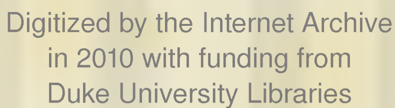
The ISLAND of SHEEP

Cadmus & Harmonia

DUKE UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

The Glenn Negley Collection
of Utopian Literature


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
Duke University Libraries

http://www.archive.org/details/islandofsheep00buch

THE ISLAND OF SHEEP

THE ISLAND OF SHEEP

BY

CADMUS AND HARMONIA

BOSTON AND NEW YORK

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

The Riverside Press Cambridge

1920

COPYRIGHT, 1920, BY HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

C124I

THE PEOPLE IN THE BOOK

Colonel ARTHUR LAMONT and his wife . . . . *The host and hostess*

PHYLLIS . . . . *Their niece*

The Rev. JOHN MACMILLAN *Minister of the Parish*

The Lady GUIDWILLIE of Waucht . . . . . . *A Highland landowner*

Mr. JAMES BURFORD . . *A Labour ex-Member of Parliament*

The Lady SEVENOAKS . . *Wife of a former Liberal Minister*

Mr. ALBERT WYPER . . *A progressive journalist*

The Lady PENELOPE WYPER . . . . . . *His wife*

Mrs. MARTHA LAVENDER . *An American resident in England*

Mrs. URSULA ASPENDEN . *A lady given to good works*

Mr. CHRISTOPHER NORMAND . . . . *A Conservative*

Sir WILLIAM JACOB . . *A Liberal lawyer*

Mr. George Stanbury-Maldwin	*Late of the Grenadier Guards*
Mr. Penrose MacAndrew	*Lieutenant in the Third United States Army*
Mr. D. C. Jonas . . .	*A Labour Leader*
Mr. Philip Lenchard .	*An Imperialist*
General Ferdinand Morier	*Lately commanding an Army of France.*
Mr. Archibald Strathbungo	*A Coalition Member of Parliament*
Mr. Merryweather Malone	*An American politician*
The Lord Linkumdoddie	*A Captain of industry*

THE ISLAND OF SHEEP

THE ISLAND OF SHEEP

I

Prologue, in which two retired gentlefolk are distressed about the future of their country. To them enter the Lady Guidwillie and Mr. Burford.

In a pleasant arbour looking down on spring meadows which sloped towards the western sea, a gentleman was reading aloud from Matthew Arnold. "The sunshine in the happy glens is fair," he read.

> "And by the sea, and in the brakes,
> The grass is cool, the seaside air
> Buoyant and fresh, the mountain flowers
> More virginal and sweet than ours.
> And there, they say, two bright and agèd snakes,
> That once were Cadmus and Harmonia,
> Bask in the glens or on the warm sea shore,
> In breathless quiet, after all their ills."

He looked up from his book. "Singularly like us, my dear," he observed to his wife.

"Yes, darling," she replied. "I feel aged, but not very bright."

Colonel Lamont rose, revealing six feet of lean manhood clad in the most ancient of tweeds. He stared for some minutes at the delectable landscape beneath him. A shallow glen, seamed by a shining river, wound to a pale-blue ocean. It was bright with the young grass of May, and patched with snowdrifts of blossoming hawthorn. There was no sound in the valley except the ripple of the stream and the faint calling of curlews from the hill.

"I've been looking forward to this for four years," he said. "Peace, you know — the real peace in one's own place among one's own people. And now that I have got it I don't seem properly to enjoy it. There are too many empty houses in the glens. Too many good fellows who will never gillie for me more. And this old world has got such a twist that I can't see it settling down in our time. I wish to Heaven I knew where we all stood. Kathie, my dear, I am feeling very much older, and I am losing my nerve."

The lady looked at him with troubled eyes. "Do you think we ought to be entertaining

on such a big scale, Arthur, if we are so much poorer?"

"Confound it, my dear, it is not the money. Jennings went through my position with me yesterday, and we are still pretty well off. I would n't mind paying fifteen shillings in the pound in taxes for the rest of my days. No. It is the country I am worrying about. Here we have gone and sacrificed the better part of a million of our picked men, and crippled hundreds of thousands more for life. And for what? We have won, of course, but we don't seem to know what we've won. Those damned politicians are at the job again. I thought we had washed all that out."

"And Bolshevism, dear!" said his wife.

"And every little faction on the globe wanting to turn itself into a State!"

"And our own Labour people so discontented!"

"And all this business of the League of Nations! How on earth are we going to give up our Navy and trust the fortunes of Britain to a collection of Kilkenny cats?"

"It's very puzzling, dear. And Agatha writes me such miserable letters about Reginald. He's simply wretched at being out of Parliament, and she has had to change her cook twice since Christmas."

This amœbean plaint was interrupted by the appearance of a young woman. She was a pretty, fair-haired creature, with eyes too old and too tragic for her years; yet even the listlessness of her walk and the sombre black of her dress could not muffle the grace of her youth. She carried a telegram, which her aunt opened.

"Martha is coming by to-morrow's boat," Mrs. Lamont announced. "How very fortunate! I hope you will like Martha Lavender, Phyllis. She is so buoyant and kind and American and devoted to Arthur. Without her I do not think I could have faced Jeanne Sevenoaks."

The young girl showed only a conventional interest.

"Who are the others?" she asked.

"Nobody young, I fear. You see there are

so few young men nowadays; only boys. There are the Wypers — Albert and Pen. Pen is Arthur's niece, you know, and she wrote and said they both wanted a rest."

Colonel Lamont snorted.

"I wish she were coming by herself. 'Pon my word, Kathie, I don't find it easy to be civil to Wyper. He patronises me so infernally."

"Well, he has lost his seat now, and probably he is quite humble. We must be nice to him for Pen's sake. Then" — counting on her fingers — "there is Sir William Jacob. Jeanne told me to ask him, and he has been at Oban on some Land Commission. The great lawyer, you know, my dear."

"I don't know," said Phyllis. "And besides him?"

"There's Ursula Aspenden. You must like her. So good and charitable, and oh! so pretty."

"I scarcely know her," said the girl.

"There's Christopher Normand."

"I like *him*," said Phyllis emphatically.

"He was a friend of Charlie's. How awful for him to be fairly young and healthy and the best shot in England and yet not to be allowed to fight because of his lameness! That would have driven me mad, Aunt Kathie."

"Well, dear," — and the older woman patted the girl's hand, — "you must be very kind to him. Poor Kit! His mother was such a joy to me till she went mad about religion. That's the lot, I think. Except, of course, Margaret Guidwillie."

"Thank God, she is coming," Colonel Lamont said fervently. "She has a tongue that would take the skin off a rhino, but I would sooner have her at my back in a row than any ten men. She ought to be here for tea, for she is coming by the ferry from Rona. I sent the wagonette to meet her."

The girl seemed unsatisfied. "Did n't Uncle Arthur say something about a Labour Member?"

"Oh, my dear, I forgot. Yes, he is one of Martha's friends. He has been very ill and recruiting in Scotland. His name" — and she

consulted a small address-book in her bag — "is James Burford. Martha calls him 'Jimmie,' and often 'My Jimmie.'"

"I must confess that the thought of him makes me confoundedly nervous," said Colonel Lamont. "I don't a bit trust Martha Lavender's judgment. You remember when she planted me with a young Hindu who was some beastly kind of a god. The fellow may be as spiky as a hedgehog, if he is not as mad as a hatter. I never met a Labour Member in my life."

"He is not a Member," said his wife. "He was beaten by ten thousand votes by the man who makes all the potted meats. Martha says he is a saint."

"A what!" exclaimed Mr. Burford's prospective host in dire alarm.

Then he turned and gazed at the grass slopes beyond the sunk fence, for some one was making his way towards them from that quarter. The stranger was obviously out of breath and took a long time to cross the ha-ha. Then he caught sight of the house and stood

blinking at it, till he became conscious of the presence of people in the arbour.

As he turned towards them Colonel Lamont saw a squarely built man of about thirty-five, with a broad, cheerful face. Short-sighted blue eyes peered through horn spectacles, and a thatch of untidy hair was revealed, since he had removed his hat to cool his brow. He was curiously dressed for that part of the world, wearing a black coat and a bowler hat. In his hand he carried a small kit-bag, which he dumped on the gravel walk.

"Is it Colonel Lamont?" he asked, beaming at the party in the arbour.

"I am James Burford, sir," he continued. "I was due to come to-morrow, but the weather was so fine that I got a small boat to put me over to Kylanish and I walked the rest. It's a bit of an intrusion, but you know what we city folks are like when we get on holiday."

He spoke in a soft West-Midland voice with a slurring of "s's" and a slight burr in the "r's"; and he looked so friendly and boylike

as he made his apologies that his three hearers vied with each other in declaring their pleasure at the sight of him.

Presently across the lawn came the butler, followed by a footman and a parlourmaid with the materials of tea. Ere Mrs. Lamont had poured out a single cup the butler appeared again, ushering another guest, at the sight of whom Colonel Lamont leaped to his feet in a fervour of welcome.

The newcomer was a tall lady clad in a dark-green tartan skirt, a tweed coat, and a well-worn leather hat. She might have been any age between forty and sixty, for her face bore the marks rather of weather than of time. In her big, gauntleted hands she swung a stick like a shepherd's crook, and her walk was that of one more familiar with the moors than the pavements. Mr. Burford once again removed his bowler as he was presented to the Lady Guidwillie of Waucht.

"Tea, as you love me, Kathie," she said. "I've got an appetite like a hunter," and, seizing two buttered scones, she began her meal.

Colonel Lamont detained the retreating butler. "What about your luggage, Mr. Burford?" he asked.

"It's all here," said that gentleman, handing over his little bag. "I'm one that travels light."

"You know something about food, Kathie," observed Lady Guidwillie when she had taken the edge off her hunger.

"I hope you don't think it wicked to have tea in the old-fashioned way," said the hostess to Mr. Burford. "We cut off cream and sugar and cakes during the war, but Arthur made me have them back again."

"And quite right too. I am not going to let the war or anything else come between me and a good tea."

Lady Guidwillie regarded him with curiosity mingled with approval. He had suddenly risen and was staring towards the west, where a very beautiful golden shimmer lay on the sea. "That beats cock-fighting," was his tribute. Then he announced his wish to get to higher ground to see what lay behind a certain

woody cape, and Phyllis was commandeered to show him the road.

"Who on earth is he?" asked Lady Guidwillie, as soon as the two were out of earshot.

"A Labour Member," said Mrs. Lamont. "At least he was before the last election. He is a friend of Martha Lavender. She says he's a saint."

"Let me hear what sort of menagerie you have brought me into. I have been so bored at Waucht that I want to go into society. First, who are the women? I think you told me that Martha was coming?"

"By to-morrow's boat. You like her, don't you, Margaret?"

"I love her. What is her latest form of mischief-making?"

"Oh, I don't agree. She never makes mischief. She is always on the side of the angels."

"The elves, you mean. Her father did n't make a fortune in the Chicago wheat-pit. Her father was Puck, and she follows him in putting a girdle round the earth. Next?"

"Ursula Aspenden."

"Kind and silly. I make it my business to shock her on every possible occasion."

"And Jeanne Sevenoaks."

"I retire. She'll do the shocking. Why does she insist upon being called Jeanne? Her good father christened her Jane. He was a most excellent man who used to take one of Guidwillie's moors and made a great deal of money in floorcloth somewhere near Falkirk. . . . Arthur, I hear you are getting peevish. You are not like Doris Cranlegh, I hope, who thinks that the war has been fought in vain because she can't get under-housemaids?"

Colonel Lamont smiled down on his old friend.

"I don't think I am peevish, but I am a little out of my bearings. We all are. I want something extra fine to come out of the business when the price has been so high. You see, I cannot bear to think that our best have died except for the very best."

"No," said Lady Guidwillie, in what for her was a very gentle tone. "No, that is not to be borne."

"And since the whole nation has suffered, every one must feel the same."

"Has the whole nation suffered? Some have led very sheltered lives. Our own class has paid nobly, and the poor, and the lower middle class most of all. The little tradesmen and professional men, I mean. But there have been big ugly patches of *embusqués* and profiteers, and I do not see why the working-classes at home should take so much credit to themselves. They worked hard, no doubt, but they were never in danger and had mighty fine wages, while the soldiers flirted with death for a shilling a day. I wonder what your black-coated friend says to that?"

Mr. Burford and Phyllis were returning. As he reached the arbour a footman approached and asked him for his keys.

"Never had any," he said cheerily. "The old bag's got a broken lock."

II

In which the ears of the company are assailed by sundry political phrases.

Lady Sevenoaks and Mrs. Lavender on the evening of their arrival were walking on the south terrace awaiting the summons of the dressing-bell. They were a remarkable contrast, the first tall, slim, and golden-haired, with somewhat languid blue eyes, the second dark and small and alert as a linnet. Both were libertines in speech, the one with a talent for epigrammatic extravagance, the other shrewd and racy as one of her husband's cow-punchers. That gentleman, indeed, was wont to remark that he would back his Martha to talk down a Democratic caucus, and that if her old-time namesake of the Scriptures had been like her, he reckoned Mary would have quit business.

"Martha, darling," said Lady Sevenoaks, "did you ever — ever in your life — see such

a collection as Kathie has got together? Her parties were always like a *table d'hôte*, but this beats — how do you say it, darling?"

"The band," said Mrs. Lavender.

"It is so difficult for me, you know, feeling as I do about George's career and the shameful way he has been treated. William Jacob, of course, is a true friend. But it was Wyper and his horrid cranks that wrecked our party. And the Labour man — Bunyan, is n't it? — I know just how unpleasant he will be, talking nonsense about the triumph of Democracy and exulting in the destruction of what he calls the Old Gang."

"Jimmie was beat himself," said the other. "And he never exults. It is n't in his nature. You had better be nice about Jimmie, my dear, or you will rouse the lurking savage in me. Remember I'm only one generation removed from the pioneer."

"Well, if he won't exult, Margaret Guidwillie will. I can see it in her rude old eyes. Some day soon I shall detest her. Poor Guidwillie! She never appreciated him. He died of

a surfeit of haggis and brown sherry — such an odd death, darling, but so characteristic. George always loved dining with him."

"She is the only woman in the world," said Mrs. Lavender, "that I think I am a little afraid of. Your grand dames don't worry me a little bit. They're always acting stylish, and if you kick away their little pedestal they look foolish. But she's so sure of herself that she never wants to be anybody else. Twenty generations of cold northeasters and high-handed economy and the Presbyterian religion give a woman something to stand on. I feel new and raw before her, like a small, impudent Israelite looking up at the walls of Jericho."

At that moment the dressing-bell sounded, and as the two ladies moved upstairs they encountered Mr. Albert Wyper. He carried an *attaché* case and several weekly papers. He had a soft, shapeless face, a humourless eye, and an untidy person.

"I have found a new theory of Democracy in a French review," he said, "and am writing a letter to the *New Republic* on the subject.

It may interest you, Lady Sevenoaks, for one of your husband's speeches is the text."

"Martha," said that lady at her bedroom door, "this is a very foolish world. When I was a young girl Democracy meant the Liberal majority, and was chiefly mentioned in the House of Lords. Then the Labour Party discovered the word and it came to mean the Poor. Now it stands for everything which any speaker likes and agrees with. If we had come in, we should have been triumphant Democracy; as it is we are effete aristocrats whom the Democrats of Carlton House Terrace and Eccleston Square are going to slay. I wish we could go back to Whig and Tory. They were prettier words and meant something. I know they will all talk about Democracy at dinner and I shall be quite unwell."

But at dinner the high, clear voice of Mrs. Aspenden discoursed of history.

"I have been reading all about this place," she announced. "Do you know that St. Brandan came here on his great voyage? It is his Island of Sheep, where he found the lamb for

the Paschal sacrifice. There is a beautiful passage about it translated out of some old Latin chronicle. He sailed, you remember, out of tempestuous seas and came suddenly to a green isle of peace with sheep feeding among the meadows. And long after him the monks had their cells on the west shore, looking out to the sunset. Who can tell me more about it?"

"You had better talk to Mr. Macmillan," said the host. "He is the minister, and you'll hear him preach to-morrow."

"He is the great scholar of these parts," Lady Guidwillie volunteered. "But he's not very interested in the monks. He prefers the ruffians from whom I descended — the Northmen who came down on the islands and cleared out the saints."

"How horrible!" said Mrs. Aspenden. "It sounds as if he were a Prussian."

Colonel Lamont laughed. "He'd be amused if you told him that. In the war he was chaplain to one of the Cameron battalions, and he used to go over the top with the men and lay

about him. He's a good man of his hands, Macmillan."

