THE SOUL OF DENMARK

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BY

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BY WAY OF EXTENUATION

In a world of book-makers, a visit to a country does not, as the World and his Wife seem to think, confer the right to the infliction of a new book upon a long-suffering people. If the Stranger within the Gates simply cannot refrain from utterance, he should at the outset state the reason, so as to give the reader, if he doesn't like it, a chance to burn the book—or the book-maker.

The writer has ventured to utter "The Soul of Denmark," because, in the first place, he thinks it "a consummation devoutly to be wished" that Mother Denmark and her friend across the North Sea, John Bull, should understand and learn from each other, and in these pages has sought to bring them closer. But the personal, more intimate reason is that, having lived for nearly four years in the bosom of Mother Denmark, and having been received by her as a foster-mother, the foster-child, having in the aforesaid bosom developed that fine critical faculty characteristic of the generation of to-day in the presence of its elders, and feeling, consequently, the necessity of pointing

THE SOUL OF DENMARK

I

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

As to the Heavenly City and Another Place, there are many roads to little Denmark. If you are what the Danes call " sea-strong," you can have eighteen hours of heaving from Harwich to Esbjerg, on the west coast of Denmark; if you are not a Viking, but an ordinary mortal of frail stomach, you can make the journey through the country which forms to Denmark a contrast that has no parallel amongst the countries of the world.

What is the psychology of a frontier line? It is invisible, but it is—and the Great War has proved it—the most potent thing on earth. On one side of this line drawn roughly from Tønder to Flensborg—for the temperamental, if not the geographical, frontier begins at the Schleswig part of South Jutland—there is the uniformity of iron and powder, of brassbound, red-taped officialdom; on the other, the easy-fitting tunics and half-tops of Denmark The Machine is not changed, only the Man, but the machine changes its psychology with its man—the *Deus ex machina.* Up

to the German frontier proper everything goes like clockwork: porters that might be signals; signals that might be soldiers; stations fractioned to so many places of decimals, in that vast Toyland that is Germany. Beyond the frontier, and the beat-beat of the train has its moments of inertia. There is a general loosening of beltings and couplings. There is a certain tendency to stroll, to wander from the rigid lines of officialdom to the flowery meads and pastures green. Some day a train will be lost. Perhaps one has been lost. They tell the story of a train which, after crossing the frontier, kicked up its back wheels and ran amok into the surrounding country, letting off steam as it went, and carrying in its bosom a load of outraged Teutonicity. I could imagine any free-minded train with a spirit of its own, which had come through the iron lines of the Fatherland, doing it. And some day, some day, Teutonic officialdom will find that it is possible for a country to regulate an earthly paradise to the fraction of an inch through that order which is supposed to be heaven's first law, and lose its soul in the regulation.

You come from the brassy bosom of the Fatherland, a sort of Jehovah-land, and you fall into the motherly bosom of little Denmark, a Motherland—in this case into the soft, so soft, tunic of the guard, who does what a real guard should do—that is, guards you like a father. He is standing now in the half-lights of the carriage; he is smiling, bless his heart! smiling and signing in the International language. It is he who pillows your hard, foreign head upon the cushions of an empty first-class carriage, though he knows you

have only a second-class ticket; it is he who pulls down the blinds and "dowses the glim;" and it is he who with his own fair hands brings you a cup of the best coffee in the world and a sort of ambrosial cake that is half bread, which melts between your teeth as manna must have melted between the teeth of the Chosen People.

And he does it, not for *drikkepenge*, or "drink-money," as tips are called in Denmark, but for the best reason in the world—because you are a human being. For the Danes, as you are to find out, have rediscovered the lost art—the art of being "human."

And so to sleep under the land-scents which are beginning to steal into the carriage. There are flowers you knew as a boy . . . the friendly odour of cattle . . . the train beats its lullaby, so lazily . . . so lazily . . . there is the anæsthesia of the coffee in the nostrils . . . and the beat-beat . . . those flowers . . . a cow lows somewhere . . . and . . .

You awake in the silver dawn of May to a miracle. You peep out. Yes, you are still in your carriage, but it is running upon the silvery green of the tideway. Like a second Peter, unbelieving, you are walking on the water—a gleam of fjord which stretches away into the low-lying shores beyond there. Someone calls it the Little Belt—a little friendly name. And now, amphibious mortal, you are running over the land and so on to the water again; and now you are skimming Little Belt's big brother, the Great Belt; and then you are ashore again, ceasing to marvel at this dear little land of the silvery streaks and ways of golden-green, comforted by that excellent coffee, served with nutty

bread and golden butter and those varied cakes in the cleanest, most spacious of cabins; for, crossing the Great Belt, you descended into the bowels of the amphibian, and found them sweet and clean to the eye and nostril, with the two portraits of the omnipresent King and Queen, who smile on you whilst you regale yourself within their domains *ad lib.*, at an inclusive cost of a kroner, or a little more than a shilling. For everything in Denmark is *ad lib.*, and apparently half price. This country doesn't know how to be mean. Shades of the London, Chatham and Dover Railway!

As you run up towards the capital, you discover that the travelling Dane, at least, knows how to wash. You always thought that the English alone had mastered the intricacies of personal cleanliness, but on the boat you have discovered plenty of hot and cold water *and* clean towels *and* soap. Now in your railway carriage you find this reproduced in miniature, and so you shave in comfort in the easy-running train, which, bless it! doesn't hurry itself. For has it not all eternity before it?

The cows are lowing at you from . . . but where *are* the fields? Where are the hedges and stone walls and dykes of England? Before you is a vast expanse of flat country. No, not *flat*. It is the sweetest, dearest of landscapes. You feel you have known it since you were born—or was it before you were born? And the stations are covered with creepers and the first spring flowers. And young Denmark, with its great round head and blue eyes and flaxen hair, is staring, staring. Staring but friendly, if you get me. And so you are enveloped by that *hyggelig* (that word

which has no English equivalent, but you can hear it, can't you—*hyggelig*) atmosphere which takes you as in a mother's arms, and which brings to your mind what the East End costermonger calls "a 'ome from 'ome." You are in the bosom of one happy family. You are in the heart of an intimate landscape which takes you as though you were in a house, where everybody watches you, and where your every movement is heard and noted as a member of the family. For if the Archangel Gabriel blew his nose on the sandspit of Skagen, everybody in the country would hear it, and would note the method and duration of the blow . . . and yet Gabriel would not feel spied upon.

And whilst you are thinking of this you have run into a regular Scandinavian station, with something of the Sagas in its decorations of crimson and gold—the cleanest and one of the most beautiful stations in Europe; and so you are in Copenhagen, and for the first time it comes to you that you are not at home, for the tongue that comes to your ears sounds like no other tongue on earth. You note it with something of apprehension. You have reason.

II

DEMOCRATIC DENMARK

It may be that it is because you have come from the Jehovah-land over the frontier a few hours away that the Mother-land of Denmark seems so democratic. For the first thing that invades and inveigles you here in the heart of the country is the atmosphere of democracy.

You leave the station. You remember very well what happens to the unwary traveller who comes out of Liverpool Street or Euston. You recall apprehensively the human shadows that materialise out of the circumambient, who cajole or terrorise you into "carrying your bag or your whatnot for a tanner." "Only a tanner, guv'nor!" And here in this great city of over half a million you await something of the same kind.

The only thing that materialises here under the colonnades outside the station are white-jacketed, reliable-looking old gentlemen. Nothing of the beggar about these fellows. In their uniform caps they bear a brass badge to show that they are duly certified *dragere*, or outside porters, guaranteed by Government capable of transporting a lap-dog or a piano with equal ease and security. They approach you as one man to

another, lifting their caps as befits a gentleman, and, of course, expecting you to do the same in return. They point to your hand-luggage, and if you shake your head they instantly desist and, with another dignified lift of the cap, wait for the next passenger. No expostulation. No solicitation. No terrorism.

If you entrust your belongings to one of them, he " does all things decently and in order," as the Prayer-Book has it—goes into the station, arranges about your luggage which has been impounded, and when you give him your address you find your luggage waiting for you on arrival, safe, unbashed. Again, shades of Liverpool Street ?

There is even a Porters' Trade Union, which makes itself responsible for its members. It has its own automobiles and its own uniform caps. It protects you and your luggage in the home of democracy.

At the beginning you think all this hat-lifting un-English. You are inclined to think it a trifle Germanic, and have shivering remembrances of the Hamburg gorgon in spiked helmet and short, curved " sticker " whom you humbly saluted before you asked the way, rather afraid that the answering salute might be a sword-cut. But as you reach your hotel you find it to be the " outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace " of democracy—that, in a word, autocracy and democracy are really one and the same thing. For here is the *Frøken*, or " Miss," who is your chambermaid, and as you see that no one dares to address her without lifting his hat, you naturally lift yours, being a gentleman and not a cad, something that she acknowledges with perfect self-possession, as

befits a lady. Not "lady-like," though the English-loving Danes often have a pathetic idea that the word always means "to act like a lady," instead, as it so often does, to act "after" or in imitation of a lady.

When you go out into the street from your hotel, which happens to be a "Missionshotel," something that at first blush sounds rather like a Salvation Army barracks for the conversion of lost foreigners, but which is one of a series of the cheapest and cleanest hotels in Europe, you find this democratic atmosphere in the broad, clean streets outside. You find it in a hundred nameless things, but first in the well-bred democracy that does not stare at "the Stranger within the Gates," as it does, for instance, in London, or Amsterdam, or even in Paris. There is no city in Europe where a tourist, an' it please him, can wear so loud a suit of checks without attention as in Copenhagen. Which is saying something for one of the most "curious" nations on earth!

There is something you miss on the spacious pavements. The eye searches uneasily the faces and clothes of the people who pass, for, like a true Briton, you look first at everybody's clothes. And then it comes to you. Where is Denmark's submerged tenth?

Where is the odd-job man jousting with Providence each day in the lists of the streets? Where is that European institution for the salving of conscience—the beggar? Where are the broken-breeches and the handkerchiefless? for the handkerchief is the real symbol of civilisation, as every European knows who has had anything to do with coloured ruffiandom. Where are they?

You can walk the length of these pavements, in the main thoroughfares at least, without finding half a dozen of the submerged. The protuberance beneath the waist-line of the corduroyed class tells its own story. The men over there who are tearing up the macadam, when they feel inclined, are great beefy, bullocky fellows; and, Lord 'a' mercy! three of the gents, looking like giant white-swaddled babies, have applied their lips to three black bottles, which you hope hold nothing but milk, whilst a fourth looks on approvingly.

Which reminds me. A friend of mine had a nephew who wanted to be an architect, and, as is the fine deep fashion of Denmark, had to start literally "at the bottom of the ladder," carrying out the behests of his lords and masters of the proletariat. Being an innocent young aristocrat, he came home one day and said that architecture was work most interesting and mysterious, but he could not quite grasp why so much of his time had to be occupied in taking black bottles up the ladder to white-clothed democracy on top!

These knights of the road, armoured in the corduroy of Christendom, possess a certain corrugated independence. They look well-fed—perhaps too well-fed—self-respecting men. They look as though they regarded their class, not in that "as good as any other and a darned sight better" way which so often conceals a real feeling of inferiority, but as the most important class in the community—as the producing class. Like second Atlases, they look as though they supported a world and knew it, and meant to have the price of the support.

Later, you are to discover that there is no rough-riding over Demos in Denmark. You can't very well ride over a man who, with his *kone*, or wife, leases through the trade unions at regular intervals the whole of the King's Theatre, where they hear Denmark's finest artists in grand opera and in drama, sucking up culture from Ibsen and Wagner with the best of their masters. Only that there are no "masters" in Denmark. And where there are no masters, there are also no "servants." For this is the most exclusive democracy in the world, as it is the most inclusive.

As you walk along there comes to you, vague, incredible, such signs as "The English Magazine," "High Fashion," and "Gentlemanlike Fashions;" for the Danes cannot be seduced from the belief that a "magazine" is the same as the French *magasin*, that "gentlemanlike fashions" is the same thing as "to be dressed like a gentleman" or "Fashions for Men," and that "high fashion" is not the most English of phrases. And you have no wish to seduce him.

This brings to you a confused impression that many of the words in the shops are English or half English; for there are "Manchester Skjorter," which you at once know means "Manchester Shirts," or perhaps "Skirts," only that by its side stands "Skørter;" "Handsker" must be something for the hands—happy thought! "gloves;" across the way there stands a hat-shop, and the word "Hatte" plain to be read; whilst over a shop cheek by jowl with the baker's, in the window of which "Brød" is writ, "Barber" is inscribed, only that there hangs outside a shallow

brass dish instead of a pole, giving you to understand that you are not entirely outside the resources of civilisation, like that Whitechapel friend of yours who rather thought the Danes were big, strong-moustached fellows who wore wings and a sword in a very cold country up near the North Pole.

In fact, you would think there was quite an English look about the words if they didn't sometimes look drunk, like inverted Russian, or like Welsh gone mad with a superfluity of consonants and length. And there is no getting over that guttural check and gurgle which streams from the pavements about you—the sound you heard as you came out of the station.

But that indefinable air of democracy quickly reassures you with those beautiful human-looking policemen, in the irreproachable trousers, white gloves, and tunics, with something of the air of a fireman about them. You are quite sure one of them, that tall, fair fellow standing under the corner where that Anglo-Danish word "Politiken" encircles a globe, will understand your English if you ask him the way to the Raadhus, or Town Hall. You are not disappointed. He understands you. His salute is courteous and unofficial. And you turn away with the incredible idea that at last you have met a rival of the two best-looking bodies of men in the world—the giant guardians of London and Dublin, with their aquiline noses and raven hair and dark blue eyes—for every London policeman is an Irishman where he's not a Scotsman! Only you have already discovered that they cannot manage the traffic like they do at home, and they lack the *Pax Britannica*. Traffic control is a gift from

the gods to the British Empire. Even the German Moloch has missed it.

And now you are to meet the second underpin of the Kingdom of Denmark. The policeman wears blue —the colour of policemen the world over. The second pillar of State wears white—a linen jacket which looks cool in the cold polished sunlight—the kind of sunlight we never see in England, the sunlight with something " northening " in it.

This gentleman is confidentially helping old ladies, and young ones, on to the back porch, so to speak, of his kingdom. He does it with such a fatherly air, though he is in the early thirties, that you feel instinctively you could trust to him your wife or daughter, if it wasn't that the former once hit a bus-conductor of the old-fashioned sort because he tried to assist her on to a bus in Trafalgar Square, " as though she were a cripple," and that the latter was a demon tennis-player. But these ladies are not demons . . . and they don't play tennis. You can judge many things from their waists and waist-cloths. But I forbear.

As you step up into the back porch of the tram, for the gentleman in the white coat is a tram-conductor, he touches his hat to you before he, with dignity, rings the bell—a fine, full, leisurely motion. You find you can, if you like, stand upon the back porch and see the street rolling from under you like a white ribbon, or you can sit inside in an indescribable atmosphere—perhaps because every window is hermetically sealed. Or, if you are adventurous, you can go to the front of the finely built, long tram and stand with the driver, who, like all drivers, mustn't be spoken

to, but who will be delighted, if you can speak Danish, to exchange the time of day with you, despite rancid regulations, for regulations in Denmark, like pie-crusts, are only made to be broken and eaten up.

But you elect the back porch on this occasion, and watch the gentleman in the white jacket, who is a model to diplomacy in general, and who, though you don't know it, not being exactly a born linguist, is carrying on a critical conversation with the gentleman in the morning-coat and bowler hat, and long hair, about last night's "Enemy of the People" at the King's Theatre. But he does stagger you a bit when, just as you are beginning to feel uneasy and wonder if he has forgotten the "Lange Linie," which has been written for you on a piece of paper, he comes to you and says in quite good English, "You get off here, sir," with an indescribable accent on the "r" of the sir. Of course he is an exception.

Later, very much later, when you have got on all fours with this language of the throat and stomach, you will discuss with him, perhaps, as I have done many times with a friend of mine upon the tram that runs to Valby, Georg Brandes' latest chronicle in "Politiken" or Professor Christiansen's play of the night before, or, if your mental stature is below his, the price of butter or eggs. But not the weather. People don't fall back upon the weather so much as we do in England. The Danes are conversationalists.

You have had the Blue and White. Now you are to have the Red—making the Red, White, and Blue pillars of the Danish State.

You cannot mistake this last. You have seen it

like a glorified robin redbreast upon the pavements, entering houses, of all of which it seems to be free, as though it were after worms, coming out ruddier and ruddier, walking and looking as intelligent as it really is—in fact, as it is in all countries. There is some occult connection between the carrying of letters and the absorption of their contents, as there is between the compositor and the matter he sets up; for the Danish postman, of whom we have been speaking, like the "comp.," is a walking encyclopædia. He seems to know everything, and is delighted to impart his information, especially to the foreigner. Letters never go astray in Denmark, one of the advantages of living in a country where everybody knows everybody. And he is so gracious withal!

He hands you a letter like a blessing, and when there is nothing for you and you seem to be what the ladies of the East End of London call "expecting," he says in apologetic hopefulness, "Not this time, sir," the crimson of his coat warm as fire in December.

I am always being surprised by my friend in red. Sometimes I have seen his red jacket—the civil servant is not ashamed of his uniform in Denmark—in my audiences, and sometimes he writes to me. Soon after I arrived in Denmark, I had a letter from a postman, written in excellent English, asking me what I thought of their red coats, as there was a movement for their abolition; and when I replied that the day Denmark sloughed its red coat I would slough Denmark, the letter was printed in the *Posthorn* under the title "The Most Beautiful in Denmark," as I had ventured to describe the jacket, with some gracious sayings

about the writer. The postman, in a word, is a man of education and intelligence.

But one is always meeting cultured democracy in the home of democracy. My barber has, I find, given to a gratified world a volume of verse. The little servant-girl where I am staying works from 8 until 3 (she is what they call a "before midday" girl in Denmark), and at 3 she goes to her High-School, where she studies until 9 o'clock. She and her pale, studious face are understanding and even pedantic in a beautiful reflective way. Her first expression upon her arrival was that "she hoped she was perfectly reliable," delivered in a serious old-world voice. Last week, at the house of an insurance director and at that of one of Denmark's leading mathematical professors, the maids, after being introduced as "Miss So-and-so," sat down with us to dinner and to afternoon tea, respectively and respectfully. And so on, and so on.

So I am not surprised to find that the well-known writer of whom I have just heard, in his fighting days "under the slings and arrows of outrageous Fortune," had calmly decided to take place as a waiter at Nimb's, and had no more shame about it than he or others would have had were he working there to-day. And this falls in naturally with the fact that the most popular six feet and a half of royal humanity in Europe is that King Christian who treats everybody as his very good friends, and in return has received the highest compliment that democracy can bestow upon autocracy—is himself treated as a human being.

My first meeting with him was in this wise. I saw in the distance from the back porch of my tram the

longest legs in Europe, coming earthwards on each side of a horse and unattended, returning the friendly greetings given them from the side-walk. The legs were the lower extremities of His Majesty, whose father, the late King, incidentally, always insisted upon saluting one of the most excited of his Republican subjects in the royal suburb of Charlottenlund. I would never have known who it was but that the conductor said casually, between two pulls of the bell, that "it was Kongen," or "the King." You can hear him say it—"Oh, that, that's Kongen," with a certain collective friendliness of voice. I liked him so much that I nearly got off the tram to have a chat with him, and I have a vague impression, whether rightly founded or not, that anybody can drop in for a cup of tea at the Palace around 5 o'clock.

They tell me that the King's best friends are the Socialists, who hate him officially, but love him as a man. I can quite believe it. It is men like King Christian who are the despair of the Social Democracy. Much better have a naughty King, with head-choppings and mailed fists.

The Crown Prince, an entirely lovable young man, is as much of a democrat as his father. The thing that lies nearest to his heart is not soldiering, but music, whilst he finds the greatest pleasure in his princely life in a cup of coffee and Vienerbrød at the house of a commoner. Only that there are no "commoners" in Denmark. For there are no "Kings."

Again, naturally following, there are no snobs. These Danes are, or at least were before the war, the least snobbish people in the world. They have adopted

the word into the language, and, although I have heard them use it on one another, they very often use it wrongly, and have invented a dreadful verb—" to snob." And as I write it comes to me as incredible—a country without snobdom ! Impossible. But why is it ? Why ?

Now I have it ! It is that everybody has some work or another. Everybody works. Everybody. Work is not the thing to be escaped and sometimes despised, as it used to be, at least before the war, in middle-class England. Work is not the primeval curse, but the blessing of Nature. Everybody has his or *her* work. And everybody has his or her title. It is the land of titled democracy.

You always know what the man to whom you are speaking does for a living, what is his particular contribution to the world's work. If he is a student, he is introduced as " Mr. Student So-and-so." If he has taken his first degree at the University, where the students are drawn from King and peasant indiscriminately, his name is brought to your notice as " Mr. Kandidat Petersen or Jensen," as the case may be. If he is a lawyer, he is called " Mr. Lawyer Sørensen." If he is a master-butcher, he is called " Mr. Slaughter-Master Nielsen." If he kills men instead of pigs, he is, as in England, introduced as " Colonel or Captain Alabast-Jorch." Everybody has a title.

But—and there is always a " but " in Denmark, as elsewhere—this titling can be overdone.

When I first came to Denmark I was always seeing in the papers the name of a certain " Professor

Brandes." Now, the only Brandes I knew was Europe's most famous critic, the Dane, Georg Brandes, who, amongst his hundred other works, has written the finest critique of Shakespeare extant. So one day I asked who *was* this Professor Brandes. Then I heard that it was my Georg Brandes. It seemed he had some years ago, as an ill-considered trifle, taken a professorship, and as this was his official title, so it had stuck to him.

Think of "Professor" Bernard Shaw! Think of the lightnings of offended omnipotence which would pour from the point of his godship's pen against the University which dared to desecrate him with a professorship! But the mind boggles!

That is the secret of Denmark's democracy. *Everybody does something.* Marriage is not a profession in Denmark, it is but an incident, and the wife goes on with her business in the workaday world after she has "hitched her wagon to a star." Everybody works.

I have met only two people in Denmark who don't do anything. They were two young ladies. They were the two most miserable outcasts in the country. In the house where I met them they sat aloof in their stolen finery, with their tails, so to speak, between their legs, despised—not actively, but quietly, surely. "They don't work." It is a woman's as it is a man's epitaph in Denmark. Democratic Denmark.

III

" THE TAIL THAT WAGS THE DOG "

If Jutland be the head of Denmark, Copenhagen is its tail. And it is, *pax* the Jutlanders, the tail that wags the dog.

That is Denmark's tragedy—one of her half-dozen national tragedies. Here is a little country of 3,000,000 of people, of whom no fewer than 600,000 are flung together in the capital. It is nearly as bad as London. Unhappy the country with the hypertrophied capital. " Capital " ways of doing things and " capital " sayings and " capital " dress are apt to " capitalise " the land.

They say that " when the good American dies he goes to Paris." When the good Dane dies he certainly goes to Copenhagen, if he doesn't go to Another Place, if wish has anything to do with his eternal destination. For the desire, the overwhelming desire of every Dane, certainly of every middle-class Dane, is to find himself sooner or later in Copenhagen—before his death if possible, for he is a trifle uncertain about the aftermath, but after at any rate. They all want to get to the capital. They have a pathetic belief, even though they grin at it—for the Dane grins at everything that touches him closely—that to be a " Kjøbenhavner " or a " Kjøbenhaverninde "—that *inde* with which the

Danish feminise their words—is to be a devil of a fellow or fellow*ess*: for there are she-devils as well as "hes" even in undemoniac Denmark. That the Magasin du Nord, Copenhagen's finest shop, is the centre of civilisation, via Paris. That only in the capital can the "Fox-trot" or the "Bunny-hug" be properly, or improperly, indulged; for, alas! these angular *can-cans* have spread even to dear little Denmark.

There was an egg-man once. I knew him. He came from Fyn, that big island which lies between the Island of Zealand and the mainland Jutland. He also was pining for the Danish Paradise—he and his wife and daughters. So they came, they saw, and they were conquered. But after a few months he couldn't "hold out," as the Danish idiom goes. He and his *kone* wanted idyllic, bucolic Fyn, with its fat pastures and *smørrebrød*. The last I heard of him he was living close down to Mother Earth in a house a Danish mile, which is four times longer than an English, from any railway-station leading to Copenhagen, where the theatre was unknown, and where neither the "Turkey-trot" nor "Bear-wallop" troubled, and the weary were at rest. But he was the exception to prove the rule. Most of these people come in to the assault with glorious riot . . . and are carried from the arena neck and heels to a nice quiet little churchyard, like that outside the Frederiksberghave, where they get all the rest they want, and for ever.

I have found this nameless *træk*, as the Danes call it, this tendency to lean towards the capital, all over Denmark. There is a certain bulging of eyes upon

Copenhagen, a certain stretching of hands, as though there were an invisible magnet over there on the east coast of the Island of Zealand, upon which the capital stands. It has come to me in a certain feverishness even upon that most unfeverish, pastoral of isles, Fyn, in the dancing and feasting after Copenhagen models —unconscious but immanent. It has stretched its tentacles up through hard-headed, *solide* Jutland. One meets it sometimes even in two such old-world towns as Aalborg (" Eel-castle ") and Aarhus—yes, even in proud Aarhus, Denmark's second city, where there is more local patriotism to the square inch than in any other town of Denmark—a patriotism which in this most beautiful of towns I must say is justified. They all want to get to the capital. And everything is done to help them. First-class steamers run from both these towns twice or thrice a week. Comfortable trains and ferry-boats look after their creature comforts on the road to Paradise—or is it Valhalla ? All the world trends to Copenhagen.

And do you know, when one comes to think of it, one is not surprised, after all. For Copenhagen is, after the writer's mind, the most beautiful city in Europe. Every Dane to whom one says this inserts sceptically, and the Danes have a fine capacity that way: " But have you seen Stockholm ?" No, I have not seen Stockholm, but I am prepared to lay my hand on my heart and aver it is not more beautiful than Copenhagen. " Why ?" you ask. " Simply because it can't be." There is nothing more to be said.

Beauty cannot be described mathematically, though

the mathematicians have tried to do it; but a mathematician would try to do anything, even down to "squaring the circle." If you ask me mathematically why I call Copenhagen the most beautiful city in Europe, I cannot reply to the fraction of an inch. It cannot be described in terms of squares or streets. But it is.

When one wanders in certain parts of Copenhagen, and especially at certain hours, one has an indescribable feeling that one is back in the world "when the world was young." I have many times wandered under the moonlight, the clarified moonlight of Copenhagen, which is the Moon-City, down past that old-world canal that runs by the side of the Holmen's Kirke, or Church, down past the jewelled, blinking façades of the diamond-paned houses which strike back to the moon silvery lights like frosted nights; I have seen the strip of bluey-green water bringing back the magic-lantern slide of childhood, running upwards like a miniature Little Belt into the heart of the Kongens Nytorv; caught the lights of leaded silver high up upon the copper roofs in this city of green copper . . . and I was back again as a child in one of Hans Andersen's fairy-tales, and the old bachelors had still their booths down there by the water and dreamed their lives away under their night-caps.

Or, an' you will, you can take a halfpenny steamboat, with the fringed funnel like the trains of infancy, and go over to Christianshavn within five minutes, passing through the twentieth century of high-powered sea-craft, and you are back in the middle of the seventeenth. Here you can see shops that are a delight to

the eye and nose, with the yellow oil-lights of a bygone day, where all things are sold, from liquorice to a *skraa* or chew of tobacco. Tumbly-twisty but solid houses of time-tanned brick, that might fall into the green canal before them but for that endurance which is the Dane's; near them the long row of orange-red, low-lying houses, with the trellis-work separating them as it has separated them through the centuries, which run down the canal where it turns at a sharp right angle. You hear the clang of the sabot on the pavement; catch the emerald baize of a shawled fishwoman a-wander from Skovshoved, cowled to the tip of her sharpened nose, tottering behind her an old man with something haunting and Dutch in the cut of his lower garments, with everywhere the little round-faced, old-world children . . . and you are still in the seventeenth century.

But if you want to get back again into the twentieth in this old-modern city, you have only to hold straight along for half an hour down through the Harbour, where the mud-banks scum under the new moon, with the Øresund a belt of liquid silver beyond. You are on the edge of the forest of masts through which you have come, but with that shoulder-rubbing of the twentieth and seventeenth centuries here as elsewhere. For under your lee is a sort of Flying Dutchman, with her bluff nose and tangled whiskers of sea-green, which has sailed out of the ages; there, a German collier with the bellying sides of the Ark, unloading as the world unloaded its ships when Noah was Noah. A hundred yards beyond, domineering, is an Australian liner with towering deck-works and wireless, leaning sullen

against the warehouse into which she is vomiting the grain from her overcharged belly under the naked stare of the arc lights. Beyond her, again, is a giant crawl, sucking downward into the hold of a shapeless coal-tramp that looks like a stranded leviathan, dragging out her innards by the ton and dumping them, black and running, into the coal-wharf over the road.

And so you can pass out of the roar of the Machine Age of to-day into those places of the yesterdays which are the real Copenhagen—the Copenhagen of moonlight. I can never wander through the unlighted colonnades of the Kongelige Teater and look across the irregular square of the Kongens Nytorv without passion, with its limes and its box gardens and grass like green velvet a-shimmer under the great white moon. I can never stand in the small hours of a night of starlight in the most exquisite corner of Copenhagen, looking at the rounded curve of the rotunda by the sheer square ugliness of Thorwaldsen's Museum, and catch the play of the stars in the black water under the old bridge fretted by time, without feeling the passions of a lost past stirring within me, as *you* may feel them stirring if you are a Celt and not a Copenhagener . . . for all this is a closed world to the Dane, who loves his Copenhagen, but not in that way.

Or it may be that you will go in the sunshine of the next day to Lange Linie, past the English Church, with the fine spire of grey stone aristocratically aloof, which looks as though a bit of England had been transplanted through the air to Copenhagen. And here at the end of the land you are amongst the yachts, and the playing children, and outside a raking torpedo-

boat is nosing contemptuously and dangerously alongside a man-of-war which sailed the seas when war was young in the world. And the boats are running past on the glistening tide out over there to where the Swedish coast lies in the silvery grey that is Sweden, a film on the horizon; and the little copper mermaid, who, human and fishy, crouches upon her rock, is being loved by the babies who sit astride her shoulders. And all the world and his wife is eating outside the café—and there is Rasmussen, the polar explorer, and Willumsen, the painter, and a dozen other celebrities, walking and eating very much like ordinary mortals. And the air is clear and bright and fresh—new cleaned each morning.

I have stood upon a November day in the irregular rectangle of the Raadhuspladsen at five of the evening, and found myself in an evening of fairyland, with the cloudy blues that filmed the red brick of the Raadhus façade with its edges of greeny-copper, swathing its high tower to the golden-faced clocks up into the fainted stars of the far away. I have found the vast spaces so full of adventure, so full of the mystery of the long ago, that the houses and the people fell away and I was back again in the Copenhagen of Hans Christian Andersen, before the twentieth century had touched it with the finger of desecration.

Yet even the Copenhagen of to-day has its own beauties. To stand on a clear December evening close under the verandah of the Umbrella Café and follow the black streamers of smoke from the high chimneys interlacing in the upper air is to see that even restaurantdom and factorydom cannot kill the

poetry of life. For there is a poetry of factorydom —or is it of fact?—the poetry of the Machine as well as of the Hand and Imagination. To sweep the lofty roofs, let the eye run along the smoky-red façades of the Raadhus, climb upwards to the minarets of the Palads Hotel or the Raadhus itself, and run through the tinkling, twinkling, lights of the great newspaper offices, and follow the trams that twine and writhe themselves like golden serpents about the great square —all this is to catch the new poetry, the poetry of the twentieth century, the poetry of motion.

* * * * *

Of course, when you tell this to the Dane, he is very pleased that you think so and all that, but . . . "Naa-a-a!" that unforgettable nasal, throaty note of scepticism. Of course, he really thinks so himself, though he thinks it not through the medium of the sixth sense, but through that of his five solid senses.

But I don't despair to discover Copenhagen to the Danes—another Copenhagen.

IV

ENGLAND AND THE DANES

THE way to be beloved is to love, and " all the world loves a lover." If that be so, John Bull at least should be very much in love with little Fru or " Mrs." Danmark, for Fru Danmark is very much in love with John Bull. For there is something John Bullish about Fru Danmark—something rotund, something of butter and eggs and even of beef. And she adores her friend over the way.

Love, like frontier, is inexplicable. It may be that Fru Danmark has misty memories of the good old days when she harried and married the fair-haired Angles, or " angels," as the Bishop called them in the story. It may be that she, a nation of sailors, has a sea-comradeship for a nation of men " who go down to the sea in ships;" that she, who once ruled the waves, has a fellow-feeling for the big friend to whom she has handed over her trident. I don't know. But she loves Johnny Bull . . . and sometimes laughs at him—quite nicely, but laughs. You know that lover's laugh.

This first comes to you when you open your lips in your native English—the love, not the laugh. Instantly you create what the Danes call a *stemning*, that ethereal word which we translate by the grosser

"atmosphere"—a word which I propose to use throughout this book, as it is really untranslatable. If it be in a room, the voices about you are hushed; if in a tram, all eyes, great round Danish eyes, are fixed upon you, with something admiring, something envying in the look. At least, *you* think so. But wherever it is, you are instantly free of the neighbourhood. The best introduction in the world to Denmark is the English tongue.

Of course, part of this is admiration for the "big nation," or, in its modern form, the admiration of little business for Big. The Danes are never tired of speaking of "little Denmark," and saying, apologetically and unreasonably, that "we are but a little folk." For they've never heard of Jack the Giant Killer in Denmark, or little David—unless it be David Lloyd George of that ilk. They have only a makeshift known as "Den Store Bastian," a whiskered pedagogue with tendencies to infanticide, and a shameless, shirtless youth of the name of "Dude-Soren." They enormously admire the big nation. They think, again unreasonably, that to be born under an Imperial flag is of necessity and out of the fitness of things to be born to high destiny. Of course, when the Imperial flag has a split eagle with beak and claws on it, it has its disadvantages, they think; but, still, *alligevel*, all the same . . . that expression of doubting confidence which the French translate by *tout-de-même* and the English by "Wait and See!"

And here one meets the first of Denmark's many paradoxes. If the Dane had to choose a flag under which to be born, he would, with the exception of the

hypercultured superman minority, choose the Union Jack . . . but he admires tremendously German *Kultur*, and, yes, despite denial, the German discipline and powers of organisation—just those things he lacks himself. German art and German science and German might—the mailed fist—the iron heel—the waxed moustachios heaven-turned, aspiring—these are the splendid things of earth. Imperial. Earth-shaking. Detestable. But splendidly detestable, like a Castle of Bluebeard. But . . .

The Imperial representative of all this, with his Münchner and his Frau and his glasses and his gutturals—the Dane is not so sure about him. He receives him in little Denmark hospitably and courteously, as he receives all the world in a country where the Lares and Penates are sacred. But . . .

But he fears the mailed fist and the discipline of iron and the German heaven, and being compelled to do what no Dane has ever done or ever will do—walk in step. And there is Sønder Jylland over the way, with its Teuton conquerors. And . . . there are so many things.

But the Englishman. He is "the strong, silent Englishman." (Incidentally, the Englishman does his best to live up to his reputation, and to conceal the fact that he is one of the most sentimental, not emotional, of Europeans; that he has a warm heart; that he really likes to be made a fuss of.) He is that term one always hears, or always heard before the war, "the practical Englishman," for the tremendous organising powers of the German during the war have had their effect. He stands for the freedom of the

little peoples. He is the Imperial mother who gathers her chickens to roost under the folds of the "Red, White, and Blue;" the other Imperial person an eagle who gathers them in another way—a sort of Imperial mother-in-law. Of course, the Englishman cannot weave operas in gold and purple. Of course, he hasn't *Kultur*, but he is the man Fru Danmark means to marry. Like the Yorkshire lady who was offered her choice between John Barleycorn, farmer, and the Austrian violinist with the hair, "she doesn't want any damn brilliance." She wants a partner for wear *and* tear, not for show.

There is a section of young Denmark which pays the national homage to things English in its own way—that is, through the cut of its coat and the set of its trousers. I often meet young Hansen in my walks in the Frederiksberggade or, like his English prototype, hanging outside the Scala music-hall or the little hell over the road. His bowler is ultra-English, set to the correct angle over the left ear, but not too much; his unmentionables are turned up, his eyes are turned down; his jacket has the slim English waist; and his handkerchief, which I regret to say is sometimes coloured, is the regulation one inch of corner. But Hansen doesn't look English. Something has gone wrong somewhere. If it isn't the hat, it's the boots with the square ends; if it isn't the boots, it's the waistcoat; if it isn't the waistcoat, it's Hansen's nose or jaw or stomach—sometimes it's nothing. Hansen hasn't yet learned that, like the English lawn, it takes several centuries to turn out the finished article. And I wish he wouldn't.

Anyhow, why not be *Danish* for a change?

The love of all things English, and above all the English "gentleman" ideal, is only equalled by the uncanny understanding which the Dane has of various sides of English work and ways. My first vivid recollection of Denmark was an interview I had with one of its foremost pianists and composers during my first visit. He came into the room looking like a German professor with a bent to philosophic abstractions, shaking hands with me in friendly, intelligent fashion, and instantly plunged into a discussion upon . . . "The Origin of Species" or Schopenhauer, did you say? . . . Not at all . . . upon the Home Rule question, of which he discussed the complexities far more intelligently than I have often heard them discussed on the other side of the North Sea.

The passion to knowledge of England is dazing. No lecture in Denmark is quite so popular as the lecture upon some side of English life—upon its middle class; its women; Lloyd George; or what Sir Edward Grey is doing when he shuts his mouth like a steel trap. What one may call "psychological questions" in particular interest the average Dane. Only . . . no man in this world has ever been able or will ever be able to disabuse the Danish mind that Irishman, Scotsman, and Welshman, are all "Englishmen." The Celt is as much an enigma to the Dane as he is to—well, shall we say to the Englishman himself? Great Britain and Ireland are "England," and only "England," and there is not the slightest psychological difference between her peoples. All are the same. All are "strong, silent, practical Englishmen."

Even Bernard Shaw, Lloyd George, and the O'Donovan Rossa.

But the Danish liking for things English does not confine itself to vague sentimentality. It shows itself in the best way of all—in the desire to speak English. "Desire," did I say? I mean "frenzy."

It may be that they do it to escape their own tongue, which, admirable language in itself, is, except English, the worst spoken tongue in Europe, which, according to an Italian who lived in Copenhagen a century ago, sounded as though the inhabitants had swallowed a potato and could not get rid of it.

An American put it this way the other day: "Danish is a queer business. Sometimes the Dane swallows the heads of his words and sometimes the tails. *My* trouble is that I sometimes swallow the head instead of the tail, and then they don't know what I'm talking about!"

For Danish is slurred and gurgled and chipped—is produced from the throat or even from what the lady called the "infernal" regions; the "r's" are never sounded with the tongue, only sort of coughed, and it is the aim of everybody to keep up the good work. But the most irritating thing of all, as in Wales, is that the people will persist in pretending to understand one another.

And yet it is Denmark which has produced the man who is perhaps the world's greatest foreign teacher of English, Professor Otto Jespersen, whose system of phonetics has revolutionised the teaching of the language. I have met Danes, many of them, whose accent was indistinguishable from that of Englishmen,

only that it was a little better. Copenhagen has a small army of English teachers, both native and Anglo-Saxon. And so French, which twenty-five years ago was, I am informed, Denmark's chosen language after German, has been quite displaced by the English, which the Dane at least believes is destined to become the world-language, and in which, all things considered, I am inclined to think he is not quite mad.

