

SOCIALISM & CHARACTER



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**SOCIALISM AND CHARACTER**

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# SOCIALISM AND CHARACTER

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## INTRODUCTION





## CHAPTER I

### SCOPE OF BOOK

§ I. *Our present individualist system causes many evils.*

CAN anyone who is not utterly callous profess himself to be content with our present social system? If he is content, he must either be blind or live far remote from our main centres of population. Let him visit the nearest industrial city and then defend, if he can, the system which brings such places into existence. Our industrial cities produce the wealth which is necessary to modern civilization; and what sinks of misery they are! Everyone detests them, except perhaps the capitalists who grow rich there. What English family would choose to live in Sheffield or Wolverhampton, still less in that full-blown growth of competitive commercialism, the East End of London? The material evils of our system are gross and palpable, and have made us a byword of reproach throughout the world. But corresponding to them there is also a spiritual mischief, which is even more deplorable to a thoughtful mind; a low morality, which is not confined to the poor people who live in the slums but spreads corruptingly through every rank and class of the community.

The characteristic defects of our society, I hold,

are due to individualism ; by which term I mean the way of distributing wealth whereby men scramble for it according to each individual's strength and cunning. In Maine's *Popular Government* (p. 50) there is a priceless passage which ought to be engraved upon a tablet of brass and set up on a pillar somewhere east of the Tower of London—best perhaps upon the broad pavement of the Mile End Road. "The motives which impel mankind to produce wealth are such as infallibly entail inequality in distribution. They are the springs of action called into activity by the strenuous and never-ceasing struggle for existence, the beneficent private war which makes one man strive to climb upon the shoulders of another and remain there through the law of the survival of the fittest." What a comfort it should be to the poor citizens of East London to know that their slums are just the outcome of that great good natural law of the survival of the fittest ! But really we ought to be grateful to Sir Henry Maine ; he has put the matter in a nutshell for us. Beneficent private war ! "I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word." Our commercial system is indeed a kind of private war ; not at all beneficent, I should say, but full of the cruelty of warfare in its meanest and most selfish form. If we want to understand its results, we can walk along Regent Street and Piccadilly in the evening, and observe the interrelation between riches and vice ; and then we can take the Tube eastwards and study the shabby crowd that surges along the noisy boulevard of the Mile End Road. The Mile End Road should have shaken Sir Henry Maine's complacency, if anything could ; but probably he had never

travelled so far eastwards in London as that. Prosperous academic apologists of individualism usually confine themselves to the West End.

Long before the Great War came upon us, thinking men had seen the rottenness of individualism ; but its apologists still boasted that, though it might be ugly in parts and perhaps illogical, it was practically efficient and strong. The war destroyed that imposture for ever. An individualist state is essentially feeble ; it is torn by conflicting interests, greeds and ambitions, and is slow and ineffective in action. Our rulers discovered that it could neither find the men nor produce the material for a first-class war. To get the material they had to socialize the agencies of production ; to get the men for the fighting line they had to give up individualist methods, which are so wasteful of labour, and introduce some elements of scientific organization.<sup>1</sup> Now that the war is ended, we have retraced our steps and gone back to individualism ; and we shall certainly be beaten in the next war if we have to encounter an enemy organized by the methods of socialism.

It was the sinister interests of our society that clamoured to return to the old "beneficent private war" ; they wanted the confusion back again through which they had grown rich and powerful. The danger from foreign enemies has passed away for a time ; but the moral mischief of individualism is as deadly as ever. This private war corrupts every part of our national life : it stimulates unwholesomely the grasping and domineering instincts of our nature ; it drags the masses down into a

<sup>1</sup> Detailed proofs may be found in Sir L. Chiozza Money's admirable book, *The Triumph of Nationalization*.

condition of semi-slavery and puffs up the directing classes into petty tyrants ; it makes the rich degenerate and the poor coarse and brutal ; it deadens social sympathy and public spirit and makes society full of injustice and hatred ; it hardens our hearts to the influences of friendship ; it darkens and cripples the lives of children and degrades women ; it suffocates the wider spiritual interests which give dignity and beauty to human life ; it stupefies and vulgarizes us. In short it is war, without the heroism and devotion which light up the terrors of a conflict against a public enemy.

Preachers may preach, but profiteers will turn deaf ears to them. The plainest proofs that individualism is morally corrupting will weigh as nothing with our plutocratic leading class. What may touch their minds is the danger of a violent revolution if we go on with our present system. Such a revolution will certainly come, if we lose a European war. In any great conflict of the future our small professional army will be useless ; the whole manhood of the nation must stand to arms. But our working people will not fight unless they have a country worth fighting for. In the last war they fought well, because we were all enraged by the methods of the enemy and conscious that the existence of democracy in Europe was at stake. That danger is now past ; despotism in Europe has been crushed for ever : in future we shall have to rely upon the ordinary motives of rational patriotism. Now, do we really think that intelligent working men are going to bleed and suffer for those filthy industrial cities in which most of them live ? Are we going to call upon the slum-dwellers of East London to

rally round the mansions of Mayfair and Belgravia? Unless we begin in earnest to socialize our country, we shall be beaten in the next great war; and then a burst of popular fury will sweep away the whole capitalist system, as it did in Russia. Many thoughtful people believe that this would actually have happened if we had been beaten. If Germany had had twenty or thirty extra submarines at the critical period, we might be living now under a red Republic.

§ 2. *And should be replaced by socialism.*

We cannot remedy the material and moral evils of England unless we adopt some intelligent plan of distributing wealth. To expect to achieve a cure by means of exhortation or philanthropy is futile and childish; it is like applying soothing lotions to a dislocated limb, or trying to abolish destitution in the East End by building homes for waifs and strays. We must establish an organization which will regulate wisely the natural desire of acquiring wealth. If regulated, the desire is beneficent; otherwise, maleficent. When men are stimulated by any powerful desire and are acting without guidance, they hinder and irritate each other and become furious. In the panic of a shipwreck all kindly feeling and reflection disappear; men fight and struggle horribly, and even kill each other. So it is in our industrial society under the excitement of gain; each man scimmages for what he can get and tramples upon his neighbours without remorse. The socialist is one who detests this hideous confusion. He believes that our social evils



are due, not to the badness of human nature, but to want of regulation. Let distribution be made upon a proper plan ; let men co-operate intelligently instead of climbing madly upon one another's shoulders, and then the better elements of human nature will prevail. The socialist does not want to systematize merely from the love of system, but in order to improve the personal character of his fellow-citizens.

The theoretical foundations of socialism must be got from the mental and moral sciences ; from psychology, moral philosophy, political economy and sociology. By the first of these we learn what elements there are in human nature ; by the second, what good character is, and how its formation may be encouraged ; while the third and fourth deal with wealth and the laws of social combination. The conclusions of the philosopher should not be merely theoretical ; they should be such as to help practical men in dealing with social problems.

Therefore we must work with ideas which are truer to human nature than those which prevailed in England when Maine's *Popular Government* was written. Maine himself was no philosopher ; such thought as lies behind his magniloquent sentences was borrowed by him from Herbert Spencer and Darwin. Now, Darwin was much too modest and too fully conscious of the limitations of the scientist to dogmatize on questions of moral philosophy. But Spencer was full of presumption, and blinded by the prejudices of the current individualism. He was brought up to admire the competition of English country shopkeepers, and thought he could defend it by analogies from biology. He did not

see that the competition of animals for the means of subsistence is totally different from the co-operative division of labour by which wealth is created in civilized communities. 'Survival of the fittest' is a good principle for hawks and tigers; it produces great individual excellence of physique and some valuable qualities of mind: but there is no similarity between the life of such creatures and that of civilized men.

§ 3. *The book aims at showing how human character will be improved by socialism, and what the institutions of socialism will be.*

The main purpose of the book is to show what improvements in personal character may be looked for as the result of framing a better social organization, and in particular of distributing wealth upon an equitable system. As a preliminary it will be necessary to describe in outline the kind of social organization towards which I think that socialists ought to work. The ordinary programme of socialism seems to me to be too narrow; for one thing, the claim of the hand-workers to an equitable share of wealth cannot be satisfied, unless we satisfy also a claim which is near akin to it though not identical, the claim of women to full political and economic justice. And there are yet other changes involved, affecting deeply the intimate relations of the family. Wealth is a fundamental factor in human life; we cannot alter its distribution without modifying deeply the rest of our social system.

The moral improvement which may be looked for will extend through every part of conduct and

influence every element of character. There is an infinite difference between the private war of selfish greed and the peace and friendship which spring from intelligent co-operation. The greatness of the change can be appreciated only if we realize how imperfect our current standards and practice are. To bring this home to the reader will compel me to say much in criticism of contemporary society. It is not a pleasant task to point out the defects of a system in which one has been reared ; I should not take it up except for the sake of pointing forward to a happier future.



## CHAPTER II

### MODERN SOCIALISM

#### § I. *Modern socialism aims chiefly at the equitable distribution of wealth.*

THE aims of modern socialism are in appearance sharply contrasted with those of older thinkers; we lay far more stress than they did upon political economy. The ancient communists and fashioners of utopias thought little of wealth. Plato, the first and greatest of them all, valued nothing but intellectual excellence and virtue; property he wished to abolish altogether, so far as concerned the best of his citizens. In our own country the idealistic communists, such as Robert Owen, thought mainly of human brotherhood and moral regeneration. The new era begins with Karl Marx; he was the first to see that to attain a satisfactory social reconstruction we must reform the productive agencies of society. Such then has been the order of development, from idealism to practicality. This I believe to be the proper order. The old theories were splendid, but impossible; and yet they were the right theories for their age. In every great movement the visionaries—the poets, prophets and philosophers—appear first; when they have kindled enthusiasm and diffused conviction, then comes the time for the practical men.

But though modern socialism is economic and

deals so much with statistics and percentages, we must not overlook its moral quality. The motives of those who lead the movement are not sordid, nor is wealth a sordid thing. We must clear our minds of old prejudices and phrases about covetousness and filthy lucre. Wealth, the supply of goods for human use, demoralizes us only when we have too much of it. Men cannot be properly virtuous or have the proper character of citizenship when they are exposed to the miseries of want. There is no moral declension in modern socialism.

The chief aim of the modern socialist is to equalize the distribution of wealth ; or, more accurately, to distribute it upon equitable principles. To accomplish this he holds that it is necessary to institute an elaborate system of public ownership and service, which will make the equitable distribution permanent. Everybody agrees that it would be useless merely to take away any property from those who have and give it to those who have not ; the causes which produced inequality before would soon produce it again. This is why socialists advocate public ownership of land and capital and public performance of services of general utility.

Such is the modern socialist programme. I think that it is too narrow, and that it will be found to be too narrow, when it is either worked out in practice or thought out in theory. Redistribution of wealth cannot be effected without a thoroughgoing social reorganization. But let all this stand over for a little while. The programme is good, so far as it goes ; and it is practicable, if not at once, at least in the not-distant future. And we can begin at once to take preliminary steps towards it.

§ 2. *The chief obstacle in its way is the reluctance of the rich to surrender their wealth, motivated by the instincts of property and of command.*

The aims of the socialist cannot be achieved without conflict; there are powerful influences which have to be counteracted, a stiff resistance which will have to be broken down. The possession of riches is demoralizing; Scripture tells us so, and perhaps many wealthy churchmen would admit that Scripture is right, if pressed in argument. All the same, they don't want to give up their riches. Their resistance may justify itself by various arguments, such as that socialism is ungodly (which is not easy to reconcile with certain texts in the Gospels), or that it attacks the family, or that it is hostile to the "great man" (this is Mr. Mallock's special contribution); but the simple fact is that those who have want to keep. This is not unnatural. Riches are superfluous now for any good and useful purpose; but they gratify two very powerful and ancient instincts, the proprietary instinct and the instinct of domination or command.

The proprietary instinct must have begun in human history as soon as our ancestors got tools and other things for use or enjoyment; the purpose of making is frustrated if the agent cannot keep what he has made. The instinct is greatly strengthened when man has reached a stage when he can possess a home. Men who wander continually and live by hunting can possess but little; but, if they live in fixed habitations, they can shelter their goods and add continually to their store. This is the proprietary instinct in its primary and salutary

form ; later it develops into a more or less artificial taste for acquisition. With the advance of civilization and with our contrivances for creating and perpetuating inequalities of wealth, the desire of acquisition is directed upon objects which are widely different from the original objects of human property. A man can look with proprietary interest upon a field, or even upon a wide-stretching landscape ; he can feel proprietorship in stocks and shares which represent objects lying on the other side of the globe, or in minerals which lie hidden deep in the earth and from which he will draw revenue though he may never see them.

But riches gratify an instinct which is even stronger than the proprietary, the instinct of domination or command. Wealth is power ; the possession of wealth enables a man to have influence over the minds and bodies of those around him.

The love of power is older than the love of property. The higher animals, or such of them as live in packs or herds and co-operate in work, need leaders who have the capacity of direction. Of all co-operating creatures man is the chief ; the tasks which he undertakes are infinitely more numerous and various than those of the others, and require more movements and muscular exertions. Moreover, the work of men, unlike that of animals, is largely prospective ; it has reference to the future and consists in providing for developments which will shortly arise, but of which there is yet no hint in present surroundings. Hence leaders of men must be not only workers but thinkers ; they need continually to be giving orders and exhortations to their subordinates : and this, no doubt, was how speech came into being.

Corresponding to the need of command there exists among men an instinct of command, and also a pleasure in the exercise of the instinctive faculty. There are very few men who are not at some time or other set over their fellows; and, where they exercise command successfully, they take pleasure in it. What are called in France the 'directing classes' have it as their special function to supply persons possessing such natural gifts; from them we draw the 'officers' of our social organization. In some exceptional cases, such as Napoleon, the passion of domineering determines the man's whole scheme of life.

§ 3. *These instincts need regulation, especially the latter.*

The instincts of property and of command are in no way to be eradicated or frowned upon; in their due place they are absolutely necessary to human welfare. We shall always need objects of personal property and houses which have to be furnished and beautified; and our commonwealth will always need leaders for guidance in action and thought. Indeed, as society grows more complicated and its tasks more extensive and various, leadership becomes more and more necessary. We may go even further than this; we may admit that in the past there has been utility in a development of these tendencies which now, in a more advanced social stage, must be regarded as excessive. I do not see how civilization could have begun without the establishment of political systems or states. Now the origin of the state is in warfare; and wars were made and



armies created by ambitious chiefs who, being dissatisfied with the opportunities of domination afforded by the tribe, set about forming kingdoms by conquering their neighbours. Nor do I see how societies could have become cultured without the existence of persons possessing riches. And riches are accumulated by men who have the passion of acquisition and bequeath fortunes to descendants, who are freed thereby from material anxieties and can pay some attention to culture.

These, then, are the two instincts which prompt men to cling to riches ; we ought to try to understand the motives of the rich. None the less we must insist that the time has now come when these motives must be limited more strictly than of old. The world has no use any longer for ambitious kings who make war upon their neighbours, or for men who pile up great fortunes in business. The suffering and evil which they cause outweigh the gain.

It is the abuse of wealth which makes the more odious show, and draws upon itself the moral indignation of those who are earnest for social progress. We hate the insolent and wasteful display of opulence, the flaunting feathers and silks, the monstrous houses, the stables, motor-cars and gamekeepers, just as we hate the coarse magnificence of barbarous kings. Above all we hate the manners—the presumptuous, contemptuous tone which is encouraged by the possession of great wealth. It is the acquisitive passion which socialists declare against ; it is the tangible results of acquisition which offend us and which we wish to sweep away. But the real enemy is the desire of domination ; if we could put

limits to that, we should not have much trouble with acquisition.

Consider for a moment why men desire riches ; surely the main impelling motive is the love of power. Even if a rich man has not the native gift of command, his wealth at least gives him the show of it ; everybody is outwardly civil to him. Wherever he goes he enjoys the envy of the poor, and tradesmen await his orders with respect. It can be nothing but this motive that makes men desire great establishments ; otherwise a very large house, much larger than one family can properly enjoy, would seem to be merely a burden. A great establishment monopolizes the time of those who are at the head of it ; as Carlyle said somewhere of some of his aristocratic friends, their whole time is spent in the mere business of living. The main pleasure of a great house depends upon the servants ; its master is a kind of king ; he stands continually in a position of authority. A king is nothing if he have no subjects, a preacher nothing without an audience ; and so riches are a mere potentiality, unless the rich man can surround himself with beings upon whom he can exercise his power.

The motive which makes men pursue great wealth is, I think, psychologically different from the instinct of property, the genuine love of possessing things of use and ornament. The possessions of the lover of riches are often no more than an instrument of his power or an advertisement to announce his power to the world. Sometimes we see men who are keen pursuers of wealth, but are definitely lacking in the genuine proprietary instinct. They live hard and frugal lives, with poor and simple furniture

and clothing for their personal use. Such a life is said, I do not know with what truth, to be lived by some of those typical kings of riches, the millionaires of the United States.<sup>1</sup>

In the commonwealth of the future the love of power will receive all the gratification that is rightly due to it; those who are competent to exercise authority are sure to get high positions assigned to them. Probably the same sort of men will make their way to the front as now obtain success in trade and the lucrative professions. But the love of power will be purified and ennobled by devotion to the public service, and we shall be rid of those useless beings who by accident of birth are in authoritative positions without any real capacity for command.

§ 4. *To complete their programme socialists ought to check, not only the domination of rich over poor, but also the domination of man over woman.*

If the excessive love of domination is really the main obstacle to socialism, the programme which socialists put forward ought to be greatly enlarged. We ought to curb all undue development of the passion, and not that only which manifests itself in the accumulation of riches. Our people cannot be free and happy so long as they are exposed to the pressure of excessive domination in any form. The practical application of this principle is that the consistent socialist must adopt the aims of feminism.

<sup>1</sup> Compare the austere personal surroundings of the railway millionaire, Augustus P. Flint, in Winston Churchill's novel, *Mr. Crewe's Career*.