Mr. Christopher Normand was sitting next to Lady Sevenoaks. He was a strongly built man of forty-five, whose clean-shaven face had the high gloss given by much open air and a good digestion. But for his lameness he was a fine figure of masculine strength. A curious sadness in his eye and a delicacy about the mouth and chin softened the impression of vigour given by his bodily presence, and his brow was rather that of a scholar and dreamer than of a Yorkshire hunting squire.

"I like the story," he said to his neighbour. "To come out of stormy seas to a green isle of quietness! It is what we are all seeking. Democracy is a great and wonderful thing, but it does not make for peace."

"There!" exclaimed Lady Sevenoaks. "I knew it. Already we have reached that odious subject."

"Which?" asked the man. "Peace or Democracy?"

"She means Democracy," said Mrs. Lav-

ender. "Jeanne is sore about it, for it has jilted her."

"My dear Jane," said Lady Guidwillie, "it is you who are inconstant. Six years ago the word was never out of your mouth. Whenever your party was in a hole, you declared it was fighting the battle of Democracy. When you were told that you had lost the support of sensible people, you said that anyhow Democracy was on your side. You once announced, I remember, that triumphant Democracy would make short work of people like me. . . . Surely the thing can't have changed so utterly in six years."

Lady Sevenoaks raised her languid eyelids. "It has. Then it meant something. Now it means precisely what a few thousand different people choose to make it mean. It is democracy to make Germany pay all our bills, and democracy to forgive our enemies. It is democratic to establish new nationalities, and democratic to get rid of nationality altogether. The whole of political debate nowadays is one welter of crudities and contradictions."

The fine voice of Sir William Jacob was heard. "We must stick to proved definitions. For me it has been defined once and for all by Lincoln — government of the people, by the people, for the people."

"An idle dream," said Mr. Normand. "*Of* the people — yes. *For* the people — perhaps in good time, when we have hanged a few score political *arrivistes*. But *by* the people — never. Government is an expert business, like any other science. You can choose your administrators from any class, but they will still be a sect apart. You can no more give all the people a share in the practice of government than you can make them all their own dentists."

Mr. Wyper's eye brightened, for this kind of discussion was after his own heart.

"That is an old difficulty, but it seems to me to rest in a confusion of thought. The people reign, but they do not govern except at intervals. No. I don't mean General Elections. Three fourths of administration they are content to entrust to their chosen representatives

without much supervision. But in greater matters and the things which affect them deeply, they exercise, and should exercise, a direct control through many channels. Our business is to devise a machinery of government which will make this direct control easy and exact at the proper moments. . . . I do not complain of the last election. A nation is entitled to its hour of pique and prejudice as I am permitted an occasional fit of bad temper."

"Democracy, then, may be Tory and Radical and Socialist by turns and yet remain Democracy?" asked Mr. Normand.

"Certainly."

"It is a comforting doctrine for the politician. But we ordinary folk want something more. We want it to be wise. What is the good of making the world safe for something called Democracy unless that thing is worthy of safety? We are too much concerned with machinery for doing this or that, and we do not stop to consider whether this or that is worth doing. We are very German, you know."

"Surely," said Sir William Jacob, "it is

worth doing — to make the will of the people prevail."

"I don't see why, unless it is a good will and a reasonable will. If it is bad and unjust I want to put every obstacle in the way of its prevailing."

Sir William laughed. "So that is your Tory Democracy, my dear Normand. It is you who are the Prussian. You are prepared to let the people govern only if they behave as superior persons direct them. That is not my notion of liberty."

Christopher Normand demurred. "The sovereignty of the people is a fact, and only a fool would try to upset it. But I don't see why it should be necessarily a good thing. It may be extraordinarily muddle-headed and perverse, if the people are foolish. That's my objection to the common eulogists of Democracy. The system is the best or the worst according to the way it is worked, but it has no intrinsic guarantee of goodness. When it's good it's very very good, and when it is bad it's horrid."

Mr. Burford had so far not spoken a word, but had eaten his dinner with much contentment. Now he observed that it was high time politicians stopped being mealy-mouthed about the People. "We can't get on," he said, "without a bit of rough-tonguing when we deserve it. There's been a deal too much of the cap-in-hand business. Working-folk don't like it."

"I sat for a great working-class constituency for many years," said Sir William. "I found they responded most readily to any appeal to their higher instincts. . . . But I confess that these higher instincts seem for the moment to be submerged."

"Not a bit of it," said Mrs. Lavender. "They're out on a bust. It does them good to kick up their heels now and then, the same as you and me."

The picture of Sir William Jacob kicking up his heels in the company of Mrs. Lavender was too much for the gravity of Mr. Burford. He laughed merrily, but there was no response from the other guests. Lady Sevenoaks was

fretful, Mr. Normand sunk in apparently painful meditations, Mr. Wyper cross, and Sir William abstracted, while the host and hostess had had their worst fears confirmed by the preceding conversation. Dinner ended in a mood of dismal resignation to fate.

In the drawing-room later Mr. Burford sat beside Phyllis.

"I hate everybody's pessimism," said the girl.

"They ain't pessimistic," said the man. "They 're only puzzled. You see, none of them have been fighting, except the Colonel."

"But you 're cheerful, and you were n't fighting."

"No," he said sadly, "I was n't. They would n't have me even for a Base job. My eyesight 's nothing to boast of."

"And yet you don't stand aside and prophesy darkly about the People, as if they were some new kind of influenza."

"I'd have to get outside my skin to do it," he said, tilting up his spectacles and peering at her with his curious, merry eyes. "I'm one

of them, just an ordinary sample of the forty million working-folk they're so scared at. You would n't ask me to get scared at myself?"

III

An Island Sabbath morning. The Minister of the Parish mounts the chaire de vérité. *Two young men and a Labour leader enliven a depressed gathering.*

The Sabbath morning dawned blue and shining, with that delicate, clear light which is found only in an island set amid miles of sea. A light wind came from the mainland, bringing scents of spring. Under ordinary circumstances Colonel Lamont would have been in good spirits and would have whistled his one tune, "Auld Lang Syne," while dressing, but the memory of the depression of the previous evening weighed him down.

"We've got a nice collection of Job's comforters," he informed his wife.

"I can't understand it," was the plaintive reply. "Even Ursula, who used to be so sweet, is difficult."

"Burford is the only fellow who is n't afraid to laugh. I like him immensely. He reminds

me of an old collie my father had when I was a child. Same jolly, trusty eyes."

"I think Jeanne is in a very bad temper," said his wife. "Poor darling, she has much to try her. But she really is very rude. Ursula was telling us about the Havering engagement, and said they were touchingly happy. Jeanne said in her gentlest voice, which always frightens me, 'Yes, I saw them last week lunching at the Ritz. As happy as two little birds. And such ugly little birds, dear.'"

So tonic was the air, however, that the company at breakfast were in better spirits. Mr. Burford, who had been early abroad, had some colour in his face, and his stubborn thatch of hair was in more than its usual disorder.

Mrs. Aspenden had a grievance. The night before she had inquired as to the whereabouts of the church, and, being uninstructed in the theological differences of her country, had set out according to custom for early service. She had been sadly disappointed.

"I found a square building like a furniture

repository," she complained. "It was locked, and there was nobody about except a man in a garden, a man in his shirt-sleeves smoking a pipe."

"That would be Macmillan," said Colonel Lamont.

"The parson!" exclaimed Mrs. Aspenden in horror. "Why was n't his church open, if only that one might pray in it?"

"Dear Ursula is very High," whispered Lady Sevenoaks to her neighbour, who happened to be Mr. Wyper. "She finds spiritual consolation in attending private theatricals before breakfast." Mr. Wyper, who professed agnosticism, received this piece of irreverence with sympathy.

"I did a bit of praying myself," said Mr. Burford. "But I did it on the lawn. You don't want churches on a May morning."

It was weather which did not permit of lethargy, and when the Lamonts appeared equipped for church they found among their guests an unexpected desire to accompany them. Even Mr. Wyper set down his *attaché*

case, from which he was rarely separated, and looked for his hat. Lady Sevenoaks was late and was therefore compelled to accompany Mrs. Aspenden, who was driven by her conscience to attend some place of worship in spite of the irregularities of the smoking parson.

The minister was a man of fifty-five, short in stature, black-bearded, and as strong as a Highland bull. His battered, brown complexion and far-sighted grey eyes gave him the air of a deep-sea skipper masquerading as a landsman. He was a bachelor who had led a peaceful life of honest parochial work, varied with excursions into scholarship and fishing whenever fish were to be caught, till the war had swept him to France for four strenuous years. His voice, as happens sometimes with such a figure, was one of great sweetness and melody, and he spoke pure English with a soft Gaelic intonation.

In the bare little kirk, through whose plain glass windows might be seen the wheeling of gulls and plovers on the moor, there was but

a slender congregation. Most waited for the Gaelic service in the afternoon, for Mr. Macmillan's English discourses were sometimes hard for his parishioners to understand. The big sheep-farmer from Lith, having had a heavy week at Oban, was soon asleep. The family from the Kylanish inn had new clothes and sat in self-conscious pride; the innkeeper's son, late of the Argylls, was self-conscious too, for he was a hero just returned to his native land. A few fishermen and herds made up the rest of the flock, save for Colonel Lamont's party.

Mr. Macmillan, taking as his text the First Epistle of St. Peter, the first chapter, the twelfth verse, and the last clause of the verse, "Which things the angels desire to look into," discoursed upon the present discontents and asked questions.

Every one, he said, knew roughly for what we had been fighting. We had been resisting Germany's claim to impose her will upon the world. We should have been right in our opposition, even had that will been a good will; but

as a matter of fact it was in the main a bad will. That point, at any rate, was clear.

But now came the difficulty. We were in danger of labelling every part of Germany's creed as evil and of affirming as our own creed the direct opposite. For example —

Germany stood for the super-nationality, the big coördinating union of peoples. Bad, no doubt, as she conceived it. But was the principle wrong? The alternative was a chaos of feeble statelets based on trivial differences — economically weak, politically unstable. Were we prepared to put all the emphasis on self-determination? If we did, we should not get freedom, but anarchy. We should undo the long work of civilisation.

Again, Germany stood in an arrogant and offensive way for nationality itself, fidelity, as Burke said, to the platoon in which men are born. We entered the war for the same principle, because Germany had pressed hers so far that it had become incompatible with the existence of any other nationalism. But some of the opposition to Germany came from

people to whom the whole notion of nationality was repugnant. During the war we made a pet of the extreme German Socialists who would divide the world horizontally by classes. Let us beware lest in opposing Germany's foolish exaggeration we denied a doctrine which lay at the root of civilisation, and allied ourselves with civilisation's arch enemies. "*Non tali auxilio,*" said Mr. Macmillan.

Lastly, Germany stood for something not wholly material or base. She had an ideal, cross-grained and perverted in the hearts of many of her classes, but amongst simple folk capable of affording an honest inspiration. At its worst it was something not utterly without moral value, something which involved renunciation and sacrifice. It was nobler than mere loaves and fishes. She believed in the historic state, enriched with the long-descended gifts of time, though in her folly she mistook the mechanical for the organic. But were there no mechanists among her opponents? There were those, even in Britain, who sought to defeat Germany only

to replace her blunder by one of their own — to set up a British or American or French world-mechanism instead of a Teutonic. The selfish rich on the one side and the crude demagogue on the other both dreamed of a Prussianism not a whit nobler and far less well-considered than Germany's. "For God's sake," said the preacher, "do not let us forsake the complex legacy of the past, with its equipoise and balance and deep foundations, for a jerry-built usurpation of some raw new class. Let us oppose Germany's darkness, not her gleams of light. Those who would base the world on a shallow Marxian materialism are more Prussian than the Prussians. The Junker creed has more idealism than the Spartacist, and the Russians who fought for a corrupt czardom were better men than the Bolsheviks who fight for their own pockets."

Mr. Macmillan, conscious of an honourable record in the war, thus paid his tribute to our late enemies. Himself a determined Calvinist, he now said a good word for the Church of Rome.

"I have no particular weakness for the Vatican," he observed; "but, again, let us fight against darkness and not against light. The Roman Church stands for much which the world dare not lose. We have been irritated by its apparent weakness and time-serving, but let us consider its strength. It is for the historic bequest of Europe against crude novelties, for a spiritual interpretation of life against a barren utilitarianism, for dogma and ascertained truth against the opportunist, the sciolist, and the half-baked. Those of us who believe in God cannot do without its aid. By all means let us condemn its blunders in diplomacy and politics, but do not let us abuse it as a dead hand on a living world. For, if it is dead, then the world also is dying."

"I appeal to you," he concluded, "to cultivate honesty and scrupulousness of mind. In the present welter of ideas we may drift towards false gods. If we make our creed the exact opposite of all that Germany strove for, then without doubt we shall slip into a worse

kind of Germanism, shoddier, narrower, falser than that which we have fought in the field. Let us try to forget political tactics and do a little serious thinking about principles."

This appeal had no effect upon the sheep-farmer from Lith, who slumbered through it, or on the young ladies from the inn, who did not understand it. The native congregation were waiting for the good gospel in Gaelic in the afternoon. But Colonel Lamont's party listened with an attention which few of them had been in the habit of according to a sermon.

As they walked home by the white moor-road, Mrs. Lavender approached her hostess.

"Tell me, Kathie dear, when are the boys coming? You said you expected George Maldwin and my little cousin Penrose."

"They should be here after dinner. They get a boat from Rona. George was to motor there this morning."

"I hope you won't mind, but I asked Penrose to bring on D. C. Jonas. He was in Glasgow for an engineers' conference, and I thought he would be the better for your sea

breezes. Besides, I want you all to see him. An hour or two of Dan will do you highbrows a deal of good."

Mrs. Lamont wrinkled her brows as if personally affected by the word. "Delighted, my dear. But won't he make us more depressed? Jeanne is so angry with the Labour people, and none of us seem to be in the best of spirits."

"Oh, Dan won't depress you," said Mrs. Lavender. "He'll cheer you up. We need it too, for Jimmie is no earthly use. He's so happy here that he talks no more than a graven image."

Luncheon was a silent meal, and thereafter, when the party sorted itself into groups for the afternoon walk, Christopher Normand chose a book from the library and settled himself with it in the arbour. He was in a sad, reflective mood, and the work, which was the "Homilies" of St. Gregory the Great, fitted his temper. He found one sentence in it which so pleased him that he transcribed it into a notebook. "If we yet love such a world as

this, it is not joys but wounds that we love."

Mr. Normand about tea-time had come to the conclusion, from the examination of his own mind, that at the moment there was a deplorable lack of good-humour in the world. His conclusion was not weakened by the return of the walking parties. Lady Sevenoaks by some mischance had been paired with Mr. Wyper, who had treated her to that peculiar form of patronage which made him unpopular with his own sex. His habit was to lay down some thesis and invite criticisms, and to receive such criticisms with the smiling condescension with which a governess greets the crude efforts of a backward child. He had what is called a "mobile" countenance, and his eyebrows and eyes were in constant movement, so that Lady Guidwillie had occasion to observe to her host that she wished something could be done to make the man demobilise his face.

Mrs. Lavender, too, was out of temper with Mr. Burford. He, alone of the party, was in

the best of spirits, but he refused to communicate the secret of his content. He had hunted enthusiastically for the eggs of the black-headed gull when Mrs. Lavender would fain have had him show his intellectual paces before her friends. On the subject of the sermon of the morning he had refused to be drawn, only remarking that he liked the look of the chap, and meant to have a good yarn with him some day soon.

At dinner, which, owing to the mildness of the air, took place out of doors on the south terrace, Mr. Wyper was much disposed to argument.

"I had hoped," he said, "to see Macmillan here this evening. Is n't it the custom in country houses that the parson dines on Sunday night?"

He was informed by Colonel Lamont that Mr. Macmillan had strict views on the observance of the Sabbath and would as soon think of dining out on that day as of setting up a confessional. "He's coming here one night soon if he gets back in time from the fishing.

You can't depend upon him if the sea trout are running in Lith Water."

"He interests me enormously," continued Mr. Wyper. "An honest obscurantist! His point of view is, of course, very much that of our late enemies. Had every one been as honest as he, the war would have died away in the first month from very shame. The school of thought to which I belong is the extreme antithesis of Germanism, but we opposed the war because we knew very well that this country did not fight with clean hands. Macmillan, you tell me, was ardently bellicose and served in the field, and now that he has won he is in terror lest his victory should be complete. He realises that he has been fighting against his own creed. It is all very typical of our national confusion of thought."

