye is like a garnet."

"I love him," said Joan.

But she did not want to discuss Oswald just then.

"About this new theology of yours, Peter," she said. . . .

"Well?" said Peter.

"What do you mean by this Old Experimenter of yours? Is he—*God*?"

"I don't know. I thought he was. He's— He's a Symbol. He's just a Caricature I make to express how all *this*"—Peter swept his arm across the sunlit world—"seems to stand to me. If one can't draw the thing any better, one has to make a caricature."

Joan considered that gravely.

"I thought of him first in my dream as the God of the Universe," Peter explained.

"You couldn't love a God like that," Joan remarked.

"Heavens, *no!* He's too vast, too incomprehensible. I love you—and Oswald—and the R. F. C., Joan, and biology. But he's above and beyond that sort of thing."

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"Could you pray to him?" asked Joan.

"Not to *him*," said Peter.

"I pray," said Joan. "Don't you?"

"And swear," said Peter.

"One prays to something—it isn't oneself."

"The fashion nowadays is to speak of the God in the Heart and the God in the Universe."

"Is it the same God?"

"Leave it at that," said Peter. "We don't know. All the waste and muddle in religion is due to people arguing and asserting that they are the same, that they are different but related, or that they are different but opposed. And so on and so on. How can we know? What need is there to know? In view of the little jobs we are doing. Let us leave it at that."

Joan was silent for a while. "I suppose we must," she said.

"And what are we going to do with ourselves," asked Joan, "when the war is over?"

"They can't keep us in khaki for ever," Peter considered. "There's a Ministry of Reconstruction fozzling away in London, but it's never said a word to me of the some-day that is coming. I suppose it hasn't learned to talk yet."

"What do you think of doing?" asked Joan.

"Well, first—a good medical degree. Then I can doctor if I have to. But, if I'm good enough, I shall do research. I've a sort of feeling that along the border-line of biology and chemistry I might do something useful. I've some ideas. . . . I suppose I shall go back to Cambridge for a bit. We neither of us need earn money at once. It will be queer—

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after being a grown-up married man—to go back to proctors and bulldogs. What are *you* going to do, Joan, when you get out of uniform?”

“Look after you first, Petah. Oh! it’s worth doing. And it won’t take me all my time. And then I’ve got my own ideas. . . .”

“Out with ’em, Joan.”

“Well——”

“Well?”

“Petah, I shall learn plumbing.”

“Jobbing?”

“No. And bricklaying and carpentry. All I can. And then I am going to start building houses.”

“Architect?”

“As little as possible,” said Joan. “No. No beastly Architecture for Art’s sake for me! Do you remember how people used to knock their heads about at The Ingle-Nook? I’ve got some money. Why shouldn’t I be able to build houses as well as the fat builder-men with big, flat thumbs who used to build houses before the war?”

“Jerry-building?”

“High-class jerry-building, if you like. Cottages with sensible insides, real insides, and not so much waste space and scamping to make up for it. They’re half a million houses short in this country already. There’s something in building appeals to my sort of imagination. And I’m going to make money, Petah.”

“I love the way you carry your tail,” said Peter. “Always.”

“Well, doing running repairs hardens a woman’s soul.”

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"You'll make more money than I shall, perhaps. But now I begin to understand all these extraordinary books you've been studying. . . . I might have guessed. . . . Why not?"

He limped along, considering it. "Why shouldn't you?" he said. "A service flat will leave your hands free. . . . I've always wondered secretly why women didn't plunge into that sort of business more."

"It's been just diffidence," said Joan.

"*Click!*" said Peter. "That's gone, anyhow. If a lot of women do as you do and become productive for good, this old muddle of a country will sit up in no time. It doubles the output. . . . I wonder if the men will like working under you?"

"There'll be a boss in the background," said Joan. "Mr. John Debenham. Who'll never turn up. Being, in fact, no more than camouflage for Joan of that ilk. I shall be just my own messenger and agent."

"One thing I know," said Joan, "and that is, that I will make a cottage or a flat that won't turn a young woman into an old one in ten years' time. Living in that Jepson flat without a servant has brightened me up in a lot of ways. . . . And a child will grow up in my cottages without being crippled in its mind by awkwardness and ugliness. . . . This sort of thing always has been woman's work really. Only we've been so busy chattering and powdering our silly noses—and laying snares for our Peters. Who didn't know what was good for them."

Peter laughed and was amused. He felt a pleasant assurance that Joan really was going to build houses.

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"Joan," he said, "it's a bleak world before us—and I hate to think of Nobby. He's so *ill*. But the work—the good hard work—there's times when I rather like to think of that. . . . They were beastly years just before the war."

"I hated them," said Joan.

"But what a lot of stuff there was about!" said Peter. "The petrol! Given away, practically, along the roadside everywhere. And the joints of meat. Do you remember the big hams we used to have on the sideboard? For breakfast. A lot of sausages going sizzle! Eggs galore! Bacon! Haddock. Perhaps cutlets. And the way one could run off abroad!"

"To Italy," said Joan dangerously.

"God knows when those times will come back again! Not for years. Not for our lifetimes."

"If they came back all at once we'd have indigestion," said Joan.

"Orgy," said Peter. "But they won't. . . ."

Presently their note became graver.

"We've got to live like fanatics. If a lot of us don't live like fanatics, this staggering old world of ours won't recover. It will stagger and then go flop. And a race of Bolshevik peasants will breed pigs among the ruins. We owe it to ourselves, we owe it to the world to prevent that."

"And we owe it to the ones who have died," said Joan.

She hesitated, and then she began to tell him something of the part Wilmington had played in their lives.

They went through field after field, through gates

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and over stiles and by a coppice spangled with primroses, while she told him of the part that Wilmington had played in bringing them together; Wilmington who was now no more than grey soil where the battle still raged in France. Many were the young people who talked so of dead friends in those days. Their voices became grave and faintly deferential, as though they had invoked a third presence to mingle with their duologue. They were very careful to say nothing and to think as little as possible that might hurt Wilmington's self-love.

Presently they found themselves speculating again about the kind of world that lay ahead of them—whether it would be a wholly poor world or a poverty-struck world infested and devastated by a few hundred millionaires and their followings. Poor we were certain to be. We should either be sternly poor or meanly poor. But Peter was disposed to doubt whether the war millionaires would “get away with the swag.”

“There's too much thinking and reading nowadays for that,” said Peter. “They won't get away with it. This is a new age, Joan. If they try that game they won't have five years' run.”

No, it would be a world generally poor, a tired but chastened world getting itself into order again. . . . Would there be much music in the years ahead? Much writing or art? Would there be a new theatre and the excitement of first nights again? Should we presently travel by aeroplane, and find all the world within a few days' journey? They were both prepared to resign themselves to ten years of work and

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scarcity, but they both clung to the hope of returning prosperity and freedom after that.

“Well, well, Joan,” said Peter, “these times teach us to love. I’m crippled. We’ve got to work hard. But I’m not unhappy. I’m happier than I was when I had no idea of what I wanted in life, when I lusted for everything and was content with nothing, in the days before the war. I’m a wise old man now with my stiff wrist and my game leg. You change everything, Joan. You make everything worth while.”

“I’d like to think it was me,” said Joan idiomatically.

“It’s you. . . .”

“After all there must be some snatches of holiday. I shall walk with you through beautiful days—as we are doing to-day—days that would only be like empty silk purses if it wasn’t that they held you in them. Scenery and flowers and sunshine mean nothing to me—until you come in. I’m blind until you give me eyes. Joan, do you know how beautiful you are? When you smile? When you stop to think? Frowning a little. When you look—yes, just like that.”

“No!” said Joan, but very cheerfully.

“But you are—you are endlessly beautiful. Endlessly. Making love to Joan—it’s the intensest of joys. Every time— As if one had just discovered her.”

“There’s a certain wild charm about Petah,” Joan admitted, “for a coarse taste.”

“After all, whether it’s set in poverty or plenty,” said Peter; “whether it’s rational or irrational, making love is still at the heart of us humans. . . .”

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For a time they exulted shamelessly in themselves. They talked of the good times they had had together in the past. They revived memories of Bungo-Peter and the Sagas that had slumbered in silence since the first dawn of adolescence. She recalled a score of wonderful stories and adventures that he had altogether forgotten. She had a far clearer and better memory for such things than he. "D'you remember lightning slick, Petah? And how the days went faster? D'you remember how he put lightning slick on his bicycle? . . ."

But Peter had forgotten that.

"And when we fought for that picshua you made of Adela," Joan said. "When I bit you. . . . It was my first taste of you, Petah. You tasted dusty. . . ."

"I suppose we've always had a blind love for each other," said Peter, "always."

"I hated you to care for any one but myself," said Joan, "since ever I can remember. I hated even Billy."

"It's well we found out in time," said Peter.

"I found out," said Joan.

"Ever since we stopped being boy and girl together," said Peter, "I've never been at peace in my nerves and temper till now. . . . Now I feel as though I swung free in life, safe, sure, content."

"*Content*," weighed Joan suspiciously. "But you're still in love with me, Petah?"

"Not particularly *in* love," said Peter. "No. But I'm loving you—as the June sun loves an open meadow, shining all over it. I shall always love you, Joan, because there is no one like you in all the world."

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No one at all. Making love happens, but love endures. How can there be companionship and equality except between the like?—who can keep step, who can climb together, joke broad and shameless, and never struggle for the upper hand? And where in all the world shall I find that, Joan, but in you? Listen to wisdom, Joan! There are two sorts of love between men and women, and only two—love like the love of big carnivora who know their mates and stick to them, or love like some man who follows a woman home because he's never seen anything like her before. I've done with that sort of love for ever. There's men who like to exaggerate every difference in women. They pretend women are mysterious and dangerous and wonderful. They like sex served up with lies and lingerie. . . . Where's the love in that? Give me my old brown Joan."

"Not so beastly brown," said Joan.

"Joan *nature*."

"Tut, tut!" said Joan.

"There's people who scent themselves to make love," said Peter.

"Experienced Petah," said Joan.

"I've read of it," said Peter, and a little pause fell between them. . . .

"Every one ought to be like us," said Joan sagely, with the spring sunshine on her dear face.

"It takes all sorts to make a world," said Peter.

"Everybody ought to have a lover," said Joan.

"Everybody. There's no clean life without it." . . .

"We've been through some beastly times, Joan. We've run some beastly risks. . . . We've just

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scrambled through, Joan, to love—as I scrambled through to life. After being put down and shot at. . . .”

Presently Joan suspected a drag in Peter's paces and decided at the sight of a fallen tree in a little grass lane to profess fatigue. They sat down upon the scaly trunk, just opposite to where a gate pierced a budding hedge and gave a view of a long curved ridge of sunlit blue, shooting corn with red budding and green-powdered trees beyond, and far away a woldy upland rising out of an intervening hidden valley. And Peter admitted that he, too, felt a little tired. But each was making a pretence for the sake of the other.

“We've rediscovered a lot of the old things, Joan,” said Peter. “The war has knocked sense into us. There wasn't anything to work for, there wasn't much to be loyal to in the days of the Marconi scandals and the Coronation Durbar. Slack times, more despair in them by far than in these red days. Rotten, aimless times. . . . Oh! the world's not done for. . . .”

“I don't grudge my wrist or my leg,” said Peter. “I can hop. I've still got five-and-forty years, fifty years, perhaps, to spend. In this new world. . . .”

He said no more for a time. There were schemes in his head, so immature as yet that he could not even sketch them out to her.

He sat with his eyes dreaming, and Joan watched him. There was much of the noble beast in this Peter of hers. In the end now, she was convinced, he was going to be an altogether noble beast. Through her.

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He was hers to cherish, to help, to see grow. . . . He was her chosen man. . . . Depths that were only beginning to awaken in Joan were stirred. She would sustain Peter, and also presently she would renew Peter. A time would come when this dear spirit would be born again within her being, when the blood in her arteries and all the grace of her body would be given to a new life—to new lives, that would be beautiful variations of this dearest tune in the music of the world. . . . They would have courage; they would have minds like bright, sharp swords. They would lift their chins as Peter did. . . . It became inconceivable to Joan that women could give their bodies to bear the children of unloved men. “*Dear Petah,*” her lips said silently. Her heart swelled; her hands tightened. She wanted to kiss him. . . .

Then in a whim of reaction she was moved to mockery.

“Do you feel so *very* stern and strong, dear Petah?” she whispered close to his shoulder.

He started, surprised, stared at her for a moment, and smiled into her eyes.

“Old Joan,” he said and kissed her. . . .

§ 9

When he returned to the house on Monday morning after he had seen the two young people off, a burthen of desolation came upon Oswald.

It was a loneliness as acute as a physical pain. It was misery. If they had been dead, he could not

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have been more unhappy. The work that had been the warm and living substance of fifteen years was now finished and done. The nest was empty. The road and the stream, the gates and the garden, the house and the hall, seemed to ache with emptiness and desertion. He went into their old study, from which they had already taken a number of their most intimate treasures, and which was now as disordered as a room after a sale. Most of their remaining personal possessions were stacked ready for removal; discarded magazines and books and torn paper made an untidy heap beside the fireplace. "I could not feel a greater pain if I had lost a son," he thought, staring at these untidy vestiges.

He went to his own study and sat down at his desk, though he knew there was no power of attention in him sufficient to begin work.

Mrs. Moxton, for reasons best known to herself, was interested in his movements that morning. She saw him presently wander into the garden and then return to the hall. He took his cap and stick and touched the bell. "I'll not be back to lunch, Mrs. Moxton," he called.

"Very well, sir," said Mrs. Moxton, unseen upon the landing above, nodding her head approvingly.

At first the world outside was as lonely as his study.

He went up the valley along the highroad for half a mile, and then took a winding lane under almost overhanging boughs—the hawthorn leaves now were nearly out and the elder quite—up over the hill and thence across fields and through a wood until he came to where the steep lane runs down to Braugh-

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ing. And by that time, although the springtime world was still immensely lonely and comfortless, he no longer felt that despairful sense of fresh and irremediable loss with which he started. He was beginning to realise now that he had always been a solitary being; that all men, even in crowds, carry a certain solitude with them; and loneliness thus lifted to the level of a sustained and general experience ceased to feel like a dagger turning in his heart.

Down the middle of Braughing village, among spaces of grass, runs the little Quin, now a race of crystalline water over pebbly shallows and now a brown purposefulness flecked with foam, in which reeds bend and recover as if they kept their footing by perpetual feats of dexterity. There are two fords, and midway between them a little bridge with a hand-rail on which Oswald stayed for a time, watching the lives and adventures of an endless stream of bubbles that were begotten thirty feet away where the eddy from the depths beneath a willow root dashed against a bough that bobbed and dipped in the water. He found a great distraction and relief in following their adventures. On they came, large and small, in strings, in spinning groups, busy bubbles, quiet bubbles, dignified solitary bubbles, and passed a dangerous headland of watercress and ran the gantlet between two big stones and then, if they survived, came with a hopeful rush for the shadow under the bridge and vanished utterly. . . .

For all the rest of the day those streaming bubbles glittered and raced and jostled before Oswald's eyes, and made a veil across his personal desolation. His

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mind swung like a pendulum between two ideas; those bubbles were like human life; they were not like human life. . . .

Philosophy is the greatest of anodynes.

"Why is a man's life different from a bubble? Like a bubble he is born of the swirl of matter, like a bubble he reflects the universe, he is driven and whirled about by forces he does not comprehend, he shines here and is darkened there and is elated or depressed he knows not why, and at last passes suddenly out into the darkness. . . ."

In the evening Oswald sat musing by his study fire, his lamp unlit. He sat in an attitude that had long become habitual to him, with the scarred side of his face resting upon and hidden by his hand. His walk had wearied him, but not unpleasantly, his knee was surprisingly free from pain, and he was no longer acutely unhappy. The idea, a very engaging idea, had come into his head that it was not really the education of Joan and Peter that had come to an end, but his own. They were still learners—how much they had still to learn! At Peter's age he had not yet gone to Africa. They had finished with school and college perhaps, but they were but beginning in the university of life. Neither of them had yet experienced a great disillusionment, neither of them had been shamed or bitterly disappointed; they had each other. They had seen the Great War indeed, and Peter knew now what wounds and death were like—but he himself had been through that at one-and-twenty. Neither had had any such dark tragedy as, for example, if one of them had been killed, or if

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one of them had betrayed and injured the other. Perhaps they would always have fortunate lives.

But he himself had had to learn the lesson to the end. His life had been a darkened one. He had loved intensely and lost. He had had to abandon his chosen life-work when it was barely half done. He had a present sense of the great needs of the world, and he was bodily weak and mentally uncertain. He would spend days now of fretting futility, unable to achieve anything. He loved these dear youngsters, but the young cannot give love to the old because they do not yet understand. He was alone. And yet, it was strange, he kept on. With such strength as he had he pursued his ends. Those two would go on, full of hope, helping one another, thinking together, succeeding. The lesson he had learned was that without much love, without much vitality, with little hope of seeing a single end achieved for which he worked, he could still go on.

He drifted through his memories, seeking for the motives that had driven him on from experience to experience. But while he could remember the experiences it was very hard now to recover any inkling of his motives. He remembered himself at school as a violent egotist, working hard, openly and fairly, for his ascendancy in the school games, working hard secretly for his school position. It seemed now as though all that time he had been no more than a greed and a vanity. . . . Was that fair to himself? Or had he forgotten the redeeming dreams of youth? . . .

The scene shifted to the wardroom of his first battleship, and then to his first battle. He saw again

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the long low line of the Egyptian coast, and the batteries of Alexandria and Ramleh spitting fire and the *Condor* standing in. He recalled the tense excitement of that morning, the boats rowing to land, but strangely enough the incident that had won him the Victoria Cross had been blotted completely from his mind by his injury. He could not recover even the facts, much less the feel of that act. . . . Why had he done what he had done? Did he himself really do it? . . . Then very vividly came the memory of his first sight of his smashed, disfigured face. That had been horrible at the time—in a way it was horrible still—but after that it seemed as though for the first time he had ceased then to be an egotism, a vanity. After that the memories of impersonal interests began. He thought of his attendance at Huxley's lectures at South Kensington and the wonder of making his first dissections. About that time he met Dolly, but here again was a queer gap; he could not remember anything very distinctly about his early meetings with Dolly except that she wore white and that they happened in a garden.

Yet, in a little while, all his being had been hungry for Dolly!

With his first journey into Africa all his memories became brighter and clearer and as if a hotter sun shone upon them. Everything before that time was part of the story of a young man long vanished from the world, young Oswald, a personality at least as remote as Peter—very like Peter. But with the change of scene to Africa, Oswald became himself. The man in the story was the man who sat musing

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in the study chair, moved by the same motives and altogether understandable. Already in Nyasaland he was working consciously for "civilisation" even as he worked to-day. Everything in that period lived still, with all its accompanying feelings alive. He fought again in his first fight in Nyasaland, and recalled with complete vividness how he had loaded and fired and reloaded and fired time after time at the rushes of the Yao spearmen; he had fought leaning against the stockade because he was too weary to stand upright, and with his head and every limb aching. One man he had hit had wriggled for a long time in the grass, and that memory still distressed him. It trailed another memory of horror with it. In his campaign about Lake Kioga, years later, in a fight amidst some ant-hills he had come upon a wounded Soudanese being eaten alive by swarms of ants. The poor devil had died with the ants still upon him. . . . Oswald could still recall the sick anguish with which he had tried in vain to save or relieve this man.

The affair was in the exact quality of his present feelings; the picture was painted from the same palette. He remembered that then, as now, he felt the same helpless perplexity at apparently needless and unprofitable human agony. And then, as now, he had not despaired. He had been able to see no reason in this suffering and no excuse for it; he could see none now, and yet he did not despair. Why did not that and a hundred other horrors overwhelm him with despair? Why had he been able to go on with life after that? And after another exquisite humiliation and disappointment? He had loved Dolly intensely,

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and here again came a third but less absolutely obliterated gap in his recollections. For years he had been resolutely keeping his mind off the sufferings of that time, and now they were indistinct. His memory was particularly blank now about Arthur; he was registered merely as a blond sort of ass with a tenor voice who punched copper. That faint hostile caricature was all his mind had tolerated. But still sharp and clear, as though it had been photographed but yesterday upon his memory, was the afternoon when he had realised that Dolly was dead. That scene was life-size and intense; how in a shady place under great trees, he had leaned forward upon his little folding-table and wept aloud.

What had carried him through all those things? Why had he desired so intensely? Why had he worked so industriously? Why did he possess this passion for order that had inspired his administrative work? Why had he given his best years to Uganda? Why had he been so concerned for the welfare and wisdom of Joan and Peter? Why did he work now to the very breaking-point, until sleeplessness and fever forced him to rest, for this dream of a great federation in the world—a world state he would certainly never live to see established? If he was indeed only a bubble, then surely he was the most obstinately opinionated of bubbles. But he was not merely a bubble. The essential self of him was not this thing that spun about in life, that felt and reflected the world, that missed so acutely the two dear other bubbles that had circled about him so long and that had now left him to eddy in his backwater while they

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hurried off into the midstream of life. His essential self, the self that mused now, that had struggled up through the egotisms of youth to this present predominance, was something deeper and tougher and more real than desire, than excitement, than pleasure or pain. That was the lesson he had been learning. There was something deeper in him to which he had been getting down more and more as life had gone on, something to which all the stuff of experience was incidental, something in which there was endless fortitude and an undying resolution to do. There was something in him profounder than the stream of accidents. . . .