All throughout human history men have exercised domination whenever they have had opportunity. In olden days the strong tyrannized over the weak and enslaved them ; in our own day the rich tyrannize over the poor and half enslave them ; and so for countless ages in the past men have tyrannized over women. The liberating spirit, which abolished slavery in the last century and is out against the tyranny of wealth to-day, ought to be fighting for the full emancipation of woman.

There is a strong natural affinity between the supporters of socialism and those of feminism, but no explicit alliance ; because, I suppose, people have not seen how necessary one is to the other. Most of us probably have felt in some indefinite way the theoretical inconsistency of declaiming against the injustice of the rich, while neglecting the still greater and more ancient injustice of man towards woman ; certainly most enlightened supporters of movements for the extension of male citizenship (J. S. Mill for example) have shown themselves generously disposed towards women's claims. But what is not generally understood is that no effective scheme of socialism can be brought into working without the full co-operation of women. And it is impossible for women to throw themselves heartily into any scheme, or to have the qualities which are necessary for efficient co-operation, unless they receive just treatment in the commonwealth. Why women are indispensable and what their functions will be I hope to explain in a later chapter. They will need high qualities both of intellect and moral devotion. These cannot be looked for in persons who stand in a semi-servile position, and labour for

the common good without adequate remuneration from the common store.

§ 5. *Property and domination have been much regulated in the past; socialism will only carry the regulation a stage further forward.*

There is no ground for the fear that the regulation of the acquisitive and dominative instincts which is proposed by socialism will prove impossible. They have been subjected to much regulation in the past, and all that socialists propose is to carry it yet a stage further. As soon as men begin to form any sort of society, they limit the instinct of acquisition by prohibiting theft. In the Middle Ages the laws and customs against accumulation of landed properties and engrossment of trade were most elaborate, and, though frequently evaded, were continually being renewed and modified till the industrial break-up at the Renascence. Socialism puts forward no proposal which is essentially new. Its limitative ordinances are rendered necessary by the greatly increased opportunities for acquisition which are afforded by modern industry and finance, while they are made possible by modern advances in social science.

The instinct of domination has been restrained even more closely. The right to enslave has gone long ago; the rights of the father over his children, and of the husband over his wife and her property are now greatly diminished; the power of the employer over his workpeople is less than it was, though it is still very great, and may be exercised with great injustice without transgressing the law.

The employer has less power in our own country than in other countries which stand at a lower level of culture, and he will have less in the future than he has now—at least, the sort of power which may be abused; for all good purposes the captain of industry will be stronger than even before. The socialist wishes to regulate still further the power of man over his fellow-men; he wishes to limit the opportunities of abuse of power, while preserving and enhancing those elements of government which are truly valuable to the individual and to society



PART I  
THE COMMONWEALTH



## CHAPTER III

### WEALTH

§ I. *Part I of the book explains the organization of the community which will be needed to carry socialism into effect.*

LET us begin with a definition. We need a term to denote the general communal organization, which includes the specially political organization called the 'state.' I intend to use the term 'commonwealth.' The commonwealth is the general organization or body of institutions whereby we regulate matters of wealth and industry, family-life and religion, as well as political affairs. At present our commonwealth is organized in accordance with the principles of individualism.

Individualism I have spoken of already. It is a very different thing in primitive or pre-industrial communities from what it is in our own thickly populated country. Where men live scattered in farms and cottages, each family must work for itself, and reward is usually proportional to work performed. The case is quite different in modern cities, where there is minute division of labour and each man co-operates in producing the total output of the community. There we often see a clear separation between work and reward: a man may do most excellent work; but, unless he fights for

himself, he will get an inadequate reward or perhaps none at all. This I call industrial individualism. We have got used to the system and have come to think that it is the only possible one; in reality it is quite unsuited to a co-operative state of society. The socialist contends that the distribution of the goods produced by social co-operation should not be left to the result of a scramble, in which grasping and pushing men will always come out best; but should be regulated by foresight and the best available wisdom of the community.

If we reform the distribution of wealth on socialist principles, we must also reform the commonwealth in other respects; in the organization of industry, in government, in the family, and in the relations of the sexes, especially in their economic relations. Wealth is such a vital factor in human society that reforms cannot be made in respect of it without consequential changes in many other things. These I propose to indicate in other chapters of this Part. The Second Part will take up the main subject of the book, the effect of those reforms upon the character of the individual.

§ 2. *As being a primary condition of welfare, wealth should be well-regulated in respect of its production, distribution and consumption.*

Wealth is the first point which should be considered in any scheme of social reorganization. The welfare of the soul is dependent upon the welfare of the body; we can, it is true, have health without virtue, but not, as a rule, virtue without health. The 'health' I am speaking of is not, of course, mere



physical soundness, such as that of a hungry wolf ; but the fit bodily condition of a well-fed, well-clothed and well-sheltered civilized man. Now, to maintain himself in fitness a man must consume much ; in his physical aspect he is a system of energies which continually manifest themselves and are dissipated, and therefore continually need to be renewed. He renews or protects these energies by substances which have to be won from his environment. Wealth, in the main, is man's accumulated store of energy-generating substances and of appliances which help in the winning of such substances. For instance, a man may be rich because he has a store of corn, or of tools and other things which are useful in the raising of corn. There are other kinds of wealth, such as ornaments—jewels for example—and objects of culture, such as books ; but these are subsidiary. If a man has no wealth he cannot maintain his bodily energy and fitness ; and therefore he cannot have spiritual welfare or virtue.

It follows then that, if a community as a whole is to be in fitness, all its arrangements in respect of wealth must be put upon a satisfactory footing. Let us consider them under the three headings of production, distribution and consumption.

There should be an adequate production of wealth ; adequate, that is, for every citizen to have enough of the substances which go to generate his bodily energies, and enough also of other objects, such as ornaments, to satisfy his reasonable needs. And the production should be made under conditions which are not injurious to the producer. It might be that the production of wealth could be greatly increased by some invention which acts injuriously

upon the workmen ; but we could not approve of such an invention. This seems to apply to some recent devices which have been developed out of the 'scientific management' invented by the late Frederick W. Taylor, of the Bethlehem Steel Company ; the 'moral and intellectual damage' caused by them outweighs the gain. Physical damage we may see in almost any factory ; in most industries there is some particular process which is unhealthy for those who are engaged in it. A notorious example is the glazing of pottery by compositions containing lead. Such injurious processes must be eliminated or ameliorated, if possible.

Now turn to distribution. The distribution of wealth among the citizens should be fair ; it should be in such proportions as conform to the current sentiment of justice. What kind of distribution this will prove to be, may be a matter of much debate ; but some kinds of distribution are certainly to be condemned : for example a distribution which gives much wealth to some citizens of no great merit, but a very poor supply to other citizens who are useful. And the distribution should not only be fair in quantity, it should be made by methods which do not injure the character of the citizens. Here we touch upon the great cause of complaint against the competitive system. To put the matter shortly, commercial competition degrades us morally and intellectually. I think this is really the deepest source of discontent with the existing constitution of society.

Finally there should be in the commonwealth a right consumption of wealth, i.e. a consumption which conduces to a kind of human enjoyment of

which we can approve. Wealth is produced to be consumed; food to be eaten, clothes to be worn, ornaments to be displayed and admired. Wealth should not be saved and hoarded out of sight; still less should it be wasted, that is, consumed without enjoyment. And the enjoyment which is gained must not be such as degrades those who enjoy, but should rather conduce to their moral and intellectual welfare.

§ 3. *In our present individualist state wealth is ill-distributed.*

The existing individualist system is open to grave objections in all these respects—in production, in distribution and in consumption. Its faults are most glaring in respect of distribution. Inequality of distribution is what socialists complain of most loudly; but perhaps there is even deeper discontent with the moral evils of competition.

It is notorious that the existing distribution of wealth is unequal. The researches of Mr. Rowntree have shown that the average working-class family goes through a period of poverty and privation when the children are young, and is stinted of food and other necessaries in a way which acts injuriously upon welfare; similar inquiries have been made into the condition of the rural labourer with a similar result. If anyone defends this state of things, he must do so on the ground that such evils are inevitable; he must argue that without partial starvation and the threat of worse the hand-workers will not work reasonably hard, or will not abstain from extravagant propagation. I do not

think that the argument is valid ; but such elements of it as deserve attention will be discussed in a later chapter.

Other classes on the contrary are over-supplied with wealth. Some of the men who are rich owe their wealth to their special ability ; they are able organizers or inventors, or craftsmen of special skill such as painters or surgeons. But most of the rich owe more to luck than to skill. Sometimes they are highly paid for services which are not really of special value ; often they are rich by inheritance and perform no service at all ; sometimes they have got rich by means which do disservice to the community, by robbing it under legalized forms or pandering to its vices.

§ 4. *The true principle to be observed in distribution is that the share of the citizen should be proportional to the public service which he renders.*

The true principle to be observed in the distribution of wealth is that of public service. It is neither possible nor desirable to apply the principle with exactitude, and to try to make a citizen's share of wealth strictly proportional to his services ; and indeed citizens who render very great services, such as literary geniuses and great commanders in war, usually do not wish to make merchandise of their talents. But a general proportion ought to be observed. The citizen who performs high services should receive in distribution upon a higher scale ; and he should receive in a form which relieves him from the worry and strain of competition.

In some degree this principle is already in opera-

tion ; all government servants are paid thus. In the navy, for example, there are two broadly marked classes, officers and ratings ; the latter for the hand-work, the former for planning and command. In each class there are many subdivisions ; men receive more or less according to their length of service, devotion and ability. So also it is in the civil service. That the principle commends itself to our sense of justice is shown by the fact that there is no acute discontent against it ; and not, in the civil service at least, many glaring cases of merit overlooked and unrewarded.

When a socialist state is established with functions much more extensive than our existing state, this must be the principle upon which services are rewarded and wealth distributed. I do not think that, even under a political system in which the hand-workers have their full share of power, there will be any outcry against assigning to the brain-working or directing classes pay upon a higher scale. Hard manual work is very conducive to health and happiness, but not to intellectual effort ; if brain-workers are to be efficient, they must have servants who will take off their hands the daily work which is necessary to life. And, in order to hire service, the brain-worker must be paid upon a higher scale.

I doubt whether a socialistic system would make any great change in the economic position of our professional or salaried class. Some of these at present are paid too much ; which is because they have special skill, and bargain to get the highest terms they can for their services. Others are paid too little ; which is mainly because the professions are overcrowded, a trouble which could easily



be remedied by public regulation. The important changes would be made in the hand-working class which would be levelled up, and in the capitalist class which would be levelled down.

The distribution of wealth ought not to be left to 'natural' causes, in other words to the results of a scramble. There ought to be a public staff of statisticians and experts in standards of living. These men should estimate what total volume of goods there is available for distribution year by year. They should fix the amount that is needed to keep a working-class family in good comfort. As the main strength of a nation lies in its hand-workers, it should be the chief aim of the commonwealth upon its economic side to see that the hand-workers reach this approved standard. In emergencies the directing class may go short of the further share which is their proper due; but the hand-workers should have their indispensable quantum.

§ 5. *We must apply reform to the causes through which men grow excessively rich, such as (a) our land system, (b) public debt.*

As to the capitalist class, it will be necessary to take steps to prevent them from possessing anything like their present monstrously exaggerated share of wealth.<sup>1</sup> I doubt whether we can altogether prevent men from growing rich. So long as the community has within it elements of weakness and ignorance, so long must it be content to surrender an excessive

<sup>1</sup> The fortune of Mr. J. D. Rockefeller is now estimated at £250,000,000.

share of wealth to persons who are able to take advantage of it ; just as men in extremities, in famine or danger from enemies, must pay a heavy ransom to those who will help them. But much may certainly be done to cure the fatal disease of opulence which now afflicts us.

Let us consider some of the causes through which inequality of wealth arises. One of the most odious and vexatious is our system of land tenure, which gives the unearned increment of urban land to the ground-landlord. For many various reasons, of which equality in the distribution of wealth is only one, the site and immediate environs of a town should be the property of the town. Our land system has no justification whatever in any wholesome want or tendency of human nature. It is a heavy burden hanging round the neck of the community which we have been too lazy or too selfish to cut away. A resolute effort would easily make an end of it.

Another cause of inequality is public debt. Credit of course is necessary to commerce, as between individuals ; but the system of public credit is a very different thing, and may be applied to purposes which have no economic justification. A defence can be made for the public debt which is spent productively and for which definite assets can be shown, such as waterworks or tramways or houses ; but not for the debt which is spent unproductively. Long ago some persons lent money to the British government to carry on war, and the heirs of those persons are still receiving dividends on that ancient loan. The essence of the matter is that bygone statesmen pledged in advance the fruits of the

labour of future generations to men whose descendants are still enjoying those fruits without exertion.

Before we can have equitable distribution of wealth, public debt must somehow be extinguished. The extinction will be difficult, perhaps impossible, so long as wars continue; for in such emergencies a nation will pledge its future for ever in its desperate efforts to defeat an enemy. And a country which has no credit (because it refuses to incur debt) must always be at a hopeless disadvantage in war. Perhaps therefore the final extinction of public debt cannot be hoped for in the immediate future. That however is no reason why we should not make a vigorous start with its reduction by a levy on capital or other means, as soon as we recognize that the existence of debt operates against equality of distribution.

#### § 6. (c) *Inheritance.*

Both land and debts pass on from generation to generation by inheritance. By law a man's power over his property does not end with his life; he is allowed to govern by testament the distribution of it after he has passed away. The principle has existed so long that men have come to look upon it as an unshakable law of nature; they do not realize how artificial it is, how much a convention of civilized society. Our modern death-duties have infringed greatly upon the principle: the state now deducts at each succession a substantial fraction of a large estate; nor is there any reason, except expediency, why one fraction should be appointed rather than another. Probably in the future it will be through restriction of inheritance



that the dispersal of great properties will be achieved. If for example a man dies possessed of £100,000, the state will confiscate much, say half, of it; the rest may be allowed to descend in parcels, but not more than a moderate-sized parcel, say £5,000, to any single inheritor.

The principle of controlling the descent of property should be applied to corporations also, which do not die. It is not expedient that men should be able by testamentary disposition to lock up property for ever in the hands of a corporation, such as a church, or in the hands of trustees, for purposes which may not always remain conducive to the public interest. The title-deeds of all corporations and bodies of trustees should be subject to review at suitable intervals.

No doubt an outcry will be made that we should be invading natural rights by limiting bequest in these various ways. The fact is rather that we should be modifying a convention of highly civilized society. In primitive societies there is no power of bequest. Freedom of bequest has been in the past a valuable aid to progress; but the time has come when it should be subjected to strict limitation.

#### § 7. (d) *Capitalism.*

The usual socialistic demand in regard to capital is that it should belong, like land, to the community. The demand is just in the main, but a distinction must be made as regards the various kinds of capital. In its practical and operative form capital consists mainly in credit, but the credit is of course based upon concrete objects of human use. For the sake of clearness let me enumerate some of these objects:

land improved so as to be fit for agriculture or pasture, buildings, roads, bridges and streets; railways, canals and harbours; ships; mines and machinery; live stock, crops, raw materials and consumable stores; furniture, clothes and ornaments. This selection is enough to explain in what capital really consists. By the devices of finance all this heterogeneous property is, so to speak, liquefied, and can be applied to maintaining labour which is engaged in creating new capital in any part of the world.

We cannot usefully discuss questions relating to capital, unless we recognize the great differences between the various kinds of capital. Capital consisting of objects which are of intimate personal use, or which cannot be maintained in efficiency except by close personal supervision, is suitable to private ownership; objects which are of general use and do not need close supervision are more suitable to public ownership. It is generally recognized that roads should be public, and not private or semi-private, as they were in the eighteenth century. Many people would say the same of railways, canals and harbours. Mines and machinery might be doubtful or divided, some public, some private. Household furniture and ornaments would certainly be private. The kind of capital which is held publicly is withdrawn once for all from being engrossed by private owners. But wherever capital remains private, there will always be a possibility that individual persons may accumulate riches and become capitalists. Against this evil we shall have to contend with various socialistic measures, such as the limitation of inheritance, which will be supported by the invaluable assistance of public opinion.

§ 8. (e) *Special industrial ability. Checks to the accumulation of wealth must be applied with caution.*

In addition to these ways of getting rich there is yet another, very important and very difficult to control: the exercise of special industrial ability. The ability may be manifested in relation to existing sources of wealth—in organization and management: or in discovering and exploiting new sources; as when an inventor, such as the late Sir Henry Bessemer, discovers and exploits a process of steel manufacture, or when a speculative builder ‘develops’ a piece of urban land. There is no doubt that in all conditions of society, individualist or socialist, we shall need able and inventive men for the direction of industry. The question is whether we can procure their services by payment of reasonable salaries, or whether we must continue to let them ransom us as they do to-day.

Such a question cannot be answered without the test of experience. There will certainly be in the future a great extension of collectivist trading; but it will not cover the whole field of business, unless it shows the qualities of the successful entrepreneur. If collectivist undertakings are outclassed in skill and enterprise by private ventures, then the private adventurer will survive, and we must submit to see so much inequality in the distribution of wealth as his existence may involve.

My own belief, which I admit is mainly based on faith, is that business ability, indeed ability of all kinds, will be sought out for the public service more keenly than it is at present and will be more sys-

tematically rewarded. The whole matter depends upon a change in the spirit of our governing class. When wealth is the chief qualification for a governor, government is unintelligent and clever men neglected. But when the main qualification for government is ability, things will be far otherwise.

In checking the operation of the various causes whereby riches accumulate in single hands, we must remember that they correspond, most of them, to some natural tendency or instinct of human nature. We must apply our checks with caution, lest we upset the natural balance of human functions and do harm or provoke a mischievous reaction. The laws of inheritance, for example, correspond to the pride which a man takes in his property and to his care for his offspring. The cause which needs handling most circumspectly is the rewarding of special industrial ability. We must at all costs have a good supply of energetic and original men.