Sir William Jacob shook his head. "I see no confusion. I think we had some very good sense this morning — some truths which to me personally were very disquieting. The parson's advice was to keep our heads clear, and, because we had to smash a perversion,

not to be betrayed into a denial of the truths which had been perverted. That seems to be plain enough."

"That is a fair debating point, Jacob," said Mr. Wyper. "But it has no substance. My argument is that these doctrines must from their very nature be liable to constant perversion. So soon as you accept nationality and the historic state and the large political organism, you slip insensibly into the vice of Prussianism. Will any one deny that our British Imperialists held in reality the German faith, and only missed its enormities because they were less able and logical than the Kaiser and his Marshals?"

All, including Sir William Jacob, seemed disposed to deny it, but their hostess anticipated them.

"We shall have Mr. Philip Lenchard here on Tuesday. We had better leave the British Empire to be defended by him."

"I sincerely hope so," said Mrs. Lavender pensively. "Philip promised me to let nothing stand in the way. But you know, my dear, he

is in serious danger of being made a god. His visit to India was far too successful. He is just that mixture of Herbert Spencer and Buddha that Orientals love. I hear that there is quite a powerful body already which worships him and burns Blue-Books in his honour."

"I wish," said Lady Sevenoaks — "I wish that some of our politicians could be deified. It would be such a dignified way of getting rid of them. They won't be satisfied with ordinary peerages, so we might make them *Divi.* It would be a very complete way of kicking them upstairs, for of course it would be *sacrilege* if they came back to politics. Mr. Hepplewhite, for example, — I simply cannot tell you the mess that man made of things in Paris. George says they imported hundreds of clerks, and took hotels and stuffed them with experts on every kind of irrelevant question like the origin of the Kurds and the land system of Nebuchadnezzar, and the whole shepherded by nosy young men in big spectacles, which is the new Foreign Office type. George says the

French began by giggling at us and then grew very cross."

"It seems," said Colonel Lamont dolefully, "that we have won the war and are doing our best to lose all the fruits of it. Nothing has gone right since that infernal Armistice."

The tone was so dejected that Christopher Normand's sense of comedy was stirred. "Cheer up, old man," he said. "In time we'll get used to the horrors of this Peace to end peace. . . . We're all getting too pessimistic. After all, none of our troubles are new. Read the memoirs of a hundred years ago and see the fools our people made of themselves at European congresses — hordes of smart women and flimsy bureaucrats cumbering the busy men. Even our Labour troubles — every one of them — have a long ancestry. I am prone to the dumps myself, and the best cure is to read a little history."

Mr. Normand had raised his voice, as his habit was when he was in earnest, and three newcomers had approached the table ere the diners were aware of their presence. Two were

tall young men; one was small and middle-aged, with a thin face, fiery red hair, and restless brown eyes. This last caught the concluding words of Mr. Normand, for he signalised his advent with loud approval.

"'Ear! 'Ear!" he said. "That's well spoken. What we all want is to learn a bit of 'ist'ry."

While they were being welcomed by the host and hostess, Lady Sevenoaks asked Mrs. Lavender their names.

"The tallest is George Maldwin — Stanbury-Maldwin. A great friend of mine, and the best man to hounds in Northamptonshire."

"A Guardsman, I suppose," said Lady Sevenoaks. "They all have double names and places in the Midlands."

"The other boy is my cousin, Penrose MacAndrew. He is just back from keeping watch on the Rhine."

"The third?" asked Lady Sevenoaks. "I have seen him before, but where and when I can't remember. Probably on some platform."

"Not on your George's, I bet. That's D. C. Jonas."

Lady Sevenoaks exclaimed, "The Labour man! I'm going home to-morrow. Why in the name of goodness does Kathie invite all these people here just when we're tired and want cheering?"

"Because," said Mrs. Lavender, "they seem to be the only cheerful folks left alive in this little old world. I asked her to get Dan and Jimmie here. You highbrows want a lot of talking to. You may call me every kind of fool, my dear, if they don't turn out to be the cheeriest members in this congregation of undertakers."

IV

In which two Leaders of the People essay the sports of the idle rich. Mr. Jonas expounds the meaning of Bolshevism and the temperament of the British nation.

COLONEL LAMONT examined his correspondence at breakfast with a puzzled air.

"We must be getting very popular people," he told his wife. "Malone proposes to come here on Wednesday for a day or two and to bring with him the French Army Commander for whom I did *liaison* on the Somme. I never thought to entertain old Morier in this island. I must say I am uncommonly pleased. Do you know Mr. Malone?" he asked Mrs. Lavender.

"Merryweather! Why, yes. He was a beau of mine before I met William and married beneath me. He's a bright boy. Say, Penrose, what do you think of Merryweather Malone coming here?"

The young American, who had a curiously solemn face and very bright, humorous eyes,

ejaculated, "Fine!" and continued his breakfast.

"And, Martha dear," said the hostess, "Mr. Lenchard arrives to-morrow, god or no. I suppose he will behave like ordinary people."

"Indeed he won't. I can promise you that, Kathie. But he eats the same food as you and me."

"Thank Heaven, there's plenty of it," said the Colonel. "That is the advantage of having your own land nowadays. But the cellar has been shockingly neglected for four years."

"You need n't worry about that," said Mrs. Lavender. "Merryweather has gone dry like the rest of the U.S.A. Your French General won't want more than a glass of white wine, and Philip is all for barley water. Pour your cellar into the sea, Arthur, and join the ranks of the bone-dry. You'll be a happier and a healthier man. And, you boys, quit the flowing bowl, or you'll get whipped at polo every time."

"I am waiting to take on America," said Mr. Maldwin, "when she has given up alcohol

for ten years and then rediscovers it. It will be like the South Sea Islanders when they had measles. She will have lost the power to resist it."

"And that's the youth of England!" the lady exclaimed, flinging up her hands. "For the Lord's sake, don't corrupt little Penrose. I promised his mother I would look after his morals."

The arrival of the young men had worked a change in the party comparable to the introduction of effervescent salts into flat water. It was a clear, fresh morning, and every one sought the open air. Mr. Maldwin, who announced that he had long ago resolved to make a pet of himself after the war, arranged with Mr. Jonas for a trip in their host's racing cutter. Mr. Burford, Penrose MacAndrew, and Phyllis proposed a day's fishing on the Lith, while Christopher Normand and Colonel Lamont were to try for brown trout in the Black Loch.

"I'll come with you, George," said Mrs. Lavender. "If you drown Dan and there's

nobody else on the scene, they'll say it was a plot of Capital to weaken Labour."

"No, they won't," said Mr. Maldwin. "I voted Labour at the last election and I'm going to join the party as soon as they clean up their stable and engage a better class of jock."

"You'll come to a bad end, dearie. Your kind of demagogue always gets knifed in the flower of its youth."

Mr. Maldwin, as they set off for the shore, was heard to remark that a prolonged sojourn in the Ypres Salient had made him a trifle *blasé* about murders.

That evening dinner was deferred, for the fishers were late, and it was not till the stroke of nine that the sailing party returned with ravenous appetites and deeply sunburned faces. The tremendous news was announced that Mr. Burford had caught a salmon and had landed it after a long run during which he had twice fallen into the river. Phyllis recounted the exploit.

"He stuck to it like a Trojan and did every-

thing I told him quite right, but his reel jammed and he had to play the fish with his hands. I have just had them bandaged, Aunt Kathie, and he's having a bath and changing."

The sportsman entered the room and was overwhelmed with laughing congratulations.

"My word," he said, beaming on the company, "that was fun all right. I have n't enjoyed myself so much since I was a kid. It was n't so much me catching a salmon as the salmon catching me. I would walk a hundred miles to get that thrill again when the reel screams. Dan, I'm feeling on the side of what you'd call the idle rich to-night."

"'Ear, 'ear," said Mr. Jonas. "I've been 'aving the time of my life too."

"They nearly drowned me," said Mrs. Lavender. "You never saw such a pair of mountebanks. Twice George made the sheet fast and left the tiller to me, while he and Dan sat and argued like costermongers in the bottom of the boat. It's a mercy my old dad taught me something about sailing."

"I would n't have left you in charge if I had n't known all about you," said Mr. Maldwin appreciatively.

"It has n't done your complexion any good, Martha dear," said Lady Sevenoaks.

Presently, when the edge had been taken off healthy appetites, Mr. Jonas began to look round him and encountered the eyes of Lady Sevenoaks. She had had a dull day, for she had stayed at home to write letters and had been condemned to the society of Mr. Wyper, who had remained behind for the same purpose. Mr. Wyper's conversation had roused her many political grievances, and she was prepared to wreak her vengeance on Mr. Jonas.

"They tell me you say that Liberalism is dead," she began.

"Not a bit of it," he replied cheerfully. "Nothing of that kind ever dies. But the old Liberal Party is dead, if that's what you mean."

"You call yourself a moderate man," said the lady sadly. "And so I suppose do Christopher and Mr. Burford. And yet you are

happy at the prospect of the country being left without a middle party and brigaded into two extremes."

"What do you mean by a middle party?" Mr. Normand asked.

"A party of mediation," was the answer. "You have Labour on one side making extreme demands and Capital on the other indisposed to yield. To mediate you must have a party which sees the justice of both sides — and the blunders. Otherwise you have a struggle of the 'haves' and 'have nots,' and the victory of either is ruin to the nation."

Mr. Normand lifted his eyebrows. "Is that a fair description of the Liberal Party of the last twelve years?"

"It was what we aimed at," said Sir William Jacob. "If we failed, it was because we were too successful."

"That's a true word," said Mr. Jonas. "You failed because you waxed fat and kicked. You were the ''aves' and you prided yourselves on your cleverness in getting, and the people who believed in idealism finally got

sick of you. I've been in Glasgow and talking to our chaps there, and I asked them to explain the downfall of Liberalism in Scotland. I took Scotland as a test case, for you were at your strongest 'ere. This is what they told me. Scotland, they said, 'ad been Liberal ever since the days of John Knox and the Covenanters, and when there was a chance of the thing dying Gladstone came along and gave it a new lease of life. Scotsmen were Liberal because they were conservative and liked the old ways. Their creed was traditionalism touched with emotion. They liked old things, and they liked also to think that they were on the side of the angels. Why should n't they? Well, the great Liberal Party became the most powerful Government of modern times. It developed a most efficient caucus and made a speciality of every electioneering dodge. You prided yourself on it, and that was the beginning of your downfall. Then came the spectacle of your stalwarts, who wanted the land for the people and scorned the 'Ouse of Lords, scrambling after peerages and setting

up as county magnates as soon as they got them. Jock Willison was telling me about one of them who was all for abolishing squires and lords, and the last Jock 'eard of him was a picture in the papers showing him in his peer's robes and describing the welcome of the tenantry when he returned to his new ancestral seat. That about finished the job, with the 'elp of Marconi. And now the 'ard-'eaded Scot is taking none of your Liberals. He wants honest Tory or honest Labour."

Lady Sevenoaks sighed. "There's some truth in that. Many of our people were the vulgarest of God's creatures. But they were no worse, surely, than the Unionists."

"Oh, yes, they were," said Mr. Jonas, "for the poor old Unionists did n't make any noble professions. There's no special 'arm in going to a casino, I take it. But if you find the President of the Anti-Gambling League punting you get a bit sick."

"Then do I understand you to say that the revolt against Liberalism is a revolt against middle-class vulgarity?" asked Sir William.

"Partly, and partly a revolt against silliness. Your party got into the 'abit of not arguing fair and square, but referring to 'Liberal principles' as if they were a new Ten Commandments. God knows what they mean by them, but that 'abit was the worst kind of Toryism. And then you talked a lot of slush. Take the old ——" and Mr. Jonas mentioned a well-known weekly paper.

Mr. Wyper, who was one of that journal's most valued contributors, bridled. "I deny that utterly. It endeavours to explore every question from the standpoint of eager, vital people who are striving to make a new world. It is the only organ left of serious political thought."

Mr. Jonas, whose face was scarlet from the sea winds, was not easily silenced.

"I make no personal allusions, and I ask everybody's pardon, but I don't see where the eagerness and vitality come in, unless it's eager to be as pettish as an old maid and vital to be always on the edge of tears. You won't argue well if you're 'aving 'ysterics all the

time. I've got tired of a paper that's shaken in every column by a passion of sobs."

"You're going too far, Dan," said Mr. Burford. "There's a heap of good writing in it, and you know you read it yourself every week."

"I do, but I never shut it up without feeling what a funny little cellar it lives in. No, Jimmie. You're not going to reform the world by being spiteful and tearful. The people of this country ain't one or the other."

"All that's beside the point," said Lady Sevenoaks. "Of course we had our faults — bad faults. But how is the country to get on without us? You must have a halfway house where both sides can meet. Otherwise you have two extremes which never touch. And these extremes will tend to grow more extreme in the absence of a *trait d'union*, till you have Bolshevism on one side and Junkerdom on the other."

Mr. Jonas refused a glass of port, leaned his elbows on the table, and collected the eyes of the company.

"We'd better 'ave this out," he said. "Lady Sevenoaks, you're what the Americans call a 'stand-patter,' begging your pardon. You still think of the nation as split up into classes each utterly different in temperament and outlook. That's where you're wrong. You Liberals are the worst reactionaries. You 'ave n't any notion of the ordinary man. Nothing like as much as the Tory. Why, in my old part of the world people used to 'sir' the Liberal member and touch their 'ats to him, while everybody called the Tory candidate by his Christian name. There ain't much in that, but it's a parable of the way you have got into the 'abit of cast-iron class notions. This war has shown that all classes are much the same at bottom. Ask the soldiers. They've learned more about the British people in the trenches than you'd learn in politics in a hundred years."

Mr. Maldwin signified his assent. "That's true of the two things I know anything about — sport and fighting. I always guessed it, but I learned it pretty thoroughly in France. That's why I'm for the ordinary man, who's

the chap that won the war. I'd be for the Labour Party to-morrow if it would buck up and reform its stable. It ain't the horses that's to blame; it's the poor stamp of jock."

"What I say," continued Mr. Jonas, "is that so long as we go on talking about classes as if they were things established by 'Eaven since the creation of the world, we are asking for trouble. You'll never get to understand about folks in a different walk of life from you if you think of them as somehow different by nature. Things are easier in America, because they tell me that classes are fluid there and their boundaries are always shifting. That's so, Mrs. Lavender?"

"True," said the lady. "William was raised in a shack in Idaho, and if the present rate of taxation goes on, my boys will be getting back to that shack."

"I'm not speaking about classes," said Lady Sevenoaks. "I am speaking about creeds. Do you mean to deny that Bolshevism is rampant in British Labour to-day?"

"Of course I do. It's a bad 'abit to call a

thing names when you don't understand it. Of course the workers are restless, same as everybody else; and since they 'ave won the war they want a square deal with the fruits of peace. But they ain't Bolsheviks — barring a few dozen miscreants who should be in gaol. What's Bolshevism anyhow? Judging by the Russian specimens, apart from their liking for 'olesale 'omicide, it seems to mean a general desire to pull things up by the roots. Well, that ain't the line of the British working-man. He is the soundest conservative on the globe, and what he wants is to get his roots down deeper. In other countries the poor man has a grip on the soil. In this country he 'as n't 'ad that for two hundred years. We are over-industrialised, as the saying is; but a root's got to be found somewhere, and he finds it in his Unions. That's why he's so jealous about them, and quite right too. He wants to find security and continuity somewhere. Now that's the opposite of Bolshevism. The true Bolsheviks are the intellectuals that want to make him only a bit of scientific terminology,

as Jock Willison says, and the plutocrats that want to make him a cog in a cold-'earted machine. They're the folk that are trying to upturn the foundations of things."

"I should define Bolshevism differently," said Sir William. "Its chief motive seems to be the establishment of the tyranny of a class. It's the same thing as Prussianism, only its class is the proletariat."

"I'm dead-sick of that word 'proletariat,'" said Mr. Jonas. "It's part of the bastard scientific jargon that's come over from Germany. I would n't call my dog such a 'ard name. But you're right, Sir William. Only what I'm arguing is that Bolshevism is a very old thing, and that there is n't much of it in the British working-classes. I'll tell you who were 'earty Bolsheviks in their day. The Manchester School and the Utilitarians. They wanted to run the world mainly for the benefit of one class, and they considered only material ends. It's true they did n't dabble in crime, but that was because they were rich, frock-coated gents and did n't need to."

Sir William Jacob was far from pleased at Mr. Jonas's assent to his definition, followed as it was by this unexpected illustration. "You misread the Manchester School very gravely, Mr. Jonas," he said.