I was going to say that every Dane speaks a little English. Anyhow, one can be spoken to everywhere by all sorts of people in one's own language. I have been addressed in it by schoolboys from the Copenhagen Board Schools; have heard Shakespeare recited excellently by the youths of a Danish private school, where, incidentally, the teacher, herself a Dane, spoke such pure English that I believed her all the time to be a highly educated Englishwoman, even going so far as to wax indignant because Student Petersen, in an unexcised version, made reference to certain nameless portions of the human anatomy internal. " Petersen," she said, and again I heard the voice of my old friend Mrs. Grundy, " I am ashamed of you. You know *we* don't mention things of that kind by name."

It was England again. It is always so delightful to feel at home !

One of my many astonishing evenings in regard to English was an evening when I was being entertained by one of the most intelligent sections of Danish life, the lady Board School teachers or *Kommunelærerinder*, as they are called. I was finishing my last piece of toasted bun and my last cup of tea when there broke on my ears " The Old Folks at Home," sung in beau-

tiful English, which was followed by a number of other English songs. It was a little surprise for me from the next room, the singers being working-class girls from the Copenhagen Board Schools, taught by one of the Danish ladies who were my hostesses.

Waiters, those international parrots, have, of course, often addressed me in English; tram-conductors; postmen, and once, coming on the boat from Norway, a Danish seaman with one leg and a half, a twisted smile that would, as he said himself in idiomatic English, " draw a nail out of a plank," and, indeed, drew a krone out of my pocket, and who gave me a fine imitation of Cockney, tailing off into German, Norwegian, and Swedish—so to speak, to kick his polyglot heels a bit and show there was no harm meant.

Only I would say one little thing here. The Danes, paradoxically enough, are the biggest language cowards in Europe. The Dane, you must know, is mortally afraid of being laughed at—perhaps because he laughs at everybody—and especially by his own countrymen and countrywomen, who have a fine capacity that way, and so he holds himself to certain set phrases and words of which he is sure. The result is a distressingly accurate English accent and grammar, and, sometimes, an equally distressing lack of vocabulary. He gets the accent at times, and loses his linguistic soul in the getting.

Of course, there are exceptions, but in the mass this holds true. Still more curious in a people who themselves, in their ordinary conversation, use many more words than the average Englishwoman or Englishman.

Just a word to the English-speaking Dane. Get

out of the rut. Kick your heels in the air like the twisted sailor. Don't be afraid to make mistakes, and for Heaven's sake drop your dictionary and your heavy books and learn through the ear and the newspaper! Then you can, if you will, go in for that root of all evil, grammar, and even the English Bible and Shakespeare.

But to this passion for English, as to all action, there is equal and contrary reaction. May the Lord have mercy upon the Englishman who comes to Denmark to learn Danish. He is much more likely to learn pure Scandinavian in Timbuctoo or Whitechapel. This thing did not strike me of a heap—it grew on me, enshrouded me like a London fog. In my un-English desire to learn another language I thought I would begin to get hold of the tongue of throat and stomach —the tongueless tongue. When I first fleshed my virgin larynx in it, the faces of the people about me seemed to indicate that they suffered from stomach-ache—a good-natured stomach-ache, but, still, stomach-ache. In a room there was a certain tendency to change the conversation in every sense of the word. My efforts were met politely but stolidly by a dead wall of public opinion. If I spoke in Danish I was answered in excellent English, more or less. When I expressed my conviction that it was not altogether a sin against nature for a Dane occasionally to speak his own language, I was regarded rather as a good-natured lunatic . . . and, speaking accurately, for many months after I had some fluency in the language I cannot once remember a Dane giving me the name of a single thing in Danish or making the slightest effort

to impart the tongue of his beloved motherland . . . except one old lady, upon whose head be blessings! and who—perhaps because she did not know a word of English—sort of "aunted" me in the language.

I regard my emancipation as dating from the evening when, some six months after I had set myself and my ear to learn this accursed tongue, my translator, or *tolk*, as he is called, and I had a slight difference of opinion as to his capacity in English, and so he refused to act at my lecture. Meeting waiting. Tickets sold. Money taken. Five minutes to begin. What was to be done? Nobody else in the town could take his place.

So I grasped this particular linguistic bull by the horns, and informed my angry friend that I was going to speak in Danish. That did it. At all costs the national conspiracy against letting a foreigner speak the language must be kept up. But I was adamant . . . I was Irish.

And speak I did, for nearly two mortal hours, in the most frightful language ever heard since Babel. Somebody understood me, for the next day three columns of the local paper reproduced my remarks, such as they were, with substantial correctitude.

I was saved. I set my teeth, and when my Anglo-Danish friends spoke English to me, I replied in Danish, quite politely, but with phlegm. And I kept on replying. The story went round that there was "a mad Englishman" trying to speak Danish. But at last I conquered the conspiracy of the 3,000,000. They had to speak Danish to me.

V

CONCERNING FOOD

AND now we have reached a delicate point. One does not know whether to go forward or go back. For we are about to come close to the Dane *in puris naturalibus*. We are going to speak about his, and her, stomach, the thing for which, to avoid mention, we have devised so many rare and curious excerpts from the resources of the English language.

We say in English—almost the only time we use the forbidden word—that "the nearest way to a man's heart is through his stomach." It is certainly the nearest way to Danish human nature, to the Danish inner man. For it is only when we begin to discuss matters gustatory that we first really get close to the Dane as a human being.

I used to think that Ireland was the most hospitable country in the world. I could not imagine any other country coming within lengths of it. But then I did not know Denmark.

Hospitality in Denmark is not "hospitality;" it is not an attribute of the country—it *is* the country. Hospitality that envelops the stranger, that is poured out upon him like oil, that snares and traps his unwary . . . stomach. Little invitations here, a glass

of wine there, a dinner, a tea, a supper. Champagne and oysters at the Bristol in the higher flights, nectar and ambrosia with the gods and goddesses at the Palads, little private supper-parties after the theatre, clinched by a breakfast, a Danish breakfast, in the morning.

And running through it all " that little cup of coffee." Denmark's poison cup, as it is Denmark's loving-cup. All things in Denmark are settled by a little cup of coffee, or, as the Jutlanders have it, " a little *drop* of coffee." Coffee is the universal stimulant, as it is the universal panacea. You drug your losses or settle a deal running into thousands over that little cup. You marry your daughter or another man's over the glistening brown fluid. Wine indeed! A man will tell you more of his private life, or another man's, after one good strong cup of Danish coffee, especially if, as sometimes happens, it is preceded or blended with Schnapps, than after a magnum of champagne or a quart of port. Perhaps that is why so much business is done in Denmark.

For I would have you to know that eating and drinking is a serious business in Denmark. In more senses than one, it is Denmark's most serious business. The Dane is not ashamed of it. He will sometimes confess it—and with pride. A Dane has often said to me: " You have the idea that we concentrate rather upon eating and drinking in Denmark. Well, so we do." With laughter gargantuan . . . " SO WE DO!" A fine hearty gloat. And then, with a pang of conscience, *pianissimo :* " But what about the Germans!"

The Dane always falls back on the unfortunate German as a pillow for his eating conscience—when he has any.

This business of feeding the inner man or woman is astonishingly concentrated upon in Denmark. That is putting it as delicately as possible. The queer-looking phrase to English eyes, *god mad*, beats itself like a punctuation mark through all Danish conversation. At least "good food" enters sooner or later into all conversations of the Dane of either sex who has passed the forty mark. For food is a sexless thing.

But I have heard the discussion of good food over and over again by young Denmark in the gymnasium. I have heard refinements of sauces—the national dish; questions of lobster; the diplomacy of *schnapps;* the psychology of *smørrebrød*, thrashed out in all their bearings by young men not all of whom had that protuberance below the waist-line which is apt to mark the Dane for its own.

I do not think, speaking as a whole, that the Dane is insultable, but the Dane who cannot be insulted by any mortal means can be got at in one way—that is to refuse to eat his food. One of the best friends I have in Denmark, an old lady of the nicest possible frame of mind in the ordinary way, I have caught looking poisonously—or as poisonous as a Dane *can* look—at me across the table because I refused a third helping of roast pork, or that I refused to have my plate heaped to repletion before I had cleared away the last—one of the difficulties of Danish hospitality, which watches the plate of a guest jealously so that neither it nor its owner may ever appear empty. I have sat at a farmer's

breakfast-table in Jutland where even a Yorkshire breakfast "would pale," literally, "its ineffectual fires." Warm dishes and cold. Meats of all consistencies and temperatures. Liver paste. Sausages mottled and black and pink. Cake. Coffee, chocolate, and tea, with beer and liqueurs. Bread in half a dozen varieties. Little appetisers flecked here and there upon the snowy cloth like the colouring of a futurist picture, the whole completed by ill-considered trifles of the *smørgaas bord* at the side which are the despair of all Englishmen.

Many Danes have asked me to a dinner or a breakfast, but no one ever asked me to a game of cricket or football.

It may be that the Danes have a secret dislike to foreigners, and that they are determined to poison them with good food. I give the theory for what it is worth. However that may be, no English stomach, or Irish, can hold out more than a month or two of Danish hospitality. Something is bound to go. Buttons fly. Straps give. Couplings unloosen. Nothing can resist the hospitality that is Denmark's own.

Now I am going to make a personal confession. I have eaten the dainty "made" dishes of France, the greasy goodness of Germany, the stimulating tit-bits of Sweden, the fair all-round kitchen of the Dutch, but to my mind the best food in Europe is that of Denmark. That is the result of, as my friend said, "rather concentrating." In England we have two or at most three sorts of bread—mostly white, tasteless, and unnourishing; on the average Danish table there are three sorts of bread and sometimes half a dozen,

for in Denmark they have learnt that bread is "the staff of life," the backbone of all other food. They have rye-bread—that bread which once lost an election in England because someone accused the Protectionist party of trying to introduce black bread, "only fit for horses," and the Englishman said he was not a horse—the best bread in the world, the bread which, smuggled into England, and if the English stomach could be brought to the point of toleration, would bring back the national digestion and teeth. They have *sigtebrød*, a close, fine grey bread with just that suspicion of bitterness to make bread good to the palate; they have many varieties of wholemeal bread, and bread with caraway seeds that tastes like cake without its clogginess. They have loaves sound and good, and baked through without the heart of the grain, the very essence of the nourishment, being pasted out by the steel mill. A meal of Danish bread-and-butter is fit for a king or a connoisseur.

Then their national dish *smørrebrød* — literally "smeared bread"—is in a hundred varieties. It consists of thin bread-and-butter—not too thin—laid with strips of veal or beef or ham or tongue, cut with a fine delicacy, or with a dozen varieties of fish, smoked salmon or lobster, anchovies or sardines. It looks red and white and crisped in the windows, glistening with freshness, as though it had been painted there by an old Dutch master. It is the best food in Denmark. Not a sandwich, mark you, for it is criminal to place one piece of bread-and-butter upon another—that is something quite other, the English sandwich of international infamy—but just laid on. *Laid* on.

Of course, the Danes cannot cook a beefsteak—who wants them? They don't understand joints—why should they? They don't understand much about beef—they are calf-eaters—and they have the funniest joints in the world (incidentally, they regard ours as libellous upon God's inferior creatures). They never eat mutton unless it's smoked, and lamb displaces its mother on the national palate, but they have the cleanest (every joint is stamped by the Government stamp before it can be sold), the best, the freshest, and the greatest variety of food in existence, sometimes with all animal food shut in behind glass down which water is continually streaming. I never ate fresh fish till I came to Copenhagen, where the sea is segregated in tanks and carted around with the cod and plaice jumping all-alive-oh! One of the few occasions on which I saw a Dane really upset was when a man told me he had once bought some fish in the Chiswick High Road, London—you know those "fresh" fish three days on ice from the North Sea and out in the front under the dust? I had never seen a Dane angry before.

It is upon all this, the national setting, that your friends are concentrating at your first dinner-party. The first thing that strikes you, the guest of the evening in a dinner-party of the country which has coined the word *gæstfrihed*, or "guest-freedom," is the fact that everybody about you is natural. For the Danes have managed to hold the thing that civilisation has murdered. In five minutes you are "at home." You can go into any house in Denmark, and whether it be that of prince or peasant you are exactly as if you were in your own house—perhaps more so! There never

have been such " natural " people as the Danes, or people so quick to see and resent artificiality in others—even though they have a sneaking admiration for the chill of the Englishman.

You quickly make another discovery, especially if you are a teetotaller; for the wine of Denmark anæsthetises even the Englishman into the atmosphere of the dinner-table, leavens him with the whole lump, so to speak, so that he is apt to lose the critical faculty. It is that the Dane is the most talkative animal in Europe. They have a peculiar verb in Denmark, the verb " to snak," or chatter; only that it cannot be accurately resolved into English—for " to snak " is not to chatter foolishly, but comes somewhere between " talking " and " chattering." The Dane is always *snakking*. As a Dane once put it, " Our specialities are *snak* and *smør* "—or " talk and butter." But he never snaks so much as when he is seated at the dinner-table, and very delightful it is to hear him.

As you get out of the soup into the beginning of the feast, fighting your way through the first two or three sauces, and wedge your way into what looks like the beginning of the sweets, but which, bless your innocent stomach ! are but sweet frillings for the savouries, the snakking is rising about you. It passes from a rather comforting drone, like that of a hive of bees on a sleepy afternoon of summer, to a deeper, fuller note, as though a giant organ were playing somewhere; and now it is a higher note with the " thur-r-r " of the aeroplane in it . . . but it is rising, ever rising, and now it is a storm that catches you up in the heart of it.

There is an elasticity of tissue and *stemning* in the

place; the faces are taking a deeper hue about you, little lights are lighting up in eyes and cheeks and bald patches, and with the lighting up the scepticism is lighting up too.

It started in a *pianissimo* that sprayed itself lightly across the table; it has passed through *piano ;* and now it is a *crescendo* of scepticism. I suppose there never was, except the camel, so sceptical an animal in the world as the Dane. He doesn't believe in anything. The people about you are laughing at themselves, at one another, at their mutual friends, who probably at the moment are laughing at them, but all in the delightful, inoffensive, natural way which the Dane has made his or her own. But you will find also that with this, as is so often the case, there goes the dislike of being laughed at. The Dane is not, as he says inimitably, "a rotten egg"—that is, he is not "thin-skinned"—but all the same he doesn't like being laughed at. He will do anything to avoid it. It is the thing that holds him back, natural as he is, from being himself; that prevents him from risking all and "chancing his arm;" that does more to stultify power and talent and the gift of the gods that men call imagination in little Denmark than anything else. If a man gets his head out of the ruck, laugh him down into it again. If a man has got it down, prevent him from getting it out—laugh at him. If a man is enthusiastic, laugh at him. If a man speaks seriously, take it as a joke—like the lady who once said to me, after I had been wasting a precious two hours upon an analysis of some of the weaker sides of the Danish character: "Oh, but you are always joking, you

know!" But, anyhow, laugh, laugh, and keep on laughing.

If ever an epitaph be written for Denmark's coffin, it will run: "*This nation died of laughter.*"

And it is this laughing scepticism which has induced the national failing of not believing in themselves. No Dane believes in himself. If he does, he takes very good care to keep it to himself. There is a fine personal scepticism and a fine scepticism about one another. And this results in two things. First, an entirely overrated belief in the foreigner, and, secondly, in a narrow horizon, in parish pump politics, and in the lack of what the Americans call "The Big Idea."

All this you are finding out under the food stimulus, for *in vino veritas*. But it is all done so cleverly and so nicely and good-humouredly that you do not realise it in the beginning. For the Dane never laughs at *you*—at least, not before your face. He is too good-natured, too courteous, for that. And you have discovered that he takes criticism splendidly; that he is not afraid of criticism from you; that you are a privileged individual—as a foreigner. If you said the things you have just said under the nervous stimulus of the dinner *stemning*—it takes different men different ways—and were a native, God help you! for they would not. For the Dane has a very pretty turn of wit—a tongue that can bite when it likes. But he keeps that for the homegrown article and not for the stranger, who is sacred.

Talk—talk—talk. Snak—snak—snak. Not only at the dinner-table, but wherever men do congregate. In the train, the restaurant, the gymnasium. I have

heard a Dane talk whilst turning a hand-spring over a horse with head down and heels up. I have heard them snak whilst they lined up, whilst the outraged drill-sergeant prayed them to fall in. Snak—snak—snak. Talk—talk—talk. It's Denmark's curse—that and the hospitality which prompts it.

But it is a delightful curse and a delightful hospitality.

VI

" FLESH "

THIS chapter follows as naturally upon the other as flesh must always follow the *gæstfrihed* which is its cause. I have called hospitality " the curse of Denmark," but Denmark's flesh, like the mark of Cain, is the sign of the curse, and Denmark carries it in front writ large and free. There is something ponderous, something smashing, about the German intellect which helps it to break its way through the wall of flesh into which Germany has built herself; but the Dane has neither the German brain nor the German psychology.

One of Denmark's illusions is that of Dr. Johnson —that " flesh is strength," mental and physical. To no Dane does it come either as disgrace or disease. The tacit subconsciousness of the ignobility of flesh of the Anglo-Saxon is in Denmark non-existent. The idea that " the body is the temple of the soul " sounds to the Dane like a fairy-tale or " poetry." No Dane says with Hamlet, the Great Dane himself, " Would that this too too solid flesh would melt;" for Denmark scarcely knows that it is fat—scarcely more than " comfortable." Men—well-fed, well-washed, white-linened men—will shamelessly expose their stomachs in a Danish railway-carriage without any conception

of impropriety. I have even seen a Dane rest his stomach carefully between what he called his thighs, so that it lay upon the chair between them, again without any particular feeling, either for himself or for others. I have sat at table with those International Fat Men, the commercial travellers, when crossing the Store Bælt or Great Belt, when, after one of those gastronomic displays peculiar to the tribe, they have sat round after their meal like gorged porpoises—again without the slightest feeling of the neighbourhood of others. For fat has no feeling.

That is the point: "Fat has no feeling." This question of flesh is no mere question of the physical —it is psychological. It is the brake upon Danish thought and the naturally fine Danish intellect. It is the choker and strangler of genius. It is the thing that lies behind so many other things. It is the national enemy, and as the national enemy should be fought down and out, together with certain sides of the delightful hospitality which is its cause. Why not a National Anti-fat Campaign?

Every man entering Denmark from one of the less fleshly countries is at once pervaded by the generally relaxed air of the Danes—that happy-go-lucky, *laissez-faire*, don't-mind-if-it-snows air which possesses the country, a psychological *stemning* or atmosphere, in heavy, dead contrast to the physical *stemning;* for here in the cold clear Northern air one feels tireless and ever alert. The Danes themselves admit this. They say, constant and complacent, "Oh, but we are a lazy people!" in the way they speak about so many other national tragedies—as though they were come-

dies. Danes have often boasted to me, boasted, of the " academical quarter of an hour," of the Danish public meeting which never starts on time. It is something to be laughed at, to be laughed *over*—not something to be tackled seriously and whole-heartedly and wiped out. Heaven knows we do not always start to time in England, but at least we have the grace to be ashamed of it.

And this " academical quarter of an hour " is to be found everywhere. Business men tell me that it is almost impossible to get " keen " men in Denmark. The Danish office, with exceptions, has an air of easy-going good-nature about it. Laundries deliver your washing more or less as they feel inclined. The Danish train, not having quite shaken off the traditions of coaching days, is the most happy-go-lucky vehicle in existence, with its twelve hours from Copenhagen to Aalborg and tendency to pull up on the slightest provocation—to *schnapps*, to *snak*. Some of the Danish banks are carefully calculated institutions for the development of Jobs, where it takes you twenty-five minutes to do what it takes the London bank five. It is maddening to walk on the Danish pavement, for all the world and his wife is taking it easy; nobody wants to hustle, or even to move quickly; and the obstructionists are always so good-natured that they become quite intolerable. Life is something to take easy—there is plenty of time; for the Dane, who rarely believes in immortality, acts, like his trains, as though he had all eternity before him.

The incarnation of the spirit of Denmark's " academic quarter " has only just disappeared from the

streets of Copenhagen. She was an old lady, a *Frue*, or "Mrs.," I think, who pursued her placid if haphazard way through the streets each day from Gammel Torv to a destination unknown save to the moving spirit in the shape of a well-fed, four-cornered quadruped which might have stepped out of the Ark. I would meet her sometimes in my peregrinations, carrying a load of unperturbed humanity upon her tail and under her wings, pottering here and pulling up there, to the clink-clink of a bell that sounded like a cluck-cluck, utterly unmoved by the Twentieth Century, which ran and sidled and stole past on rubber wheels and stank and "did things."

The lady was a one-horse tram, and Copenhagen, with the humour that is its own, called her "The Hen."

Behind all this lies the one thing—flesh. It lies everywhere—in the street, in the council chamber, in the office—even in the gymnasium. There is a certain tendency in the Danish *stemning* to smooth out all sharp contours of mind or body, to lubricate with the lubrication that is fat's own, to mould and knead people into the mass, to blur all sharp enthusiasms, to smooth over all the doubtful, unpleasant places—in a word, to be as *pleasant* as possible, working to the ideal of pleasantness which is the ball that rolls whither it lists. Denmark is always outpouring upon the altar of the Pleasant God, the only god who does not demand sacrifices, as she did when it was written of the Jutlanders in Mercator's "Atlas" of 1608: "They eat and drink exceedingly much . . ." and in 1562, when a foreign visitor wrote of the Zealanders: "They ate

and drank the whole day worse than swine." But Denmark has improved since then.

What the Dane originally was and still can be is shown in the pattern of the race in that nature which always renews itself, hoping against hope. For the Danish boy is one of the most beautiful boys in existence, with his luminous blue-grey eyes, fine full head, unpinched, alert expression, and strong not ungainly body, with a certain length of line to it—with " breeding." You see him a few years later when flesh has begun to do its work on him. That fineness of fibre, that quickness of eye, that individuality of contour, has begun to go, to be merged into the national whole. He has begun to look " ordinary," to become good-natured and softened and " sceptical." The little Danish girl, who in her first decade is attractive and quick and intelligent, with, as one sees it sometimes, the long Scandinavian arm of her forebears, later undergoes the same change as her brother, under the smoothing hand of flesh. If Denmark could only keep young !

It is this national flesh which makes the young Dane look ten years older than the Englishman of the same age, which turns the girl of twenty-five into the mature woman, and the mature woman into the old woman. It is the killer of beauty, as it is the destroyer of mind.

Occasionally something of this penetrates the Danish woman-consciousness—for the woman at least can never quite kill her intuitions, which are the " eternal feminine " itself. I remember sitting at the private rehearsal of a certain film in which the hero

was to be found in " the great scene " staggering under some kilos of heroine. The original of the lady sat just before me with the hero, to whom, in uncontrollable anguish, she murmured, " Oh, but I am so terribly fat !" to which masculine Denmark replied comfortably, to smooth still more the pleasant places: " But no, dearest. You look just right !" And so feminine Denmark went to sleep again in her cradle of flesh.

With its comfortable enswathing goes the hatred of reality, the disinclination to face the facts of life, the tendency to call fresh air " draught," to shun all shocks from cold baths to mental showers, to turn tragedy into comedy, and with the Preacher " to have a little slumber, a little sleep, a little folding of the hands to sleep;" and this—the tragi-comedy of it ! —in a world of quick changes, of revolutions, of war.

John the Baptists have sometimes appeared upon the Danish stage. They have preached, not Christ crucified, but Denmark crucified—the crucifixion of the flesh. They have preached what Roosevelt called " the strenuous life;" the cult of shock, national and otherwise; the cold bath, locusts and wild honey, with a girdle of camel-hair. Denmark soon settled them. It laughed at them. It put them up on their cross, the cross over which hangs a grinning mask. For Denmark has the habit of crucifying its John the Baptists, whose voices are as " the voice crying in the wilderness."

And with this fleshly metamorphosis there is going on to-day, rapid, insistent, a mental metamorphosis;

for all this flesh question is wrapped up with Denmark's destiny, though Denmark doesn't know it.

The new metamorphosis has come with the war—shows itself in a certain feverishness, in what we call in England the " gold fever." And its name is *Goulash.*

After the war there are coming two changes in Europe—in opposite directions. In the warring countries we are seeing a certain cleansing of the mind and body, urged by the fires of war; in some of the neutral countries a gold-wallowing, an in-materialisation, an enwrapping in a fleshly sepulchre. Denmark can choose between these two things. She *is* choosing.

The two worst things in the world are gold and the lack of gold. Denmark has gone through one stage, and is now going through the other. She has been a comparatively poor country, without that deadening, staggering poverty of her wealthier neighbours, but still " poor."

Then came the war, which for her has been the Golden War. Moloch the Magician waved his golden wand over Denmark, and hey ! presto ! in the twinkling of a year the Danish *stemning* had changed. The simple, sterling good-nature of the Dane, the pillar upon which Denmark stood, his naturalness, his humanness, his absence of artificiality and snobdom, all became inoculated with the golden virus. This thing, with the Dane himself unconscious and unheeding, has penetrated deep into Denmark.

As I write, Denmark is a nightmare of gold. The simple fisherman of the western coast, who lived and died as his fathers, hardly, eats ten-kroner notes as

appetiser for his *smørrebrød*. He has even adopted the silk hat and the frock-coat. His pockets gorged under the stream of war-gold—for the silvery harvest of old time from the sea has now become a harvest of gold—he plumes and preens it with his one-time "betters."

Like the negro, he has the outward habiliments of civilised savagery: he has not yet acquired its virtues. He, like his first-cousin, Goulash, will in the course of time develop a stomach as the outward and visible sign of the new spirit. Moloch should always be drawn with a stomach.

The golden war-rain has trickled through the highways and by-ways of little, simple Denmark. It has trickled into the railway-carriages where the commercial traveller sits ensconced behind his wall of flesh. It has trickled across the silvery stretches of the Great and Little Belts. It has trickled, as I have shown, even into hard, simple Jutland. But it has *showered* itself upon the gentleman with the brand-new automobile with the high number, the be-furred be-cuffed great-coat, the double chin, and the treble paunch—the gentleman who is named Goulash—and great is his name.

I have just seen him. But first I saw his automobile, for Goulash without automobile is as unthinkable as balloon without gas. It drove up, a sort of mechanical megliosaurus, snorting, fuming, and grunting, with a monkey crouched in dogged misery over the steering-wheel waiting until its master should appear. The Thing waddled down the newly painted steps, a man-mountain, the enpurpled lips sucking

the Giant Regalia, the little piggish eyes set deep, close, in the folded skull; behind it, in the doorway, a vision of white aprons, with the furs in which to enswathe the Giver of all Good Things. It waddled solemnly down the drive, its duplicate chins a-quiver; the pound of flesh that hung over its coat-collar, by which Death had marked it for his own, a-quiver; the triplicate paunch a-quiver; the stocky, jellified legs, under the weight of flesh above, a-quiver, with its rumblings and belchings and noisome vapours, like the stinking monster into the bowels of which it was tucked and swathed by the monkey in the peaked cap and the leather breeches—a mean, shrunken animal, sucked out by the Thing in the Car.

And then the monkey had pulled the fang of the megliosaurus, which snorted, grunted, and the abortion inside had sprung into violent motion, wafting away upon his padded perch, the little mean head in its petrified top-hat swaying bubble-like upon its springs of flesh, the thing hanging over the back of the coat collar a-lollop, the heaving stomachs a-lollop, whilst those purple lips clasped the enormous cigar in fleshly contentment as they expelled the smoke of satiety as it belched its way, Juggernaut-like, through the streets.

From Ape to Man. The Metamorphosis of Flesh. The Evolution of the New Denmark. Whilst the old Denmark stares outside on the pavement, sneering, sceptic, but gratulatory, admiring.

This is the gentleman who sits surrounded by a grand piano upon which he cannot play; pile carpet into which the feet of flesh sink softly; brand-new

painted pictures splashing his walls in crimsons and whites—for Goulash hates age and the mildness of age—whilst Frøken Goulash is having a lesson upon an inlaid mother-of-pearl mandoline in the next room, and the wife, poor wretch! befuddled and bedazed, sits in her stolen finery, wondering how the devil these things are.

This is the gentleman who pervades the expensive hotels and dabbles in unknown dishes at unknown prices, whilst his women-folk, who usually have deserved a better fate, strip themselves to the frontiers of indecency and, like their savage forebears, screen their nakedness with precious stones. This is the highly upholstered person who introduces his "strawberry trains" so that he may eat the forbidden fruit in the winter-time of life. This is the pioneer of the New Snobbism.

For the Snob has come to Denmark, and come to stay The corpse of the Snob has come, as it always comes, in a sepulchre of flesh. It has come, though, unconscious like all flesh, it does not know it, to carry on the fight of the century, which Denmark, segregated in its economic back-water, had somehow escaped—the fight of the Plutocracy against the Aristocracy which it apes—that Plutocracy which some day will have to fight the Democracy now rising above the time-horizon.

No wonder that we see standing in the papers the advertisements of the New Snobbism, with the victim sitting at the feet of its destroyer—the *god tone* (literally "good tone") advertisements in which "a young lady of high family will be happy to inculcate

those who have recently come into money into the ways of the best society." For the Aristocracy is thin and poor, and the Plutocracy is rich and fleshy. And the dog must come to the hand which feeds it, and which finally will strangle it.

Flesh.

I spoke of a national campaign against flesh. But it will not come. It never comes. For Fat is Unconsciousness.

VII

WHEN DENMARK DANCES

As may be imagined in a country of the festive flesh, the Dane is a passionate pleasure-lover. He is Europe's Lover of Life.

The French have the reputation of being a pleasure-loving race—at least, when they live in Paris—but they do not pursue the airy goddess with that steady pertinacity which is the Dane's. Paris is a city of feverish pleasure—the pleasures of a night; Denmark the country of the cult of the Pleasant God—not goddess—the god substantial and constant.

The amount of national effort put into the pleasure cult is extraordinary, and if turned into other channels —say of business or intellect—would place little Denmark high upon the ladder of the nations. It is a cult which follows its course the clock round. It does not hold itself to the florid hours of midnight or to those tiny, strength-sapping hours of the morning. It spreads itself through the twenty-four.

Whilst the world outside was murdering itself, the talent of Europe has gathered itself together under the tocsin of war from the four quarters of the Continent into Denmark. The world's greatest artists, from its fiddlers to its break-downers, have poured into

the capital. The newspapers have had whole pages filled with close-set, heavily-leaded advertisements day after day, of world-renowned names, of Russian and Hungarian violinists, German pianists, Italian singers. But, despite the competition, the half-million of the capital have packed the concert-halls, like the music-halls and the theatres, to the doors, have overflowed into repeat performances, have paid big prices. And all over, in every seaside resort throughout the land, as in the capital, Denmark was dancing.

One of Denmark's greatest men, known to the world as the Prophet of the North, the educationalist and social reformer Grundtvig, writing in the year 1807, just after the bombardment of Copenhagen in the Great Little War of that time, said that " Denmark danced on the edge of Denmark's grave." In that far-distant time the Dane was not deterred by red war from merry-making, and he has not changed. The Dane at least has no intention of " making the best possible of both worlds "—only of *this*, with which he is perfectly satisfied. But someone older than Grundtvig wrote: " Let us eat, drink, and be merry . . . for to-morrow we die." Denmark, perhaps, is not going to die to-morrow, but at least she means to " eat, drink, and be merry " to-day, for " to-morrow never comes."

In those little cabarets scattered near the Frederiksberghave, as they are dotted through the length and breadth of Denmark; in the hot summer nights, when the liqueurs sheen under the lights in their greens and purples and violets; in that unique eating-house

that lies in the heart of the capital, with its lines of blues and mauves and yellow against its sheets of whitened glass, with the smashing, braying orchestra up aloft under the ceiling, with the clash and smash of ten thousand plates and cups, and the pinkle of the glasses running through the riot; that Palace of Food with the family parties snuggling themselves into the rich meats and flesh-pots of Egypt; that palace where the Seven Deadly Sins, not flaunt themselves, but preen themselves quietly, heavily, under the high lights . . . one senses the Denmark of Pleasure.

For in these halls of food and strong drinks is manufactured the laughter that, as I have said, one day may write itself across the coffin of little Denmark —the laughter of death. In these halls of ease, of pleasure, of pleasant delights, of "a folding of the hands," Denmark is working out her destiny.

And yet there is something very pleasant and sweet in the *stemning* of these great halls. To sit amongst the friendly, good-natured faces, to see their homely, uncritical enjoyment, to sense their courteous consideration for the stranger amongst them, to hear their whole-hearted appreciation of the orchestra of this most musical of peoples, to be treated by the waiter as a "human being" rather than "a customer"— all this is to come close to the humanity that underlies all things Danish, to make one under its influence think only of that beautiful, simple Denmark which perhaps is passing, to feel grateful, to get down to the heart of things, and to forget the dangers of the pleasant paths—the pleasure of living.

In Denmark, All-the-World and his Wife seek this

pleasure, the pleasure of life, inside the restaurant. It is not the pleasure of the few, but of the many. Denmark is a restaurant country. Eating and drinking is the national pleasure. It is the medium which forms the *stemning* for all the other pleasures of life, in which they are developed. It fumes the man or woman to receptiveness. It smothers and it anæsthetises.

Where the people of the Anglo-Saxon countries find their pleasure in their homes or at an occasional music-hall or theatre, the Dane has a good dinner, which to him is a pleasure only just ahead of hearing a good lecture; for the Dane has a curious capacity for combining the gastronomic with the intellectual—perhaps the excess of the one always leads to the excess of the other, if we are to believe the theorists who tell us that the hypertrophy of intellect leads to the hypertrophy of the material.

This passion for a good dinner is Denmark's own, and illustrated itself once in rather pointed fashion. I had been asked to speak at a certain English club in the provinces, the secretary of which, so that my travelling expenses might be halved, wrote to the committee of a neighbouring English club asking them whether they would like me to speak there the following evening. The reply ran: " We have the necessary funds for the lecture, but the committee has decided to apply the money to a better purpose. We are going to have a good dinner with it."

But it is not for the mere pleasure of tasting and satiety that the Dane finds his pleasure in eating. The Danish psychology lives upon sensation, for his

gastronomic pleasures are as much psychological as physical. He has "*til at more sig*" ("to be amused"), as you will constantly hear the expression as you walk along, just as you so often hear the question put quite innocently to someone who has been out to a party: "What did you get to eat?" "*Morsomt*" and "*at more sig*"—"amusing" and "to be amused." For amusement is the fitful flame from which he draws the very inspiration of his being. It is not a hectic inspiration—it is as constant and necessary as food. Take away from Copenhagen its restaurants, its theatres, and its dancing-halls, and I am persuaded Danish nature could not support it. The Dane would perish from the planet, not of ennui, but of the effects of being cut off from the means of life, as a child from its mother's breast. It is a steady streaming flow upon his mentality; a certain spraying of oil upon the fires of life. Denmark is the only country in which amusement is not an accessory to life, but life.

Copenhagen has developed the queen of pleasure resorts. She has there developed a *stemning* which many other cities of Europe have tried to imitate—without result. For to develop this *stemning* one must be in Denmark and Danish. *Stemnings* cannot be transplanted, and the Dane lives on *stemning*.

The Tivoli is the very centre of that steady even whirlpool with the smooth ebony sides which is Denmark's merriment—the very haunt of the Pleasure God. It is the Palace of the Thousand Delights; it is the Arabian Nights Entertainments, H. C. Andersen's fairy-tales, the Earl's Court of London, and a Paris

Exhibition, rolled into one—with that something else which is Denmark's, the thing incommunicable.

When I pass with the other devotees through the golden gates of Tivoli, I always feel as though the genius, the power of Denmark, its virility, are pouring through there with me, as they have poured in the past, to worship at the feet of the Pleasant God which is Denmark's, sweeping aside and over and through that tiny minority, that serious, hopeless minority, that seeks to bar our path, to turn us into channels long disused. In the Arcadian trellises through which pours the laughing, "snakking" throng; in the golden-blue peacock which spreads its wings before the throne of Pierrot; in the glittering façade of the Temple of Food on the right; in the kaleidoscopic interior of the great Concert Hall with its eating listeners who sandwich their Tschaikowsky and Wagner between *smørrebrød* and beer, whilst the great restaurants that flank the sides of the hall show the eaters behind the walls of glasses which merge them with the concert-room itself—in all this one senses the vitality of Denmark. In the "purgatories" and "hells," in the merry-go-rounds, with their solemn carmagnole of cavaliers and dames; in the Old Village, with its silk-hatted musicians and excellent, untemperamental dancing—in all this one finds the spirit which is the Dane's. Through all the laughing throng, through the great open-air orchestras, through the lotteries, with the fireworks that break themselves out on the night skies and fall down into irretrievable ruin, one senses the Denmark of pleasure, of pleasantness—Denmark the Lover of Life.

To watch the Dane at the gambling-table is alone an interesting sidelight upon his psychology. There is a little circular room in the centre of the Tivoli where a game is played with handles and levers and white balls which run up a groove and fall upon certain numbers, the highest one of which gives the lucky player the pool. Here you will see the only untemperamental players in Europe, with nothing of the icy fever of Monte Carlo or the temperamental pitch and toss of the London *gamin*. Here is a squat colossus of a woman whose podgy bejewelled arms tug at the lever as mechanically as though they were piston-rods. She will stand there for hours, her heavy fleshy eyes apparently as uninterested in her game as the two croupiers. She comes, one supposes, to make money, but is obviously unmoved whether she wins or loses. You search the half-circle of her competitors and find there only the same lust, indifferent to the passing hour and the passing amusement—the lust for sensation—a dull, even sensation.

You pass out and watch the Karousals, as they call the merry-go-rounds, though there never was anything which circles with less of a carousal about them. Here the men and women sit stolid faced, taking in sensation with each circling, with none of the cries and shrieks and laughs of other countries. In "The Kitchen," where for threepence you can smash as many plates and pots and pitchers as you like, there are two heavy men smashing the plates one by one with monotonous regularity, watched stolidly by the spectators, without anything of the sporting shot or the lucky stroke—just the craving, deadly, insistent, heavy,

for sensation—the sensation of seeing a plate fly in pieces.

A few yards away and the strident calls of the trombone tells you that Denmark is dancing. And as you watch it, it is turning evenly, heavily, where it is not walking nonchalantly, through its waltzes and Fox-trots and Bunny-hugs. It marches through them without animation or enthusiasm. Excitement and fever is as removed from the dancing-hall as though it were a Methodist meeting. Though one can glimpse the aping of Montmartre and the crouch and throw of the *can-can*, which are drifting their way into the modern dance, there is nothing of the demoniacal, nothing abandoned, certainly nothing indecent about it. The dancing is as regular and as even as the turning of the Karousal outside which is braying itself to high heaven. Sensation, heavy, even, is the thing on which the dancers turn. With turning comes sensation, and with sensation life.

In the little music-hall near by they are putting a man in a tank to see how long he can live under water. The audience watch him going in, and watch him coming out, without excitement, only the craving for stolid sensation. Act after act goes, and there is the same heavy, stolid imbibing of sensation—not as a titillation, nothing wild or whirling about it, but just as sensation, as a necessity to existence.

At the biograph the pictures from the front of men engaged in murderous struggle leave the audience indifferent, chocolate-eating, taking it all in as a part of their daily sensation course, or, as one woman said at the conclusion of the terrific Somme film, "*Det er*

udmærket" (" It is splendid ! "), and chewed steadily on. The bursting of shells and rockets against the night skies, all the glaucous paraphernalia of death, which would leave the English or American audience strained, spellbound, even shrieking, leaves the Dane aloof—it is just *sensation,* something on which he exists. And yet the Dane is tender and hates suffering.