He sat now with his distresses allayed, his mind playing with fancies and metaphors and analogies. Was this profounder contentment beneath his pains and discontents the consciousness of the bubble giving way to the underlying consciousness of the stream? That was ingenious, but it was not true. Men are not bubbles carried blindly on a stream; they are rather like bubbles, but that is all. They are wills and parts of a will that is neither the slave of the stream of matter nor a thing indifferent to it, that is paradoxically free and bound. They are parts of a will, but what this great will was that had him in its grasp, that compelled him to work, that saved him from drowning in his individual sorrows and cares, he could not say. It was easy to draw the analogy that a man is an atom in the life of the species as a cell is an atom in the life of a man. But this again was not the complete truth. Where was this alleged will of the species? If there was indeed such

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a will in the species, why was there this war? And yet, whatever it might be, assuredly there was *something* greater than himself sustaining his life. . . . To him it felt like a universal thing, but was it indeed a universal thing? It was strangely bound up with preferences. Why did he love and choose certain things passionately? Why was he indifferent to others? Why were Dolly and Joan more beautiful to him than any other women; why did he so love the sound of their voices, their movements, and the subtle lines of their faces; why did he love Peter, standing upright and when enthusiasm lit him; and why did he love the lights on polished steel and the dark-nesses of deep waters, the movements of flames, and of supple, feline animals, so intensely? Why did he love these things more than the sheen on painted wood, or the graces of blonde women, or the movements of horses? And why did he love justice and the revelation of scientific laws, and the setting right of disordered things? Why did this idea of a League of Nations come to him with the effect of a personal and preferential call? All these lights and matters and aspects and personal traits were somehow connected in his mind, and had a compelling power over him. They could make him forget his safety or comfort or happiness. They had something in common among themselves, he felt, and he could not tell what it was they had in common. But whatever it was, it was the intimation of the power that sustained him. It was as if they were all reflections or resemblances of some overruling spirit, some Genius, some great ruler of the values that stood over his existence and

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his world. Yet that again was but a fancy—a plagiarism from Socrates. . . .

There was a light upon his life, and the truth was that he could not discover the source of the light nor define its nature; there was a presence in the world about him that made all life worth while, and yet it was Nameless and Incomprehensible. It was the Essence beyond Reality; it was the Heart of All Things. . . . Metaphors! Words! Perhaps some men have meant this when they talked of Love, but he himself had loved because of this, and so he held it must be something greater than Love. Perhaps some men have intended it in their use of the word Beauty, but it seemed to him that rather it made and determined Beauty for him. And others again have known it as the living presence of God, but the name of God was to Oswald a name battered out of all value and meaning. And yet it was by this, by this Nameless, this Incomprehensible, that he lived and was upheld. It did so uphold him that he could go on, he knew, though happiness were denied him; though defeat and death stared him in the face. . . .

§ 10

At last he sighed and rose. He lit his reading-lamp by means of a newspaper rolled up into one long spill—for there was a famine in matches just then—and sat down to the work on his desk.

THE END.

**THE STORY OF
A GREAT SCHOOLMASTER**

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**THE STORY OF
A GREAT SCHOOLMASTER**

CHAPTER I

SANDERSON THE MAN

§ 1

OF all the men I have met—and I have now had a fairly long and active life and have met a very great variety of interesting people—one only has stirred me to a biographical effort. This one exception is F. W. Sanderson, for many years the head master of Oundle School. I think him beyond question the greatest man I have ever known with any degree of intimacy, and it is in the hope of conveying to others something of my sense not merely of his importance, but of his peculiar genius and the rich humanity of his character, that I am setting out to write this book. He was in himself a very delightful mixture of subtlety and simplicity, generosity, adventurousness, imagination, and steadfast purpose, and he approached the general life of our time at such an angle as to reflect the most curious and profitable lights upon it. To tell his story is to reflect upon all the main educational ideas of the last half-century, and to revise our conception of the process and purpose of the modern community in relation to education. For Sanderson had a mind like an octopus, it seemed always to have a tentacle free to reach out beyond what was already held, and his tentacles grew and radiated farther and farther. Before his end he had come to a vision of the school as a centre for the complete reorganisation of civilised life.

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I knew him personally only during the last eight years of his life; I met him for the first time in 1914, when I was proposing to send my sons to his school. But our thoughts and interests drew us very close to one another, I never missed an opportunity of meeting and talking to him, and I was the last person he spoke to before his sudden death. He was sixty-six years of age when he died. Those last eight years were certainly the richest and most productive of his whole career; he grew most in those years; he travelled farthest. I think I saw all the best of him. It is, I feel, no disadvantage to have known him only in his boldest and most characteristic phase. It saves me from confusion between his maturer and his earlier phases. He was a much stratified man. He had grown steadfastly all his life, he had shaken off many habitual inhibitions and freed himself from once necessary restraints and limitations. He would go discreetly while his convictions accumulated and then break forward very rapidly. He had a way of leaving people behind, and if I had fallen under his spell earlier, I, too, might have been left far behind. He was, I recall, a rock-climber; he was a mental rock-climber also, and though he was very wary of recalcitrance, there were times when his pace became so urgent that even his staff and his own family were left tugging, breathless and perplexed, at the rope.

Out of a small country grammar-school he created something more suggestive of those great modern teaching centres of which our world stands in need than anything else that has yet been attempted. By all ordinary standards the Oundle School of his later

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years was a brilliant success; it prospered amazingly, there was an almost hopeless waiting-list of applicants; boys had to be entered five years ahead; but successful as it was, it was no more than a sketch and demonstration of the great schools that are yet to be. I saw my own sons get an education there better than I had ever dared hope for them in England, but from the first my interest in the intention and promise of Oundle went far beyond its working actualities. And all the educational possibilities that I had hitherto felt to be unattainable dreams, matters of speculation, things a little too extravagant even to talk about in our dull age, I found being pushed far towards realisation by this bold, persistent, humorous, and most capable man.

Let me first try to give you a picture of his personality as he lives in my memory. Then I will try to give an account of his beginnings, as far as I have been able to learn about them, and so we will come to our main theme, *Sanderson contra Mundum*, the schoolmaster who set out to conquer the world. For, as I shall show, that and no less was what he was trying to do in the last years of his life.

“Ruddy” and “jolly” are the adjectives that come first to mind when I think of describing him. That he had been a slender, energetic young man his early photographs witness; but long before I met him he had become plump and energetic, with a twinkling appreciation for most of the good things of life. His complexion had a reddish fairness; he had well-modelled features, thick eyebrows and thick moustache touched with grey, and he wore spectacles through

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and over and beside which his active eyes took stock of you. About his eyes were kindly wrinkles, and generally I remember him as smiling—often with a touch of roguery in the smile. Quick movements of his head caused animating flashes of his glasses. He was carrying a little too much body for his heart, and that made him short of breath. His voice was in his chest, there was a touch of his native Northumbria in his accent, and he had a habit of speaking in incomplete sentences with a frequent use of the interrogative form. His manner was confidential; he would bend towards his hearer and drop his voice a little. “Now what do you think of—?” he would say, or “I’ve been thinking of—” so and so. At times his confidential manner became endearingly suggestive of a friendly conspirator. This, as yet, he seemed to say, was not for too careless a publication. You and he understood, but those other fellows—they were difficult fellows. It might not be practicable to attempt everything at once.

That reservation, that humorous discretion, is very essential in my memory of him. It is essential to the whole educational situation of the world. He was an exceptionally bold and creative man, and he was a schoolmaster, and that is perhaps as near as one can come to a complete incompatibility of quality and conditions. In no part of our social life is dull traditionalism so powerfully entrenched as it is in our educational organisation. We have still to realise the evil of mental heaviness in scholastic concerns. We take, very properly, the utmost precautions to exclude men and women of immoral charac-

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ter not only from actual teaching but also from any exercise of educational authority. But no one ever makes the least objection to the far more deadly influences of stupidity and unteachable ignorance. Our conceptions of morality are still grossly physical. The heavier and slower a man's mind seems to be, the more addicted he is to intellectual narcotics, the more people trust him as a schoolmaster. He will "stay put."

A timid obstructiveness is the atmosphere in which almost all educational effort has to work, and schoolmasters are denied a liberty of thought and speech conceded to every other class of respectable men. They must still be mealy-mouthed about Darwin, fatuously conventional in politics, and emptily orthodox in religion. If they stimulate their boys they must stimulate as a brass trumpet does, without words or ideas. They may be great leaders of men—provided they lead backward or nowhither. Sanderson in his latter days broke into unexampled freedom, but for the greater part of his life he was—like most of his profession—"wading hips-deep in fools," and equally resolved to work out his personal impulse and retain the great opportunities that the governing body of Oundle School had, almost unwittingly, put into his hands. He was therefore not only a great revolutionary but something of a Vicar of Bray. A large part of the amusing subtlety of his personality was the result of the balanced course he had to pursue. In all he did, in all he said, he was feeling his way. No other schoolmaster—and there must be many a rebellious heart lying still in the graves of

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dead schoolmasters and many a stifled rebel in the schoolrooms of to-day—no other schoolmaster has ever felt his way so discreetly, so far and, at last, so triumphantly.

I remember as a very characteristic thing that he said one day when I asked for his opinion of a particularly progressive and hopeful addition to his board of governors: "He does not know much about schools yet, but he will learn. Oundle will teach him." And in his last great lecture, he flung out a general "aside"—that lecture was full of astonishing "asides"—"I turned round on the boys and the parents," he said, "*both are my business.*"

Never was schoolmaster so emancipated as he in his latter years from the ancient servility of the pedagogue. Not for him the handing on of mellow traditions and genteel gestures of the mind, not for him the obedient administration of useful information to employers' sons by the docile employee. He saw the modern teacher in university and school plainly for what he has to be, the anticipator, the planner, and the foundation-maker of the new and greater order of human life that arises now visibly amidst the decaying structures of the old.

§ 2

Sanderson was born and brought up outside the British public-school system that he was to affect so profoundly. His early education was obtained in a parish school. His father was employed in the estate office of Lord Boyne at Brancepeth in Durham.

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There were several brothers but they all died before manhood, and the scanty indications one can glean of those early years suggest a slender, studious, and probably rather delicate youngster. He was never very proficient in any out-of-door games. In the early days at Oundle he careered about on a bicycle; in later years he played tennis; his vacation exercise was rock-scrambling. He became a "student-teacher," so the official Life phrases it, at a school at Tudhoe, but whether there was any difference between being a student-teacher at a school at Tudhoe and being an ordinary pupil-teacher in an ordinary elementary school under the English Education Department I have been unable to ascertain. He was already notable in his village world as exceptionally intelligent, industrious, and ambitious, and with a little encouragement from the local vicar and one or two friends he effected an escape from the strangling limitations of elementary teaching.

He may have aimed at the church at that time. At any rate he gained a scholarship and entered Durham University as a theological student. He did well in Durham University both in theology and mathematics; he was made a Fellow and he was able to go on as a scholar from Durham to the wider and more strenuous academic life of Cambridge. At Cambridge theology drops out of the foreground of the picture. He took a fairly good degree in mathematics, and he worked for the Natural Science Tripos. He did not fight his way up into that select class which secures Cambridge fellowships, but he had made a reputation as an able, hard, and honest

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worker; he was much sought after as a coach, and he was given a lectureship in the woman's college of Girtton. From this he went as senior physics master to the big school for boys at Dulwich.

A photograph of him in the early Dulwich period shows him slender and keen-looking, already bespectacled and with a thick moustache; except for the glasses not unlike another ruddy north-countryman I once knew, the novelist George Gissing. Both were what one might call Scandinavian in type. But Gissing was as despondent as Sanderson was buoyant. In those days, an old Dulwich associate tells me, Sanderson was in a state of great mental fermentation. He loved long walks in his spare time, and along the pebbly paths and roads and up and down the little hills of that corner of Kent, the two of them talked out a hundred aspects and issues of the perplexing changing world in which they found themselves.

It was the world of the eighteen-eighties they were looking at, before the first Jubilee of Queen Victoria, and it may be worth while to devote a paragraph or so to a reconstruction of the moral and intellectual landscape this lean and eager young man was confronting.

Upon the surface and in its general structure that British world of the eighties had a delusive air of final establishment. Queen Victoria had been reigning for close upon half a century and seemed likely to reign for ever. The economic system of unrestricted private enterprise with privately owned capital had yielded a great harvest of material prosperity,

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and few people suspected how rapidly it was exhausting the soil of willing service in which it grew. Production increased every year; population increased every year; there was a steady progress of invention and discovery, comfort, and convenience. Wars went on, a marginal stimulation of the empire, but since the collapse of Napoleon I. no war had happened to frighten England for its existence as a country; no threat of warfare that could touch English life or English soil troubled men's imagination. Ruskin and Carlyle had criticised English ideals and the righteousness of English commerce and industrialism, but they were regarded generally as eccentric and unaccountable men; there was already a conflict of science and theology, but it affected the national life very little outside the world of the intellectuals; a certain amount of trade competition from the United States and from other European countries was developing, but at most it ruffled the surface of the national self-confidence. There was a socialist movement, but it was still only a passionless criticism of trade and manufacturers, a criticism poised between æsthetic fastidiousness and benevolence. People played with that Victorian socialism as they would have played with a very young tiger-cub. The labour movement was a gentle insistence upon rather higher wages and rather shorter hours; it had still to discover Socialism. In a world of certainties the rate of interest fell by minute but perceptible degrees, and as a consequence money for investment went abroad until all the world was under tribute to Britain. History seemed to be over, entirely superseded by the

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daily paper; tragedy and catastrophe were largely eliminated from human life. One read of famines in India and civil chaos in China, but one felt that these were diminishing distresses; the missionaries were at work there and railways spreading.

It was indeed a mild and massive Sphinx of British life that confronted our young man at Dulwich and his friend, an amoeboid Sphinx which enveloped and assimilated rather than tore and devoured. It had not been stricken for a generation, and so it felt assured of the ages. But beneath its tranquil-looking surfaces many ferments were actively at work, and its serene and empty visage masked extensive processes of decay. The fifty-year-old faith on which the social and political fabric rested—for all social and political fabrics must in the last resort rest upon faith—was being corroded and dissolved and removed. Britain in the mid-Victorian time stood strong and sturdy in the world because a great number of its people, its officials, employers, professional men, and workers honestly believed in the rightness of its claims and professions, believed in its state theology, in the justice of its economic relationships, in the romantic dignity of its monarchy, and in the real beneficence and righteousness of its relations to foreigners and the subject-races of the Empire. They did what they understood to be their duty in the light of that belief, simply, directly, and with self-respect and mutual confidence. If some of its institutions fell short of perfection, few people doubted that they led towards it. But from the middle of the century onward this assurance of the prosperous British in their

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world was being subjected to a more and more destructive criticism, spreading slowly from intellectual circles into the general consciousness.

It is interesting to note one or two dates in relation to Sanderson's life. He was born in the year 1857. This was two years before the publication of Darwin's "Origin of Species." He was growing up through boyhood as the application of the Darwinian criticism of life to current theology was made, and as the great controversy between Science and orthodox beliefs came to a head. Huxley's challenging book, "Man's Place in Nature," was published in 1863; Darwin became completely explicit about human origins only in 1871 with "The Descent of Man." Sanderson, then a bright and forward boy of fourteen, was probably already beginning to take notice of these disputes about the fundamentals, as they were then considered, of sound Christianity.

He was already at college when Huxley was pounding Gladstone and the Duke of Argyll upon such issues as whether the first chapter of Genesis was strictly parallel with the known course of evolution, and whether the miracle of the Gadarene swine was a just treatment of the Gadarene swineherds. Sanderson's Durham and Cambridge studies and talks went on amidst the thunder of these debates, and there can be little doubt that his early theology underwent much bending and adaptation to the new realisations of the past of man, and of human destiny that these discussions opened out. He did not take holy orders but he remained in the Anglican Church; manifestly he could still find a meaning in

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the Fall and in the scheme of Salvation. Many other promising teachers of his generation found this impossible; such men as Graham Wallas, for example, felt compelled for conscience' sake to abandon the public-school teaching to which they had hoped to give their lives. Wallas found scope for his very great gifts of suggestion and inspiration in the London School of Economics, but many others of these Victorian non-jurors were lost to education altogether.

The criticism of the economic life and social organisation of that age was going on almost parallel with the destruction of its cosmogony. Ruskin's "Unto this Last" was issued when Sanderson was four years old; "Fors Clavigera" was appearing in the seventies and the early eighties. William Morris was a little later with "News from Nowhere" and "The Dream of John Ball"; they must have still been vividly new books in Sanderson's Cambridge days. Marx was little heard of then in England. He was already a power in German socialism in the seventies, but he did not reach the reader of English until the eighties were nearly at an end. When Sanderson discussed socialism during those Dulwich walks, it must have been Ruskin and Morris rather than Marx who figured in his talk. Although there remains no account of those early conversations, it is easy to guess that this stir of social reconstruction and religious readjustment must have played a large part in them. Sanderson meant to teach and wanted to teach; he was quite unlike that too common sort of schoolmaster who has fallen back into teaching after the collapse of other ambitions; like all really sincere

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teachers he was eager to learn, open to every new and stimulating idea, and free altogether from the malignant conservatism of the disappointed type.

He kept that adolescent power of mental growth throughout life. I remember my pleased astonishment on my first visit to Oundle to find in his library—I had drifted to his book-shelves while I awaited him—a row of the works of Nietzsche (who came into the English-speaking world in the late nineties) and recent books by Bertrand Russell and Shaw. Here was a schoolmaster, a British public schoolmaster, aware that the world was still going on! It seemed too good to be true. But it was true, and in the end Sanderson was to die, ten years, shall we say?—or twenty, ahead of his time.

And while we are placing Sanderson in relation to the intellectual stir of the age let us note, too, the general shape of human affairs as it was presented to his mind. It was an age of steadily accelerated political change, and of a vast increase in the population of the world. The fifties and sixties of the nineteenth century had seen the world-wide spread of the railway and telegraph network, and a consequent opening up of vast regions of production that had hitherto lain fallow. The screw was replacing the ineffective paddle-wheel of the earlier steamships and revolutionising ocean transport. There was a great increase in mechanical and agricultural efficiency. We still call that time the mid-Victorian period, but the history teacher of the future, more sensible than we are of the innocence of good Queen Victoria in any concern of importance to mankind, is more likely

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to distinguish it as the Advent of the New Communications. These new inventions were "abolishing distance." They were demanding a political synthesis of mankind. But there was little understanding as yet of this now manifest truth. One hardly notes a sign of any such awareness in literature and public discussions until the end of the century; and failing a clear understanding of their nature the new expansive forces operated through the cheap and unsound interpretations first of sentimental nationalism and then of romantic imperialism.

Sanderson's boyhood saw the differences of the cultures of north and south in the United States of America at first exacerbated by the new means of communication and then, after four years of civil war, resolved into a stabler unity. The straggling peninsula of Italy under the sway of the new synthetic forces recovered a unity it had lost with the decay of the Roman roads; the internal tension of the continental powers culminated in the Franco-German war. But these were insufficient adjustments, and a renewed growth of armaments upon land and sea alike, betrayed the growing mutual pressure of the great powers. All dreamt of expansion and none of coalescence. The dominant political fact in Europe while Sanderson was a young man was the rise of Germany to political and economic predominance. German energy, restrained from geographical release, drove upward along the lines of scientific and technical progress, and the outward thrust of its pent-up imperialism took the form of a gathering military threat. Germany first and

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then the United States, released and renewed after their escape from the fragmentation that had threatened them, made the economic pace for the rest of the world throughout the eighties and the nineties. They stirred the British manufacturer and parent to indignant inquiries; they forced the drowsy schools of Great Britain into a reluctant admission of scientific and technical teaching. But they awakened as yet no profounder heart-searchings.

The young science-master at Dulwich talked, no doubt, as we all did in those days, of Evolution and Socialism, of the rights of labour and the Christianisation of industry, of the progress of science and the scandal of the increasing expenditure upon armaments, with the illusion of an immense general stability in the background of his mind. It was an illusion that needed not only the Great War of 1914-18 but its illuminating sequelæ to shatter and destroy.

§ 3

Accounts of Sanderson's work in Dulwich school differ very widely. At one time it would seem that he had troubles about discipline, and it is quite conceivable that his methods there were experimental and fluctuating. No doubt he was trying over at Dulwich many of the things that were to establish his success at Oundle. On the whole the Dulwich work was good work, and it gave him sufficient reputation to secure the headmastership of Oundle School when presently the governing body of that school sought a man of energy and character to modernise it.

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The most valuable result of his Dulwich period was the demonstration of the interestingness of practical work in physical science for boys who remained apathetic under the infliction of the stereotyped classical curriculum. He was getting not the pick of the boys there but the residue, but he was getting an alertness and interest out of this second-grade material that surprised even himself. The interest of the classical teaching was largely the interest of a spirited competition which demanded not only a special sort of literary ability but a special sort of competitive disposition. But there are quite clever boys of an amiable type to whom competition does not appeal, and some of these were among the most interesting of the youngsters who were awakened to industrious work by his laboratory instruction.