Such considerations will doubtless be used as an argument for *laissez-faire*, and for continuing to leave the distribution of wealth to settle itself. I think the better way is to try to remedy the present evils, while fully admitting the difficulties of the task. Statesmen should proceed gradually and with caution, and they should be mindful of what can be learnt from psychology and sociology. Hitherto they have not taken much notice of philosophic teaching; though whether this is the fault of statesmen or of the unpractical spirit in which most contemporary philosophers pursue their inquiries may remain an open question.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Every statesman can learn much from books such as those of Mr. Graham Wallas, especially *Human Nature in*

§ 9. *Wealth cannot be distributed equally unless production is socialized.*

The most prominent questions of social reform are connected with the distribution of wealth; but it is necessary to speak also about production. For one thing, it is evident that, if distribution is to be equalized, wealth must be socialistically produced. If, to take an example, soap is produced by private firms such as Lever Brothers, then it is impossible to prevent those who risk their capital and devote their brains to the enterprise from drawing large profits. We might by various devices deprive Lord Leverhulme of his money as fast as he makes it, and prevent him from transmitting masses of property to his descendants. But, even if successful, we should produce a feeling of injustice and should alienate public sympathy. The only satisfactory way of eliminating the capitalist producer is by superseding him. We must make more soap, better soap and cheaper soap by collectivist agency than can be produced under our present system. When this becomes manifest, private soap-makers will be glad to pass over their concerns to collectivist management.

The goods which are most suitable for collectivist production are those which may be termed standard goods, i.e. goods of general use which are made by well-established and well-understood processes of manufacture. Those which are least suitable are objects of intimate use, such as clothes, ornaments and books, where everything depends upon personal

*Politics and The Great Society*, and from Professor McDougall's *Social Psychology*.



peculiarities and tastes. In respect of these goods there will always be room for private production, and therefore some opportunity for the accumulation of wealth by the successful producer.

§ 10. *This will also conduce to a more abundant production of wealth.*

It is usually taken for granted that under our individualist system we have at least an abundant supply of wealth, though the methods of production and the distribution may be faulty. But this is not true. The amount of food, clothing and other goods consumed is not so high *per capita* as it ought to be. This means that the nation is under-supplied with wealth. Apart from minor causes, this is due to the inefficiency of our productive agencies; the work of our 35,000,000 of English population is so feeble and so ill-arranged that we cannot rise above a low *per capita* rate of production.

The obstacles to industrial efficiency would mostly be removed by the adoption of socialism. One of them is the multitude of drones and parasites, the endowed citizens who make no contribution to the public wealth, but live idly upon the labour of others. Another is the defective training of the workers, who have not been taught how to apply their labour to the best advantage. Great mischief is done by competition and absence of systematic organization: thousands of men are working hard, not to produce wealth, but to prevent others from producing; and thousands of men are running hither and thither confusedly, accomplishing a small amount of work with a great deal of effort. If we compelled every-

body to work, fitted them carefully for work by appropriate education, and arranged the work upon an intelligent plan, we should increase largely the *per capita* production of goods.<sup>1</sup>

§ II. *The socialist state will regulate consumption.*

A few words must be added about consumption, which from the standpoint of happiness is the most important part of the whole matter; for it is no use to produce wealth abundantly or to distribute it equitably, unless it is wisely consumed. The objection may be made that advice about consumption is superfluous and even impertinent; since people will know well enough how to consume the goods, provided only that they have them to consume. But this is not so. It is true that our country is very different from some others, whose inhabitants do not know how to consume wealth; such a country is Egypt, where the people since the war have had more money than they know what to do with, and where the great need of the nation is to be taught how to consume. But even in England, and especially in those industrial districts where wages are high, there is much need for regulation and encouragement of consumption.

What is needed is twofold; on the one hand restraint, on the other hand expansion. Even now in our society much restraint is done by taxation and legislation. The taxes on tobacco and alcohol, for example, are not maintained merely for the

<sup>1</sup> The existing causes of industrial inefficiency are well analysed by Sir L. Chiozza Money in his *Triumph of Nationalization*, chap. ii.

sake of revenue ; they have a valuable function in diminishing the consumption of those articles. Sunday Closing in Wales and ' Prohibition ' in America are well-known examples of legislative restraint. It is probable that, under socialism, state restrictions upon undesirable consumption will be greatly increased, either by pressure of public opinion or by definite statutory coercion.

Another kind of restriction which is now recognized as reasonable is restriction of waste. This was very much in evidence during the war. We all felt then that waste of wealth, even wasting ' our own,' was an attack upon national welfare ; men were not allowed even to use stale bread as ground-bait for fishing. And this is the right principle. The consumption of wealth should be left mainly to the discretion of the individual consumer ; but if the discretionary power is abused, an offence is committed, and there ought to be a remedy.

But the really effective changes of the future will be in expansion rather than restraint. Putting the matter shortly, we may say that the cultured tastes of the upper classes will be made to spread downwards through society : the hand-workers will consume more things and better things than they do now ; they will have more varied food and better cooked, more and better clothes, bigger houses, better furniture, more books, more ornaments and in better taste. And they will have more leisure in which cultured desires can be gratified.

And this change will be helped by public agency. A great part of the education of children is an education in consumption ; they learn to appreciate artistic and literary objects, and so wish to acquire



them. What is done by our present system of compulsory elementary education will doubtless be supplemented greatly in the future. It will only be necessary to extend in various directions the culture-diffusing agencies which are already in operation.

§ 12. *The socialist will be wealthier than the individualist community.*

Let me sum up shortly the main results which may be expected from the adoption of socialism in regard to wealth.

The socialist community should be much wealthier than the individualist ; the volume of goods produced should be much greater, and the amount consumed by each family much larger. The change will be greatest among the hand-workers, who will be much better off than they are now and will consume their shares in ways which cultivated people can understand and respect ; at present so many well-paid working-class families exemplify nothing but a sluttish profusion.

At the top of the social scale there will be a great decrease of consumption : there will be no more racing-stables or vast conservatories, such as that which was recently scrapped and blown up with dynamite at Chatsworth ; no houses with ten servants, no footmen and perhaps no butlers. And with this shrinkage there will probably be a corresponding change in all the sentiments and standards of taste that are connected with wealth.

The least change will probably be seen in the professional class, whose style of living and degree

of consumption will probably remain much as they are now. Two evils, however, will cease to afflict professional men. They will not be haunted by the fear of sinking into the abyss of poverty through dismissal or through pressure of competition. They will be in the position of the ordinary civil servant who knows that, so long as he behaves himself, his position is secure. And they will not be tormented by the sight of opulence. At present the professional man cowers before the mighty capitalists with their mansions, parks, game-preserves, motors and liveried servants; his modest comfort is rebuked and ashamed before all that magnificence. He would not be any happier if he had those costly things; but he thinks he would be, and the thought prevents him from enjoying to the full his really adequate and wholesome share of wealth.

## CHAPTER IV

### ECONOMIC ORGANIZATION

§ I. *Industry under socialism will be non-capitalist. It will aim at producing an adequate and steady supply of goods.*

SUPPOSE that the principles of the preceding chapter have been generally adopted, suppose that land has been taken out of private hands, that there is no public debt, that most of the accumulated wealth of the nation is publicly owned, and that the work of management is entrusted to salaried officials—how then will industry be organized? What will be the status of our various industrial organizations, and what aims will they keep in view?

The most important organizations of industry under socialism will have, of course, the general negative character that they will be non-capitalist; that is, they will not exist to produce dividends for their proprietors. The primary business of all civilized industry is to produce goods for the use of the community; but this tends to be lost sight of when it is controlled by private owners.

The aims of these non-capitalist organizations may be stated briefly as follows. They will endeavour to produce as much goods as the community needs. A capitalist on the other hand will produce only that amount of goods which he thinks will bring

him the highest percentage with the least trouble. Suppose, for the sake of argument, that he can make a net income of £1,000 by producing 1,000 tons of goods, and can make only just the same income by producing 1,500 tons ; he will prefer the smaller production as involving less risk and trouble. Moreover, if he hears that another firm intends to establish works in competition with him, he will make efforts to prevent the works from being established, though his own products may be insufficient to supply completely the public demand. In our present business system a great deal of the available energy is spent on fighting rivals. When capitalism is well organized and capitalists quarrel, the fighting may develop into a 'trade-war.' As the organization of capitalism advances, trade wars become more formidable. It is credibly asserted that great restriction of production is due to the action of trusts and other forms of capitalistic combination.

The production of goods under a socialist system would be not only more ample, but also more steady and accurately adjusted to the needs of the community. At the first glance this may not seem to be of great importance ; but in reality much suffering and loss are caused by irregularity of production. It is the main cause of unemployment, which inflicts so much hardship upon our hand-workers. Much loss also is caused when seasons of glut alternate with seasons of scarcity ; with the glut there is a waste of goods, with scarcity there is the waste of missed opportunities of enjoyment.

Men can never make production quite steady and accurately adjusted to demand, because of the irregularity of nature ; but much could be done in

that way which is not done now. Under a socialist system a staff of statisticians would calculate the amounts which the productive agencies of the commonwealth should turn out year by year. At present there is no such organized foresight ; there is no one with the power or the will to foresee. Sometimes the ill-informed and unorganized crowd of producers are animated by hope, each one expecting to get a larger share of business than his neighbour ; and so they produce in excess of the demand. Later, when their hopes are falsified, they restrict their output till scarcity comes on. By-and-by the bad times of stagnant business begin to pass away, and then the upward movement of the rhythm begins again. These destructive fluctuations of trade are aggravated by the sinister activity of speculators. It is the rise and fall of prices that gives the speculator his chance ; stability of prices, quite apart from collectivist ownership, would destroy him. And this perhaps is why some sections of the commercial world are so bitter against any public regulation of industry.

§ 2. *With good conditions of labour and regular employment for the workpeople.*

It will be definitely and expressly the business of the socialist commonwealth to study the welfare of its workpeople. There are at present not a few employers who make efforts in this direction out of philanthropy : but this kind of private action is spasmodic and ineffective. The fatal difficulty is that under our present system the expense of welfare-improvements falls upon the private employer, and

therefore handicaps him in competing with rival firms ; an employer who thinks too much about his workpeople is in danger of being driven out of business altogether. The whole matter is far too big and heavy for private hands. Perhaps the greatest difference in the future will be made by the continuous and scientific study of welfare conditions under the control of a corps of experts trained in psychology and physiology. It is utterly impossible to get this work done privately. Under our present conditions of individualism there is no sufficient motive to undertake such a work, and no power to carry it through if undertaken. It must be done by observers who accumulate results year by year and have the solid backing of the commonwealth behind them.

Under the heading of welfare we must include regulation of hours of labour. At present they are governed by merely commercial considerations, except so far as inordinately long hours are prohibited by the State. The result may be summed up in a well-known phrase of J. S. Mill: "It is questionable if all the mechanical inventions yet made have lightened the day's toil of any human being." Hence some kind-hearted but unpractical people have proposed that we should revert to hand-production, which may be less effective but is more agreeable to the worker. The remedy seems rather to lie in collectivist production. Machines increase a thousand-fold the efficiency of labour ; we must use them in order that our society may be wealthy. But there is no good reason why men should toil for long hours at machine-work in order that employers may grow rich. From the standpoint of the com-



munity there are conflicting interests to be reconciled: on the one hand we need an ample supply of goods, say of boots; on the other hand it is not expedient that the boot-operatives should work excessively long hours, otherwise they are injured in body and mind. It will be the business of public statisticians and welfare experts to arrange a satisfactory compromise, and to revise their arrangements from time to time as conditions change.

It is incredible how workpeople may be oppressed as to hours of labour under an individualist system. Many years ago I remember talking to a London bus-driver late at night: he told me he had just finished a sixteen-hour day, and that this was usual in his trade. Such hours deprive a man of home-life throughout the week; he can hardly see his children during their waking time.

The steady production which will result from socialism will make employment more regular. Under an individualist system there must be always much unemployment, which is imperfectly mitigated by unemployment insurance. A small employer who works to meet a fluctuating and intermittent demand must employ men irregularly. He gets an order and takes men on to execute it; when the order is finished he must pay them off again. The matter might be illustrated in detail from the building trade. In any single town there may be perhaps twenty master-builders; each of these must have his ups and downs of business, when he alternately takes on and pays off men. If the building trade in the town were socialized, fluctuations of employment would be greatly reduced.

Apart from the general rise and fall of trade,

employment is made irregular by the predominance of the power of the consumer ; he makes his wishes all-powerful by acting upon the competition of producers against each other. If a man wants a house in a hurry, he will easily find a builder eager to secure the contract, without any regard for the state of the labour-supply. Under socialism the state of the labour-supply will have its due consideration. If the regular staff of building workers is already well employed and the consumer has no good motive for his hurry, he will be told to wait his turn ; he will not be allowed to upset the regular employment of workmen for no satisfactory reason.

§ 3. *The commonwealth will accumulate capital, avoiding the present evils of waste and of over-saving.*

It is important that in a community there should be a due amount of saving, that is, a laying by of wealth in order to produce new wealth in the future ; and this should be done in due measure—not too much saving, nor yet too little. Owing to our individualism the public significance of thrift is not considered, nor the limits to which it ought to go. The individuals who save are not thinking of the community at all ; their motive is to protect themselves against the unkind chances of a hard and selfish world. As the ordinary working-class or professional family is never overpaid, it hardly seems possible for them to save too much ; their economic position is so precarious that thrift seems to be entirely a virtue. But keen observers of moral tendencies must have noticed that, concurrently



with the present diffusion of collectivist principles, the virtue of thrift is praised less heartily than it used to be. The civil servant, for example, is not expected to save; we like to see him spend his surplus on education and culture, knowing that he will have official provision for his old age.

From the national point of view saving can easily be overdone. The community needs an ample supply of wealth-producing capital, which in its tangible form appears as railways, factories and such other things as were enumerated in the previous chapter. But it does not need more of these things than can be usefully employed; it is foolish to build railways running into solitudes, or factories to make goods which no one wants.<sup>1</sup> Nor does a nation need unlimited foreign investments; it needs large investments to guard against the danger of national scarcity or misfortune, especially investments in new countries such as our colonies, where there are great openings for capital. But foreign investment, like home investment, can be overdone.

Under a socialist system there would be arrangements for deducting year by year suitable amounts from the national income for home and foreign investment, i.e. for setting up new agencies of production. The investments would be on such a scale as expert advice dictated, and be devoted to such enterprises as financial experts considered to be sound. Both these points are neglected in our present system. Together with a great deal of blind and harmful waste by some persons, there is a great deal of blind and harmful saving by others. The thrift which our forefathers thought to be so

<sup>1</sup> See J. A. Hobson, *Problem of the Unemployed*, chap. v.

entirely excellent leads to the country becoming overstocked with accumulated goods, and so suffering from recurrent periods of industrial stagnation. Moreover, a vast amount of capital is lost by bad finance—squandered on 'wild-cat' schemes, devoured by the swindlers and sharks of commerce, filched away by the cunning manipulations of financiers. From such distresses socialism would deliver us.

§ 4. *Performance of services and production of goods will be done in the socialist state by various agencies; e.g. by the imperial government, by sub-national governments, by local authorities.*

Let us turn from the aims which will be kept in view by the economic organizations of socialism to the systems upon which men will be combined together therein. First we must note that socialist principles do not commit us to any single system, so long as the before-stated aims are attained. It seems probable that services will be performed and goods produced in different ways, and that several systems will be tried, varying according to the work to be done, the local conditions of material and the peculiarities of the population.

The kind of socialistic action which is most conspicuous with us, the undertaking of services by the imperial government, is perhaps the least satisfactory of all; though it is certainly necessary for some services which are required equally over the whole extent of the community, postal services for example. The unsatisfactoriness is due to the vast size of the organization, where the individual feels himself almost lost and the element of human interest is greatly lacking.

In the future some of the services which are now imperial, or national in the wider sense, will probably become sub-national or national in a narrower sense. If for example there comes into being a Scottish Parliament with civil servants subordinate to it, the Scottish authorities will doubtless take over many important services, such as education, transport, land-development, housing, fisheries and drink-regulation. All these, and perhaps some others, are public services which should be regulated by the Scotch in accordance with Scottish ideas and with regard to the special conditions obtaining in Scotland. And in such matters there ought to arise a healthy rivalry between the sub-nations of our United Kingdom; Scotland for example would certainly make special efforts to excel in education.

Under socialism the activity of local authorities, such as town councils, county councils and district councils, will certainly be extended. Even now the services performed by these local bodies are manifold; they deal with sanitation, care of the poor and sick, transport, water-supply, gas-supply and many other things. They have lately begun to take up in earnest the production of houses. In the future probably the whole business of working-class housing will be in public hands; houses which are more elaborate and expensive may be left to private provision. The great change which is likely to take place in the future is that local bodies will not only perform services, but also distribute and manufacture goods. There is no reason, except the opposition of private tradesmen, why town councils should not supply bread, milk, meat, coal and other articles of general use, the handling of which is well

understood. Nor is there any reason why towns which have a reputation for some particular article, as Leicester for hosiery or Northampton for boots, should not produce these articles and send them out stamped with the trade-mark of the town as a guarantee of excellence. And so with agricultural produce; there is no reason why the city of Cork should not export butter, or Aberdeenshire officially supply the south country with its excellent local beef.

§ 5. *By co-operative societies, by philanthropic trusts and by guilds of producers.*

The co-operative movement is not socialist in form, but is truly so in spirit; at least, in those co-operative societies which avoid the snare of high prices and big dividends. Co-operative societies are bodies of consumers, more or less closely attached to a neighbourhood, who share among themselves the profits of the business of distribution, and are restricted in respect of the amount of capital which any single member can hold. Being for the most part composed of working men, they are humane and liberal employers. They seem to have solved the problem how to conduct business successfully by methods which elevate morally, rather than depress, those who participate in it. Acting through the Co-operative Wholesale Societies of England and Scotland, they are also manufacturers upon a large scale. Their operations increase year by year and seem to be capable of indefinite expansion.