The only time he is touched to expression is when his curiosity is momentarily held in abeyance by something deeper. And he has a great gift for curiosity. For it comes to you that the secret of all his stolidity is curiosity. He is too *curious* to be moved. The ball on the grooves; the man in the tank; the burst of shell; the Great War itself . . . it is all curiosity. Life is something *to be curious over.* Life is something with which to be amused. Curiosity is the pleasure of life.

One must always be merry, cheerful. A false *stemning* must be created in the tragi-comedy that men call life. Life is a merry-go-round—not a hectic carousal, but a merry-go-round. You must amuse and be amused. You must laugh, laugh, and go on laughing. For if you cease to laugh, life becomes intolerable—and you die.

VIII

THE DANE AS A SPORTSMAN

If the psychology of a people is shown minutely in its pleasures, it is in that department of pleasure which we call " sport " where one can, in a sense, as closely anatomise the soul of a people. The sports of the English are a looking-glass for England. In Denmark, where sport has only just begun to touch the fringe of the national fantasy, one can see the evolution and devolution of the Danish people.

Sport has come to Denmark because Nature in the course of the years always creates her antitoxins to her poisons. For sport is the natural antitoxin to the poisons of flesh and " pleasure." And it is in sport and on the playing-field only that one senses a sort of " throw-back to type," as Darwin has it—the trace of the old Viking in his descendant, for the Viking spirit was the " sporting " spirit.

The vital difference between sport in Denmark and England is that for the Dane it is still for the minority, and for the Englishman, as for the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic world generally, a pleasure of the people. But this minority is rapidly increasing, and it may yet prove the leaven that will leaven the whole lump that is Denmark. Sport, though the Dane still persists in

regarding it as " relaxation " instead of what it really is, a bracing up of the nation, a serious business with profound effects upon the physique and, through it, upon the psychology of a people, may yet prove the salvation of Denmark from the deadly pleasant sins of the Pleasant God. To say which is but to point out one more of those differences of concept as to what constitutes " pleasure " and " amusement " between Dane and Briton; for the latter is just as assured as the former that both " pleasure " and " amusement " are necessary corollaries of existence.

Perhaps it is that the Englishman takes his pleasures " sadly," and the Dane not sadly enough !

One of the first things that strikes any Anglo-Saxon in Denmark is the non-existence of the Saturday afternoon. When the hour of one comes, there is no pouring out under the hot summer sun of the little clerk with his green cricket-bag in hand, or in the winter of the man with the studded brown boots tied on the outside of the cowskin bag which holds his football paraphernalia. The world wags the same on Saturday afternoon as on a Friday, which is blasphemy.

Go through the parks, and there is no checkering of the green communal grass with the riot of youth in white flannels or ragged netheralls. No smack of ball on bat. No enthusiastic cry of delight when the ball goes out. None of the clash and smash of football, played with anything from a paper-bag or a rolled-up cap to a football flamboyant in its new brown skin. And, incidentally, there is none of the psychological elasticity of the Monday morning which one sees in

England after the Saturday in the playing-field and the Sunday on the river. Monday is "black" Monday in Denmark. For there has not been that blessed interlude of fresh air, reddened blood, and the glory and freshening up of the duel—only a heavy Sunday of eating and strolling through the woods or streets. For the Danish employer has yet to learn that with a half-holiday once a week he gets paid back treble-fold in fresher work, more concentration, new ideas. One of the reforms England will have to give to Denmark is the Saturday half-holiday.

But in this, as in all other things, there is "the other man's point of view." There is something healthy, sane, and suggestive in that Danish expression for the English sportsman of the one-idead type, or even for the home-grown article, *Sports Idiot*, which any Anglo-Saxon can read. For the Dane, with that intellectual, cynical penetration of his, has seen the weak point in the Englishman's sport armour. He recognises, and especially since the war, from the standpoint of organisation that too high a price can be paid for sport; that this, like all other things, can be exaggerated; and that hypertrophy of physical development is apt to lead to atrophy of development in other directions.

To the average Dane the English sportsman is a problem—where he is not something at which to be tolerantly amused. In the mass, the Danish mind finds like a nightmare the passion of the Anglo-Saxon to shoot his head fleeting a foot before that of another man, or to lift his body an inch higher than another over a bar. The golf maniac is to him just . . . a maniac, and the tiny fashionable minority of golfers

in Denmark who have taken up the game, together with its English expressions and sports outlook, to him are as interesting as the dodo . . . and as negligible.

For it is this last sportsman who has most nearly approached the Englishman in looks and toothbrush moustache and soft collar. His accent is often almost indistinguishable from the native product. His clubhouse is a place where you can have a whisky-and-soda or a gin-and-bitters if you are so disposed. He rides like an Englishman. He goes to the races attired in English fashion. He uses English horses . . . or Irish. He copies the Englishman in his yacht—and, in a word, he is the perfectly finished imitation.

But this man is the exception, not the rule. To the vast mass of his countrymen he is an enigma, and is regarded more or less as a parrot. For even in Denmark the imitator is not always admired.

Yet there is one point where the Dane, and a not altogether insignificant minority of Denmark, scores heavily over the Englishman in matters of sport. For the Dane, next to the Swede, has the best gymnastic system in the world, and the type which attends the Danish gymnasium in those early hours when all the world is abed in England is, taken as a whole, one of the cleanest and best types in Denmark. The Dane recognises something the Englishman has yet to learn —that something to which the success of the Swedes in the Olympic Games and the decline of English sports laurels has pointed the way—that for all sport gymnastics are the only possible preparation. The hypertrophy of certain muscles through sport can be

corrected in the gymnasium, which, indeed, is a correction for that modern hypertrophy which is life on the planet to-day.

But it was in the gymnasium that I first stumbled on the secret behind the Danish sportsman, the thing which in the writer's opinion is going to keep him back in the playing-field and the athletic arena indefinitely, the thing without which—as the old Greeks themselves recognised in their realisation of the indivisibility of the mind and body—sport becomes a thing of deadness . . . temperament. For the Dane is the untemperamental sportsman.

You sense it first in the gymnasium drill, where the Dane takes up his place when it suits him and not a moment before. He is not " keen "—that word which means so much. When he has body-bending exercises to do, he uses half his superfluous energy in sundry grunts and howls expressive of strain physical and mental . . . and he talks, talks, talks.

In the horse and plinth exercises there is none of that dare-all, do-all spirit of the Anglo-Saxon. He does what he has to do, unenthusiastic for the most part, between his conversations and asides with Jensen and Petersen, just as he sings his gymnasium songs also without enthusiasm. He has occasionally a habit of leaving before the exercises are completed, and it is doubtful whether he goes through his exercises at home. For the gymnasium is not a place to brace the mind and body, but, as in those many other things, a place to be amused, a place to talk in and exchange the time of day and the latest Goulash news.

I may be wrong, but I believe the Dane, like the

Roman in the days of *panem et circenses*, on the whole, prefers his sports vicarious. He would rather look on, be amused.

I have seen men, overweighted men, coming season after season to the gymnasium, displaying their vast paunches and rubber necks without shame, going through their exercises as mediums to increased appetite—not knocking off their beer and spirits, and certainly not decreasing their good dinners. The fact that they themselves were excellent comrades and good fellows, as W. E. Gilbert has it, " has nothing to do with the case." The gymnasium is a place in which to be amused, a medium for the further enjoyment of life.

This is the spirit, or the lack of it, you sense in watching the boys of the middle-class schools at play, just as you sense it when you watch their fencing with the broad sword in the Danish *Fægtning*, in the *Kommuneskole* playgrounds, or in the street games, those indexes of national psychology.

But it was when I went to see my first football match in Denmark, that between Denmark and Sweden, that I really began to discover the curious difference in the sports outlook of the Danish sportsman as opposed to that of his brother across the North Sea. I was thinking, as I went to the magnificent Stadium which has been erected inside Copenhagen itself, of the Cup Ties I had seen at the Crystal Palace, of the Rugby football matches I had seen between England and Ireland. Of the fierce, keen play; the high rising of national enthusiasms; the crash of cheer on cheer, like the breaking of the ocean upon

the iron beach; the dead silences in between; and all the fever and ice of national football. I thought of that day when the New Zealand team, unbeaten, their record scathless, came on to the field to play little Wales; of the crash of thirty thousand throats as they sung upwards to the God of Battles their chaunt of defiance and prayer; the dead, dismayed faces of the New Zealanders as they met that wall of psychological opposition, which, as one of them said, "sapped our strength before we touched the ball." I thought of their answering war-song in the Maori tongue, its short, fierce intonations, listened to in the dead silence that can be Wales. And then the play, lightning-fierce, flickering over and across the ground—the pulling down of man by man, the saves marvellous, the deeds of derring-do . . . and the pæan of victory as little Wales, on the edge of circumstance, struck down the Colonials by a bare "try."

All these things surged through my brain as I went up into the grand stand.

The crowd was big enough, big enough for the greater enthusiasms and the more intensive national feelings. But when the Swedish players came on to the ground there was but a spatter of cheering. That, I thought, was because the match was in Denmark . . . and yet I wondered where were the Swedes, and thought of the tens of thousands who for the Final Cup Tie at the Crystal Palace in London spend the long night in a cheap train to see their favourites. Then came the Danes . . . there was a rise in the note, but nothing fierce, nothing temperamental, everything good and round and ordinary.

And the play. " The play's the thing, my masters." The play was good; there was some good football, lacking in combination—the same lack I had met with in the world of business—but where were the yells of the rival partisans? Where were those lightning flashes which even in a bad match in England relieve the monotony? Where was that nervous strain which holds player and spectator enthralled, each part of the other, during the hour and a half? Where were the short, fierce grunts, the sigh as of " souls confessed " when the goal was missed? Where was that sub-conscious recognition of the fact that sport is life . . . that " playing the game " is playing the game of life itself? Where was it?

And yet I must say that the game was contested with scrupulous fair play. I have never seen fairer, and, at some of our Cup Ties at least, rarely so fair, if truth must be told. There was no hacking or tripping, no arguing with the referee. There was some beautiful unselfishness—too beautiful to be effective at times! But where was the spirit of the game?

It was then I wondered how it was that these very Danes, drawn from a little country of three millions, once managed to defeat the Newcastle United Cup Team some years ago. How was it done?

But I knew the Danes had produced some good boxers. And boxing, as I knew, could not be carried on without temperament, both on the part of fighter and spectator. So I went to see my first boxing match in Denmark.

The first thing I saw were some tables laid with white cloths for some cryptic purpose. And then I

saw the fighters. The atmosphere psychological—the physical was hot enough—was cold and dead. Although the match was a big one, there was none of that feverish tension of a " great night " at Olympia or the National Sporting Club. There were none of those bursts of uncontrollable emotion which go up from the London boxing crowd. There was none of the fierceness of the " man against man " which is the soul of the gloved art.

The great crowd sat and looked and . . . *ate*—though no Englishman will believe this last—what time the boxers were destroying in each other the image of God. The boxing, like the football, was fair, scrupulously fair, and the crowd were also scrupulously fair and unbloodthirsty. And then it came to me . . . perhaps it is the man with the temperament who does not always " play the game." Perhaps it is the real sportsman who is unsportsmanlike. Perhaps it takes the excitement of temperament to make a man unfair. I don't know.

I only know that a more decorous crowd I have never seen, or a more unimpassioned. The boxers were skilful enough, but I had often wondered at the lack of success of Danish boxers, who, as I knew, were skilful and strong and brave—for the Dane is full of a stubborn, unimaginative courage of his own. Then I found the secret. It is that the boxer, like the football-player, and the crowd which makes the player what he is, is untemperamental.

In a word, " the lust of the duel " is not for the Dane. That pitting of man against man which is the soul of cricket and football and boxing does not exist for him as in the more temperamental Anglo-Saxon.

It may show an advance in his culture or his development—I do not know. But this is the fact.

In my three years in Denmark I have never seen two boys, or, for the matter of that, two men, fight in the street. It may be a sign of a high civilisation. Perhaps civilisation means lack of temperament. Again, I don't know. Only, as one Dane explained it to me, "The Dane doesn't know how to fight. He doesn't feel strongly enough."

Not that the writer regards fighting as other than detestable . . . only it happens to be a sign of temperament, of feeling—the crudest and the most ordinary, if one will. Put in another way, it is as though the Dane had passed the Viking stage, and in the passing had lost temperament and the possibilities of temperament, whilst the Anglo-Saxon is still partially in it, but, keeping temperament, to him all things are possible.

Its final expression came to me after a lecture I had given upon "English Sport and Sportsmen." I had tried to show something of the profound effects, physical and psychological, of sport upon the English people, and through them upon the British Empire and the world. Amongst my illustrations I had taken some of those blood-stirring and blood-spilling passages from Kipling's sport of Empire—the sport of all sports. I had done my best.

But when I had finished I saw that my audience was interested, not stirred, in the thing as a scientist might be stirred by the vivisection of a rabbit. It was a survival from the Stone Age, a relic of barbarism. It was all very interesting and amusing, and . . . inexplicable.

IX

THE HEART AND BRAIN OF DENMARK

LIKE Cæsar's Gaul, Denmark is divided into three parts geographically, and two psychologically. Denmark, in the philosophic-anarchist senses at least, is intensely individual—as individual as those Jutlanders from whom England, rightly or wrongly, is supposed to have inherited her own individualism and independence.

For between the Island of Zealand and the Peninsula of Jutland, with little Fyn sandwiched between, not joining, the two, there is a gulf psychological as well as physical. In no European country with which I am acquainted, with the exception of the Celtic fringe of Great Britain, and in spite of the national characteristics which make them one people, does there exist such curious difference of outlook and temperament as between the Jutlander and the Zealander, and to a still greater degree between the Jutlander and the Fynlander. Even their very language, despite the handful of miles between them, is strongly marked. The very geography of the three countries—and they *are* three countries—like the people they breed, varies, that of Jutland being characteristically distinct from the islands. These three countries have, of course, not

only a common mother-tongue, but also many of the traits of which I have already spoken. A Dane is always a *Dane*, just as you cannot mistake the Englishman, whether he comes from London or the Bombay Presidency, or the Irishman, whether he greets you from a Dublin lane or a New York back-block.

Zealand is not Zealand, but Copenhagen. It is "the Island of the Capital." The people in it, in one way or another, are hopelessly Copenhagenised. It is the island of the city I have described and of well-cultivated pasture-land, of fat kine, comfortable peasants, green fields, *snaksomhed*, and trips to and from the capital.

When I fell into the lap of Fyn, it was as though I had fallen into Denmark's pantry and the marrow-land of Europe—for Fyn is Zealand . . . but more so. So much fat, human, animal, and vegetable, to the square inch I had never met before. The land was literally, like the land over Jordan, a land "flowing with milk and honey," and, it might be added, *schnapps*, *smørrebrød*, and everything pleasing to the sense of gastronomics. For Fyn is the island of creameries and cream, bacon and butter. It is the Island of Lethe where one forgets the busy world outside under the anæsthesia of friendliness and food. It is the island where the science of human comfort has reached, not its most extreme—there is nothing "extreme" in Fyn—but its ultimate well-being; where everything and everybody, geography and gastronomics, combine to make you useless for this world of reality and struggle.

About Zealand and the Zealander, especially as you

draw near to the capital, there is at times a certain feverishness in a *snaksom* kind of way. There is a tense curiosity about people and things. There is a sort of high strain upon the pleasure note. Even when you see the Zealand peasant going out in the morning kissing good-bye to his wife and children the day of the periodical "co-operative" dinner, dressed out and decked out in his finest broadcloth, hard bowler, and cleaned boiled shirt, there is something eager, anticipatory, in his farewell—an anxiety to be at his business, whether it be of feasting, or matters "co-operative," or both, an anxiety which, it is true, as the hours of the evening begin to draw down, has been tempered sometimes into a general feeling of well-being and Universal Friendliness, but still . . . anxiety.

Not so in Fyn, which, though only a little over an hour away across the Great Belt, takes its pleasures unanxiously. There is no anxiety in Fyn. There never has been and there never will be. It is the Isle of Forgetfulness and the pleasant life. It is the isle of creameries and co-operation, but pleasant, easy co-operation, with plenty of cream to lubricate. Nothing strains itself in Fyn, not even the chickens, which, with the cows, are the backbone of its financial being. The very hens lay their eggs unstrained and unclucking; the cows browse through the days and dream their nights away in the lush-grass under the golden moons of Fyn; for if there are such outer-world realities as slaughter-houses and poulterers in the island, Fyn takes very good care to cover them up, as it covers up all unpleasantnesses.

Your very train, which has sometimes lost its head a bit on the run from Copenhagen to Korsør, resumes its way across the flat pasture-lands of Fyn at a steady jog-trot of twenty-five English miles an hour. In the carriage the *stemning* has changed. There is a tendency to sleep and cigars. The comfortable gentlemen with the greatcoats ornamented with the silver badges inside over the pocket and the "Danish pound" on the backs of their necks are too sleepy and too comfortable to ask the stranger any questions as to his destination or his origin. The newspaper boys, cherubs with round faces and sleepy eyes, do not cry their wares at the stations, but saunter up and down and look at the sun. And then you lollop into Strib.

Your train, or part of it, has walked un-regularly on to the ferry, as you would expect a Fyn train to do. But the moment the boat sets her nose across the twenty minutes of Little Belt at the browns and greens of Jutland yonder, there seems to come resolution into the pad-pad of her engines. The throttles begin to snort a trifle, with something of hardness and determination in the note. There is a freshening up of your fellow-travellers, who have something "set" in their faces as they watch out across the green strip.

It is the Jutland *stemning*.

When you set foot ashore on Fredericia, with its record of the desperate battles of '48, you have the impression that something or somebody about you is speaking English, or a dialect of English. You almost imagine you have heard a man ask another "What o'clock is it?" Later on, when somebody has used the English "horse" for the animal which they call

a *hest* in Zealand, you are almost persuaded that the Jutlanders are bilingual, if not downright English.

You miss the slur and the smother of the Zealand Danish. No longer is Danish a language produced in the stomach and spoken from the throat, but produced, perhaps, in the throat and spoken in human fashion from the mouth and lips. There is a clarity about it, easily understandable—a clarity which you quickly discover has its origin, as all such things must have their origin, in a certain clarity of the mind which lies behind.

As you wander the length of Jutland, you are looking at the faces about you. This is no Zealand face, but a harder, leaner jaw, with something of leather in it, something of the old Covenanters, Cromwell's Ironsiders, or the American New Englander. There is a glint in the eye, something almost sullen if it had not been Danish, hard, which gives you ideas and brings back to you the Scotsman whom you have left away at the back of beyond. Sometimes you almost sense a heightening of the cheekbone that might be Celtic. When you stray from the beaten track and get amongst the fisher-folk or the little farmers who cultivate those vast stretches of heathland over on the West Coast, you might be amongst the Men of the Kilt; certainly you are amongst a people other than the Zealanders—a people of imagination, perhaps, a folk of harder mould.

They are not without the traces of a folk-lore, and they are not, except so far as they have the earth-lust, earth-bound. They are the first people you have met in Denmark who have anything of what I

speak of later as "the four-dimensional idea"—not much, but something. Despite the fact that much of what has already been said about Denmark as a whole applies to them, they stand apart from the other Danes. They are another race, a harder, solider, dourer folk, with something of grit and sand in the texture of their humanity.

That they realise this quite as fully as you yourself you discover when you get into conversation with them, when you have won their confidence—not their friendliness, for, like all Danes, they have a fine good-nature of their own to the stranger. But theirs is a friendliness tempered with a shrewdness that is the Jutlander's own.

You speak to a Jysk child in the street to ask it the way, and there comes at once the answering flash of understanding in the grey-blue eye, the unfearfulness of a being that feels it is a citizen of no mean city, the all-seriousness and earnestness to understand and to be understood. There is something lightsome, an intelligence-transparency, about the wee Jysk maiden of three or four or fourteen, with her corn-colour plaits and luminous eye, that brings back to you, despite the racial gulfs separating them, the child of the Southern Irish or Highland Celt. Unlike some of their countrymen and women, the Jutlanders do not lose their characteristics with the years. There comes to me the brisk, clean understanding; square, serene brows, and hair coiled smoothly back of the firm head set upon the shoulders in graceful strength, of all sorts of Jysk women I have met, from chamber-maids to school-teachers. There comes back to me

in a succession of shadow-pictures the clean-cut-featured labourers who have shown me over the farms of Jutland, or of the co-operative managers who have taken me over its slaughter-houses and creameries; the men who have the power of delocalisation, who can grasp something of the ways and means of peoples unfamiliar to them, whose minds can set their courses outside the peninsula of Sand and Heather.

Not that Jutland is all sand and heather. There is nothing on earth quite the same as a Jutland wood on a snowy day of winter, with the carpet of white velvet running smoothly over the dome of the hill under the high sunlight, up through the tall, dark tree-stems, white-flecked the blackness of their length. The eye sweeps the great white curves of snow-plains nestling amongst the hills, runs to the glint of ice on the grey-blue fjord at one's feet . . . and one is in a land of adventure, of icy fairy-tale—a land as different from the tame, cultivated areas of pastoral Zealand and succulent Fyn as a Norwegian landscape differs from an English. There is a silent beauty about a Jysk wood upon a day of winter—a purity, an exaltation, a longing, an eternal aspiring upwards and outwards, which is as purifying and cleansing as a bath in the blue ether.

The only thing which deeply holds the Jutlanders to the rest of Denmark is their curiosity, which, in a quiet way, is insatiable and omnipresent. They are more anxious to know the wherewithal, the whereabouts, and the whys and wherefores of the stranger than they are anxious about their immortal souls. Of course, they are held to their brother-Danes by

a dozen other links, but the main link is that of curiosity.

I remember on my first trip, one of the ten or twelve trips I have made to Jutland, meeting a little wiry, rather subdued man in my carriage. He had a wandering grey eye with queer little lights in it, that seemed to flicker at you out of the corner of the carriage where he sat. He apparently was thinking of nothing at all, but the aforesaid eye had the habit of lifting, first to my bag, where it hovered a moment at my initials, then to my stick, and, after absorbing quietly my features and tie-pin, seemed to ruminate in a digestive sort of way. Then the man with the eye began to eat—the Jutlander, I am sorry to say, is a ferocious feeder—unpacking an extraordinary collection of *smørrebrød*, with pinks and spotted tones the prevailing hues. The man with the eye sniffed a good deal at his food, as though he didn't think very much about it and rather suspected it might be poisoned. Then he produced from some Holy of Holies under his coat-tails a black bottle, followed by a collapsible glass, which he filled with care, and then, to my astonishment, without a word, and evidently having made up his mind as to my reliability and general standing, offered it to me with a sort of side-ways, engaging gesture with one hand and the Eye mentioned.

This was our introduction. He sidled along the seat until he brought up opposite me, and began with a healthy anatomical criticism of the *smørrebrød*, which he informed me, quite needlessly, came from Copenhagen. He said "Copenhagen" with a quiet

twist of the eye and what might have been a curl of the tight, thin lips expressive of contempt and disgust for all things Copenhagenish, something which, after a little conversation, I found extended to all things Danish outside of Jutland.

Having got so far, he made the following inquiries in the order named: (1) Where did I come from? (2) Was I married? (3) How many children had I? (4) Were they boys or girls or mixed? (5) Were my father and mother alive? and—by this time resigned to my fate, though breathless—(5) How much money I earned, and what I did for a living? I replied to all these questions most truthfully, as though I were under cross-examination by a lawyer, for I was afraid of the Eye, which by now conveyed something of shrewdness and gimlet-boring indescribable, and I can only say that they no more offended me than if they had been asked by, shall we say? the Public Prosecutor. But there was something so unofficial, so human, so altogether friendly and, in a way, child-like about the man with the grey eye, that if he had asked I am sure I would have told him all my sins past, present, and to come, as I would have told a father-confessor. It was that human note which the Dane always strikes, the note that disarms criticism and makes you forget things.

The Man with the Grey Eye was Jutland. I am not sure that he was not Denmark . . . the Original Dane.

The quiet, tacit contempt of the little man—who, by the way, was a gravestone-cutter by profession—for all things Danish outside Jutland, I found scattered

thickly or thinly over the Jutland Peninsula. It was not a pugnacious, prominent contempt, but deep-seated, deep-rooted in the oak of the Jutland heart, as is the contempt of the Plymouth Brother for all other sects outside the one true fold. It was not the kind of contempt you could argue about—it was no more arguable than breathing—it was something that had been sucked from the sandy wastes and heather acres of Jutland—sucked in with the mother-milk. I noticed whenever I ventured upon any criticism of Denmark and the Danes to my Jutland audiences, than whom there are no better in the world, that there was a tendency to guttural " Hear, hears !" for it was quite unnecessary to specify that I referred to Zealand and Fyn. No Jutlander could imagine my criticising Jutland.

I have spoken elsewhere about hospitality in general and that of the capital in particular, its delights and drawbacks, but no other Danish hospitality is to be compared with that of Jutland, which is the superlative of the art. It is true, as I have said, that everywhere the Dane wins you over with his or her good-nature and desire to please the stranger, however unworthy the stranger may be, but the Jutlander hospitality I can only say left me ashamed and afraid—ashamed of my unworthiness, and afraid, or rather sure, that neither in this world or the next could I ever repay its bounteous unconsciousness. It is good in a world of suspicion, and despite its effects on the nation, once to have known the hospitality that is Jutland's.

For it is a hospitality that is tempered, as is always the best hospitality. There is not so much talkative-

ness around the Jutland dinner-table; there is something less of the disposition to laugh at all the world and one another; there is a more serious atmosphere. The problems of the great world, and especially, if one comes into the Jutland High-School home, its political problems, have the habit of being discussed in hard, solid fashion. It is unnecessary to add that the fashion is intelligent, for I was going to say that nobody had ever met an unintelligent Dane—certainly, no one has ever met an unintelligent Jutlander.

The high average intelligence of these " Highlanders of Denmark " is surprising. The Jutland peasant, who, by the way, is no more a " peasant," in the ordinary sense of the word, than is the Londoner, will sometimes have on his table all kinds of scientific books, from agricultural handbooks to linguistic books, and possibly the English Shakespeare. His criticism of England and the English, as of other countries upon which he has never set eyes, are astonishing in their shrewdness, though given with a reserve that is half shrewdness and half good-nature. And all the time the Jutlander, whether he be peasant or townsman, is loading the stranger's plate and making him as happy and comfortable as possible in the inconspicuous way of his own, you are conscious of the fact that nothing escapes him—not the flicker of an eyelash or the set of a coat-button. If there are any bare spots in your mental anatomy, the Man with the Grey Eye will discover them, though he will not tell you of his discovery. If there are any bare spots on your character, he will find them out, though he will not tell you of the finding.

And you are always finding something to stagger

you in the Jutland intelligence, always discovering some new, unsuspected intellectual stratum lying beneath the surface. I can recall my flabbergastation when in the house of a Jutlander of the middle class I heard him holding fluent converse with his children in some heathen dialect, which I concluded must be some new and hitherto unheard variation of Danish. It turned out that it was Chinese, which was with them an ordinary vehicle of communication (my host had been a teacher in China); but I found before I left the house that the children were equally at home in French and German and an English which they spoke with the purest accent. Of course, it was an exceptional case, but Jutland is the land of exceptional cases.

Those vast stretches of sand and heather that lie along the West Coast and through up the centre to Skagen have, as geography always does, left their impress upon the Jutlander—made him, if not dreamier, at least more susceptible to impressions, more of the poet in this land of the poet, than his brothers on luscious Fyn and pastoral Zealand. The sand has given him something of its grit, the heather the poesy that always come to the Heather Folk. They, or those thousand and one intangible realities which go to the moulding of a people, have gone to give him that feeling of superiority, in his case conscious, which has brought about that other Danish paradox, the paradox of a country where the capital looks up to a part of the land lying outside it—for all Denmark tacitly pays its tribute to the qualities and fibre of the Jutland people.

For Jutland *is* Denmark.

X

THE DANISH HIGH-SCHOOL

IF I were asked by a foreigner to point to the thing in Denmark which is most distinctly Danish and which should have the most significance for the other countries of Europe, I should instinctively point to the Danish High-School. As an "idea" it comes before the Danish Co-operative Movement; as a "quality" —and the Danish High-School *is* a quality—it stands level with the Danish "humanness," from which, indeed, it springs.

Whilst not pretending to any exhaustive knowledge of the High-School, the writer has had the opportunity both of seeing the daily life of the School and lecturing in it, and, further, has had the advantage of learning in concrete form the views of about a score of representative High-School heads and teachers, each man dealing with his special side of the School, in the contributions to a book upon the High-School which he translated at the request of the Danish Red Cross Society for distribution amongst the English prisoners of war in Germany.

One can, however, most clearly sense the High-School, not so much in the School itself, where one cannot always "see the wood for the trees," as in the

men and women of the countryside—for the School is almost non-existent in the towns—who have been High-School pupils. The writer has been fortunate enough during the three and a half years of his stay in Denmark to live amongst the peasants in several visits of from three weeks to two months' duration, where he has had the chance of seeing something of the influence of the School in the daily life of Denmark.

Denmark in its attitude to the High-School may be divided into three. There is the High-School thick and thin adherent who cannot find spots on his sun; there is the average man who is indifferent; and there is the "superior" person who at times is the inferior.

The last named delivers himself or herself thusly: "Oh, the High-School is all right, you know . . . but" . . . after a pause . . . "the young peasant, after his or her three to five months' course at the School, thinks he or she knows everything. Intellectual pride. . . ." Or: "There is a High-School way of thinking and of speaking that is irritating"—what the English would call "goody-goody" or "high-falutin'," only that the Dane is never "goody-goody;" he is too finely democratic for that. "Goody-goodyness" is the virtue of prigs—and no Dane is a prig. The "intellectual pride" critique, incidentally, like many other critiques, is apt to have an economic basis; for the High-School is not likely to cheapen labour or make the peasant "contented with the lot to which it has pleased God to call him."

The High-School man at least has no doubts. In

his view, the High-School stands for all that is best in Denmark. Its object, he will tell you, is to make the Dane "national:" to give him pride of birthright; to make him "think," which, when you come to look at it, is the most peculiar of all qualities. In a word, to make him "a human being," and neither a blank page nor a dictionary of dead words. In a sense, the High-School is a sort of "extension" school; in a truer sense, is the only school, for the High-School, unlike some other schools, concerns itself with life, and only with life.

As I have said elsewhere, Nature always breeds her own reactions. Grundtvig, the Father of the High-School, came as the needful reaction at a time when Denmark was in a low condition, moral and economic. The High-School itself was the natural, inevitable antitoxin to the poisons of the Denmark of that day—materialism; lack of national feeling; and a dead "rationalism" which still persists. For Denmark still needs the High-School as, perhaps, she needs another Grundtvig. She has so far missed the drastic reaction of war. Other reactions must come—will come.

Look at him how you will, Grundtvig was a tremendous man—a way-breaker for his people into the Promised Land. There is a sort of powerful sweetness about the great, heavy, thinking head and mouth, the curve of the big arms, the "set" assuredness of the face—not obstinate, but "sure:" sure of itself, sure of its mission, sure of the future. It is the face of the warrior-priest—the face of all those leaders of humanity from Moses to Brigham Young. It is the face of the

man who makes history, to whom not even the man of the world can hold himself indifferent.

Here is the son of a South Zealand priest who finds his life-work after an age when most modern pigmies are exhausted; who sets out, literally single-handed and in face of the scornful laughter of his country, to awaken a people from sloth; to battle against the spirit of his time; to infuse new energy, new self-realisation, into his people, beaten down into the slough of materialism and self-distrust by the unsuccessful war against England in 1807 and their separation from Norway after the war of 1814. And all this because he loves them. Grundtvig was a great lover.

The rock upon which Grundtvig built his temple was "nationality." He at least recognised "the vice of going outside." He believed, believed it almost painfully, narrowly, that a man must realise himself as "a national human being" before he can borrow internationally. He had the *idea*. He had to find the *method*.

His method, arrived at after years of laborious analysis, both of himself and of his countrymen, was that this should be accomplished by the breeding of nationalism through the teaching of history—that "historical method" which the High-School applies even to mathematics themselves. When the young Dane had reached what are perhaps the determinative years of life, between eighteen and twenty-five—for the High-School prefers, as far as possible, to have its pupils over twenty than under eighteen—he should have the chance of going to an adult school, to be called a

" High-School," where, first and foremost, he should learn what it was to be " Danish," and, through that, what it was to be " human." He should be helped to that " consciousness " which is the great lack in the transition stage from the fixity of the Middle Ages to this age of democratic flux, when men have broken out the old anchor-holds to sail the free ocean, but have not yet found a compass. The young Dane, man or girl, should learn why they were Danes, the things for which their country stood, and the path of least resistance towards self-realisation. For this attainment they needed the means of self-expression. The means they would find in " nationality," through which they would reach down to the spiritual foundations of existence. The method was to be both embryological and empirical.

Grundtvig saw about him the ordinary stereotyped educational methods, and found them dead teaching—the teaching of words rather than ideas; or, as he might have put it, of " death " rather than " life." He discovered the formalism which is bred of books exclusive, with the resultant lack of all those things which he believed his countrymen needed. But he had to find a method to replace the purely bookish.

He found it in what I believe is yet destined to be one of the root reforms in modern education—in what he called " the living word," at which the superior people, both professional and lay, have jeered, inefficiently.

The idea of " the living word " is really the recognition of " life " in education; it is the recognition that knowledge does not consist in that piling up of

facts upon which modern education is largely based, in superimposition from the outside, but in the development of the individual from the inside, and with it the development of a " conscious " relation to life and its " facts," such development to find itself through the intercourse of the living spoken word. For the spoken word, in the words of the High-School, has a vitality denied to the printed; facts acquired in a " live " way are more likely to be remembered than facts acquired through the dead black and white of the printed page. It is a principle long understood in the Far East, has been adopted *in toto* by educationalists like Jan Ligthart, the Dutchman, trenches on the lines of lay-reformers like H. G. Wells, and is slowly but surely making itself felt in orthodox circles. And it is in the sweet reasonableness of things that so human a method should have germinated through so human a people as are the Danes.

This mention of the living word brings one to the fact, so little recognised, that the Danish High-School, partly unconsciously, and the principle for which it stands, is the deadly enemy of the thing that underlies Danish as other European education. It is a case of the collision of two implacable foes in the world of ideas. Grundtvig, like so many other big men, only partially recognised his life-work. He believed himself only to be concerned with Denmark in his erection of the High-School; he was really concerned with the world, being the pioneer of principles which are beginning to undermine the educational fastnesses.

The High-School was also the instinctive recognition that to-day the human being's education really begins

after he leaves school. All that the average man learns at school that is of real use to him, spiritually or economically, is to read (mechanically), to write (indifferently), and to cipher (badly). The other things he learns are fragments for examinations—pieces of this—snatches of that. His education is in "books, books, books," not in "life"—in records, not in ideas. His education not only does not help him to think, but often prevents him from thinking. In a sense, though not necessarily, life and the book are in irreconcilable antagonism.

From this it might be imagined that the High-School was essentially utilitarian. It concerns itself, however, much more with ideas than with their application, though some High-School adherents may deny this. It knows that if the right ideas are sown the application will find itself. Yet it does not ignore the specialist, whose life is concerned primarily with "application." It sees something of that classic futility which has chained educationalist Europe to two dead languages and so loosened its hold on life; but it recognises the specialist and his needs.

Thus, the young peasant who shows special aptitude for the study of the History of the North shall be given the opportunity to study Latin, so as to be able to follow the original documents necessary. There are classes in Natural Science, treated historically, for the agriculturist as for the non-specialist. At the Extended High-School of Askov there have been classes even in Old Icelandic, the Old Northern Language, to help the student to a fuller understanding of the fact that Danish Nationalism includes, or should include,

not only the Danish people, but also the sister-peoples of Norway and Sweden, with the former country Denmark having been united as one kingdom for over four hundred years, and the language of which is almost identical with Danish. The famous " Craft Schools " introduced by Bentsen, the one-time carpenter's apprentice, were also a recognition of the specialist, but a specialist developed, not by the vicious hypertrophy of to-day—a hypertrophy, however, that is already being considerably modified—but developed upon the general " national " education of the High-School. For in its recognition of the true specialism which has its roots in general knowledge, essentially life-knowledge, the Danish " Craft School," the idea behind which may be said to be " unity in diversity," is really a branch of a High-School and not a school apart, the pupils not only learning, *e.g.*, technical drawing, and so on, but also attending the ordinary High-School classes, with a resultant broadening of the concept of Danish craftsmanship and subtly vital effects upon the country.

As some indication of the scope of the High-School teaching, one may here give that in vogue at the Extended Askov High-School, the most typical and most comprehensive of the Danish High-Schools. Here, however, it must be remembered that instead of the usual course of five winter months for men and three summer months for women of the average High-School—for which the men pay on the average about £2 15s. monthly and the women £2 8s.—which is all the time the average peasant can spare out of his life in the workaday world, the teaching stretches over

three consecutive winter courses of six months each course. The place at Askov, like the other schools, is a boarding School.

Two lectures, common to the whole school, are held each day, one in the forenoon and one in the afternoon, the remainder of the teaching being broken up into smaller sections. The lectures fall under six series and the subjects under two groups: History and Natural Research. As befits a school where the historical method is everything, the first group includes part of the History of the North, the History of the World, the History of Literature, Church History, and the History of Culture. With this group is associated in the famous High-School " conversation " form a united study of the History of the North and the World's History, the pupils of the third winter being divided into smaller sections. For second and third winter's pupils there are special conversation lessons in History and Literature.

The lectures in the second group of Natural Research include Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, Geology, and Biology. With this goes a series of conversation lessons and mathematical and laboratory exercises for each year's courses, divided into smaller sections.

The Danish High-School, like the Irish Gaelic Movement, recognises that the essential to nationality is language—that of all life's syntheses language is the most pregnant as it is the most subtle. The Dane, it says, must be taught not only to use his language for mere utilitarian communication in the haphazard way that nine men out of ten use it, without thought to the significance or deeper purpose of the mother-

tongue, but to use it consciously, freely, and powerfully, until it finds its full development in that conscious-unconsciousness which shows the master. In the Danish High-School at least, what I have said about the refusal of so many Danes to speak their mother-tongue does not apply. At Askov in a typical winter course, teaching in the mother-tongue is completed in twelve different sections according to the pupil's previous knowledge. Third winter's pupils can have teaching in the Old Northern Language. Swedish, and something of the Norwegian "Landsmaal," or "Norwegian-Norwegian" (a language constructed upon living Norwegian dialects for the purpose of replacing the "Danish-Norwegian" which Norway uses to-day), also usually find their place in the first year's section, so that the pupil may be able to read and understand these Northern languages, so interwoven.

At the same time, the High-School is practical. It may have its head in the clouds, but, as one of its pioneers, Kold, the shoemaker's son, always insisted, its feet are on solid earth. It recognises the desirability, almost the necessity, for the Dane to have a second language—one of the world-languages. So at Askov there are classes in English, German, and French, varied from classes for beginners to more developed students, the classes being divided into three grades.

Sociology, as may be expected, plays a large part in the School's course. First year's pupils study Danish sociology in a way that gives the Dane a real grip, by the historical method, of how the Danish society into which he has been born has come to take its present

form; something that gives him what the men of so many countries lack—a " conscious " citizenship. The second year's pupils study a more purely Historical Sociology, with the life-histories of leading men. In the third winter, in the obvious impossibility of making an exhaustive study of the subject in three courses of six months each, of which only a part can be set aside for Sociology, certain selections are made for the study of the oldest pupils.

In Mathematics, as in the other subjects, the courses are most carefully graduated according to the pupils' capacities, only one thing being common for all—that is, the fullest demands are made on the pupil's own powers of work. A course is given in Historical Mathematics, with other systematic courses, which for the most advanced can lead into Analytical Geometry and the beginning of Differential and Integral Calculation. Needless to say, having regard to the short time available, the mathematical course at the ordinary High-School is not so exhaustive.