It is clear that before Sanderson went to Oundle he had already developed a firm faith in the possibility of a school with a new and more varied curriculum, in which a far greater proportion of the boys could be interested in their work than was the case in the contemporary classical and (formal) mathematical school, and also that he had conceived the idea of replacing the competitive motive, which had ruled the schools of Europe since the establishment of the great Jesuit schools three hundred years before, by the more vital stimulus of interest in the work itself. He also took to Oundle a proved and tested conception of the need for the utmost possible personal participation by every boy in every collective function of the school. Quite early in his Oundle career he came into conflict with his boys and carried his point upon the issue

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whether every boy was to sing in the school singing or whether that was to be left to the specialised choir of boys who had voices and a taste for that sort of thing. That was an essential issue for him. From the very first he was working for the rank and file and against the star system of school work by which a few boys sing or work or play with distinction and encouragement, against a background of neglected shirkers and defeated and discouraged competitors.

Sanderson married soon after he went to Dulwich. His wife came from Cumberland and she excelled in all those domestic matters that make a successful head master's wife. Throughout all the rest of his life she was his loyal and passionate partisan. His friends were her friends, and his critics and opponents were her enemies, and if she had a fault it was that she found it difficult to forgive any one who had seemed ever to differ from him. Two sons were born during the seven years that passed in the little home in Dulwich. It must have been a very brisk and happy little home. One can imagine the tall young man with his gown a little powdered with blackboard chalk, flying out behind him, striding along the school corridors to some fresh and successful experiment in laboratory work, or in homely tweeds walking along the Kentish lanes with his friend, or snatching a delightful half-hour in the nursery to see Master Roy's first attempts to walk, or reading some new and stirring book with the lamp of those days before electric lighting at his elbow. He was thirty-five when he achieved his last step in the upward career of a secondary schoolmaster and was appointed head master of Oundle. That

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success probably came as a surprise, for Sanderson's modest origins and the fact that he was not in holy orders must have been a serious handicap upon his application. It must have been a very elated young couple who packed their household belongings for the unknown town of Oundle.

CHAPTER II

THE MODERNISATION OF OUNDLE SCHOOL

§ 1

OUNDLE SCHOOL, which was to be the material of Sanderson's life-work, which was to teach him so much and profit so richly by the reaction, was one of comparatively old standing. It was a pre-reformation foundation; a certain Joan Wyatt having endowed a schoolmaster in the place in 1485. Its main revenues, however, derived from Sir William Laxton, Lord Mayor of London and Master of the Grocers' Company, who in 1556 left considerable property to that body on condition that it supported a school in his native town of Oundle. The Grocers' Company took over the Joan Wyatt school and schoolmaster, and has discharged its obligations to Oundle with intermittent energy and honesty to this day.

Oundle has always been a school of fluctuating fortunes. The district round and about does not sustain a sufficient population to maintain full classes and an efficient staff, and only when the prestige of the school was great enough to attract boys from a distance had it any chance of flourishing. Time after time an energetic head with more or less support from the distant governing body would push it into prominence and prosperity only to pass away and leave it to an equally rapid decline. The London

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Grocers' Company is a body very unsuitable for educational work. It is not organised for any such work. It was originally a chartered association of city wholesalers, spice dealers, and so forth, who maintained a certain standard of honest trading and protected their common interests in the middle ages; it commended itself to the spiritual care of St. Anthony, and built a great hall and acted as almoner for its impoverished members and their widows and orphans; its normal function to-day is the entertainment of princes and politicians. It is now a fortuitous collection of merchants, business men, and prosperous persons, and it is only by chance that now and then a group of its members have had the conscience and intelligence to rise above the normal indifference of such people to the full possibilities of the Laxton bequest. Generally the Company's conduct of the school has varied between half-hearted help and negligence and the diversion of the funds to other ends; it has no tradition of competent governorship, and the ups and downs of Oundle have been dependent mainly upon the personal qualities of the masters who have chanced to be appointed.

There was a period of prosperity during the second quarter of the seventeenth century which was brought to an end by the plague, and by the impoverishment of the school through the fire of London in which various Laxton properties were destroyed. Throughout a large part of the eighteenth century the school was completely effaced, and the entire revenues of the Laxton bequest were no doubt expended in hospitality. There was a revival in 1796. In the seventies of

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the nineteenth century the school was doing well in mathematics under a certain Doctor Stansbury, and in the eighties it had as many as two hundred boys under the Reverend H. St. J. Reade. Then it declined again until the numbers sank below a hundred. It was a time of quickened consciences in educational matters, and some of the more energetic and able members of the Grocers' Company determined to make a drastic change of conditions at Oundle. They found Sanderson ready to their hands.

§ 2

The world is changing so rapidly that it may be well to say a few words about the type of school Sanderson was destined to renovate. Even in the seventies and eighties these smaller "classical" schools had a quaint old-fashioned air amidst the surrounding landscape. They were staffed by the less vigorous men of the university-scholar type; men of the poorer educated classes in origin, not able enough to secure any of the prizes reserved for university successes, and not courageous enough to strike out into the great world on their own account. They protected themselves from the sense of inferiority by an exaggeration of the value of the schooling and disciplines through which they had gone, and they ignored their lack of grasp in a worship of the petty accuracies within their capacity. Their ambition soared at its highest to holy orders and a headmastership, a comfortable house, a competent wife, dignity, security,

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ease, and a certain celebrity in equation-dodging or the imitation of Latin and Greek compositions. Contemporary life and thought these worthy dominies regarded with a lofty scorn. The formal mathematical work, it is true, was not older than a century or a century and a half, but the classical training had come down in an unbroken tradition from the seventeenth century. One of the staff of Oundle when Sanderson took it over is described as a "wonderful" classical master. "His master passion," we are told, "for Latin elegiacs and Greek iambics fired many of his pupils, whose best efforts were copied into a book that bore the title 'Inscribatur.'" These exercises in stereotyped expression were going on at Oundle right into the eighteen-nineties. They had their justification. From the school the boys passed on to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, where sympathetic examining authorities awarded the greater prizes at their disposal to the more proficient of these victims. The Civil Service Commissioners by a mark-rigging system that would have won the respect of an American election boss, kept the Higher Division of the Civil Service as a preserve for ignorance "classically" adorned. So that the school could boast of "an almost uninterrupted stream of scholarship successes at Cambridge" even in its decline in the late eighties, when its real educational value to the country it served was a negative quantity.

This seventeenth-century "classical" grind constituted the main work of the school, and no other subject seems to have been pursued with any industry. Most of the staff could not draw or use their

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hands properly; like most secondary teachers of that time they were innocent of educational science, and no attempt was made to teach every boy to draw. Drawing was still regarded as a "gift" in those days. The normally intelligent boy without the peculiar aptitudes and plasticity needed to take Latin elegiacs seriously, had no educational alternative whatever. There was no mathematical teaching beyond low-grade formal stuff of a very boring sort, and the only science available was a sort of science teaching put in to silence the complaints of progressive-minded parents rather than with any educational intention, science teaching that was very properly called "stinks." It was a stinking imposture. The boy of good ordinary quality was driven therefore to games or "hobbies" or mischief as an outlet for his energies, as chance might determine. The school-buildings before Sanderson was appointed were as cramped as the curriculum; old boys recall the "redolent" afternoon classrooms; the Grocers' Company in its wisdom had built a new Schoolhouse during the brief boom under St. John Reade, between a public house on either side and a slum at the back. It must have been pleasant for master and boys alike to escape from the stuffiness of general teaching upon these premises, and from the priggish exploits in versification of the "inspired" minority, to the cricket-field. There one had scope; there was life. The Reverend H. St. J. Reade, the head master in the eighties, had been Captain of the Oxford Eleven, and drove the ball hard and far, to the admiration of all beholders.

The Reverend Mungo J. Park, who immediately

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preceded Sanderson, is described as a man of considerable personal dignity, aloof and leisurely, and greatly respected by the boys. Under him the number of the boys in the school declined to fewer than a hundred. That dwindling band led the normal life of boys at any small public school in England. Most of them were frightfully bored by the teaching of the bored masters; the wonderful classical master lashed himself periodically up to the infectious level of enthusiasm for his amazing exercises; there was cribbing and ragging and loafing, festering curiosities and emotional experimenting, and, thank Heaven! games a fellow could understand. If these boys learned anything of the marvellous new vision of the world that modern science was unfolding, they learned it by their own private reading and against the wishes of their antiquated teachers. They learned nothing in school of the outlook of contemporary affairs, nothing of contemporary human work, nothing of the social and economic system in which many of them were presently to play the part of captains. If they learned anything about their bodies it was secretly, furtively, and dirtily. The gentlemen in holy orders upon the staff, and the sermons in the Oundle parish church, had made souls incredible. There has been much criticism of the devotion to games in these dens of mental dinginess, but games were the only honest and conclusive exercises to be found in them. From the sunshine and reality of the swimming-pool, the boats, the cricket or football field, the boys came back into the ill-ventilated classrooms to pretend, or not even to pretend, an interest in languages not merely dead,

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but now, through a process of derivation and imitation from one generation to another, excessively decayed. The memory of school taken into after life from these establishments was a memory of going from games and sunshine and living interest into classrooms of twilight, bad air, and sham enthusiasm for exhausted things.

§ 3

Sanderson made his application for the headmastership of Oundle at an unusually favourable time. There were several men of exceptional enlightenment and intelligence upon the governing body of the school, and they were resolved to modernise Oundle thoroughly and well. To the innovators the very unorthodoxy of Sanderson's upbringing and qualifications was a recommendation, to their opponents they made him a shocking candidate, and the Grocers' Company was rent in twain over his application. It requires a little effort nowadays for us to understand just how undesirable a candidate this spectacled young man from Dulwich must have appeared to many of the older and riper "grocers."

In the first place he was not in holy orders, and it was a fixed belief of many people—in spite of the fact that few of the clerically ruled English public schools of that time could be described as hotbeds of chastity—that only clergymen in holy orders could maintain a satisfactory moral and religious tone. On the other hand, he had been a distinguished theological student.

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That, however, might involve heresy; English people have an instinctive perception of the corrosive effect of knowledge and intelligence upon sound dogma. Then he was not a public-school boy, and this might involve a loss of social atmosphere more important even than religion or morals. The almost natural grace of deportment that has endeared the English traveller and the English official to the foreigner, and particularly to the subject-races throughout the world, might fail under his direction. Moreover, he was no cricketer. He had no athletic distinction; a terrible come-down after the Reverend H. St. J. Reade. These were all grave considerations in those days. Against them weighed the growing dread of German efficiency that was already spreading a wholesome modesty throughout the commercial world of Britain. This young man from Dulwich might bring to Oundle, it was thought, the base but valuable gifts of technical science. And there was apparent in him a liveliness and energy uncommon among scholastic applicants. His seemed to be a bracing personality, and Oundle was in serious need of a bracing régime. The members who liked him liked him warmly, and he roused prejudices as warm; feeling seems to have run high at the decision, and he was appointed by a majority of one.

The little world of Oundle heard of the new appointment with mixed and various feelings, in which there was no doubt a considerable amount of resentment. No man becomes head master of an established school without facing many difficulties. If he is promoted from among the staff of his predecessor old

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disputes and rivalries are apt to take on an exaggerated importance, and if he comes in from outside he finds a staff disposed to a meticulous defence of established usage. And the young couple from Dulwich came to the place in direct condemnation of its current condition and its best traditions. There can be no doubt that at the outset the school and town bristled defensively and unpleasantly to the newcomers.

In one respect the old educational order had a great advantage over the new that Sanderson was to inaugurate. It had a completed tradition, and it provided the standards by which the new was tried. Whatever it taught was held to be necessary to education, and all that it did not know was not knowledge. By such tests the equipment of Sanderson was exhibited as both defective and superfluous. Moreover, the new system was confessedly undeveloped and experimental. It could not be denied that Sanderson might be making blunders, and that he might have to retrace his steps. People had been teaching the classics for three centuries; the routine had become so mechanical that it was done best by men who were intellectually and morally half asleep. It led to nothing; except in very exceptional cases it did not even lead to a competent use of either the Latin or Greek languages; it involved no intelligent realisation of history, it detached the idea of philosophy from current life, and it produced the dreariest artistic Philistinism, but there was a universal persuasion that in some mystical way it *educated*. The methods of teaching science, on the other hand, were still in the experimental stage, and had still to convince the world

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that even at the lowest levels of failure they constituted a highly beneficent discipline.

I do not propose to disentangle here the story of Sanderson's first seven years of difficulty. He found the school and the town sullen and hostile, and he was young, eager, and irascible. The older boys had all been promoted upon classical qualifications, they were saturated with the old public-school tradition that Sanderson had come to destroy, and behind them were various members of a hostile and resentful staff inciting them to obstruction and mischief. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Sanderson was old enough or wise enough to disregard slights or to ignore mere gestures of hostility.

Reminiscences of old boys in the official life give us glimpses of the way in which the old order fought against the new. Everything was done to emphasise the fact that Sanderson was "no gentleman," "no sportsman," "no cricketer," "no scholar." It is the dearest delusion of snobs everywhere that able men who have made their way in the world are incapable of acquiring a valet's knowledge of what is correct in dress and deportment, and the dark legend was spread that he wore a flannel shirt with a sort of false front called a "dicky" and detachable cuffs, in place of the evening shirt of the genteel. Moreover, his dress tie was reported to be a made-up tie. Unless he is to undress in public I do not see how a man under suspicion is to rebut such sinister scandals. The boys, with the help and encouragement of several members of the staff, made up a satirical play full of the puns and classical tags and ancient venerable turns of humour

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usual in such compositions, against this Barbarian invader and his new laboratories. It was the mock trial of an incendiary found trying to burn down the new laboratories. It was "full of envenomed and insulting references" to all the new head master was supposed to hold dear. Finally it was rehearsed before him. He sat brooding over it thoughtfully, as shaft after shaft was launched against him. "It didn't seem so funny then," said my informant, "as it had done when we prepared it." It went to a "ragged and unconvinced applause." At the end "came a pause—a stillness that could be felt." The head master sat with downcast face, thinking.

I suppose he was chiefly busy reckoning how soon he would be rid of this hostile generation of elder boys. They had to go. It was a pity, but nothing was to be done with them. The school had to grow out of them, as it had to grow out of its disloyal staff.

He rose slowly in his seat. "Boys, we will regard this as the final performance," he said, and departed thoughtfully, making no further comment. He took no action in the matter, attempted neither reproof nor punishment. He dropped the matter with a magnificent contempt. And, says the old boy who tells the story, from that time the spirit of the school seemed to change in his favour. The old order had discharged its venom. The boys began to realise the true value of the forces of spite and indolent obstructiveness with which their youth was in alliance.

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§ 4

Not always did Sanderson carry things off with an equal dignity. His temperament was choleric, and ever and again his smouldering indignation at the obstinate folly and jealousy that hampered his work blazed out violently. Dignified silence is impossible as a permanent pose for a teacher whose duty is to express and direct. Sanderson's business was to get ideas into resisting heads; he was not a born orator but a confused, abundant speaker, and he had to scold, to thrust strange sayings at them, to force their inattention, to beat down an answering ridicule. He was often simply and sincerely wrathful with them, and in his early years he thrashed a great deal. He thrashed hard and clumsily in a white heat of passion—"a hail of swishing strokes that seemed almost to envelop one." A newspaper or copy-book at the normal centre of infliction availed but little. Cuts fell everywhere on back or legs or fingers. He had been sorely tried, he had been overtried. It was a sort of heartbreak of blows.

The boys argued mightily about these unorthodox swishings. It was all a part of Sanderson being a strange creature and not in the tradition. It was lucky no one was ever injured. But they found something in their own unregenerate natures that made them understand and sympathise with this eager, thwarted stranger and his thunder-storms of anger. Generally he was a genial person, and that, too, they recognised. It is manifest quite early in the story that Sanderson interested his boys as his pred-

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ecessor had never done. They discussed his motives, his strange sayings, his peculiar locutions with accumulating curiosity. Two sorts of schoolmasters boys respect: those who are completely dignified and opaque to them, and those who are transparent enough to show honesty at the core. Sanderson was transparently honest. If he was not pompously dignified he was also extraordinarily free from vanity; and if he thrust work and toil upon his boys it was at any rate not to spare himself that he did so. And he won them also by his wonderful teaching. In the early days he did a lot of the science teaching himself; later on the school grew too big for him to do any of this. All the old boys I have been able to consult agree that his class instruction was magnificent.

Every year in the history of Sanderson's headmastership shows a growing understanding between the boys and himself. "Beans," they called him, but every year it was less and less necessary to "Give 'm Beans," as the vulgar say. The tale of storms and thrashings dwindles until it vanishes from the story. In the last decade of his rule there was hardly any corporal punishment at all. The whole school as time went on grew into a humorous affectionate appreciation of his genius. It was a sunny, humorous school when I knew it; there was little harshness and no dark corners. No boy had been expelled for a long time.

§ 5

The official Life gives a diagram and particulars of the growth of the school during Sanderson's time, and

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there is no need to repeat those particulars here. From 1892 to 1900 there was no very remarkable increase in the number of boys; it rose from ninety-odd to a hundred and twenty or so. Then as Sanderson's grip became sure there followed a rapid expansion.

From 1900 onward Oundle grew about as fast as it was possible to grow. New laboratories were built, new subjects introduced so as to furnish a wider and wider variety of courses to meet such intellectual types as the school had hitherto failed to interest. There was a great development of biological and agricultural work from about 1909 onward. The attention given to art increased, and there was a great change and revolution in the history teaching. By 1920 the numbers of the school were soaring up towards six hundred. He wanted them to go to eight hundred, because he still wanted to increase the variety of courses, and the larger numbers gave a better prospect of classifying out the boys effectively and making sure that each course of studies was sufficiently attended to keep it active and efficient.

The prestige of the school grew even more rapidly than its size. From 1905 onward the inquiring parent who wanted something more than school games and *esprit de corps* was sure to hear of Oundle.

And Sanderson was growing with his school. Every instalment of success stimulated him to new experiments and fresh innovations. No one learned so much at Oundle as he did, and it is with that growth of his conception of school method and his widening vision of the schoolmaster's rôle in the world that we must now proceed to deal.

CHAPTER III

THE REPLACEMENT OF COMPETITION BY GROUP WORK

§ 1

WHEN Sanderson first came to Oundle his ideas seem to have differed from the normal scholastic opinion of his time mainly in his conviction of the interestingness and attractiveness of real scientific work for many types of boys that the established classical and stylistic mathematical teaching failed to grip. He developed these new aspects of school work, and his earliest success lay in the fact that he got a higher percentage of boys interested and active in school work than was usual elsewhere, and that the report of this and the report of his wholesome and stimulating personality spread into the world of anxious parents. But it early became evident to him that the new subjects necessitated methods of handling in vivid contrast to the methods stereotyped for the classical and mathematical courses.

There have been three chief phases in the history of educational method in the last five centuries, the phase of compulsion, the phase of competition, and the phase of natural interest. They overlap and mingle. Mediæval teaching being largely in the hands of celibates, who had acquired no natural understanding of children and young people, and who found them extremely irritating, irksome, or exciting, was

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stupid and brutal in the extreme. Young people were driven along a straight and narrow road to a sort of prison of dusty knowledge by teachers almost as distressed as themselves. The mediæval school went on to the chant of rote-learning with an accompaniment of blows, insults, and degradations of the dunce-cap type. The Jesuit schools, to which the British public schools owe so much, sought a human motive in vanity and competition; they turned to rewards, distinctions, and competitions. Sir Francis Bacon recommended them justly as the model schools of his time. The class-list with its pitiless relegation of two-thirds of the class to self-conscious mediocrity and dufferdom was the symbol of this second, slightly more enlightened phase. The school of the rod gave place to the school of the class-list. An aristocracy of leading boys made the pace and the rest of the school found its compensation in games or misbehaviour. So long as the sole subjects of instruction remained two dead languages and formal mathematics, subjects essentially unappetising to sanely constituted boys, there was little prospect of getting school method beyond this point.

By the end of the eighteenth century schoolmasters were beginning to realise what most mothers know by instinct, that there is in all young people a curiosity, a drive to know, an impulse to learn, that is available for educational ends, and has still to be properly exploited for educational ends. It is not within our present scope to discuss Pestalozzi, Froebel, and the other great pioneers in this third phase of education. Nearly all children can be keenly interested in some

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subject, and there are some subjects that appeal to nearly all children. Directly you cease to insist upon a particular type of achievement in a particular line of attainment, directly your school gets out of the narrow lane and moves across open pasture, it goes forward of its own accord. The class-list and the rod, so necessary in the dusty fury of the lane, cease to be necessary. In the effective realisation of this Sanderson was a leader.