"Why?" asked Mr. Jonas. "They objected to all war, except their own kind. So does Lenin. They asked about everything only what cash value it produced. So did Marx and his lot. They chose a fraction of the State and said everything must serve its interests, seeing that it was the People and wisdom would die with it. So does Trotsky. What more do you want?"

"The great Cobden —" began Sir William, but he was interrupted.

"Cobden!" cried Mr. Jonas, with something approaching passion. "Cobden was the biggest Bolshevik there's ever been. I reckon 'im the 'orridest character in all 'ist'ry. I was reading a bit about 'im the other day, a letter he wrote during the Crimean War, where he fairly gloats because what he calls the governing class was losing sons at Balaclava. He

'ad n't the stuff in 'im to love his country, but he could 'ate all right. I'll give you a definition of Bolshevism, Sir William. It's the creed that's based on 'ate. And if you think that's common among the British people, you greatly misjudge your countrymen."

Mr. Jonas, as if conscious that he had been too fervent, sat back in his chair and spoke in a quieter voice, that soothing voice which aforetime had calmed great gatherings at great crises.

"We are going through a difficult time, I don't deny. But it will come all right if we remember two things. The first is never to 'ate, for it's un-English and un-Christian, and don't pay. The other is to remember 'ist'ry and to realise that none of our troubles are new. Our grandfathers 'ad them, but they faced up to them like men, and did n't confuse their 'eads with bad science.

"It's like," he continued, "a time of thaw. The bitter binding winter of war is over. War was a cruel thing, and nipped young life and killed the weaklings and put a stop to growth.

But its frosts were exhilarating too, and keyed us all up. Now we're in the thaw, with muddy roads and dripping skies, and our tempers are getting short. It's a 'ard time, for there's neither the tonic of winter nor the comfort of summer, but only grey weather over a grey world. But you can't 'ave spring without it. That's what we 'ave to remember. And the time is coming when the sun will shine again and we will walk in green fields."

A strange gentleness and beauty had come into the speaker's rugged face. Suddenly he began to laugh.

"Dearie me," he said, "I'm getting eloquent. 'Ow's that for a peroration? It only wants a reference to the sunrise and the 'ills of Wales to be up to one of the P.M.'s efforts."

V

A wet day. The ladies proffer their cures for the present discontents. Mr. Normand discourses on Liberty. An Apostle of Empire arrives.

BREAKFAST next morning was made remarkable by the cheerfulness of Mrs. Lamont. Usually of a shy and timid habit, as of a dove in a world of eagles, she now blossomed into a sober merriment. She rallied Mr. Burford on his damaged hands, and Mr. Jonas on his garb, for that gentleman, resolved to emulate his friend's fishing exploits on the Lith, had borrowed a pair of Colonel Lamont's trench boots and a shooting-coat which hung loose on his shoulders.

"Your ruthless optimism last night has gone to Kathie's head," Lady Sevenoaks told the latter.

"Yes," said the hostess, "I was so cheered with what you told me. I know so little of the working-classes, apart from our own people

here, and the papers are full of such disquieting stories."

Mr. Jonas, who was standing up eating porridge in imitation of his host, and making rather a messy job of it, set down his plate and announced that breakfast was not the time to talk politics, but that he was bound to issue a warning.

"Our people are sound at 'eart," he said, "but the situation is disquieting right enough. They're asking for big changes in their life and work, and they mean to 'ave them. There's plenty of folk in the country who won't be got to understand what the workers want, and plenty who understand and won't agree to it. That means a fight, and whether it's a decent fight or a bitter, long battle depends just upon the amount of good temper and good sense both sides put into it. I 'ave n't any doubt which side will win, but I want it to be a fair win, leaving no bad blood behind it. The mischief is that unless the masters show a good spirit, they'll get up the backs of the men, and the men will make demands that

'ave n't justice in them. That's always apt to 'appen. So a lot depends on you, my friends. The People are n't very clever and they're pretty slow, but when they make up their mind and get earnest they're always right. It is n't going to be pleasant for everybody to admit this, and no amount of nice phrases will get over the unpleasantness."

Mrs. Lamont's face fell, but Mr. Jonas was relentless.

"Then there's the trouble abroad and all the mess of wickedness that the 'Un has created. There's plenty of Bolshevism about in Europe — real Bolshevism — and we've got to get the thing straight, for a country can't live to itself alone any more than a 'uman being. We're all members one of another. We won't get peace at 'ome till we get peace abroad. Why, every little industrial dispute in England is in the long run a world problem."

"I should like to hear you develop that," said Mr. Normand.

But Mr. Jonas refused. "No," he said, "I'm going fishing. This is n't the 'appy

breakfast table of No. 10 Downing Street. I'll tell you all about it to-night, if Jimmie does n't drown me."

The day passed somewhat slowly for the ladies. The only man left behind was Christopher Normand, who was busy in the library, for even Mr. Wyper had departed for the Black Loch, where he proposed, not to fish like the others, but to ascend an adjacent mountain. In the late afternoon a slight drizzle began, and the party assembled for tea in the hall, where a fire of logs burned with the ferocity which characterises fires in summer lit rather for cheerfulness than for warmth. The group presented a comfortable spectacle to Mr. Normand as he returned from a constitutional in the rain.

"We were discussing what Mr. Jonas said at breakfast," Mrs. Lamont informed him. "What do you think the workers really want, Christopher?"

"A little kindness and putting their hair in curl-papers," was the reply.

"I wish you'd be serious," said the lady,

who did not recognise the quotation. "I can't help feeling that they only want sympathy."

"Just what I said," replied Mr. Normand.

"I mean," said Mrs. Lamont, her kind eyes looking into vacancy — "I mean they want a more human relationship than that between the employers of a company and a board of directors whose names they don't know. My father used always to say that joint-stock companies would be the ruin of our working-classes. I think no one should be allowed to be an employer of labour who does not know personally every one of his men."

"And has a nice wife who takes them soup when they are ill," said Mr. Normand.

"That would be a good thing too," said Mrs. Lamont innocently.

"Nonsense, Kathie," said Lady Sevenoaks. "You're always harking back to the Lady Bountiful business. The working-classes only want what we all want — more money and more leisure. I am all for high wages and a short working-week, and the country can well

afford them if it does not cripple itself with idiotic schemes of Tariff Reform."

"I think you are too material," said the intense voice of Mrs. Aspenden. "I cannot believe that a war which has been won by the spirit should lead only to an increase of loaves and fishes. What we need is more religion — true religion."

"I agree," said Mr. Normand gravely.

"How can we expect the poor to be happy," said the lady, "when our churches are so ugly and our services so few and uninspiring? As dear Father Mabbett used to say, if we want to restore Merrie England, we must have priests serving all day before our altars, and the poor regarding the Church as their true home, and the bells of every town and village in the land ringing to welcome in the days of the Blessed Saints."

"You think you could rally Labour on that cry?" asked Mr. Normand.

"I am sure of it," said the lady.

"Like Sir Vavasour Firebrace and the bitter wrongs of the baronetage."

But his gibe missed fire, for Mrs. Aspenden was not a student of Disraeli. "You have no idea what good work the Toil and Spirit movement is doing," she continued. "Faith Brantwing told me that she had a shop-steward to tea and he stayed till midnight and poured out his heart to her. People like her can lift the workers out of their materialism."

At the last word Mr. Normand, who remembered the toilettes of the lady in question, could not repress a smile.

"What do you say, Pen, dear?" Mrs. Lamont asked her niece.

Lady Penelope Wyper, who habitually wore clothes more suited for a Three Arts Ball than the Hebrides, was busy fitting a tiny cigarette into an elaborate holder.

"Oh, I don't know," she said. "I live only for the beautiful in life and I'm not interested in economics. I don't think anybody is, except the people who make their living by teaching them. I agree with Ursula that the change must be in the spirit, but a few thousand extra High Church parsons won't work the change.

I think the people are craving for colour and form. Now, if Augustus John —"

But, unnoticed by the speakers, the party from the Lith had returned, and Phyllis and the two fishermen were standing between a Coromandel screen and the passage to the drawing-room. They had been listening to the last part of the conversation, and Mr. Normand was a delighted witness of the slow amazement which overspread their faces. Phyllis, who could not see it direct, caught the reflection of it in Christopher's eyes and broke into merry laughter.

"Have you got a fish?" Mr. Normand asked.

"I 'ave," said Mr. Jonas. "And I've put Jimmie's nose out of joint. Mine's a pound and a 'alf 'eavier than 'is."

"You must be dreadfully wet, you poor people," said Mrs. Lamont. "Had n't you better change before you have tea, or shall I have it sent up to you?"

They disappeared, protesting that they would be down in ten minutes, and in the interval conversation languished. It was im-

possible to induce Lady Penelope to expound her views further.

"But you must contribute something, Christopher," Mrs. Lamont told him. "We are trying to be public-spirited and helpful, and you only jeer."

"Well, if you want to know my views, I think the workers of this country at the moment want liberty above all things."

"But surely they've got it."

"Not quite the right sort. Kathie, your grandfather was one of the 1832 Whigs."

"He was, the more shame to him," said Lady Guidwillie.

"Why shame?" Mrs. Lamont asked. "He was a very good man, Margaret."

"He was," said Mr. Normand, "and he fought in what was on the whole a very good cause. He wanted the people to have political liberty. Well, industrial politics are the vital politics of the workers. They want the same kind of liberty there that your grandfather helped to win for them in the constitutional field."

"Rubbish, Christopher," said Lady Guidwillie. "They have ample liberty. They can carry their labour to any market, and drive a hard bargain for the price of it. What more do you want?"

"Price is n't everything. They want to have a say in running the world by which they live. I believe that if they had it they would be better workmen and that every industry would yield a bigger profit. Production is what we need, more and more production, for the war has starved the world of everything; and this is a way to it."

"I don't in the least know what you mean," said Lady Guidwillie. "Do you want to nationalise everything? That, no doubt, would give the work-people some say in the management of business, for the whole nation would be the employer."

"I believe that in one or two cases nationalisation would be right," Mr. Normand replied. "But I don't want to see it carried too far, for the State should stand a little outside the industrial world and be able to interfere

with some prestige when things get at loggerheads. If it were the universal employer it would have no independent status."

"Then what do you want? You surely would n't argue that a committee of ignorant workmen was as capable of running a business profitably as the highly trained employer. They 've tried it in Russia and made a pretty mess of it. You would only decrease production, and that would put up the cost of living and lower wages. Really, Christopher, you 're very illogical."

Mr. Normand laughed, and put a question. "You would admit that a despot, if he were really able and benevolent, would run a country better than a democracy?"

"Certainly."

"But the world has decided against the despot, partly because you can't count either on his ability or his benevolence, and partly because men like to be free and would rather have an imperfect government for which they are responsible than a perfect government for which they are not. You agree?"

Lady Guidwillie nodded doubtfully. Being very shrewd, she saw where she was being led.

"Well, there's the same feeling about the present system in industry. Men want to have a say in what concerns them more nearly than the government of the State, and that is the management of the work by which they live. They don't believe in the divine right and infallibility of employers any more than in the divine right of kings and the infallibility of the Pope. If you reply that they must trust the expert, they are incredulous and declare that that is pure Prussianism. You see, the average man in Britain has learned very completely the lesson of the war."

Mr. Maldwin and Sir William Jacob had returned from a long tramp and were listening with interest to the discussion.

"I don't believe in the unvarying competence of employers," said the latter. "I have cross-examined too many and found out how little they knew of their own business. To that extent I sympathise with the workers, and as a Liberal I am in favour of carrying the prin-

ciple of self-government into all things. But surely, Normand, you are perilously near the ground of the Syndicalist and the Guild Socialist. I thought Tory Democrats believed in the historic continuity of things. You are prepared to scrap a machine which on the whole works, and put in its place an empirical toy."

"I wish," said Mr. Normand — "I wish that people would stop calling me a Tory Democrat. I don't know what the silly phrase means. I'm a Tory *or* a Democrat. I should prefer to be a Tory if the world were what it was long ago. No, I am not sentimental about the past, but I don't believe greatly in the merits of what we call progress, and I should have preferred a simpler and poorer and happier England. But I'm not blind, and Toryism, except for a few eternal principles, belongs only to history. As it is, I'm a Democrat *sans phrase*, and I maintain that it's a natural transition from honest Toryism."

Sir William apologised. "But what about your Syndicalism?" he asked.

"Syndicalism is simply a proof of the widespread instinct I've been talking about. You will always find people to fit an abstract absolutist creed to any instinct. Syndicalism goes too far, and would enthrone one human relation at the expense of all the rest. Guild Socialism is uncommonly interesting, but I believe that it is too exotic to work well in the world as we know it to-day. But both are exaggerations of what I believe to be sound doctrine. I have never been much of an enthusiast about the blessings of self-government, but if it's good for the things that matter less it is better for the things that matter more."

Lady Guidwillie was not convinced.

"I have always been told that an army would be beaten if it were commanded by a debating society, and I don't see how that does n't apply to business. Expert knowledge is expert knowledge, and the workman who tends a single machine will make a mess of it if he interferes with the organisation in which his machine is only a part. Is n't there a passage in the Apocrypha about the man whose

talk is of bullocks sticking to them and not trying to sit in the councils of the State?"

"That text is on my side," said Christopher Normand. "We are dealing with the management of bullocks, not with things like foreign policy. Besides, the rank and file will obey the real expert better if he is the man of their own approval. Give the ordinary man a fair chance and he'll pick good leaders and be loyal to them."

Mr. Maldwin, who had been listening intently, took up the parable.

"I believe all your life you've practised what Normand's saying," he told Lady Guidwillie. "I've been pretty often to stay at Waucht, and I must say the sport was better run there than anywhere I know. But did you ever dare to interfere with Donald Matheson? He used to run the stalking like a tyrant, and run it jolly well too. Why, I've heard him give Guidwillie a proper keel-hauling for some mistake, and Guidwillie always admitted he was right. And the same with Anderson, the river keeper. Do you think you would have

got as good work out of these fellows if you had been always supervising them and telling them what to do, instead of letting their show be their own concern and making them feel proud of it?"

Mr. Burford and Mr. Jonas, dry and re-clothed, had entered the hall and were busy making up arrears. It was for them a solemn duty, for both were in the habit of declaring that they would rather give up every other meal than tea. Muffins sealed Mr. Burford's mouth as dust dimmed the eyes of Helen, but Mr. Jonas had still a voice.

"I 'ad the privilege of 'earing a little time ago some very interesting views from the ladies as to what the workers really want."

The ladies in question looked guiltily at each other.

"Very interesting and enlightening they were. And now I've 'eard some very good sense from our friends Mr. Normand and Mr. Maldwin 'ere. But I've got to protest again about the 'abit of thinking of the work-ers as if they were an unfeatured class, like a

field of corn. We'll get on better if we think of Jack and Bill and Tom as individuals. Our job is to restore the ordinary man's individuality, which 'as been submerged. Everything comes back to that, and if you think of the question in that way you'll find it easier going. Bill Thomas, let's say, wants better wages and more leisure and more interest and responsibility in his job. And we all want to see Bill a better citizen, with some notion of 'ow it takes all kinds to make a nation, and 'ow 'is own interests 'as to be squared with other people's. Well, that means that Bill's got to be better educated. Go for Bill, and never mind 'is class that you call the 'workers,' for if you think of an abstract thing like a class, you'll never get to grips with the problem. I'm speaking to my own address as well as to yours, for God knows I've talked a bit of nonsense in my day."

Lady Guidwillie approved. "'Workers' is a horrid, question-begging word," she said, "like 'Democracy' and 'the People.' But all this talk seems to me most disquieting. You

want a millennium, but unless you get it universally it will be a pandemonium. Industry and commerce are world-wide things, and while we are busy giving Bill Thomas a good time, his slender output will be swamped by the products of less fortunate countries, and the latter end of Bill will be starvation."

Mr. Normand looked up sharply.

"You've put your finger on the crux of the whole business. I'm not afraid of giving our people more self-government in industry, for that is a subject in which they are deeply concerned and in his own way every one of them is an expert. But Democracy is apt to be terribly self-centred in its interests. It suffers from a short-range imagination geographically. The purer a Democracy we become, the less are we fitted to handle world problems intelligently, and these world problems are just as vital to our well-being in the end as any domestic question. I agree with what you said at breakfast, Jonas. Every little industrial dispute we have is in the long run a matter for the whole world."

Mr. Jonas was about to reply, when he was interrupted by the dressing-bell. At the same moment there came a sound of wheels from without, and Mrs. Lamont rose in some excitement. "That must be Mr. Lenchard. Martha went to meet him."