Another kind of economic organization which is collectivist in its tendency is that of societies or trusts which pay only a limited dividend and pursue

their operations from some ulterior motive of philanthropy or public benefit. There are for example various bodies which are interested in education, such as the Girls' Public Day School Trust ; there are also Public House Trusts, which aim at providing good popular houses of refreshment without the unpleasant features of the ordinary public-houses.

A very important recent development is that of guilds of producers, such as guilds of builders to construct the houses which were needed so acutely in England after the termination of the war. They may be either national in their extent, as is advocated by Mr. Douglas Cole ; or may be local, e.g. the building workers of Oxford may form a guild which will do any work of the kind that is needed in the town.

Societies of producers have not been very successful in the past, for reasons which are well-known to those who have studied the history of co-operative production. The main reason perhaps is that the management of a big business needs far more commercial ability than even a highly intelligent workman can command. A man who has been brought up to hand-work thinks about hand-work, and is not at home with problems of management ; management, like other complicated affairs, can be done only by those who have thought about it for many years. Another reason for the past failure of co-operative production is that the direction of the enterprise falls naturally into the hands of the senior workmen, who are not very ready to adopt new processes. The methods of the society soon become antiquated, and it is outclassed by more progressive producers. It is not impossible however that these



and other difficulties in the way of co-operative production may be overcome; if so, there is no reason why productive co-operation should not take an important place among the future organizations of industry.

The worst enemy of all collectivist effort and production is public apathy, and this is due to public ignorance. The guild system is still so recent that no one can judge confidently of its value; but co-operative distribution is undoubtedly one of the most powerful influences for good in our industrial system; and yet we hear very little about it. This is because co-operation is ignored by the newspapers, which are the most powerful agents in the country for spreading information. Newspapers of course live upon their advertisements; and these are inserted mainly by private traders, certainly not by co-operative societies. In fact, collectivism altogether, whether as co-operation or guild production or in any other form, is contrary to the newspaper interest. Newspapers altogether are fatally implicated with capitalism and individualism; as Mr. Wells says somewhere, the news we read every morning is printed on the back of puff-advertisements of patent pills and sales of drapery. Every advance of collectivist agency narrows the field from which the dividends of newspaper proprietors are drawn. Hence the bitter and unscrupulous attacks of journalists upon socialist men and measures; hence the need of a vigorous counter-propaganda in the interests of truth and social reform.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The establishment of the *New Statesman* has done great service in spreading socialist ideas, especially among the younger generation.

§ 6. *The socialist state will always have some private industry. It will gain by its variety of economic organization.*

I think that a judicious advocate of socialism will recognize that the private adventurer is not likely to be superseded entirely. Many articles which we require—clothes to some extent, ornaments and literature—are satisfactory only when they are exactly suited to the user's taste, and therefore should be produced by those who can give the closest personal attention to the making. And the same is true of persons who render services, such as dentists and to some extent physicians. So there will always be little shops where clever workmen make boots to suit oddly shaped feet, and jewellers and goldsmiths, and studios where pictures are painted; and there will be periodicals, no doubt, and authors and publishers with nothing socialistic about them.

Nor is socialist management well adapted to new and hazardous enterprises where fresh sources of wealth have to be exploited with no assurance of safe returns. Public authorities are not well suited for discovering and working gold-mines in Brazil or for developing commercial aviation. What they ought to undertake is work the methods of which are well-understood, and where a good market is assured so long as the articles produced are of standard quality. There can be no objection to entrusting socialist bodies with the manufacture of bread and cheese, or with the production of coal, or with transport by road, rail or canal. And yet even there we should always allow for the possibility that improvements may be discovered, and should



therefore tolerate some private adventurers who may introduce novelties at their own risk.

Even in those departments of industry which are best understood there will probably still be some opening for managers or entrepreneurs of quite exceptional skill, who are not contented with the slow and sure advancement which the public service affords. There must always be a considerable amount of private capital in the country; and this can be used to finance private ventures, which will have to justify themselves by exceptional efficiency. If this is so, there will still be inequality in salaries or profits and some accumulation of wealth. And then there will be need for constant measures to ensure that this wealth is distributed again and not piled up into hereditary fortunes. In taking such measures the statesmen of the future will have to consider what course offers the least disadvantage. It will be desirable that the community should have the services of those specially talented men; but perhaps they will not exercise their talents unless they are allowed to accumulate and bequeath their wealth. Then the statesmen will have to decide how much accumulation and inheritance can be tolerated without paying too dearly for the special talents.

It is one of the scares—a vain scare—of the enemies of socialism that it will involve a dead uniformity which will impoverish character and depress all enthusiasm. In regard to industry, at least, this should not be true. The industrial organization of the future will always be diversified by some admixture of individualism; and even definitely collectivist systems will show great variety of character. The

aims of socialism can be secured in various ways, and there will probably be many theorists and many warm advocates of the various systems. In these matters it is most desirable that experiment should have a free hand, so that men may learn what system works best. Probably there will be good points in every system and none will be perfect; probably one worker will be better suited by one system and another by another. Perhaps the various systems will be advocated by preachers and writers no less fervid than those who contend for articles of faith; and there will be fanatics and missionaries of guilds and of co-operation and of semi-philanthropic trusts and of municipal agency. The multiplicity of systems will doubtless lead to some overlapping and waste of effort. But it will produce a healthy rivalry and competition: not the cut-throat competition which makes men malignant and deceitful; but the competition of gentlemen who have public spirit and are working in a public service, and feel a proper respect for the opponents against whom they are contending.

## CHAPTER V

### GOVERNMENT

§ 1. *We shall always need government, and more than ever under socialism.*

THE anarchists or nihilists who denounce all government as superfluous and mischievous seem to be wrong in their political philosophy. With the advance of society we do not need less government, but more; as our system grows more complex, men need more and more to be directed and trained for their work. Anarchists assume, I suppose, that men will improve so much in intellect and morals that each will understand for himself perfectly the system in which he is working, and will do with perfect fidelity the work which falls to him. But this is visionary; certainly it will not come to pass at any period which we can look forward to and make provision for.

Even if the vision does eventually come true, men will need a long preliminary period of training. Now this is mainly done by government. Government is, or should be, a system in which the best intellects devote themselves to laying down the methods upon which men must work in relation to the widest interests of the community. Government at present is the most powerful organized agency for good in our society; even if we are to

have less of it in the future, we must have more of it now.

But more probably the dream of the anarchist is impossible for ever. Government rests upon a solid basis of primitive human instincts. All gregarious animals need leaders; men most of all, because their work is so intricate. And we have instincts correspondent to our need. We have an instinctive love of leadership—those of us who are qualified to lead; and, on the other hand, we like to be led—at least, by those who are competent to lead us. Socialism will not abolish those instincts, but rather provide increasingly for their legitimate satisfaction. Nothing in the history of politics is plainer than the extension of public control which has come about in the course of our movement from the oligarchy and individualism of the eighteenth century towards the democracy and collectivism of the twentieth. This has consisted not merely in the passing of laws which enjoin or forbid, but in the construction of a system of institutions that need continual improvement and extension. The individualist, on the contrary, wants as little government as possible; his ideal would be a government which merely 'kept the ring' for the combatants who fight for wealth, or merely stood on guard over property, like the policeman who watches the Gold Cup which the horses race for at Ascot. That was what the eighteenth century was like, all property and no government.

We have much government now and may expect in the not-distant future to have much more. There will be a great growth in the elected political bodies and a great increase in the number of persons who

are employed in the public services ; the power which they exercise will be much greater than the power of existing governments, and the system which they administer will be much more elaborate. I wish now to consider what changes in our political system all this will imply.

§ 2. *The government of the socialist state will continue to be democratic.*

One thing at least will continue unchanged, our democratic principle. We need not consider the various reasons for this ; it is enough to put forward that which is most relevant to the present issue. An elaborate system of government cannot be wholesome and effective unless there is a strong political interest diffused through all classes of the population. Government should be subjected to a constant and intelligent criticism on the part of those for whose sake it exists, i.e. the governed ; and it can be effective only if the governed co-operate heartily in carrying out the directions of the governors. Unless the people are interested in the government under which they live, they can neither criticize nor co-operate. Democracy is, among other things, a device for stimulating political interest and for giving to the governed the power to make their views respected by the governors.

The main condition of democratic government, a good measure of wealth and of education, exists in England already, and is likely to be strengthened in the future. Unless the people are well educated they cannot criticize ; and unless they have wealth they have no time for education or for anything else

but a struggle to keep alive. These considerations limit the introduction of democratic institutions into foreign countries. We must always ask, when such an introduction is proposed, whether the people are wealthy enough and intelligent enough to criticize effectively and to co-operate.

In a country which is poor and ignorant, men have a choice of two evils: either to have little government; or to have a government which is elaborate but, in default of criticism and control, corrupt and tyrannous. England in the eighteenth century suffered from the former; Russia during the past *régime* from the latter. I do not know which of the two evils is the worse; but a country which is wealthy and intelligent ought to be exempt from both. As our nation grows in political ability we shall have more and more government, and at the same time more and more control over government. When a policy of *laissez-faire* is adopted, it will be upon a deliberate calculation of good and evil, not, as now, because men are too lazy or stupid or corrupt to interfere.

### § 3. *With an improved civil service.*

Under every form of constitution the main work of governing is done by the permanent officials. As there will be so much more government under socialism, there will have to be a great extension of the public services and an enhancement of their quality. In England the civil service, perhaps from the fact that it was so long recruited from the poor relations and hangers-on of the aristocratic class, is still regarded in some quarters as a sort of half-



time and half-amateur affair. Recently, at any rate, it was not thought incompatible with efficiency that a highly placed civil servant should double his income by literature or journalism. In some public offices there is an easygoing style of work which would never be tolerated in private employment or in the semi-private employment of higher education.

The education of our civil servants is not such as to fit them for the work, nor are there prescribed courses of study for young members of the service which would increase their efficiency. Some of this is due to want of co-ordination between our educational institutions and our government; the high schools and universities are out of touch with the needs of the state, and the state has no means of determining the policy of the schools and universities. Some of it is due to the indifference of the chiefs of our civil service. The army has made provision for the further education of officers who wish to be specially efficient theoretically; but there is nothing of the kind for the civil service.

And there is another point in which the civil service might learn from the army. Military men are not allowed to be merely theoretical: a staff-officer does not put in all his time upon the staff; he has to learn by practical experience how those men live who do the spade-work of regimental duty. Without some spade-work men lose the sense of reality; they give orders from their desks without fully realizing what the execution of them will imply. In some armies there are arrangements by which staff-officers are sent away periodically for spells of regimental duty, so that the brains of the service



do not become doctrinaire. But there is nothing like this in the British civil service. For example, the cultured gentlemen who direct the postal service from their offices in London have never collected or delivered letters, nor managed a local post-office. It may seem revolting to our traditions of gentility that they should ever be called on to do so ; possibly the whole proposal may seem a waste of superior abilities upon menial duties. But the question is whether a spell of menial duty would not make them more efficient as directors. If that is so, arrangements should be made to bring them into contact with every grade of post-office work.

The great flaw in our public services, both civil and combatant, is the want of arrangements for eliminating what are vulgarly called 'duds,' i.e. ineffective members. An entrance examination ensures for a great part of the civil service that recruits should have a reasonable standard of industry ; but there is no system for maintaining a high level of efficiency during the period of employment. We still keep up the tradition that an official's office is a semi-freehold, from which he cannot be extruded except for grave delinquency. He holds it *ad vitam aut culpam*, and inefficiency is not reckoned as a *culpa*. The chiefs of the service shrink from strengthening the hands of authority, perhaps from mere apathy, perhaps from fear of undue political influence, perhaps from fear of entrusting heads of departments with power which may be used tyrannically. Various remedies might be suggested for this ; what is certain is that we can never have an efficient public service, and therefore no socialist commonwealth, till we have found a way to deal

with duds faithfully. I would suggest that matters of discipline and promotion should be in the hands of committees rather than in those of single heads of departments, who are fully proved to be ineffective so far as discipline is concerned. On these committees various interests might be represented, such as the superior officials, the inferior officials, and that portion of the public which is specially served by the department in question. It is difficult to see what temptation such a committee would have to be over-lenient or over-severe in discipline.

The whole organization of our civil service has grown up anyhow, without any comprehensive design ; it is still in large measure dominated by the traditions of private employment, though the two kinds of service are quite different. The private employer appoints by favour ; he gives his vacancies to his sons or the sons of his friends. Patronage is only an application of private-employment methods to public institutions ; and though this corrupt and inefficient method of recruiting has been largely superseded by competitive entrance, there is still too much patronage in the public service. The private employer makes no effort to educate his staff, either by theoretical instruction or by deliberately changing their work. He means to keep all the well-paid posts in the hands of his family ;<sup>1</sup> for the rest, he wishes that a man should stay where he is put and that a cashier or salesman should not

<sup>1</sup> A friend of mine, an engineer formerly employed by an Indian railway company, was warned by the managing director not to expect high promotion. The director had, he said, relatives enough to fill all the well-paid posts under the company.

look outside the narrow sphere in which it is his destiny to remain. Nor does the private employer need contrivances to keep his staff efficient: if he thinks an employee inefficient or dislikes him for any cause, he just dismisses him; an unpleasant business, but necessary for self-preservation. For the head of a public department the business is just as unpleasant, and there is no sufficient motive of self-interest to make him undertake it.

§ 4. *And an improved parliament.*

In respect of government, what publicly elected bodies do is to watch and control the work of permanent officials in the interests of the governed. Parliament has the highest position in this respect; below it, with a narrower range of duties, there stand various locally elected bodies. Under socialism all these bodies will differ not a little from those which we have now. Our present parliament is mainly composed of the rich; of those who have inherited money, or those who have made it. This is inevitable in an individualist society. We are all scrambling to be rich—to climb on to the shoulders of our neighbours, as Maine said; and he who climbs highest is respected and regarded as a leader, and therefore fit to be a public representative. When this sort of climbing has ceased, electors will look out for qualifications of a different kind.

I think that the parliaments of the future will be abler than they are now; they will contain more men who are specially interested in problems of government and have had special training in political theory. The English universities of the future will

do what they fail to do now, provide courses of study which prepare men expressly for political life. Men who look forward to such a career will take these courses, and their academic records will be scrutinized when they offer themselves for election, as they are now when they are candidates for the more intellectual branches of the civil service. At present, systematic thinking on politics is rather discouraged in public men; but perhaps that is just as well in a state of society whose basis will not bear critical examination.

We have already begun to put the work of our parliament upon a satisfactory footing by paying salaries to the members. At present the payment looks somewhat absurd in most cases, a trifling pittance to men who can very well do without it. But it has enabled some poorer men to come into parliament; and, as time goes on, they will come in more freely. The present figure of course will have to be revised; it should stand at the amount which an ordinary professional man can expect to earn. In the future most of the best intellects of the country will be in the public service in one way or another. On entering parliament they would be 'seconded' in their former duties, to use a military term; they would receive as M.P.'s a salary not less than they had in the public service. At the termination of their work in parliament they would resume their old positions.

§ 5. *The principle of giving salaries to elected representatives will be extended to local elective bodies.*

In local government the great reform which is needed is to extend the principle of payment to local

representative bodies. At present no one can take service on these bodies who is not a moneyed person, and therefore the interests of the hand-working classes are not properly represented. In the towns the councillors and aldermen are mostly tradesmen; in particular, builders, who have an obvious interest in seeking for election: in the country districts they are country gentlemen or large farmers—not a very enlightened or progressive class. Under these conditions the country may think itself lucky if any progress whatever is made in matters of local government.

The tradition of non-payment for such duties comes down to us from the time when local governing bodies were corrupt and obstructive rings which offered substantial spoils to those who could contrive to get into them. Gratuitous service is well enough so long as the duties are not serious, and so long as it makes no serious difference to the welfare of a district whether they are performed well or ill. When local government is the arduous and scientific business which it will become in the future, everyone will recognize that those who watch and control it should be paid for their work; just as much, say, as the directors of a co-operative society. And at the same time arrangements will be made to ensure that the public gets regular and efficient service for its money. Payment of local governing bodies should be introduced as soon as possible; the same good results may be expected from it as have attended the payment of members of parliament. Working men will be enabled to take part in local government, and the work of socializing our commonwealth will be greatly accelerated.



§ 6. *When our constitution reaches equilibrium the party system will be obsolete.*

The whole constitution of representative bodies will be greatly modified, I think, by changes which will take place in regard to political parties. Our political system being in a state of transition from an individualist plutocracy to a socialist democracy, we have two political parties with widely divergent principles; one wishing to go forward on that path, the other to hold back. A gradual rate of progress is maintained by the crude expedient of turning the progressives out of office from time to time and giving a spell of power to the reactionaries. But when the socialist state is established, the two-party system will be obsolete; minor difficulties and questions of detail must always arise, but we shall have reached a general agreement upon main principles. In Switzerland things already approach the position of equilibrium; ministers remain in office for many years, watched and checked, but not superseded. And so I think it will be under socialism. This implies that politics will be less of a sport, and we shall have a less 'sporting' type of politician. The typical politician will be a clever professional man, a physician or teacher or industrial manager, who has a taste for public life and gets himself elected to a parliamentary seat. If he is lucky and shows special ability, he will get office and probably remain there indefinitely. If office does not come to him, he would naturally after a few years go back to his profession. We shall not see, as we see now, parliament as a sort of rival amusement to horse-racing or speculating on the stock exchange—a

game for the rich and a spectacle for the people ; no more raging-and-tearing propaganda, rant and tub-thumping, party manœuvres, victories and defeats. But then perhaps, in a more civilized community, such appeals to elementary passion will no longer be popular.