In all these subjects the teaching is divided for the 150 male and 125 female pupils, something which applies also to Physiology, Gymnastics, and Drawing.

This work at Askov is carried out by some nineteen teachers, it being a condition for their work that each one in his sphere is in " living " connection with his subject, and at the foundation of the School in 1865 there being, in that thorough way which characterises much of the High-School work, a rule that the teachers should stand upon an intellectual level with the Head.

I have spoken above of the " conversations." The lecture method through " the living word " has always

been the backbone of the High-School teaching; but although its advantages over the book are obvious, it has the disadvantage that it makes no direct call upon the personal efforts of the pupil. When Jan Ligthart showed me over his famous school at the Hague, he also showed me how to do without the book, for which he substituted living observation, combined with an absolute freedom between teacher and child which is really a form of the High-School "conversation."

It is this conversational method which many High-Schools now employ, in the belief that the advantage the lecture has over the book, the conversation has over the lecture. The conversations between teacher and pupils and pupil and pupil take place when the School is divided into small sections of some twenty to thirty, and always during lesson-time. It must be remembered that the relationship of the High-School pupil and teacher is not at all the relation of "pupil" and "teacher," but the relation of one friend to another, and the teacher recognises that in all education the master learns as much from his pupil as his pupil learns from him. There is no constraint, though, as I have found in the High-School, a perfect discipline, and the pupil can ask any question he pleases, and if the teacher cannot answer, he, unlike some other teachers, will admit it. If the pupil does not care to ask a question openly, he can write it on a piece of paper and put it in the "question box," when it is answered later by the teacher.

I have before me as I write some hundred questions, asked by High-School pupils, taken haphazard, which

are amazing in their quality and scope and heterodoxy. They display a " wish to know " and a contempt for the traditional which is one of the finest things I have found in Denmark, and which gives one a little hope that the minority which display it will one day come to leaven the lump of the majority.

The High-School has not been afraid to be heterodox, and so has again and again got the idea that matters. It has been ahead of its time.

But despite its " futurism," the High-School—the idea behind which is so living and a fuller knowledge of which would mean the study of so many years that one only ventures to criticise it with the utmost reserve and as it comes to an outsider—one gathers in many different ways, like other excellent institutions, is in danger, to an extent, of becoming " institutionalised." There is possibly at times a tendency to hold to ideas, one had almost written " dogmas," that have had their day—dogmas not only religious, but methodical.

I will take an instance of what I mean. Some time ago I heard a lecture given by the Head of a certain High-School which dealt with Moses and the Children of Israel for its subject matter—a not uncommon High-School theme. The lecture was splendidly delivered—it was one of the best lectures I had heard in Denmark—but it dealt with the Talmudic minutiæ of the Old Testament in a way which brought back painful memories of boyhood. Such a lecture at the beginning of the High-School might not have been out of place —to-day it is not only hopelessly against the spirit of the time, which I admit must sometimes be fought, but hopelessly useless. The price of existence for the High-

School, as for other things, is the very thing for which it stands—keeping in touch with life. The young man or woman of to-day, except in small minority circles, is not concerned with the Bible as an inspired book, only as *a* book, and even Moses and Aaron as leaders of men are to-day of less interest than Napoleon or Lloyd George. Nor is it the goal of the High-School to appeal to minorities, but to the nation—of course, without sacrificing the principles for which it stands, and here there is no question of *principle*, but of *method*. For a live being such as is the High-School, to stand still is to go back. It must not only keep abreast of the times, but ahead of them, and in movements like that of the High-School there is always the danger of a traditional curriculum as of a traditional terminology, leading to the disease of "official sclerosis."

This brings up the whole question of using Christian dogma as a basis for the School—something that to the orthodox High-School man will seem almost blasphemous. To be quite fair, the High-School is not in any sense a theological or priestly institution; it does not demand of its pupils that they shall be Christians, orthodox or otherwise, for its creator specially laid it down that there must be room for each one who, as pupil, longed after a fuller life. But founded as it has been by a man who was a Christian before he was anything else, and himself a priest, it is not to be wondered that the "Christian" idea pervades the School; and the High-School does not deny, but glories in its roots being set deep in a dogmatic though broad Christianity.

This I at any rate am convinced, though I say it with diffidence, will be a stumbling-block in the spread

of the High-School in certain other countries. The spirit of the time is against dogma, even Christian dogma, in any form. To speak of these things is to speak of dogmatic ghosts that cannot be resurrected, which is not to preclude the teaching or even the preaching of Christianity upon its non-dogmatic sides.

But this can apply even to countries in which the Christian dogma is deep-rooted, as in Ireland, and how far the High-School is from grasping one phase at least of this is shown by a conversation I had with one of the older High-School adherents, the wife of a Grundtvigian priest. I tried to show how in Ireland, a country which of all others needs a High-School, side by side with the Gaelic Movement, to give form and point to its passionate but at times undirected nationality, it would be quite impossible to introduce Christ and Christianity as a basis for the School—a country where, in the South, these matters are fast locked in the bosom of Holy Church infallible, and where, in the North, there is a mixed and highly inflammable theology of Protestant and Catholic—when my friend innocently asked: " But could the Irishman not agree to treat Jesus as far as possible as a human being ?" The lady did not know Ireland !

It is precisely because in Denmark the High-School has to battle more than perhaps in any other country for the principles of nationality and anti-materialism that the High-School propagandist must beware of " direct " propaganda — that propaganda method which, with its opposite, the " scientific," non-personal method, it expressly discountenances in its teaching. In no country is any hint of dogma so fatal as in

Denmark—a country where the writer at least has no doubt that if the question put to the English people by the London *Daily Telegraph* some years ago, " Do we Believe ?" were asked, if honestly answered, would be, generally speaking, in the negative, an analysis of Denmark which, like all similar analyses, will be indignantly denied by those Danish " minorities " who always come to me and say, " But if you only knew our circle !" and who perhaps, like other minorities, and majorities, when faced with unpleasant " fact," get over it by saying " superficial " or " exaggerated," an easy but dangerous method. It is only fair to say, however, that this method of facing criticism in Denmark, which, on the whole, takes its critical gruel well, often springs from certain blank places in the national consciousness, which make it difficult or impossible for the Dane to grasp the point or feeling underlying certain criticisms from the outside, especially where they concern " temperamental propaganda," political or religious. All countries, including England, have their " blank spots."

The High-School, in its seventy-three years of existence, has, on the whole, and despite the 5,000 to 6,000 pupils, of whom in the 1915-16 course 2,878 were men and 2,745 women, who yearly pass through its sixty-eight Schools, failed to grip the Danish people nationally. It has never got a footing in the towns, and the 600,000 of the capital, despite the two High-Schools there, will have nothing to do with it, though one does not suggest that the reason is to be found either in dogmatic presentation or in any single thing.

If it is ever to get into the towns, where it has to

face the competition of the biograph, the dancing-hall, the lecture, and the technical school, it seems to the writer that it will, amongst other things, have to come away from dogma, whilst keeping as its kernel, if it will, the non-dogmatic, "religious" side of Christianity: something that seems to be recognised in part by men like the High-School Chief, who said: "One can easily imagine a school where the word 'Christian' was never named, but which was Christian at heart." Much water has passed through Øresund since Christian Kold heroically erected his little school at Ryslinge, and gave his equally heroic pupils one raisin apiece in their soup. The world has changed enormously since his time—more than in the previous two thousand years. It may come away from materialism and become four-dimensional: it will never go back to the worn-out dogmas; it is reaching out in an entirely new direction in its path sunward. It has passed through the necessary stage of dogma, as it is fast passing through its reaction, materialism, in its progress to "religion," and neither the High-School nor any other force can set it back in the old paths. Some changes in this world carry upon them the seal of inevitability—the passing of dogma is one of them. No one can put back the hands of the clock.

Although fully conscious of the difficulties of any criticism, however slight, of that backbone of the High-School, its national teaching—a criticism which to many High-School devotees will seem an impertinence, coming as it does from an outsider who has not been able to devote the many years which they deem necessary to the understanding of Grundtvig and his

work—one cannot avoid pointing out that the very natural tendency of the School in connection with Christianity to hold to methods which have had their day brings up the question of nationality. This comes especially to one who has had some experience of this question in his own country, where all questions resolve themselves into " national " questions.

It is not easy to say how Grundtvig, born as he was 135 years ago, would have " orientated " himself towards that modern Internationalism which, despite the war, will yet be regarded as the hall-mark of the Democratic Era; but one imagines that he was too much of a human being, too much of a lover of humanity, to fight it, despite his, and for his time natural, view that all Internationalism meant loss of power to the individual. But it would seem, with the limited experience of the writer, that at times his followers are inclined to lay exaggerated stress upon what is apt to become " national dogma," in a world of Internationalism, which, incidentally, has its dogmas too. I know we do it in Ireland.

Now, the modern Dane, and not only that " cosmopolitan " Dane of Copenhagen and the towns who is so often thrown at one's head by the " nationalists," is international in a cultured and non-political sense of the word—he is certainly not " national." And national culture need not necessarily exclude Internationalism.

An extreme, not perhaps typical, example of the dangers which threaten a purely national educational concept in the narrow sense was the argument used to me in a South Zealand village by a High-School

priest, who himself, with a thorough knowledge of English, said that it was a great disadvantage for a country to have so rich a language as English, a language which had borrowed from so many sources, as it could not be used by "the people." It appeared to be his opinion that no writer should go outside the ordinary spoken language of a nation!

Other things following upon this question of a too stringent national interpretation seem to the outsider to invite some criticism.

In its sociology, for instance—though I may have been unfortunate in not meeting the right kind of person amongst the various High-School pupils and adherents to whom I broached the subject—I have found no real grip upon the most important, the vital phenomenon of modern society—the International Socialist Movement. The High-School people to whom I spoke about it did not know the movement from the inside, only that branch of it which concerns their own country—a most untypical branch—and that not always thoroughly. It is a lack of grip, perhaps springing partly from the intensely national High-School outlook, upon the world-movements of Democracy, political and industrial—a grip which is essential not only to "international," but to "national" culture; and it is significant that I have never met a High-School Social Democrat. Why should not a *national* High-School draw its adherents from all parties as from all classes?

It is clear that, in the teaching of nationality to the Danes, the pill has to be administered with plenty of sugar. The Dane, despite his simplicity and

humanness, has a keen, unnaturally keen, sense of the ridiculous, and the rigidly national method which was the right one when Grundtvig began his work may to-day be the wrong. The spirit of 1917 Denmark is not that of 1848. These things must grow; they must not be superimposed. Anything in the nature of flag-waving or "systematised" patriotism is apt to make the Dane indifferent; he is never hostile: he is apt to think it . . . naïve. And *naïveté* to the Dane is like oil to fire. He kindles.

This is the thing at the root of the average Dane's laughing criticism of the High-School "cheerfulness," as it is at the root of other of his criticisms. To him it seems, at times, an attempt to keep up a fictitious merriment in a world which is not at all a merry world, but a world of hard work and harder pleasure, though he does not put it in this way. The everlasting attempt to be cheerful is a *stemning* we know in Great Britain amongst some of the religious sects, where it has the unpleasant habit of being mixed with brimstone and hell-fire.

It seems to the writer that anything in the way of national veneer is apt to come off in the wear and tear of the competitive life of to-day. Only the nationality that is developed from the inside holds, and not always that; and the High-School, it must be admitted, does more than its share in developing such nationality. I know that when I first paid a visit to a High-School in the terms for girls I was much impressed by the way in which some sixty or seventy girls, farmers' and cottagers' daughters (the two classes that chiefly support the High-School),

took part in the national songs and dances with which the High-School, like the Gaelic Society in Ireland, is trying to combat the cheapness of the music-hall song and the meretricious sex-dancing of the modern ball-room. I said what I thought to the High-School teacher by my side, and added that surely such "national" dancing and singing would, must, make itself felt upon the nation through these girls in after-life. He turned to me a little sadly, I thought, as he said: "Yes, but when they go away from here they are apt to forget something of this." It brought back what an Irish Gaelic teacher said to me: "The Gaelic Society works for a few months or years; the great world is always at work."

But to say all this is but to say that there are spots on the sun, or that there seem to be spots. The High-School strikes a note in Denmark which is struck by nothing else. It is that note of earnestness, patriotism in the better sense, and anti-materialism, which amongst so much that is uncertain has its own ring —a ring of pregnancy and personality that cannot be mistaken. It is a note that has made itself heard in the sister land of Norway, with its more than a score of High-Schools; in the half-hundred High-Schools of Sweden; in the twenty to thirty High-Schools of Finland; as in the many High-Schools in the United States, in Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, and California, and even in England itself, with the solitary one at Bournville, Birmingham. It is a note that should be heard in all lands, and it is a note which, though, through its very success, it may lose its distinctiveness with the lapse of years, will be

interwoven, is already interwoven, into the symphony of the national education of the future which is now taking form.

It is the note which must be woven into the tone-structure of English education and Irish, even though for the latter country its form will have to be something quite other than that of Denmark. Of all things which Denmark can teach Great Britain, the High-School stands out first, and in no countries in the world should the High-School idea find so fruitful a holding-place as in Great Britain and Ireland, where it has already prepared for it the culture-beds of a set nationality and antimaterialism. What one hopes is that after the war the British Government, with its new searching out for better educational methods which has been stimulated by the war, will send a Commission not only of professional educationalists, but of politicians and "average" men, to investigate the working of the High-School in Denmark with a view to its transplanting to England, and its support under forms suitable to its new environment by carefully considered State grants. This, followed by a series of lectures and articles throughout Great Britain, should bring the idea to maturity. It is "practical politics." Its effect, in increased national efficiency and national consciousness, would at once be felt.

A unique idea of the national power of a High-School is to be found in those Lecture Unions which are the children of the High-School, and which now possess over one thousand meeting and exercise houses throughout Denmark, each place holding on an average eight lectures yearly—eight thousand in all. People of all

ages and types, old pupils, etc., stream to these lectures, which are upon all imaginable subjects, and which are given by High-School teachers, who receive a small fee, except where, with the true propaganda spirit, they seek to instal lectures in a poor district.

Apart from these Lecture Unions, the High-School has inspired the Autumn and Old Student Meetings, at which all kinds of prominent men speak, including politicians, clergymen, scientists, artists, and particularly High-School teachers. The Autumn Meetings are held in that rest-time which comes for an agricultural country like Denmark after the harvest has been brought in, their object being, in the words of a High-School leader, " not any special purpose, but the holding of lectures which can serve as a general education and uplifting for all people, without reference to age, class, or position;" and it is this kind of work which has helped to produce a peasantry who, it must be confessed, on the whole, are much above the English peasantry in education and general intellectual outlook. The meetings are held at the High-Schools, in some cases the gatherings lasting over four days and being attended each by over one thousand people daily.

The Students' Meetings are held each year on a fixed day, usually in the summer, and it is in this way that the old High-School pupils meet together, coming long distances to fight their old battles over again and to renew the old life. In some cases, even after twenty-five years have elapsed, High-Schools get applications from old students to attend these meetings; for the High-School is a fellowship like that of Oxford and Cambridge, which persists long after

schooldays are over—but it is not so much a class-fellowship as a fellowship of nationality.

When one lives in Denmark one is forced to realise the pregnant, far-reaching effect of the High-School upon every side of public life; though the results of the High-School have not been spectacular, they have been subtle, and one cannot gauge its success by the noise that it makes. For the High-School, living as it is, has never frayed the umbilical cord which has held it to life in its every phase, just as it has itself held a balanced teaching inside the school, from the splendid physical groundwork of the gymnasiums, with which every school is fitted, to the generously conceived psychological equipment, for, like its founder, it has been the ideal combination of poetry and fact. It has held itself abreast of technical education as of modern science, with a spiritual as with an economic interpretation of the motherland. One finds the traces of its work and spirit in the transformation of the heather into agricultural and timber-growing areas, as in the general agricultural cultivation of Denmark, for the eighteen Agricultural Schools are themselves children of the High-School; in the Danish Press as in Danish art.

And yet, in spite of all that has been said, a curious phenomenon presents itself, something that is perhaps not so much of a phenomenon as an instinct—an instinct which has not lacked indirect corroboration from High-School men themselves. Speaking always with reserve, one feels that the Danish High-School is standing at the parting of the ways which comes to all great movements; that it has lost something of

breath in the rush and wear of the new movements and new ideas with which to-day is teeming—ideas and movements which, under the urge of war, will yet take stranger, more urgent shapes. Can the School adapt itself to the new stresses, the new demands? The war can do one of two things for it—either make its way more easy to the hearts and brains of the Danish people, or put it out of the running. The writer does not pretend to attempt the solution of a difficult problem, upon which, doubtless, the leaders of the High-School are now at work, but one of the things which the School apparently needs is more centralised control, more inter-related working, and younger blood.

It may be that the High-School, as some think, has done its work and must gradually pass from the stage; it may be that it is only beginning, and that it will "renew its youth like the eagle's." However that may be, one feels that the School has reached a critical point in its story, though High-School adherents, as may be expected, will not be ready to admit this. There is a tenseness, almost an uneasiness, in the High-School *stemning* of to-day which cannot fail to be noticed by the looker-on. To put it as it comes to the writer, the School is waiting for newer inspirations; it lacks the personal, possibly *a* personal, inspiration—it is waiting for the Hour and perhaps the Man. It may be that it is waiting for inspiration, not so much from the inside, which it has already received, but from some event outside, perhaps outside Denmark itself.

Possibly the School, to meet the fast-changing world, will have to change its curriculum and method, to sell

its soul for a mess of pottage, as the traditionalists would put it—to change its form without changing its soul, as one or two High-School teachers have put it to me. It is significant that, even allowing for the economic difficulties of war, I was informed that no fewer than ten Schools would be compelled to close their doors in 1917.

Will the newer inspiration and inspirer come? Whether they come or not, the work of the High-School, as its message, will never die; it is the message of life in education, of life in a nation. It is perhaps the eternal message.

XI

WHERE DENMARK LEADS THE WORLD

If the Dane who, with the Englishman or American, reads this page would rather not know something about the backbone of his own country and suffers from the delusion that figures can never be interesting, he, or she, will do well to skip this chapter. If, on the other hand, he wishes to know, as he often does not know, the thing for which Denmark stands in the eyes of the modern world, he will "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest."

To speak of Jutland is to speak of Denmark's backbone—*i.e.*, of Co-operation. The genius of Denmark has found its expression, not in the fine arts of speaking or painting, but, as the Chinese have found theirs, in the Vulgar Fraction, within that assemblage of fractions, something that might be called "the fortuitous concourse of atoms," which is known to-day as the Co-operative Movement. Denmark is a rank individualist, with, in the towns at least, a detestation of working together . . . but, to be true to her paradoxic quality, she is the supreme Co-operator.

It has remained for this tiny group of islands and larger peninsula, Jutland, coming out from the Middle European Continent towards the north, to teach the

world how to co-operate, and the world is beginning to listen.

Climate makes character. Is it that the mildness of the islands and their people, with their beech and oak and apple orchards and good-natured, smiling humanity, has been tempered along the peninsula by the cold blasts which, unchecked by forest, pour in from the North Sea over the western frontier? Is it that the softness of the islands, human and geographical, has been eradicated in the Jutland Peninsula, which, for a great part, is a continuation of the great Prussian heathland, leading to the development of the tougher Jysk strain which is the backbone of the Co-operative Movement, which, however, of course, covers the whole of Denmark? Is there something in the North Sea blast which makes the Co-operator?

An Englishman who lived amongst the Danes nearly two centuries ago wrote of them that they were "a well-fed, comfortable, easy-going people." The curse of Denmark, which, like so many curses, comes in the guise of blessing, is that they always "*har haft det altfor godt*" (literally "has had it too well"). When privation might have used its graving tool upon her, and hard living have led to harder thinking, the gods of Denmark, the Pleasant Gods, decreed that the Co-operative Movement should come along to push her back again on to her bed of ease. Countries, like people, may thrive under "enough" or "not enough;" never under "too much." Which, of course, to the Dane is blasphemy.

Denmark's *raison d'être* is neither art nor science, but agriculture and cattle-breeding, in which there is

both art and science. Four-fifths of the country's total exports is agricultural. She has managed to secure, outside China, the most extraordinary successful results in the world upon a system of Smallholdings, which, without Co-operation, would have spelled disaster, especially when one remembers that the soil of Denmark is not in itself specially fertile.

This soil, amounting to about 7,000,000 *tønder* (¾ tønde=1 acre English), or about five and a quarter millions of English acres, presents to the Englishman a sort of chess-board puzzle, being split up amongst its owners as follows.

0-1 tønder land	.. ..	0·3 per cent.
1-9 ,,	.. .. ..	10·6 ,,
9-27 ,,	.. .. ..	16·4 ,,
27-54 ,,	.. .. ..	24·4 ,,
54-108 ,,	.. .. ..	26·3 ,,
108-432 ,,	.. .. ..	13·6 ,,
Over 432 ,,	.. .. ..	5·7 ,,
Undetailed tønder land	..	2·7 ,,

This Smallholding idea is in itself a contradiction. The whole trend of the age in which we live is towards the big idea, towards agglomeration, not division. But the co-operative side of Smallholding, which alone has made it possible, is the Big Idea with a vengeance; it forms, in fact, the third of that trinity of big ideas which govern the modern world—Capitalism, Socialism, and Co-operation, of which the last two are unconscious allies, and which perhaps will one day be found side by side in the struggle which has just begun in Denmark as elsewhere.

Frankly, I would as soon think of criticising the Negro Question with a free-born citizen of Alabama, the divinity of William of Orange with an Ulster Orangeman, or the question of whether Amundsen found or did not find a Scotsman sitting on the top of the South Pole when he got there with a son of Caledonia, as of criticising the Smallholding idea with the Jysk, Zealand, or Fynsk peasant. Smallholding in certain Danish circles is not merely an economic dogma, but a religion. And, like most religions and most dogmas, I find it extremely difficult to get at the truth; for where the Dane's Smallholdings prejudices are concerned, he will tell you black is white, or white is black, with as little compunction as any Jesuit or scientist of them all.

Thus, I am told by one man that the Smallholder is absolutely independent, more or less owns his farm, and generally stands excellently with the world. From another, not a Smallholder himself, but a large butter exporter, I hear, as I have heard it elsewhere, that the Smallholder's freedom is only nominal, that he is frequently heavily mortgaged, and, as one of Denmark's largest farmers told me, is sometimes compelled to buy his seed and manure from the bigger man, who, buying in bulk, can get it cheaper. But then, on the other hand, the seed and manure co-operative store can buy these things cheaper than any individual man, however big—so I am still puzzled. One of the Venstre or "Left" party men tells me that the Smallholdings idea is right, but that it demands profound modifications.

When I say to a Social Democrat, "But won't the

personal possession of land give the Dane the earth-lust, as it has given the Frenchman ? as Zola has so inimitably set it out in his ' La Terre,' making him a confirmed individualist; and is it not, therefore, opposed to the whole basis of the Social Democracy ? and that being so, why does the Socialist party back up the idea ? " he takes refuge in evasions, or says, generally, that no political party in Denmark dare really come out in the open and fight the Smallholding idea.

So we are still where we were.

And then there comes to one the dream of those horizonless farms of the great American prairies; the giant steam-ploughs with their mile-long furrows; the coming of the Farm Trust in the States . . . and a hundred other things . . . and then little Denmark's Smallholdings. Where are we ?

The fact remains, anyhow, that Smallholdings in Denmark have given Denmark's peasantry a curious freedom from the extremes of poverty and, with the Co-operative System that knits them up, an object-lesson to the world of the value of Co-operation. Perhaps the Smallholding is but a transition stage leading to National Co-operation. Perhaps, like so many other paradoxes in life, it holds the seeds of its own destroyer. This does not matter here. We are only concerned with the facts.

When all these little farms were anarchically producing each butter for itself, they could neither secure a standardised product—that standardisation which is one of the secrets of the modern successful business-man, as it is the secret of Henry Ford's motor-car—

nor the requisite conditions for export. The big landowners at that time were cocks of the walk.

Then Denmark woke up. The peasants put their heads together, began to build communal creameries, and standardised their butter. Like wildfire, the creameries flung themselves together and up all over the country, so that at the turn of the century about 83 per cent. of the farms, with their cattle, were affiliated to the Co-operative Creameries, and about 81 per cent. of the cattle of the country registered under the Co-operative Movement.

Of course, the big men stood out and sneered. They always do. And of course, when the thing had been made a success by the little men, they came in and gave it their blessing.

The Danish Co-operative Creamery is nothing more or less than Social Democracy in practice—that Social Democracy which the majority of the Smallholders heartily detest; for the Co-operator is not a Social Revolutionist by instinct, only by practice. Each creamery is controlled entirely by the Co-operators, who, with " one man one vote," elect their own Boards, which as a rule choose their Managers, and the profits are divided equally according to the delivery of the individual.

Fat rules the creamery, for the payment for milk delivered is now generally determined by its fatty contents. I don't know that Denmark ever watered its milk—I couldn't imagine Denmark doing anything so desperate—but I believe it is used in individual instances to develop a habit of thinning when it was paid for by the pound alone. For water, anyhow,

weighs the same as milk, and only the baby knows the difference! But Denmark doesn't starve its babies—or anything.

Milk pours out of Denmark in a white Niagara of floss and silk. For she has over one million milch cows, of which half are black and white and the other half red, the latter having their home chiefly on the islands and possessing the Anglian strain without any of its wickedness. I never saw a wicked cow in Denmark—not often a wicked bull; and I don't suppose anybody else ever has. They don't trouble to spancel their cows when they milk them, and the sin of kicking down the bucket is, I believe, unknown. In fact, the animals have no temperament of the sort you meet in the black-brown Kerry devil or those white-faced, wall-eyed she-demons you sometimes meet in the North of England.

Throughout the country the average milk yield of the little farms is 2,850 kilograms and that of the larger 2,650, the fatty percentage running something over 3·5 for the whole country. For all these things are worked out to places of decimals, like that big Jysk farm where the proprietor showed me a sort of barometric chart for every cow on his farm, with the name of the animal writ above, which told him at a glance whether the lady was doing her duty and whether she was secreting the necessary fatty contents or not, and pouring out through her voluminous udders—or perhaps I should not say "udders"—the requisite quantity. I have a vague idea that the temperature of each lady is taken twice a day and put down on the chart, with notes weekly as to

her general conduct, but this may be slightly exaggerated.

This is where the gentleman-cow, as the Fynlander—or is it the Jutlander?—might call him, comes in. They tell me that some of the Co-operative Managers and Smallholders get fatty degeneration of the brain through concentration upon fatty contents. The Co-operator dreams "fatty contents." He uses bulls taken from certain cattle strains with a high fatty percentage, and breeds from them, and goes on breeding for decimals of fatty percentages. Which reminds me.

A farmer in Jutland asked me whether I liked bulls. I replied guardedly, "Yes, in a general way . . ." adding to myself, "and tied up nicely to a nice strong post." So he took me out. He presented me by name, I think—he certainly mentioned the gentleman's name, which was "Sejr Something or Other"—and asked me what I thought of the bull, murmuring from time to time "Fatty percentages."

I looked at the bull, a pug-nosed, short-tempered looking gentleman in black and white, who looked at me rather inhospitably, I thought, for a Dane. I said I thought him very nice indeed, fearing that the brute might overhear me if I said what I really did think, but glad to see a nice strong ring fitted through his nice strong nose, and attached to a pile driven into the ground. My host, I think, explained the interior and exterior of that animal in a way that would have done credit to any post-mortem surgeon in the country. He went into details about his back and horns—I specially noted his business end—as though he were

speaking of a friend of the family; but it was when he came to his nose that the gentleman in black and white began to wake up—bulls are so sensitive about the nose. He either said it was not aristocratic enough or too aristocratic—I don't know which; but His Majesty Sejr Something or Other began to walk round in circles and shake the nose aforesaid, and seemed to be examining me for a soft place for horn insertion. It was then I discovered an urgent appointment some miles away.

To this day I have hazy notions of a country where the headship of the family is shared by horned gentlemen in black and white with other and inferior animals who walk about on two legs instead of four, murmuring "Fatty contents," which latter may apply to either of the gentlemen mentioned.

Many of the smaller circles of agriculture employ a sort of travelling expert, who goes from farm to farm "with an eye for fatty contents" and undertakes test-milkings. These gentlemen, I am informed, can tell you everything about the genealogy and milky-way of every cow in the country. They make out at the end of each year detailed accounts of each lady, from which the Co-operator can decide exactly what he has earned from her, and whether to keep her or kill her; literally—for I have seen waistcoats upon these dames at times—"to take her clothes and go." The State also use these results when the ladies are exhibited for prizes at agricultural shows.

The total of these controlling Unions was, at the end of 1915, 666, with about 15,400 members and 229,000 cows. There were also at this date 925 Cattle-Breeding

Unions for the purpose of "fatty contents" bulls, guaranteed to make good husbands and fathers, the Unions having 23,100 members and 1,048 bulls. The State, like a good mother, gives its contribution to all these things, subscribing to the Cattle-Breeding Unions for the financial year 1914-15, 88,500 kroner (£5,206, the krone being a little more than one shilling), and to the controlling Unions 120,000 kroner (£7,059) for the last financial year received.

Unfortunately for the domineering gentlemen in black and white, as for their spouses, there are killings in Denmark. Taking it all in all, the pacific, blood-hating Dane does as much slaughtering as any General on the Western Front could wish. For an easy-going Peace Union man he has concentrated upon slaughter to a perfectly alarming extent. He has been concentrating since 1887, when, five years after the installation of the first Co-operative Creamery, the first Co-operative Slaughter-House was built. There they only killed pigs; later, as the blood-lust began to develop in the following ten years, twenty other houses were added, which killed anything and everything. You can see how the Dane developed his bloodthirsty instincts from the following table:

Year.	*No. of Slaughter-Houses.*	*No. of Co-operators.*
1900	26	60,000
1905	32	70,000
1914	45	142,000

Now Denmark has 46 of these places of slaughter, which in the year 1915 had a membership of 146,000, and where they killed a trifle of 2,169,560 pigs, 21,396

cattle, and 46,636 calves and sheep—a veritable Slaughter of the Innocents. That slaughtering means money is shown by the 253·2 millions of kroner (£1,489,411) which represented the business turnover for the above.

I have visited a slaughter-house in Jutland which, despite its infinite cleanliness, almost made me a vegetarian. It was one of the most perfect pieces of machinery for the separation of soul and body—I think it was Pythagoras who tells us that animals have souls; John Wesley certainly believed it—that any decorated General could desire. There was a place where the pig went in and a place where he came out—if not in sausages, as in Armour's of Chicago, at least in something like sausages. There was a delightful condemned cell filled with piggish delights, like the condemned cell of any human, where he spent his last moments, and a little farther on an arrangement which slung him up and, I think—for I am happy to say I did not see it—cut his throat; and a crawl that ran him either into a scalding pit or into a sort of iron porcupine with the bristles on the inside, but a porcupine used for grilling off the pig's bristles. And there were benches where men spent their days, knife in hand, amidst fleshly specialist horrors . . . and there were other things.

The only thing I gathered from the delightful gentleman with a couple of eyes like grey gimlets, who showed me over the place, was that any animal ought to be happy to die by such methods and in such luxury. Then I said to him, " But if you were the pig ?" after which the conversation languished.

The animal, however, has a fine choice of slaughter-houses so far as size is concerned. Thus:

11	Slaughter-houses	kill	75,000 pigs and over,	a year.
9	,,	,,	50,000-75,000 pigs	a year.
8	,,	,,	25,000-50,000 ,,	,,
16	,,	,,	under 25,000 ,,	,,

the average delivery being 17·2 pigs per Co-operator.

Behind this bloody business stands a total capital of thirty millions of kroner (£1,764,706), of which the installation of the slaughter-houses is put down at 9·3 millions of kroner (£547,059) in the books, which, I am told, is a great deal less than the actual cost of the installations and their real value. The balance is made up of working capital which is in bank, outstanding accounts for goods, and capital produced by the accumulation of the surplus and by various bank advances.

I commend the following statistics of the personnel to any military expert as an example of economy in slaughter; for there are only 1,800 employed in all the slaughter-houses, of whom 1,210 do the dirty work, 250, the clerks, the clean, and the balance of 340 are split up between sausage and tinned meat departments and general labour.

One of those many things where Denmark shows the way to the world is the splendid State control of these places of killing, which also includes both meat and trichina control. For this the houses pay 289,000 kroner (£17,000) yearly, or about 4·1 per cent. of the total administration expenses, paying also a yearly sum of about 50,000 kroner (£2,941) for improvements

in pig-breeding, testing-stations, circulation of boars, agricultural show prizes, and so on. The State, incidentally, also, like a good mother, keeps as guides for the Boards and Managers of the Co-operative Creameries several consultants, who give advice as to machinery, etc. It may be that Denmark has hit upon the happy mean between the anarchy of Individualism and the benevolent bureaucracy of State Socialism. I don't know.

Dan Leno, the famous English comedian, used to say that there were three kinds of eggs: there was the frankly rotten egg beloved at political meetings; the new-laid egg, almost extinct; and then he would say, after a pause . . . there was . . . "the Egg." It is the last named we know in London. You cannot say it is exactly rotten, nor can you, for that matter, aver it to be exactly fresh. Its age, like its sex, is indeterminate. It is just "the egg."

I don't know whether the London "egg" comes from Denmark, but I don't think so, for I have been over an egg "factory," which, like the Co-operative Creamery I had visited just previously, has an air of restfulness about it in peaceful violence when compared with that slaughter-house Gehenna. I suppose the collection, registration, and transportation of eggs need an atmosphere of rest—to prevent the shells cracking.

One of the sweetest old gentlemen in Denmark led me solemnly to a sort of tin box filled with what used to be called by polite people "the fruit of the hen." He touched a button, and lo and behold! it was as though I were looking into the Origin of Species, for

every mother's son or daughter of those eggs had become transparent, and, as I told the old gentleman to his delight, I thought I could detect the heart-pulsation of each chicken inside the shell. Anyhow, he could tell exactly how long the article (by the way, what is an egg—an article or an animal?) had been alive, where it had come from, and, I think, though I am not certain, its sex. The only thing he could not tell me was which came first: the hen or the egg.

Then he took my breath away by telling me that the export of eggs from Denmark in the year the war broke out ran into a value of 36·2 millions of kroner (£2,129,412). I asked him to work it out in dozens, but he gave it up. So did I.

Then he held me over some fathomless pits, then empty, where I suppose the London "egg" is manufactured. Here, he informed me, the eggs are laid and impregnated with a solution of chalk, which makes them fresh for ever and ever. I said nothing about Dan Leno's "egg," not wishing to hurt his feelings, but lost myself in the problem of how the eggs were laid down those shafts of infamy without breaking. You couldn't very well climb down the ladder at the side and stand on the eggs as you built them up layer by layer. Then, like a second Columbus, he told me that first they filled the tanks, then they put the eggs in, which found their level automatically and as light as snowflakes in summer. It's all so easy when you know.

Then I went deeper into the profundity of Eggdom, and discovered that the country is divided into egg-collecting areas; that each Co-operator has his number,

which, together with the date the egg is laid, is stamped on each eggshell; that the eggs are sorted by weight; and that they are collected by a man who goes from village to village for the purpose, forwarding them by rail to the head depot for export.

However, the egg Co-operatives are behind the butter and pork agglomerations, for they only accounted for a quarter of the figure above mentioned; but they are steadily increasing, and Denmark's egg output took a big upward swing since the export of eggs has been dealt with on Co-operative lines.

When you say "eggs" to an Englishman, he instantly replies "bacon," regarding, as he does, the national dish of the English, bacon and eggs, as, next to beef, the backbone of Britain. The Dane sees that he is well supplied through a company by which a great part of the Danish pork is shipped across the North Sea, a company which is owned by fourteen Co-operative Slaughter-Houses, which in 1915 had a turnover of about 519,000 porkers at a figure of 39,000,000 kroner (£2,294,118). To the writer at least the high price which Danish bacon fetches in England is a mystery, for in flavour he regards it as entirely inferior to either Irish bacon or California peach-fed pork; just as he and many others prefer an ounce of Australian butter to a pound of Danish. But figures talk.

For, speaking about butter, there are seven Butter Export Unions through which the Englishman is fed, the receipts for these in the year 1914 being the enormous sum of 46,000,000 kroner (£2,705,882).

But the Dane, being the earth's greatest Co-operator,

is not satisfied with applying Co-operation to pigs and bulls, cocks and hens, but is prepared to supply anything on the Co-operative principle at a moment's notice. Thus, if you want to be insured you go to one of the big Co-operative Accident Insurance Companies, who regulate your premium in some instances by the number of pounds of milk (not "pints," you notice) you deliver to your creamery. One of these companies alone has a federation of about 1,300 creameries.

If you want your money taken care of, or if, having none to take care of, you wish to borrow, you, as a Co-operator, simply apply to a certain great Co-operative Bank which in 1915 did a total business of 9,000,000 kroner (£529,412), of which the cash deposits were a full half. If you are dying of consumption of either variety, you become a member of the Co-operative Sanatorium Union, which on April 1, 1915, had 1,062 Co-operative Unions as members, with a total of 180,000 Co-operators.

The executive machinery of Denmark's Co-operation should be ideal, for all its Co-operative Societies are federated into one Co-operative Executive—"the Central Co-operative Committee of Denmark." It is this Executive which wisely tries to strengthen the Co-operative Unions, internally and externally, the latter more particularly in relationship to that Third International which is developing throughout Europe —the International Co-operative Movement. Recognising that without a paper a movement is dumb, the President of the Committee is also the editor of Denmark's Co-operative paper.

Compared with the giant British "Co-ops.," as they are called in the North of England, the consumers' side of Co-operation seems trifling, but for Denmark it is big and significant. There are to be found about 1,560 of these stores, with a membership of 244,000, of which about 93 per cent. of the total number of stores and 84 per cent. of the total membership are to be found in the country places. This big movement has all been built up from 1870, when there were only 21 stores in Denmark. The total turnover of the stores to-day is the huge figure of 103,000,000 kroner (£6,058,824), the consumption per member being greatest in the country and lowest in the provincial towns.

Until I came to Denmark I had always regarded manure with aversion. I did not know then that not only were there millions in manure, but that manure was literally the staff of life, without which Denmark, as Europe generally, might as well give up trying to live agriculturally. Next to "fatty contents," I suppose manure plays about the biggest part in the imagination of the Danish Co-operator, and next to that seeds and fodder. Several big Co-operative Societies have been formed for the purchase of these things, amongst which may be mentioned the Fodder Unions, which in 1914 (and throughout, except where otherwise stated, one takes the year when the war broke out as a fairer index of the normal work of the "Co-ops.," both producing and consuming, than in the middle of the war) imported corn and fodder to a total of 158,000,000 kroner (£9,294,118), and the Danish Co-operative Manure Society, the turnover of

which in 1914 ran into about 7,000,000 kroner (£411,765), the latter including, in the summer of 1915, 763 local stores, with 15,642 members.

The Danish farmers have realised as none other the importance of cutting out the profits of the middleman and importing or producing all things for themselves. They have their own Co-operative Seed Supply Union, which is in close working association with the stores, the producers after the harvest sending the seed to the stores of the Seed Union, where the cleaning of the seed takes place. The Union has also its own testing farm.

The Co-operator also has his Societies for the purchase of cement, as well as for the two bases of modern industry—coal and machinery. The Danish Co-operative Cement Factory included at the end of 1914 no fewer than 700 Unions, the guaranteed capital being 400,000 kroner (£23,529), whilst the business in machines in that year was 2,200,000 kroner (£129,412) and in coal 1,200,000 kroner (£70,588).