"*Favete linguis,*" whispered Mr. Normand to Lady Sevenoaks. "When half-gods go, the gods arrive."

Dinner was a pleasant meal which passed swiftly, for the new guest, who had travelled straight from London, brought news of the outer world which was greedily received by people dependent upon irregular Scottish papers and a belated *Times*. He had just been in Paris, and gave an amusing account of the jumble of nationalities at work in that perplexed city. Mr. Lenchard was one of those figures who in every generation intrigue their contemporaries. Most people knew him only as a name, for, like the god Baal, he was often on a journey. Still in early middle life, he had a singular air of youth, but of monastic youth.

His hair, though plentiful, somehow suggested a tonsure; and whatever garment he assumed had the appearance of a monk's robe. His searching black eyes were preternaturally solemn, but his face now and then broke up into a slow smile. Perhaps it was his voice that suggested the Church; it seemed made to intone chants and offices. As the founder of that admirable quarterly, *The Square Deal*, he had some claim to be a shaper of political opinion, and he had gathered round him a group of men who in their several spheres had done distinguished work for their country. His critics declared that he was Prussian in his complete humourlessness and his inhuman persistence; his friends found in him both humour and modesty. Under his coercion the British Empire had altered much of its constitutional practice and wholly revised its constitutional theory — no small achievement for a single patriot.

The party assembled after dinner round the hall fire, for the coming of rain had brought a slight chill into the air. Lady Sevenoaks

was eager to make Mr. Lenchard talk, for she wickedly anticipated a row with Mr. Wyper.

"How is the Empire going to come out of all this?" she asked. "We have to be very chary in using the name now. What is the new phrase? The British Commonwealth?"

"Yes," said Mr. Lenchard. "That is a safer word and a more exact description. I like 'Empire' myself, but the Germans have given it an ugly sound. . . . I think things are going very well. The British peoples sat round the Conference Table as a group of free nations, and it was pleasant to find so many involuntary tributes to our success in government. Whenever there was any doubt about the proper mandatory for a part of the world, they generally came first to us."

"I should have thought," said Lady Sevenoaks, "that the whole creed of Imperialism had been a little blown upon. Mr. Wyper said the other day that the attitude of the British Imperialist was indistinguishable from that of the Pan-Germans, except that he had less logic and courage."

But, to her astonishment, Mr. Lenchard refused to be drawn. He actually laughed.

"I think that view has a good deal of truth in it. The whole world was bitten by Prussianism and none of our records are quite clean. We all thought too much of the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. But, yes — on the whole we were saner, even in our worst extravagances. Only our fools talked the racial nonsense of the Boche. The great Imperialists were inclined to be very humble in the face of their problems, and, remember, we had always a good deal of the sound old Whiggish notion of liberty in our heroics. But we wanted purifying, and, please God, we've got it."

Mr. Wyper, one of whose possessions was an uncommonly thick skin, was prepared to dispute this proposition. But Mr. Lenchard declined.

"Good Lord, I'm not going to discuss politics at this time of night. I'm fairly dropping with sleep. We'll talk about it to-morrow, if you like. . . . Colonel Lamont, I hear General Morier is coming here?"

"He turns up about eleven to-night. Malone wires that he's crossing in a yacht which the new Member for the county has borrowed from one of his millionaire friends."

"I saw a little of Morier in Paris, and he makes a man feel about four feet high beside him. We've produced great soldiers, as great as anybody except Foch, but we can't produce just the Morier type. He does n't belong to the modern world at all. He fought the war in the spirit in which St. Louis went to the Crusades or a mediæval knight rode out to rescue a princess. It was funny to see him trying to puzzle his way through the kind of problem we had to face, wondering all the time why a war which had been fought for chivalry should end in bargaining. And the odd thing was that he finished by being the toughest bargainer of the lot. A great idealist often finds it hard to understand other idealisms than his own, and ends by being rather specially *terre-à-terre*. I dare say Mr. Jonas would call him an old reactionary."

"No, I would n't," said that gentleman.

"I call him an 'ero. An 'ero does n't belong to any particular world, ancient or modern. But we all take off our 'ats to 'im."

"He is so wonderful," sighed Mrs. Aspenden. "I hear that he went to Mass every morning during all his battles."

"Bless my soul," said Colonel Lamont, "I forgot all about that. This island was converted so thoroughly at the Reformation that there is n't a priest within twenty miles. . . . I wonder if Macmillan would be any good. He was rather nice about the Pope last Sunday. The Lith is getting pretty low, and if only this rain does n't bring it up there may be a chance of inveigling him from the sea trout."

VI

Mr. Lenchard discusses the faults and virtues of British Imperialism. General Morier is in doubt about the League of Nations. A Practical Politician combats Idealism, and shows himself not immune from it.

It was Lady Sevenoaks's habit to wake early and to pass the time in writing notes. At that hour of the morning her mind was active and her desire to express it overpowering. In London she would scatter her billets among her friends by special messenger, but here in the Hebrides she confined herself to inditing letters for the post. Her first thought on waking was of General Morier. She had a weakness for great men, especially for the romantically great; she remembered that during the war she had once sat next to him at lunch at the French Embassy, and she desired to recall herself to his memory. Accordingly she wrote and despatched by her maid an agreeable letter written in her best French.

But while Lady Sevenoaks's French was of

a crystal clarity, not so her handwriting. A footman presented the missive to General Morier while he was still heavy with sleep. The attempt to decipher it woke him up most effectively, and he continued his labour while he shaved. He grasped the friendly tenor of the document, but for the life of him he could not read the signature.

When he descended to breakfast he found the party awaiting him with a curiosity scarcely masked by good breeding. Indeed, he was a figure which would have commanded attention in any company, even if his famous record had been unknown. Tall and spare, and bearing himself with that erect grace which his countrymen alone can command, he seemed the incarnation of the spirit of chivalrous war. A long, curving scar on his brown cheek told of that wound in the first Argonne campaign which had laid him aside for months, and a maimed hand spoke of the grave days of Verdun when corps commander and *fantassin* alike faced imminent death. His deep-set grey eyes were at once shy and

masterful, and in every line of his worn face were gentleness and self-control. He spoke almost perfect English, and Colonel Lamont, who had welcomed him in halting French, relapsed with a sigh of relief into his native tongue.

Lady Sevenoaks greeted him with the warmth of a privileged friend, Mrs. Aspenden with the reverence with which she would have received a Prince of the Church, and Mrs. Lavender with something approaching that curtsy which she would have refused to any crowned head on the globe; the young men stood to attention as if on parade; and Mr. Jonas, in his hero-worship, forbore to make any remark till he had finished his porridge.

After the meal the General took his hostess aside. "Have you perhaps a Madame Snooks staying in the house?" he asked. "I desire to be presented to her."

Mrs. Lamont hastily repeated the names of the women. The General reflected and found enlightenment. "I beg your pardon," he said, laughing; "I am getting old and

stupid. Snooks! But, of course, no. It is my blunder." And he hastened to compliment Lady Sevenoaks on her morning freshness and on the distinguished public services of her husband.

It was a day of steady rain. "Confound it," said Colonel Lamont. "This will fill up the Lith, and there will be no hope of getting Macmillan away from it." In the house there was a large and pleasant room, half library, half smoking-room, which was the usual rendezvous on wet days. Many fine heads of deer adorned the walls, and the bookshelves contained the assortment of literature common in Scottish country houses — old three-volume editions of Sir Walter Scott's novels, the proceedings of antiquarian and agricultural societies, and odd works of eighteenth-century divinity. Colonel Lamont had elsewhere in the house a well-appointed library, and this room was the backwater into which drifted the less regarded volumes.

Here during the morning most of the men found themselves assembled, with eyes turn-

ing from the wet window-panes to the glowing peat fire. Mr. Lenchard and General Morier stood talking on the hearth-rug; Mr. Maldwin was deep in a volume of *Jorrocks*, with his legs swung over the arm of his chair; Sir William Jacob and Mr. Wyper were writing letters; and Christopher Normand was dozing over a three-days-old *Times*.

Mr. Wyper finished his correspondence and joined the two by the fire.

"I am afraid Lady Sevenoaks rather traduced me last night," he told Mr. Lenchard. "Morally, of course, I never classed Imperialists with Pan-Germans. If you had clearly envisaged your aims — which you never did — you might be liable to the charge. But what difference, except in degree, was there between your 'self-sufficing Empire' and the Germany which Bülow and Ballin dreamed of? You too wanted to set yourselves outside and above the comradeship of nations."

Mr. Lenchard regarded with some disfavour the restless being before him.

"Nobody ever preached a self-sufficing

Empire. It was a fiction of our opponents. What we advocated was the development of a closer union between the parts of that Empire. Only a fool, if he has to live in the world, seeks to cut himself off from the world."

"Will you tell me what is this Imperialism?" General Morier asked. "For many years I have had little leisure to study, and I know it only as a name."

Mr. Lenchard turned with a smile to the General.

"You ask me a good deal," he said. "But I will try to tell you what I mean by it. Like every big thing, people interpreted it in different ways."

He lit his pipe, pulled up an armchair, and stretched his long legs to the fire.

"First, I believed in the big social unit. In our complicated world you cannot limit any question territorially, and the big questions need a big space for settlement. Therefore, like Germany, I believed in great nations administering great tracts of land. No. It was n't *grandeur*, General. It was common

sense. I wanted to create a new patriotism for the big unit, which would not supersede the smaller patriotisms but would safeguard them. I believe that to be a right deduction from history. Take the case of Scotland. If Scotland had remained a little separate kingdom, like Holland, she would have lost her Scottishness. The struggle for life would have rubbed away her idioms of language and literature, thought and manners and tradition. But, being part of the British Empire, she can cherish all her idiosyncrasies, and at the same time feel a genuine devotion to the bigger unit which she has done so much to create."

The Frenchman nodded. "That is truth," he said.

"Well, then, I wanted the Empire for three reasons. One was its economic value. These islands were over-industrialised, and to give our people a wholesome life we needed more space. A second was its moral value. The duties of Empire brought fresh air into our politics, and gave our young men a richer

field of service. Thirdly, I wanted it as a safeguard of peace. The hope of peace, to-day as in the Middle Ages, lies in a community of law, interests, and culture over the biggest possible area. We could not restore right away the unity of Christendom, but the British Empire was the first instalment."

"That is clear," said General Morier, and Mr. Wyper, whose mouth was opened to questions, forbore, for the Frenchman went on: "There is nothing in what you say that France would not subscribe to. I see in it none of that universalism which I dread."

"What effect has the war had on your views, Philip?" Christopher Normand asked.

"It has not changed them. In a sense it has justified them. But, thank God, it has also superseded them."

General Morier looked anxious.

"Are you then a convert to universalism?"

"I hope not," said Mr. Lenchard, "for I never heard a more beastly word. But I am a convert to the closer interconnection of all peoples. We are in for Democracy every-

where, and we have got to safeguard the world against its defects. Its biggest danger is that the people become absorbed in their domestic problems, and, while the State extends its area of control over national life, there is a perpetual risk of a country intensifying its self-consciousness to the point of truculent independence. We have lost the old cosmopolitan society which kept the upper classes of Europe in touch with each other, and we are in danger of leaving foreign relations to a small body of disregarded experts. That is simply foolishness, for however nice you make your house and garden it won't be a desirable dwelling unless you see that the amenities of the neighbourhood are preserved. . . . Well, the war has shown us, I think, that we can't live apart from the rest of the world. Most people now see that foreign affairs are as much a part of their politics as an increase in the income tax. But unless we get the right kind of machinery we shall always tend to sink back to the old absorption in home questions. We have to orientate the parish

pump with a wider world. I used to think that the Empire was enough for the purpose, but now I see that we want nothing short of humanity at large."

Mr. Wyper expressed his approval. "Your definition of Imperialism," he said, "was pure Prussianism. It was exactly what the parson here was defending last Sunday, when he warned us not to despise Germany's ideals. I could parallel every one of your points out of Delbrück. But I welcome a belated convert to the League of Nations. There, at any rate, we are in agreement."

"I don't think we should agree long," said Mr. Lenchard. "You want to blur all nationality into a soft, pulpy thing. I want to make it harder and craggier than ever. Before we can have a League of Nations we must have the *nations*, and that's what you fellows forget."

Mr. Wyper would fain have retorted, but at that moment Mr. Jonas and Mr. Burford entered the room. They had been for a walk in the rain, and the wet glistened on their

faces. Mr. Lenchard, at the request of the General, continued:

"I believe in a League of Nations on the same grounds as I believed in Imperialism. The least important is that it is the only guarantee of peace. I will give you a reason which should appeal to Jonas. We in Britain have to face a complete reconstruction of industrial life. Thank Heaven, we mean business this time and won't be allowed to trifle with it. But, if industry is a world-wide thing, how are we going to give our people a better life if elsewhere on the globe we have to compete with the cheap products of the dark ages? Believe me, a country which develops its industrial life on purely nationalist lines will end in disaster. It will either fail and starve, or it will go to war like Germany. I am not a Socialist, but I have always admitted the good sense of the *Internationale*. The Socialists saw the world-wide ramifications of the things that interested them, and they made an honest attempt to provide adequate machinery. . . . I won't bother you with other

reasons, except to say this. The moral and imaginative value which some of us found in Imperialism is to be found in a far fuller measure in the conception of a working union of all civilised peoples."

General Morier sadly shook his head. "I do not deny the splendour of the conception, but I fear that it is too splendid for an imperfect world. It will weaken the homely intimacies of race and country, which have about them the glamour of ages. How can you get that long-descended reverence with which to invest your brand-new League?"

"I think," said Mr. Lenchard, "that the difficulties are enormous, but that most of them will vanish if they are faced by a resolute good will. As for the sanction, we must make it. We must create an international mood, and make men as loyal to mankind as they are to their own lands. It can be done and it will be done. The larger patriotism does not destroy the smaller, for men are loyal to the British Empire as well as to England or Canada, and a Frenchman loves France as

much as his Normandy village. But it needs," he concluded, fixing his eye on Mr. Wyper, "the devil of a lot of wisdom, and the thing will be wrecked at the start if it is left to feeble intellectuals who profess for the world a devotion which they refuse to their own country."

"That's a bit 'ard," said Mr. Jonas, grinning. "I am 'eart and soul for the League, but I'm puzzled to know how it's going to work. I don't like the folk that call themselves jurists."

"No more do I," said Christopher Normand from the depths of his armchair. "They usually come from Guatemala or Peru. They start by talking about Solon and Lycurgus and they end by being squared."

"What I mean to say," Mr. Jonas continued, "is that I'm afraid of the League becoming too much of a State and giving us a double dose of politics. Lord knows we have enough to satisfy us at present!"

"I don't agree," said Mr. Lenchard. "We want more of the State and not less, and you,

as a good Socialist, Jonas, should agree with me. You made an excellent speech the other day in which you told your people that their first loyalty was owed to the State and not to their Union or their class. We want to uphold the State as against all sectional organisations. I don't want to see men brigaded by classes and interests. I want to see every man a citizen first and a Trade-Unionist or an employer second. And I want a World State to supersede any *Internationale,* for it will deal with the whole complex of political life and not with a fraction."

Mr. Lenchard had squared his shoulders and was embarking on a fuller exposition, when the sound of the luncheon-gong fell on the ears of the party. Luncheon on a wet day in a Highland lodge is apt to be a dreary meal, but on this occasion the presence of General Morier lent it an agreeable excitement. There also appeared Mr. Merryweather Malone, who had arrived the night before and had stayed in bed during the morning to cure a cold. He was a large man of some forty-odd

years, who combined a plump body with a lean countenance. His greeting of his fellow guests was marked by the ceremonious dignity common among American gentlemen; his greeting of Mrs. Lavender was touched with a romantic regret for lost opportunities. Speaking through a heavy catarrh, he announced that he believed that he had staved off the pneumonia which had seemed a sure thing when he awoke, and was now ready for a little nourishment.

General Morier continued the conversation of the smoking-room.

"You English are too idealist," he said. "You strive after the impossible and have a passion for uniting incompatibles. We of France take our stand on the solid ground of European tradition. We revere the wisdom of our forefathers. We believe in the perfectibility of mankind — but not yet awhile. We do not think that even this great war has changed human nature, and we would not have it changed. We love the fallible thing which is France more deeply than any cloudy

cosmopolitan fatherland. You cannot break with the past, my friends, and you dare not forget history."

Mr. Jonas signified his assent. "I am always preaching more 'ist'ry," he said.

"I wonder if you realise what a difficult patch Britain has to hoe," said Mr. Normand. "France is European, America is American. We're European on one side and American on another, and a great many things besides. We're a far more complicated piece to fit into the international jig-saw puzzle."