For a time he let the classical and literary work of the school run on upon the old competition-compulsion, class-list lines. For some years he does not seem to have realised the possibility of changes in these fields. But from the first in his mechanical teaching and very soon in mathematics the work ceased to have the form of a line of boys all racing to acquire an identical parcel of knowledge, and took on the form more and more of clusters of boys surrounding an attractive problem. There grew up out of the school Science a periodic display, the Science *Conversazione*, in which groups of youngsters displayed experiments and collections they had co-operated to produce. Later on a Junior *Conversazione* developed. These *conversaciones* show the Oundle spirit in its most typical expression. Sanderson derived much from the zeal and interest these groups of boys displayed. He realised how much finer and how much more fruitful was the mutual stimulation of a common end than the vulgar effort for a class place. The clever boy under a class-list system loves the shirker and the dullard who make the running easy, but a group of boys working for a common end display little patience with

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shirking. The stimulus is much more intimate, and it grows. Jones minor is told to play up, exactly as he is told to play up in the playing field.

In the summer term the conversazione in its fully developed form took up a large part of the energy of the school. Says the official Life:

“All the senior boys in the school were eligible for this work, the only qualification necessary being a willingness to work and to sacrifice some, at least, of one’s free time. There was never any dearth of willing workers, the total number often exceeding two hundred. The chief divisions of the conversazione were: Physics and Mechanics; Chemistry; Biology; and Workshops. A boy who volunteered to help was left free to choose which branch he would adopt. Having chosen, he gave his name to the master in charge; if he had any particular experiment in view, he mentioned it, and if suitable, it was allotted to him. If he had no suggestion, an experiment was suggested, and he was told where information could be obtained. As a general rule two or three boys worked together at any one experiment.

“Some of the experiments chosen required weeks of preparation; there was apparatus to be made and fitted up, information to be sought and absorbed, so that on the final day an intelligent account could be given to any visitor watching the experiment. This work was all done out of school hours. Four or five days before Speech Day, ordinary school lessons ceased for those taking part in the conversazione; the laboratories, classrooms, and workshops were portioned out so that each boy knew exactly where he

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was to work, and how much space he had. The setting up of the experiments began. To any one visiting the school on these particular days it must have seemed in a state of utter confusion, boys wandering about in all directions apparently under no supervision, and often to all appearances with no purpose. A party might be met with a jam-jar and fishing-net near the river; others might be found miles away on bicycles, going to a place where some particular flower might be found. Three or four boys would appear to be smashing up an engine and scattering its parts in all directions, while others could be seen wheeling a barrow-load of bricks or trying to mix a hod of mortar. Gradually a certain amount of order appeared, some experiments were tried and found to work satisfactorily, others failed, and investigation into the cause of failure had to be carried out. As the final day approached excitement increased, frantic telegrams were sent to know, for example, if the liquid air had been despatched, frequent visits to the railway-station were made in the hopes of finding some parcel had arrived; sometimes it was even necessary to motor to Peterborough to pick up material which otherwise would arrive too late. A programme giving a short description of the experiment or exhibit had to pass through the printer's hands. At last everything would be ready; occasionally, but very seldom, an experiment had to be abandoned or another substituted at the last moment."

The year 1905 marked a phase in the co-operative system of work on the mechanical side with the machining and erection of a six-horse-power reversing

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engine, designed for a marine engine of 3,500 horsepower. Castings and drawings were supplied by the North Eastern Marine Engineering Works. The engine was a triumphant success, and thereafter a number of engines have been built by groups of boys. Concurrently with this steady replacement of the instructional-exercise system by the group-activity system, the mathematical work became less and less a series of exercises in style and more and more an attack upon problems needing solution in the workshops and laboratories, with the solution as the real incentive to the work. These dips into practical application gave a great stimulus to the formal mathematical teaching, for the boys realised as they could never have done otherwise the value of such work as a "tool-sharpening" exercise of ultimately real value.

§ 2

Quite early in his Oundle days Sanderson displayed his disposition towards collective as against solitary activity in his dealings with the school music. When he came to the school the "musical" boys were segregated from the non-musical in a choir; the rest listened in conscious exclusion and inferiority. But from the outset he set himself to make the whole school sing and attend to music. The few unmusical boys were carried along with the general flood; the discord they made was lost in the mass effect. Towards the end a very great proportion of the boys were keen listeners to and acute critics of music.

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They would crowd into the Great Hall on Sunday evenings to listen to the organ recital with which that day usually concluded.

§ 3

Presently Sanderson began to apply to literature and history the lessons he had learned from grouping boys for scientific work. Most of us can still recall the extraordinary dreariness of school literature teaching; the lesson that was a third-rate lecture, the note-taking, the rehearsal of silly opinions about books unread and authors unknown, the horrible annotated editions, the still more horrible text-books of literature. Sanderson set himself to sweep all this away. A play, he held, was primarily to be played, and the way to know and understand it was to play it. The boys must be cast for parts and learn about the other characters in relation to the one they had taken. Questions of language and syntax, questions of interpretation, could be dealt with best in relation to the production. But most classes had far too many boys to be treated as a single theatrical company, so small groups of boys were cast for each part. There would be three or four Othellos, three or four Desdemonas or Iagos. They would act their parts simultaneously or successively. The thing might or might not ripen into a chosen cast giving a costume performance in public. The important thing is that the boys were brought into the most active contact possible with the reality of the work they studied. The groups discussed stage "business" and gesture and the precise

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stress to lay on this or that phrase. The master stood like a producer in the auditorium of the Great Hall. Let any one compare the vitality of that sort of thing with the ordinary lesson from an annotated text-book.

The group system was extended with increasing effectiveness into more and more of the literary and historical work. Here the School Library took the place of the laboratory and was indeed as necessary to the effective development of the group method. The official Life of Sanderson gives a typical scheme of operations pursued in the case of a form studying the period 1783-1905. The subject was first divided up into parts, such as the state of affairs preceding the French Revolution; the French Revolution in relation to England; the industrial system and economic problems generally; and so on. The form divided up into groups and each group selected a part or a section of a part for its study. The objective of each group was the preparation of a report, illustrated by maps, schedules, and so forth, upon the section it had studied. After a preliminary survey of the whole field under the direction of a master, each boy followed up the particular matter assigned to him by individual reading for a term, supplemented when necessary by consultation with the master. Then came the preparation of maps and other material, the assembling of illuminating quotations from the books studied, the drafting of the group's report, the discussion of the report. In some cases where the group was in disagreement there would be a minority report.

In this way there was scarcely a boy in the form who did not feel himself contributing and necessary

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to the general result, and who was not called upon, not merely by his master but by his colleagues, for some special exertion. It might be thought that the departmentalising of the subject among groups would mean that the knowledge would accumulate in pockets, but this was not the case. Boys of separate groups talked with one another of their work and found a lively interest in their different points of view. It is rare that boys who have received the same lesson can find much in it to talk about, unless it is a comparison of who has retained most, but a boy who has been preparing maps of the Napoleonic military campaigns may find the liveliest interest in another who has been following the history of the same period from the point of view of sea power. There was indeed a very considerable amount of interchange, and when it came to facing external examiners and testing the general knowledge attained, the Oundle boys were found to compare favourably with boys who had been drummed in troops through complete histories of the chosen period.

This group system of work had arisen naturally out of the conditions of the new laboratory teaching, and it had been developed for the sake of its educational effectiveness; but as it grew it became more and more evident to Sanderson that its effects went far beyond mere intellectual attainment. It marked a profound change in the spirit of the school. It was not only that the spirit of co-operation had come in. That had already been present on the cricket and football fields. But the boys were working to make something or to state something and not to gain

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something. It was the spirit of creation that now pervaded the school.

And he perceived, too, that the boys he would now be sending out into the world must needs carry that creative spirit with them and play a very different part from the ambitious star boys who went on from a training under the older methods. They would play an as yet incalculable part in redeeming the world from the wild orgy of competition that was now afflicting it. In one of his very characteristic sermons he gave his ripened conception of this side of his work. He had been speaking, perhaps with a certain idealisation, of the old craftsmen's guilds—with a glance or so at the Grocers' Company. The school, he declared, was to be no longer an arena but a guild. For what was a guild?

“A community of co-workers and no competition, that was its idea. It is all based on the system of apprenticeships and co-workers. The apprentices helped the masters in every way they could; even the masters were grouped together for mutual assistance and were called assistants. The Company was a mystery or guild of craftsmen and dealers, and their aim was to produce good craftsmen and good dealers.

“To-day, in these days of renaissance, we return to the aim and methods of the guilds. Boys are to be apprentices and master-workers and co-workers. In a community this needs must be. We are called to a definite work, all who are privileged to attend here, staff and boys alike—the work of infusing life into the boys committed to our care. Nor can any one

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stand out of this and seek work elsewhere. Nemesis sets in for all who try to live for themselves alone. They may try to work—but their work is sterile. The community calls for the energies and activities of all. We are beginning to learn something of what this means. It does not mean an abandonment of the best methods of the past. But it does mean that we have to concern ourselves with the pressing needs and problems of to-day, and join in the work. I do not dwell on this now. My mind goes off to the possible effect of these ideas on the general life of the school.

“The working of these ideas is well seen already in the outdoor life of the school. We see it when houses are getting their teams together to join a competition for a shield, say. We see the mutual help, the voluntary practice, the consultations of the captain with others. We see it in the work in the Cadet Corps. We see it in the preparation for a play—this time, the ‘Midsummer Night’s Dream.’ We see it in the new work in the library, and we see it as clearly as in anything in the preparation for a *conversazione*. No more valuable training can be given than this last—well worth all the many kinds of sacrifice it entails. From it, at any rate, the spirit of competition is, I think, altogether removed. Boys, we believe, set forth to do their work as well as they possibly can—but not to beat one another. . . . I dwell upon these things because we hope that all boys will become workers at last, with interest and zeal, in some part of the field of creation and inquiry, which is the true life of the world. It is from such workers, investiga-

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tors, searchers, the soul of the nation is drawn. We will first of all transform the life of the school, then the boys, grown into men—and girls from their schools grown into women—whom their schools have enlisted into this service, will transform the life of the nation and of the whole world.”

CHAPTER IV

THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN SCHOOL AND REALITY

§ 1

IN the previous chapter I have told how Sanderson was taught by his laboratories and library the possibility of a new type of school with a new spirit, and how he grew to realise that an organisation of such new schools, a multiplication of Oundles, must necessarily produce a new spirit in social and industrial life. Concurrently with that, the obvious implications of applied science were also directing his mind to the close reaction between schools and the organisation of the economic life of the community.

It is amusing to reflect that Sanderson probably owed his appointment at Oundle to the simple desire of various members of the Grocers' Company for a good school of technical science. They did not want any change in themselves, they did not want any change in the world nor in the methods of trading and employment, but they did want to see their sons and directors and managers equipped with the sharper, more modern edge of a technical scientific training. Germany had frightened them. If this new training could be technical without science and modern without liberality, so much the better. So the business man brought his ideas to bear upon Oundle, to produce quite beyond his expectation a counter-

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offensive of the school upon business organisation and methods. Oundle built its engines, organised itself as an efficient munitions factory during the war, made useful chemical inquiries, extended its work into agriculture, analysed soils and manures for the farmers of its district, ran a farm and did much able competent technical work, but it also set itself to find out what were the aims and processes of business and what were the reactions of these processes upon the life of the community. From the laboratory a boy would go to a careful examination of labour conditions under the light of Ruskin's "Unto this Last"; he was brought to a balanced and discriminating attitude towards strikes and lockouts; he was constantly reminded that the end of industry is not profits but life—a more abundant life for men.

As one reads through the sermons and addresses that are given in "Sanderson of Oundle" one finds a steadily growing consciousness of the fact that there was a considerable and increasing proportion of Oundle boys destined to become masters, managers, and leaders in industrial and business life, and with that growing consciousness there is a growing determination that the school work they do shall be something very far beyond the acquisition of money-getting dodges and devices and commercialised views of science. More and more does he see the school not as a training-ground of smart men for the world that is, but as a preliminary working model of the world that is to be.

Two quotations from two of Sanderson's sermons will serve to mark how vigorously he is tugging back

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the English schools from the gentlemanly aloofness of scholarship and school-games to a real relationship to the current disorder of life, and how high he meant to carry them to dominance over that disorder.

The first extract is from a sermon on Faraday. Under Sanderson, it has been remarked, Faraday ousted St. Anthony from being the patron saint of Oundle School. "With what abundant prodigality," Sanderson exclaims, "has Nature given up of her secrets since his day !

"A hundred years ago Man and Nature as we think of them to-day were unexplored by science; to-day a new world, a new creation. Industrial life has developed, machinery, discoveries, inventions—steam-engine, gas-engine, dynamo—electrical machinery, telegraphy, radioactive bodies, tremendous openings out of chemistry, biology, economics, ethics. All new. These are Thy works, O God, and tell of Thee. Not now only may we search for Thy Presence in the places where Thou wert wont in days of old to come to man. Not there only. Not only now in the stars of heaven; or by the seashore, or in the waters of the river, or of the springs; among the trees, the flowers, the corn and wine, on the mountain or in the plain; not now only dost Thou come to man in Thy works of art, in music, in literature; but Thou, O God, dost reveal Thyself in all the multitude of Thy works; in the workshop, the factory, the mine, the laboratory, in industrial life. No symbolism here, but the Divine God. A new Muse is here—

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‘Mightier than Egypt’s tombs,
Fairer than Grecia’s, Roma’s temples.
Prouder than Milan’s statued, spired cathedral,
More picturesque than Rhenish castle-keeps,
We plan even now to raise, beyond them all,
Thy great cathedral, sacred industry, no tomb—
A keep for Life.’

And the builders, a mighty host of men: Homeric heroes, fighting against a foe, and yet not a foe, but an invisible, impalpable thing wherein the combatant is the shadow of the assailant.

“Mighty men of science and mighty deeds. A Newton who binds the universe together in uniform law; Lagrange, Laplace, Leibnitz with their wondrous mathematical harmonies; Coulomb measuring out electricity; Oversted with the brilliant flash of insight ‘that the electric conflict acts in a revolving manner’; Faraday, Ohm, Ampère, Joule, Maxwell, Hertz, Röntgen; and in another branch of science, Cavendish, Davy, Dalton, Dewar; and in another, Darwin, Mendel, Pasteur, Lister, Sir Ronald Ross. All these and many others, and some whose names have no memorial, form a great host of heroes, an army of soldiers—fit companions of those of whom the poets have sung; all, we may be sure, living daily in the presence of God, bending like the reed before His will; fit companions of the knights of old of whom the poets sing, fit companions of the men whose names are renowned in history, fit companions of the great statesmen and warriors whose names resound through the world.

“There is the great Newton at the head of this list

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comparing himself to a child playing on the seashore gathering pebbles, whilst he could see with prophetic vision the immense ocean of truth yet unexplored before him. At the end is the discoverer Sir Ronald Ross, who had gone out to India in the medical service of the Army, and employed his leisure in investigating the ravishing diseases which had laid India low and stemmed its development. In twenty years of labour he discovers how malaria is transmitted and brings the disease within the hold of man."

The second is from a sermon called "The Garden of Life."

"As Canon Driver says, 'Man is not made simply to enjoy life; his end is not pleasure; nor are the things he has to do necessarily to give pleasure or lead to what men call happiness.' This is not the biological purpose of man. His purpose or instinctive end is to develop the capacities of the garden in the wilderness of nature; to adapt it to his own ends, *i. e.*, to the ends of the races of men. Or, as we would now say, his aim is to take his part in the making of his kind; and he is to 'keep it,' or guard it—*i. e.*, he is to conquer the jungle in it, to prevent it from roving wild again, from reverting to the jungle, from losing law and order, from becoming unruly and disorderly, from breaking loose and running amuck. He is to bring and maintain order out of the tangle of things, he is to diagnose diseases; he is to co-ordinate the forces of nature; he is above all things to reveal the spirit of God in all the works of God.

"And in all this we read the duty and service of

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schools. The business of schools is through and by the use of a common service to get at the true spiritual nature of the ordinary things we have to deal with. The spirit of the true active life does not come to us *only* in those experiences we have been so accustomed to think of as beautiful and revealing. The active spirit of life is not revealed simply by the arts—the beautiful arts as they may be thought—of music or painting, or literature. These indeed may be only and abundantly *material*, and the eye and ear may be blind and deaf to the active, creative, discovering, revealing spirit. ‘Painting, or art generally, as such,’ says Ruskin in his “Modern Painters,” ‘with all its technicalities, difficulties, executive skills, pleasant and agreeable sensations, and its particular ends, is nothing but an expressive language, invaluable if we know it as we might know it as the vehicle of thought, but by itself nothing.’ He who has learned what is commonly considered as the whole art of painting, that is the art of representing any natural object faithfully, has as yet only learned the language by which his thoughts are to be expressed. One language or mode of expression may be more difficult than another; but it is not by the mode of representing and saying, but by the greatness, the awakening, the transmuting and transfiguring conception and knowledge of the thought presented, that the gift cometh, that man is created. Awkward, discordant, stammering attempts may be the burning message of a new hope. But this ‘voice’ of art is too often drowned. It is drowned by executive skill—as is the history of all art—when this skill stretches

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itself to present things that are static, motionless, dead. . . .

“It is especially our duty to reveal the spirit of God in the things of science and of the practical life. Herein lies a new revelation, a new language, a direct symbolism. Science, just like art and music, can be materialistic—science can aim only at mechanical advancement and worldly wealth, which is not wealth at all—just as art can aim only at pleasure, desire, and drawing-room appreciation. But this need not be so. Certainly no one in a responsible position can teach science for long without the coming of the revelation of a new voice, a new method of expression, a new art—revealing quite changed standards of value, quite new significances of what we speak of as culture, beauty, love, justice. A new voice speaks to the souls of men and women calling for a new age with all its altered relationships and adventures of life.

“With eyes opened to this new art you can wander through the science block and find in it all a new Bible, a new book of Genesis. So we believe. This is our duty and our faith. Into this Paradise have you been placed to dress it and to keep it.”

Let me turn from these two passages of talk to his boys—they are rescued from a mass of pencil notes in his study—to a passage from an address delivered in the Great Hall in Leeds in 1920. It shows very plainly the quality of his conception of what I have called the return of schools to reality.

“Schools should be miniature copies of the world. We often find that methods adopted in school are

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just the methods we should like applied in the state. We should, in fact, direct school life so that the spirit of it may be the spirit which will tend to alleviate social and industrial conditions. I will give an example of the kind of influence the ideals and methods of a school can exert upon the working life. I will take a condition of labour which is now recognised as probably the greatest of tragedies. It is the slow decay of the faculties of crowds of men and women, caused by the nature of their employment—the tragedy of the unstretched faculties. So common is it, and ordinary, that we pass it by on one side; but no one can go into a factory without seeing workers engaged in work which is far below their capacities. Decay sets in, and the death of talent and enthusiasm, the inspirer of creative work. A little thought will convince us that the process of decay of such a delicate and vital organism as the brain is bound to set up violent, destructive, anarchic forces which go on for several years. A recent writer in the *Times Educational Supplement* (and this paper cannot be called revolutionary) says that the tragedy of undeveloped talent is being seen more and more to be a gigantic waste of potentiality and an unpardonable cruelty. It is a tragic disease and produces in early life startling intellectual and moral disturbances, which are the natural sources of unrest. As years go on a mental stupor sets in, and there is peace, but peace on a low plane of life. The loss to the community by this waste is colossal, and it is not too much to say that the output of man could be multiplied beyond conception.

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“Schools should send boys out into the industrial world whose aim should be to study these tragedies, and by experiments, by new inventions, by organisation, try, we may hope, by some of their own school experience, to alleviate the disease. To my mind this is the supreme aim of schools in the new era.”

CHAPTER V

THE GROWTH OF SANDERSON SHOWN IN HIS SERMONS AND SCRIPTURE LESSONS

§ 1

BEFORE I go on to a discussion of the latest, broadest, and most interesting phase of Sanderson's mental life, I would like to give my readers as vivid a picture as I can of his personality and his methods of delivery. I have tried to convey an impression of his stout and ruddy presence, his glancing spectacles, his short, compact but allusive delivery, his general personal jolliness. I will give now a sketch of one of his Scripture lessons made by two of the boys in the school. Nothing I think could convey so well his rich discursiveness nor the affectionate humour he inspired throughout the school. Here it is.

“SCRIPTURE LESSON

“Delivered by F. W. Sanderson on Sunday, 25th May 1919, and taken down word for word by X and Y, and subsequently written up by them.

“Limitations of space and time have prevented them from including all the lesson. Omissions have been indicated. They apologise for the lapses of the speaker into inaudibility, which were not their fault. They do not hold themselves in any way responsible for the opinions expressed herein.

SERMONS AND SCRIPTURE LESSONS

“ANALYSIS

“of the portions copied.

“Characteristic portions in the Gospel of St. Matthew.

“Obstinacy of the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board.

“Character of the devil, according to some modern writers.

“First act of our Lord on beginning the Galilean Ministry.

“Empire Day.

“*Subject of the Scripture lesson:—St. Matthew, chaps. iv and v.*

(“The Temptations, the commencement of the Galilean Ministry, the first portion of the Sermon on the Mount.)

“(The head master enters, worries his gown, sits down, adjusts his waistcoat, and coughs once.)