The fact is that when one first comes inside Denmark's magnificent Co-operative Movement one rightly or wrongly feels that the private trader is doomed, as one feels that it is only a question of time for Society as a whole to adopt National and Universal Co-operation. Whether this conclusion is right or wrong the future alone can show, but if it does materialise the credit will largely be that of the Dane, who for his efforts deserves the eternal tribute of posterity.

And here one wonders if the Danish Co-operative Manure Society, which now has as members between 90 and 100 per cent. of all Danish farmers, realises that to-day, in its struggle to the death with the

Manure Trust, it is sounding the clarion note which marks, not only for Denmark, but for Europe, the first stage of the battle between the Co-operator and the Trust. Does it realise that in a very definite sense it is formulating all that chaotic struggle of preliminary reconnaissance between the two opposing forces which we have seen in England, Belgium, and other Co-operative countries? For this Society, and with it the brainy little country that gave it birth, will go down to history as the inaugurator of the movement which will lead ultimately to drastic changes in Society itself.

Finally, it must be for little Denmark, who so lacks the missionary or propaganda spirit in other directions, to become the world's Co-operative Missionary. She must send out her sons throughout the earth to teach the men of other countries the lessons of Co-operation, even though by so doing she will lay the seeds for herself of a harvest of stern, fierce competition. She must establish her Co-operative schools, not only in Denmark, but in other lands. Especially must she teach her friends the English, and more particularly the Irish, the lessons she has to give on the producing side of Co-operation—lessons by which the bonds of international understandings will be forged and the ethics of humanity be strengthened through its economics.

The writer acknowledges with gratitude the debt—one of many others—under which he has been placed by the many friends and acquaintances, experts and laymen, who have helped him in his compilation of the above, and more particularly to Herr Godsejer J. A. Lemming, the well-known expert upon Denmark's Co-operation.

XII

"LITTLE" BUSINESS AND "BIG"

By the accident of fortune I have been brought a good deal into contact with Danish business and Danish business men. I, of course, use the word "business" more in its English sense as applied to finance and the distributive trades of a country, rather than to those agricultural and co-operative sides of which I have written. On the whole it has been a very pleasant accident. It has given me the opportunity of observing a side of Danish life which falls to the lot of few foreign writers, a chance to compare the English business man and his Danish *vis-à-vis*, their methods of business, their respective economic weaknesses and strengths. To know Denmark without knowing its business is not to know it at all, for business in one form or another and the business man occupies a large part of the national vitality and genius. You can estimate a country from its business facet as accurately as from that of its love-making, its art, or its religion. All are facets of the one whole, and they are not shut off from one another, as so many think, into air-tight compartments. In life there are no air-tight compartments.

Put briefly, the comparison between Denmark and

Great Britain is the comparison between " Little " business and " Big."

Almost everything in Denmark, saving a few gargantuan exceptions which tower over their fellows, in the way of business or economics is on the small scale. Denmark has had " to cut her coat according to her cloth." She has lost the beginnings of world empire which might have given her the wide business horizon. She is, despite the frequent comings and goings of her people, shut off more or less from the greater world which is born of Empire. The mixing of the White business and the White psychology with the Black, Yellow, and Brown has no existence for her. For her there is no " Trade follows the Flag," nor is there the blare of the Imperial bugle under the Red, White, and Blue over the lands of the Black, White, and Yellow. Despite the fact that, man for man, she knows quite as much about the races and lands that agglomerate the British Empire as the Imperial Briton himself, who so often is ignorant of the multitudinous resources of the greatest Empire the world has known, he has not, like the Briton, that daily Press which, with its wires ramifying to the four quarters of the globe, glean the news of an Afghanistan rising, a Zulu rebellion, a Hong-Kong earthquake, an Indian harvest, an Australian gold-find, or a Canadian timber-jam. The Briton, however insular he may be, cannot escape the wide horizon; he is born into it—it is his.

The wide versus narrow horizon is reflected in all sides of the Danish economic life. Where the Englishman talks of pounds, the Dane speaks of kroner, one-twentieth of the amount; where the Englishman

speaks of pence, the Dane speaks of øre. The Danish millionaire is a man with 1,000,000 of kroner; the British millionaire is a man with twenty or one hundred million of kroner. The British newspaper speaks of its million circulation where the Danish boasts its 80,000. And so on.

You pass your ways along the streets of this beautiful old city of Copenhagen—a big city, with its inhabitants running over the half-million, and I think one of the first things that strikes you is the cellar-shop. I discovered the cellar-shop by falling into it. I suppose I had not thought it possible after London that one could find a modern city with steps that broke into the evenness of the pavement; but fall into it I did, and nearly into the arms of a delightful *kone*, who seemed to regard my visitation as of a heavenly variety, if I am to judge by her beautiful smile and the then, to me, entirely unintelligible Danish. These are the shops which are to be found literally by the thousand throughout the capital, and as often as not in its principal streets, cheek by jowl with modern emporiums. In them, as in the now nearly extinct English village store, you can buy anything, as was Whiteley's boast in London, "from a needle to a white elephant." I have not seen the elephant, but I have certainly seen the needle. Sterene candles, Bismarck's Klumper (a delightful striped ball impregnated with peppermint, which you suck when you go to bed), bread, money-pigs, bootlaces, paraffin oil, vinegar, sugar, and tea, and sometimes even red cabbages, as my friend Carl Rasmussen, who presides in his knitted waistcoat over the cellar at the corner,

would say: *med det samme*, or, anglicised, " at the same time." I have little doubt that if you asked therein for a suit of clothes, Carl, who, like so many other cellar-shop proprietors, generally adds some more or less illegitimate business such as *træk-vogning* to his legitimate trade, would tell you gravely, as, indeed, I *have* been told about other things; that he would " skaffe," or produce, them for you, given time.

These cellar-shops are the business underpins of Denmark. In them everything is cut down to fractions of halfpence, to those *øre* which are about the tenth of a penny or the fifth of a cent. Inconceivable mathematics are necessary before you can produce, pay for, and receive the change—an unlimited stream of copper—from a kroner, which is about equal to the English shilling. For these are the home of that vulgar fraction which is Denmark's economic basis.

And here comes the inevitable business paradox of this country of paradoxes. How on earth has the little cellar-shop, under the laws of modern competition, by which the Big Business inevitably eats up the Little Business, as sure as the big fish eat the little, managed to evade these laws? How is it that the cellar-shop, the foreign equivalent of which has long since begun to disappear from the cities of Europe, has been able to hold itself rooted stubbornly down its three steps and aloof from the stream of Big Business as from electricity and typewriters, holding its own with the giant emporium next door, which is lighted and run by electricity? How, to put it bluntly, can a shop that buys in øre where its com-

petitor buys in kroner, and in single kroner where the other buys in twenties or hundreds of kroner, getting the inevitable reduction for quantity—how can it escape? It is enough to make the economist Karl Marx turn in his grave and wish to burn his famous "Das Kapital;" or even to turn the hair grey of the more orthodox economists, of whom the finance of the present war has exposed the barer places.

You might think the cellar-shop unique, with its good old-fashioned easy-goingness, of the days when the world was young and Business hadn't grown up, which gives my friend Carl Rasmussen and myself time to *snak* away the golden hours together. You might believe that such a survival was an accident, and that the small price and the "Little Business" *stemning* was alone to be found there.

Well, I thought so until that day when, outside Copenhagen's greatest store, as big as any in Europe, I saw staring me in the face the announcement that safety-razor blades, which the Englishman and American has the habit of throwing away when blunt, were sharpened for ten øre or one penny each. Think of the Chinese minuteness which makes it pay a giant store to spend its precious window-space in announcing that it will sharpen razor blades for one penny! How many thousand razor blades must it sharpen to make £100 profit? But the mind wilts.

This Lilliputian announcement is typical of a hundred others which dot this city of the Vulgar Fraction. Copenhagen's most fashionable shop, I discover, when it alters covert coats for customers, carefully wraps up the cuttings and sends them home

with the garment; . . . my friend, the Professor, tells me that he has his old suits turned inside out by his tailor when one side is worn, and informs me it is not an infringement of the Draconian laws of Tailordom; . . . my postman, whom I love, when I am compelled to pay twenty-four øre fine on an understamped letter sent me by those unpractical English, gravely hands me back what is called in Denmark " a red øre " from my twenty-five øre piece in change, as though it were fine gold.

And then I thought of my cutler in Old Broad Street, London, and his supercilious " Oh yes, sir, we *do* sharpen safety blades," if I brought my old razor blades back to him to be revivified; . . . of the slightly raised eyebrows of the blonde aristocrat in Madame de Bovary's, Regent Street, with the superciliousness of thirty shillings a week, if my wife suggested that she would like the trimmings of her coat sent back with the garment; . . . and the look of blank disgust and amazement upon the usually bland countenance of Poodle, my tailor in the Strand, if I suggested his turning my coat inside out. . . . " Oh yes, sir, of course we *can* do it . . . we *can* . . . but," with a tentative, contemptuous laugh, " I did not know, sir, you were a turn-coat ! " . . . whilst my postman, if øres existed in England, would not insult me by doing more than fumbling a bit in his waistcoat-pocket. It is a wonderful country. Little Business and Big.

However that may be, and whether this is the cause or no, the thing which stands out from all others for the foreigner in economic Denmark, something

which, at least, was true before the war, is the cheapness of living. Everything almost, excepting boots, looks ridiculously cheap. Restaurants seem to give their food away. Shopkeepers seem eccentric individuals who have taken to shopkeeping as an excuse for philanthropy. For one penny you can, if you list, run all over Copenhagen in a beautifully painted and upholstered tram-car. Entertainments are half price; lectures and concerts are, so to speak, ladled out like free soup. The land of the Vulgar Fraction.

But to come to hard figures, I have taken out a calculation over a substantial period of time before the war which showed that the all-round cost of living in Copenhagen, including rent, etc., was roughly two-thirds of that in London, which, incidentally, is the cheapest city in the world to live in, if you know how and don't mind roughing it.

It was this economic atmosphere which raised a host of economic ghosts and put at nought all one had ever imbibed from the professors of "the dismal science," and which first made me look more carefully at and into the Danish business man, whether clerk, shopkeeper, or chief. I examined both the outer and the inner man, his brain and the cut of his top-hat, the size of his boots and head, and the legs of his trousers. For in the business world, or so the business world seems to think, the trousers and hat make the man.

The first thing that came to me in my investigations was the phenomenon of "sheltered mediocrity," which surely in Denmark has reached a proportion unequalled in Europe. I was amazed at the number of people

I knew or discovered who had perfectly safe posts, at perfectly safe—that is to say, for the most part, low—salaries, in Governmental or semi-Governmental institutions, in the Post Office, at the Raadhus, in private business where they were clamped as a whelk is clamped to its shell, from which nothing short of an earthquake could shift them: places in which they lived and died, provided with that cup of morning coffee, that *smørrebrød*, that cigar, and that occasional party or theatre. Safe as the Bank of England and as unchangeable. There were men who were violinists in the evenings and communal officials in the daytime; men who taught German at night and drove a pen in the morning; men who were advertisement managers at five, and before five either journalists or jerry-builders. This was one side or one result of " Little Business " with a vengeance—little, safe business.

Then I began to keep my eyes open inside the Danish office when I could get access to it, in order to see what the Dane looked like as he worked, how he did his work, its quantity and quality. I wanted to compare the Danish clerk with the English, as I wanted to compare the businesses in which they had their being.

One thing I noticed in all offices—that was the office *stemning*. You could not mistake that atmosphere; it was in such un-violent contrast to that of the London office. It was a *stemning* as of a Sabbath evening in heaven—nothing devilish, or flashy, or sulphurous about it; no nerves, just an evenness, a sureness, and a touch of what the Spaniards call " mañana " in it, which made it extremely restful to

the onlooker and doubtless to the indweller. It reminded me of a certain office in one of the Record Departments of Somerset House—the kind of place which has vanished under the war stress. Ten to four and two hours for lunch. It was when I had visited a few offices that I knew for certain I had in the fulness of time come to the land of *laissez-faire.*

For in business Denmark is the land of *laissez-faire.* It is the same spirit which makes the Danish bicycle the worst-kept machine in Europe, with age-old incrustations of mud and a tendency to fall down in high winds. In a gale, Copenhagen seems like a city of drunken cycles, the occupants of which dash up like inflamed monkeys—the Dane is an enthusiastic cyclist—throw the machine at the edge of the pavement, and stroll off. If the pedal catches the curb, well and good; if it doesn't, the cycle goes down either at once or after a few seconds, without, of course, disturbing the young gentleman in charge.

It is this spirit which makes Copenhagen a city of collisions. I have seen more cycle and car accidents in Copenhagen in four years than in twice the time in London. You sometimes keep your side of the road, and sometimes you don't. Can't be bothered. You take corners at the run—perhaps nobody is on the other side; if he is, so much the worse for him. Can't be bothered. You ride at night with a lantern like a rushlight, or, better still, forget a lantern and carry a candle in a piece of paper. Can't be bothered.

It is the same thing when you walk into one of the shops, whether of Big or Little Business. There is always that relaxed atmosphere. I have spent many

interesting hours in these places watching customer and shopman, and I must say I enjoyed the restful experience. When you enter even the biggest departmental store, there is no gorgon of a shop-walker who in horrific accents croaks, " Miss Jones—for . . . war-r-r-d," as in Regent Street or Hackney. You meet usually a complacent, easy-going individual in a frock-coat and a smile who seems to be thinking of Christmas. He is much too polite to speak unless spoken to. He doesn't ask you what you want, but appears to imagine you have come in for a warm. The young gentleman behind the counter has an air of quiet independence and detachment from all affairs mundane, certainly from the affair of the moment, which I frankly admire. It is such a relief from the slavish crawling of the young gentleman in the eightpenny-halfpenny tie and the eternal smile, who in the London store tries to make you buy what you don't want. *This* young gentleman doesn't want you to buy anything. He doesn't bother himself to produce *clocked* socks in violent hues or scarlet-fever ties, or, if it be a lady, erysipelas veils or yards of flimsy nothingness at pounds and pounds. He won't sell much, but on the whole I prefer both him and his lady friend at the other counter to their counterparts in London or Paris. You at least feel about them, and you feel they feel about you, that they and you are human beings. And damn Big Business.

But I had memories of that living, breathing, snorting thing which is Carmelite House, that Northcliffe nerve-ganglion on the Thames Embankment from which the Newspaper Colossus, through the printed

word on the white page, holds his sway over millions in all lands. There must surely be some Carmelite Houses in embryo in Copenhagen, and so I began to frequent the newspaper offices, and as a matter of fact did discover one or two run upon up-to-date lines, with a plant and system which would do credit to any modern Fleet Street paper. But I also found the others—many of them. I found—and wild horses will not drag the name from me—a delightful cosy corner in a certain less busy street in Copenhagen. I had waited as I came for the roar and thunder of the machines—that snarling whirl which you hear on a still evening in Bouverie Street; I anticipated that being caught up in the electric short circuit which is the modern newspaper; and then I came to the office, about the entrance to which there seemed to brood a Sabbath calm. This was the house which, instead of the Northcliffe caravanserai, should have been called "Carmelite," after the Order of monks which used to live on the site of the house by the Embankment. I went up the wooden stairs, worn by the tread of the generations, and found myself in a long, narrow room with doors opening into it on all sides as though from cells monastic. There I sat me down, waiting for the man I had come to see to materialise, which, incidentally, he took over an hour to do, and allowed myself to become impregnated with the eternal peace that brooded over the place. It was a perfect rest cure. Every now and then a door would open, a face would peer out, and the door would close silently again. Or sometimes the face would be followed by the body of the gentleman, who would walk out, his

hands set deep in his cross-pockets, and stand looking at vacancy, after which another gentleman, feeling something and the need for communionship, would come out from another door, with *his* hands in *his* cross-pockets. They would look at each other, possibly being joined by a third gentleman *en route*, and then " snak " softly together in the eternal silence of the place. And when they had " snakked " they would go back softly to their respective hives and softly close the doors, like Gray's " Elegy in a Country Churchyard," " leaving the world to darkness and to me."

Then my inquiries began to take acuter, more intimate form; it does not matter here when or how. I discovered in this amazing land, where poverty is almost unknown and where the laws of competition run not, that in the average office nobody troubled very much about losing his or her place, for there was always a place around the corner into which they could slip comfortably and cosily. The Danish office at least had not the habit of asking too inconvenient questions about one's last place or the reason for one's leaving or being " sacked;" nor on the railways did there exist that system of underground intercommunication by which a British company knows exactly why a man has had to leave any other company—what he can do and what he can't do. The memories of that advertisement which my friend had inserted in a London paper asking for a clerk at twenty-five shillings a week, and which brought him one hundred and fifteen applicants, including an Oxford man, seemed like a dream. In Denmark at least, land of

no competition, there are not ten men waiting to slip into the vacant stool. Oh, happy land!

I have even been told a story—it may have been a Copenhagen story, upon which one cannot always place the same reliance as upon Holy Writ—that a certain young gentleman was sacked in a certain up-to-date office for "playing about." (This is the part of the story I don't believe, for I have never seen any Danish clerk with enough energy to "play about.") The young gentleman in question, a heavy youth, it is true, could not realise he had been sacked. He didn't exactly refuse to go, but he simply turned up morning after morning and sat in his old place without anybody interfering with him. So far as I know, he is sitting there still.

But what I *do* know is that I have seen a man come into one of Copenhagen's biggest companies, a place in which he had excellent prospects, the kind of place for which the ambitious English or American clerk will give his eyes for the chances it contains, and because he did not like the way in which the manager addressed him one morning, he said he would go; he had another place around the corner waiting for him. And go he did. I *do* know that in another place the chief director told me that when he first tried to run his business upon something like modern lines, his clerks all showed a tendency to go on the stroke of the hour, though the working day was under seven hours, and that it was with some difficulty they could be induced to remember that in big business time occasionally has no existence, and of that English saying that

" Time was made for slaves." I may be wrong, but it has seemed to me that to the average Danish clerk, with, of course, those inevitable exceptions for which I have steadily allowed in the course of this book, the office is a place which, in return for a modicum of service, gives the wherewithal to keep body and soul together. It is not a place in which, as it happens to be your job in life, to strive your utmost, if not for your employer, which is, perhaps, comparatively unimportant, at least for yourself and for your self-respect; it is not, like so many offices in London and New York, a place of adventure—a fairy-tale which some day may come true. The Danish business man will be able to correct me if I am wrong.

Then I came closer still into the business of Denmark. I visited all sorts of places, from " Co-operative Stores " to shop-counters, and from oil-cake factories to the wharves; I watched hand-workers and quill-drivers, cooks and counter-jumpers.

First it came to me that, despite the absence of keenness and ambition which I thought I had noticed, there existed inside some offices at least a tacit and unpleasant tendency for the employees to slightly despise one another. I had been informed by the " Kontor Chef," or manager, of a big business that he had many times known two men to sit opposite one another at the same desk for years, heartily detesting and envying each other, watching out to see that, so to speak, " if *I* don't get a rise the other fellow shan't " —something not altogether unknown in England. Now, I could not imagine such a good-natured people

as the Danes hating; but I received something of confirmation in a conversation I had with the man who perhaps, of all others in Denmark, stands most for the new idea and for Big Business, who assured me that such an atmosphere of envy had developed in his own business house, and especially amongst the departmental heads, that he found it necessary to call them together and threaten to sack the lot if the atmosphere did not change—since when it has changed, as such things do.

I found my closest acquaintance with the business side of Denmark when I had occasion to advertise for a typist and shorthand writer who could take dictation from English, with the proviso that only skilled workers need apply. Here is the average conversation stereotyped from the great majority.

Applicant comes in smiling good-naturedly. English reserve slightly thaws under the Danish sun. A chair is taken.

ENGLISH RESERVE: "You have seen my advertisement?"

MISS DENMARK: "Yes." (Varied sometimes by a doubtful sound that sounds very much like "Hvad behag?" the Danish for "I beg your pardon?")

ENGLISH RESERVE: "What can you do?"

MISS DENMARK (smilingly): "I don't know."

ENGLISH RESERVE (encouragingly): "How many words a minute can you write from English dictation?"

MISS DENMARK (quite unabashed): "I don't know."

ENGLISH RESERVE (still hoping against hope):

" How many words a minute can you write in English on the typewriter ?"

MISS DENMARK (entirely unmoved by the sufferings of Great Britain): " I don't know;" then, with a bright idea: " How many hours must I work ?"

The above is not a fanciful but an almost verbatim transcript of conversation after conversation, the conversation which has made me divide typewriting Denmark into the " I hope sos " and the " I don't knows."

One of these ladies, who informed me casually that she could do shorthand and typewriting in Norwegian, Swedish, German, and, I think, French, but who, when it came to the point, appeared not to have included English in her accomplishments, wrote to me at a suitable interval " that she did not think of taking the place, as she feared it might be too enervating." The lady herself, and I hope she will forgive the publicity which I have thrust upon her, was certainly like her conception of the place—she was one of the roundest, best-tempered, easy-going ladies I had ever seen in my life. Another lady, after I had engaged her at what for Denmark were extravagant rates of pay, waited about a month, so as to give herself plenty of time to think it over, I suppose, and then informed me coolly that she really did not think of leaving her other place, the manager of which she had previously informed me was intolerable. The manager, I presume, had changed.

Only it is into this land of *laissez-faire*, into this *stemning*, already charged with electric shocks, that is

coming, has already come, the rumble and tumble of Big Business. Denmark is not, as Grundtvig said, "dancing on the edge of Denmark's grave." Denmark, though she doesn't know it, is sleeping on a volcano.

XIII

THE DENMARK AFTER THE WAR

It is precisely because Denmark as a neutral country has held herself outside the vortex of war, because during the fighting she has reaped in safety enormous material benefits through her feeding of the fighting countries, because the even tenor of her way has been undisturbed by mailed fist or high explosive, that, as I have said, she is sleeping on a volcano. There are many kinds of volcanoes, psychological as well as physical, a statement which, I am sure, will come as a profound relief to Denmark, who doesn't bother too much about things of that kind. Only now Denmark will have to bother. Which, perhaps, is one reason for the war.

The whirlings and eddyings of the Great War have imperceptibly impelled her into the golden streams of the age in which we live—the Age of Gold, and now she is being carried away by the stream into the tides of modern finance and "Big Business." Had she been caught up into the war itself, she might have been swept into other channels—channels of inspiration, of cleansing, even of imagination. It may or may not be that the gods have reserved for her the extremity of punishment by saving her from her baptism of fire.

However that may be, and whether she knows it or not, she has turned her broad back for ever upon sleepiness and sloth in the business world. For good or ill, she is caught up in the new current. Her destiny is cast.

Under the stress of the war, Denmark, and Copenhagen in particular, has become a ganglion for the business nerves of Europe. In the shock of war there has been, broadly, a nerve severance between the countries of the Central and Allied Powers, a severance that has been brought about by the breaking of ten thousand connections, both psychological and physical. Every realm of human thought has been affected by these war breakages: religious as well as artistic, philosophic as well as educational. The breakage or stoppage of a single steamship line, as of the throwing down of a network of telegraph wires, though the world does not always realise it, spells profoundly subtle psychological changes in the countries affected, especially in these days of the Machine, when the physical is more than ever linked up with the mental through quickened human connection by telephone, telegraph, and steam.

So far as the business is concerned, the severance of all business connection between the warring countries has led to that forming of those new links which we see so often in the world of the body in injuries to the nervous system, where Nature automatically endeavours to replace her normal method of communication from brain to limb by what may be called "vicarious nerves." The position of Denmark, geographical and agricultural, has in a peculiar degree

contributed to her utilisation by the different warring countries as a sort of vicarious connection. She has become more and more a sort of short-circuit of locomotor nerves for Europe, and she is in process as I write of herself forming new associations, not only with the warring but with the neutral countries, and particularly with the United States, as well as with countries still farther afield—associations which, I think, will be found to be unbreakable.

I know it to be the opinion of many business men that when the war is over Denmark is going to lose the great mass of the business which, under the war, she has, as they think, only tentatively acquired, because the Great Powers have been forced back upon internal production for use rather than profit, and so have been compelled to neglect the outside markets.

Though I do not pretend to be a business man, I do not share that belief in its extremity of application, any more than it is shared by many shrewd business men in Denmark. At least, if she loses the mass of business and has her newly formed communications broken down, it will be her own fault, and not that of anything inherent in the laws of economics.

As every business man knows, *c'est le premier pas qui coûte.* First get your connection; the rest often follows of itself. Connections of the type Denmark is building up at the moment are not easily broken. Some of the threads will snap, but the mass will hold. If the threatened economic boycott of one set of Powers by the other ever materialises, or even if it only partially materialises, this alone will enormously help to permanise and strengthen the bonds Denmark

is now unconsciously forging. But such international boycotts are not at all essential to their permanence.

Now, all this Big Business, that flood of war-gold which has covered the country, and which, in its grosser forms, has meant the coming of Goulash . . . all this has led to vital nerve changes in Denmark, as it has led, within the short space of three years, to deep changes in Danish nature—those changes which, to anyone who knew the Denmark of six or seven years ago, or even the Denmark before the war, leave one staggered at the flexibility of human nature.

One of the first symptoms of the new Denmark which is coming after the war has, of course, been Goulash, but Goulash, as in all countries, forms only an insignificant minority of a country, though its influence, indirect, is anything but insignificant. But the new influence has shown itself in less obvious and none the less pregnant ways: in the development of " nerves;" a feverish lust " to make money quickly;" in a *klausulbrud*, or breaking of food-export laws epidemic; the issue of a Stock Exchange literature; and excited gambling in steamer and other shares from speculators down, it is said, to the very milk urchins in the streets, who have clubbed together. The atmosphere which has been created is in excited contrast to that of the Denmark before the war, and recalls those mad, bad days of the early nineties in England, when everybody from Methodist minister to twenty-shilling-a-week clerk was buying gold-mine shares.

But all this, with its comedy and tragedy, its stupidity and ugliness, its indulgence and heart-breaks, means the break-up of " Little " business.

There has been with all this a national expansion, an expansion of idea, of the power of money, of the possibilities of finance. Men who spoke and thought in kroner now think in 10-kroner notes; men who thought in 10-kroner notes now think in terms of 100-kroner; whilst there is an ever-increasing minority which has reached the aristocracy of finance—the thinking in " paper."

One of Great Britain's millionaires said to the writer many years ago, when speaking of a schoolfellow who had gone down to the gutter whilst he had climbed over the million mark: " The only difference between me and Hoskins was that I thought in thousands where he thought in hundreds." Denmark is beginning to think in thousands. And like the man who, once poor, has learned to think in thousands and spend in thousands, Denmark will find it difficult, perhaps impossible, to go back to her old standard of life.

Denmark, with that inflation of men's minds which comes from an increased cost of living, and, treading laggard on its heels, but treading, the inevitable high wages, is about to slough her sheltered mediocrity. In the Denmark after the war, though not, perhaps, at once, it will no longer be possible for the comfortable, ambitionless Dane to sink easily into hungerless ease. It will be no longer possible for the clerk who has lost his job to slip easily into that other " round the corner." The Machine is going to replace the Man, and the Man—poor devil!—is going to be speeded up. He is going to be asked brutally, " What can you DO?" There is going to be inequality of

reward for inequality of service, instead of the "just-enough-to-go-round" system of to-day. The man with ambitions is going to show—nay, is already showing himself. Denmark is about to emerge from her haven of ease into the stormy waters of competition—that fierce, ruthless competition of modern business, in which the battle is to the strong; in which the big fish eat the little as assuredly as they eat one another in the bosom of the vasty deep And she is about to develop—perhaps she has begun to develop—the genus known in Great Britain as "the Business Shark."

For remember, when the Great War is over and the last gun has sounded across the graveyards of Europe, little Denmark, easy-going Denmark, with much of her war business withdrawn, but with the new organisation machinery created by the war hungry for food, will be face to face with the new Battle for the Markets, which in its earlier stages will be the battle of the neutrals. With the quantity of *matériel* which after the war will have to be replaced, and before the financial machine in the warring countries gets into its stride again, and after those first possible strike-waves have run their course throughout the warring countries when the soldiers come back from the trenches and find the Woman in their old places and ten men for one job, the outside countries will scramble for the business of the fighting countries. But later, Denmark will find herself face to face with the now warring countries, who, with that new Production for Use which has developed under the stress of war, and with the enormously increased national efficiency

resulting from the civil conscription, as with the passing, for example, of Free Trade and the coming of Colonial Preference in England, will prove more than ever inclined to develop their national resources and fend for themselves, making the getting of new business extremely difficult. And yet Denmark will have to fight for this business; it is the condition of her new feverish existence. She has before her the choice either of taking her share in the international business *mêlée*, in the fight for the world markets, or going under, going back into the Slough of Despond of the past.

With the morals, the rights or wrongs, the desirability of undesirability, the advantages or disadvantages, of this new phase, the writer here has nothing to do. He simply presents what he believes to be the facts—facts which he freely admits may be radically modified by unforeseen circumstances, though he is not blind to the ugly and dangerous sides of Big Business.

One of the most interesting studies is to watch the psychology of Denmark's new business man under the influence of the new ideas. The man in the top-hat and fur-lined coat doesn't look quite easy in his new part. The hat has a tendency either to tilt sideways upon the top of the smooth round Danish skull or, if he be a Jew, to come a trifle down over the ears. In this transition stage from "Little" business to "Big" there appear to be countless nuances. There is the man who has reached the altitude of striped cashmere trouserings, white vest-slip, and morning-coat, but still feels more at home in a bowler than

in what even to-day is looked upon in the countries of Big Business as the hall-mark of Finance—the shiny topper. There is the man, and I often walk behind him, who sports an ebony stick with an over-balanced silver mount which he carries under a topper one size too small; his brother who still wears a home-spun coat with the smooth broadcloth of civilisation. There is the man, and him I sometimes meet at the Palads, who looks as if he had just run out and thrown himself into a ready-made evening suit, despite its cut and costliness, who is not quite certain what he ought to do with his hands, or whether finger-bowls are made for washing in or drinking out of. There was the gentleman I met the day before yesterday who, determined, perhaps, to go one better than civilisation, wore an opera-hat in broad daylight. And there are others.

But what I have noticed, and what, in its way, I think stands to the credit of Denmark, is the devotion, and not always lip devotion at that, which the Danish business man of the new stage, even though he be a *klausulbryder*, pays to the conception of the English business man, who is what the Dane calls a "gentleman." Of course, at times it is but the tribute that vice pays to virtue, but more often it is not. Heads of big businesses have come to me and expressed their satisfaction and happiness when they have the opportunity of doing business with an English gentleman. For the Dane, he stands first in the world—for honour, probity, and fair play. Danish business is, or certainly was before the war, itself straightforward and simple. It does, or did, not care—though, unfortunately, it

will now have to care—for the subtleties and evasions and " deals " of Big Business. The Dane admires the American business man, but he is too " smart " and perhaps too hustling. He admires German organisation and thoroughness, but the man after the Danish heart is John Bull, Gentleman. John Bull has a lot to live up to.

And this is all the more curious in Denmark's modern business atmosphere, because, rightly or wrongly, I believe I have noticed a tendency under the new inflation to a lowering of the business morale; for the Danish business man has, as a whole, been incapable of dirtiness in business. He is not by nature a trickster. In Great Britain certain sins, where a man has gone over the invisible line known as " sailing too close to the wind," have meant his being down and out for ever with " decent " men. Of course he may, and sometimes does, fall to a lower stratum where he manages to do business of a sort; and one is also forced to confess that this " sailing too close to the wind " has at times a habit of differentiation according to the individual case, but taken as a whole there are certain business sins which place a man outside the category of his fellows for all time.

In the Denmark of to-day there appears to be a certain forgiveness of sins which may or may not be a tribute to Danish good-nature, but I am forced to say that at times it appears to be a venal forgiveness, depending to a certain extent upon the evasion by the wrong-doer of the Eleventh Commandment—the sin of being found out. But even where the man is found out and makes money, there seems to be a

tendency to forgive and forget, for the making of money appears to be sufficient quittance for all. At the same time, it must be pointed out that this applies at present but to a small minority, for the Government, which has handled the helm of the Danish ship of State so excellently through the troubled waters of the present war, has been especially severe against the sin of *klausulbrud*. However, it is a dangerous precedent, and, like the gold-fever, is apt to be infectious.

Already the Big Men of the future are showing themselves—those men who are always developed under stresses like those of the present war. These are the men who yesterday were Nobodies, but to-day are Captains of Finance. They are the men of imagination—for the modern business man without imagination is an eagle chained to a perch—the men with the Big Idea, the men who, like the young war-horse, already sniff the battle from afar, hear the roar and surge of those whirlpools of commerce which are making themselves felt underneath the red surge of war.

These are the men, perhaps only a score or two, who, unconscious themselves of their task from an ethical standpoint, have had placed in their hands by Fate the guidance of the New Denmark, not only into the stormy waters of Big Business, but into imaginative oceans and the Big Idea. These are the men who, believing themselves that they are doing it only "to make money," are about to speed up sleeping Denmark; are to be the prime movers, in its earlier stages at least, of the guidance of Denmark under wider horizons, under more spacious skies. They are the centres, however unconsciously, of the waves of a new *stemning*,

from whose offices and personalities pass out those influences as intangible and as carrying as the Marconi waves, leaving, as they will, no section of Danish life untouched. Pioneers as they are, way-clearers for the artist who is to follow them, and to whom they so often seem in unresolvable, irreconcilable opposition, like war itself, they have been necessary to break up men's minds for the reception of the newer ideas.

I have in mind as I write the offices of one of these men, with which I have some slight acquaintance. It is an office which is run like a machine, but with a man behind it—the "*Deus ex machina.*" The whole place is strung together upon electric wires. The dictaphone has taken the place of the human dictator. The telephone of the messenger. The cable has replaced the letter. It has one of the most perfect systems of filing and inside departmentalising in Europe. Its men and women, like the man at the head, are filled with ambition to do their bit. And it is the model office with which the Denmark of the future is going to be patterned if that Denmark is to live. It is the office of the Idea. To-day almost unique in Denmark, to-morrow it will be one of many others, with behind all the Idea of Combination.

For the price of existence for Denmark in this Age of the Combine is going to be Combination—that Combination which she lacks in so eminent a degree. The Dane, as I have elsewhere said, is a confirmed individualist. He on the whole detests the Idea of Combination, whether on the football field or in that other field of sport—Big Business. He more or less likes to work alone, and has not learned the lesson

that the lonely man is the unsuccessful man; that the price of survival in the world of capital is the agglomeration of capital; that ten men who put their capital together can do infinitely more than those ten men separately; that to survive is literally to combine—something that one day the nations will learn in their National Economy, as, in fact, they have begun to learn it under the war. The Dane in finance is an anarchist, despite the fact that in agriculture he is the world's greatest co-operator.

I have gone into this question of combination with business men of all sorts and sizes, from a man who is bordering on millionairedom to a little man struggling to keep his head above water in the supplies trade. To one of the former type I had expressed my perhaps amateurish amazement that it had not been found possible to instal an Insurance Trust for the three Scandinavian countries, which as an outsider seemed to me an obvious procedure. To one of the latter type, a little man up four flights of stairs, I had been expressing something of the same kind in connection with another matter.

What both men told me was substantially the same, but the way the little man put it to me was the most picturesque and striking. I give his words almost verbatim.

"No Dane," he said, "if he can help it, will combine; he hasn't the idea. For example, in my own line of business I sell a certain fitting at thirty kroner a dozen, which leaves me a fair profit. No sooner do I do this than Petersen over the way jumps in with a kroner reduction, and Jensen next door with another half-

kroner, and so on, until there is no profit for any of us. And this," he added, " is an article which could easily be controlled by half a dozen men in Denmark."

When I asked him why they did not combine for mutual protection, he replied bitterly by telling me a story which he had heard in America about a man who, being shown around an asylum in which four hundred lunatics in the exercise-ground were being looked after by half a dozen warders, asked, " What would happen to those warders if the lunatics combined ?" to which came the answer, " Lunatics never combine !"

When to another man I happened to throw out the suggestion that in order to popularise the use of a certain machine the different sellers of the machine should club together to hold film lectures in the different Danish towns, inviting the heads of departments and business chiefs to the show, he looked at me as though he had been struck dumb or as though I were a lunatic myself. Then he said, slowly, sadly, " But, sir, you don't know Denmark."

This national lack of Combination, and always excepting the Co-operative Movement, runs through everything in Denmark, even down to those English Club Committees who invite the speaker of English to lecture for them, and who, incidentally, are some of the best hosts in existence. It sometimes happens that the speaker will have to make a long, expensive journey to a town in Jutland, spending a couple of days on the lecture, and perhaps a few days or weeks later have to give another lecture in a town only a few miles away, and so have to make an additional journey

When it is asked why a Central English Control Committee is not appointed to share expenses and arrange for lectures to be given in two adjoining towns upon consecutive nights, the answer usually comes: "We have tried to get something of the sort, but found it impossible. Our people don't seem to be able to get together."

Perhaps this lack of the Combination Idea is really a fine tribute to Danish individualism, if it were not that one is tempted to ask: "Is it that the Dane is an individualist, or merely 'can't be bothered'?" Slavish combination, that slavish combination of benevolent bureaucracy which Kings and Revolutionists both seek to introduce, is a soul-sapping thing—rank anarchy is better; but there is the happy mean, where the fullest play is allowed to the individual genius under sane combination for the good of the community—the kind of thing you have in the Danish Co-operative Movement.

Big Business at any rate, which, like Necessity, knows no law, will have to have the combination, which, although in the beginning used for the baser ends of mere money-making, in the end, like the Big Business for which it stands, must have profound effects upon the national character and temperament.

XIV

EUROPE'S PACIFISTS

DENMARK, though Denmark doesn't know it, is a country of paradox. The Dane himself is unparadoxical; the country, full of contradictions.

There is the paradox of the Dane as a fighting man. In England, when somebody mentions the Danes, one conjures up visions out of the vasty deep of winged warriors of the Sagas with Robinson Crusoe mustachios hanging on their breastplates, with a shield for a waistcoat, and a sword for a walking-stick. One thinks of the Berserk gentlemen who had the pleasant little habit of dropping across the North Sea, a-raping and a-burning and a-killing. Even to-day the Englishman expects to catch the glint from the deep blue of the Danish eye, feel the heads, if not be-helmed, at least be-hatted, carried a trifle hard-by. Sense the traces of the people who were once the fiercest fighters in Europe.

The only helm I have seen in Denmark is a nice large floppy hat, or a spread-eagle "bowler" at the most. The only sword is the walking-stick or umbrella, and the only breast-plate one of those soft leather air-tight abominations in which the Dane swathes himself, and, alas! herself, in the cold weather. The strapped sandals have made way for the long square-

toed boot of civilisation, in an out-size, and no breastplate that was ever tailored for a Viking would go round his descendant, who has a waist measurement of his own.

Now, I am quite prepared to admit that the bump of pugnacity can be overdeveloped—that on the whole it is perhaps overdeveloped in the Isle of Fogs. I am entirely convinced that the tongue and brain and the arbitration-table will one day replace the bloody mess of what Kipling calls " spurting death through a hose," and even the gentler arts of poison fumes and burning sprays. I will even admit that a country may have a high fighting and a low intellectual culture. But here I am not concerned with the ethics of combat, but with the facts.

The modern Dane is *the* hater of war. He is Europe's only pacifist. " The tap o' the drum " is to him simply an irritating reminder that there is uniformed death in the world. The flag ? Oh yes, the *Dannebrog*, as the national flag is called, is a pretty thing to run up on your flagstaff on Sundays over your garden allotment or before your house—for, another paradox, the pacifist Dane is the biggest flag-wagger on the planet. Denmark is bestrewn with the white cross on the red ground which " from heaven fell." But to him uniforms are relics of barbarism, as they undoubtedly are.