"Our difficulties are our strength," Mr. Lenchard cried. "Because we're no one thing in particular we're everything. We're the eternal hyphen in a new era."

"Perhaps," said the General, with a smile at Mr. Lenchard's enthusiasm. "Nevertheless you seek two incompatibles, a world politically united, and a spiritual unity which will alone make the other possible. That was your argument this morning. Well, I say they are incompatibles, and I look to history for the proof. In the Roman Empire you had political

union, but you had a thousand clashing faiths. Then came Christianity. In the Middle Ages you had spiritual unity, but a world all split into warring races. You may have one or the other, but not both, and it is both you seek. You are too idealist."

"Perhaps we are," said Mr. Lenchard. "Nevertheless we must attempt the impossible, for there is no other way. And after all, General, mankind has advanced chiefly by attempting and achieving the incredible. In four years Britain created out of nothing one of the most successful armies in the world. You yourself at Verdun defied every law of probability."

General Morier bowed. "I am a lover of daring, my friend. Perhaps it is not on that ground I oppose you. The trouble is that I do not like your new world. I think of France, now these many centuries old and yet eternally young. I rejoice to see her head held high among the nations. I would have her strong through wise alliances, and modest in her strength, for being old she is well-bred,

and does not need to boast like a *parvenu*. We and you together, and the Americans, are security enough for peace, for though we are unlike, yet our qualities supplement each other and the sum is political wisdom. I do not like to think of my country shorn of her strength for defence, which is the pride of every man and every people, and surrendering her honour to an international debating society."

"Why not?" asked Mr. Wyper. "We have abolished duelling and leave our disputes for the law to settle."

"The parallel is not exact. Duelling, it is true, is infrequent, and so I hope will be war. But every true man is still able and willing, if need be, to defend his honour, his wife, his family, with his own hand. You would take from my nation the power to do likewise."

Mr. Wyper admitted that he would.

"Then I do not like it. You would destroy the old way, but you will not change humanity, and the day will come when your League will break and you will have to face the

ancient mischief with untrained arms and a broken tradition. We French love real things and do not walk with our heads in the air. We believe that God has a holy city prepared for us, but not this side the grave. So in the meantime we cling to our little terrestrial towns." And he quoted:

> "Heureux ceux qui sont morts pour les cités charnelles,
> Car elles sont le corps de la cité de Dieu."

The beauty of his voice and the gentleness of his manner had a curious effect on the others. It made Mrs. Lavender want to cry, and Mrs. Aspenden's face assumed that air of devotion which it wore during the ministrations of Father Mabbett. Mr. Burford was also greatly impressed, and, removing his spectacles, blinked earnestly at the speaker.

It was at this moment that a visitor appeared on the scene. Mr. Archibald Strathbungo, the new Member for the county, was a young man already celebrated in the half-world of politics. He had been private secretary to an eminent statesman, and had made

for himself a high reputation as an adroit tactician. No man could more subtly influence the Press or had a keener nose for electoral possibilities, and to him was generally attributed the unique success of the Coalition at the polls. He was slight and boyish of figure, with close-cropped black hair, large restless eyes, and the jaw of an Old Bailey lawyer. Whence he sprung no one knew, but his speech had the racy idiom of the environs of Glasgow. To an immense circle of acquaintances he was known as "Bunggie."

He introduced himself to his host, who presented him to the company. With some, such as Mrs. Lavender and Mr. Jonas, he was already acquainted. Lady Sevenoaks regarded him with a stare of abhorrence, seeing in him a shameless enemy. A place was laid for him, and he fell with zest to luncheon.

"How's the cold, Mr. Malone?" he asked. "You would n't take my advice and try a rummer of hot whisky. Man, teetotaller or no, it's a mistake to despise the best medicine God ever made."

Mr. Malone inquired as to the health of the owner of the yacht in which he had travelled the previous day.

"He's fine. He's got a new maggot in his head about making Persian rugs on Highland looms with native dyes. I like old Linkumdoddie," he added, turning brightly to Colonel Lamont. "If it were n't for his yawt I'd never get about these islands. I've a kind of pull with him, for I spoke a word in the right quarter about his peerage and I think he knows it."

"Linkumdoddie," murmured Lady Penelope Wyper. "I'm sure there's no such name in the peerage."

"You'll find it in the Profiteerage," Mr. Normand whispered.

Mr. Strathbungo had broken utterly the spell cast by General Morier. An air of rollicking candour sat on him, and one might have suspected him of innocence but for his alert eyes. It was not long before Mr. Wyper had roused him to argument by a complaint of certain electioneering methods.

"Ugh, away," said the gentleman. "There's some of you folk too high-minded for this world as long as you're on the losing side. When you see a chance of winning there's nothing you won't do. Just look at the Liberals. They were always declaring that the party system was the root of the Constitution, until they saw that the Tories were likely to beat them at the game, and then they had no words bad enough for party spirit. I'm a plain man, and I believe in parties, same as I believe in nations. You've got to fight and win, and then you do the best you can for the country."

"I presume you do not believe in any Hague Convention about the methods of party warfare, Mr. Strathbungo," said Lady Sevenoaks acidly.

"I don't. There's just one convention to keep in mind, and that's human nature. The man that understands human nature wins."

"And you would defend an appeal to the people on the programme of 'anging the Kaiser and making Germany pay for every-

thing, when you know both are impossible?" asked Mr. Jonas.

"I don't know they're impossible, and I defend them right enough. They were my own idea. We would have lost the election if we had gone on talking about brotherhood and the 'spirit of the trenches' and all that hot air. What you object to were the only things the voters cared a rush about. You Labour chaps did the same thing, only you were n't clever enough. You started yowling about Conscription, when you knew there was n't a man on our side who did n't loathe the very name of it."

Mrs. Lamont's mild spirit was stirred. "It all sounds very wicked," she said.

"Oh, I don't think so," said Mr. Strathbungo genially. "It's the rules of the game. The people want to fight and it's your business to show them sport. You've got to fight on the issues they prefer."

"Such is Democracy," said General Morier softly.

Mr. Normand leaned over to him. "We

English are too idealist," he whispered, and the Frenchman smiled.

Mr. Strathbungo caught an echo of the phrase. "That's an awful word," he said. "I'm not very particular, but I would n't like to be an idealist. It's a poor, milk-blooded, blue-spectacled sort of business."

Colonel Lamont was ill at ease. He had never met the new Member before, and disapproved of him strongly; but his sense of hospitality held him in an embarrassed silence. Not so Lady Guidwillie. With her grimmest smile she addressed Mr. Strathbungo.

"You had a meeting at Waucht in December," she said. "I was n't present, but if I had been I would have moved a vote of no confidence. You talked some precious nonsense about the land."

Coffee having been served, Mr. Strathbungo was smoking — a cigar set in an amber mouthpiece which stuck in a corner of his wide, loose mouth.

"Let's hear what the nonsense was," he said pleasantly.

"You told them that the land in the Highlands could be made to support five times the present population, if they got rid of the landlords. I'll give you leave to try at Waucht. I pay twenty-five shillings in the pound for rates, and there are n't twenty acres on the estate you could get a plough through."

Mr. Strathbungo suddenly became a different person. He laid down his cigar and his whimsical face grew solemn. Also the veneer of English accent disappeared and he spoke in the unabashed drawl of his native city.

"I was n't referring to Waucht," he said. "There's not much could live at Waucht, except deer. And I was n't speaking of landlords like your folk. You're the old kind, who think first of their people and would starve rather than let them starve. But I stick to every word I said about the Highlands at large. They're stuffed with Englishmen and Americans and Jews that come only for their amusement and don't care a docken about the place. Oh, they spend money. I know it. But they spend it to make people slaves, and I would

rather have the Highlander poor and free. I'm one myself, and my blood boils when I see big trencher-fed gillies crawling before a London shopkeeper."

"Democracy! Democracy!" said Mr. Normand.

"Democracy be blowed! The Highlands were never democratic — never in that way. But they used to be free. Tell me, Colonel, did ever men fight better than the Highland battalions? They've earned the right to the use of their native land. Are you willing to have that land only a playground and a resort for honeymoon couples, and its chief export picture postcards? You ask Macmillan, the minister. He'll tell you of the old days when there were droves of black cattle on ground that now has nothing but deer. You can't restore those days, but you can bring in modern inventions. You can make the finest fishing industry in Britain if you take trouble about canning factories and transport. You can start the old cottage industries again. You can introduce sheep where they should be

instead of deer, and cattle where they should be instead of sheep, and the plough where it should be instead of pasture. But the first thing you've got to do is to emancipate the land from the idle rich."

Lady Guidwillie regarded the speaker almost with affection. "There's some sense in your head, Mr. Strathbungo. I rather wish I had been at your meeting. I might have seconded the vote of confidence."

"Of course you would!" he cried. "The real gentry like you should be on my side. Do you think I came to this part of the world for fun? I have dreamed of the job ever since I could stand on two legs, and now the war has given me a chance. I am not going to rest as long as there's an acre of Highland ground lying idle that can be used to support human life. What's left over can go to sport. I like a day with the gun myself."

Mr. Jonas, who had been vastly entertained shook his head.

"You can't do it, Bunggie. Your old Coalition depends on the idle rich."

The young man forgot his manners. "Then I'll see the Coalition in Tophet," he said, with a ferocity that produced a sudden silence.

General Morier leaned towards Mr. Normand. "I was right," he said. "You English — all of you — are too idealist."

VII

The visit to the Sea Skerries and Lord Linkumdoddie's yacht. Mr. Merryweather Malone enlarges on the gulf between British and American minds and the embarrassments of his own land. He differs from General Morier and comforts him with texts.

During the night a wind rose which blew away the rain, and on Thursday morning the island woke to blue skies and a world washed clean. The little hill streams were still in spate, but the strong sun dried the ground, so that after breakfast it was possible for Mr. Strathbungo to smoke his first cigar seated on a bank of heather above the lawn, where he was volubly appreciating the prospect. He, General Morier, and Mr. Malone had to leave that afternoon, and it was arranged that the morning should be spent on the little isles known as the Sea Skerries, where they could be picked up for luncheon by Lord Linkumdoddie's yacht, in which the

three departing guests were to continue their journey.

There must be an attraction between opposites, for General Morier showed a curious liking for Mr. Strathbungo's society. He had played billiards with him the evening before and been soundly beaten, and he now took his seat beside him on the heather.

"You have told me many things," he said, "but you have not spoken about the League of Nations. We were discussing it yesterday when you arrived. You are a British politician — what you call a practical man. What do you say to it?"

Mr. Strathbungo winked solemnly at his questioner.

"It's all right," he said. "Personally I'm not much heeding about it. It's not the kind of business that interests me. But it's a grand thing to keep some folks quiet. You see, General, most folk are not men of the world like you and me. They like hot air and fine sentiment, and the great thing is to give them a subject where they can safely indulge their

taste. They can blow off all the steam they want about the League of Nations without doing much harm."

"But for the scheme itself you do not care — how is it you say? — a docken?"

"Well, I would n't just say that. I'm quite ready to be enthusiastic about the parliament of man and the federation of the world, and all the rest of it. But I don't regard it as very practical politics."

"And yet it is in the forefront of the Peace deliberations."

"It had to be. We had to satisfy America, and it turns out we only satisfied Wilson. . . . Well, they can fight it out as they like for me. If the thing goes phut, I'm not caring. If it succeeds, good and well. Anyhow, it's a fine safety-valve and makes a lot of wind-bags happy. I'm all for keeping a subject like that as a standing diversion for what you call idealists."

As they walked down to the shore, General Morier found himself in company with Christopher Normand and Mr. Burford.

"I like the young Strathbungo," he said. "He is a good and merry fellow. But I think he is a relic of the old life before the war, for he has not been touched by it. I wonder how he contrived it. Have you many like him?"

"Heaps," said Mr. Normand. "All the professional politicians. They are by no means dead, and nothing changes *them*. If there was a universal convulsion and we were all suddenly back in the Palæolithic age they would be organising caucuses next morning among the cave-men."

Mr. Burford took a more hopeful view. "You won't find many. Only a few middle-aged folk who have no children. I go about among the towns and villages of England and I hardly come across a man who has n't had his world knocked endways by the war. They can't remember the life they lived five years ago. For good or for bad, mankind's got a jog out of its rut."

"I don't know. What about America?"

"Ah, America," said General Morier. "A great and most curious country." His air was

such as might have been worn by a mediæval geographer puzzling over a modern atlas.

The short journey to the Skerries was performed in heavy salmon-cobles rowed by sturdy fishermen. It was indeed a marvellous day, the sunlight dancing on the ripples, the big hills of the mainland showing blue and distant, oyster-catchers and terns piping on the shingle, and every corner of shore a nook of greenery. When the Skerries were reached, some of the party set off to visit the ruins of a monastery famous in Church history. General Morier, who had been ingeminating America as Lord Falkland ingeminated Peace, stayed behind with Mr. Malone, and the two, along with Mrs. Lavender, Mr. Burford, and Penrose MacAndrew, seated themselves on the top of a little cliff which was crowned with a thatch of young heather.

"I'm sorry to leave," said Mr. Malone. "I'm always mighty sorry to leave any part of this little country. I'm a lover of England, Martha, though I don't forsake my native land like you. I wish America were planted

right here, for then there would be a better chance of our getting to like each other."

Mr. Burford inquired concerning American opinion regarding Britain.

"It's better," said Mr. Malone. "You can't fight in the same trenches against the same Hun without feeling a kind of sympathy. But there's plenty of room for improvement. The trouble is we have too much in common. We can't help feeling we are near relations, and that riles us. If there was n't so much Englishness in the United States, we'd think England a fine museum-piece and revere her."

"No," he said, in reply to a question by Mr. Burford. "It is n't Irish and German propaganda or lying history books or damfool Englishmen on their travels. The main cause is right deep down in our nature. We speak pretty well the same language, but we have n't the same way of looking at things. We have n't the same sense of humour, and that's a difference that would divorce husband and wife. You pitch the case too low, and we think it funny to put it sky-high. One

day last summer I was in a bit of the line which the British were holding next door to the Americans. There was a horrid great shelling all morning. Our boys said they reckoned that hell and Vesuvius had been having a bowling-match. An English sergeant I spoke to admitted when he was pressed — *when he was pressed*, remember — that the Kaiser might have been a bit 'asty that morning. When we think poorly of a man, we say he's so low down he'd want an aeroplane to get up to hell. You'd mention he was an outsider and trouble no more about him. . . . Then there's what you call your Oxford manner. We've got that, too, but only in Boston, but with you it's in the bone. You're so darned genteel and superior. And the fellows among you that are always explaining England to America by abusing the Oxford manner have got it worst of all. An American don't like to say anything against his country, even when he knows she's in the wrong. When he hears an Englishman criticising England he puts it down as another example of his blamed

superciliousness. . . . You see, we're a young nation and very sentimental, and don't mind showing it. You're an old people and a critical, and you'd rather die than admit your feelings. Why, our business, that we think so much of, is a form of sentiment. It's the big ideas that get us, and we roll them round our tongue and plan to astonish the world. Sometimes we get there and sometimes we don't. You pride yourself on being unbusinesslike, but you often get there sooner."

"Seems to me you've acquired the Oxford manner yourself, Merryweather," said Mrs. Lavender.

Mr. Malone laughed. "We've all got a bit of it, ever since Abel. It was that that made Cain mad. But I'm not going to blame my country's foibles, though I see them right enough. I prefer them to other people's sense. This old world 's getting too logical, and you can't be happy that way. Very soon America will be the only place left for a white man, for she don't give a cent for logic. . . . Just look at our labour troubles. We quarrel a bit, but

we are never near the eternal rock-bottom you've struck in Europe."

Mr. Burford was much interested.

"That's quite true, but you can't keep it always that way. Up to now you've led the sheltered life, very little concerned with your neighbours and plenty to go on with at home. You've been able to provide so much jam, or the near prospect of jam, that you've kept the children quiet. But the children are growing up, remember. What are you going to do when your fluid classes solidify and you bump up against the old questions that perplex the rest of the world? You'll be pretty raw to the job, Mr. Malone. I've seen a lot of America, and in ordinary political education you're the most backward land on the globe. Your Labour leaders still talk the language of the 'seventies and 'eighties. But that's changing every day, and you've got to get busy about your education. You are n't a peculiar people any more, and you can't shut yourself off from the rest of the world."