§ 7. *Government will be stronger than now, though less pompous.*

We may look forward therefore to a kind of government which is abler and more public-spirited than the present one, and more fully in harmony with the wishes of the community ; and we may be sure that it will be much stronger. Government then will order things and forbid things which no government at present can venture on, though men may admit that they are desirable. The fault of all despotisms and oligarchies is that they are weak ; or, perhaps we may say, weak for good, though powerful for evil. They presuppose poor qualities in the population ; it is only ignorant and servile folk that will endure to be governed in this way. Not much can be done with such people ; because they do not understand the regulations that are made for their good, nor are they willing to co-operate in carrying them out. Every people has the governors that it deserves ; with inferior subjects the governing class will itself be short-sighted, slack, inefficient, and probably also corrupt and brutal. What can any despot do, except do harm ? He can only act through his subordinates. And where is he to find among his stock of governing men subordinates of honesty, intelligence and public spirit to carry out



his good intentions? And, even if he did find them, his demoralized and brutalized subjects would not understand him; they would still seethe with discontent and continually suspect him. The usual reward of the benevolent despot is assassination, as happened to Alexander II of Russia:

What the despot and the oligarch lack in power they try to make up for in pomp. But there will not be much pomp in the state of the future; a few spectacles, perhaps, to amuse the less intelligent citizens and the children. Plainly dressed and unassuming men, living in simple houses and sprung from unpretentious families, will wield great and unquestioned authority. On the termination of their periods of office they will be thanked and moderately rewarded. When their public life is over they will subside quietly into the mass of professional citizens, as do to-day the presidents of the French Republic and of the United States.

## CHAPTER VI

### CHILDREN

§ I. *Individualism has a dysgenic influence: the upper classes are sterilized, the hand-workers suffer hardship in rearing families; the poorest stocks multiply recklessly.*

ALL our aspirations, all our schemes and efforts for the improvement of our country must be in vain, unless we can ensure that a good supply of young life will come on continually to take the places of the elders as they pass away. Of all men's private interests, children are the worthiest and the most absorbing; and the renewal of population should be the very earnest concern of the commonwealth. Riches, about which men wrangle and fight so fiercely, are empty and unreal compared with the interest of children.

In most ways individualism has a dysgenic influence and militates against a proper renewal of the population. This is to be expected from a condition of private war; the spirit of war and the spirit of the family are sharply opposed. In the overpowering excitement of conflict the claims of the little ones are unheeded, and struggling men trample upon them.

Among the highest classes of our population there is a lamentable sterility. Having by competitive

arts attained a secure financial position, the English upper middle-class family is obsessed by the fear that it may lose it. At the same time, these people do not like the idea of going on with business-life; the struggle is so hard and ugly that they are glad to get out of it. The children of a successful business man tend towards the professions, such as the army and the church—careers of gentility, but far from lucrative. Then begins the process of sterilization. To avoid the monstrously heavy expenses of education and to transmit his property undiminished to the next generation, the professional man takes the precaution of limiting his family; he rarely goes beyond three children, and often stops at one. Hence the cultured classes are continually dying out. Individualism exercises a negatively selective or exterminating influence upon the intellectual and refined elements of the community.

In every station of life the man who sets about rearing a family incurs pecuniary risk and disadvantage. We do it in response to an overmastering instinct; but, as business men, we are fools for doing it. No professional man is paid any the better because he has a family to keep. But his difficulties are trifling compared with those of the classes below. The ordinary town workman is not paid at a rate which would enable him to rear comfortably even a moderate-sized family. He does well enough as a single man, but when he is married and his children are still young, the household suffers hardship in respect of elementary necessities—food, clothes and house-room. The hardship injures the children in health, growth and general welfare. The best and most intelligent working people, who

are determined to escape these sufferings, take the same precautionary measure as the professional man. They produce one or two children, and so, in a generation or two, extinguish their race.

Upon the lowest classes of the community economic pressure has a very different effect; it stimulates them somehow to reckless propagation. How this is to be explained psychologically is uncertain. Probably the explanation is quite simple—mere passion; when people have nothing else to think about, their minds are full of sex. But sometimes I think that what influences the lowest poor is a kind of conceit or egoism, an immense confidence in the excellence of their stock, a feeling that the world can never have too many of that kind. This race-confidence is quite natural to man; it is valuable in bearing up a father in the arduous task of rearing a family. In the professional classes it is overborne by economic anxiety; among thoughtless people it operates without restriction. But, whatever the motive may be, there is no doubt about the outcome. Society is always dying at the top and being recruited from below; and those who furnish most recruits are the poorest of the citizens—poorest in physique, intelligence and culture. No other cause perhaps has had so great an influence in retarding the progress of man.

§ 2. *Socialism will remedy these evils by relieving the professional class of economic anxiety. It will give maintenance-allowances for children, while checking large families.*

Socialism will certainly seek a remedy for these evils. It will relieve the professional man of his

nightmare of economic anxiety ; it will assure him a living wage with pension, and provide for his family in case of premature death. It will afford facilities for educating his children in their own station. In Scotland higher education is cheap ; in England it is monstrously dear. But there is no good reason why, when elementary education is free, upper-class education should be purchasable only at a great price. The professional and directing classes are no less necessary to the community than the hand-working class, and public provision should be made for educating them.

In every class that is useful to the community there should be public allowances for children. This follows logically when once the principle is established that a worker should be paid from the standpoint of the community, not from the standpoint of the private employer. A professional man does so much work for the community, say as a physician, and should be paid accordingly ; as a father of children he does so much more, and should be paid more. And so also with the hand-workers. It is most unjust to the individual and most injurious to the community that a man should suffer because he undertakes the duty of parentage.

Concurrent with these measures of encouragement there must be measures of repression ; it would not be safe to remove the present checks on population without establishing others. If children are to be maintained and educated at the public charge, the better stocks will relax some of their prudence and cease to dwindle. As for the poorer stocks, is there not a danger, when the spectre of starvation is banished, that they will burst into a frenzy of propaga-

tion, so that we shall have our country swarming with cheap life, like some parts of India and China ?

I think that in all classes there should be discouragement of very large families. The task of rearing children is so exacting that parents can do it well only when their families are moderate in size, not more than five children, or six at the most. In the case of many large families one finds that the father is thoroughly selfish and inconsiderate and his wife a poor exhausted drudge, worn out physically and morally by immoderate child-bearing. Under these conditions the children are 'dragged up,' under-educated and coarsened by the hardships of their scrambling home. At present there are wealthy parents who bring up very large families passably well with the aid of servants. In the future there will not be so many servants ; parents will have to work personally for their children.

We may not like restrictions upon the family, but they will be necessary to preserve the concord of society. Even now, many of the cases which are met in ordinary Charity Organization Society practice fill one with indignation—a father out of work for three months (and therefore probably a poor workman), an invalid eldest daughter, four young children under ten years of age, and another expected shortly. What is to be done with people like this, with no more foresight or conscience than rabbits ? At present it does not seem necessary that such cases should be dealt with legally, because we think that most parents are restrained by the thought of the sufferings of the children. But if all children, wanted or unwanted, are to live in comfort, there will certainly be public indignation against improvident breeding.



If the evil is not checked, it will be fatal to the common goodwill which is the foundation of socialism.

Under socialism the needs of the community in respect of population will be watched and calculated, like other things. In every country there is an optimum density of population: in new countries, South Africa for example, each family would be better off if there were more people in the country; the old lands of Europe are mostly overpopulated, so that a reduction of population would increase their prosperity. It will be the business of English statisticians to say what number of children are wanted year by year in England to renew the population in each class of workers, so as to secure the greatest prosperity for the nation. If their requirements can be satisfied without public action, well and good. But, if overpopulation threatens us, I do not think that socialists will shrink through delicacy from regulating families, any more than they will shrink from legislation to stamp out venereal disease.

§ 3. *It will issue licences to marry and will inspect families.*

Some subsidiary ordinances will be needed for which public opinion even now is almost ripe. There must be a system of licences to marry. We cannot get children of good quality unless they are bred from good parentage, i.e. parents of suitable age, neither too young nor too old, without transmissible defect and of good physique. Some of these qualifications may not be easy to ascertain in the present state of our scientific knowledge; but most of them



are plain enough. There are some marriages which anyone can see are undesirable—marriages of lads under twenty and of girls under eighteen; of old men over sixty; of persons badly infected with tubercle or syphilis; of persons markedly deficient in intelligence or moral qualities. These evil unions are legal now, and have no small influence in debasing the community.

There will have to be inspection of families; if allowances are assigned for the maintenance of children, there must be assurance that the money is properly spent. This of course is done now where pauper children are 'boarded out' with foster-parents; but in ordinary families there is no check upon parents, save in gross cases of cruelty and neglect. In the lower quarters of our large cities a high percentage of the children attending the elementary schools are in a condition which is officially described as 'poor,' i.e. ill-nourished, dirty and with ragged clothing. At present nothing is done about them, because the rearing of children is legally a purely private affair. When it is recognized as being of public concern, administrative steps must be taken in respect of all children who are not up to a good standard of physical condition.

§ 4. *The regulation of population will be done by women.*

And now to speak of the agency by which all this regulation is to be accomplished. It certainly cannot be done by men. They are quite incompetent to deal with the very intimate and delicate questions which the work will involve. Men are unfit to deal

with most of the problems of sexual morality. As Mr. H. G. Wells says somewhere in his worldly-wise way, we men are such humbugs ourselves that we cannot be trusted in this sort of thing; most decent men in fact would avail themselves of any pretext to get excused. The proper persons to act are women. This must be evident too, if we consider that in all matters of reproduction, whether our aim is to stimulate or restrain, attention must be fixed mainly upon the female. There is not much to be done with the men, except to deprive them of opportunity; but much may be done with women in the way of training and exhortation. And women themselves alone are fit to do this. In the commonwealth of the future, if a wife is so weak, or so incontinent, or so overpowered by maternal instinct that she cannot be content with five children, the women who will form part of the governing class will find some means of dealing with her. And they will know how to deal also with the 'unmarried mother,' upon whom at present so much sympathy is expended. Men could do nothing in such cases; they would be melted by the tears of the poor little unmarried mother, and grin covertly at the incontinence of the very fertile wife. Women alone have the knowledge which cannot be imposed upon, and the justice which is the truest mercy.

This is one of the reasons why a socialist commonwealth must have women who are well-educated and full of self-respect and dignity; they will have to perform most important functions in framing ordinances to regulate population and in seeing that the ordinances are obeyed. Even now, when all the education and training of women is far below the

proper level, there are many who are competent to perform these high functions, as anyone may see by attending committee-meetings of the Charity Organization Society. My own experience of these committees is that the ladies, who do most of the business, are very sensible and just; though their justice is not excessively tempered with mercy. Compared with them the men-members have mostly the air of weak sentimentalists.

§ 5. *Socialist regulation will improve the family.*

The main resistance to these proposals will come from the individualists who profess to make a stand for the inviolate sanctity of family life. Now, I should be the last person to deny that there is something very sacred about the family; it is perhaps the best of all human institutions, and, so far from being superseded, I think it will be more firmly established than ever under a socialist system. What socialists want is, not to abolish the family, but to improve it. The claim of individualists to be the champions of family life I regard as an impudent imposture; if there were any truth in it, we should not see so many wretched children in our cities, where the stress of competition is felt most severely. Family life is happy and enjoyable only when there is food enough, and house-room enough for comfort. In England thousands of families live without any privacy or decent convenience in a single room; under these conditions children can be nothing but a sore burden. Even in average working-class homes the mother suffers no little hardship; and therefore many working wives take all sorts of

measures, legal and illegal, to avoid bearing children.<sup>1</sup> Individualism is the greatest enemy of the family. The slow depopulation of France, which is so terrible to French patriots, seems to be due to severity of industrial competition. France is very largely a land of only children. The regulations of socialism will have the effect of improving the family and of admitting a larger number of persons to enjoy family life.

However excellent an institution the family in general may be, it may, like other institutions, be badly managed in particular cases. The paternal relation is very sacred, and no one would interfere with it so long as paternal duties are duly performed ; but there are many things which a father must not do to his children, and many things which he is bound to do for them. In case of certain grave delinquencies, the law ordains that the relationship may be invaded by public authority, or may even be broken up altogether. But no one wants to touch the family, unless there is delinquency which is injurious to the community. And one of the delinquencies of the future will be the production of an excessive number of children.

Although in the future there will be a greater number of restrictions than now in respect of the family, there will probably be no increase in the number of legal prosecutions. In such matters public opinion has great power. When once these regulations are generally approved, and under a democratic government they can become lawful in

<sup>1</sup> It has been reckoned that in Germany there is one "künstliche Fehlgeburt" to every four normal births. See Mückermann, *Um das Leben der Ungeborenen*.

no other way, the community will abide by them loyally. At the same time there are certain to be not a few gross and atavistic persons who will transgress, and have to be coerced; otherwise their evil practice will corrupt and embitter the community.

§ 6. *There are naturally some anti-social influences in family life which need to be checked by public authority.*

Without the family a highly civilized society is impossible; and yet there are some strong anti-social influences in it. They appear very plainly under a system of individualism. Each family is to its members a little island of affection in a hard, indifferent world; we find in it a warmth which we can get nowhere else. But this does not make us considerate towards other men's families, or do much to temper the severity of economic competition. Every householder has to stand at the door of his house defending it against the rivals who would break up his family life. In times of stress there is always an outburst of family selfishness: in war men begin to hoard gold; in a blockade each housewife attempts to lay in large private stocks of food—conduct which would bring the state to ruin if not sharply checked. In ordinary life the commonest form which this spirit takes is the accumulation of wealth to 'provide for' the children; the economic struggle is so cruel that parents wish to amass a fund which will lift their children out of it. At present this is an inevitable outcome of parental affection; but it makes the equitable distribution of wealth impossible.

Under any circumstances of society there must be something exclusive about the family. A family is not satisfactory to its members unless it can shut out strangers or admit them only at definite times and under circumstances of some formality. A home into which strangers can walk freely is not a home at all. Usually too a family has some degree of separate pride, and believes in the excellence of its breed and of its peculiar ways. In good forms this appears as anxiety to uphold the family honour ; in bad forms as family snobbishness.

The population proposals which I have just been advocating would not injure the family in its legitimate property, its privacy or its pride. I have touched upon these matters only to show that the family, though very good, is not wholly good. It is not so sacred that we should shrink from eugenical regulations, if they are demanded by the highest interests of the community.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE STATUS OF WOMEN

§ I. *In order that socialism may be workable, women must be put on an equality with men.*

THE conclusion of the last chapter was that socialism cannot be worked as a practical system without the whole-hearted co-operation of women. If we take steps to ensure the equitable distribution of wealth, we are led on to the regulation of the family and of population generally; and the main agents in this work must be women. Such important and responsible functions cannot be performed by women so long as there is any subjection or inferiority in their status. They must be raised to an equality with men, not only politically, but also in respect of their economic position.

This is the immediately practical and special reason for raising the status of women; there is another of a more general kind, which may seem to be more remote but is really even more important. Socialism is impossible unless there is diffused throughout society a high standard of virtue; it will need all kinds of virtue, but more especially those which we see in persons who are both sympathetic and self-controlled. The citizens of a socialist state must have charity, humanity, continence, temperance and general moderation of character; without

these qualities it would be impossible to work so elaborate and delicate a system. Now these are the virtues which belong specially to women. They are wanting in societies where women's influence is weak, and prevalent in societies where women are strong. And, therefore, women must have much influence in the socialist community; in fact, all the influence that they can legitimately claim.

This means that the domination of man over women must cease. In respect of politics it has ceased, or nearly ceased, among us. It is time that it ceased in social and economic matters also, so that women may have full citizenship and stand in respect of all public rights on a footing of perfect equality with men. Using the convenient terminology of Lester Ward, we may call the traditional system 'androcracy,' in which man is dominant and woman subservient; the proper system is a dyarchy, in which the two sexes have co-ordinate power.

§ 2. *The domination of men over women was necessary in early society, but is necessary no longer.*

Androcracy is a curious fact in human society; it is not like anything which is to be seen among animals. Many species of the higher animals, such as lions and others, have definite mates, and the male resents fiercely the intrusion of a rival; but there is never the same sort of control and possession that man claims over woman. But we find this condition among men throughout; even in the most

primitive human marriage the control of the male spouse must have been much greater than among animals, because human jealousy is much more continuous and watchful.

Jealousy is the foundation of marital domination, but control became stricter when men began to acquire property. The husband claimed the exclusive services of his wife in order to watch over his property, and finally came to treat her as an item of property. With the possession of property, moreover, there grows up a pride of social position ; and then, when rules of inheritance have been established, a pride of race. The house-father becomes anxious to protect the purity of his stock, and therefore tightens his control over his womankind.

At present there is a strong and well justified reaction against masculine domination ; but we shall not understand the causes and cure of it till we recognize that it was a great step forward in human progress. We cannot have civilization without good family life ; and this demands a habit of reserve and self-restraint which savage women do not possess. The jealous domination exercised over women by men has bridged the interval which separates the stage of primitive licence from the stage at which women are able to exercise reserve from a perception of its intrinsic fitness.

The views which a man holds about the emancipation of women must depend upon whether he judges that they are now able to observe the rules which are necessary for the welfare of the family. If he doubts their ability, he will insist on the continual need of the chaperone. He will also be unwilling that women should have much control of property ; for

property means power, and those who have power and do not know how to use it become licentious. But if we are convinced that Englishwomen are well able to exercise the necessary reserve, then there is no justification for maintaining a tight control over their actions. Women should be regarded as fully responsible beings, able to judge for themselves, and fit to be trusted with that part of the welfare of the community which rests in their hands. As a consequence they should have their fair share in the property of the community; for without property they lack the power which a full citizen ought to possess.

§ 3. *The chief means of giving equality to women is to pay them for their services as wives and mothers.*

In order to make an end of masculine domination, it is not enough to give women political equality; that is mainly an instrument for obtaining economic justice. Nor is it enough to give 'equal pay for equal work'; for example, to pay clerk's wages to a clerkess. What women do outside the home is relatively inconsiderable; they are useful chiefly as wives, mothers and housekeepers. Economic justice to women means payment for those distinctive services, and till they receive it their status in the community cannot be satisfactory.