In one of my public lectures I ventured to trace the inspiration and power which had built up the British Empire to the love of combat. There were references to Drake and Frobisher and Raleigh—to the brave days of old when men cut and slashed one another

inaccurately and unscientifically instead of by the methods of civilisation—of poisoning and maiming and burning your adversary out of God's image; of touching a button and hurling a ton of hell upon a man below the horizon whom you have never seen, and who, for all you know, may have no existence. I tried to throw on with a laden brush something of the Elizabethan colour of high galleons with the gaudy banners of Spain floating upon blue seas, and by their side, biting deep into them, the black sea-dogs of England's Admirals. And there was India and a third of the world with the blast of England's bugle blared into the dying sun from sunset to sunset.

But my audience " were not having any." The Dane admires the Anglo-Saxon immensely, but not as a fighting man. One gentleman was peacefully asleep, and after the lecture I was asked the question, which Danes of all sorts, from business men to doctors and lawyers, and even soldiers, have put to me in a tired way: " What's the good?" Well, perhaps what *is* the good ?

The first country in Europe to disarm will be little Denmark, for the moment a country begins to ask the question, " What's the good ? " and challenges, however tacitly, the immemorial right of mankind to slaughter, the throwing down of gun and sword is only a question of time. Perhaps that is how the millennium will come ! But Denmark will disarm, not to the fanfares of the peace clarions: she will have no brass bands and impassioned speeches when she does it—that is not her way—but she will do it because she is tired and doesn't want to be bothered.

I once saw a sentry at Korsør as I changed from the train to the steamer to cross the Great Belt, a gentleman who, like all Danish soldiers, bored to death, strolled up and down with laggard steps, his rifle drooping over his comfortable shoulder at an angle not provided for in the regulations of war. It was not much to carry, but it was too much for him. In a minute or two he had dropped his weapon to the trail and dragged it after him, looking the picture of relaxed humanity. He wanted " the whole dam silly business," as the Yorkshireman said about the Mayor's funeral, over, and was thinking of that *lille kop kaffe* and *smørrebrød* to come. He disarmed as Denmark some day will disarm.

I do not know a more depressing or exhilarating—just as you are a member of a Peace Society or a Boy Scout—spectacle in the world than that of a section of the Danish Army on the march. I have watched it dozens of times. First there comes to you out of the distance an odd stroke on the kettledrum; nothing rat-a-tat-tatty about it—just a stroke when the drummer lists. Then there files into view a lot of good-natured but bored-looking men, who sometimes walk in step, sometimes not, especially in the rear files, which look rather as though they had got out of bed on the wrong side and had had no breakfast—or too much. There is an officer or two on horseback, looking slightly dejected, as though they knew the whole thing was no use. Then the guns, bluff, easy-going, unmurderous weapons, drawn by sleek undertakerish horses, with the gunners on the limbers crouched like tired monkeys and smiling to the spectator, when

there *is* a spectator. And so the procession straggles along from nowhere into the unknown.

I have met one of these merry processions looking like a funeral without the corpse, and have seen an officer run across the road to the pavement and buy an *Ekstrabladet*, Denmark's evening joy. I have seen a detachment near the old bridge with what looked like ammunition trays carried by the rear files, who were laughing and "snakking" together under their breaths, and the boy-officer turn as sharply as he could manage it and reprove them . . . and after a little the "snak-snak" again. I have seen many things.

And yet . . . and yet . . . these are the sons of the men who in '64, facing fearful odds, put up one of the most desperate fights in history; grandsons of the men who in '48 defeated the massed might of Germany, and I think, I think sometimes I catch in the eyes a sort of sullen courage, a stubbornness, which might make these men in the drunkenness of battle some of the most unyielding fighters in the world. The Dane does not make "an emotional infantryman," but he might make a stubborn infantryman.

But they are bored—bored to death. Denmark has conscription, but I should never be surprised to hear that it had vanished in a night, as the early cloud and morning dew. An artist-conscript once told me that in barracks the men are so bored that where in other countries it fills them with the fight lust, sometimes turning the barracks into a pretty little private shambles, in Denmark it fills them with the lust for something to drink so as to pass the time away. He tells me that the men are bored in the morning, bored

in the evening, bored at night. The men, in the Danish idiom, " cannot hold out."

Of the Danish officer I can only say that he is the best officer in the world—the best, bar none . . . because, outside the British Army, he is the only officer with whom I am acquainted who is first of all a human being before he is a soldier. I have met him under varying circumstances—at dinner-parties and in his mess. I have spent an evening with a Lieutenant-Colonel who was as far removed from the martinet as any Jens or Hans in his regiment. He spoke to me in the sweet ununiformed way that distinguishes so many Danish officers, talked of his men like a father, and managed to get his conversation away from brass buttons and straps and " shop." I have been received by the mess of a fortress near Copenhagen where the officers were one happy family of civilians, where the Stranger within the Gates was made as free as though he were in his own house, and where all sorts of topics were discussed, from the qualities of the Irish horse to the price of eggs. The Colonel of the regiment was a father and a gentleman in one, the Major a great big boy, and the Lieutenants naughty children who, comparatively speaking, were spoiled to death.

Two things of that evening stand out in my memory. Somebody or other had arranged a surprise attack or something for the sake of practice or to prevent boredom, and as we were eating there came a rattle of musketry or machine-guns from the outside. I was startled out of my five senses, believing that Denmark had fallen into the war whilst I was dining, and would have felt ashamed of my uninsular emotion only that

I thought that at least one of the younger officers also looked startled. Machine-guns make such a nasty noise.

The other incident was the warm, earnest pressure of the hand of one of the Captains, who said to me: "You know we love everything English here in Denmark." "Oh," I said, "but I am an Irishman, you know," for I not unnaturally concluded that the compliment was partially directed at myself. "Well," he said, "everything that speaks English."

But the contradiction is always there in all things Danish. In this land of easy uniforms, where people don't excite themselves over the length of a stripe or the position of a brass button, I once had an excited discussion with a Colonel about the trousers of the Danish soldier. I said, and I meant it, that I had never seen a pair of trousers upon a Danish soldier which looked as if they had been made for him . . . which did not look as if he had run away with them . . . if they were not three inches too short there was too much slack in the seat; if it wasn't the slack it was something else. With pride, he told me that if I would see his battery paraded in the morning I would see every Jens in a pair of unmentionables into which he might have been poured. I did not see them, but I will take his word for it.

There is a sort of *naïveté* about some Danish officers which is delightful, something of childlike pride. I had ventured to say something of what I have been writing here about the Danish infantryman to an artillery officer, who told me, "pride in his port, defiance in his eye," that the Danish soldier, despite

what I had said, was the most disciplined man in Europe. He was compelled to salute all officers of all regiments in the street, instead of only saluting, as in the German Army, I think he said, the officers of his own regiment. Certainly it is true in paradoxical, undisciplined Denmark one sees the length of the Frederiksberggade or along the Vesterbrogade a vista of salutes and saluters. I am sorry for the officers in a country where you meet a conscript every half-dozen yards. It is enough to induce wrist-drop. The private has to salute if the officer, as he very often does in Denmark, bestrides that most unmilitary of steeds, a bicycle, or if he is with his *kæreste* or " dearest one "—even, I am sure, if he were upside down. It would delight the spirit of a German " non-com."

Of course, there is a minority in little Denmark who, like the English curate, are amongst the most ferocious members of the community. But it is a minority, a very small minority, and I think, if one penetrated the deepest " innards " of some of the young officers in order to fathom the reason for their adopting a military career, one would very often discover that it was not quite skin deep—that it was the uniform, one of the most beautiful in Europe, slightly on the loose side like a French soldier's, with the pale-blue trousers, the broad white stripe, and the tight-fitting dark tunic with the high slashed collar, and the voluminous peaked cap, like that of an Italian, coming well down over the back of the head. The young officer looks a picture, bless his cherubic face! and Frøken Danmark thinks so also, with her mamma. Frøken Danmark can no more resist that tunic—or is

it the trousers?—than Fräulein Gretchen or Mdlle. Jeanette. "It's the uniform that does it," as the Bath footman said in the "Pickwick Papers;" "it *will* work its way with the sex."

There should not necessarily be any connection between patriotism and war, and perhaps in the age of the millennium there will be no such connection, but to-day the two things seem one and indivisible. Anyhow, when one thinks of patriotism, one thinks of drum-banging and cannon-shooting and flag-wagging.

Here at least Denmark is no paradox. If the Dane be the most unmilitary and the most pacific person in the world, he is surely also the least "national" and patriotic. I don't know how it is that this thing strikes one in Denmark almost more than anything else. It may be that it is because the writer comes from the country of the fiercest, most deeply ingrained of all patriotisms. It is not merely that the Dane is un-national; it is simply that in the mass, and always excepting that very patriotic minority, he has no conception of what nationality means, and I think I know why the national hero, Holger Danske, still sleeps on, his beard growing into the stone. Of course, he has a vague feeling when one puts it to him that he lacks something here, and he will say, laughing: "Oh, the foreigner thinks that because we Danes don't wear our hearts on our sleeves." But he will not deny it, nor is he, all things considered, ashamed of it. I never met a Dane yet who denied it about his countrymen in the mass, except one old lady rising eighty who was still living back in the Middle Ages and talked of

the war of '64 as though it were the day before yesterday, much as we Irish speak of '98. Though, if the country were attacked, it is not outside the bounds of possibility that the Dane might undergo the psychological change to the patriotism which we have seen throughout Europe in the Great War, only I do not think it would be a frenzied patriotism.

But I go farther. It is not only that the Dane in the mass has no national feeling, but that when patriotism shows itself he is an adept at laughing it down and out. If a man in a public meeting or in a drawing-room expressed himself in those terms of deep patriotism which are the everyday occurrences of life in the United Kingdom, he would be laughed at—laughed to death. That Danish "Naa-a-a!" would rise nasally on the air. He would be regarded as "touched," and would be treated with indulgence as befits lunacy.

It is another of Denmark's contradictions that Grundtvig, priest and prophet, the most patriotic and national of men, was a Dane, "the great Dane," the man who laid down as one of the two foundations of his scheme of education that it must be "national," suited to the Danish character and psychology.

But the concept of people like Grundtvig, as of the Scots or Welsh or Poles or Irish, that a country can best develop its national genius through national channels, just as the individual composing the country can best bring his personal genius to fruition through his own individual methods, has no meaning for the Dane in the mass. The Dane is ready to go outside

to Germany or England or Pekin for his culture, and beyond a small minority, like that of the High-School, does not make the slightest effort to develop his own national culture. He seeks his light from the outside, not from the inside. The Dane will rather speak any language, certainly any of the three world languages, than his own. He will fill his concert programmes with German songs and German music; he rarely goes inside his own frontiers for his music or his songs. He is an excited—the only time he is excited—searcher after foreign culture and foreign knowledge, which is all very fine in its way and, up to a point, natural, for the Dane must speak one of the great languages in addition to his own, but which need not necessarily exclude deep national culture. He is good-naturedly amused if the foreigner wants to know something of Danish culture or the Danish language. He will speak or sing or dance foreignly, never nationally.

One of the vices of Denmark, and the writer says it in all kindness and sincerity, is " the vice of going outside." If the Dane, with that trend of his to internationalism which is the hall-mark of true culture, could combine with it that feeling of nationality, which is only the consciousness of individuality, of being a creator instead of an imitator, he would start in the life-race enormously advantaged. " Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery," but it is not good for the race. As it is, he is apt to become " Jack of all trades and master of none," without his own stamp, the stamp of belief in himself and his country.

In the gymnasium which I attend we have to our

hands and tongues one of the finest collections of national songs in existence. We sing them as though we were tired to death. We howl them sometimes out of sheer ennui. Sometimes we don't finish them. We sing the same two or three songs over and over again; the step does not grow more elastic, the eye does not brighten as the sound of " Der er et yndigt Land " or " Kong Christian stod ved højen Mast " rises on the air. There is nothing of a Gaelic night at the Queen's Hall, for instance, or a Welsh Eisteddfod. We sing them in hang-dog, tired fashion.

Of course, there is in Denmark, as elsewhere, the enthusiastic nationalist minority. It is a very enthusiastic, even ferocious, minority. It is the minority which so often comes to me and laments that there is something rotten in the state of Denmark's patriotism. But, unfortunately, this tiny minority, which often is living in the irrecoverable past, this tiny minority has not always grasped, any more than the great indifferent majority, the fact that " nationality " and national feeling is not a thing for *a* political party, not a thing for *a* class, not something that is necessarily bound up with lethal weapons and flag-waving, but a thing for the whole country—something wider than frontier, deeper than flags.

The High-School, as I have shown elsewhere, is also trying to develop Danish nationality and patriotism along Grundtvig lines. But I wonder sometimes, perhaps ignorantly, whether the past has not also taken into its grave the great High-Schoolmen of old-time—the Schroeders and Kolds and Grundtvigs.

The High-School has a great part to play, and is playing a great part, but can it set back the time-clock ? Is it not that something has touched the hem of Denmark's national garment, that the virtue has gone out of her ?

XV

PROPAGANDA AND POLITICS

RIGHTLY or wrongly, one finds intimate connection between the last chapter and the present. In the world as it is, between war and politics, as between war and propaganda and between war and nationalism, there is but a hair line. The people—the only people in the world who refuse to interest themselves in nationality—are likely to be almost the only people to refuse to interest themselves politically; that is to say, in pure politics, "temperamental" politics, politics touched by the propaganda spirit.

Here at least Denmark shows none of those paradoxes in which she delights. For the Denmark of to-day stedfastly, persistently, except so far as they concern matters of bread-and-butter, and even then in a utilitarian rather than in a spiritual sense, refuses to interest herself either in politics or politicians, which is only another way of saying that she refuses to interest herself in propaganda.

As the Devil abhors the water of holiness, the Dane abhors the political meeting, just as he tacitly despises or positively dislikes the politician. It is towards politics and politicians that his scepticism takes its most acute form. In the mass, and with those excep-

tions which prove all rules, the Dane has no use for and no interest in politics other than utilitarian, and in the capital many do not trouble themselves overmuch even about these. He doesn't feel keen enough to replace them by anything else, to develop, for example, a fine, free, unconvincing anarchy; but regards them as necessary evils, like the weather, and is always willing " to let the other fellow run the country."

In the dogmatic way that the world says, " Business is Business," he says, " Politics are Politics," and leaves it there.

The root fact that every Anglo-Saxon and every Celt in the world who speaks the English language has grasped—that Politics are not " Politics," but " Life," has no relevance or existence for him. " Life " to him, upon the plane of the material, is eating and drinking, " snakking," and, in a lesser degree, marrying; upon the plane of ideas, the theatre, the concert, and the lecture-hall, simply because he is insensible to *propaganda*, whether of art or intellect, though he is himself insensible neither to the artistic nor the intellectual *as* the artistic and the intellectual. " Politics " to him are something entirely divorced from life, a wearisome mechanical round of meetings and pollings, a shifting of party where all stand for much the same thing, a counting of heads. Literally a question of the " Ins " and the " Outs," as they used to be in Great Britain before the vital changes of the last generation which have lifted certain sections of politics to the stage of a religion; something which has indeed to-day made Social Reform Politics the National Religion

of the British people, clothed with the phraseology and interpenetrant with the spirit of propaganda, without which either politics or their precursor religion are impossible.

Many Danes, and this in perfect honesty, will deny this, having in mind the more temperamental politics of the past, and will point to the political concentration of the Danish Smallholder as of other sections of the community, and to the space which politics occupy both in the Copenhagen and provincial Press, forgetting that these are almost exclusively economic politics, and, even at that, politics largely untouched by the propaganda fierceness of the clashing politics of the Anglo-Saxon, as most Danes will admit who have had experience of the Social Reform as of the more " ethical " politics of either Great Britain or the United States.

It is entirely impossible for any modern Dane to grasp the feeling that lies behind the greater and what one may call the more " temperamental " measures of pure politics, such as Home Rule, or the more ethical, as the Disestablishment of the Welsh Church. The raising of a national temperature to boiling-point under the stimulus of such a matter of mere sentiment as a form of government is a Chinese puzzle to the Dane, who, however, as a rule, knows more about, or wishes to know more about, the Irish question than any other foreigner in Europe. That in these days people will live and die for a political principle is to him an enigma insoluble. He has in the mass forgotten '48 and '64, for the Dane of to-day has a short memory. The only political problems under-

standable by him are those of bread-and-butter, for the politics of the Dane are almost wholly economic.

Twice, however, I have seen Denmark excited for a month upon a politic that was not purely economic. Once when it was proposed to sell the Danish West Indies to America. For a moment the old fires seemed to revive, and one could see the men and women of a patriotic past toddling or being helped to the polling-booths to vote upon the National Referendum. Friendships were even impaired, and the Press of Denmark carried on what, for Denmark, was quite an exciting controversy. But it was noticeable that the excitement lay with those in whom the fires of life had burnt low. The young Dane of either sex was laughingly indifferent, amused to see the "pother" of their elders. "What does it all matter?" seemed to be the verdict of the generation of to-day. Talk about "national honour" simply raised a smile of good-natured contempt and indifference. "What does it all matter?" In vain did certain sections beat the big drum of politics or pointed to the glory that was Denmark's when the world was young. Denmark shut her eyes and ears. One cannot put back the hands of the clock, national or political.

The other occasion, in a sense, had nothing to do with politics, and is another example of that delight in paradox which clings to all things Danish. Here passion seemed to run high, for the question at issue was no less than the choosing of a professor. To my untutored astonishment, something which in England would not have won half a dozen lines in any newspaper filled the Danish columns, which divided them-

selves into two camps according to the men they backed, partisanship apparently not being determined by scholastic so much as by political motives. Here at least was a case where Denmark took her "politics" seriously—even vituperatively. So strong was the feeling that even after the unfortunate man had been elected, one paper which had opposed his election refused to take its beating lying down and kept on returning to the charge, the rumblings of which were heard for many months after.

It was, despite the weirdness of the politic, the first healthy sign of propaganda passion in Danish political life, and I rejoiced. But had it been a matter of pure politics nobody would have turned a hair.

And yet this is the country which has the best organised political party in Europe—always, of course, excepting the Irish Nationalist party and what in America is known as "Tammany"—a party of great and increasing power. But it is this very party which more than anything else in Danish politics marks out that queer difference between Denmark and other countries, just as Denmark is the country where, although you seldom hear it mentioned, there is more "applied" Socialism than in any other European country.

The Danish Social Democratic party, with its battalions of well-drilled voters, a party in which the great majority of the Danish industrial workers are enrolled, bases its propaganda and its platform almost entirely upon economic issues. Whether one agrees with it or not, the lofty phraseology and an enthusiasm that is almost religious which distinguishes certain

sections of British and other European Socialism are almost absent in the party in little Denmark, where Socialism finds its expression much more in terms of kroner, in wages and hours, than in abstract idealism, whether international or otherwise, though no one denies the importance of the economic side.

Of course, from the standpoint of the political interests it represents, it may be that the party is far better advised to-day to hold itself to the questions of the bread that feeds the body before dealing with " the bread of the soul," and its leaders ought to be in a better position to judge of these things than any outsider can possibly be, as has been demonstrated by the phenomenal success of the party—in a sense, the material, the most successful in Europe. But in comparison with the movement in other countries it came a little strange upon a First of May demonstration, that day of Brotherhood and Internationalism and " the Big Idea "—whether impossible or otherwise does not matter here—to hear speech after speech delivered upon purely local questions, questions which touched, directly or indirectly, upon wages and hours and housing, and to find enthusiasm reserved for an excellent handling of the housing question; whilst the revolutionary songs of other First of Mays in England and elsewhere were replaced by one in which what one may call an economic refrain came at the end of each verse, chanted lugubriously by the assembled thousands.

All this, of course, may be exactly as it should be, and no one from the outside can presume to criticise the political tactics of another country or party; but

it is only recorded as an interesting example of the markedly economic trend of Denmark's politics, as opposed to the political and ethical sides which give their stamp to those of some other countries.

But it is on the purely propaganda side that the difference is most marked. The street-corner meeting of the English cities, that emblem of the political genius, as it is the emblem of all that is best and characteristic of Great Britain, is to the Dane an interesting psychological phenomenon. It has no relation to life or to living. When he hears of an Albert Hall demonstration of some ten thousand or of a Hyde Park Suffrage demonstration running over the million, it is to him, as, indeed, I have heard it seriously discussed, a most interesting example of "mob-madness," hysteria, or undevelopment, something for scientific analysis—the way in which one sometimes thinks the Dane regards all propaganda. As a political woman put it to me after we had been discussing one of the great London demonstrations, "We are not *quite* so mad!"

Yet, and the paradox comes up, I have never spoken to more intelligent or more interested audiences than those of Denmark, where I have addressed meetings of every kind, sort, and description, from children to grown-ups. In Europe I have never met a people who were so eager to flock together to hear a lecture, and, incidentally, to pay for the privilege; to follow with close, intelligent interest and that quick sense of humour which is the Dane's own; to develop so quickly "the soul of the crowd." I have never met a people so quick to see through anything of the insincere,

anything shallow or doubtful, as these people. I have seen them in the concert-hall applaud excitedly at intervals for half an hour after the conclusion of a recital by some favourite artist: this in the city which is regarded by the artists of the world as a stringent music test—Copenhagen. I have even seen the sections of the audience at a " test " concert give vent to their feeling for individual artists in a way which would make the demagogue rejoice.

But I have never seen, nor has anyone else, anything of enthusiasm at a political meeting—anything at least approaching violent approbation. I have been present at a great popular meeting in the Copenhagen Town Hall, addressed by Denmark's leading Ministers and by some of its best speakers, which was as solemn and unmoved as though they had come together to discuss the price of pork . . . and yet the only time the meeting was really moved to anything like enthusiasm was when one of the speakers began to show the measures the Government had taken to keep down . . . tyrants ? landlords ?—no, just that very price of pork of which I have spoken !

I have been present at political meetings where the speakers were greeted man after man with a silence which would have stopped a 12-inch projectile. I have heard songs chaunted before and during a political meeting which might have been the chaunts of the damned. I have seen an unfortunate foreigner, who, after what perhaps were preparatory agonies untold and some years of study, getting up to deliver a two-hour lecture in the Danish tongue, was greeted by a

deadly silence from a political audience, who really only began to awake to life at the conclusion of his lecture. And I thought of the way in which British political audiences receive the infrequent foreigner who has mastered the English tongue and tries to address them in it—the encouraging hearty applause, the frequent punctuation of approval or dissent, and then that thing unique in political meetings, the whole-hearted roar of thanks at the close.

It is not that the Dane is unappreciative—he is one of the most appreciative of listeners—but it is physically and psychologically impossible for him to work up enthusiasm for anything in the nature of politics. One might as well expect a hen to take to water. Not for him the tense expectancy of the English or Irish, Welsh or Scottish political meeting. Not for him the rising wave of enthusiasm or dissent. Not for him those billowing waves of feeling that rush across an Anglo-Saxon audience as the wind across the grass. Not for him the boiling-point and zero of the Albert Hall or Hyde Park. He simply cannot understand it, any more than he can understand the love of combat.

And once more, this is the country which has, through its politics, carried out some of the most far-reaching social and political reforms in Europe. It has been one of the first countries, not only to give the vote to women, and that without struggle, but has made them eligible to sit in its Parliament. There exists perhaps no parallel in Europe to the way in which, within a hand-span of years, it has raised its

peasants from a feudal condition to that of one of the most educated and independent peasantries in the world; whilst of Denmark alone it can uniquely be said that by the wise application of State control it has practically abolished poverty—certainly the pressing, pinching poverty of the great cities of modern civilisation. It has also developed a minority of women politicals who occupy a high place in comparison with their political sisters of almost any other country, as they form certainly one of the best audiences it has been my privilege to address to Denmark, and the only political audience I have seen touched with something like the spirit of enthusiasm.

But all these are but the exceptions to prove the rule—the rule that makes Denmark the country which, of all, has the least enthusiasm for politics.

Why is it ?

The Almighty left out two lobes of the Danish brain when he made Holger Danske—the propaganda lobe and another with which I will deal in the next chapter, which hangs closely together with this chapter and the preceding, which is only another way of saying that he has left out the " enthusiasm " lobe. Outside music and the theatre no Dane has any capacity or any understanding of enthusiasm. He could no more be enthusiastic about a man's politics than he could be enthusiastic about a man's religion. If John the Baptist came to Denmark they would not stone him—no Dane is sufficiently enthusiastic for that—they would simply flock after him in the streets, criticise his camel's hair and wild honey, listen to his propa-

ganda, and go away with their tongues in their cheeks, laughing and sceptical . . . just as they go away sometimes from the lectures which they follow so avidly—interested, amused, and . . . unconvinced.

But behind all this lurks the paradox which lurks behind all things Danish. In the world there is no more Social Animal than the Dane, as I have shown. He stands unique in his hospitality, his friendliness, his love of intercourse with his fellows. Surely this last is the very heart of politics throughout the world, as it has been the heart of all religious movements—the desire to do something for one's fellows, for one's class, to be " friendly." In most countries it is this which has led to that modern tendency, the tendency to cohesion, to mass together in the street demonstration, in the political meeting, at the polling-booth, to " propagand "—surely this should have made the Dane an enthusiastic politician.

But his love of coming together is not the development of the Political-Social Sense, but of the Convivial-Social. There is plenty of social life of the " dinner " type in Denmark, but no Social Life of the public type in the Anglo-Saxon sense of the word. " The passion for meddling with other people's private affairs," as the Dane might put it, does not exist amongst the inhabitants of Denmark.

That tense high feeling of public responsibility, which is another word for Public Life, and which is to be met with all over Great Britain, has little existence in Denmark, where the Public Sense is a rarity, even sometimes amongst those engaged in political life.

The Danes are the greatest talkers in Europe, but I can lay hand on heart and say honestly that I have never heard a single Dane who from the platform was a master of speech, with the power of the orator to sway the mass to his will, to play upon them as a musician plays upon a mighty organ, passing at will from *diminuendo* to *crescendo*, perhaps because no player can play without his instrument. Lloyd George himself could not do it.

But they don't produce Lloyd Georges in Denmark. They don't produce them for the very good reason that the production of the Lloyd George needs a certain "atmosphere." It needs belief in something—earthly or unearthly. It needs what I will call, for want of a better word, the "spiritual" view of life. Now, Denmark does not believe.

Only, and there is always an "only" in Denmark, though the Dane is heavily uninterested in politics and politicians, especially of his own country, he is tremendously, eagerly interested in personality even when it is to be found in the politician. He does not bother much about principles—he *does* bother about persons. For in these things at least the Dane, intellectual as he is, has not yet passed the teething stage. The personality of a man like Lloyd George, for example, has an extraordinary working upon the Danish imagination. I have seen a Jutland audience fill a Town Hall nearly to the doors in order to hear a lecture *in English*—a lecture only advertised a couple of days before. I have had before me audiences in different parts of Denmark to whom the passionate

Celtic psychology and political feeling of a man like Lloyd George were a dark room, entranced by the personality of the man. But if Lloyd George had been born a Dane the chances are the world would never have heard of him, for his oratory, having nothing upon which to feed, would never have been developed . . . the Danish attitude to politics and the politician would have killed him as, in a sense, it killed the work of that other great politico-religious propagandist, Grundtvig, who also was the leader of his people.

Of all the social phenomena which Denmark presents, this is the most astounding and outstanding—a country without propaganda. A country without the street meeting. A country without proselytisation. A country in which nobody seems to have the least desire to interfere with either a man's soul or his politics, with anything more serious than a man's digestion ! I have never seen either a religious or political tract in Denmark, though I will not say they have no existence. No one has ever stopped me in the street to ask me anything about my destination, either terrestrial or eternal. I am not sure that anybody was interested in either, or thought it quite decent or normal to be interested. No one has spoken to me in solemn warning about the Danish Constitution or about the iniquities or virtues of the Government—about the angels and devils of Liberalism, Conservatism, and Socialism.

For Denmark is the country where the " isms " have no existence. You can have any " ism " you like, or none at all. You can go to heaven or its antipodes. Nobody cares a tinker's damn. Your

politics are your own business . . . if you are so silly as to have such a business. Politics, anyhow, is no man's business; the politicians are the lost souls of the " No Man's Land," the limbo to which the Dane relegates his politics as his propagandists.

XVI

THE LAND OF THREE-DIMENSIONS

If one believes that the reaching out of mankind has been shown in the past, first, by the patriotic instinct in one of its multitudinous forms, then, later, by the religious instinct of the dogmatic type, and in our own time by the democratic-political instinct which shows an ever-increasing tendency to be transformed by the "religious" or propaganda spirit (particularly in its non-dogmatic form), and that all these three instincts are in the twentieth century undergoing kaleidoscopic changes, so that one no longer can separate one from the other, the whole blending and leading into that new stream of expression which the Twentieth Century is trying to find for its spirit—a sort of International non-dogmatic, politico-religious faith . . . then we shall find the present chapter following upon the two preceding in a natural sequence. If our assumptions about the patriotic and political sides of Denmark have been correct, and nobody knows better than the writer how vehemently they are likely to be challenged with the challengers differing amongst themselves, then we shall expect to find a corresponding atmosphere in the sphere of religion and imagination. If there has been limitation or atrophy in the one, we shall find

limitation or atrophy in the other: we shall find an atrophy or non-existence of that Sixth Sense which is the distinguishing mark of the threshold between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Now, Denmark in the mass, and with those inevitable exceptions which have been allowed for throughout this analysis of a people, lives conscientiously within the limits of her five senses. She hears; she sees; she smells; she tastes; she feels. She limits herself, or is limited strictly, by the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and touch. In other words, she is brain-limited. For her, outside these five senses, the universe has no existence; her universe is a length-breadth-depth universe. She is the land of three-dimensional existence; the land where the Majesty of Matter, the material concept of the universe, is universally acknowledged.

This might have been the real "rottenness" of which Hamlet spoke, because it is the rottenness of matter without imagination to inform it. For the very vital principle of life, from amœba to man, is imagination. When imagination ceases, and imagination cannot continue to exist inside three-dimensions alone, dry rot sets in. For imagination is the gift of the gods, and Denmark has not yet learnt the lesson of the man who wrote: "There is neither good nor ill, but *thinking* makes it so."

It is this national lack of imagination which lies at the root of that eternal infernal phrase, "We are but a little people!" as it lies at the root of the exaggeration of the local sense which stands behind the phrase. The Dane is intensely local; despite his admiration and imitation of other lands, an admiration and imita-

tion which, divorced as it is from the only reaching out that can lead to anything, an Internationalism based upon the National Idea, seems but to deepen in him the sense of locality. " We are but a little land —a little people." Here, again, is but the result of that lack of imagination, of intuition, of the " Sixth Sense " of which I have spoken; for as man progresses to the god it may be that " the stars become his playground, the universe his home."

The Dane himself, perhaps through that keen intelligence of his which takes the place of imagination, sometimes has the feeling of this, that there is something lacking. I will not say it makes him uneasy, though the working of imagination through matter always breeds unrest, but at least he has to bring to his help his eternal scepticism. He disposes of the whole thing by simply saying it has no existence " except in the imagination," as though anything could have existence " outside " the imagination. He has become a past master in laughing all things out of existence which he doesn't understand, or with which he doesn't want to be bothered. Unfortunately, or fortunately, for him, these things cannot be annihilated by laughter, as the whole trend of modern science and religion shows.

And here, right at the beginning, one is faced with the difficulty which faces all people in Denmark who dare to get outside the five senses or the three dimensions. It is the difficulty of conveying to the Danish mind one's meaning, the danger of being misunderstood; or, still worse, of being accused of " preaching ;" or, worst of all, of being " religious." There are two words which in Denmark are taboo—one " religion "

and the other its corollary, "spiritual." (The Danes have no word for "spiritual.") To the great mass of educated opinion in Denmark the first is another word for "superstition," or for "dogma," or for "church-going;" the second a word of doubtful "churchy" associations, an unscientific word, a word without meaning. The Dane recognises the physical, the intellectual, even the "moral;" the "religious" has no meaning for him outside the four walls of the churches which, in the mass—at least, in the cities—he does not attend.

To the Danish audience it is a positive danger to use either the one word or the other. Again and again from the platform, when I have used the word "religion" or "spiritual" in their modern and non-dogmatic senses, I have been conscious of that look of puzzlement upon the faces of my audience—needless to say, like all Danish audiences, intelligent—have seen something like a veil drop before the eyes of my listeners and sometimes a kindly little smile of doubt and scepticism come to the lips. And behind, the intelligence groping round and round inside its three-dimensional cage, trying to get at the speaker's meaning, and trying vainly.

"What does he mean?" "Does he mean we should go to church?" "In what old-fashioned dogma does he believe?" "Surely he understands that all these ideas are reckoned superstition to-day?"

It is useless to explain that the lecturer scarcely ever enters a church; that he has no belief in any dogma; that when he speaks of "religion" or the "spiritual" he is speaking as exactly and as scientifically as any

physicist amongst them. It is all no use. There comes up the eternal smile of scepticism. For "the Dane laughs out of existence all that he doesn't understand."

It is just this curious lack in the Danish mentality which makes certain four-dimensional passages in writers so widely divorced as Shaw, Kipling, and Poe, so much Greek to the average Dane.

For this is the other lobe which the Almighty left out of the brain of Holger Danske—the lobe of the Sixth Sense, of imagination, of intuition, of religion—call it what you will. The Dane, with certain exceptions, not only deliberately shuts out from his thoughts or his investigations anything outside the plane of material, but he bangs, bolts, and bars the door in the face of the eternal. He stops each cranny, and is determined that nothing which he cannot hold in his hand, see with his eye, hear with his ear, that he cannot weigh in his balance or dissect with his scalpel, shall have admittance, though he knows full well from his own physical science, as he knows from the police-court records of circumstantial evidence, that of all guides the five senses are the most deceptive; that there are sounds which are so great or tiny that they cannot be heard, movements so fast or slow that they cannot be detected.

In a word, the thought of Denmark is old-fashioned, untouched as it is by that spiritual Renaissance, or rather, perhaps, spiritual reaction, against the material concept of science as of life which saw its dawn throughout Europe in the nineties, and found the beginning of its flood in the Great War. It is a science, as a life conception, of the purely material which, as in the

time of the late Professor Tyndall, not only seeks to limit human thought to the plane of the material, but regards what is called the "immaterial" as being unworthy the attention of any serious man, as something indecent—for Science, like Society, has its Mrs. Grundys, just as some of its representatives have taken the place of the dogmatists of the churches.

Now, this would not matter in Great Britain and some other countries where the scientist, outside the purely physical, and in his endeavour to annihilate what for want of a better term one may call the "super-physical," has never been taken seriously by the masses of people, who, with the unfailing instinct of collective humanity, have refused to have their intuitions or their imagination held in thrall by any dogmatist, whether scientist or priest, however exalted he might be in his own sphere. But in Denmark, as in Germany, the scientific man is taken very seriously indeed, and in a curious sense, perhaps through the high intellectual standard of the Dane, colours the thought of educated and, to a certain extent, of uneducated Denmark. Physical science, or rather the material conception of science, in fact, stands in the position it occupied in England in the Huxley-Tyndall period, when the science of the material was popularly looked upon as a new life-giver—a dead saviour to save the race from outworn dogmas and defunct religions.

Denmark, who is so far ahead of Great Britain in matters of pure intellect and in the artistic sense; Denmark, who has disposed once and for all of "transition stage" problems such as whether women should

have the vote, just as she has disposed of those which, in the sphere of literature, deal with what is and is not permissible to the artist, stands just as far behind her upon the plane of imagination.

She has, in fact, so deliberately stultified and strait-jacketed her imagination that, like her intuition, it has almost ceased to exist, except, perhaps, amongst a minority, and even then too often in its cruder forms. Her science, apparently, if one is to judge by its reflex and interpretation in the popular mind, has been almost untouched by that new spirit which, instead of unscientifically laying bounds to the scientific domain, and shutting out from it all investigations upon the plane of the superphysical, is now carrying it into other spheres, as it has been carried by such modern scientific giants as Alfred Russel Wallace, the contemporaneous discoverer of the principles of evolution with Darwin; Sir William Crookes, one of Europe's greatest analytical chemists; Arthur James Balfour, philosophic writer and late Prime Minister of Great Britain; and Sir Oliver Lodge, the head of Birmingham University and President of the British Association in 1913, as of leading scientists of other countries.

In the writer's somewhat slight experience of the Danish scientific man personally, as in his wider experience of Danish semi-scientific opinion in the mass, he has been struck by the *naïveté* of the national outlook upon such matters, and its easy dismissal of all investigations upon the planes of the superphysical to fancy and superstition—in other words, by the attempt to cramp that imagination which should be

the very fount of science, by setting limits to it, as though one should say to the novelist, as, indeed, it has in effect been said in some of the Anglo-Saxon countries: " You shall write only on this and this."

That radium which has been the disintegrator of the older-fashioned material science, as it has been the sun-burst to lighten new worlds to the scientist, has yet to shed its rays on Denmark.

And it is this spirit, or absence of spirit, which runs through so much that is Danish—through the *Doktor Disputats* (literally " Disputations of the Doctors," in which the applicant for the degree of Doctor is " tried out "), where the atmosphere is almost painfully matter-of-fact, and in some of which, whether ill founded or not, one has the feeling that all incursions into the superphysical are banned as being the marks of a disordered, disorderly intellect, coupled with that other feeling, that the idea underlying the *Disputats* is to catch out the " new boy " in some bloomer. It runs through the Danish newspapers, where spiritual discussion is strictly barred, as it is barred in the dining-room. It is to be found everywhere.

The fact that science is in the throes of disintegration, that each year sees new barriers between the physical and superphysical thrown down, that the New Synthesis is at work, apparently leaves Denmark unmoved. It is scarcely conscious of such things. It shuts its eyes and ears upon the principle that what you can't see or hear has no existence.

For the Danish scientific man, as a man, one has nothing but admiration. He is so unscientific. Of all European scientists, the Dane is surely the least

pretentious and the most natural and human. Scientists do not "give themselves airs" in Denmark, or relegate to themselves the right to determine the destiny of the universe. You may, as the writer has done, sit in the society of two of the world's most distinguished scientists and never hear a word of "shop" from either during the evening. In the *doyen* of Denmark's scientific men, known throughout the two worlds, one sees the incarnation of the human spirit of the Danish scientist—a man who looks friendly upon all the world, is loved by all, and is accessible to all. I have many times met two of Denmark's medical scientists, one of them with an international reputation in surgery, and have always been struck by their supreme naturalness, their interest in and readiness to discuss all sorts of topics, and the absence of all that professional affectation of superiority which sometimes marks the "professional," whether scientist or artist, all the world over.

But however charming the scientists of Denmark are as individuals, and however charming and natural their lay-disciples throughout Denmark may be, the fact remains that the Danish concept of science and of life—and throughout we are speaking much more of Denmark as a whole than of the scientific men of the country—is material.

Whilst in Denmark the investigation of all things purely physical is regarded as having a common interest, a national interest, the investigation of the realms of the superphysical is regarded as of intense privacy, a matter purely and simply for the individual. The process of reasoning is not easy to follow, but it is

there. This attitude can be crystallised by the remark made to me by a Danish journalist: "A man's religion is his own business."

In nothing does Denmark distinguish itself so much from the Anglo-Saxon countries as in this: "A man's religion is his own business." In all English-speaking countries, in one form or another, dogmatic or non-dogmatic, old-fashioned or modern, a man's religion is not only supposed not to be his own business, but, as it concerns itself with the projection or end of all human activities, is supposed to be of vital importance not only to the individual, but to the nation and race—in a word, to be of public interest, a view shared by all the world's teachers from Buddha to Christ.