"We are going to have a darned good try,"

said Mr. Malone. "I don't say there's not truth in your view — I think there's a lot of truth. I've said the same thing myself, and that's why hitherto I have been such a conspicuous failure in public life. But it's going to be a large-size job to shift America from her dug-out. She is the only decent conservative left, and she hates real change like hell. She was very willing to fight, but now she wants to get back to the farm straightaway and hammer her sword into a ploughshare."

"But you're a business people," said Mr. Burford, "and you must want to see the job through."

"We never finish anything," said Mr. Malone — "not in politics. Look at Mexico. Look at the progress of our Reform movement. Our little old Constitution was expressly framed to prevent us doing anything drastic. We're all for compromise and halfway houses. We're mighty English, far more English than you. . . . I tell you, Mr. Wilson has got a tougher proposition to put through than anything George Washington handled.

. . . There's just a chance of his falling down over it and America establishing a Republic."

"If you're right, Merryweather," said Mrs. Lavender, "I'm going to hustle William back to the States right now and take a hand in the fight. What side are *you* on, anyway?"

"I'm a good Republican," said Mr. Malone, "but I'm for Wilson. I'm not going to put it too high, Martha, for we'd like you back with us, but I think he's going to win out if he handles the thing in the right way. There's just one winning ticker for him."

Mr. Malone bit the end off his cigar and borrowed a match from Penrose MacAndrew.

"You've maybe observed, Penrose," he said, "that we Americans are a profoundly religious people."

General Morier looked startled, and Mrs. Lavender denied the charge. "Utterly pagan," she said.

"No," said Mr. Malone, "you're wrong, Martha. You're getting short in the memory. We have fits of paganism, but we're never happy in them. We know we're backsliders

and pretty soon we repent. . . . We're very religious, but it's our own special kind. We are not interested in your European brand of church. Our type is the field preaching, and we always get back to it. Getting converted is our national pastime. What put us into the war? I reckon the village prayer meeting, first and foremost, and please God, it's going to put us into peace. All our religions that count are revivalisms, whether it's Billy Sunday or Mamie B. Eddy that professes to have the goods. Revivalism is the key to the heart of America, and if Mr. Wilson's a good enough revivalist he'll win out. He's got to make us feel that if we don't do what he tells us we're way down on the level of the Impenitent Thief."

Mr. Malone's exposition was interrupted by the arrival of the other sight-seers. Lord Linkumdoddie's yacht was moored a little way out in the channel, and as the hour of luncheon had arrived the party embarked again in the boats and were rowed towards it. It was well that no one of Mr. Malone's hear-

ers thought fit to repeat his views, for Mrs. Aspenden, whose soul had been elevated by the sight of Culdee relics, was in no mood for for what she would have regarded as profanity.

Lord Linkumdoddie was a man of sixty, on whose slim shoulders was set an enormous and beautifully shaped head. He had a trick of smiling secretly to himself as if amused by the world, and he spoke little. His vast fortune had no heir, and he was in the habit of dispensing benefactions so colossal that the popular mind was dulled by their sheer magnitude. He was reputed a hard man of business and intolerant of fools. His position left him ample leisure, for he held the view that the better organised a business the less it required the attention of its head. Travel, the collection of old English furniture, and the care of a weak digestion were his chief absorptions. He was also an active and devout member of the Baptist communion.

The five-hundred-ton yacht showed few marks of its war service in the brilliance of its

brass-work and the scrupulous whiteness of its decks. The large party packed the dining cabin, but through the open portholes came the cool sea airs.

Mrs. Lavender gave Christopher Normand a summary of Mr. Malone's recent conversation, to which Lord Linkumdoddie listened with interest. America, the owner of the yacht declared, held — not for the first time — the key of the situation.

"I like her for her slowness," he said. "No great country changes in a hurry. After all, her attitude is the same as ours was a generation ago. We strove to keep out of Continental entanglements, and proclaimed that all our interests lay beyond Europe. A Conservative dislikes changes, but when he alters he does it wholesale. Look at the Tory party to-day. Look at Britain in 1914. . . . I am not a Conservative, so I have always preferred change."

"Even industrial revolution?" asked Mr. Normand.

"Industrial revolution most of all. I have

never worked to make money, and I would far rather build up a sound industry than big profits. Up to now our whole industrial fabric has been preposterous, and I am glad it's falling to bits. If they take all my money, I can make more. Thank God, I'm not dependent on my bank balance."

Lady Guidwillie, who had the misfortune to depend upon inherited capital, protested.

"You're the most dangerous man in the country," she told Lord Linkumdoddie. "You're an adventurer, and don't mind losing your stakes, for you know you can win them back. But what of us poor people who are not so fortunate?"

Her host smiled reassuringly. "I don't think you need worry, Lady Guidwillie. There will be no downfall of capital in the ordinary sense. But there will be a rooting-up of vested interests in men's lives, and I for one am glad of it."

Mr. Jonas had his mouth open to speak, when the attention of every one was caught by the loud voice of Mr. Malone.

"America is too antiquarian," he was saying. "That's the trouble. She sentimentalises too much about the past, for you see she has n't had very much of it and she cherishes what she's got. I say that the world's bound to cut loose from its antiques, especially as most of them are shams and come from Wardour Street. We are all on a pilgrimage, and it won't do to load ourselves up with every relic picked up by the road and be always stopping to moon over them. I'd keep the old maps as a historical record and discard the relics, for the one's got some meaning for the present day and the other's just junk. Above all, it's no good cherishing old grievances."

"Like Ireland," suggested Christopher Normand.

"Like Ireland," said Mr. Malone. "There's an awful warning for you. I'm of Irish stock myself, and for our sins we've got a good many like me in the States. That poor little island is living in a bogus past and trying to screw some pride out of it, while she's forgetting to do anything to be proud of right now.

The ordinary Irishman is ashamed of himself and he has n't the honesty to admit it. No man's any good unless he has something to swagger about, and Ireland has n't anything except a moth-eaten ragbag of wrongs. That's her confounded antiquarian habit of mind. And the worst of it is that this sentimental grieving is n't sincere. Apart from a few poets, it's only the stock-in-trade of vulgar careerists. It's enough to make a man sick to hear an Irish ward-politician talking about Dark Rosaleen. . . . If America is too much of a stand-patter, there's a horrid risk of her getting like Ireland. She has n't grievances, but she's got dislikes and false sentiments, and that's just about as bad."

General Morier did not agree.

"I think you are too hard," he said. "These things that you despise are very near the heart of every honest man. The prejudices of a nation are as vital as its principles, and I do not desire to see a completely rational *bourgeois* world. Would you apply your maxim to Europe also?"

"To be sure I would," said Mr. Malone. "Britain's forgot a lot, but she's a deal more forgetting to do. Italy has a fine assortment of useless lumber to jettison."

"And France?"

"Yes, France most of all. Look here, General. I know your country. I want to cry when I think of some of the things you've done. But you've got to forget about your sufferings. You're too big to be a Martyr State. The other day you were mad with Mr. Wilson because he did n't run off straightaway and look at your battle-fields and devastated areas. That was maybe a blunder of tact on the President's part, but it's a worse blunder if you make too much of your wounds. It won't do for France to be a sort of Byron among peoples, making a pageant of her bleeding heart."

"These things are the war," was the answer. "Would you have us forget that?"

"Yes," said Mr. Malone stoutly. "It would be better to forget it than to be always remembering it. The nations have got a terrific

job before them, and they won't ever make good if they're always thinking about the war. The war has n't solved any problem except the one — which side was the stronger; and that does n't help us much except by clearing the ground. Therefore, I say we can't be always dwelling on it, and referring things back to it."

Mr. Burford had taken off his spectacles, and now quoted, as if to himself: "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize."

Mr. Malone warmly approved. "I am with Paul there," he said. "He spoke horse-sense on most subjects. And, General, for your consolation, I'll give you another text: 'Instead of thy fathers thou shalt have children, whom thou mayest make princes in all lands.'"

As the rest of the party were rowed shoreward Mrs. Lavender was observed to be deep in meditation. On Christopher Normand offering her a penny for her thoughts, she ex-

plained that she had been reflecting upon the case of Mr. Malone.

"I never saw such a change in a human being," she said. "It looks to me as if Merryweather had got religion."

"Perhaps it is part of his training as Presidential candidate," said Mr. Normand, and was rebuked for his flippancy.

VIII

The Minister of the Parish comes to dinner. He warns Mr. Jonas of the brittleness of all Democracies, and in turn is presented with the just demands of the British People. Mr. Burford pleads for an Aristocracy.

THAT evening before dinner Mrs. Lamont felt happy, and she communicated her mood to her husband through the open door of his dressing-room.

"I really think," she said, "that this little party has been a success. Everybody was in a bad humour at the start, but now everybody has begun to like each other. I can't help feeling, Arthur, that if such very different people can come to an understanding, the country must be able to settle its worst troubles. Don't you think so, dear?"

Colonel Lamont, busied with his tie, had his mind on other things. "Macmillan's an infernal ruffian. I asked him to dine to-night and he has never answered. It's most annoying, Kathie, with Jonas leaving to-morrow.

I was most anxious that the two should meet. There are times when a passion for fishing becomes a positive vice."

"And, Arthur," continued Mrs. Lamont, "I can't think what has come over Phyllis. She's a new creature. She has recovered all her interest in life. I think it is Mr. Burford, for they are always together. I wonder if I should do anything about it. She has no mother and I feel it is my duty to look after her."

"It would be a dashed good thing," said Colonel Lamont, as he brushed his thinning hair, "if they took a fancy to each other. He's a most capital good chap. I feel happier for merely looking at him. I only wish he'd talk more. . . . Confound Macmillan! That's another fellow I wanted him to meet."

But at dinner the erring minister appeared. He had been away, he said, when Colonel Lamont sent his note, and had only received it an hour ago. He was not apologetic; rather it seemed that an apology was due to one who, with the Lith in perfect order, had been de-

prived of an evening's fishing. As he sat at table opposite Lady Sevenoaks and between his hostess and Mrs. Lavender, his figure was like some stubborn furze bush which had strayed into a parterre. He was more like a deep-sea skipper than ever, as his great grey eyes took in the scene before him. So massive was his air that even the substantial figure of Sir William Jacob seemed weedy by comparison, and so rugged his face that the homely countenance of Mr. Jonas seemed almost refined.

"Macmillan," said his host, "you've missed a lot of interesting people by your confounded obstinacy. You should have been dining here every night. We outlandish folk don't often get a chance of improving our minds. You were a fool to miss Morier. And Malone. We've had some uncommonly good talk."

The minister asked what they had talked about, and Lady Sevenoaks replied.

"Everything on earth, and we came to all kinds of contradictory conclusions. We were

told that we must preserve the historic state, and at the same time that we must forget most of its history. Mr. Normand does n't much believe in self-government for the nation, but he would like to see it in industry. We are to be more fervent nationalists than ever, but to give up most of our national rights to an International League. The strikers who want to hold up the country are not Bolsheviks, but Cobden and his poor old middle-class friends were the worst kind. We must scrap all mediæval rubbish, and we must n't scrap it, because it's the most valuable stuff we've got. (That was your own contribution in your sermon, I think.) The working-man is the only real Conservative, and the only real Radical. We must n't speak about classes, for there is only one class that counts and that's the working class, and it's not a class, Mr. Jonas says. We all agreed in abominating political parties, but Mr. Strathbungo convinced us that they were much more important than political ideals, with the exception of the confiscation of Highland

land, which he thought more important than the Coalition. . . . I think that's a fair summary."

"Lamont," said Mr. Macmillan, "I am sorry I stuck to the Lith. I ought to have been here. You seem to have talked uncommon good sense."

"Glad to hear you say so," said the host. "Lady Sevenoaks makes it sound rather foolish."

"Not a bit. You've pulled all the contradictions into the light of day. That's what we want. Politics are a collection of views, most of them contradictory and nearly all of them true. Statesmanship means admitting the contradictions and paying due respect to the half-truths and trying to harmonise them. The fool seizes on a half-truth and exaggerates it, and pretends it is the whole truth and the only truth. The first step in wisdom is to keep your balance and not take sides. You seem to have followed that rule."

"What are your politics?" Mr. Wyper asked.

"None," was the answer. "I voted for Strathbungo because I liked his candour. I'll vote against him as soon as he starts talking nonsense about free fishing. That subject defines my politics. I want everybody to have a chance of fishing that likes it, but I want the fish to be there to be caught. In the same way I want every man in these islands to have a better life, more comfort and more leisure, but I also want the wealth to be there which can give him these things."

Mr. Jonas seemed struck by an illustration which his recent experience on the Lith had enabled him to appreciate. He also knew a man when he saw him, and Mr. Macmillan's steady eyes and sagacious brow were very impressive.

"We've all been talking too much," he said. "I'd like to 'ear a fresh voice. What's your view of the situation?"

The minister laughed. "I'm not a leader-writer to be able to give you that. I'm a minister of the Gospel, and I'm concerned with bigger things than the whirligigs of poli-

tics. But up here I've time to read and think, and I've studied history, so I've certain views. You're a Labour leader and a very powerful man, Mr. Jonas. You're accustomed to be spoken about respectfully in the papers and in Parliament. Well, I'm not respectful by nature. You remember the story of the Scots girl who complained of a shy lover that he was 'senselessly ceevil.' You won't get any senseless civility from me."

"Go ahead," said Mr. Jonas. "Jimmie and I never mind plain speaking."

"Well," said the minister, "I don't like the threats that your fellows use. Miners and railwaymen and transport workers, when they have a grievance, get up on their hind legs and warn the country that they have the power and mean to use it. That's folly. In the first place, they haven't the power. They're only a fraction of the nation, and if they fight in an unjust cause the nation will beat them. It may take years, but they'll be beaten in the end. The workers have never won, and never will win, unless they're in the

right. Why this stupid bluster? Bluster means smugness, remember. What madness possessed you in the Coal Commission to entrust your case to advertising journalists? You did n't come out of it extra well. The ordinary Briton rather prefers a stupid coal-master to those glib gentlemen. And he enormously prefers Lord Durham. . . . Secondly, a settlement by force, even if it succeeded, would be no real settlement. It's sheer Prussianism to think it would, and the sooner your fellows learn the lesson of the war the better."

Mr. Jonas nodded. "I'm with you there. But it's ill 'olding angry and ignorant men. I grant you that the threat business is wrong."

"The next thing I have to say is that it's time you stopped gloating over the triumph of Democracy. You talk as if it were a thing inherent in nature, with all the forces of nature working on its side. You're in error. It's a fine thing, but it's the most brittle thing on earth, and it can be maintained only by constant watchfulness and sacrifice. Cast your mind back in history and consider how

short has been the reign of Democracy compared with that of any other form of government. It began a long time ago, but it's never had more than the briefest run. Man, do you remember how somebody in Herodotus spoke of it like a lover as being lovely in the very sound of its name, and twenty-five years later you had a popular Athenian statesman — *popular*, I say — declaring it was hardly worth discussion since it was 'acknowledged insanity'? You will say that that was long ago, and that the world is safer for it now. It is n't. Democracy had a better chance of life in the little State. In our dense modern world we can only exist by the help of law and order, and you get order more easily — I don't say better, but more easily — from the autocrat."

Mr. Jonas again assented. "I'm not denying that. I'm a student of 'ist'ry myself."

"Thirdly and lastly," said Mr. Macmillan, "go canny with liberty. It's by no means the same thing as Democracy, but in this country we want both. We must treat it reverently,

for it also is a delicate plant. I think," he added, looking round the company, "that liberty is like the car of the goddess Nerthus, which once a year was brought from its island home to travel among the German tribes. Wherever it went, it left increase and happiness and peace, but no man was allowed to lay hand upon it. . . . Liberty is too precious a thing for fools to paw."

The minister's remarks had revived Mrs. Lamont's fears, now for some days dormant.

"Are you afraid of the future, then, Mr. Macmillan?" she asked.

He laughed. "I don't think I'm afraid of anything except a prosecution for heresy in the Courts of my Church."

Mrs. Aspenden sighed, as if she thought that a consummation to be devoutly wished for. Mr. Macmillan was not her idea of a priest.

"But Bolshevism?" quavered Mrs. Lamont.

"Oh, Bolshevism! I regard the mild British variety as an inoculation against the dangerous foreign kind. We would n't be human if we did n't have a dose of it."

Mr. Jonas was looking curiously at the speaker, and their eyes met. Something in each pleased the other, and they smiled with that sudden understanding that is occasionally arrived at between men who have but newly met.

"I apologise, Lamont," said Mr. Macmillan. "I've been talking as if I were in the pulpit. I did n't come here to talk, but to listen. I want instruction, since I have been foolish enough to go fishing all the week. . . . Mr. Jonas, tell a lone country minister what you and your friends have come forth for to seek."