“The—um—er—I am taking you through the Gospel of St. Matthew. I think, as a matter of fact, we got to the end of the third chapter. We won't spend much time over the fourth. The fourth, I think, is the—er—er—Temptations, which I have already taken with you—a rather—er—very interesting—ah—very interesting—er—survival. That the Temptation Narrative should have survived shows that there is probably something of value in it or I do not think it would have survived. There are two incidents of very similar character of—er—very—er—similar character and—ah—different to a certain extent from everything else—er—ah— There is a boy in that corner not listening to me. Who is

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that boy in the corner there? No, not you—two rows in front. I will come down to you later, my boy. There are two incidents in the Gospel Narrative which are similar in—er—character and which I have for the moment called ‘Survivals’—very characteristic, namely, the somewhat surprising narrative of the Temptation of our Lord, and the other the account of the Transfiguration. These are different in form and character from other narratives, just in the same way as the account of our Lord sending messages to the Baptist differs from others. Er—yes—that last one. I should put them together as coming from a similar source (lapse into inaudibility—bow wow wow. Unique in characteristic—bow wow wow—Somewhat subtle—bow wow). One remarks that the Temptations are always looked at from the personal point of view, which I have put down in my synopsis. Has anybody here got my synopsis? lend it to me a moment. I don’t think the personal significance of the Gospel stories has importance nowadays. We needn’t consider it. That’s what I think about things in general. Personal importance giving place to universal needs. We are not so much concerned with whether boys do *evil* or not. Of course it annoys me if I find a boy doing evil. Leading others astray. Shockingly annoying. Oughtn’t to be. Like continuous mathematics not enabling a boy to pass in arithmetic—bow wow wow—screw loose. See what I mean, K——? Not referring to you, my boy (laughter). Hunt me up something in Plato about all these things. During the last generation——

“(Half a page omitted.)

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“Just in the same way from another point of view shall we live for our own advancement, which we are continually tempted to do? It’s awfully annoying if you do certain things and people won’t recognise them. I was pretty heftily annoyed myself at a meeting of the Oxford and Cambridge Board. Professor Barker—great man—I nearly always agree with him. Professor Barker. They had made science compulsory for the school certificate. Bow wow wow. I don’t want boys turned aside from their main purpose to have to get up scraps and snippets of science. Literary pursuits and so on. I wouldn’t have it at any price. Bow wow wow. Modern languages are compulsory too. By looking at a boy’s French set I can tell whether he can pass or not. Bow wow. Professor Barker proposed that science should be voluntary. I seconded him, but I said that languages should be voluntary as well. He didn’t see that at all. Isn’t it enough to make a man angry?

“(Half a dozen lines omitted from our notes as incomprehensible.)

“Now I am inclined to think that Satan in this Gospel is not intended to be the Satan of our minds—the prince of evil. He is intended to be more like the Satan in the book of Job. He is the devil’s advocate. He argues for the other side. For the opposition. He is put up to create opposition. This may in itself be a valuable thing. I don’t know that I need go further into it. I would just like to tell you this, boys. Some modern writers, especially Bernard Shaw, have a very high esteem for the devil. He*

* Mr. Shaw.

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prefers hell to heaven. So he says. Of course he hasn't been there, so he can't tell. So he is voted a dangerous personage because, dear souls, they don't know what he means. What *he* means is that heaven as it has been run down to and God as He has been run down to—everything placid and simple and inactive and non-creative and sleepy. People don't worship God. They worship (burble burble). They don't disturb their minds and think about things. That's what he means. Yes. Man and Superman. Activity of intellect. That's more or less what he has in mind. He prefers people doing something outrageously wrong than doing nothing at all. I don't know if it's true; it's all expressed in Greek thought.

“(Four pages omitted on running with the tide, Lloyd George, the importance of French in examinations, and the correct way of getting a true national spirit.)

“Well, our Lord now proceeded to found His Galilean Ministry. And what was the first thing He did, L——? It's quite obvious. What did He do? Obvious. Were you thinking of what I said just now? No, sir. My stream of words goes over you, not through you. Obvious. Now what was the first thing He did? What is obviously the first thing He did? Why, it's painfully obvious, even to L——. What was it? What? Where are we, L——? L—— has lost the place. Which paragraph do I mean, L——? Read the paragraph I mean. No. I have finished that. Next one. Obvious. What is it about? Yes, what is it about? What is it about? Two or four? Yes, four! Now what is obvious? Obvious!

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Now you've just got it, and you're ten minutes behind. Of course. The first obvious thing He had to do was to get a band of faithful disciples. Very first thing He did. What did He call them to be? To be what? Fishers of Men. Obvious.

“(Five pages omitted on Empire Day, Medical Study, and Cancer.)

“Now the—er—the Sermon on the Mount. You have heard this ever since you were on your mother's knee. At least I hope so. Beyond the historical times of your memory. For you, the Sermon on the Mount is as old as the ages. And yet I dare trespass on the Sermon on the Mount. ‘I've heard of it before,’ you say. ‘I'm tired of it. Do something fresh.’ Boys, you must go and read old things and breathe into them the new Spirit of Life. Now what is that chapter in Ezekiel, boys? Do you know the number of the page, and the paragraph, and the chapter? No. What am I talking about? Why, the valley of dry bones. Never heard of it! No. Is it in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, or where, or Habakkuk? Is it in Ezekiel 1? No. 36? No. 37? Yes. Dry Bones. Bones. Yes. That's what. I am going to take you to a valley of dry bones. Dry Bones. Bones. It is your business to go into the dry bones of the past and cover them with flesh, and breathe into them the new Spirit. I often read the Sermon on the Mount. It never bores me. I have more excuse to be bored than you. I learned it, gracious goodness, how long ago! Beyond Historic times. I loved it as a boy. Dry Bones.

“(Three pages on the Sermon on the Mount.)

“Now yesterday was Empire Day. Why did you

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want me to put the flag up? Rule Britannia! Britannia, rule the waves! Is not that it? (Yes, sir.) Dear boys! I wouldn't throw cold water on it for worlds. Well, you had your flag. It didn't fly. There was no wind behind it. There was no devil to blow it. Dear boys, you wanted that flag for a reason I think a shade wrong. It wouldn't be within the—what's the word I want?—suited for our modern gauges. The new world won't come until we give up the idea of Conquest and Extension of Empire—no new kingdom until its members are imbued with the principles that competition is wrong, that conquest is wrong, that co-operativeness is right, and sacrifice a law of nature. Now, how do the seven Beatitudes read with *Rule Britannia*? Now you say you believe in your Bibles. You say you are Christians. Pious Christians. You would be most annoyed if I called you heathens. Well, if so, you believe that these are right:—

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Rule Britannia!

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Rule Britannia!

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Rule Britannia!

“Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Britannia, rule the waves!

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Rule Britannia!

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see all that is worth seeing and living for. Wave your flag! Rule Britannia!

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“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Rule Britannia!

“Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness sake. Rule Britannia! It is incongruous. . . .

“Dear souls! My dear souls! I wouldn't lead you astray for anything. I can't explain it . . . this national spirit of yours. Beneath it all there is a spirit of great righteousness. I wouldn't tamper with it for thousands of pounds. But you must just see the other side. . . .

“(Starts on the Salt of the Earth, but is interrupted by time. Sets a heavy prep., and goes.)”

§ 2

Now that was the key in which Sanderson dealt with his boys and in which he gave his message to the world. And that is also the key in which they dealt with him. I want to clear out of the reader's mind any idea that this great teacher of men was a solemn and superior person, clear, exact, and exalted, and that his boys had any vague sentimental worship for him. They laughed at him, loved him, understood him, assimilated his ideas, and worked with him. He was much more like a sweating, panting, burly leader pushing a way for himself and others through a thorny thicket. And when I sat in his study and read over the notes of his sermons and scripture lessons I got the same impression of a sturdy fighter thrusting through a tangle.

Altogether there were several hundred of these sermon-memoranda. He would take a quire of manu-

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script paper and write down his notes, not headings merely but sentences, writing very fast, missing out halves of words, leaving phrases incomplete. The result would be a little book with perhaps a title and a date scribbled on the back page. The dozen specimen sermons in the official Life were mostly taken from these rough drafts. There was also a quantity of printed sermons dating from his earliest days at Oundle. So that it was possible to trace his development from the days when every heretical utterance was jealously noted, to the days of complete freedom of thought and expression.

He came into the interlaced briars and brakes of modern religious thought, a trained theological student, but already a very broad one, far from the trite materialistic superstitions of the narrowly orthodox. "Of what is termed 'definite religious teaching' his boys received little," says one of his clerical assistants. "The Head fought shy of anything which he felt might cramp a boy's tendency to think for himself and develop his own views."

This is far from the old days of salvation by belief.

He took Christ as the central figure in his teaching. In his early days he had prepared a parallel arrangement of the Gospels, and this developed into his "Synopsis of the Life of Christ." He seems to have clung stoutly to the authenticity of the recorded sayings of Christ, but he held himself free to doubt whether we have as yet "got to the bottom of many sayings of the Master." And, says the same witness, at once rather vaguely and rather illuminatingly:

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“He brushed aside impatiently doubts as to the feasibility of this miracle or that. To any who seemed to be worrying about the actual turning of water into wine at Cana he would urge that they were missing the whole point; cold, lifeless water was turned into warm, life-giving wine—and this was the work of the Master and His new teaching. Could they doubt that? He seemed to feel acutely that the passing of the centuries is liable to bring a distortion as well as an enrichment of the Christian revelation, and for that reason he was always trying to meditate himself, and to get others to meditate, on the true characteristics of the Master in the earliest portraits of Him handed down to us in the Gospels.”

Like all religious teachers he emphasised some aspects of the general doctrine in preference to others, but his accent was never on the sacramental or ceremonial side. The root ideas of orthodox Christianity, the ideas of sin and an atonement, never very prominent in his teaching, faded more and more from his discourses as the years went on. He never seems to have had much sense of sin, and he laid an increasing stress on action, on courage, and experiment. One saying he repeated endlessly, “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall men give into your bosom.” Still more frequently he quoted, “I came that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly.” In his later days that had become a new motto for Oundle School; it ousted “God grant Grace” from the boys’ thoughts in much the same way that Faraday for all spiritual purposes

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ousted St. Anthony as the patron saint of the school. And in the later sermons one would find side by side with Gospel sayings, exhortations from quite another quarter. The boys were told to "live dangerously." The Christ of later Oundle became indeed a very Nietzschean Christ.

§ 3

Orthodox Christianity is built upon the doctrine of the Fall of Man and the damnation of mankind, but I could find only the rarest and remotest allusions to this ground beneath the Christian cornerstone of salvation in the bale of sermons I examined. There is no evidence that Sanderson ever denied the fallen state of man, but he never alluded to it, and the general effect of his teaching went far beyond a mere avoidance. As his teaching developed, another word, a word infrequent in the Gospels, became dominant, the word "creative." For any mention of "salvation" you will find twenty repetitions of "creative." So far as I can gather he took the word from a hitherto unrecognised Christian father, St. Bertrand Russell. And I should submit the following passage from a sermon on "The Garden of Life," to any competent theological body with very grave doubts whether they would accept it as consistent with the teaching of any recognised Christian Church.

"God had created man, and had moulded and fashioned him, and had breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul, possessed of the divine and eternal indestructible spirit,

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the Godlike spirit which would fill him with the glorious and life-giving spirit of unrest, of unsatisfied longings and desire, of the instinctive natural urge to have more of life. A mighty power, a dynamic creative force, a dæmonic increasing urge—against which the forces of hell, of destructiveness, of caprice, of lawlessness, of the jungle, cannot prevail. Under this power man and the races of man progress: but without this mental fight, this constant struggle, no life can come. I dwelt on this fact last time I spoke to you, having in mind the mental or intellectual aspect of it, especially for those of you who are working for some searching examinations: for without a persistent, painful, and often enough disappointing effort the understanding of things will not come to you, or to any of us.

“Be true to yourselves, suffer no artifice, or artificial understanding, to throw dust in your eyes. Do not struggle for a static victory. Be true to yourselves. Do not struggle for your own recognition, as it were, or for the mere appearance of knowledge—rather struggle to enter into the kingdom, the kingdom of service.

“And where can you find the inspiration and urge of life? The source is wonderfully drawn out for us in the illuminating and suggestive commentary on Genesis you have the advantage to study. A great human book is Canon Driver’s ‘Commentary,’ digging out for us the deep truths of life embedded in the ancient myths of Genesis. A study in the use of words; of what we can learn from words; a new form of text-book. Such a text-book as we should

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have for the new era. This picture of the coming and making of man tells us a story of the widest applicability. It is found in all the works of God; it is found in all our surroundings; it is found in all our work and toil; it is found most fully and actively in all our daily working life. God, we are told, made a garden for man, and there He placed him and gave him charge of it; and there the Lord God came and walked with man, and communed with man, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And there He gave him his chief aim of life, his one purpose. And the Lord God took man, and put him in the Garden of Eden, to dress it and to keep it. And then with the memory and order of that garden in his mind He permitted him to receive knowledge, and then sent him out into the great wilderness to find his garden there.”

And here is another passage from a sermon entitled “Creative.”

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and the earth was waste and void. The world was in chaos, darkness, and gloom. But it was not to be left in this state. All this condition of anarchy, this waste and void, was the material out of which a new world was to be created. Confused and impossible though everything appeared, yet there was something present that made steadfastly and incessantly for order. So we believe it is now, in the present state of things. All the conflicts and strifes of to-day are the breaking up of the fallow ground. They are the effort to create life. They are the messengers of the coming of the Son of Man. In storm

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and tempest cometh the Son of Man. Over all this lawless, shapeless, impossible material of chaos there brooded, we are told, the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God was brooding over the waters like a bird over its nest, and in due time, in the order of creation, a new life was to take shape, and a new world was to rise up. In stately, ordered, majestic manner with all the certainty and irresistible power of gravitation, step by step, stage by stage, out of the welter of anarchy, a life—a new life—was to come into the world. A new life came.

“And at each stage we hear the words of the Lord God, ‘Let there be,’ and ‘there was.’ And then: ‘God saw that it was good.’ There was evening, and there was morning—darkness changed into light—and the day’s work was done. And God saw that it was good.

“So, too, it is and will be in the history of the human race. The uplifting of mankind, the coming of fuller life to nations, to man, to classes and sections of men, has come in epochs of change. Such stages in history are like the stages in the life history of a plant. There seem to be resting phases, epochs of apparent quiescence, the cessation of struggle.

“The fact is that some new freedom, some new principle of life, some desire to grow, has for a long time been taking root in the minds and souls of men. The urge to become more creative—to gain more of life and give more of life—becomes at last intense. And there is an immense desire to satisfy the great urge of nature. The old order passes. The gathered forces seek release. The pangs of birth are upon us.”

The further one goes with Sanderson, the stronger

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is one's sense of new wine fermenting in the old bottle of orthodox Christian formulas. In one of the late sermons he deliberately sets aside the Epistles of the New Testament as of less account than the gospels. He was still diverging when he died. In the last year or so of his life a new word crept into his talk and played an increasingly important part in it. That word was "syncretism." He spoke of it more and more plainly as an evil thing. And I cannot but believe, knowing his sources of knowledge and the angle at which he approached history, that he must have been aware that doctrinal Christianity—as detached from the personal teaching of Jesus—is, with its Mithraic blood sacrifice and Sabbath keeping, its Alexandrine trinity, its Egyptian priests, shaven and celibate, its Stella Maris and infant Horus, the completest example of a syncretic religion in the world. My impression is that if he had lived another two years he would have shed his last vestiges of theological paraphernalia and gone straight back to the teaching of the Nazarene, openly and plainly. And that would have created a very embarrassing situation for the members of the Grocers' Company, in the school at Oundle.

§ 4

And what creed was taking the place of the old theological tangle? What interpretation was Sanderson putting upon this ever-new teaching of Christ in the world, that he was stripping so steadily out of its irrelevant casings of dogma and superstition? I cannot do better in answer to that than quote from

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one of his latest sermons, a sermon delivered on the reassembly of the school at the opening of a new school year.

“The fundamental instinct of life is to create, to make, to discover, to grow, to progress. Every one in some form or other has experience of this joy of creating; the joy of seeing the growth, the building, the change, the coming. The instinct of those in authority has recognised—without perhaps knowing it—the love to create, when they devised punishment—the treadmill, prisons, routine, all thwarting that free creative impulse to the point of torture. Or on a minor scale the trivial school stupidities and idlenesses of ‘lines’; detentions without labour or sacrifice or both; or even the cheap and easy physical punishment. Such punishment, if not all inflicted punishment, springs out of the distinctive protective aim of slavery. Creative life comes slowly.

“Life, this beautiful, creative life, comes slowly through the ages, but it comes. Slowly mankind is emerging out of slavery into the beautiful freedom of creative life. Slowly mankind is realising the natural desire, the instinctive natural urge, the essential need for life—of each individual to be free. Free—*i. e.*, free to strive, to endeavour, to reach onwards, to create, to make, to beget. The economic freedom of the individual has been slowly escaping throughout history. It burst into a new vigorous life through the hammering blows of the French Revolution. During the last century or more this principle of freedom has been changing our political relationships and values. This economic escape may be said to have reacted on

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science, and the modern developments of evolution have benefited by the spreading change in the temper of mind, and by the influx of workers and creative thinkers from the enslaved order.

“And this raises a large question which I have in mind this morning. Every one can see to-day the immensity of the problems before the world. It does not need much reflection, or foresight, or knowledge, to see that the organisation of the intercourse of races is hurrying on to becoming a dangerous problem. As has been said, and as any one I think with powers of sight can see, it is in a large sense a race between education and catastrophe. And the question we in schools have to ask is, Can we in schools be outside all this? Can we confine our work, our play, our necessary work, our necessary play, to the recognised, traditional work or play of schools? We here think not. We believe that schools should move on towards becoming always a microcosm of the new world. A microcosm, and experiment, of the standards of value, of the commandments, the statutes and judgments, of the organisation, of the visions and aims of a coming world. We must not get into our heads that these are theoretical things, it may be pure idealistic sort of things, or, it may be new and dangerous things. They are none of these things—they can be expressed in very every-day, homely, matter-of-fact things and in the doing of our ordinary work. Of course they do mean thought, a tendency to believe, a faith in boys—and they do mean labour, and sacrifice—as they are called or thought of at first—until both pass on into the beautiful life.

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“Such aims and urges become terrific powers for prolonging the life of man; and as the stream of life goes on it becomes more and more like a vast river moving slowly forward with great power, receiving more and more of tributaries, slowly, strongly, surely flowing on ‘unto the estuary that enlarges, and spreads itself grandly as it pours its waters into the great ocean of sea.’

“But the beginnings are here: and here boys must find themselves in the great stream of true life. They must find themselves in the land of the great vision, of faith, of service. No beating or marking of time here. No easy static state. No satisfaction with conventional static comfort. Here they will join in this great world life. They came from their homes to join the great world life here. Even these tiny boys here will feel that something is before them that matters, something of true life and true intent. They will get the germs of life from some of those things we are perpetually trying to do, and never succeeding in doing. They will catch the contagion of effort. For learning is not our object here, but doing. They may learn things in a deadly static way, they may learn much in a static way and gain nothing of life. Not here, I hope. No, the germs of life come from the spirit; from the incessant travail of the soul; from high intent; they come from the burning desire to know of the things that are coming into the world. . . .”

CHAPTER VI

THE WAR AND SANDERSON'S PROPAGANDA OF RECONSTRUCTION

§ 1

THE disaster of the great war came to Sanderson as a tremendous distressful stimulant, a monstrous and tragic turn in human affairs that he had to square with his aims and teaching. He had had our common awareness of its possibility, and yet when the crash came it took him, as it took most of us, by surprise. At first he accepted the war as a dire heroic necessity. This aggression of a military imperialism had to be faced valiantly. That was how he saw it. Both his sons joined up at the earliest possible moment, and the school braced itself up to train its senior boys as officers, to help in the production of munitions, to produce aviators, gunners and engineers for the great service of the war.

The practical quality of the old boys from Oundle became apparent at once. They stepped from laboratory and factory and office into commissions; they returned from all over the world to prepare for the battle-fields. By 1918 over a thousand Oundle boys had gone into the fighting services, three had V. C.'s, many had been mentioned in despatches, awarded the Military Cross and the like.

He did his best to find God and creative force in the world convulsion. Here is a part of an address to

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the Church Parade of the Cadet Corps which shows his very fine and very human struggle to impose a nobility of interpretation upon the grim distressful last stages of the war.

“It is a pleasant thing to wander about these fields and watch the cadets who are told off to instruct their squads. It is a splendid illustration of the power of co-operation in education—where boys and men, or where a community work together, teaching one another, learning one from the other, where all are teachers and scholars, a body of co-workers, helping, encouraging, stimulating each other. This community method is dominant wherever there is a great stirring, *e. g.*, a great call, a great pressing into a new kingdom; wherever there is a great discovery and a new need. The war will establish it in schools.

“And just one word when you go forth from here. You will carry this mutual co-operative spirit with you. You will love your men, take care of their interests, making full use of their individual faculties, and learn to be coworkers with them.