To try to explain the latter view to the average Dane is useless. There comes instantly that absence of the propaganda spirit, and with it that unscientific concentration upon the purely material, to act as a veil between. "A man's religion is his own business." That is the Danish dogma.

What the Dane really thinks about his immortal soul—if he has one—I am not prepared to say, because I frankly don't know, despite various attempts by Danes to localise it or even to determine its position by the balance and scalpel. Of all the hundreds of Danes of both sexes whom I have known intimately, I can truthfully say that I don't know the religious views of half a dozen. I know what they think about the latest novel; I know what they think about the public or private behaviour of Petersen or Nielsen or Jensen; I know their tastes of brain and stomach; but I don't know what they think about religion or the "spiritual"

side of life, nor can I nor anyone else find out, for all the naturalness of the Dane evaporates under any inquiry of this sort; he shuts up closer than an oyster, or, rather, dismisses the whole thing with a laugh, as he will probably try to dismiss this chapter.

Next to the absence of the propaganda spirit, the most astounding thing about Denmark is the fact that it is the only European country with which the writer is acquainted in which the women, in the mass, have not the religious instinct, even in what, perhaps, may be regarded as its more ordinary and orthodox forms. Even in countries like France, where the male has more or less abandoned—or, rather, had more or less abandoned before the war—" the idea of God "—that is to say, an unmaterial concept of the Cosmos—the women still held to it. But in Denmark the discussion of anything outside the three-dimensional view of life, even amongst women, is rare. Women in Denmark, as perhaps in other countries, when they come together, " snak " upon every subject under the sun, conceivable and unconceivable, but, although women are, of course, to be found in the Danish churches, except in certain infrequent circles neither the religious topic in its more orthodox form nor the extra-material is ever discussed.

The absence of the street-corner meeting, whether religious or political, the distaste to politics, the absence of passionate national feeling—all these things hang together with the absence of the " religious " instinct.

This has been borne in upon me many times, in the street as in the drawing-room, but not least in those more orthodox and perhaps cruder spheres of the

religious assembly, whether of the church or otherwise, and more particularly upon two occasions which stand out in my memory.

The first was in one of Copenhagen's largest State churches, famous for its service on Christmas Eve, which, incidentally, and unlike England, is Denmark's greatest Feast Day for presents and Christmas-trees —not Christmas Day. Here, I was informed, I should see something of the religious side of Denmark, and so it was that I found myself crushed into one of the side-galleries behind a great concourse of people who filled the vast white church. I was puzzled. Such a mass of people, surely, must betoken a national religious feeling which I had missed. There were men and women, children and young people, all gathered together in acknowledgment of the four-dimensional. I thought: "How do they find room for all these people on Sundays?" The devotion which could withstand the pressing and pushing must, it seemed to me, be overwhelming.

Then a hymn was given out. There was that flutter of anticipation which one hears in the concert-hall, and the place was filled with some fine "professional" singing by a choir of boys. I looked at the people around me, who all had leaflets in their hands with the hymn upon them, and waited for that full-throated devotion to which I had been accustomed in Great Britain. They were singing, some of them, but the majority were not singing, but listening to the choir, as I had seen them listen to a professional violinist or a professional singer.

You could not blame them, for the singing was some

of the most beautiful and least devotional I had ever heard. One was in a sort of theological concert-hall, listening to highly trained performers; and when a man in evening dress, which gave the final touch of the concert-room to the proceedings, extinguished the lights near the altar, and the " snak-snak " broke out around me as the merits of the singers were discussed, the secret of the vast congregation burst upon me: the majority of them had come, not for four-dimensional expression, but to hear the singing, just as they would have gone to the Tivoli or the Concert Palæ. For many of them, I discovered, this church had no existence save upon this one evening of the year.

I had found this absence of religious *stemning* in other churches in Denmark, but believed, not unnaturally, that it might be found in its more expressed form in one of those " revival " meetings, so rare in Denmark, but which in all lands are the media for one form of " four-dimensional " expression, and, unfortunately, but too often for religious hysteria. It was to be held in a tent by a converted actress who, like a second Mrs. Partington, had set herself to the task of sweeping back an Atlantic of scepticism with the broom of religion.

Memories came to me of the enthusiastic scenes at other revival meetings in tents, which have a curious capacity to concentrate the feeling of such meetings, and I thought of all sorts of meetings under canvas, from " the penitent form " of a General Booth to the great tent meetings at Keswick, in the North of England.

The tent, like the church of which I have spoken,

was packed to suffocation, the "devotees" rushing in, chattering and laughing, to find places and to wait for the star of the evening to appear on the homely wooden platform which faced the main entrance. She came, a beautiful little woman, with a voice of silver to show how beautiful Danish can be made, and a charm of speech which would have wrung blood from a stone. One waited almost instinctively for the hand-clap which would greet an old platform favourite.

She stated her case quietly and appealingly, a case touched at times by deep emotion, and the people listened. But she did not wring either blood or tears from her audience. There was an expression on their faces which made me wonder. It was something which at the beginning was undefinable, but gradually it came to me that these people had not come together to break into a new world, but to "stare." Curiosity had brought them together. They were staring their fill of the once popular favourite, curious to know the solution of such a puzzle as a woman giving up the substance of a great stage career for the shadow of the religious platform. The men were interesting studies. They stood in rows and stared, stared, not with any offensive intention, I am sure, for the Dane is never offensive, but *curious*, absorbed, some of them with their hats on their heads.

Whether the speaker knew it or not, she had but exchanged one stage for another.

Where were the gusts of passion, of feeling? Where was the enthusiasm, the frantic singing of the "Glory Song" of a Torrey-Alexander or a Moody and Sankey meeting? Where were the men and women, heads

in hands, the tears streaming down their cheeks, praying, praying ?

I did not hear one sigh, one groan—see one movement of feeling. No one got up "to give testimony." No one evinced any more feeling than if they had been in the presence of a graven image.

Of course, it may be urged, and perhaps properly, that such demonstrations are the evidence of untutored, ignorant, or, as the writer would prefer to call them, undeveloped, minds; that the Danes are too highly cultivated a people to fall into such obvious transports, and so on; but I don't think the argument will hold good in its entirety, for many of the people there were no more cultivated, no better and no worse in brain power, than the masses I had seen at some revival meetings in England. In any case, the interest in such a psychological manifestation does not lie in the ignorance or knowledge composing such a meeting, but in the curious absence of the "religious" instinct, even though that religious instinct has purposely been taken in its crudest and most obvious form.

Nor is the writer insensible to the fact that in Denmark itself there is a deeply religious though insignificant minority of people who have the religious instinct, even though they do not feel so passionately about it that it sends them out to the street corner or into the drawing-room to preach it. One finds it in the High-School, in that survival of the old Blood and Fire Methodism of Great Britain, the Indre Mission, and in the increasing numbers of people who are becoming converts to the Roman Church, and beginning again to frequent the places of worship, which had been

emptying. But these are the more orthodox expressions of the religious instinct; they are but a tiny minority, and they do not vitally affect the question of the absence of what I have called the "four-dimensional" instinct, something that has not necessarily any connection with churches and dogmatic religion, amongst the masses of people as amongst the educated few. They do not radically affect the material view of life which, as a whole, stamps Denmark and the Danes.

To all the action of the materialism which, if Grundtvig is to be believed, distinguished Denmark one hundred years ago as it distinguishes her to-day, there has now come the inevitable and contrary reaction which applies to religious matters as well as to physical—a reaction which, however, is at present confined to an insignificant minority. It is the universal Newtonian law through Nature. If one is to rely upon the proper authorities, the young students of both sexes to-day show a constantly increasing tendency to anti-materialism in its more orthodox forms, something that seems to be borne out by the big membership of one of the religious students' Unions. New churches, still to take one of the more usual forms of the expression of the religious instinct, are being built and the congregations of others steadily increasing; whilst the expression of the new reaction on its grosser and more "superstitious" sides is to be found in the more grotesque forms of sand divination, fortune-telling and palmistry, with the advertisements of which the Danish Press is full. Copenhagen at least is fast becoming the happy hunt-

ing ground of the charlatan in these arts, as of the professional spiritualist medium, who, for a fee, professes to bring the living face to face with the dead, and it would not be surprising if the last state of Denmark were worse than her first. One would not, in fact, be surprised if the sceptical Denmark of yesterday and to-day rushed headlong into the "black magic" and superstition of to-morrow. From materialism to superstition is but a step. It is the penalty which materialism pays to "religion."

Behind the insensibility to religion and propaganda lies the vice of tolerance, one of the supreme vices of Denmark, who has not yet learnt the lesson that to be "tolerant" is not to be indifferent. No Dane wishes "to propagand," for to propagand is to be disturbing, and no Dane wishes to be disturbed, carrying out literally the golden rule to "Do unto others as you would they should do unto you." For there is always in Denmark "a little slumber, a little sleep, a little folding of the hands to sleep," that *stemning* of relaxation and ease.

But it is an irritating, an exasperating *stemning*, which in the man of imagination breeds "nerves," just as it soothes and anæsthetises the pleasant man. Put in another way, slightly exaggerated, as an Englishman put it to the writer, "When one lives in Copenhagen one becomes either a monk or a monkey!"

Perhaps, if Denmark could change her atmosphere she would not be Denmark, but if she could take the mummy cloths from about her imagination, throw herself open to the newer message of modern Science,

to the four-dimensional idea, with that fine, keen intelligence which is the Dane's, he might carve out for his country a new niche in history. With his artistic and literary potentialities he might write a newer Saga.

XVII

ART AND THE ARTIST

A THING that strikes the English-speaking foreigner soon after he has begun to find his feet amongst the Danes and to go into their houses and to visit their concert-halls and pictures, as in a more peculiar degree to grasp their method of literary handling, is the artistic chasm which separates the Dane from the Englishman or the American. This chasm lies not only in actual accomplishment, but in the national conception of art, and involves one of the strangest of paradoxes, as will be shown.

The difference is precisely that difference which separates certain Oriental schools of thought from those of Europe—the science of the East from the science of the West. The East, with its ethical assertion of definite cosmic aim throughout all phenomena to some appointed end—of the godship of the human being . . . the West with its implication that Evolution has no definite, no eternal, aim in itself, but is simply an endless chain of cause and effect, causeless, purposeless, relegating the human being to the position of a Divine Automaton. The difference, perhaps, into which the White World itself, whether of science or art, can be divided—that fundamental difference of life-concept

which perhaps lies at the root of the two broad divisions of humanity—the difference which, perhaps, causes the surge and wash of Evolution itself.

What I will call the Anglo-Saxon concept of art—and the art of that section of the white peoples which has given the world some of its greatest writers, poets, actors, and orators, cannot be ignored—as opposed to the Danish concept, may or may not be the right one—that is not the point at issue here—but at any rate it is vitally different.

For the Anglo-Saxon concept is essentially the ethical concept—the "passionate" concept, if one will; that of the Dane the non-ethical, the intellectual—that is, the "passionless." "Art for art's sake," to use a stereotyped but perfectly understood expression, is the inscription which seems to stand over all exhibitions of Danish painting, as it stands over Danish literature and colours the atmosphere of Danish concert-halls. "Art for God's sake, for humanity's sake," is to be found impregnating the art of the Anglo-Saxon, whether of Great Britain or America, and of the Celtic, English-speaking fringe of the two branches of Anglo-Saxondom.

One is quite conscious that such a division, as such a concept of art, just as in the concept of the national, political, and religious sides of Denmark, which all hang together with its art, will seem arbitrary and almost fantastic to many Danes . . . because of their very unfamiliarity with an ethical concept of art. The writer is in the same position as the man who rushed in to separate the man and his wife and received the abuse and the blows of both; he may be regarded

as a sort of "religious" fanatic by the majority, and will receive the objurgations of the minority, who will declare that he has overlooked them. Nevertheless, he will put the case as it comes to him.

Right at the beginning any holder of the Anglo-Saxon concept is faced by the unpleasant difference between the *average standard of technical accomplishment* in Denmark as compared, for instance, with Great Britain, and this despite that sceptical self-criticism which one finds in so many Danes, who sometimes pooh-pooh the art of Denmark. Whether the Danish concept of art is right or wrong, there can be no doubt that, either by accident or design, the concept is associated with a much higher artistic standard, whether of music, decoration, painting, and, in its public concept, of literature, than is to be found in Great Britain. And here it is necessary to point out that what is spoken of is not the individual giant only, but the thing that really matters—the *national* artistic standard, to which, of course, the giant contributes. A nation may produce half a dozen artistic supermen who straddle the world, and yet, from the standpoint of development, rank below a nation of the same size which has never produced one. If there be any objective in life, it is not to produce merely the individual genius, but to raise the life-standard.

Here is a little nation of some three millions which turns out painters, and good painters at that, by the hundred, poets by the dozen, and writers galore—a nation which also produces certainly more than its proportionate share of the bigger men, whether painters or writers. It is almost not too much to say

you fall over a new writer in every newspaper column, a new singer in every concert-hall, a fresh painter at every street corner, as he is to be found in every meadow, on every strand of Denmark. The number of men who can write, whether journalists or novelists or both, is bewildering. One leaves out a unique figure like that Danish critic who is perhaps Europe's greatest critic, or musical artists of International fame, and comes again to the only thing that is the measure of the art of a country—the Great Average; and once again one is astounded by the number of Danes who can sing, and sing well, who can sculpture, who can play. The whole country is covered with teachers of singing who have pupils by the score, pupils high above the British average. Everybody you meet seems to be either actually learning to sing or paint, or to be about to do so, and this, not in the " accomplishment " way of Brixton or Clapham, not as something superimposed, but as a means of expression, for, thank God ! the suburban back drawing-room piano and pianist is almost unknown.

At least, there are few middle-class people who are unable, and not an inconsiderable number of what we miscall the " lower class " in England who are able, to give critical appreciation or depreciation to the artist, whether he be singer, painter, instrumentalist, or writer.

It is no flight of fancy that the artist, whatever his art may be, who comes to Copenhagen has to face criticism of a high order—it is fact. It is fact, because the artist has not only to face the critics, who are perhaps no better and no worse than the professional

critics of other countries, but of some of whom it can at least be said that they try to encourage the young artist in a way which does credit to a difficult profession, but he has to face something much more genuinely critical—the public.

In the Danish theatre you do not find the public applauding cheap sentiment or trashy declamation. No artist in the Danish concert-hall, however brilliant, can hope to capture his audience with mere fireworks. The lady with the high " F " or the long-haired gentleman who can play one of Paganini's brain-breaking exercises without mistake or feeling has little chance in Denmark, because the Dane is not affected by artistic gymnastics, as, for instance, is sometimes a Queen's Hall or Albert Hall audience in England.

In literature it would be quite useless for the publisher, in order to attract the buyer, as one has seen in England, to state in his advertisement of a book that behind the love-story stood the love-story of the author himself. It would only lead to laughter—Danish laughter, which can be caustic as well as sceptic. The Danish public in the mass have not, as they have in their science, placed a strait-jacket around their authors telling them what is and is not permissible in literature. There are no " forbidden subjects " in Denmark. You can discuss everything, from the inherent depravity of your grandmother to the virginal beauties of Skagen, the watering-place of fashion, where both the sand and the people are usually to be found in " the altogether."

The unfortunate writer is not, as is sometimes the case both in America and Great Britain, faced with the terrors of that censor of public morals, Mrs. Grundy,

who, however, even in Anglo-Saxondom so often contrives to be evaded. There is no Mrs. Grundy in Danish literature outside the conscience of the artist—if he has one, which is all as it should be. In the estimation of the Danish reading public, the study of mankind is man; of the artist, the world, without care for either creed or prejudice or sentiment, and without qualification.

In the world of the stage, despite the fact that a censorship of a sort exists, the wretched author is not faced with the official idiocy of a British Stage Censor, is not handicapped whilst he writes, as was the now notorious American pianist who, playing to an audience of cowboys in the Wild West, bore the device on his back: " Don't shoot the pianist; he's doing his best." You may get your play refused because its technique is wrong, or because its art is wrong, or because it is a piece of sheer " made " idiocy: sometimes even because it will not pay—and I think there has been a marked decline in the art of the Danish theatre since the war—you will never get it refused because it discusses "the hidden plague," whether that plague be the Forbidden Thing or mothers-in-law.

And when it has been accepted and produced, there will not break upon the ear of the trembling author that sibilant hiss which indicates that in some way or other he has infringed the canons of Mrs. Grundy—of what can or cannot be presented, said or left unsaid, on the stage. He can be as daring as he likes, yet I think I am right in saying that mere " daring for daring's sake " will not in itself serve to get or to hold his audience.

But there is one thing which the Danish artist has to face from which the English is free. In Denmark, the higher you climb as an artist, the more chance there is of your being thrown down and breaking your artistic neck. In England the reverse holds true. For the Dane, so undiabolical in most things, takes a peculiar and malignant delight in making a cock-shy of his great men and women. The more the rising young artist comes into the limelight, the more he discovers it to be a fierce searchlight of public criticism which watches, Argus-eyed, for falter or slip. In England, when a man has made his name—and the process there, if he be an artist, is, to put it circumscribedly, ten times harder than in Denmark—he can, in the brutal words of a well-known writer, " give the public any damn thing he likes." It is said of one very great English novelist that he has a room papered with his rejection forms; of another that it was eight years before he was able to print his first book; of yet a third that he drowned himself because he could not gain recognition, and, the irony of it, he himself was a publisher's reader who had written a book upon " Why your MSS. Return." But when the first two men had made a name they were able to pull out from their dusty, musty recesses the rejected MSS. of the past, which the editors swallowed greedily, in one case of which I have heard the editor biting avidly at an MS. which he had rejected with contumely some years before! We have even had our own cobbler of Köpenick, in the shape of a disappointed and ever-rejected writer sending in a story under the name of another man, which was printed with delight and many thanks.

There are no Köpenicks in Denmark. There is very little—praise be to the artistic gods!—writing down to the public; the artist is always assured of recognition, and that not delayed—if he really is an artist. But, on the other hand, the writer, for example, cannot unearth rotten MSS., nor can he scribble anything for a public the fine edge of whose appetite is constantly whetted with each step he climbs. They will pull him down if they can . . . and he lets them, as sure as eggs are eggs. If they get him down they will show him no mercy. The higher the climb, the greater the fall.

Which is all as it should be.

Of course, the pecuniary rewards of art in so small a country as Denmark are dreadful in English and American eyes. In the beginning no man can live by his art, whether he be writer, painter, or musician. And this also, in a way, has its advantages, for it drives the artist face to face with that world from which so many arm-chair artists shut themselves off. It compels a man to take one of those little safe positions in which Denmark abounds. But it brings him, or her, into contact with the great world. On the other hand, the man who can write does get his books or articles *printed;* he is spared those heart-breaking, hair-greying rejections of years before recognition comes. The money may be a third or a fourth of what he will get in England, but there are no Thames Embankments in Copenhagen. Denmark is too artistic for that.

You find this superiority of artistic atmosphere everywhere. In Denmark, in the poorest houses—if

there *are* any poor houses there—you are saved from the more flagrant oleograph and china dog. In the middle-class house you are spared the vapourings of the youngest but one of the family about the latest novel "by that dear darling Windermere de Vere." In nearly all Danish interiors, and certainly in those of the middle classes, there is to be found some touch of refinement, something that prisons the eye, something that you take away with you in happy memory, whilst those of the more cultured are often pictures of balanced decorative beauty. The standard of conversation, when it gets away from undiluted "snaking," and even sometimes when it does not, always, so long as it deals with art, is, to put it into brute mathematics, 25 per cent. higher than amongst members of the corresponding class in Great Britain, of whose conversational standard, from the artistic standpoint, I have frequently heard Danes, and those lovers of the English, express their amazement.

In nothing is this difference of artistic atmosphere so marked as in the Danish newspaper. Whereas, with one or two exceptions, the Danish newspaper, seen from the standpoint of pure journalism, falls entirely below that of the English paper—for the English, like the Americans, have that journalistic genius which is a form of the Social Sense—they rise correspondingly higher from the literary standpoint.

The "kroniks," or special articles, of a certain Copenhagen daily, for instance, number amongst their authors such names as Tolstoi, Brandes, Bjørnsen, and Maeterlinck, and that such a high literary standard is not altogether singular is demonstrated by the

contributions to, and literary flavour of, other papers. And contributions like these "kroniks" are not relegated to some obscure literary corner, but occupy the most prominent position in the newspaper, and are read by all sorts and conditions of men, from literary men to licensed slaughterers. And, incidentally, nothing is more significant in Denmark than the way in which towns that are not much more than villages manage to support two or three newspapers. Some day "the Man with the Idea" will come along and combine the journalism of the English newspaper with the literature of the Danish, and so secure the perfect medium for the expression of popular art.

But there is something in the Danish *stemning* which acts as a whetstone to the temperamental man, just as it lulls the easy-going to forgetfulness. Despite what I have written, this holds true of Danish art and artists. The fundamental lack in modern Danish art, taken as a whole, is that it lacks the wide horizons and Big Idea. Like the Danish mind in relation to the four-dimensional, it is intensely "local." The Danes, who are unflinching critics of themselves—at least, to the foreigner—have often admitted this, but have explained it by the invariable "We are such a little country!"—that vicious thought-circle again, as though being "a little country" explained anything; witness, for instance, Ireland with its four-dimensional concept, which it has held untouched through fifteen hundred years.

Whatever the reason, this "locality" runs through the art of the Danes, from the newspaper of which I have spoken to their pictures and their novels. In

regard to the last, a well-known Danish publisher has said to me: "No Dane can write a romance; he cannot construct it: he is too local." So far as the Danish newspaper is concerned—and the art of a nation is to be found, perhaps, more accurately reflected in its newspaper than anywhere—it concentrates too much upon what we call in England "parish pump politics" and persons. I have no hesitation in generalising by saying that to the Danish mind the most interesting item in the newspaper is the personal paragraph—the item about the comings and goings of the individual, be he never so unimportant, as his accidents and failings; the local chatter; the "Puffs from the Provinces;" the "News from Nowhere" par. The latest *konkurrence*, or competition, between two would-be professors; why Nielsen the actor didn't come home last night; why tram 1333 stopped running; or the price of butter or eggs—all these things, which in the British newspaper are relegated to the "snippet" columns, in Denmark not only meet the eye day out and day in, but are given half-columns. And, with the usual paradox, side by side with such items there will run a piece of pure literature from the pen of a Brandes or a Kipling, or the serious discussion of a play by Ibsen or Strindberg.

In the painting of Denmark one finds "locality" still more defined, as one finds it sometimes, though with some notable exceptions, amongst so many of its writers. The eternal piece of yellow strand; the everlasting sunsets; "Cows coming Home (*motiv* from Bagsværd);" the recurring pictures of interiors with the same woman seated with her *back* to the spectator

over the same piece of work, and the same hinged window slightly open upon the same strip of garden. Or that couple I know so well, who walk hand in hand by the Øresund—or is it the Cattegat ?

The fantastic, the symbolical, and imaginative one rarely sees. In the last case one has seen at least one "set" subject for the gold medal aspirations of the Young Art of Denmark resulting in something approaching fiasco. The pulsing, smashing machine of this Age of Machines; the symbol of Demos, as other symbols; the sea of the crowd; the realms of the extra-terrestrial —none of these, if one excepts the pictures of one great Danish artist who stands almost alone with one or two others, are to be met with in Danish art, which rarely emblemises passion, whether of man or machine. The pictures you meet at an exhibition like the Charlottenborg are well done—too well done—the standard of their technique is comparatively high, but they have that fatal defect: they are lacking in imagination, in passion, in power.

XVIII

ART AND THE ARTIST—*Continued*

IT is here that one stumbles upon something of the solution of the seeming paradox of which I have spoken. If the temperament of a people, if their power and passion, be expressed in their art, then the Danish attitude to Nationality and Politics, to Religion and Propaganda, will be found expressed in their art. If lack of passion, which *is* propaganda, lack of temperament, be shown in those other things, it will also be shown in the art of the country.

The art of Denmark has a high intellectual, even a high technical standard: it has a low temperamental and imaginative. Its standard of accomplishment, like the standard of the Danish artistic atmosphere as a whole, is high—its purpose and its power not so high.

As I have pointed out elsewhere, here is a country with so high an artistic standard that the working classes sometimes actually take over the finest theatre in Copenhagen for an evening, where they see Ibsen, or Shakespeare, or Strindberg, or hear an opera by Tchaikowsky or Wagner—pieces which in Great Britain would not draw five hundred people from the working classes—not a hundred. Here is a country which, in the words of one of her greatest musicians,

draws its best musical audiences from "the people." Here is a country which produces its poets and its painters multitudinously from all classes, has developed a high conception of the sphere of art, and yet this is the country the art and artists of which, as the followers of that art, leave the impression of lack of power and imagination; whilst the literature of Great Britain at least, despite all that she lacks in these respects—though, were one not speaking here only of contemporary art, one would not except those Folk-Songs of the Four Peoples, which perhaps stand first of all in Europe—often gives an indefinable impress of power, of purpose, of imagination.

The standard of the Queen's Hall, the Albert Hall, and Covent Garden, or other English orchestras, for example, may or may not be below that of the Tivoli or the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen—and the German papers themselves have written of Sir Thomas Beecham's orchestra, the members of which are, I am told, nearly all Englishmen, that it was "the finest in the world"—but they leave, and especially their audiences leave, upon the mind of the spectator an impression of enthusiasm, of purpose, of *development* under the influence of the music, which no Danish orchestra or audience give.

One can never see the Dane being influenced in his or her daily life, in their ordinary comings and goings, either by anything they hear in their theatres, their concert-halls, or even from the lecture platforms. It may be that the writer is mistaken, but it often seems to him, when he looks upon a Danish audience, that the people have come together to gaze at "a stage

spectacle," to "hear," to have the ear titillated with agreeable sounds, or, in extreme cases, to see the actor rather than to hear his words or to apply the idea behind them. A lecture is "a lecture;" a theatre, "the theatre;" a concert, "a concert;" and nothing more.

Through all this it must be remembered we are speaking of the art of Denmark of to-day, and not of that of a hundred years ago.

This unreceptiveness, as this conception of the theatre as "a spectacle," especially where the imaginative and symbolical are concerned, was never more clearly expressed than in a recent production of Strindberg's "Drømmespil" ("Dream-Play") in Copenhagen, the audience being fairly representative of all sides of Danish life. Here, surely, was a case where the slightest spark of receptiveness might, under the suggestive influence of Strindberg's masterpiece, have been fanned into glow—at any rate, the very physical *stemning* of the setting might have caused the audience to forget their objective selves for a little, and for once lose themselves in the imaginative.

It was not difficult to see that for nine-tenths of the audience the play might as well have had no existence, for in those darkened intervals between the rapidly succeeding dream-pictures the proscenium was filled by a hurricane of "snak," the people about me discussing everything 'twixt earth and heaven, from a "curious" examination of the meaning of the author to what they were going to have to eat after the theatre. In vain did the wretched minority hiss the chatter. It was like spraying water on a fire; the moment the

hissing subsided, the fiery chatter broke out with redoubled force destroying each time the *stemning* the play was trying to create.

These people had come to the theatre because the play was by Strindberg and had been written about in the Press—for even in unsnobbish Denmark there is a certain snobbishness about these things—but to judge by the conversation about me after the performance, both in theatre and street, the idea of applying the play to everyday life never crossed the minds of the speakers. To them it was " a Strindberg play."

One is irresistibly driven back again to that interrelationship of the Politics, the Patriotism, the Religion, and the Art of Denmark. What Denmark lacks is exactly what the Gaelic Society in Ireland is trying to cultivate—the development of a National Art from the power and genius of her people. Just as her nationhood leaves her indifferent, leading her inevitably to her copying and drawing always from other countries, so in her art Denmark makes little or no effort to develop an art out of the genius of her people. What the Dane does not understand is that it is no accident that a man is born a Dane, any more than that he is born an Irishman. A country can always best express itself through the media of its own latent and national powers, for there is such a thing as psychological inheritance. A Dane can better express himself in Danish rather than through German or English, even when he has learnt the latter languages in babyhood, and, apart from the psychomachine of language, can certainly better develop his own peculiar powers, as an entity of a race, through

the medium of the psychology of his own country than he can by borrowing that of other countries. He must use the national framework as the nucleus upon which to build the best he can gather from the culture of other lands.

When he has developed himself nationally he can, if he will, develop himself internationally, for however much it may offend the Dane to hear it, he is first of all a Dane before he is a European. To go outside first for his national building is to begin his national house from the roof instead of from the foundations.

One has the feeling always in Denmark that she is unduly influenced by foreign art, just as she is apt to overrate the foreign artist at the expense of her own, and, as the Danes say, to *sværme for* (literally "to swarm for") them. One has that feeling that in her musical and some other artistic circles she has been enormously influenced by the German school, which, however fine it may be in itself, is not *Danish*, in contradistinction to the fact that the mass of her people are far more pro-English than pro-German, and more English than German in their concept of the State and the relationship of the official and layman.

Nothing is more astonishing than to find the Danish concert programme filled with German songs sung in German, a few French, and, often, no Danish. The Danish singer will do anything rather than sing in his or her own tongue if it can possibly be avoided. Every visitor to Denmark will remember the baritone or tenor who, in drawing-room after drawing-room, fills the air with German gutturals rather than with the very tongue in which he has been conversing a

moment before. Of course it will be said that this is owing to the enormous richness of German music and the comparative absence of Danish compositions of the first rank. This is true, but the Dane who uses the argument never goes deeper—to ask why the Danish composer is not there? And when all is said and done, Denmark has some very beautiful music of her own, and especially some very beautiful folk-songs.

There are, I believe, Danish National evenings in Denmark for the cultivation of Danish music—those evenings which, however reluctant the professional may be to acknowledge it, should represent the thing that is the foundation of a country's music—but they do not obtrude themselves any more than the national music of Denmark obtrudes itself as one travels about the country. Certainly, nobody has felt the *stemning* of an Irish or Scottish night in London, when the mass of the audience sometimes join with the singer in his expression of the soul of a country's music—something that will strike the Dane as a lamentable lack of artistry. Grundtvig may have dreamed of such things, but they have remained dreams. The possibilities of some original music have been exchanged for the highly finished foreign production, which, however beautiful in itself and however right it may be sometimes to take the best of other countries, can never entirely take the place of a national art. For no Dane thinks it better to be a creator of little than imitator of great.

But no Danish artist can raise the plea for the lack of imagination that "he lives in a little country." Here is one of the many things about Denmark and

the practical sense of the Danes which is wholly admirable, for Denmark, instead of ignoring or sneering at her young artists, and despite her cancerous laughter, does everything in her power to encourage them—upon the financial side at least. (If *they* would only encourage *her* upon the imaginative !) She has devised an excellent system of travelling grants—not grants given only by competitive examination, that modern curse of Cain, but grants which are available to young men and women who have demonstrated in one way or another that they have talent.

This excellent support, which is undertaken chiefly by the State, not only applies to painters, but to actors, sculptors, writers, and musicians. In no country in the world is there less excuse, from the financial standpoint at least, for the non-development of the artist.

Whatever you may think of Danish art, however, there is no denying the Danish artist, who, like the Danish scientist, has a charm of his own. In one sense at least Denmark has evolved the only natural, as it is the only " universal," conception of the artist—that is, the conception of the artist first of all as a " man," for when the artist ceases to be the man and becomes the " artist," both his art and his manhood, which are one and the same thing, lose something.

In some other countries, at least, a certain type of artist considers it necessary to differentiate the tribe from the human species, either by chess-board knickers, unbarbered whiskers, or tie flamboyant. He considers it necessary to " talk shop "—that is, " art "—upon all occasions. He regards humanity much as

a Martian astronomer may regard the terrestrials through his telescope, as something inferior, remote—subjects only for the vivisection of his brain and palette-knife. He holds himself to his coteries, has his haunts and his passions. He no more merges himself in the nation than he regards art as something, not for the individual, but for the mass. He is, in fact, sometimes, a snob and a "bounder." He is an "artist" before he is a human being.

But the Danish artist, like the Danish scientific man, is a human being before he is an "artist." It has been my pleasure—not always an unmixed pleasure, if truth must be told—to spend evening after evening in a circle of young artists, mostly painters and writers, who considerably astonished me by talking on every subject under the sun, approaching each subject with the zest of the human being rather than with the aloofness of the artist. Of course, they "snakked," but at least they "snakked" humanly and not "artistically," and, equally of course, here in such circles, as everywhere else in Europe, one discovered the futurist idiot who greens himself in absinthe furies and finds the world reflected in his glass; who holds himself, insect that he is, and in the unoriginal, powerless way that he has, duplicating his predecessors through the centuries, outside all law; prides himself upon the morals of a monkey and the habits of a pig; but this young gentleman, and, I regret to say, at times young lady, like the poor, we have always with us. It is a rare species in Denmark.

Just as Denmark in the mass has good reason to be proud of her naturalness, so has she special reason to

congratulate herself upon the fact that her artists, be they painters, musicians, or writers, have managed to keep that fine naturalness and humanity which is the Dane's. When you speak to a Danish artist you always feel you are talking to a fellow-creature, with like desires, affections, passions, to yourself—a man who, however unconsciously, has begun to realise that goal of art which is the artistic nation—that is to say, the abolition of "the artist."

There comes to me as I write my first meeting with one of the best of Denmark's younger teachers of singing, upon my first visit to Denmark some years ago. He had been, as I knew, a deep student of the theory of singing in many countries, a man with a deep enthusiasm for his art, who all his life had been brought up amongst musicians. So upon our meeting I settled down resignedly to the usual interminable "shop" about singers and singing; the meaning behind "Parsifal;" the curses and blessings of interpreters and composers. I waited for the introductory remark "to draw me out," as an introduction to that idiot "professional" chatter which one meets in all countries, the endless talk which leaves the brain benumbed and murderous thoughts in the heart. Then we spoke for an hour upon an invention of his for preventing collisions between railway-trains!

I speak later of my first meeting with Anna Larsen, but "Anna Larsens," in the sense of a unique art, though not common in Denmark any more than they are common anywhere, are common enough in their "human" sense. I have lived within a hundred yards of Denmark's best dancer, who spent all his

spare time and holidays labouring like a galley-slave in his garden, where he looked like a prosperous farmer. One of Denmark's finest operatic artists is a lady who cannot be torn away from the kitchen, where she finds cooking an excellent corrective to singing. Upon the street you may meet any day men and women whose names are household words in the theatre world of Denmark, and sometimes outside, who might be doctors, or business men, or housewives. The leader of my squad in the gymnasium, whom in the street I had always regarded as a good example of the sporting man, with his knickers and enormous calves, turned out upon closer acquaintance to be an actor of the first class, just as a certain unobtrusive gentleman, to take another type of " art," who limped around upon a leg and a half and shared " Bolscher " with the others, turned out to be a former Minister of War.

This naturalness and humanity of the Danish artist, like the naturalness and humanity which distinguishes so many Danes of all types, came to me as a revelation. There is something about it which, despite all temperamental differences, all differences in outlook, all criticism, is a fine contribution to that " one touch of nature which makes the whole world kin." I at least have never been able to resist it . . . or the men behind it.

XIX

THE DANE IN LOVE

THERE are many microcosms by which one can judge that macrocosm which we call a nation. But the microcosm of a country in love is perhaps, of all others, the most accurate reflex of its temperament, its morals, and, in a sense, its art. Somebody has said, " Give me the lover of a country, and I will give you the country."

The many curious contrasts between Denmark and Great Britain reach, perhaps, a climax in love matters. These two countries, which have so much in common, from language to Governmental concepts, and which share a common friendliness, are, in matters of marriage and love, as far divorced as London and Lhassa. If the sociologist cares to quarter the map of Europe by its national proceedings when in love, he will discover that the relations of the sexes, whether physical, or ethical, or spiritual, are an exact quartering of its nationalities. Some day the sociologist, like the geographer of the future, will write or map a European " Anatomy of Love," and so reveal to a world of lovers a new method of determining geographical and national boundaries.

In nothing throughout Europe has there taken place

within the last fifty years so many changes as in the conception of the relationship of the sexes, nor in any two countries have the changes in their more radical aspects been so slight as in Denmark and Great Britain. But this is the only thing they have in common upon "the marriage plane." In this nervous machine-civilisation of ours, when men's brains and nerves are wrung to the uttermost, there has been from the competitive plane an extraordinary and inevitable reaction upon the plane of sex relationship. Despite the theologians and sometimes even the sociologists, the barriers of the past have been swept away for ever; marriage is a freer and, taking it as a whole, altogether a better and a saner institution than it has ever been. In this age of the breaking down of barriers, social and psychological, the barriers erected about the theological and social fastness which used to be marriage have been flung to the ground.

Denmark, unlike England, has done a great deal of the throwing down of barriers in the direction of loosing the marriage bond; otherwise, as she has shown herself in so many other things where "nerves" come into play, she has been profoundly unaffected by the changes in marriage. Unlike Heaven, she, in a practical sense, has been experimenting upon a large scale, there having been during the last one hundred years so much "marrying and giving in marriage" in little Denmark that she has in that period trebled her population; for however steady may be the trend throughout Europe to divorce the child from the marriage relationship, Denmark has so far been comparatively unaffected in this. She at least freely

admits, sometimes almost brutally, if she could ever be brutal, that the marriage bond *does* result in children. Great Britain, in her conversations, sometimes does her best to hide the indecent fact, one of the many differences of which I have spoken.

I have watched the Dane very closely in his love-making—sometimes, I am afraid, when he has not known it. I have watched him in the drawing-room, as in the newspaper columns; in the lecture-room, concert-hall, and theatre, as in that national playground of Cupid, the streets. I have seen him united in the bonds of holy matrimony, as I have seen him, in a condition of splendid perilous isolation, divorced. I have seen him, magnificent, glorified, enter the lists of love in blue trousers and sword, as I have seen *her* in the delicate sophistries of evening gown. He or she—and in Denmark at least the woman is, so to speak, the attacking party quite as much as the predatory male—has been my joy to watch under the influence of the tender passion, under the electric night-suns as under the sun of day, lighting, incidentally having just the same distinctive influence upon the quantity and quality of Danish as other love-making. One has spent many interesting evenings in noting the effect of food upon the bump of amativeness, as in marking the damping, depressing effects of cold upon a nation that likes to keep warm.

But, so far as I have been able to judge, love in the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic sense has practically no existence in Denmark, something which, just as you care to look at it, may or may not be an advantage.

The most simple-minded Englishman—and here I

am not at the moment speaking of his Celtic brother of Ireland, Scotland or Wales, whom I have hyphenated to " Anglo-Saxon " in these pages—under the stimulus of passion becomes an individual of extraordinary complexities. His complexity may take many forms. As in " David Copperfield," it may take, and as a matter of fact very often does take, the form of strenuous physical exercise, plunging into ice-cold water, " doing " his dumbbells, and torturing the body even down to trying to cram a No. 8 foot into a No. 7 shoe. I have known it, upon a normally uncomplex individual, fetch him out of bed at six in the morning instead of eight-thirty; in another, a young man with an entire incapacity to assimilate a foreign language—which probably is the explanation of his attempting it—send him into the throes of Greek and modern French; in a not exceptional case lead to a homicidal attack upon another young man. In that of a boy of seventeen I have known it to cause him to lose fourteen solid pounds within a few weeks, and in the case of another to send him into despair because, by taking thought, he could not add the same number of pounds to his physique in order to impress his lady-love.