Mr. Jonas, nothing loath, leaned his elbows on the table, as was his habit, and looked round the company. "I'm glad to 'ave the chance," he said, "more especially as we've been playing round so many subjects without settling anything. I'm not one that thinks any reform is a simple job, but it's my business to study the people and I can tell you what they mean to 'ave in some form or other."

"Mean to have?" queried Mr. Macmillan.

"Yes, mean to 'ave. That is n't a threat, because we know we've right on our side and can convince any honest man. . . . I'll put it this way. We've 'ad a great war, and it's been a war of the rank and file. We 'ave n't 'ad any Napoleon playing skittles with the enemy because of his peculiar genius. We've 'ad good generals, but the folk that did the job were just the ordinary British soldiers out of every class and calling. The war's been a glorification of the average man."

"I agree," said Mr. Macmillan, "provided you admit he is n't only the working-man."

"True enough, but the workers 'ave the biggest numbers and therefore they 'ave a big claim to be 'eard. They want to know what the war has been fought for. They've been defending England, but England's got to be worth their while to defend. They've cleaned up Prussianism abroad, and they are n't coming back to it at 'ome. They want a bigger share of England — more leisure, more chances, better wages, and a better life."

"You are aware," said Sir William Jacob, "that, according to a recent calculation, seventy-five per cent of the total product of our wealth is distributed among the workers."

"I am aware, and it does n't alter the argument. I am not wanting a levelling down of incomes all round, for I know very well that it would only give each man a shilling or two more. What we are asking for is a better system. You 're not getting the best value out of men as things stand now. We want far more production, but you won't 'ave it by merely begging the men to work 'arder. We want a new deal. There would be no limitation of output, no stupid Union restrictions, if every man had a direct interest in the thing and knew he was n't slaving to fill idle men's pockets."

"I don't believe in profit-sharing," said Lady Sevenoaks. "My father tried it and it led to endless bickering and suspicion."

"No more do I," said Mr. Jonas; "not the ordinary kind. The working-man wants to know 'ow the profits are arrived at and to 'ave

a say himself in the distribution. To dole out a few 'alfpence extra and ask him to be grateful for them is just Prussianism. To tell him to trust his employer who knows the business better than 'im is also Prussianism. He is not going to 'ave any of it, and I'll tell you why. Because the war 'as made him conscious for the first time that he is a free man.

"I'll put it this way," he continued. "There are just the three things in industry — capital, management, and labour. Capital is necessary, but not in the same way as the others. It's like the lubricating oil in a machine. We need it and we must buy it at a fair price. I am for giving capital an honest return and a safe return. Beyond that I'd divide the profits between labour and management. . . . Now, mark this. Labour has an uncommon good notion of the real expert and it is n't likely to stint him. It knows that good management is life and death to it and it will pay a big price for it. But it wants to know at the same time that the money is n't being wasted in order to let some fat old Jew keep ten motor

cars. . . . Now, if you cut down the lifeless material thing, capital, to its fair price and give the sporting chance of profits to the living things, management and labour, and let labour also have a say in its management, you'll do two things. You'll lay suspicion, which is always 'alf the trouble, and you'll give the working-man an incentive to put his back into his job, for he'll know that he is earning profits only for himself and his nominees."

Christopher Normand approved.

"But how are you going to work nationalisation into a scheme like that?" he asked. "The other day I saw in the papers that you were clamouring to nationalise the mines and the railways, and, I believe, shipping also. You say the working-man wants the best management and is prepared to pay high for it, because he knows his own comfort depends on it. But he won't be able to do that if his industry is nationalised. His managers will be Civil Service officials, not the best men bought in the open market.

And he won't have direct self-government in his work, for he'll have to share his direction of it with every Tom, Dick, and Harry who has a vote."

Mr. Jonas smiled ruefully.

"Rome was n't built in a day, Mr. Normand. I'm not much in love with nationalisation. There was a time when I was young and callow and wanted every blessed thing made a department of the State. Now I've lost my confidence in any Civil Service. We can improve on the present one, but we'll never get the brains and the ginger into it that a private show can command. But nationalisation might be a good first step. The trouble in the other way is to know 'ow to begin. You want to get the smaller shops grouped together before you can start, and that would take a bit of doing. If the State took over a big industry, that would 'appen automatically, and you'd also get the question of the future of its capital settled right away. Then a little later, when we've found our balance, we'll take the next step."

Mr. Macmillan had been listening intently with a somewhat grave face.

"You talk of machinery, Mr. Jonas, and I dare say you talk good sense. Heaven knows I don't quarrel with the things you aim at. We can't pick up again the ragged mantle of 1914. But is it not possible that you think too much of machinery? I am a minister of Christ and I have another question to ask. The workers want more leisure, but what will they do with it? They want a share in the government of their own work, but have you made sure that they have the qualities for government? You say truly that the war was won by the ordinary man, but it was won by his spirit. If he is going to win the peace, you dare not forget that spirit. The finest machinery on earth will not save his soul."

There was a slight hush, for the gravity of the minister's voice had brought some subtle change into the atmosphere. Then Mr. Burford spoke.

"The only hope for Democracy is to make it an aristocracy."

"That is one of the most sensible remarks I've ever heard," said Mr. Macmillan, as the party, on Colonel Lamont's advice, moved ont of doors into the sweet-scented night.

IX

In which Mr. Burford sees visions, and the Reverend Mr. Macmillan propounds a parable.

The lawns, which dropped into slopes of heather and then into the meadows of the valley, lay golden under a moon three quarters full. The stream was outlined in long curves of light, and the sea beyond was like a sheet of crisped metal. The mainland hills were only clouds, but in the near and middle distances every object stood out sharp in a monotone of chrysoprase. Wafts of rich scents — hawthorn and young grass and bog-myrtle and pine — drifted up from below, and ever and again a light wind would bring the delicate saltness of the sea. Somewhere far off a voice was singing, and a curlew cried from the hill pastures.

"This is magic," said Mrs. Aspenden, as she sank into one of the wicker chairs placed on the promontory of lawn below the terrace.

"This is the true Island of Sheep. I could believe it was Tir-nan-og itself."

Mr. Burford had taken off his spectacles, and by a common impulse the eyes of the party were fixed on him. He had spoken little since his arrival, but had greatly endeared himself to everybody, and Mrs. Lavender hushed Lady Sevenoaks, who was about to question Mrs. Aspenden. Lady Sevenoaks cordially detested Celtic mysticism.

"We want to hear what you have to say, Mr. Burford," said Mr. Macmillan. "If you folk cannot carry us beyond machinery you have nothing to give us. I know little of economics, but one thing I know. I am a son of a crofter, I was long a minister in city slums, I am a little of a scholar, and I have served for years with my fellows under the shadow of death. I claim therefore to know something of the human heart. Believe me, man will never live by bread alone. If we are to make this earth of ours a better habitation we must first purify our spirit." Looking round, he quoted some lines of Coleridge:

> "Would we aught behold of higher worth
> Than the inanimate cold world allowed
> To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
> Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
> A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
> Enveloping the earth."

Mr. Burford spoke — rather slowly at first, like one without dogma and feeling vaguely towards truth. His soft pleasant burr intensified his air of hesitation.

"I think we are at the crossroads," he said. "I agree with all that Dan says about what the people want. But I think they are asking too little. They must have more, and if they do not get the one thing more they have got nothing. I ask for the workers something far bigger than ordinary wages and power. I want them to have the wages of the spirit and power over their own souls.

"This is the way I look at it," he went on. "Every industry is asking for a fresh deal and each has a certain amount of right on its side. The miners have their claims, and the railway men, and so forth, and they make it a point

of honour to carry them intact. That would be well enough if the whole country were miners or railway men, and if a careful Heaven had provided a safe market for the results of their work. But presently other industries will get anxious and follow their example, and each will be able to make out a good case for itself — if it stood alone. But the sum of these good cases is a bad case. Coal becomes too dear and freights too high for other industries to work at a profit; the cost of living soars up, so that the men who have got what they ask find that it does n't give them what they expected, and they ask more. Then the whole economic fabric cracks, for the different parts of it have forgotten their interdependence, and the result is ruin."

"It need n't be that, Jimmie," said Mr. Jonas, "if they'll 'ave common sense."

"Yes, common sense. A sense of community. And that means that each man has to let live as well as live, and think of others than himself and his fellow unionists. He must take the big view as a citizen. How are you going

to get that, Dan? . . . Let me put it in another way. Supposing this competition in demands did n't knock the bottom out of our wealth, it would still be an accursed thing. What are they demanding? You say, the means to a better life. But what kind of a better life is a man to have if he thinks only of making tight bargains? He learns to have no pride in his craft, and no care for it except its cash value. He has more leisure, but he is a poorer creature than he was before, and he has nothing to fill his leisure with. He has more money, but no better things to spend it on. Why, man, if you improve his material condition without giving him something to work towards, his latter end will be worse than the beginning. You are sending him with a shove down the road to savagery. . . . At any cost you must give him the larger view, if he is to make anything of the victory he wins."

Mr. Burford had lost his shyness and his voice held the little group in the moonlight.

"Look at the war," he said. "There the

workers of Britain took the larger view. They did n't believe the lie that patriotism mattered nothing to them, and that they would be as well off under the Kaiser. They did n't fight for themselves only, but for the little nations that were being butchered. And when they fought for themselves it was for the greatness in them. They had a bad enough time in the real England, but they were willing to fight for an ideal England that the dullest reverenced. They knew, though they never said it, that any pride of manhood that was left to them, any liberty, any hope, could be preserved only by sacrifice. And they made the sacrifice. . . . What we have to learn is that the war is not over and never will be over, and that no victory can be maintained except by sacrifice. Every man and woman in this land must learn it."

"I think I see," said Phyllis softly. "We must give ourselves to peace as whole-heartedly as we gave ourselves to war. In the war the unhappy, restless people were the profiteers and *embusqués* and pacifists, not the First

and Second Hundred Thousand. Now our pessimists are those who accept change, but won't face up to paying the price."

"I hope that some of us do," said Lady Guidwillie. "I am old and I have n't much left to care for, but they can have it all if it's going to prevent the war being fought in vain. I think that is true of my class."

The word annoyed Mr. Wyper, and he asked, "What class?" He was told, "Old-fashioned women who have no boys left," in a tone so gentle that he regretted having spoken.

"Nearly all my pals have been killed," said Mr. Maldwin. "It's a pretty empty world nowadays, and there's nothing for fellows like me to do except to make the best of what remains. That's what we've been spared from the Boche bullets for. I'd be glad to chuck everything I have into the common stock if it would help the cause my pals died for. But we are puzzled, Mr. Burford. We want to help, and here come the Labour men with a big stick shouting that they are masters and

are going to have what they jolly well ask. That's bad business, just when we ought to get together and hammer out a decent plan."

"Ah, you misunderstand them," said Mr. Burford. "They're only puzzled like you. The ordinary man is a left-handed chap and he's apt to have left-handed leaders. The man who roars about his rights does n't mean that he wants to trample on everybody else's. He only roars loud to get a hearing. Don't you believe that the idealism we saw in the war is dead in peace. I know the working-man better than his Union officials — better than you, Dan. He's a bigger chap than the men that claim to speak for him. He's sane and he's just, and, if you give him half a chance, he has imagination. Why, the Englishman has far more poetry in him than the Celt, only he has n't got it at the end of his tongue. You must dig deep down to find it. And he's got more humour than any race on earth, and that will be his salvation."

"Humour! yes," said Mr. Normand; and he quoted as if to himself the words of Burke,

"The ancient and inbred integrity, honesty, good-nature, and good-humour of the people of England."

"He has n't had many chances," Mr. Burford went on. "And now he wants to have every chance that's going. He wants to come into his heritage — all of it. We have to keep him up to that, and, like in the fairy tale, to see that he does n't get the jewels without the eye-salve. Thank God, at the bottom of his heart he wants the best things. You folk, to whom books have been a commonplace ever since you can remember, and who have had your education provided for you like regular meals, don't know the hunger in poor men for these despised privileges. There's only one key to all our problems to-day, and that is to give the workers the same treasures of knowledge that hitherto have belonged only to the few. Then you will make our Democracy safe for the world, for you will have made it an aristocracy."

Mr. Macmillan nodded. "Right," he said; "but don't let us forget what Dr. Johnson

said about education in Scotland. He said it was like the ration of food in a beleaguered city — everybody had a little, but nobody had enough to make a square meal."

"It's a square meal we're going to give," said Mr. Burford. "He won't be content with less. Bless him for his exorbitant demands. We have to train him to take the long view and to have the means of making out of better economic conditions a better life. We have to train him to govern himself and his industry, and to produce leaders that can lead and ministers that can administer. In a year or two most likely there will be a Labour Government in power, and we have to make certain that it will be a wise Government. I think all that can be done, because the worker is going to meet you halfway. Aye, and more than halfway. You see, at bottom he is very humble. You remember Bunyan, 'I have known many labouring men that have got good estates in this Valley of Humiliation.' . . . You don't know the rare material there is in this old country. I have

been up and down among ordinary folk for years, and I can tell what is in their hearts. There was a time when they cried for nothing but education in economics, because they were still feeling their way to the first stage in a new life. But they are past that now. They don't want only to breed Labour leaders with a smattering of political economy, for they have begun to put that science in its proper place in the scheme of things. And they don't want only technical education to help them to a better-paid job. They leave that cry to the Chambers of Commerce and the employers. They want nothing less than the whole treasure-house of knowledge, everything that makes what we call an educated man.

"I tell you" — and the speaker's voice warmed — "I tell you that I have known poor men who spent their evenings with Plato and their scanty holidays with the great poets. There's a thirst abroad, a divine thirst, and the quenching of it is the finest task before us. Give the worker all the technical training he wants, but don't deny him

the humanities, for without them he can never be a citizen. . . . Think of what you can make of him. Not culture in the trashy sense, but the wise mind and the keen spirit. He lives close to reality, so you need n't fear that he will become a pedant. You will make your academies better places, for you will let the winds of the world blow through them when you open them to the Many instead of the Few, and you will make a great nation, for the Many will be also the Best."

"You will get," said Mr. Normand, "what Falkland described, 'a College situate in a purer air.'"

"I'm not dreaming," said Mr. Burford. "I'm an optimist because I know my countrymen and believe in them most mightily. It's because they ask such a lot that there's good hope. We are always telling each other what is the lesson of the war. As I see it, it is the folly of arrogance. We've beaten it in our enemies, and now we've got to conquer it — every kind of it — in ourselves. We want humility in every soul, and humility can

come only from understanding. A man will not talk folly if he has a sense of the wisdom of the past, and he will not push his own claims too far if he realises that he is part of the great commonwealth of mankind. Knowledge makes humility, and without humility there can be no true humanity."

Mr. Burford ceased, and for a little silence reigned. His words seemed in harmony with the dusky, scented world and the shining spaces of the sky. Past seemed in that moment to mingle with present, the memories of the war with the traditions of immemorial ages, and behind all moved the kindly forces of earth which daily re-create the life of man. Then Mr. Macmillan spoke.

"I have got the answer I hoped for. It is a great and noble prospect, but it wants much girding of the loins."

He got up from his chair and looked over the glen. "For your comfort I will tell you a story — a story that belongs to this place and the folk that once lived here. Among the old Gods of the North the most beautiful was

Balder, the Life-Giver, who brought morning after night and spring after winter and quickened joy in youth and hope in the old. But the day came when he was pierced by the dart of his brother Darkness, and went down to the House of Hel far below the earth. The whole world sorrowed for his loss. It tried to bring him back by its tears, and every living and lifeless thing in earth and heaven, from the High Gods to the stones and trees, wept for Balder. But he did not come back. Yet, said the tale, some day he would return. Some day twilight would fall on Walhalla, and the proud Gods would be destroyed in their last great fight. They were fine Gods in Walhalla, but they were proud and violent Gods with the passions of their kind. Then would come the Deluge, and from chaos a new earth would arise, washed clean of pride. And Balder, the Life-Giver, would come again from the House of Death to reign over a regenerate world. . . . I wonder if that may be our case. We have long been trying to bring Balder back by our tears, but they

were only tears of sentiment, and arrogance still ruled our hearts. Now we have passed through our Ragnarok and the old pride has fallen. Perhaps the day is near when Balder will wake from his sleep."

He broke off suddenly. "Lamont," he cried, "there's a monstrous great fish rising in the Cow Pool. Let's go and look at him. Where's Burford?"

Mrs. Lamont answered. "I think he has gone for a walk with Phyllis in the garden."

THE END

The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
U . S . A