There can be no question as to the value of feminine services, especially those which are rendered as wives and mothers. Not merely are they essential to the material upkeep of our society; they are, as one might easily prove, necessary to all the cul-

ture and spiritual civilization which we enjoy. But yet these services are not remunerated by wages. Consider the position of an artisan family, say a carpenter and his wife. The man does certain services to the community and is paid wages. The woman also does services, but receives no wages; in the eye of the law her services are rendered solely to the husband, who remunerates her as he thinks proper; the share of wages which he hands over to her is fixed by his arbitrary will.

As a matter of abstract justice this seems to me intolerable. And yet it is easy to see how it has arisen. According to primitive ancestral custom the wife was very much in the position of a chattel; she was practically purchased by the husband from her father, as is still done among South African negroes. A native husband considers, very reasonably, that he has a right to the services of his wife, because he has paid a price for her. There is no more question of paying wages to her than of paying wages to a slave.

We no longer buy our wives, but we still consider that we are entitled to have their services free of charge. Many women feel this to be unjust, but can get no remedy because their services are not transferable; we pay only for those services which can be taken from us. Hence the anomaly that a man pays much for the services of a domestic who is only moderately useful to him, but nothing for those of a wife who is invaluable. When a bachelor marries his housekeeper he obtains more service, but ceases to pay for it.

The best part of the work which women do is concerned with reproduction; it is inestimably

valuable, and, to be done well, requires high qualities of intellect and character. It is work which should be encouraged and rewarded ; but all this economic injustice discourages it. The injustice is greatest to women who have independent earning power. A well-educated and trained unmarried woman may be sure of getting a good income in ordinary industry ; but when she marries she finds herself reduced from independence to total dependence, with all its restrictions and humiliations. Among the moneyed class a woman may secure her position by means of 'settlements' ; but not among the classes who live on salaries or wages. The wife of the hand-worker is also in a hard case, if she only realized it. When she is young and unmarried, her services are in good demand and adequately paid ; when she marries, she enters a sphere of work where there is no systematic provision for her. Her husband gets no higher wages than he had when he was single, and is expected to keep his new family somehow out of his superfluous pocket-money. Except among the highest class of workmen the working man's wife on marriage enters upon a life where she will suffer hardship, insufficient food, clothing and house-room, and have in addition the misery of seeing these evils fall upon her children.

The inadequate recognition of reproductive services would have been remedied ere now, if our governors had not been accustomed to look at everything from the standpoint of the private employer. The individualist system does not encourage the employer to think of his workpeople as human beings ; he has climbed on to their shoulders as men climb on to beasts of burden. Some employers really care for their



workpeople, and some few more pretend to do so. But most of them neither care nor pretend to care, as anyone may see by studying the life of an industrial town. To the average employer the fact that his 'hands' have reproductive tendencies is a tiresome and unnecessary twist, which unfortunately cannot be eliminated, as we eliminate it from our domestic cats and horses. It would be more profitable for him if the workers were sexless beings whose industry is never troubled by passion, like the working-bees in a beehive.

Payment for wifhood and motherhood may have a sound of novelty, but the main principle of it has already been recognized. Under the term of 'allowances' it is practically in operation in the army, and it was carried out with elaborateness and some liberality during the Great War. A point which is not yet recognized, though very important, is that such payments should not be made for the sake of the man, or as a matter of compassion to support his 'encumbrances'; but should be made direct to the woman for her social services. There should be no element of compassion about the thing at all; it should be a matter of right, provided always that the services are duly performed.

§ 4. *The payment would not be excessively burdensome, nor cause family discord, nor make marriage mercenary.*

Although the charge of these reforms would doubtless be great, it would not be all additional to existing expenditure. Payment of standard rates of wages to men irrespective of their domestic condition is

extremely wasteful. Assume that the minimum wage, say of a farm labourer, is 50s. a week. This now is calculated on the assumption that he is married and has the usual number of children. But suppose he is not married, why should he still receive 50s. ? Let it be decided by competent authority what is the proper pay for such a man, and let him receive that ; when he marries and produces children, let the total income of the family be proportionately increased.

That a wife should always have of right her separate income is fatal of course to the principle of androcracy. To my mind that is one of its main advantages ; but to some minds it may be condemned thereby. People talk as though androcracy were necessary to family welfare. The official theory of the family is that it has a single head, the husband, of course, who is a despot, though possibly a benevolent despot, within the family circle ; unless he is 'master in his own house,' he can have no self-respect and the family no peace. Such is the androcratic theory, which has the support both of the patriarchal doctrine contained in the Old Testament and of the barbarous traditions of our Teutonic ancestors. But it is really wonderful that it should still be accepted as a theory of family government ; because, as every married Englishman knows, it is absurdly at variance with actual facts. The domestic position of the English wife to-day may be theoretically one of submission ; but practically it is one of authority, at least in decent families. A girl, who under the present unhappy conditions has to manœuvre and cajole to get a husband, is all shyness and submission and delightful ignorance

in her unmarried state. Once established in her new home, she very soon changes her tone and learns to use her power. The natural and wholesome condition in a family is that the husband is in command of such of the joint work of the family as lies outside the house—his trade or profession ; but that the wife is mistress inside. If a man is ' master in his own house,' that house is in a bad state, and cannot be a proper place for the upbringing of children. All this is seen clearly enough in the homes of good working-class people ; the wife reigns inside the house, and the husband often speaks of her as ' boss ' or ' captain.' In actual practice then, at least in England, family government is not a despotism, but a dyarchy or partnership in which the partners have each a definite sphere of authority. Economic justice to woman would simply confirm and regularize an arrangement which is commonly recognized as the best for the welfare of the home. As in other partnerships, harmony is secured, not by the autocracy of one partner, but by a reasonable delimitation of provinces, and the efficient performance of duty by each partner within his own province.

Nor would such a system make marriage a mercenary affair. To every human relationship there is of necessity a financial side, which should not be disregarded ; those who pretend to disregard it are usually found to be more mercenary than usual, when once we penetrate the disguise. One can set out to preach a new religion or launch a system of philosophy in a glow of disinterested enthusiasm, with no prospect ahead but martyrdom or genteel starvation ; but you cannot expect a succession of teachers to go on with the work unless regular

provision is made for their subsistence. And so there will not be less married love but more, when wives have a lawfully secured economic position and take an honest rate of pay for doing honest work which the community needs.

The injustice under which women suffer seems to me to be the greatest defect in our existing civilization, worse even than the injustice to hand-working men, though that is bad enough. The great merit of the recent admission of women to political rights is that it leads on to economic emancipation. Some able writers have contended that the establishment of woman's economic position should have had priority.<sup>1</sup> I venture to think otherwise. It was right that the political emancipation should come first, and it was sound judgment in the leaders of feminism that made them concentrate their efforts upon it. In working for any great change we should direct attention first upon those things which appeal to the imagination and open large vistas of service in the widest spheres. What was not generally recognized, and was perhaps not advisable to proclaim too loudly in the heat of the political strife, was that the attainment by women of political justice would lead on to an agitation for economic justice. Did the politicians who gave votes to women think that women would cast their votes merely to put one set or other of male politicians into office? No. Having got their votes, the women will use them; and the main use will be to make sure that they are justly paid for their work.

<sup>1</sup> See Wilma Meikle, *Towards a Sane Feminism*.

§ 5. *Admission of women to the full status of citizenship will promote the reform of morals by means of legislation.*

To get and to maintain these benefits women must take a full share in the management of the commonwealth. The political questions which will arise in a socialist state will be largely concerned with measures for the welfare of home-life, for the protection of women—their physical inferiority making protection necessary—and for the care and protection of children. It will be necessary to have political women, to represent the interests of the sex, just as we ought to have working-class politicians to represent the workman's point of view. What proportion of governing persons should be women it is not easy to say exactly; possibly from a quarter to a third. This means about two hundred members of the House of Commons, and so proportionately in other bodies. This would probably be found sufficient. Women are less naturally suited to a political career than men; nor does their domestic work and training lead on so easily to the public activities of the politician. But the government of the country will cease to be an androcracy, and will be cured of the faults which are inevitable in an androcratic community.

The raising of the status of women, which I think is involved in socialism, will have a vast, indeed an incalculable, effect, both upon women themselves and upon society at large. Their present economic dependence brings with it a multitude of evil consequences; it is bad for their self-respect, moral character and intelligence. It is the cause, more



than anything else, of what is called the 'Social Evil,' because it enables men who have money to purchase women who lack it; it makes them weaker in yielding to every sort of temptation, especially those to which from their physical delicacy they are especially prone; it makes them content with defective education.

When women have full opportunity for the development of their nature they will make a great difference to government; even now, though their political influence is only beginning, the direction of the oncoming changes may be discerned.

The legislation of the future will, I think, be directed more definitely than now to moral improvement. Some person—some foolish individualist—has said that you cannot make people moral by act of parliament; some one else much wiser—it is Mr. Bernard Shaw, I think—has replied that you cannot make them moral in any other way. He means no doubt that, though a moral change in the community can be begun by exhortation and voluntary observance, it cannot be completed till it is ratified by law. Law gives definiteness and majesty to the unorganized expressions of public opinion. Now the existing laws, formulated under masculine domination, are very lenient to the characteristic masculine vices—the vices of wayward, gross and self-willed creatures. Perhaps the most conspicuous of them are drunkenness and sexual immorality; they are closely connected, because the first usually leads on to the second. About drunkenness there has been a great change in public opinion. In the first half of last century, as we know from rollicking books like *Pickwick* and Charles Lever's novels, it was regarded as a genial,



almost a meritorious performance. Now it is less in favour, though many minds still think it humorous ; the drunken antics of a famous American cinema-actor are popular with most British audiences. But as women increase in power, I think we shall see less toleration of drunkenness and more readiness to proceed against it by legislation. In England most people think at present that we shall never come to 'prohibition' ; but perhaps they underestimate the suffering which the drunkenness of men inflicts upon women, and the determination of women to end the evil as soon as they have the power.

Nor do I think that woman-governors will be tolerant towards sexual vice, especially that which is mercenary. Honest women hate and loathe the prostitute, not merely as a disgrace to the sex, but as a traitor or 'blackleg' of the basest kind. It would be difficult to take strong measures against the Social Evil now, because our wretched economic system makes it almost inevitable. But an equitable distribution of wealth would take away the main excuse ; and against those who still offend I think that women in the future will proceed with ruthless vigour.

#### § 6. *And prevent violent revolution and war.*

In regard to political development, I think that the influence of women will contribute greatly to steadiness and gradualness of change. The masculine character is forward-pushing and impatient, the feminine character is traditional and steadfast ; the function of man is to augment, that of woman to

preserve, the inheritance of the race. If men cannot get just what they want, they resort to violent methods—strikes, vehement agitations, civil wars. Women dislike physical violence and get no glory by fighting, only suffering. The admission of women to co-ordinate power will be the greatest of revolutions, but it will probably be the last. The political changes of the future may be great in their aggregate, but in their stages they will be gradual and mild.

Nor are they likely to be accompanied, as they are now, by wars between nations. At present we can hardly expect to see any great political change accomplished without violent convulsions, which let loose the ever-smouldering passions of race-antipathy. We cannot imagine events like the French and Russian revolutions unaccompanied by war. But when women have full political power, nations will be less ready to fly at each other's throats. There is less racial feeling between the women of two rival countries than there is between the men ; and there is still less between the men on one side and the women on the other ; as anyone may see by visiting the parts of Germany that are now in British and American occupation. Though there certainly are other causes of war, racial antipathy is the oldest and strongest. Racial antipathy will influence the conduct of nations less, when women have come to occupy their due position in the commonwealth.

PART II  
CHARACTER



## CHAPTER VIII

### FREE CITIZENSHIP

§ I. *Socialism will give to every member of the state the character of free citizenship, whereas at present our workpeople are partially enslaved.*

I COME now to the main topic of my book, the influence which the adoption of socialism will have on character. Character alone is ultimately valuable; the elaborate system of institutions proposed in preceding chapters has its main purpose in the improvement of character. Various special points of good character are treated in chapters which follow. At present I wish to speak of 'free citizenship,' by which term I wish to indicate the general type of character which we may hope to see realized in the members of the socialist community. The free citizen is one who is competent to participate fully in a free civilized commonwealth and has the qualities which are developed by that participation.

In England at the present day a large fraction of the population enjoy the privileges of free citizenship; but there is a still larger fraction who are practically excluded, and are thereby injured in character. Such is the condition of the majority of working men in our large industrial cities. There is no necessity for this. These are men sprung

from vigorous and manly stocks, with a full share of the elementary qualities which are the raw material of loyalty and patriotism ; they are of good natural intelligence, live within reach of newspapers, and have opportunities of discussion ; and they produce wealth enough to enable them to appreciate cultural interests, if only they could have for their own use the wealth which they produce. Their defective citizenship is due to faults of social organization which are remediable. Our working people are vastly better off than the slaves of Greece and Rome, who lived amid those magnificent civilizations with no more share in them than dogs and horses ; but they cannot take full advantage of the possibilities of civic life which modern progress has put within our reach.

In regard to our working class there are two contrasted attitudes of mind which seem to me to be equally unprofitable ; one of contempt and neglect, the other of thoughtless idealization. The second is commoner at the present time. But if the working man is perfect, what need is there to trouble about progress ? You cannot improve on perfection. Surely the wise thing is to look facts in the face ; we can then take measures to remedy the evils which every sensible person recognizes as existing around us. The general position of the working man is that he is legally free, but is practically in a semi-servile position. By this I mean that, on the one hand, he is subjected to more domination from his superiors than is good for him ; while, on the other hand, he is excluded by his poverty and ignorance from full participation in the commonwealth. Thus he fails to attain the



character which is developed typically in the free citizen.

§ 2. *A condition of slavery is unfavourable to manliness, to the domestic virtues and to patriotism.*

We get much help in considering what character men should have as free citizens by considering the character which is developed when men are enslaved. The effects of full legal slavery are seen most clearly where there is no colour-bar or other natural distinction between master and slave. In the modern world there has been for the most part a colour-bar; among the ancients there was none. Slaves upon the ancient monuments look like ordinary people, only more plainly dressed and perhaps with coarser features. It is in the slave-civilizations of Greece and Rome that we can study slavery in its purest form.

The most vivid pictures of slave-holding society which we possess are contained in the comedies of Plautus and Terence. Their language is Latin; but the material is Greek, though coloured by the playwrights' familiarity with Roman life. They are depressing to read, in spite of their wit and frivolity, because of the rottenness of the social conditions depicted in them; but they are valuable documents for the sociologist, something like Zola's novels will be in the future for the student of nineteenth-century French society, only much more spontaneous and authentic. In these 'comedies of manners' we can study the vices which slavery produced both in the master and the slave.

We know well how the masters were injured by the slave system.

On that hard pagan world disgust  
And secret loathing fell ;  
Deep weariness and sated lust  
Made human life a hell.

The poet is all right about the vices, but has gone astray about the cause. The ancient world was hard and lustful, not because it was pagan, but because it was slave-holding ; its weariness went on deepening long after it had turned Christian. But the masters do not concern us just now ; we are speaking of the slaves. In explaining their vices the general principle to remember is that maltreatment injures a man in morals as much as in body. If you subject a race to the persecutions of religious bigotry, you produce a Shylock ; if you treat a dustman as composed of quite an alien clay, you must expect to find him such a person as Mr. Doolittle in *Pygmalion*. Davus, the typical slave of the Latin comedies, who lied and stole and cringed before his master, was only what his servitude had made him.

Let us consider one by one the disabilities of the slave and the points of character in which he was wanting. He was excluded from all that side of life in which a man shows manly courage or mental initiative. He could never stand up boldly to his master, because he had no protection against him. His master could have him crucified for stealing a piece of cold fish ; an immoral mistress could have him flogged to death if he was not compliant to her wishes. He was not allowed to serve in the

army as a fully qualified citizen-soldier ; if by any trick he did get into military service, no responsible position was open to him. In civil life he was never in a position of command, except as a foreman over other slaves. He could not have the chief direction of any industrial enterprise ; it was useless for him to put forward any invention or improvement in commerce. The career of civic ambition was, of course, totally closed to him.

Perhaps the worst disabilities of the slave were those under which he suffered in respect of his domestic position. He had no property of his own except on sufferance. He was therefore greatly wanting in all the virtues connected with property ; he was hardly expected to be truthful or strictly honest ; he was wasteful of his master's goods, and shirked work as much as possible. He had no home of his own and no legalized marriage. Male and female slaves formed unions, of course ; but not such as the free citizen was bound to respect. They might be broken up at the will of the master, and the man sold to one purchaser and the woman to another. The slave was wanting therefore in all the qualities of morals and good taste which depend upon the possession of a secure domestic life, and upon the influence of women who respect themselves and are respected by the men with whom they live. Respect and self-respect are impossible for the female slave.

A slave could have no loyalty or patriotism. Even if the city in which he worked were totally conquered and all the people sold by auction—the final catastrophe for an ancient community—he was no worse off ; he merely changed his master.

Nor had he any reason to rejoice in times of victory. What were the fortunes of the Roman Empire to a Roman slave? What did conquest and glory matter to him?

The typical slave character, without manliness, without domestic virtues, without patriotism, is a warning and a dreadful example to us. The prevalence of slavish vices in the ancient world explains more than anything else, I think, the ruin of the ancient civilization. We must avoid any organization of society which tends to produce this type. Now, my complaint against individualism is that in some degree it does tend to produce slave vices. And we ought to replace it by a different kind of social organization which tends to produce the type which I have called the free citizen.

Although we may say generally that our working people are in a condition of partial slavery, yet we must recognize that there are infinite gradations among the various classes of them. The 'submerged tenth,' the Class A of Charles Booth's survey of London, are worse off than slaves. Their only advantage is that there is no legal impediment to their emerging into a better state; and this privilege is not worth much, because they have been for the most part demoralized and spoilt beyond recovery by their way of life. The highest class of workmen are reasonably well off. Between these two extremes the various gradations lie.