“It is often said that wars will never cease—that they are a necessity—and in a sense this is true. One thing we know quite well, that in all affairs of life *peace* may be simply the peace of death. There is the peace of lifelessness, of inactivity, notwithstanding all its autumnal beauty. There is the quiet peace which changes not, the conventional belief, the conventional kind of round of work, with lack of initiative, of experiment, of testing and trials. There is the peace which follows on contentment with things as

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they are, the peace of death. The land of peace and of convention, and of cruel contentment. The land of dark Satanic mills—as in Blake's imagery. War may come to break up this deathful peace. So said John Ruskin. I have a letter written to me just when the war broke out. In July, 1914, the O. T. C. was inspected by General Birkbeck, and in his speech he expressed his belief that war was coming. On 2d August, 1914, he wrote to me:—

“DEAR MR. SANDERSON,—We little thought when I spoke to those boys of yours how near we were to our trial!’ and he adds: ‘These are the words of a peaceful philosopher, Mr. Ruskin, when concluding a series of lectures on War at Woolwich Royal Academy Institution, which may give you comfort. Men talk of peace and plenty, of peace and learning, of peace and civilisation; but I found that those are not the words which the muse of history has coupled together! On her lips the words are Peace and Selfishness, Peace and Sensuality, Peace and Death!!! I learned, in short, that all great nations learned their truth of word and strength of thought in war; that they were taught by war and betrayed by peace—trained by war and deceived by peace—nourished in war and decayed in peace; in a word, that they were born in war and expired in peace.’

“This is the prophet's call to arise and awaken out of sleep; to abandon the easy life of routine and routine's belief. It is a call to rise up and breathe life into the dry bones of the past; it is the trumpet blast for active warfare against all things that have become lifeless and dead. It is the herald call for a new army, to build up a new world of active, creative, dynamic Peace.”

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§ 2

In April, 1918, his eldest son, Roy, died of wounds at Estaires after the battle of the Lys. Loss after loss of boys and trusted colleagues had grieved and distressed him; now came this culminating blow. There had been the closest understanding between father and son; Roy had left engineering to become a master at the Royal Naval College, Osborne, which Sanderson had helped to reconstruct, and more and more had the father looked to his boy as his chosen disciple and possible successor.

On the Whitsunday following Sanderson preached a sermon on the text: "I will not leave you desolate, I will come unto you." The notes of the sermon were untidy, and have had to be carefully pieced together, but I think they rise to a very high level of poetry. And when I copy them out I think how the dear sturdy man in his academic gown must have stood up and clung to his desk, after his manner, full of grief and sorrowful memories of the one "gentle soul," in particular, and of many other gentle souls, he had lost—clinging to his desk with both hands as he clung to his faith and speaking stoutly.

"Whitsunday—White Sunday—white, pure, untainted—day of consolation—day of inspiration—perhaps the most joyous time of all the year. Spring in its power, life, Spirit of Peace, joy. Everywhere joy—sanctified, subdued. Joy, and peace, and new life in the music, the harmonies and discords, of Nature—here, in the country. The singing of the birds, their twittering, chattering, calling; their excitement;

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their restful chirping, abandon of joy, peace without alloy—they are friends of the soul. The atmosphere too—the gentleness of it, the life within it and soft warmth of it: freedom, imagination, inspiration are in the air; the wind bloweth where it listeth. Joy, innocent, white, pure, and happy. Happiness too. Life steeped in the sunshine of happiness. The spring, the elasticity, the eutrophy of life: life-creating life; life-giving life. Happiness on every hand mystic, elusive as the forces of Nature. ‘The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth.’ Happiness! Not freedom from care, or from sorrow, or from sleepless anguish; not freedom from abasement, not even from dark gloom—the accidie of depression—yet nevertheless the increasing sense of the life of love and service, the power of service, the completeness of it. The happiness which breaks ever and again through the clouds of uncertainties, doubts, darkneses of life—revealing it may be, for a moment, the signs of long years of effort—for as life goes on it is given to catch glimpses of the growth of the soul, something of the part the soul has taken in the building of the kingdom. It is in this life of love and service the words of the Master come to us: ‘I will not leave you desolate, I will come unto you.’”

Followed praise of the beauty of work with which his congregation must have been familiar. And then came this concluding passage:—

“And when these days of wrath are passed away, there will be a great battle-field for a new birth. Days of wrath and then a new revelation. When God came

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down on the first Pentecost on Mount Sinai, He came amid thunders and lightnings, and in a thick dark cloud—and when the Holy Spirit of God came to the waiting disciples there was a sound of a rushing mighty wind. And it must be so. New birth comes through much sorrow. So we may hope that new theories of life which for a century have been growing towards birth will spring forth out of this great contest in all the lands of the earth. Vast work there will be, and the labourers sadly fewer. The nation is now sending of her very best into the battle-field. There will be great call for new recruits to restore the countries which are devastated—great calls, too, for investigators in all branches of knowledge. Pioneers are now leading the way in research, in mathematics, in science, in industry, in the laws of logic and thought, with new ways of expression in language and art.

“There is the great pressing need of revolution in the laws and relationships in the social life. We may have visions of a regenerated social state, in which courtesy, justice, mercy, the spirit of the gentle knight, will show themselves in change of thought, of belief; we may have visions of communities guided by principles which we hope and believe rule in our great school. Care for the weak; clothing, feeding, housing, medical care for all; a crime to be poor; to be diseased, to be underfed; these regenerations controlled by the true and public spirit at the cost of the community. Laws for reform and redemption, and not for punishment. Each member of the state cared for, as it is our hope each boy of this school is. Great

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changes—essential to the well-being of a state, and to each member of it. We may have visions that the spirit of chivalry, of kindness, of courtesy, of gentleness, of all that goes to make the 'gentle soul' will bring this redemption to the people."

§ 3

The war turned Sanderson from a successful schoolmaster into an amateur statesman. Life had become intolerable for him unless he could interpret all its present disorders as the wreckage and confusion of the house-breakers preparing the site for a far nobler and better building. He shows himself at times by no means certain that this would ever prove to be the case, but he had the brave man's assurance that with luck and courage there was nothing impossible in the hope that a more splendid human order might be built at last upon this troubled and distressful planet. But for that to happen every possible soul must be stirred, no latent will for order but must be roused and brought into active service. He had no belief in hopeless and irremediable vulgarity. People are mean, base, narrow, implacable, unforgiving, contentious, selfish, competitive, because they have still to see the creative light. Let that but shine upon them and seize them and they would come into their places in that creative treatment of life which ennobles the servant and enriches the giver, which is the true salvation of souls.

He became a propagandist. He felt he had now made good sufficiently in his school. He had estab-

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lished a claim as an able and successful man to go out to able men, to business men, to influential men of all sorts, and tell them the significance of this school of his, this hand-specimen, this assay sample, of what could be done with the world. He went to Chambers of Commerce, to Rotary Clubs, to Civic Assemblies, to Luncheon gatherings of business men, to tell them of this idea of organisation for service, instead of for profit and possession. He tried to find industrial magnates who would take up the methods of Oundle in productive organisation. He corresponded extensively with such men as, for example, Lord Weir and Sir Alfred Yarrow and Lord Bledisloe. He wanted to see them doing for industrial and agricultural production what he had done for education, reconstructing it upon a basis of corporate service, aiming primarily at creative achievement, setting aside altogether competitive success or the amassing of private wealth as the ends of human activity. Surely they would see how much finer this new objective was, how much fuller and richer it must make their own lives!

When I tell of this search for a kindred spirit among ironmasters and great landlords and the like I am reminded of Confucius and his search for a duke in China, or of Plato or Machiavelli looking for a prince. There is the same belief in the power of a leader and the need of a personal will; the same utter scepticism in any automatic or crowd achievement of good order; once again the schoolmaster sets out to conquer the world. Perhaps some day that perennial attempt will come to fruition, and the schoolmaster will then indeed conquer the world. Perhaps the seeds that

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Sanderson has sown will presently be germinating in a crop of masterful business men of a new creative type. Perhaps there are Sandersons yet to come, men of energy; each with his individual difference, but all alight with the new conception of man's creative life. Perhaps Oundle may, after all, prove to be the egg of a new world. Oundle may relapse, probably will relapse, but other, more enduring Oundles may follow in other parts of the world. At present all that I can tell is of the message Sanderson was preaching during the last six years of his life.

Here he is, talking to the textile manufacturers of Bradford. This that follows is from his printed address, restrained and pruned, but for the manner of his delivery, the reader should think rather of that sample sermon and the other descriptions I have given of his personal quality.

“I am very much honoured by your invitation to address this important congress, and I am honoured, too, in being permitted to speak on education in this great city of Bradford. For your city stands out very prominently in the annals of education, and its work is well known by all who have watched educational progress.

“You, gentlemen, are concerned with education: you are much concerned with the education which will promote the welfare of the leaders and workers in your industry; and the welfare of the people in your districts. Industrialism has tumbled upon us, and it is an untamed, unruly being, the laws of which are not yet known, and need study. For some thirty-five years—a long spell—I have, in places removed

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far away from the voices of industry, devoted my time towards the introduction into Public Schools of those Scientific and Technical studies which, as I understand it, lie at the basis of industrial life. I have always had before me the work of organising Technical Subjects so that they might give all that is best to give of spiritual and intellectual training. And our object is to send forth from school boys that will be in sympathy with the work that they have to do, that they will be privileged to do, and to send them forth equipped for it. You have the same purpose. Your wish is that the boys and girls of your country should have every chance of developing into effective workers in the community, and that they should take a zealous intellectual interest in their work—that they should love their work, love to do it well, ever anxious to mount to higher things.

“And one of the difficulties of the immediate future will be to reorganise industrial conditions so that each worker may have the chance of stretching his faculties and of getting the work that will give him reasonably full play for his abilities. The fact that able and clever men are, in the present system, kept too long at work which does not stretch their brains, is a cause of unrest. Fortunately there is a growing consensus of opinion that more freedom for opportunity and for advancement is seriously necessary, and this sympathetic opinion will lead towards a solution. It is also well within the work of a school to promote this sympathy by sending out boys with those intellectual and scientific tastes and knowledge which will react upon themselves and attract them to the workers.

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“There are two other questions which I will mention before I come to the actual work which may be done in schools. One of the main aims of a good school is to see that each boy and girl is cared for, that each one has every opportunity for development. We must not cast out, or send our weak ones away, we must keep them in school—we must find out what kind of work will appeal to them, so that they, too, may move upward, gain in self-respect, and love their life. And we claim that this is what we would have done in all factories, or in any occupation. It is the essential duty of every nation. We are anxious that no worker should be stunted mentally or physically by the kind of work he has to do. This again is a difficult as it is an urgent problem. It is one which can be studied in schools, and there is no doubt that the attempts of a school to provide avenues of advance for all kinds of boys will tend to bring the right spirit into industrial and agricultural life. . . .”

§ 4

So much for the Bradford discourse. Here is the gist of a discourse given to the Reconstruction Council in London a year later.

“The object of this paper is to describe in practical working terms an organisation of schools which shall be based on a close association with the manifold needs and labours of the community life. At the outset I may say that the proposals will refer—even if not specifically so stated—to all types of schools, from the elementary to the Public Schools. It will

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be seen that the change needs a change in the ideals which have usually prevailed in schools of the past. In the community life the one urgent thing to be done to-day is to reorganise industry and the conditions of labour. This reorganisation may require quite organic or even anarchic changes—and for these changes the ideals of boys and girls must be changed, and to prepare for this change is the urgent work of the schools.

“Before I come to the proposals for reconstruction of schools, I will state very briefly some facts in industry which are now meeting with acceptance:

“1. Modern industrial life has come in with a tumultuous rush, in a haphazard, ungoverned way, through the activities of forceful, capable, and industrious leaders who have made use of the scientific discoveries of another type of men.

“2. The shrinkage of the world, and the growth of population which followed, has led to fierce competition; and this spirit of competition has ruled everywhere.

“3. In the ungoverned rush for production all sorts of methods are adopted which seem to be justified by their effectiveness. An example is the modern system of efficiency, at first sight captivating to the intellect and the desires, but yet a method which needs very careful study.

“4. Now men are beginning to believe that the first product of industry must be for the worker; that the worker should grow physically, intellectually, spiritually by his work.

“I shall claim that the work in schools should be

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permeated by Science and by the scientific method and outlook, and it will be found that Science itself does not set all this store on efficiency. Efficiency, I believe, is entirely contained within the first, or quantitative law of Thermodynamics. But eutrophy based on the more elusive qualitative law is concerned with the quality which leads to the giving up of life to others. We must see to it that whatever the efficiency may be, the eutrophy of industry be high.

“The principle that the first product of industry must be the worker leads to great organic changes. It will lead to no less a thing than closing down certain productions, certain classes of occupations, certain industries or processes. It will lead to a modification in repetition work; and to adjustments in organisation. I hope to show the bearing of this on our educational methods, and how the ideals implied may bring some help in diagnosing Labour unrest.

“It will be seen that most of the changes needed to-day depend upon international agreements; and a league of nations is essential, not, I think, to end wars, but to make the change from competition to co-operation possible.

“We are concerned to-day with the part education must take in this change of ideals of life. It is not too much to say that without the influence of a reconstructed education the way to change in the ideals of men will be hard to find. The change has to be made from competitive methods and ideals to co-operative methods; from the spirit of dominance to creativeness; and the present system of aristocraticism in schools must give way to democratisation.

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“Competition holds sway to-day in industrial life with disastrous results. Every employer of labour feels this, and wrestles, and would be glad of a change, but he is held in the grip of a system. Every one feels that competition destroys the creative, inventive life—and is the seat of unrest. And yet the spirit of competition holds sway, not in commerce only nor in diplomacy, but in the schools. Our public schools are professedly schools for training a dominant class; the aims, the educational methods, the school subjects and their relative values, the books read, the life led—are all based on this spirit. The methods are largely competitive, possessive. With, as I believe, tragic results in industrial life this same system, with the ideals behind it, has been unwittingly impressed on the working class in the elementary schools. . . .

“The change which I am advocating will demand a new organisation, and will call for a new type of school-buildings, and new values of subjects. The newcomer Science, and with it organised industry, which springs out of it, must take a prominent and inspiring place in school, and in every part of school work. It is not sufficient to say that Science should be taught in schools. The time has gone by for this. We claim that scientific thought should be the inspiring spirit in school life. Science is essentially creative and co-operative, its outlook is onward towards change, it means searching for the truth, it demands research and experiment, and does not rest on authority. Under this new spirit all history, literature, art, and even languages should be rewritten.

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“A new type of school-buildings and requirements will arise. No longer buildings comprised only of classrooms, but large and spacious workrooms. Classrooms are places where boys go to be taught. They are tool-sharpening rooms—necessary, but subsidiary. For research and co-operative creative work the larger halls are needed. Spacious engineering and wood-working shops, well supplied with all kinds of machine tools, a smithy, a foundry, a carpenter’s shop, a drawing office—all carried on for manufacturing purposes. Plenty of work which will employ boys of all ages will be found to do.

“There will be a corresponding spacious literary and historical workshop with a really spacious library full of books: books on modern subjects, as well as reference books. The building should have wings in it for foreign books—modern as well as classic, history, economics, literary, scientific. As many as possible of the foreign languages should be represented here, that boys may grow up with knowledge and sympathy and respect for other nations, and thus aid in promoting wider and deeper ideals of life. Another gallery for geography, and natural history, travels, ethnology.

“Here is full scope for a large number of boys of all ages to be engaged in research. It is all of a co-operative character. They can study the various social and economic systems—from copartnership to syndicalism; or the Liberation of Slaves; or the League of Nations; or the Liberation of Italy.

“Another block will be a science block with an engineering laboratory, machinery hall, physical, chem-

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ical, and biological laboratories—well supplied with apparatus and plant for applied science; plant, too, to lead to the investigations of the day; testing machine, ship tank, air tunnel; a miniature standardising laboratory; and with this a botanical garden and an experimental farm.

“Another would be an art-room, music-room, theatre, a home of industry for studying industrial development and industrial life.

“This is not a Utopian scheme, but one within possibility in town and country. To each large central high school should be associated groups of elementary schools, and there should be free highways between them, neither barred by examinations nor barred by expense. . . .

“Another change must also come. Books on modern problems, strangely enough, are not yet read in schools. For example, the time is overdue for a change in the English books: Burke’s ‘Reflections’ and Pitt’s ‘War Speeches,’ or Addison, to Ruskin’s ‘Unto this Last’ and ‘Time and Tide,’ or to Bernard Shaw, Wells, Galsworthy, and the modern poets. Some would go so far as to give Shakespear a rest. It is astonishing how the newer books bearing on the large questions of the day, and bearing on the actual life of the boy, strike the imagination of boys—even quite young boys of the upper elementary school age. They stir up the faculties and appeal to a less used kind of imagination. It is surprising, too, what open and live views young boys will reach. And one thing the study of these books possesses, which I hope to dwell upon later, is that they bring the schools into

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close touch with the every-day life of their homes and of the community.

“Creative education demands that schools should be brought into harmony with the community life, and should take part in the industrial and economic life. When boys and girls go home from school (even to the humblest home) the parents should find there is something their children have done at school which will help them in their work. This means that technical and vocational training should hold a prominent, and not a subsidiary, place in the schools. It is not difficult to see that this kind of work contains within it the spirit and genius of Science. We claim that education should be turned in this direction, with confidence and inspiration. The divorce of industrial life from the life of the spirit is one of the tragedies of the age. It produces calamitous results. A man’s work may be of an impossible kind, it may be sordid and destructive of life—and the cure proposed is that he should have shorter hours and more pay. This leads to bad diagnosis of the cause of the Labour difficulty, and prevents necessary reforms in the industries. . . .

“Creativeness, the co-operative spirit and method, the vision, the experimental method of searching for the truth, form the unique gift Science and Industry have to give to the ‘New Education.’ Under the influence of this new outlook all other departments of knowledge must be restudied. Under its influence the life of school will become active, the workers self-reliant, love abounding. It will make good craftsmen and make the school of use in the community—

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whether in the manufacturing life or in the investigation of economic conditions. Incidentally it will give rise to a new body of men capable of going wholly or in part to teaching, and the school will be thus linked up with the life of the place.

“It may be well to state that with an education of this kind based fundamentally on Science a capable boy will leave a secondary school with a good knowledge of Science and of its application, with a research attitude towards history and modern problems, and with a good working knowledge of two, or three, or even four languages. . . .

“The study of social questions is seriously needed. Industries would then have a close connection with the boys and girls, and yet boys and girls would be free to follow the best of their own talents and inclinations—the industrial life would not be separated from the spiritual life; and we may hope that some part of this ideal would pass over into the workshops and factories; so that the labourer would learn to love his work better than his wage—for so indeed he would wish to do. And the faculties of the worker would grow. The method of the work would follow the method of the school, as it is doing more and more in our own land and in many a workshop. For the spirit is with these ideals; the practice difficult for any single firm to carry out. Hence is the need for radical change in schools. Firms are being driven to start trade-schools of their own, when they would prefer the work to be done with all the wider scope of a school. And the same enlightened firms endeavour to ‘promote’ their men.

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“And here we come to what is probably the natural source of all labour ‘unrest’—the unstretched faculties of the worker. Men there are in any great shops who have intellectual faculties of the highest order, and these faculties are not used, so the greatest possession a man has, and the greatest his country has—the ‘faculties’ of its owners—is allowed to dissipate. And in the feeling of the mental want of equilibrium, in the slow frittering away of life, there arrives the turbulent spirit. The study of these questions is the problem for our coming international university. The industrial and economic problems involved can only be approached under international agreement. All that has been possible at present in the way of making industrial life pure and holy is by legislative restrictions, often enough rankling to the worker even when needed for his amelioration. Such legislation (Factory Acts, Insurance Acts, wages, hours) does not remove the source of the disease; at best it only mitigates the worst results. More drastic changes may be needed in the nature of the work—to the ruling out certain manufacturing processes until new discoveries can be made.

“So with the work in the shops. Men do not want wages, or shorter hours; these demands are only symptoms of a disease; short cuts to amelioration. They are doctoring. What men want is that their work may be such that they can love it, and want more of it. They do not want slaves’ work in the shops and a ‘dose’ of the spiritual life out of it. So we believe.

“Parents, too, would let their children remain at

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school. As a class there is no one more unselfish and self-sacrificing and co-operative than the working-class parent. Boys want to leave school because of the natural urge for making something and getting to business—as they see it at home. To remain at school without joining in some work is unthinkable when they see the life their parents lead.

“I may be permitted to insert one paragraph on the unfortunate opposition to this new position which is claimed for Science in the schools. The opposition springs from the belief that vocational work is simply material, having no spiritual outlook. But the truth is all the other way. Unfortunately the present studies of history, art, economy, literature, are biassed by ‘possessive’ instincts and education, and we claim that Science and its methods are seriously demanded for a new reading of these things. However, the opposition finds expression in high quarters. The Workers’ Educational Union, acting in sympathy with the Labour view—that vocational studies are to be avoided—practically taboos technical studies. This is reasonable as things are to-day, when a man’s work is too often for the profit of others, and for this reason the workers are not in love with their work, and when the day is over they have seen plenty of it; so the best of them go elsewhere for the springs of the spiritual life. But this is all disastrous to individuals and disastrous to progress. What the workers should do is to watch for the spirit in their daily work, for it is the work itself which will hold a man to God—nothing else will.”