In the Celt this " complexity of love " takes still more acute form. In the case of the Irishman, for instance—especially in cases of unrequited affection—it is a tendency, a tendency perfectly well recognised by the medical men of Ireland, to tuberculosis and occasionally to suicide. The writer has known at least one boy still in his teens—a healthy athletic boy—who, falling in love with a woman many years older than himself, was brought to the edge of the grave—a

passion not "boyish" and transitory, but which lasted in an acute form for many years, a case not in any way standing alone. The habit which, unfortunately, prevails in this most temperamental of countries of "arranging" marriages by parent or priest often induces a sickness known as "a decline"—something particularly in evidence amongst its women.

All of which to the Dane will sound incredible, "high-falutin'," but which nevertheless is fact—one of those facts which even the "Copenhagen grin" cannot laugh out of existence.

I may be doing them an injustice, but, so far as I know, I have not seen any of my Danish friends either plunging into ice-cold water, rising up before the stars are cold, or showing an interesting tendency to homicide. It has not come to me that any proposal has been set on foot to replace Denmark's "sour-milk fat cure" by the "unrequited affection cure," nor in the only fat-cure institution with which I have any acquaintance have I heard of the cure being helped by the inmates having been crossed in love. Tuberculosis, whether love-tuberculosis or otherwise, is not, as Shakespeare puts it, exactly "racy, of the soil," in Denmark, if one is to judge by the Danish face and physique. The fresh-cheeked strong-limbed young ladies, who are much too sensible to attempt to insert a No. 8 foot into a No. 7 shoe (I hope I am not doing their feet an injustice), whom I meet in my peregrinations may be in a decline through misplaced affection, but I haven't noticed it.

In a word, the Dane is much too sensible to "fall in love" in the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic sense, for that is the

stuff of which only dreams are made, and the Dane is no dreamer.

Neither he nor she is the subject of complex love emotions. For the Danish character is extraordinarily simple, almost as simple as that of the Englishman, with none of the " something up your sleeve " of his forbears in the Saga time. He is the least romantic of human beings, with that very keen sense of the ludicrous in love which is fatal to the tender passion; for that damnable scepticism of his has placed before the gates of the Paradise in which dwell the Anglo-Saxon Adam and Eve a sort of grinning, sceptic devil, who peeps over the top of the gate into Eden and tells the crowd outside from time to time how ridiculous it all is, and that Adam and Eve are blithering idiots who can't be satisfied with regarding marriage as a matter of children and comfort, but insist upon talking about fig-leaves and all that sort of nonsense—even going the length of imagining under the *stemning* of the Garden that they have once been gods and are going to be gods again.

Even in those countries where the male is still brutal, direct, and sexual, the young girl, and especially the very young girl, saves him from himself—and perhaps saves the race—by her romanticism and that Renaissance of the Gods which the man of sound common sense calls " the age of puberty." But that blending of midsummer madness and folly shot by summer lightning, that curious, wonderful age that comes to every Anglo-Saxon at least once in her life, is to the Dane just " midsummer madness." It is something not to be understood.

I sensed this upon my first visit to Copenhagen, when I missed something in the faces of the young girls on the pavements. The Danish "flapper," or *bachfisch*, as the Germans call her, has not that look of the eyes slightly staring which one so often sees in the English girl of fifteen or sixteen, as though the possessor were standing on the threshold of a new world. That half-fearing, half-enquiring, all-wonderful look is not to be found on the face of the Danish girl, who is round and comfortable and pleasant in the age when her sister across the North Sea is sometimes haggard and hard, unpleasing to the eye, but stimulating, suggestive. The Danish flapper has no "wonderful age." To her life is a matter of fact, with a "flirt," as she calls it, thrown in as a makeweight. If she is properly fed, has her sweets, a dance, she is satisfied. Life is not a thing of problems, not a problematic thing—it is "life," and *fact*.

And it is when the Danish woman is in love that one, more than in anything else, discovers the vacant places in her being—her lack of lover's pride, and romanticism, and emotion, which touches the sex relationship with the fires of life. She has not made the discovery that courting-time, like marriage-time, is the time to build up barriers, not break them down. Not for her hunger and devotion and hollow-cheeked wonder and dreaming and star-gazing. Mating is the ordinary course of life, like the birds and the beasts, with nothing wonderful or curious about it.

There is scarcely a nation in Europe which, under the "divine madness," does not in that time at least become "four-dimensional." There is hardly a boy

or a girl, however matter-of-fact in themselves, who when they "fall in love" do not find their heads amongst the stars, even though their feet may be "of the earth, earthy." The prosy prosist bursts into poetry, and the poet becomes dumb. The man of action becomes the man of thought, and the man of thought the man of action. The brilliant man, like his average fellow, rises into that idiocy which is the only hope of mankind, if it is ever to rise from the animal to the god.

All this phenomena one has observed in the Anglo-Saxon countries—incidentally, much more than in the Latin countries, the love of which is sometimes of strange simplicity, the simplicity of physical mating—but one cannot say that one has observed it in Denmark upon any scale or in such intensity as to make it obtrude itself upon the foreigner. It may be there, of course, but if it is, it has carefully concealed itself. All of which may, of course, be a sign of a highly developed intelligence or otherwise, just as the reader thinks fit. As the showman said when he was asked by the small boy at the Penny Peep Show, "But, please, sir, which is Hamlet's aunt and which is Desdemona?" "You pays your penny, my little man, and you takes your choice."

But whatever the Danish marriage is, on the whole it is not four-dimensional. I have seen Mr. Nielsen and his fiancée together both before and after marriage, and I have seen neither the one nor the other lose themselves in four-dimensional love to the extent, for instance, of that American artist friend of mine and his wife who told me that for three months before their

marriage they visited New York's most expensive restaurants, ordered the most expensive dishes, from canvas-back duck at Delmonico's to broiled lobsters, at the only house in the world for broiled lobsters, paid for them, and never ate them, because, having their living and loving in a sphere which was bounded neither by length nor depth nor height, etherealised spirits that they were, they had no use for either stomach or appetite. Honestly, and with all the wish in life, I cannot see either my friend Nielsen, or Mrs. Nielsen to be, to put it in good American, " passing up " canvas-back for star-gazing.

The truth of the matter is that the Danish concept of the marriage relationship is a psycho-physical concept, based upon an affectionate making of a home, the bringing of children into the world, and, in the higher cases, of a community of interest intellectual and artistic. That spiritual concept of marriage which, however it may sometimes be degraded from its high estate, is essentially, in one form or another, tacitly or actively recognised by the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples, is a concept which the Dane, frankly, does not take into account, which in the mass has no meaning for him. The idea of this unresolvable bond, with its filaments intangible as ether, and like ether responsive to the slightest impress, as easily broken as a cobweb, and as enduring as steel fine-drawn, is to the Dane merely an abstraction. The concept of a bond which only in an accidental and even comparatively unimportant sense is physical, but which in its highest forms takes the substance of spiritual communion, is relegated by the Dane, if he ever takes the trouble to

relegate it, to the limbo of the sentimental and non-existent.

For marriage the Dane has yet to discover, as the Anglo-Saxon has discovered it, is not a thing so much of the five senses, though they play their part in it, as of that Sixth Sense of which I have spoken before; and I am not a little uneasy that talking about "a spiritual bond" in connection with such a thing of the comfortable flesh as is marriage will make the Dane suspect me of being a priest masked, and that all this is but the *odium theologicum*.

He must think it.

XX

DIVORCE AND MORALS

No social phenomena in these modern, nervous, dangerous days has stood out more than the tense hate which at times shows itself between men and women in the modern marriage, especially in men and women of the nervous, cultured type, unless it be that other hate, the hate of the child of the present generation for its parent—that childhood which, like the marriage institution, has in a generation leaped the chasm of the centuries. In Denmark, however, both hates are almost non-existent. For such unpleasantnesses spell temperament—all unpleasantness, in fact, is temperamental.

They don't hate, for Denmark takes good care that nothing passionate or exciting or disturbing shall be allowed to intrude itself into their lives. Not that either the Danish Benedict or his wife would mind being accused of temperament . . . if temperament could be acquired and enjoyed without the difficulties and brain-storms attendant upon its possession. But there are no brain-storms in the Danish marriage, and it is not at all because of either " marriage-hate " or " brain-storms " that the Dane has begun to specialise in divorce.

Evade it how one will, it sometimes comes irresistibly to the onlooker that marriage in Denmark is regarded rather as trying a new dish. If you don't like the savour or the colour, you simply change the dish. The dishes are always there, and are of all sorts and sizes, of all flavours and colours. Denmark at least has recognised that to-day the problem of separation has become as insistent as that of joining together. She has some of the most comfortable divorce laws in the world.

This was one of the inscrutable things which left me involved upon my first visit to Denmark. I had come from a country where, amongst its forty-five millions, there were in a fair average year a total of only 577 divorces, where marriage was regarded as the most serious act in life, and its sundering—disgrace. I came to a country where, to my excited and inflamed eyes, it seemed that every second man or woman amongst my friends had been, were, or were about to be divorced. In my pristine simplicity it seemed to me a sort of incredible Arcadia—a country where the art of separation had been brought to the point of fine art, where the brains of a people had so concentrated upon the problem that it was as easy as kissing your hand to get rid of your wife and to take another man's —a sort of Eden after the Fall, with a barbaric absence of fig-leaves and, paradoxically, unashamedness.

And yet one is bound to admit that the Danish divorce, not excepting Nevada's, is the best in the world. The Dane is at least spared the divorce columns of the English and American Press; there is no washing of dirty linen before an excited public;

and, perhaps best of all, nobody knows who is the guilty partner. Here is a country where you are simply told that So-and-so *is* divorced. It does not say she or he was divorced *by* So-and-so, a nice but important corrective. Nobody knows, unless they know it in a country where every whisper is sometimes heard and megaphoned, whether the rupture is because, as in the case of the State of Nevada, the lady snored or the gentleman had developed the habit of "beating up" the partner of his joys and sorrows; or because he or she had indulged in Mormonic propensities; or simply because there was that indefinable "incompatibility of temperament" which is really the best excuse in the world for divorce. There are none of those death-in-life half divorces which in Great Britain are called "separations," which hold two people together, though living apart, as a living body is tied to a corpse, without the power to remarry.

I take my hat off to the good sense of the Danish divorce; I lift my hat to its innate recognition that the crime unforgivable is the crime of holding together a loveless marriage; and to its good taste in preventing the exposure of nauseous details to a greedy world agog, and to the acknowledgment of the fact that the only thing necessary to divorce should be a simple declaration to the effect that two people don't want to make themselves a nuisance to each other by living together.

And, finally, the world can learn from a country which gets near the solution of the root problem of all divorce, the children, by giving both partners access to the children after divorce—something of

which England should take note. For whether the Dane recognises it consciously or not, there is a subtle bond between child and parent, as there is a subtle bond between man and wife, which can neither be estimated mathematically nor explained away logically. Between such a concept and the brute concept of the State as parent there is no halfway house. If it be possible for *anybody* to fulfil the duties of fatherhood and motherhood to a child as well as its actual progenitors, there is nothing to prevent the appointment of such foster-parents by the State for all children.

It is a question for Denmark to decide—whether her increasing tendency to divorce and the loosening of the marriage bond marks advance or retrogression, whether it indicates a higher love-quality or a lower, or, to put it brutally, love or licence. However one looks at it, it is certainly the hall-mark of what we moderns call "civilisation." To the Anglo-Saxon mind it looks like the end of all things, the lowering of *morale* and the furtherance of promiscuity. And yet, when the unprejudiced outsider—which is, of course, to say the writer !—weighs the pros and cons, it is very doubtful whether that marriage rigidity of Anglo-Saxondom, with all the ugly and doubtful things it conceals, does not mark a worse state than that of Denmark, who, if she sins, has at least the merit of sinning openly and with phlegm. For Denmark sins as naturally as she speaks and acts.

The Danish "naturalness" about love matters, or rather, to put it more concretely, about *sex* matters, is appalling. The Dane not only calls "a spade a spade," but regards the naming of it as "an agri-

cultural implement" as hypocritical, if not worse. Men and women of all types discuss "the Forbidden Subject" as freely and naturally as though they were doctors or dustmen. Denmark at least, for example, refuses to pin her faith to the Anglo-Saxon tradition that the legs of a woman have no existence. Denmark, rightly or wrongly, and perhaps not altogether unscientifically, refuses to indulge the belief that children are to be found in gooseberry bushes, and not only recognises the child as a fact *after*, but even *before* birth. Her little children are brought up to face the facts of life, including their own bodies, and there is none of that "not before the child" which in certain other countries at least has sometimes led to inflamed imaginations. And, whether by accident or as a result of all this naturalness, the speech of the menfolk amongst themselves is, on the whole, clean, if sometimes a trifle coarse. At least it lacks the "suggestiveness" of certain other countries in Europe, and I think, on the whole, is one of the marks of the salvation of Denmark from that vicious sex segregation which is shown in some countries by "the smoking-room story," the spirit behind which is at the root of all sex inequality and all the gilt-edged thraldom of the female by the male.

One could wish, after writing the above, that one could be justified by results as shown in the moral standard of a country, if it be possible to measure so elusive and complex a thing as *morale*.

Here, more than in anything else almost, one is faced by that eternal Danish paradox. From what I have written above, one might say, and from one

point of view say justly, that the Dane was the most moral being in Europe, with a fine consciousness about matters sexual, bred from his naturalness and humanity. From another standpoint, one might, perhaps pharisaically, push the finger of scorn at the Dane as a most unmoral person, if one does not care to use the stronger "im-moral," for one finds it extremely difficult to say where one ends and the other begins.

If one takes the case of Ireland, for example, with an illegitimate birth-rate which is almost non-existent and can only be expressed in decimals, and compares it with the brute fact that in one week in Copenhagen there were born 98 boys and 108 girls, of whom no fewer than 64 were born outside wedlock, one would be inclined to write down Ireland as the most moral and Denmark the most immoral country on earth. But in this there come so many factors: feminine factors—for factors have sex—elusive, intangible.

Let me set them down as they come to me, in a series of interrogatives.

Is it better when a servant-girl is going to have a child to turn her out of doors on to the streets, or at best point the finger of scorn at her, and make her do penance in white sheet and candle? or—

Is it better, as is Denmark's way, to be sorry for her, to regard her sin not only with leniency, but with sympathy, and to provide for her and for her child, and not turn her away?

Is it a good thing to live in a country where any moral lapse will damn a public man for ever? or—

Is it better to regard such sins as only of private significance and not the business of the public?

Or, to put it another way. One advertises for a "before-midday" girl to clean the house and look after a child. There appears on the stairs a varied assortment of feminine Denmark, thick and thin, young and old, plain and coloured. You speak to girl after girl, for naturally you want to know something about your nursemaid. You ask them if they are married? Have they any children? And one girl after the other will tell you, in that straight, decent way which always goes to the heart and appeals to human nature, that she is not married, but she has a little child at home. She looks you straight in the face as she says it, without shame (something other than "shamelessly") and without apprehension.

Again to put it interrogatively. Is this better than the shame-faced, hang-dog confession of delinquency or the covering up which one meets in countries where there is a different moral outlook, even though, as in one case which came under the writer's notice, it led to the young lady, who had loved not wisely but too well, taking the child of her mistress, wheeling it into an indescribable back-yard of Copenhagen, and running up the stairs hurriedly to administer Nature's sustenance to her own howling Dane four flights up? She said "she thought it was natural;" and if you look at it one way, perhaps the right way, it *was* natural.

When I first came face to face with this outlook upon the sins of the flesh, it left me dumbfounded with amazement or admiration—I cannot say which.

It was in the house of an old lady-friend with one servant, who, though unmarried, was obviously about to present Denmark with another son or daughter. But nobody minded. Nobody said anything more about it than if it were a club foot or a black eye. The girl herself, it was patent to see, quite shared the general outlook. I do not think she was quite clear as to how young Denmark had come into being.

But just before her confinement she dropped in casual-like and informed her mistress that she expected the little stranger at any moment. Everybody did what they could, and were as much interested in the new baby to be as though it had its origin inside the walls of a church instead of from *flagrante delicto*. Weird and wonderful swaddling-clothes were hemmed and stitched for its still invisible legs. Sexless upper garments, embroidered and fomented, made their appearance out of the blue ether as though the Lady Saints of Heaven were turning away on invisible sewing-machines. And when the great day came, Amelia was sent to a beautiful bed in a beautiful hospital, where everybody made a fuss over her, and where, incidentally, the writer visited her (though as a male, and especially as a virtuous male, he had no right to do so under the hospital's regulations), and deposited his floral offering to beauty and virtue before the approving glances of half a hundred other matrons more or less in a similar condition.

I may be wrong, and one may be treading upon very dangerous ground in speaking about it, however obliquely, but I have a fancy or feeling or belief that quite a number of people of both sexes in Denmark—

and *pax* the Anglo-Saxon and the theologians there *are* always two sexes in these things—have sometimes arranged between them irregular unions unblessed by Holy Church or unholy Registry Office—unions which perhaps, all things considered, are not more unhappy or more loveless than those in which "Bell, Book, and Candle" has had its share. It is perfectly well known that such and such a young lady has a lover: she goes to her daily work in office or shop, he goes to his, and nobody points the finger of scorn or criticism at them. The girl in Denmark who has made her slip in life does not go to the devil, for, as a matter of fact, in Denmark there are no "ruined girls." The tear-stained, white-faced Mary Magdalene is not in evidence. Rightly or wrongly, Denmark, with her fine humanity, regards all human beings and both sexes as being in the same boat—to pillory the frail female would also mean pillorying the male; for Denmark has discovered that the sins of the flesh are bisexual, just as she has discovered that affection sometimes plays its part in them—or is it just human nature?

And yet there is something or other in the moral side of Denmark that at times leaves a bad taste in the mouth—something not easy to explain. It is no use saying that there is so much that is bad in the Anglo-Saxon outlook—in its severity, its pharisaism; that the Danish outlook upon matters of marriage and *morale* are good. Two wrongs don't make a right.

Without drawing criticism out to a fine point, and despite one's whole-hearted admiration for certain

sides of it, and always excepting that fixed minority, there stands, ghostlike, something at the back of the mind which at times leaves one sick and deadened by the concept of *morale* in Denmark. One, rightly or wrongly, has a feeling of slackness in her moral fibre, something lacking, something that at times becomes uncontrollable—a veritable Fury at the Danish love-feast.

To put it in another way, one feels that the only thing which can justify in a country the freest standard of divorce is the highest and most stringent morality; that the "humanness" and naturalness of the Dane towards love-lapses must be accompanied by a passionate determination to keep up the moral standard; that here; in this country of paradoxes, nothing but the paradox can save Denmark in the moral sense.

It may be prejudice or tradition or what you will, but one sometimes misses in Denmark that at least tacit recognition of the Anglo-Saxon and the Celt that the standard of a country is determined, and ultimately its fate, by the standard of its sexual relationships. One irresistibly wishes for that stress upon *morale*, one had almost written that hypocrisy in *morale*, which so often distinguishes the Anglo-Saxon. The code which, in theory at least, demands the same moral standard from men and women in matters of sexual conduct, and which never admits, "as people of the baser sort," the right of the male to an outlet for his lower deeps and a class to satisfy it.

In fact, one is always driven back upon the thought that, with all its doubtful sides, all its hypocrisies,

there is something in the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic moral concept and idealism in love matters that makes up for so many other lacks; that gives its possessors a fineness of fibre and endurance that bestows a certain invincibility of *morale*.

And as you have reached this conclusion, Denmark comes with her final contradiction. It is this matter-of-fact, untemperamental country which has written across the lintel of the home, "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity." It is the country which has produced the woman with the highest marriage as with the highest sex status in Europe. She is the equal of "her man," that beautiful name she has for her husband. She is not a woman, but a "human being." To her husband she is not a tool or a chattel or, what is the same thing, a butterfly. She is his wife, not his light o' love, licensed or otherwise. They are comrades and friends, on the high road to solve the problem of all marriage problems—the merging of the lover into the friend.

For that one will forgive Denmark all things. But if she could only develop temperament; if she could only develop it . . . if . .

XXI

FEMINA

As everything begins with woman, from the Genesis of the Bible to the genesis of humanity, so everything ends in her. She is not only Genesis, but Revelation. In this book she is both.

Countries, like the people composing them, have sex. Nobody, for example, could think of Ireland other than as a woman—a woman with a tear and a smile in her eyes, the woman we Irishmen call Kathleen-na-Houlahan—any more than one can think of Germany other than as the country of the Male Principle or China as sexless. India is a Mother, England Amazonian, France the Fury in the Red Cap.

Denmark is a woman, but a woman in which there is something "maleish," not "masculine" . . . perhaps one might better express it—a man with something of the woman in the texture of his being, something soft; reluctant from physical shock; perhaps lacking in that imagination which is energy and initiative, by which the worlds themselves sprang out of chaos.

It may be that Denmark has that quality of femininity no less essential to the race than the creative —the preservative, mothering element—for Denmark

is a woman; but that will be for posterity to decide. Though, if one did not instinctively feel Denmark to be a woman, one might think of her as so lacking determinative qualities as to be without sex, just as in her there is less difference between the sexes than in any other country.

When you look at the Danish woman you are looking at Denmark. The woman of Denmark is Denmark's mirror. Her physique, method of speech, expression, walk, clothes, food—all are Denmark in an intimate concrete sense in which no Englishwoman is England and no American the United States.

The Danish woman is not quite like any other, though her distinctiveness lies in her negative rather than in her positive quality. You can learn more about her, as about her country, as, indeed, I have tried to show throughout this book, by contrasting her with her opposite. The Englishwoman and her Danish sister form to each other the most singular of all contrasts. There is a polarity between them, a negative and positive of womanhood. There is scarcely a single point in which they can be said to be alike. And, as in polarity, each forms the complement to the other. I am not sure that they are not symbolical for two great and opposing principles in Nature, from the friction of which Evolution itself is born. The woman resulting from their combination should be one of the most balanced of women in an imperfect and lopsided world.

The Dane and the Englishwoman like, but do not always fully understand, each other. I have many times, in connection with my public lectures and

otherwise, received communications from Englishwomen who have lived in Denmark and from Danes who have lived in England, of which I will take two as typical examples to illustrate this.

The Danish lady said that after a long stay in England she had come to the conclusion that the Englishwoman had much to learn from her Danish sister intellectually; that she found, for instance, a much higher standard of reading in Denmark than in England—the English girl didn't read Strindberg, for example (to which, incidentally, she might have the counter that the Danish girl doesn't read Bernard Shaw, and when she does, doesn't understand him!); and that the Danish girl was more capable and, above all, more "natural." The thing which had struck her about the Englishwoman of the middle classes at least was her tacit contempt for work in the sense of a man's work. Yet she confessed herself an admirer of England and the English. (Of course, this experience was gathered before the war.)

Now let us turn the English searchlight on the Danish feminine.

An English lady who has lived a long time in Denmark and who is high in her praises of Denmark and the Danes says that in the Danish woman there is a certain failing in pride, breeding, and bearing. She is not sufficiently reserved, and lacks that personal grip and reticence which stamps the Englishwoman the world over.

Once again, like the fool, "I rush in where angels fear to tread." I am inclined to think that both are right, and this is only one of the many things in

which England and Denmark can learn from each other.

First impressions are ineffaceable, and, contrary to the general belief, are almost invariably correct, when they *are* first impressions. Intuition doesn't make mistakes. I know that my first mental snapshot of the Danish woman was that of the bearer and suckler of children. The psychology of the snapshot can be expressed in the one word *kone*, the Danish word for "wife," which holds the psychology of the thing for which it stands. With her broad hips, her strong, rather short back set upon sturdy legs, her swelling bosoms, she looked to me as formed by Nature for the bearing and suckling of strong-limbed, broad-backed men and women—for just the boys and girls I saw about me. She looked to me as I walked behind her in the street just a *kone*—solid, sensible, unimaginative . . . and very "human."

On the whole, and subject to the refinements of psychological analysis which thronged upon the plate of that first impression, I think that first conception accurate. But even thus early I was to discover that the Danish woman is also the eternal puzzle; that, like her sisters throughout the world, she has lights and shades, lights and depths, alleyways and blind *culs-de-sac*.

Soon after my first visit to Denmark I was introduced one evening to a quiet-looking, sunburnt little woman in a dress of subdued black, her pretty brown hair, with something homely in the way of dressing it, and the sun-freckles on her face giving her something of the air of the country girl whom I thought

her to be. Her name I had not caught on our introduction.

My astonishment was great when, upon our beginning to speak of the theatre, I discovered that the little homely woman opposite me seemed to know rather more of what our grandmothers used to call "the devil's antechamber" than seemed quite consistent with the countryside, and butter and eggs, cocks and hens. I could almost have imagined that the little person had perhaps a relation on the stage if it had not seemed preposterous; but there was a sort of lightning-flash about her conversation, like the turn of a salmon-belly in a dark river, to show that there was life and passion in the depths, which left me startled. Everything she touched with the fine, free, and wholly unconscious carelessness that was hers—the careless unconsciousness that illumined. And through it all that splendid "humanness."

It was a complete puzzle. A little lady from the country, with the face and air of the countryside, who spoke of the theatre as by right divine.

Then someone told me I had been speaking to Anna Larsen, the woman of international reputation who once was Denmark's greatest actress.

It was after she had finally left the stage, and she was that rare type we are producing here and there in Europe, "the International Woman;" but it taught me a lesson, taught me that the Danish woman was not so simple as she seemed, discovered to me, as every son of Adam has discovered, in that stupid, ox-like way of his, since the world began, that the feminine is eternal and omnipresent. The feminine is the only

rule to which there are no exceptions—for it is all exception.

One of the paradoxes of the Danish feminine is the fact that there is no "Danish type"—certainly not in the half-million of the capital—except as far as that the Danish woman is one of the few modern women with a back to her head. In a sense, it has been left to so concentrated a country as is little Denmark to produce, in physiognomy at least, "the international type." There *is* no Danish woman face. The Danes vary from person to person as you walk in the street. The human nose takes its greatest variety in Denmark. The chin, the eye-form (something more vital than colour), and that universal index of nationality, the cheek-bone, here discover an interminable play of form. You see Danish girls who might be English or German or American, just as you see men who might be Russian or Latin. To say that on the whole the Danish women are a fair-haired blue-eyed race is to say nothing. The face varies. It is international.

That is why, as I write, the Danish woman is perhaps the worst-dressed woman in Europe to-day. Upon my first visit to Denmark some years ago I was enwrapt by what I then called "the Scandinavian dress," though it was really "the un-national dress," something that might have been a modification of that worn in Greece or Babylon. The Danish woman was at that time, as she says in her own idiom, "something for herself." Like the Greeks, she knew the beauty of the line. Her dress *was* her. It was simple and straight of line and fall, cut simply away from the neck—and the Danish feminine neck and throat is

beautiful and fair to the eye. Upon her strong, firm breast she wore a metal brooch or plate which her Viking ancestress might have worn, or a clasp of beaten silver, to gather her cloak together. She dressed her hair in simple coil upon the back of the strong round head with the high, fine dome. Her boots, that final test of the woman dress, like her headgear, were simple and straight-form—clean to the eye. And she wore no corset. She looked herself. The dress was the woman.

Now she has fallen into the rag-bag of fashion. She has passed in successive degenerations through lamp-shade skirts borrowed via Paris or New York, making her look like an electric lamp-standard flounced; through high Louis XV. heels, upon which she struts like some curious wild-fowl; through boned, crinolined skirts sprouting from corseted waist, which transform her into some outrageous fashion-plate. She perches upon one eyebrow and a curl a three-cornered hat of the " smart " variety; she pulls all her beautiful hair inside her skull, and sets, diabolically idiotic, two little horn-curls on either side of her good-natured face—a sort of Mephistophelian dairy-maid.

Her dress looks " imported " and " put on." She forgets that with her international face she cannot take stereotyped fashions; that, ridiculous as these abortions are abroad, they look ten times more ridiculous upon her; that in Denmark, above all, the individual woman must choose her dress individually, as she did seven short years ago.

One cannot say anything better about the face of the Danish woman than that one cannot tell whether she

is beautiful or not. As a Dane who had lived abroad for many years and returned to Copenhagen put it: "Some days I think her beautiful, others unbeautiful." That irregularity of feature which is the Dane's, which gives, in a featureful way, so much expression to the Danish face, can be said neither to be beautiful nor unbeautiful; and it is in Denmark that one first staggers upon the fact underlying all "beauty"—that there is no such thing as *physical* beauty, only beauty psychological. And in this respect, however unconsciously, the Dane has a far truer concept of beauty than we have, for example, in England, where we lay ridiculous stress upon the regularity that is society's and musical comedy's own—that is, "sameness" of feature.

In Denmark at least there are fewer "beautiful cases without souls" than in most other countries.

When I first came to Denmark I was surprised to find the Danes calling a man "a beautiful man" or a woman "a beautiful woman" whose features were irregular or even ugly. Then I found they were right. It was the psychological beauty for which the Danish eye searched. It was the beauty of "expression," without which there is no beauty; and though the face of the Danish girl is apt to lack expression in the "soul-sense," there is a certain irregular expression which can be said to be beautiful.

But there is one side of beauty to which the Danish eye, like the Danish window, is hermetically sealed. And that is the side of the flesh. If the Danish girl could once get into her sound round head that fat is the ugliest of all things, that it is the deadly foe of beauty

of form and feature and of mind; that it is always, in one form or another, disease, she would have gone far to be one of Europe's most beautiful women, and do her part in forming the international beauty of the future.

As a rule, the Danish girl who has passed the twenty has begun to lose her good looks. Whilst at sixteen, when her English sister is in the leggy, gawky stage, she shows softened rounded contours; the moment she has ceased to grow in height she begins to grow in circumference. To put it as nicely as possible, she betrays a certain tendency to that protuberance which is fatal to "expression." She begins to merge into a nicely rounded, expressionless whole; and at twenty-five, when the more slowly maturing English girl is just coming to the flower of her beauty, begins to "go off." I have seen Danish women of twenty-seven or twenty-eight who might have been thirty-five or forty; for the Danish girl, like her brother, always looks older than the Englishwoman, because of her fat and nothing else—an ageing that is more psychological than physical, as, unfortunately for her, she does not wrinkle.

Her natural beauty has also to struggle against the fact that she is an eater. And worse, she is an eater between meals. Where the English girl takes her three or four comparatively sparse meals a day, the Dane takes her four or five or even six meals. She is always eating. Her stomach is never at rest. She fills herself with half-digested food, and wonders, when she troubles to wonder, that the surplus turns to the disease that men call fat. Nevertheless, there *is* a thin type.

To make matters worse, exercise to her is still comparatively an unknown quantity. Unless she be a gymnast, of whom there is but a small minority, she never gets her body thoroughly exercised. The only stomach exercise she takes is *smørrebrød* and chocolate. She drinks whilst she has her food in her mouth, another fattening process, and she still has a tendency to regard tennis and hockey as a trifle unnatural.

Of the three cardinal aids to beauty she has the most confused and irregular notions. In order to be sure and test her naturally excellent complexion of cream and roses to the utmost, she sleeps with her bedroom windows closed and lives in superheated, unventilated rooms. Like her male countryman, fresh air she calls "draught." And with this hatred of fresh air there goes, in individual cases, an enswathing of the body with an unporous leather abomination, so that the skin of the wearer may not be permitted to breathe. I doubt even whether she knows that her skin *does* breathe.

Light is something to be shut out when possible. At any rate, she rarely regards light as an aid to beauty, only as something to read or to see by. Light, like air, is of comparative unimportance.

I will not say that water is unknown in Denmark as an aid to Danish beauty, but I will say that it is only just beginning to be discovered. The practice of the middle-class Englishwoman to wash her body all over each day in water and to have a hot bath once a week, with plenty of good unscented soap, is regarded as a proceeding verging on the preposterous by the Danish Delilah. I have heard a Danish lady say of another

who never took a bath from one year's end to the other. "*Men hun er meget renlig!*" ("Oh, but she is most clean!"). Physiology is in Denmark an undiscovered art, or an art long lost. Nobody knows anything about it, and it is only the fact that the Danish constitution is by nature one of the soundest in Europe that enables the Danish girl to stand up against the horrible pressure she puts upon her beauty.

But it is the contradictoriness inherent in the feminine which makes this, the woman so old-fashioned in her physiology and physique, in some ways the most advanced woman in Europe, standing head and shoulders above her English sister upon the intellectual plane, as the latter stands head and shoulders above her physically and upon those subtler planes of breeding and imagination.

The result or cause of this, just as you like to look at it, is the fact that every woman has her specific work. That nebulous stay-at-home-if-you-can-and-work-until-you're-married-if-you-can't way of the Englishwoman before the war has no existence in Denmark. In the mornings the streets and cycle-paths are flecked with skirts and humming with the whirl of the Danish girl as she goes to her work at an hour when the Englishwoman is abed. The Danish woman is dentist and cabinet-maker, typist and shop-assistant, architect, and even lawyer. She has won the highest sex status in Europe through the only way in which it can be won—through work, in the way that under the stress of war the Englishwoman is now winning hers. Marriage to her is not a professional back-

door to escape work, but an incident of life, and, as I have shown, she often works after she is married.

The fact that every woman in Denmark has the Parliamentary as well as the Municipal Vote, and that the next election will probably see women sitting upon the benches of the Folkething, as the Danish Westminster is called, as we shall one day after the war see them sitting in the House of Commons, alone tells its own story.

This enfranchisement will bring to the mind of the Anglo-Saxon a picture of Danish Mrs. Pankhursts; but there have been no Mrs. Pankhursts in Denmark, something which will already have been clear from what has been said upon "Propaganda and Politics," perhaps because the high status of the Danish woman made it unnecessary for her to apply the Salvation Army method of "blood and fire." In the meetings of political women I have addressed in Denmark, I have found it entirely impossible to bring within their comprehension the Pankhurst type or the things that led to its development. The Danish political woman is the highest of her sex in Denmark, as perhaps everywhere, but she has no fire, physical or psychological, and she is not a speaker. For Denmark, the country of paradox, is the only country where the women literally talk less than the men.

The fact is that the Danish woman does not believe in "a Cause," which to her is the synonym of idiocy or lack of balance. She lacks that strong impulsive tendency, whether politically or socially, which is the driving force of mankind along the road to the Un-

known Goal. There is nothing of the martyr in her disposition. And she is not " extreme."

She has not the propaganda instinct. The Danish woman doesn't want to save anybody, least of all herself. She wants to let alone and to be left alone. If religion be emotion, then that general absence of the religious feeling—not " irreligiousness," which does not exist anywhere—and once more using the word in something more than its dogmatic sense, which, with certain exceptions, distinguishes the Danish woman alone in Europe, marks the absence of temperament, of " feeling."

The Danish woman does not feel, physically or psychologically, which are but two facets of one thing. Of course, she has her *feelings*. That is something other. I suppose she likes to be kissed by the man she loves, sometimes by the man she doesn't, but I don't think she feels violently about it. She can be moved to tears at the sight of suffering, perhaps; but I have not often seen tears in her eyes, though I have often seen smiles on her lips. That she can be roused to enthusiasm—that is to say, to " belief in something "—may, in nature, not be impossible; but I have not been much troubled by her enthusiasm, nor, as I think, has Denmark. Feminine Denmark does not feel.

But as I have said, she has her " feelings." She is not light-minded, but she flirts—sometimes, one thinks, flirts away her birthright in spending it in a thousand petty emotions of the moment, frittering away her vitality and her power in the way which goes far to explain the absence of " short-circuiting " in the Danish temperament. She has nothing of that tigerish

virginity which some of the women of all countries display, the thing that makes them unapproachable by the male—unless he be the chosen male. There is nothing tigerish about the Danish girl, though there is more than a suspicion of pussy-cat.

She likes warmth and comforting food and good furs and strokings. A certain type of woman in every country, it is true, sets store by these things, but they are not of her type; the Danish girl is too good and honest and downright for that. She is too democratic. But she hates discomfort: not "hates"—that is too strong a word for her—but has an aversion from discomfort. As she walks along the pavement in her fur-trimmed skirt and fur boa and comfortable padded hips and lined gloves, the whole set upon round, comfortable legs, you feel that she is the comfortable woman. And comfort kills emotion, temperament.

Just as you have made up your mind to this, your views are again flung into the melting-pot by discovering that this Untemperamental Woman's conversation is often of a high order. She has an intellectual standard unreached and unconceived by her English friend across the North Sea. You can discuss with her quite openly and frankly sex, which, whether we like it or not, is the cardinal fact of life, just as woman is the cardinal fact of sex—why, in fact, we speak of her as "the Sex." You can speak with her upon all kinds of subjects without having it borne in upon you all the time that you are talking to "a woman" instead of to "a human being." She is unshockable because she is supremely natural, and perhaps because she is

supremely untemperamental. There are none of those pauses, awkward checks, blushes, and giggles, which sometimes punctuate the conversation of the sexes in other countries. And you also discover, despite her dress and her physiology and her "lacking colour," as despite that *god mad* which invariably comes into her conversation, that she is very intelligent and quick-witted. If one wished to exaggerate slightly, one might write of her as one has already written about the Jutlander, that one never meets a stupid woman in Denmark.

But despite, or is it because of, her intelligence, the Danish girl has that lack of pride, breeding, bearing, of which the Englishwoman wrote. She has not "found" herself, has not realised, with that instinctive realisation which marks even the humblest girl upon the Scottish or Irish hillside, for example, the godship of her sex. She has no sex pride. She is not exclusive. In the splendidly good-natured way that she has, she throws herself open to all the world.

Fine as she is in so many things, she has not the spark divine which turns the human clay into the thing that distinguishes the sexes. And it is from this that there come two curious and excellent things in her character—one that there is, as I have said, less sex difference in Denmark than in any other country; and the other that the Danish woman is the most "natural" of all women.

These things are both good and bad. There is nothing temperamental about the Danish girl's way of humour or of talking or walking, any more than there is in that of her husband, brother, or lover. Her fair

round face is good-natured—receptively good-natured. She lacks the depths and heights, the fine enthusiasms, of the Englishwoman or Irishwoman, as she lacks that quality to irritate and to stimulate which in the best of her sisters spells inspiration; and, in the worst, damnation.

But to say all this is but to say once more, as one has ventured to say it of the country of which she is the reflex, that she lacks temperament, which is only another way of saying that she lacks imagination. Somewhere or other in time, the Danish woman has sold her immortal birthright of imagination, of intuition for what? . . . for a mess of pottage. Can she get it back again? Is it for the women of Denmark, with the splendid potentialities awaiting expression which they possess, as do their countrymen, to win back their birthright by guiding Denmark in the time that is opening before her, by giving to their country all that in the writer's opinion at least she lacks—those qualities of inspiration and intuition which in Europe have always been primarily associated with the woman-spirit? Is it that the women of Denmark will rise to the occasion which the Great War has thrust upon them, as it has thrust it upon their sisters throughout the world, the shock of which has placed them by the side of their life-comrade man at the helm of life? Is it that the women of Denmark will do what none of their countrymen have been able to do—rouse Denmark from her lethargy and materialism, give to her a wider horizon and nobler outlook, bring her with her splendid natural heritage of brain and earth into line with those newer movements, the rumblings of which are

already making themselves heard below the horizon of war ?

It is for the women of Denmark to choose. For the woman *is* Denmark.

AFTERWORD

THE writer has done his best in these pages to be " as wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove." Nothing could have been easier than to have put into such an analysis a great deal of dove and very little serpent, and so sacrificed to the favour of the Pleasant God. But books of the " dovey " type are as much a studied insult to the country about which they are written as the highest compliment a country can pay to the writer of this book is to make him and his book the target for its shafts, whether these are winged with satire or criticism direct.

Whether his conclusions be right or wrong, and, as he knows, they are shared in part by many individual Danes, they at any rate have been given honestly. If in the method of these pages there is to be found the vinegar of criticism, there is, he would plead, also to be found the oil of appreciation—something that has always been the method of the Irishman, and not least towards the Danes whom, in the centuries that are gone, he first harried and then married.

FINIS

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