In all manly qualities our working class are immeasurably superior to the ancient slaves. But even they are compelled to be unwholesomely deferential to their superiors, far beyond what the necessities of discipline require. In regard to civil

life the hand-worker has a serious grievance in the difficulty of obtaining promotion ; everywhere privilege and private ownership block the way and prevent him from rising above a humble position. Another grievance, still more serious, is that he has no share in the management of industry ; and therefore cannot obtain good conditions of work or protect himself from oppression. In a recently published novel, written by a man who was once a working collier, one of the prominent characters is a colliery foreman, who dispensed rewards and punishments, not with reference to merit, but with reference to the favours which he received from the wives of the men under his command. Such treatment has a terrible influence in depressing men to the servile condition, and it would be impossible under socialism.

On the domestic side the modern workman is much better off than the slave, because the humblest home is a private domain into which no stranger has the right to penetrate. But, on the other hand, the modern workman is not perfectly secure in his home, because his employment is uncertain ; so long at least as he works for a private employer. If a man can be 'sacked,' or otherwise thrown out of employment for no fault of his own, his home is not safe, and he suffers in respect of those personal qualities which are developed specially in the home.

The qualities of loyalty and patriotism are difficult for men who have not the full opportunities of the free citizen ; the marvel is that our working people have so much of these qualities as they undoubtedly have. How unfavourable to the development of patriotic feeling are the conditions in such a district

of London as Bethnal Green! The low standard of education prevalent among poor people prevents them from understanding the social system under which they live. In any case they have no cause to admire it. What admirable features does it present to them?

Oh, England is a pleasant place for them that's rich and high;

But England is a cruel place for such poor folks as I.

They feel no pride in the fact that their employers have beautiful homes in Belgrave Square. What they see around them are the squalid streets in which they live and in which their children will grow up. Nor are they philosophers enough to be consoled by the reflection that it is the great beneficent law of the survival of the fittest which has pushed them into the slums and keeps them there. The pale dispirited weaver in Spitalfields—what reason has he to think: 'I am an English citizen; my country is the greatest achievement of human intelligence and virtue; and I am a worker in it—not an important one, perhaps, but loyal and zealous in my place'? No wonder that most of the intelligent workmen who live in these bad surroundings are in a state of acute discontent, angry with their superiors and with the whole social system. Men can see the good side of things only when the world treats them at least moderately well. We are loyal to persons who are good and lead us successfully, and to a system which is wisely planned and beneficent. Such grounds of loyalty and patriotism are wanting to those who dwell in Spitalfields and Bethnal Green.



§ 3. *The characteristic quality of the free citizen is self-respect.*

There is a quality which is the outcome of the total position in which the free citizen finds himself, and which is characteristic of the free citizen—so characteristic that it can be used as a test to make sure if a man has attained to free citizenship; I mean the quality of self-respect. Without self-respect a man may be legally free, but actually he is no better than a slave; while without free citizenship there can be no self-respect in the best and fullest sense of the term.

Self-respect is a social virtue; it is the feeling which a man enjoys when he belongs to a good society and takes a not unimportant part in the work of it. It cannot be displayed by one who lives a solitary life; we find very little of it among savages and social outcasts. A certain degree of self-respect comes to a man from participation in a narrow society—a family, a school, a club; if he takes a leading part and has authority among the members of the society, then he feels self-respect. But his self-respect cannot be complete unless he is a fully qualified member of the greatest and most dignified of human organizations, the state. And the better the state, the more pride a man feels in belonging to it.

Unhappily, our present commonwealth is organized in such a way that it is hard for many of our citizens to have self-respect. They live in physical conditions so mean and dismal that the superior classes pity them; the associations in which they work—the firms or other industrial systems—are not dignified,

because private and selfish ; they have no effective share in the government of the commonwealth, because they are too poor and uneducated to take an interest in it and to understand its problems.

The reforms of the socialist are advocated in the conviction that a better condition of things is possible, and that the quality of self-respect can be widely diffused. We find it well developed among our directing class ; and we may believe that the citizens of the hand-working class can have it also. A wide diffusion of self-respect would be advantageous for the citizens personally, and for the various organizations of the commonwealth to which they belong. For a man does public service well and faithfully only when he believes that his work is valuable and is appreciated, and when he regards with affection and honour the system in which he is co-operating.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE LIFE OF ACTION

§ 1. *Under socialism there will be a call for manly qualities, especially those of command.*

WE may feel sure that no ideal state will be acceptable to the English which does not call for the display of manly qualities and open out a stirring career to men with the capacity of command. Perhaps it is the fear that life under socialism will be too tame which explains some of the anti-socialist feeling among our governing classes. I believe that the fear has no foundation; that socialist principles will not interfere with manliness, and that governing ability will be needed in the commonwealth of the future even more than it is to-day. What is still more important, the opportunity of exercising qualities of action will be extended much more widely throughout the community.

It is possible to explain the mistaken notion that a socialist system will not call for the services of active and masterful characters. In the past the preachers and heralds of socialism have been a kind of men very different from those who will eventually govern us. They were mostly, we must frankly admit, unpractical sentimentalists; men whose sensitive souls were revolted by the crimes and injustices around them, whose imagination was

fired by visions of a happier future—men of feeling, like Rousseau and Saint-Simon. Now, far be it from me to depreciate the sentimental genius; he has his own most valuable function, to awaken the conscience of mankind. But he is not a man of action, he could never 'run' any kind of collectivist institution. Poor Rousseau, "apostle of affliction," with all his "overwhelming eloquence" could not even manage a couple of small boys to whom he was private tutor. The practical leaders of the future will not have too much sentiment about them: they will be very like the individualist leaders of the present day; but better, because they will be working under a better system.

The main psychological motive which induces men to seek a leading position in active life will always be the same, the pleasure in leadership which is felt by those who are competent to lead. Ever since the remote ancestors of man reached the human level, and perhaps even earlier, they needed leaders for their enterprises of hunting and for whatever works they undertook in common. And so there are men who are born for command and love the exercise of their faculty, like Bishop Blougram:

There's power in me and will to dominate  
Which I must exercise; they hurt me else.  
In many ways I need mankind's respect,  
Obedience and the love that's born of fear.  
Thus am I made, thus life is best for me.

In its due place the love of power is as necessary and salutary as any other of our natural passions. In the past, unfortunately, it has not been kept in place. Some rulers have exercised excessive domination;

on the other hand, some incompetent persons have been allowed to rule ; while rule has been denied to persons who have had ruling faculties, but have been compelled to remain in a subordinate position.

Regarded as publicfunctionaries, the chief complaint which has to be made against the rulers in our individualist system is that they are weak. The most individualist of rulers, the tyrant, is very weak, at least when there is good to be done ; and he lives in continual fear and suspicion. His show of omnipotence is a sham and a delusion. As a previous chapter has explained, there will be much more government under socialism than there is now. And therefore we shall need more governors, possessing more and better qualities of command. The 'men of blood and iron' in our present system are mostly idols with feet of clay ; the governors of the future will be firmly based on righteousness.

§ 2. *And there will be due opportunities for ambition.*

“Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition”—poor broken old Wolsey might pardonably make that speech, but it is not true wisdom. Wherever in a community there are leading positions and wide scope for the qualities of command, young men aspire and have ambitious dreams ; a young man without ambition is fit only for subordinate tasks. There ought to be in every nation large numbers of young men full of inward forces which urge them upwards, and eager to assume responsibility. If ambition is disappointed or finds its way barred by privilege, there arises discontent which is dangerous for the community and injurious to the individual.

It may result in bloody revolution or bomb-throwing, or merely in the personal misery of the able men who are repressed. There are different sorts of privilege; that of the old *régime* in France was mainly one of birth, that of modern England rests on wealth.

At present there is a hard and ugly element in ambition from which it would be purified in a better social state. Many things combine to repress the poor ambitious man. Just because he is poor, most of the rich tend to dislike him; for he is trying to take the place of some rich young man of inferior ability. In fact, each one of our numerous social strata is in a tacit conspiracy to repress the stratum below it. The poor ambitious man finds himself indeed in a difficult position; he must always be pushing forward, and yet must not be too blatantly obtrusive, or he will fail that way. It is this sort of thing that hardens a man.

And it tends to make him unscrupulous also; in an undeveloped society his path is very dirty. Ambition is a horrible business when advancement lies through royal favour; which was what poor Wolsey was thinking of. At the present day men 'get on in the world' mainly by securing admittance to some influential circle. In *Trial by Jury* the judge relates how as a young barrister he got his first briefs by "falling in love with a rich attorney's elderly ugly daughter" whom he afterwards threw over. All we can say of this is that paying court to an attorney's daughter is better than paying court to princes.

Under socialism it will not be necessary to use these arts. It is not necessary to use them now in



such parts of our system of employment as have already been socialized. Where entrance to our public services is by open competition, there is no exercise of patronage at entrance ; and patronage is discouraged in subsequent promotion. When a scientific system of government has been established, a careful estimate will be made of the number of governing young men who are needed year by year ; they will be invited to present themselves, and their qualifications carefully examined, both in intellect and morals. One of the points which will count against a candidate will be that character of hard unscrupulousness which at present is so valuable a help to preferment.

### § 3. *For emulation.*

Many good socialists have a horror of emulation or competition in any form. I remember poor Charles Buxton, whose early death was such a loss to the world, speaking to me with great distaste of a fellowship examination at All Souls in which he had been a candidate. I suppose that what set his mind against it was the evils of industrial competition. But this seems to me a confusion of thought. There are kinds of competition which are not bad, especially that between young people to see who can do best. The motive which prompts men to compete against each other I propose to call emulation. There always must be and ought to be emulation between active and ambitious young men.

The instinct of emulation is very powerful among the best and most vigorous races. Schoolmasters know the value of it for inciting boys to learn,

though care must be taken not to let everything become subordinate to 'mark-grubbing.' On the playing-fields it is more valuable still, because the games are prized by the players largely as a means to competitive distinction; especially the best of them, those which are played by teams. Weakness in the instinct is a mark of racial inferiority. Professor McDougall found it sadly lacking among the boys of certain coast-tribes of Borneo. 'What interest is there,' they said, 'in kicking a ball over a bar, or in ascertaining whether one fellow can jump further than another?' Much of our English education consists in training the emulative instinct. It would be bad for the future of our nation if our boys became like those unwarlike Borneans.

I cannot see that there would be any lack of emulation under socialism. There would not be less in athletics at our places of education; and certainly much more in things of intellect, because the whole tone of society would be more favourable to intelligence. Among the ambitious young people who are nearing the end of their education and are entering upon careers there would be enormously more emulation than there is now, because so many more careers would be open freely to men of talent.

After men have entered upon the main business of their lives, the value of emulation greatly declines; it is a sort of vanity which is more useful in the period of youth. In maturer years it should be supplanted by the zeal of public service, which is impossible for young people who are not yet serving. Still, the instinct of emulation does not altogether die away. All kinds of honorary distinctions appeal to it—titles, orders, precedences, votes of thanks,

medals, 'mentions,' decorations. There are some men who do not care for these things ; but most men do. From the government's point of view they are a cheap and easy way of rewarding service and stimulating endeavour, and there is no reason why a socialist system should not retain them. Some of our present titles of distinction are very antiquated : " There's no damned nonsense about merit with the Garter." We cannot imagine the Order of the Garter continuing to exist under socialism, if it is to have no connection with social service.

§ 4. *For the display of courage.*

Courage is a quality which is indispensable to manliness ; I do not think there will be less of it or less occasion for it under socialism than there is now, though it will probably be of a less combative and aggressive character. The raw material of civilized courage, so to speak, is that fierce expression of anger which many wild beasts possess in a more eminent degree than man. Man naturally is not a specially courageous creature ; he is not infuriated by wounds and pain like most of the larger carnivora, but is rather cowed by them. His courage is largely artificial, the outcome of motives more or less civilized, of moral causes and of training. Some races have more of the raw material than others. Our own is very well endowed with it ; it is a deep-seated ancestral quality and is not likely to change, whatever our political constitution may be. But the moral causes which will make men brave under socialism will be superior to those which have had influence hitherto.

At different epochs different motives have induced men to face the unpleasant experience of serious danger. Among savages it is mostly eagerness for plunder, for tribal distinction, and for the excitement of adventure. At a higher level of culture there appears the desire of winning royal favour, which an ambitious and warlike king always bestows upon his bravest warriors. In modern armies there is nothing of the plunder motive: love of adventure is confined mainly to the forces operating in barbarous countries: the desire for distinction has weight; but modern armies are so vast and the fighting so deadly, that it must be a mere chance if any particular soldier attains distinction. The chief motives which make modern troops face danger are discipline and patriotic devotion.

A notion is current that socialists are an undisciplined and unpatriotic crowd. As to the first point, I have already said that I think that discipline will be much firmer under socialism. The misconceptions respecting patriotism are due to the pacifism of some socialists during the recent war. This, however, was due to temporary causes. The socialists who refused to serve alleged that the existing political system was bad, and that the war was really a quarrel between rival gangs of capitalists. They would have fought well enough in another cause, as the Bolsheviks have fought in defence of a communistic Russia. If there still continue to be wars, which is doubtful, the soldiers of socialism will not be less courageous than those of individualist states, and their training will not be less scientific.

But the main opportunities for display of courage are not in war, but in the ordinary business of life;

especially that in which men have to deal with dangerous forces and situations, such, for example, as occur continually in the life of a seaman or an aviator. The demand for courage seems likely to increase as we make progress in mechanical invention. As it is only a part of the population that gets this practical training, the others have to be trained in courage by deliberate contrivance. This is done most admirably among our upper classes by means of rough and slightly dangerous games, such as football. A socialistic system would extend this training to all classes of the community; would provide playing-fields for every grade of school, and suitable instructors for the children.

There is no reason to fear, then, that a socialist community will be inferior in physical courage; while in moral courage I think it will be greatly superior. Moral courage is readiness to face black looks and to do unpleasant things for duty's sake. Men are willing to do these things now for private gain; but they are very loth to do them for the public service, and that is why there is so much slackness in the official world. When the state is a bigger and better thing than it is now, and our consciousness of it is more acute, there will be less easygoing treatment of public delinquency.

#### § 5. *And for foreign adventure.*

The English character is deeply influenced by the existence of our oversea empire with its wide and various opportunities for a career of adventure. All over Europe there are plenty of adventurous young men; but those countries which have no colonies



must submit to see their emigrants go to alien lands and lose their nationality. If socialism really implied abandonment of empire, there would certainly be a great restriction upon the outlook of our youth.

So far as regards what may be called our settlement colonies, socialism would do nothing to loosen the ties of union to the mother-country, but much to strengthen them. Just as the friendships of good men are stronger than those of bad, so alliances are stronger between good states. In regard to those colonies or possessions, such as India, where British settlement is impossible, we must admit that socialists regard our domination as something temporary; it is contrary to socialist principles that one race should hold another in permanent subjection. But it is plain that some of the nations under our rule cannot be expected to manage their own affairs for many years to come. A condition of tutelage is necessary while the slow process goes on of raising personal character to such a level that they can act as freemen.

But this work of training will not be the whole of the career of foreign governance which will be open to Englishmen. The basis of our predominance is simply the personal superiority of the Englishman to the men of the subject races, a superiority which is mainly moral. Some of our superiority is due to education, and can therefore be acquired; but much is due to climate and race and cannot be acquired. It may be that the heat and damp of certain tropical countries render it impossible for men who are permanently resident there to attain the quality of the best Europeans. If so, there may be, even when those countries have more self-determination



than now, a constant demand for the governing capacities of the British. All this actually happens in China, where there is a demand for British civil servants, solely on the ground of their superiority in certain points to native Chinese.

So far as the oversea influence of our nation depends on moral causes, it is likely to be enhanced by socialism. The education and traditions of our professional class already produce a very fine type, both in physique and character. But I think it will be improved considerably when better institutions have lifted the whole nation on to a higher moral plane. The white man's burden is not likely to fall from him, so long as he increases in ability to bear it.

§ 6. *Arrangements will be made to give men a varied experience of life.*

The desire for new experience, for seeing new scenes and trying new forms of activity, is characteristic of men as contrasted with women, and of adventurous men as contrasted with those who are content with the familiar sphere of home. It is strongest, as we know well, in young men; but some keep it all through their lives. It may issue in a futile restlessness and waywardness: but, in its due measure, it is necessary to the welfare of the race and the development of the individual; nothing helps a man to richness of personality and to good judgment so much as wide acquaintance with different sorts of men and different ways of life. At present this demand for varied experience can be gratified pretty well by those who live in new countries where the demand for workers is

greater than the supply ; but it is repressed in the old countries where employers have the upper hand and use it to hold their subordinates down.

Our freedom for a little bread we sell,  
And drudge under some foolish master's ken,  
Who rates us if we peer outside our pen.

One of the most unhappy features of work under our individualist system is its monotony for most of the workers. From the standpoint of the private employer, the duties of most of his subordinates cannot be too limited and mechanical. Let the cobbler stick to his last, the bank-clerk to entering and casting, the schoolmaster to his yearly grind of grammar. Let all change and relief be reserved for the rich. Unfortunately, even the rich do not benefit much by their freedom, because their change is from one form of idleness to another, not a change of work which is really profitable.

Great are the merits of change of work ; some day, when society is carefully organized for virtue and happiness, provision will be made for getting it. Let those who love to continue in their grooves continue there by all means ; but let those who wish to enjoy the full richness of life have opportunities of new experience. A man who is penned in to do one thing for ever cannot explore thoroughly the social system in which he lives. Even in those parts of our system which are already socialized the vicious traditions of individualism still fetter us ; otherwise, surely, provision would have been made long ago for change of work. Why should not a man who has been, say, a librarian for two years, not be a soldier for the next two, and then a tax-

collector, and then, perhaps, take his turn at working in a dockyard? I doubt if the work would suffer as a whole; what is lost in practice would be gained in freshness. And the worker would gain infinitely in the realization of his personality.