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§ 5

I have quoted from this London Reconstruction discourse very fully. In the official Life there are a number of such addresses in which the student will find the main doctrines of that particular address repeated, varied, amplified, but as my object in this book is to strip Sanderson's views down to his essential ideas, I will make only one further quotation from this propaganda material here. This is from the notes he arranged for an address to the Newcastle Rotary Club. His favourite contrast between the possessive instincts and the creative instincts comes out very clearly here. Like all the great religious teachers, Sanderson aims quite clearly at an ultimate communism, to be achieved not by revolution but by the steady development of a creative spirit in the world.

“Schools should be miniature copies of the world we should love to have. Hence our outlooks and methods must have these aims in mind. Schoolmasters have great responsibilities. We should be able to say to a boy, we have endeavoured to do such things for you, and we ask you to go forth, it may be, into your father's business or factory and do the same to the workers. Let me illustrate from the workshops. Workshops in a school are by far the most difficult things to carry on along the lines I have in mind. Here are three conditions which must be kept in the shops:—

“(a) The work boys are doing should not be for themselves, or exercises to learn by; it

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must always be work required by the community.

“(b) Each boy must have the opportunity of doing all the main operations, and all the operations should be going on in the workshops.

“(c) Whenever a boy goes into the shop he should find himself set to work which is up to the hilt of his capacity. There is no ‘slithering’ down to work which is easy, no unnecessary and automatic repetition, no working for himself but for the community.

“And we can say, and are entitled to say, to the boy, when you go forth into life, perhaps into your father’s work or business or profession, you must try to do for your apprentices and workers what we have tried to do for you. You, too, will try to see that every one has work which exacts their faculties—by which they will grow and develop; you will see to it that they are working directly on behalf of and for the welfare of the community, and not for yourself.

“This is your real duty towards your neighbour. It is a vastly hard thing to do. This duty of believing that others are of the same blood with yourself, and have the same feelings, and loves, and desires and needs, and natural elementary rights; this duty of setting them free to exercise their faculties spaci-ously that they, too, may get more of life—is the real duty towards your neighbour. It is a hard thing. If you think of the works, the factory, the office, it is a hard thing. It involves vast sacrifice—the hardest sacrifice—the sacrifice of belief and economic tradi-

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tion. We need not be surprised that Christianity has 'slithered down' to an easier and softer level of culture and duty towards our neighbours. But whether the workers know it or not, this hard duty is essential in considering the relationships of our community system and our international system to-day.

"It is a hard duty, and boys must be immersed in it in school. The outlook, values, and organisation of a school should be based on the fundamental fact of the community service. By habit of mind, and by the activity of the schools, boys should be imbued with this high duty. It means a reorganisation of methods and aims.

"It is a hard duty, this duty towards your neighbour—the hardest part being to believe that he has like feelings with yourself and equal rights. The young man went away sorrowful, for he had great riches—riches intellectual or other. Yet the young man went away sorrowful, and there is no doubt that he eventually sold all that he had. This is Watts' version of it. The young man was at heart a follower of Jesus; he did not say that the commandment was an old one and well known, that it had been said before in the Hagadah and by Moses; he did not say that the language was the language of Plato or Philo; he did not say that it was too difficult and could not be true for every one—he went away sorrowful. We have no doubt that he sold all that he had.

"The system of education in the past has been based on training for leadership, *i. e.*, for a master class, and its method has been a training of the faculties. But the sharply defined line between the lead-

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ers and the led has been broken down. The whole mass of people has been aroused towards intellectual creative efforts. The struggle going on in all communities and amongst all races is a struggle to grow and have more of life. Whether at home amongst our workers, or in India, or Egypt, or Ireland; or between China and Europe—the struggle is the same. It is a struggle to make progress, and have more of life. This urge to grow is a biological fact. We cannot tell why it is or what creates it—but everything around us has this urge to grow, and to grow in its own particular way. One seed grows into a tulip, another into wheat. We know not how, but we recognise it. And it is precisely the same urge to grow that is causing all this apparent conflict. It is the fundamental creative instinct—the most powerful instinct of the human race, by which the race is preserved. Deep down in human nature lies this instinct; it is never forgotten, it is always present in the mind. It is voluptuous, anarchic, joyful, violent, powerful.

“The other instinct is called the fighting, aggressive, acquisitive, possessive instinct. It is the instinct to acquire, to overcome. It is distinct from the creative instinct even in the biological growth, but the distinction manifests itself more clearly in the community or herd relationships. It has none of the beautiful and life-giving qualities of the creative urge. It is essentially, even in its romance (of which we have plenty), dull, selfish, destructive. It varies its forms from sheer animal force to the dialectical methods which have assumed the names of talent and culture. The same characteristics are seen in the force

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of the slave-driver, in the forces of the wage-nexus, and in the dialectical force of the council. These are hard sayings, but for the solution of the problems of the present times it is wise, and necessary, to look facts in the face. At any rate it is well to know of the possibilities, feelings, and loves of the uprising mass. . . .

“But what has this to do with schools? My answer is that if we are to deal with the problems thrown up by science in our industrial system, and our close national and international contacts, the schools must be the seed grounds of the new thought and visions. . . .”

CHAPTER VII

THE HOUSE OF VISION AND THE SCHOOL CHAPEL

§ 1

I COME now to one of the most curious and characteristic things in Sanderson's later life, a conflict and interaction that went on between two closely related and yet in many ways intensely competitive ideas, the idea on the one hand of a new sort of building unprecedented among schools, a building which should symbolise and embody the whole aim of the school and the renewed community of which it is the germ, and on the other hand the idea of a great memorial chapel to commemorate the sacrifice of those who had fallen in the war. These ideas assumed protean forms in his mind, they grew, they blended and separated again. I will call the first, for reasons that will appear later, the House of Vision; the second, the school chapel. For though Oundle had thrown up a great cluster of houses, halls, laboratories, and other buildings during its quarter of a century of growth, it had never yet produced anything more than a corrugated-iron meeting-house for its religious services. The want of some more dignified chapel had long been evident, and even before the war was very much in Sanderson's mind.

The idea of a House of Vision was therefore the later of the two. Very early in the war a boy of great

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promise, Eric Yarrow, the son of Sir Alfred Yarrow, the great ship-builder, was killed at Ypres, and parent and schoolmaster met at the house of the former to mourn their common loss. Sanderson and Eric Yarrow had been close friends; they had discussed and developed the idea of a creative reconstruction of industry together; Eric Yarrow was to have played a part in the industrial world similar to the part that Roy Sanderson was to have played in the educational world.

The two men sat late at night and talked of these vanished hopes. Could not something be done, they asked, to record at least the spirit of these fine intentions, and they sketched out a project for a memorial building that should be a symbol and incitement to effort for the reorganised industrial state. It should be in a sense a museum containing a record of human effort and invention in the past; a museum of the development of work and production and a statement of the economic problems before mankind. Sir Alfred produced a check more than sufficient to cover the building of such a memorial as they had planned, and Sanderson returned to Oundle to put the realisation of the project in hand. Probably the two of them also discussed the need for a memorial chapel and probably neither of them realised a possible clash between that older project and the new one they were now starting.

It was in the early stage when the Eric Yarrow Memorial was to be nothing more than a museum of industrial history and organisation that Sanderson set afoot the building at Oundle which is now known

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by that name. Apparently he did not get much inspiration over to the architect, and at any rate the edifice that presently rose was a very weak and dull-looking one, more suitable for a herbarium or a minor lecture-hall than for a temple of creative dreams. It was a premature materialisation, done in the stress and under the cramping limitations of war-time. Long before it was finished Sanderson's imaginations had outgrown it. I think this unconfessed architectural disappointment probably played a large part in the subsequent development of the idea of the school chapel, still to be planned, still capable of being made a spacious and beautiful building. To the latter dream he transferred more and more of the ideas that arose properly out of the germ of the Eric Yarrow Memorial.

At first the House of Vision was to have been no more than an industrial museum. It was not to be used as a classroom or lecture-room. It was to be empty of chairs, desks, and the like, and clear for any one to go in to think and dream. About its walls, diagrams and charts were to display the progress of man from the subhuman to his present phase of futile power and hope. There were to be time-charts of the whole process of history, and a few of these have been made. As his idea ripened it broadened. The memorial ceased to be a symbol merely of industrial reorganisation and progress, and became a temple to the whole human adventure. He began to stress first social and then imaginative growth. The charts were to be full and accurate, everything shown was to be precisely true, but there was to be no teaching in the

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building, no direction beyond the form and spirit of the place.

And so while the scaffolds of the workmen rose about the commonplace little erection in the school fields, the schoolmaster in his day-dreams realised more and more the full measure of the opportunity he was missing.

The realisation of the past is the realisation of the future, and it was an easy transition to pass to the idea of this building as an expression of the creative will in man. In it the individual boy was to realise the aim of the school and of schooling and living. It was to be the eye of the school, its soul, its headlight.

The idea of this "House of Vision" was still growing in his mind when he died. He had not yet settled upon a name for it, though he had tried over a number of names—a House of Vision, which is the name we have taken for it here, the Home of Silence, the Hall of Industry, the Anthropæum, the Making of Man, the Life Creative, the Soul of the School. All these names converge upon the end he was seeking. This approach by trial, by leaving the idea to shape itself for a time and then taking it up again, by talking it over with this man and that, was very characteristic of his mental processes.

A member of the staff recalls a stage in the development of the idea. "I talked with the head master about the Yarrow Memorial in October, 1920," he says. "He then seemed to dally with a suggestion to name it the 'Temple of the World'—he expressed his hatred of the tendency to call it the 'Museum.' I gathered that his idea was to fill it with charts of all

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things and all ages, including pictures of at least all the world's great men—then to turn a boy loose in it, thereby to realise his position in the world as a unit of its time, as opposed to the inculcation of any idea of his having a part in his nationality only. His root idea seemed to be that it should be a place for meditation—restful as well as invigorating.”

Here is a passage written by Sanderson himself a little later. The idea ripens and broadens out very manifestly.

“Every school, every locality and industry,” he writes, “might build within their boundaries a new kind of chapel, a heritage, a temple—a beautiful building in which are gathered together and exhibited the records of man's great deeds and of man's progress, and the records of his needs. It is such a ‘Hall of Needs’ that we regard the Yarrow Memorial, and to this end it is being equipped.”

And here Sanderson speaks again in a sermon preached upon the text of Moses' withdrawal to the mount.

“A school will grow into a book. It will take upon itself the form of a Bible. Within it will appear the stages in the life of the soul—‘the coming of a kingdom’; the foundations, the building, the furniture, the complex apparatus, the organised beauty. A school—its buildings, workshops, classrooms, and all that goes towards a great school—can take on the form of a parable. As we wander from one place to another all that speaks of life will manifest itself before us. How life begins, what is needed for its growth; what shall be its standards, its ideals; what

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the nature of its proof-plate; the craftsman and what he is; the craftsman in languages, in mathematics, in science, in art; the secrets of nature revealing themselves; progress, change, vision.

“And boys will go out into the factory, or mine, or business, or profession, imbued with the spirit of the active love of humanity. Some will be called to lead, as Moses was called. They, too, will plant the ‘Tent of Meeting,’ the ‘Temple of Vision.’ A return with a new view-point will be made to the temple of ages gone by. The Assyrian frescoed his walls with sculptures of the deeds of his hero-kings; the Franciscans frescoed the walls of their chapels with the life of Jesus as told in the Gospels—the life of the Divine builder, of Him who came to restore a kingdom, by whose life and death a new world was created.

“But the Temple of Vision of to-day; the new Tent of Meeting. What of it? The new home of vision will be frescoed with the thoughts of to-day, changing into the thoughts of to-morrow. Generations of workers will go up into the mount, and to them, too, will be shown the pattern. ‘See that thou make them after their pattern which hath been shown thee in the mount.’ ”

§ 2

Now this is a very great and novel idea, the idea of a modern temple set like a miner’s lantern in the forefront of school or college to light its task in the world. It rounds off and completes Sanderson’s vision of a modern school; it is logically essential to

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that vision. But meanwhile what was happening to the school-chapel project?

For, after all, in the older type of school, the chapel with its matins and even-song, its "Onward Christian Soldiers" and suchlike stirring hymns, its confirmations and first communions, was in a rather dreamy, formless mechanical way undertaking to do precisely what the new House of Vision was also to do, that is, to give a direction to the whole subsequent life. But was it the same direction? The normal school chapel points up—not very effectively one feels; the House of Vision was to point onward. Sanderson had a crowded, capacious mind, but sooner or later the question behind these two discrepant objectives, whether men are to live for heaven or for creation, was bound to have come to an issue.

His mental process was at first syncretic. He began to think of a school chapel, not as a place for formal services but as a place of meditation and resolve. He began to speak of the chapel also as though it was to be "the tent on the mount," the place of vision. He betrayed a growing hostility to the intoned prayers, the trite responses, the tuneful empty hymns, the Anglican vacuity of the normal chapel procedure. Had he lived to guide the building of Oundle chapel I believe it would have diverged more and more from any precedent, more and more in the direction of that House of Vision, that the premature and insufficient Eric Yarrow building had so pitifully failed to realise.

Here is evidence of that divergence in a passage from a sermon preached after a gathering of parents

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and old boys in the Court Room at the London Grocers' Hall to discuss the chapel project. I ask any one trained in the services of the Church of England and accustomed to enter, pray into a silk hat, deposit it under the seat, sit down, stand up, bow, genuflect, kneel decorously on a hassock, sing, repeat responses, and go through the simple and wholesome Swedish exercises of the Anglican prayer-book, what is to be thought of this project of a chapel with hardly a sitting in it? And what is to be thought of this suggestion of wandering round the aisles? And what is this talk of young gentlemen who have died "for king and country," casting down their lives for the rescue of man?

"For the years to come, when the war is over, it will be well to have some visible memorial; some symbol of the redemption of the Great War, and of the heroic part old boys have taken in it; some record of the great struggle from out of which the new spirit will rise; some record of the part the whole school took in this; some record of the boys who have fallen; some thanksgiving symbol for all who have given their service. And for this it is proposed to build a chapel. But when the time comes we shall be sad to leave our present building. It is a poor building, but it is very rich in its associations. The services in this temporary chapel have taken a large part in the building of the school. Simple as is the Tent in the Wilderness, yet we have hoped that the Spirit of God would come and dwell in it. We have hoped that the Divine Spirit would come into all the activities and outlook of the school in its diverse

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occupations, whether they be literary or whether they be scientific or technical. And we have always looked onward to the day when a permanent chapel should be built, symbolic of the Divine Omnipresence for worship and for sacrifice.

“And this is what is in mind to do—and yet I confess to a certain amount of fear. A lofty, spacious chapel I have had no doubt would at the right moment be built by the Grocers’ Company. Just before the war the building of this chapel was emerging as the next great building to undertake—a chapel, such as a college chapel with stalls, as for private service. But now we look beyond this. We want something different, more open. A lofty, spacious chapel to form the nave—no fixed seats, the clear open space; quiet, still, ‘urgent with beauty.’ Joined to this the choir and sanctuary, with aisles round the three sides of it, forming an ambulatory. Round these aisles, on the walls and in the windows, the recorded memory of the boys who have fallen. An east window, a reredos, stalls, altar. A chapel, abundant in space, not for the mind to sit down in, but for the mind to move about in, for contemplation, for dwelling in the infinite, for piercing through the night, for vision, for the clear spirit of thankfulness, for communion with the saints, our own young saints among them. So we hope. As you wander round the aisles there will pass before you the memorial of those boys who have cast down their lives for the rescue of man.”

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§ 3

I cannot guess how Sanderson, had he lived, would have resolved this conflict between his House of Vision and his Great Chapel, just as I can hazard no opinion of the ultimate form his interpretation of Christianity would have taken. But the recognition of these conflicts is fundamental to my conception of the man and his significance.

He stands for a great multitude reluctant to abandon many of the familiar phrases of the Christian use and eager to read new and deeper meanings into them. But he never took "holy orders"; he knew the days of the priest, except for evil, were past, and it is only by its being born again as a House of Vision that he could anticipate his chapel with contentment. The time has come for mankind to choose plainly between the priest and the teacher.

Some six months after Sanderson's death I went to Oundle and visited the Yarrow Memorial, that abortive first House of Vision. Except for a bronze statue of a boy by Lady Scott that Sanderson had liked and bought, it was as I had seen it with Sanderson a year before. It was still, deserted, and I suppose I must count it dead. The time-charts had not been carried on. The collection of inventions, the display of humanity's growth, were still represented by empty cases. The statue was intended for the school chapel, but meanwhile it had been dumped in the House of Vision as a convenient vacant place for such dumping. The bronze boy is in an eager pose; there is duty to be done and danger to be faced and

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a great creative effort to be made. "Send me!" he said, in that empty, neglected House of Vision. But the hand that would have put that dart to the bow-string and aimed it at work and service was there no more.

Building operations upon the chapel were proceeding slowly. The rising walls were very like the rising walls of the sort of church for respectable people that gets built in Surbiton or Beckenham. I gather that in all probability it will even carry the debt customary in such cases. The new head master was, I found, a thoroughly pleasant man who came not from an elementary school but from Eton, and had never met Sanderson in his life and knew nothing of his work. He seemed disposed to regard Sanderson as a bit of a crank and to be intelligently puzzled by his originalities. I felt assured that when at last that old corrugated-iron building is abandoned for the new chapel there would be pews in the new nave in spite of Sanderson, and services of an altogether normal type and no nonsense of walking about and thinking or anything of that sort.

But though I have seen the House of Vision at Oundle dead and vacant as a museum skull, yet I know surely that neither Sanderson nor his House of Vision are in any real sense dead at all. A day will certainly come when his name will be honoured above all other contemporary schoolmasters as the precursor of a new age in education and human affairs. In that age of realisation every village will be dominated by its school, with its library and theatre, its laboratories and gymnasium, every town will converge upon

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its cluster of schools and colleges, its research buildings and the like, and it will have its Great Chapel, its House of Vision as its crown and symbol even as the cathedral was the crown and symbol of the being and devotion of the mediæval city. And therein Sanderson's stout hopefulness and pioneer thrustings will be kept in remembrance by generations that have come up to the pitch of understanding him.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LAST LECTURE

§ 1

SANDERSON'S propaganda of this idea of the possible reorganisation of the world through schools came to an abrupt end in the summer of 1922. He died suddenly of heart failure in the Botanical Theatre of University College, London, at the end of an address to the National Union of Scientific Workers. He had chosen as the title of the address, "The Duty and Service of Science in the New Era," and it was in effect a recapitulation of his most characteristic views. He attached considerable importance to the delivery and he made unusual preparations for it.

Upon his desk after his death were found seven separate drafts, and they were all very full drafts, of this address. In the margins of the pages little sums have been worked out—so many pages at three hundred words a page, four thousand, five thousand words; a full hour's talking, and still so much to say! There are little notes framed in a sort of Oxford frame of lines reminding him, for example, to "say more of bringing scientific method into *all* parts of school." On the reverse of the pages of manuscript are trial restatements. He tried back several times to a fresh beginning. There is a page headed "The New School," and giving three headings: the first, which he afterwards marked as second, is, "The faculty of

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each member shall be developed"; the second, which became the first, is "Community service—no competition"; the third is, "*Outlook—aim*, more value than ability. Service. All are equal. The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. Let all that will, come."

Then we find him trying over his ideas about science under a heading, "What we claim for science." Under that are a number of interesting subheads:—

"Its own value in the great discoveries.

"That its spirit is that of life, giving, changing, searching. (Marginal note:—without being deterred by any of the results which may follow.)

"It is 'natural' to the vast number of boys.

"Very directly applicable to needs.

"That it has a language and a message. (Marginal note:—it seeks to test, to create new standards, to fearlessly rewrite knowledge.)

"The same spirit. (? as Christianity: Editor.)"

Finally he produced a draft which was at least his eighth. This he had printed and this he may have intended to read to the meeting. But he did not do so. In the end he spoke from a fresh set of notes, which must have been at least the ninth draft. That eighth draft is given in full in the official *Life*.

His health had not been good for some time, and he kept this lecture and his exceptional interest in it more or less secret from his wife. He spent a long and interested morning at the experimental farm at Rothamsted, and in the afternoon he went to the optician's to get a new pair of spectacles and attended to other small businesses. He met a small party of us

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at the London University Club in Gower Street to take tea before lecturing. Sir Richard Gregory, the editor of *Nature*, was present, Major Church, the secretary of the National Union of Scientific Workers, and Doctor Charles Singer, the historian of classical science. Sanderson was evidently hot and rather tired, but he did not seem to be ill; he gossiped pleasantly with us and showed us his new spectacles. They were made of a recently discovered glass, opaque to ultraviolet rays and he betrayed the pride and interest of a boy in possessing them.

University College was not very far away, but he asked for a cab thither because he felt fagged. The audience was already assembled and he went straight on to the platform. The present writer made a few introductory remarks, and the lecture began. It is a matter of keen regret to all of us that we allowed him to stand throughout his discourse. It would have been so easy to have arranged for him to talk from a chair; the Botanical Theatre is not a large one and it is quite conceivable that he might be alive now, if one of us could have had that much thoughtfulness for him. We had thought of it—ten minutes after his death.

But we were all so used to the quality of effort in his voice, so accustomed to its sudden fall into almost inaudible asides, that we did not mark what hung over us until the very moment of catastrophe. His sentences seemed to me a little more broken than usual; he was rather more disconnected, he was leaving rather more than usual to the intelligence of his audience, and as he talked I watched the faces before

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me rather anxiously to see just how much they missed of what he was trying to get over to them. He got over much more than I supposed, for I have since talked with many who were present. A fairly full shorthand note was made at the time, and on this the following rendering of the last address is based. Like everything that has been printed of his here, it has been clipped and shorn, little distracting side glances have been eliminated and broken sentences filled in and rounded off.

§ 2

“It is a great honour,” he began, “to come and address scientific workers (I have only recently discovered my claim to be a scientific worker), and to describe to you what has turned out to be a scientific experiment. I hope to show the results of an experiment carried on, not in a scientific laboratory so called—physical, chemical, biological, or anthropological—but in a school for boys.

“Before doing that, I should like to say that we scientific workers do very much depend on having a number of us together. One scientific worker placed in charge of any great work finds it difficult; scientific workers do not get the chance of appointing men in sympathy with themselves often enough; so it is frequently said that scientific men placed in command of a factory in industry or a department of state at home or in the colonies fail. Well, if so, they fail because scientific men have not often got the opportunity of getting men of like sympathy to work

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with them. I take it that the object of the National Union of Scientific Workers is to get scientific men with scientific views of life and experimental experience to join together in some great work. When I speak of the duty and service of science in the new era, I mean that I want scientific men to claim justly a larger share in the work of the world, and not to confine themselves to what is called purely scientific work. We want them to expand themselves over a wider area. As a matter of fact, that is what two distinguished writers have suggested: that the time has come when the ordinary discoveries and inventions of science should be closed down in order to enable scientific minds to do this simple thing. Practically everything that exists now is the work of scientific men, their discoveries and their inventions. The whole world teems with the results of the work of science. The great machines we see used in industry—the industrial machine itself—have been created by men of science. Now, I put it to you that when motor-cars came in, the nobility of the land found their coachmen of little use. The scientific machine requires scientific men to manage it. Our industrial life is imperfectly organised; all our troubles are due to the fact that we have a process created by science, but organised in the old way by men of a different outlook. The discoveries of science have rushed into the world a considerable amount of unexpected ability. Working men engaged in industrial pursuits have had their intelligence discovered and brought out, and it is one thing to control a mass of human beings who are not thus inspired with

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the knowledge of their own possibilities, and another to control those who are. It is like trying to control a set of live molecules. It is one thing to control a hard atom and another to control a live electron.

“So that the duty and service of science would seem to lie in scientific men bringing their ideal of life, their standards, their vision, their outlook, and their methods to organise the great machine that their inventions have created. You cannot have a world half scientific and the other half nothing of the sort.

“That is to say, scientific workers will have to consider the whole question, for instance, of economics. I heard yesterday a distinguished member of the Government saying that we cannot change economics. Of course, that is one thing scientific men have got to do, to change economics so that the system of our industry shall be recreated. The system of management by dual control of the master and the slave will not work when the slave becomes an alive, active, intelligent, anarchic being. He will not be governed by the rein but by a system which the magnet can influence. However, the last hundred years has resulted in a race between the changed conditions that science has brought about and the organisation required to control them, in what has been called by Mr. Wells a race between education and catastrophe. In scientific language, it has produced a serious stress because of the hurrying on of change of conditions and the lagging behind of the methods of controlling them. It is this stress, I think, which has broken up the system. You may even say that the war itself is

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no cause of anything, but a result of the purely automatic action of shearing forces, as when a testing machine breaks a metal bar.

“The end of the war has left us with a whole host of individuals set free, and the business before science men is to organise this new body. It is a big problem, and requires scientific thought, temperament, and outlook to rewrite practically the whole of our knowledge. It reminds me of the tremendous rush there was amongst scientific men to provide workers to overhaul practically everything in biology (and theology) and other parts of human knowledge after the doctrines of Darwin were well established. I take it that all the departments of human life have to be rewritten by men under the influence of the spirit of science. Our books have to be rewritten, our very dictionaries. I have often amused myself with the ‘Oxford Dictionary,’ or found it necessary to send a boy to that authority for a definition, and it has pretty nearly always been false. Take such a simple case as the word ‘democracy.’ The ‘Oxford Dictionary’ hasn’t a thing to tell you about the meaning of ‘democracy’ as we use it to-day. It tells you nothing of the living use of words. That is one of the terrible dangers of leaving our books in the hands of men who have not got that outlook which experiment in science brings to the individual. Consequently I say that the duty of scientific men is to scour the whole area of knowledge and rewrite it to bring out new standards, new values, by means of which labour and industry itself, in the first instance, can be reorganised (the schools first should be reorganised), and

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then you can extend it into the wider area of international affairs.

“They tell us that economics cannot change our human nature. That is the great duty and service of science—to change human nature. Scientific men have to collect a band of disciples and make a new world. As far as I can gather, from a long connection with boys, the only scientific quality which is constant is inertia in response to change. The actual change itself, when it has arrived, no one objects to, and every one says, ‘Why didn’t we do that before?’ Scientific workers rarely have their opportunity in industry. To have their full opportunity they are to set forth in the spirit of the Great Master to found a new kingdom: not to manage industry by the standards and values of the present, but to transform them. And they must do what our Master Himself did—collect a faithful band of disciples imbued with the same belief. I know it is freely said (I have been corresponding with some of the leaders in industry) that scientific men cannot do this thing. They can, if only they are true to themselves and their vision; they can absolutely change the whole system under which industry is worked, and change the world to their ideals.

“‘Come, and I will make you fishers of men. . . .’ The great work that lies before scientific workers to-day is to extend the area of their labours, to become not fishers of facts but fishers of men. There will always be a distinguished band of purely scientific men devoted to pure science, who will abide devoted to pure science; but with the present number trained

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in science, we claim them also to organise the machinery that science has created. They must leave their ships and nets and become fishers of men. . . . I dare say even scientific workers know that is from the Bible. One of the greatest tragedies scientific men have allowed is for others to steal the Bible from them. The Old and New Testaments, with their record of progressive revelation, form the most scientific book ever seen. Yet scientific men have allowed a certain type of men to steal it from them. Bible stealing is an old thing, and one favourite method is to bind it in morocco and to put it on a top shelf. . . .

“But I must return to my scientific business. When I was at Cambridge I was not regarded as scientific. I was amongst those who took mathematics, and those who took mathematics and classics were respectable and had to attend chapel. But if you inclined at all towards science, or even ethics, you were not supposed to attend chapel. . . .

“I said that I have recently discovered I am a scientific worker, that I have been working a scientific experiment, though not of the kind accepted for report to the Royal Society. It has been worked by being head master of a school for thirty years and by having taught for forty years. When I became a head master I began by introducing engineering into the school—applied science. The first effect was that a large number of boys who could not do other things could do that. They began to like their work in school. They began to like school. That led on to introducing a large number of other sciences, such as agricultural chemistry, horseshoeing (if that is a

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science), metallurgical chemistry, biochemistry, agriculture; and, of course, these new sorts of work interested a large number of other boys of a type different from the type interested in the old work, so we got an exceptional number of boys, curiously enough, unexpectedly liking what they had to do in school. Then I ventured to do something daring; it is most daring to introduce the scientific method of finding out the truth—a dangerous thing—by the process of experiment and research. We began to replace explicit teaching by finding out. We did this first with these newly introduced sciences. Then we began to impress the aims and outlook of science on to other departments of school life. History, for instance: we began to replace the old classroom teaching and learning by a laboratory for history, full of books and other things required in abundance, so that boys in all parts of the school could, for some specific purpose (not to learn; to go into school to learn was egotistical), find out the things we required for to-day. We set them to find out things for the service of science, the service of literature, modern languages, music.

“This began to change the whole organisation of the school, its aims and methods. It was no use organising boys in forms by the ordinary methods of promotion for this sort of work. You have to make up your mind what you have to do, and then go about and collect anybody who would be of service to that particular work. You would require boys of one characteristic and boys of another. You make them up into teams for the particular work they have

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to do. The boys who do not fit into this or that particular work must have some other particular work found for them. You begin to design the work of the school for them. You must have all the apparatus you want for it, and you must organise for it, but you begin by organising the work for the boys and what they need to find out, and not by putting the boys into the organisation. Now, presently you discover, when you do this, that not a single boy exists who is not wanted for some particular work; to carry out your object every boy is fundamentally equal. One does this, one does that. Each boy has his place in the team, and in his place he is as important as any other boy. Placing them in order of merit does not work any more. The scientific method absolutely changed the position towards class lists and order of merit. That was an astonishing result.

“Another astonishing result was that we could not have anybody who was not working. If a boy was not working, you could see that he was not working. You could see that he was doing nothing. He could not sit at the back of a classroom and seem to be working. Everybody was working. You can manage that in school, but what about the world? All sorts of people may seem to be working and not be working at all. The curate may be doing nothing! (*Chuckle and something inaudible.*) This seems to land us into the extraordinary fact that no community if it is scientifically organised can carry any one who does not do service. I hope you will agree with me that that is scientific.

“A little farther on I turned round on the boys

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and the parents. (Both are my business.) I said, 'I have and the school has tried all it could to see to it that your boy got the right kind of work to do. We spared no trouble or expense to see to it that he might be able to perform his service in the school and to the community. . . . When you go forth to your father's works, keep in mind that it is your business to see to it that every person that comes within your influence has a like opportunity.' That is totally different from your duty to your neighbour as taught in the Church Catechism. We have landed ourselves hopelessly in the position of having a practical community definition of our duty towards our neighbour. You remember the rich young ruler who came to ask what his duty was, and went away sorrowful because he had great possessions. Some of these possessions were perhaps intellectual. I like to think of Watts' picture of that man and I like Watts' idea that he came back. I hope if any of our boys go away they will come back.

"Another step. This actual love of work spreads, and ultimately every one comes within its influence, and they begin to like the service they are rendering. Finally, competition dwindles and passes away, so that we have reached what appears to be a change in human nature. It is not really a change, but by care and attention calling out what has always been ready there in human nature, namely, a first instinctive love to create. I have always held that competition is a secondary interest and creation a primary instinct. Competition dwindles and passes away. Competition is a very feeble incentive to live. It is

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cheap and easy to arouse the motive, it is a swift motive and on the surface of things ready for you, but it is not even a powerful motive. Half the boys it dispirits and leaves idle and useless.

“The passing of competition leads on to another thing passing away, which is this: you soon find that a body of workers that as a community has attempted to provide for itself, as a community adapts itself to the community spirit, and punishment is totally unnecessary. It was a long time before that dawned on me. I have not, as a head master, taken any part in any shape in punishing boys directly, either by the easy methods supposed to train them for after-life or by the other methods that have sprung from the fertile brains of a dominant order. Punishment, I declare from years of experience in this experiment, is a crime: not only a crime but a blunder. Why? Because it is a cheap and easy thing. If you punish it is easy, but if a community has so to arrange itself and adapt itself as to produce the reaction on the individual not to do objectionable things, that is hard. It is complicated. It requires an abundance of real sacrifice. It demands readjustment of everything upon a basis of service. I have been much impressed recently by the effect of having punishment organised in removing any activity on the part of the community itself towards adjusting itself so that punishment should not be necessary. I used to flatter myself, ‘I don’t punish that boy, my prefects do; they keep me right.’ But I have been convinced by my thirty years of experiment that that was all wrong. These things come slowly. Now, without

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any action on my part, the prefects have stopped punishing, and a good thing for them. If they leave their boots about, the small boys will too, and they will have to punish them for doing so. To leave your own boots about like a lord is a fine thing, and to punish the small boy who does so is also a fine thing! But it is easy. The hard thing is never to leave your own boots about. . . .

“The reactions that we have been taught to make in the world are weakly static. What is the good of static methods? There is friction; we are told how to overcome frictional resistance. We can put an end to friction by stopping the machine. That is the static method of dealing with friction. Or we can go on working the machine, with oil and care . . . which is not so cheap and easy, but which gets somewhere. . . . If we try to remove friction by the static methods of punishment we are removing the incentive to live a dangerous life. ‘The secret of a joyful life is to live dangerously.’ You only live dangerously if you are perpetually trying to overcome your own inertia and trying to get the capacity to do great things. If you are only defensive, static, it is a waste of time. Yet those defences and resistances are securely placed in the governance of the state. What a curious thing is the form of government! Its characteristics include no repentance, no regret, otherwise it would acknowledge itself less than the governed. Its ideal is a perpetual static calm. *Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*. It is the method of people who perform the confidence trick. It is the method of ‘If you want peace, prepare for war.’ . . .”

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For some minutes Mr. Sanderson paused. He looked at his notes. He was obviously very fatigued, but very resolute to continue. He read:—

“Acquisitiveness leads to these glorified things: general science, general knowledge, national history, scholarships, examinations, advanced courses, ‘interesting’ things (whoever wanted to be interested?), the theological thing called ‘syncretism,’ tact, swindling. . . .”

Mr. Sanderson stopped and smiled in a breathless manner, half panting, half laughing, very characteristic of him. His glasses gleamed at the audience. His smile meant: “We are going a little too fast, boys. Where are we getting to? Where are we getting to?” He affected to refer to his notes and then broke away upon a new line.

“Out of all these things I have been telling you, out of all these considerations, evolves the modern school. The modern school is not made by the very simple and easy method of abandoning Greek. (Laughter.) Nor is it made by introducing science or engineering. The modern school’s business is to impress into the service of man every branch of human knowledge we can get hold of. The modern method in the modern school does not depend on any method of teaching. We hear a great deal about methods of teaching languages, mathematics, science; they are all trivial. The great purpose is to enlist the boys or girls in the service of man to-day and man to-morrow. The method which makes learning easy is waste of time. What boy will succumb to the entreaty: ‘Come, I will make you clever; it will be so easy for

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you; you will be able to learn it without an effort'? What they succumb to is service for the community. I have tested that in the workshops. They don't want to make things for themselves; they soon cease to have any longing desire to make anything even for their mothers. What they love to do is to take part in some great work that must be done for the community; some work that goes on beyond them, some great spacious work. You can spread them out into all sorts of spacious things, in all departments, such things as taking part in investigating the truth. The truth, for instance, of the actual condition of the coal-miners or of any miners. An important question which we have been concerned with for at least three years is '*What is China? What is it like?*' You may say, 'Methods of teaching geography.' But who ever learned anything from geography—as geography? Who wants to know geography—as geography? Books exist for it, maps, plasticine exists for it. We want to know about China. If we are going to see to it that every one of our working men has the same opportunities that in our school we give to our boys we shall have some difficulty with China. We shall never be able to give our working people these opportunities unless the Chinese give them too. Scientific men must find themselves dominant in the Foreign Office and Colonial Service so as to know what is the nature of the people in these distant places, how we can bring to them what we are able to give to our sons—the opportunity of making the highest and best use of their faculties. We shall not get that sort of thing from geography books. You will have to

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take the boys and let them find out what men have done who have been in China: to get products from China; to know its geology, and whether, after all, the Chinese do so deeply love rice that they want to live on a very little a day. Do the Chinese love rice? Do they love underselling white labour? Do they want to? That is real geography, but not classroom geography. That extension of interest, until China is brought into the classroom and the boys are finding out about it, is, I claim, one of the deepest and greatest tasks to be undertaken. China—India—the Durham miners—spacious undertakings. . . .

“Schools must be equipped spaciously, *spaciously*, and they must have a spacious staff. I have the list of our staff here. We have masters for mathematics, physics, chemistry, mechanics, biology, zoology, anthropology, botany, geology, architecture, classics, history, literature, geography, archæology, economics, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Eastern languages, art, applied art, handicrafts, and music.

“ ‘Impossible,’ some people say. There is no great school in the land but could quite well afford it. . . .

“We must send out workers imbued with the determination to seek and investigate truth—truth that will make them free—and to take great care that in the search for truth they will never take part in or sympathise with those methods by which the edge of truth is blunted.”

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§ 3

The voice beside me stopped. Some one pushed up a chair for Sanderson and he sat down. There was applause. I stood up and then struck by a thought, whispered: "Would you like to answer a few questions?"

"Yes, yes. Certainly," he said.

"Not too tired to answer them?"

"No—no."

I had a little strip of notes in my hand and I thought of underlining one or two points in this tremendous project of a school he had spread before his audience before I let in the questioners. I began by saying that the lecture had been a little hard to follow but that it would repay following into the remotest corners of its meaning. Then I heard a little commotion behind me and turned round to see what was the matter. Sanderson had slipped from his chair on to the platform and was lying on his back breathing hoarsely. His collar and tie were removed forthwith. There were several doctors on the platform with us and they set to work upon him. I hesitated for a moment and then declared the meeting at an end, and asked the audience to disperse as speedily as possible. I thought it was an epileptic fit and I had no sense of Sanderson's impending death. I had never seen anything of the sort before. I could not believe it when they told me he was dead.

The windows of the hot and sultry room were opened and most of the people made their way out, but the reporters remained and one or two persons

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of the curious type who hung about vaguely with an affectation of decorous sympathy. The lecture had been a very difficult one for the newspaper men, and they came now with a certain eagerness to ask questions about Oundle and Sanderson's career. I answered them as well as I could. Sanderson lay across the back of the platform, bare-chested and still. It became evident that I had to seek out Mrs. Sanderson and tell her of this disaster.

There was a little difficulty in ascertaining at which hotel Mr. and Mrs. Sanderson had been staying, and when I got there I found she was out shopping, and I waited some time for her return. Meanwhile her daughter and her daughter-in-law at Oundle were called up by telephone to come to her at once in London. I told her at first that her husband was ill, and then, as we went together in a cab to University College, dangerously ill. She was fully prepared to hear from the doctors at the hospital that the end had come. The poor lady took the news very simply and bravely.

In the Mortuary Chapel of University College Hospital I saw my friend's face for the last time, in all the irresponsive dignity of death. We took Mrs. Sanderson to him and left her for a time alone with him. Four years before in the same London hotel at which she was now solitary, he and she had shared the bitter grief of their eldest son's death together.

§ 4

An event of this sort produces the most various reactions in people, and I recall with a distressful

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amusement two unknown persons who accosted me as I went out from University College to find a taxi to take me to Mrs. Sanderson. One was a young woman who came up to me and said: "Don't be grieved for your friend, Mr. Wells. It was a splendid thing to die like that in the midst of life, after giving his message."

I did not accept these congratulations and I made no reply to her. I was thinking that a little acute observation, a little more consideration on my part, a finer sense of the labour I was putting upon my friend, might have averted his death altogether. And I was by no means convinced that his message was delivered, that it had reached the people I had hoped it would reach and awaken. I had counted on much more from Sanderson. This death seemed to me and still seems far more like frustration than release.

Then presently as I gesticulated for a cab near Gower Street Station, I found a pale-faced, earnest-looking man beside me asking for a moment's speech. "Mr. Wells," he said, "does not this sudden event give you new views of immortality, new lights upon spiritual realities?"

I stared at a sort of greedy excitement in his face. "None whatever!" I said at last and got into my taxi.

I must confess that to this day I can find in Sanderson's death nothing but irreparable loss. He left much of his work in a state so incomplete that I cannot see how his successors can carry it on. In matters educational he was before all things a practical

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artist, and education is altogether too much the prey of theories. He filled me—a mere writer, with envious admiration when I saw how he could control and shape things to his will, how he could experiment and learn and how he could use his boys, his governors, his staff, to try out and shape his creative dreams.

He was a strong man and in a very profound and simple way a good man, and it was a very helpful thing to feel oneself his ally. But now that he is gone, now that all his later projects and intentions shrivel and fade and his great school recedes visibly towards the commonplace, I do not know where to turn to do an effective stroke for education. It is only schoolmasters and schoolmistresses and educational authorities and school governors and school promoters and university teachers who can really carry on the work that he began. In this book I have tried to set out as clearly as possible, and largely in his own words, his fundamental ideas of the supersession of competition by co-operation, of the return of schools to real service and of a House of Vision, a Temple of History and the Future, as the brain and centre of community life. This present book is, as it were, a simplified diagram of the teachings less luminously and more fully set out in the official Life.

One thing I shared with Sanderson altogether, and that was our conviction that the present common life of men, at once dull and disorderly, competitive, uncreative, cruelly stupid and stupidly cruel, unless it is to be regarded merely as a necessary phase in the development of a nobler existence, is a thing not worth having, that it does not matter who drops dead

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or how soon we drop dead out of such a world. Unless there is a more abundant life before mankind, this scheme of space and time is a bad joke beyond our understanding, a flare of vulgarity, an empty laugh, braying across the mysteries. But we two shared the belief that latent in men and perceptible in men is a greater mankind, great enough to make every effort to realise it fully worth while, and to make the whole business of living worth while.

And the way to that realisation lies, we both believed, through thought and through creative effort, through science and art and the school.

THE END.