§ 7. *If suitable measures are taken, there will be due openings for men of practical originality.*

Every able and spirited man desires to introduce improvements into the system in which he works; and, if he cannot do so, feels painfully thwarted and depressed. We must count this a quality, and not the least valuable quality, of the man of action. There is a fear in some minds that it will not have sufficient scope for exercise under socialism.

But, if socialism is to be successful, it must encourage the man who is gifted with practical originality. It is not enough that we should have governors who can grasp and apply traditional principles in a traditional way. We must have arrangements which will give opportunity to men with ideas which are widely at variance with the existing system. These men are indispensable to progress. They are of the same type as the shipbuilder in Mr. Arnold Bennett's *Milestones*, who insisted on building with iron in place of wood against the bitter opposition of his partners. He succeeded, made a fortune and ruined his commercial rivals. But this rough method of getting elbow-room for originality will not be possible under socialism.

Our individualist system is supposed to be favourable to original men; and in some striking cases, perhaps, it is; but on the whole it is extremely

hostile. When a new process of manufacture is put forward the immediate interest of manufacturers is against adopting it. When Bessemer, for example, invented his revolutionary steel-making process, none of the firms in the trade would take it up, and he was compelled, though not a capitalist, to scrape money together somehow to start furnaces of his own. We are accustomed to think of those manufacturers as foolish, short-sighted men. But really they seem to have understood their own interest well enough; they were making good profits by the old process, and saw no reason to incur risk in a new one. The fact that the new process would produce great benefits to the community later on had of course no relevance for them.

It is not easy to put forward a cut-and-dried plan for doing justice to originality, because there is so little experience for our guidance. What will have to be done in the future will be to provide a regular organization for receiving new suggestions and testing them; something like the Inventions Board for the fighting services in the recent war. Such boards should be established for every part of the public service—transport, education, medical service and so forth—wherever invention is possible. And some expense and risk must be incurred regularly in giving inventions a practical trial. This has not been done hitherto; because our public organizations are built upon the model of private organizations, which will only take up an invention under the threat of being ruined by competition. But it will have to be done in the future, if we mean to escape the dangers of stagnation. The other alternative will be to tolerate in the country a considerable

amount of private enterprise in which inventive men can produce novelties at their own risk, and so either lose their money or make fortunes. And then later on the fortunes will have to be dispersed, or left to spread corruption throughout the community.

## CHAPTER X

### PUBLIC AFFECTIONS

§ 1. *The public affections, such as patriotism, are earlier than the private, and are necessary to national welfare.*

THE extremely domestic character of English life and the individualist traditions which are enshrined in our literature tend to make us forget that private affections, those of family and home, are of later development in the history of mankind than the public affections which are directed to objects outside the family circle. Such, however, is the teaching of anthropology. Private affections are more precious; but public affections are older. Among the lowest savages family life hardly exists, nor have they anything which can be called a home. And yet they always live together in associations for mutual help and defence, in packs or tribes or clans. They have therefore an instinctive sentiment which binds them together. Even the Australian blackfellow, homeless rover as he is, has a public spirit which makes him interested in his tribe and solicitous for its welfare.

The classic examples of civilizations in which public affections flourished are the city-states of the ancient world. In their private affections they were inferior to us, as we can see plainly from the



tone of their sexual morality ; but in their public affections they were much superior, which is what makes a classical education so 'fortifying.' The citizens of ancient Athens, for example, those who stood within the too narrow circle of citizenship, felt most deeply the value of their position as fully participant members of the commonwealth ; they were proud of their city and full of zeal for its glory, and were therefore ready to serve it without expecting private gain. Many good results flowed from this ; among others, excellence in art and literature, an excellence which declined as soon as the city's political position changed for the worse. One of the chief moral problems of our time is to recover some of the vigour of the ancient public spirit in forms suitable to the circumstances of the modern world.

§ 2. *The basis of patriotism is instinctive, but it also implies a rational admiration for one's country.*

The worthiest and most widely recognized of the public affections is patriotism. As with so many of the chief motive principles of our nature, it has elements which have been drawn from various levels of development. In part it is merely instinctive ; it has its origin in primitive feelings such as those which cause a wolf to feel attachment to his pack. But that alone does not deserve the name of patriotism, any more than crude sexual passion deserves the name of love. It must contain a higher and more rational element, and this I take to be admiration for the system of society to which the agent belongs : he must believe it to be a noble thing, as did the ancient Athenians ; he must regard it as claiming

his unselfish devotion. Wanting this a man may have sentiments which show a filiation to that primitive wolf-pack feeling and may falsely claim a higher name, but can easily be distinguished from true patriotism. It is the prevalence of such counterfeits that has given currency to Dr. Johnson's phrase that patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel.

One of the counterfeits is racialism. There is in primitive man a wolf-like tendency to hate his neighbours outside the pack. We see it very strong in most tribes living under natural conditions, especially tribes of hunters, such as the Australian black men and the Red Indians. It is inevitable among these savages, but very odious in modern life, where races are so mixed in blood and so necessary to each other's welfare. Unprincipled men are always working to inflame racial hostility in order to prosecute their own selfish schemes, and a thoughtless public is often ready to applaud them.

Another bad principle, though not quite so base, is the lower sort of imperialism; by which I mean the love of domineering over other races out of pure 'swank' and insolent pride. There was a great deal of this in the ancient world, especially in Rome; and not a little, I fear, in our own national history. It is bad but not altogether bad, because it does undoubtedly produce a hard, fierce, hawk-like vigour of character.

§ 3. *There will be more patriotism in the socialist state than there is now.*

If true patriotism really implies an admiration for the institutions of one's country, we must marvel

that there is so much of it in England to-day. Unless he belongs to the professional class, which is already in great part socialized, a thoughtful man must feel it an effort to be genuinely patriotic; he must always be forcing himself to look towards the future and away from the present. An ordinary youth, in whom the motive force of primitive instincts is strong, can be worked upon very easily: "Lives there a man with soul so dead?"—he responds quickly enough to all that. But later comes reflection. After a time he begins to ask: 'What is there really in my native country which should make me love it and sacrifice myself for it?' Suppose this question to be put to us by a workman of Sheffield or the East End. How shall we answer him? 'Fight for your slum, my lad; fight for your employer's park and his town-house in the West End.' That is practically what patriotic war-appeals mean to him. As soon as a man in this position begins to think, he must hate the social system which has reduced him to his wretched state; he sees it as a mixture of humbug and oppression.

Nor does society present a more admirable appearance to profiteering capitalists. To one sort, the speculative financier, society is like an inert mass of fat, out of which he can tear pieces for himself, as a shark might tear blubber from a dead whale; to another sort, the advertising manufacturer, the public are a flock of simple beings who have to be attracted by allurements artfully adapted to their simplicity, and so induced to part with their money. The capitalist making patriotic speeches is very like the fox in the medieval allegory preaching to the geese.

Unless we think things out carefully such considerations as these will destroy patriotism altogether, as they did in many minds during the recent war. I hold that we need and always shall need patriotism, but it must be of the right kind. Right patriotism is impossible unless the character of one's fellow-citizens is good, and also the general constitution of the state. These two conditions must advance *pari passu*; it is useless to expect good public spirit among citizens of a bad state, and useless to introduce excellent institutions among a population which is unable to appreciate and to work them. The socialist state will have both good institutions and a good population; and its patriotism will be, compared to our present patriotism, like sunlight compared to moonshine, and like wine to a counterfeit of tinted water.

§ 4. *Patriotism cannot be replaced by human brotherhood.*

Can the patriotism which we feel towards our native land be replaced by a sentiment directed towards some wider combination? I think not. Patriotism is a sublimation of primitive tribal feeling, or, if you will, it is primitive tribal feeling with certain higher feelings added to it. But the tribal feeling must be there for a foundation.

I do not believe that, as a motive of conduct, patriotism can be replaced by any sentiment of human brotherhood. What human brotherhood may mean exactly I do not know. If it means only a faint kindly feeling towards men as such, and a dislike to see or hear about their sufferings, I admit

that it is a real motive in the minds of civilized people, though a weak one. If it is meant in the literal meaning of the words, it is a piece of sentimental cant, always false and often mischievous. Does anyone really mean to argue that we ought to extend family affection to all our fellow-citizens outside the family circle? Genuine family affection is a very exclusive thing; it demands that those who feel it should be closely *en rapport* with each other, and should be very sensitive to each other's thoughts and feelings. Now it is not possible to be on such terms with more than a few people at once; and, if a man tries to exceed the natural limit of human powers, he is in danger of making a painful failure. Those who try to have too many brothers are likely to have no brothers at all; and perhaps not even many friends.

And 'human brotherhood' becomes still more absurd if we think of Englishmen treating as brothers all sorts of foreigners and savages—all the black and yellow men, the Fuegians, the Andamanese and the pigmies of Central Africa.

§ 5. *Or by international sentiment.*

A more definite proposal is to replace the patriotism of nations by the super-patriotism of international combination, expressed in such phrases as the "parliament of man and federation of the world." But this again is something which, though in a different way from human brotherhood, overpasses the capacity of human nature, and would not conduce to welfare, even if it were possible. Patriotic feeling, though far less intimate than family feeling, demands much



sympathy and understanding from those who share it. Difference of language is a great barrier between men, so is difference of dress or manners or religion. A Londoner who finds himself in a purely Welsh-speaking district of our island feels it hard to maintain the same attitude that he is wont to have towards his own people; and still more if he finds himself in an Erse-speaking district of Connaught, where not only language, but also religion and the externals of life are so very different from London.

But patriotism demands, not merely this unity of feeling, but also the intellectual condition that the agent should view the object of his patriotic sentiment as one thing. The object must, in Mr. Graham Wallas's phrase, be some sort of "political entity"; we ought to be able to personify it in some way, or to symbolize it by some sort of emblem. It is very hard to find any such emblem for the United Kingdom in which we live, and still harder to find one for the British Empire as a whole. What sort of emblem could be found for civilized Europe I can hardly imagine, except perhaps the Dame Europa of *Punch's* cartoons; not to mention such aggregates as Christendom, or the civilized nations of the earth, including Japan, but perhaps excluding China.

The conclusion which seems to be indicated then is that patriotism in the proper sense can exist only among men who are united by rather strong ties of sympathy. Now how far, it may be asked, does this agree with the actual state of patriotic feeling in the minds of our own people? It explains, e.g., the loyalty of the Scotchman to Scotland,



but does it explain the loyalty of the Scotchman to the United Kingdom? This is worth discussing for a moment, for the sake of clearing up the issues of internationalism. I do not think there is much common patriotism as between the Englishman and the Scotchman, and still less as between the Englishman and the Irishman. The component nations of the United Kingdom retain their traditions, ways of speech and manners; they regard with pride their own country and its good points, but they do not draw satisfaction from the good points of other countries: an Englishman is not proud of Edinburgh, though he may admire it greatly, nor is a Scotchman proud of London. Altogether it seems as though patriotism in the true sense of the term is limited to the feelings of each member of our four component nations for his own nation. And yet there is a strong sentiment in the minds of, say, Scotchmen in favour of the United Kingdom. I think this is due to a feeling that the four nations are in partnership and have common interests and common enemies. The island of Britain has a great position in the world, which can be maintained only by loyal co-operation between the various races which inhabit it. The sentiment prompting loyal co-operation we call imperial loyalty. It seems to be something weaker than patriotism; but it is as much as we can expect from the British population as a whole, and it is not expedient to ask for more.

But even a sentiment of the force of imperial loyalty is not possible as between the nations of Western Europe. They have no common possessions and no common interests, except perhaps the preservation of peace; still less have they the

sympathetic feelings which are due to community of language, religion and manners.

The whole idea of internationalism is based on the antagonism between capitalists and proletariat. 'Capitalism is international,' say the internationalists; 'let us organize the proletariat internationally to fight it.' But such an interest is too negative, and perhaps too temporary, to give rise to a sentiment which is to replace patriotism. And in any case I do not think that capitalists should be treated as enemies. It is true that they are obsolescent and they do much harm; but they still perform some functions which can hardly as yet be performed otherwise. Before we begin to fight them, let us see if we cannot render them quite superfluous; and then contrive to persuade them peacefully out of existence.

§ 6. *The separateness of nations conduces to progress.*

Even if it were possible to unite into an international system the nations of Western Europe—British, French, Dutch, German and the rest—I doubt if the results would be good. There are two methods whereby men make progress: by competition and by co-operation. The competitive method, which we see in a perfect form among beasts of prey, works by elimination of the unfit; the co-operative method by training and regulation in accordance with some plan for the common good. Within a civilized nation at present the best hope of progress lies in the method of co-operation. But as between the various nations of Europe there is no authority to make a common plan and no clearly defined

object to be attained by one. For advance therefore we must look mainly to the method of competition. If a nation adopts an improvement in political organization or industry or warfare, it gains an advantage in international competition; and other nations are bound to follow it. International competition in its most acute form is war, which is the great destroyer of obsolete political systems; as witness the recent destruction of the German, Austrian and Turkish governments. The superiority of Western Europe in civilization has been due partly to the fact that it has consisted of several political units, approximately equal in force, each big enough to develop a culture of its own, continually in competition and learning continually from each other in all the elements which conduce to progress. A condition such as that of the Roman or the Chinese Empire, vast territories under a single sway, seems to tend rather towards stagnation.

If ever the European nations are united into an effective federation, I think it will be in reference to some motive which hardly exists at present. Such a motive might come into existence if, say, the yellow races of Asia were to federate. The European nations might then feel that their interests, colonial and commercial, were threatened, and might form a counter-federation. Perhaps some change of this kind may ultimately terminate the present national system of Europe. But all this is in the remote future. In any case it would be something very different from the internationalism of existing internationalists.

§ 7. *Under socialism there will be more objects upon which public affections can be directed ; and it will be the care of the state to encourage public affections among the citizens.*

When our society has been fully organized, the objects upon which public affections can be directed will be much more numerous than they are now, and much worthier. Among ourselves the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland is not really an object upon which great affection can be bestowed, though it may be advantageous as a political organization ; we ought to have, in addition, sub-national units—Scotland, Ireland and the rest—to serve as objects of a warmer and more natural affection. We may put the matter shortly by saying that the United Kingdom is an object which one can die for ; but Scotland an object which one can live for.

As objects of a still narrower patriotism or public spirit there will be towns, counties and other local areas, just as there are now, but of better quality. Town councils, for example, will represent much better than they do now the aspirations of the citizens, and will be more powerful agencies for the promotion of good living. And there will be, even more than now, societies, churches, clubs and institutions for purposes of education or culture.

The deepest change will be in men's relationship to industrial and commercial organizations ; which for ordinary folk are the most important of all, because they do the ordinary daily work of life. At present not much public spirit can be directed towards them, since they are private affairs existing for purposes of private gain. But, when purified from

that taint, they will become suitable objects of loyalty.

Granted that public affections are a valuable part of character, and few people, I suppose, would refuse to admit their value, it will be the business of statesmen to give to the institutions of the commonwealth such a character that those who co-operate in them may entertain warm feelings towards them. Think for example of some definite institution, such as one for purposes of education, a school or a college. We find that the workers in such a place are fond of it and loyal to it when its purpose and character are good and dignified—it must be a really good school, not a wretched Dotheboys Hall ; when their pay is adequate and fairly apportioned ; and when they have a reasonable share in its management. We could easily find examples in our universities where these conditions are fulfilled, and where the results in the devotion of most of the workers are all that a socialist could desire ; and it would be still easier to find among our schools examples where the conditions are not fulfilled, and there is therefore demoralization and discontent.<sup>1</sup> In the future no institution will be approved if there is any feature in it which stifles the natural devotion of those who work for it.

Patriotism, loyalty, public spirit will mean in the future something more positive and more fruitful than they mean now. We think of them as motives mainly to the performance of disagreeable tasks—fighting and other work which may be necessary for the preservation of the commonwealth, but which no one wants to do for its own sake. Of

<sup>1</sup> E.g., the school in Walpole's *Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill*.

course, the dirty work will always have to be done : the patriot will have to fight, or at least to train for fighting ; he will always have to be a vigilant watchdog of the public service, so that it will be his duty to check waste, reprove delinquents and eliminate undesirables. But all this affords a negative and somewhat melancholy satisfaction ; a man needs rewards and honours to fortify him in the performance of such tasks. The patriot of the socialist state will find his public affections more valuable for their own sake ; he will get a continual satisfaction and pride from the excellent institutions of his country and from his conversation with his fellow-citizens whose characters are conditioned by those institutions. The more cultured men are and the wider their mental sweep, the more they will be uplifted by their country's greatness, and by their enjoyment of its intellectual and moral eminence ; while humbler minds who do not see far beyond the institutions through which they live will, though they have a narrower outlook and a less varied sensibility, find their compensation in the concentrated and single-hearted devotion which good and simple natures are privileged to feel.



## CHAPTER XI

### PRIVATE AFFECTIONS

§ I. *Socialism will strengthen private affections, because a moderate share of wealth is favourable to family life.*

THERE is no single element which can be used as an infallible test of human progress. Physical excellence, wealth, fighting-power, intelligence, patriotism—all these have to be considered when we want to evaluate a society. In all of them, I think, a socialist society will show superiority. But there is yet another element which I hold to be the most important of all, that is the development of private affections ; by which I mean the kindly feelings which men entertain towards each other. On the whole, these are the most important factors of character ; no one calls a man bad who loves and is beloved by the persons with whom he is conversant in private life. In this chapter I will try to explain the beneficial effect of socialism upon private affections, in particular those of family and friendship.

Common experience assures us that domestic or family affections can be well developed within wide variations of wealth ; there is plenty of love in cottages, and not a little in palaces also. None the less it is true that these affections are favoured most by a moderate degree of wealth, and that the extremes

of riches and poverty are alike detrimental. Consider the conditions of family affection. It rests upon a basis of mere instinct, the feelings of mates towards each other, and of parents and children; all this we share with animals. The distinctively human sort of family affection is based upon co-operation in the work of the home; in particular that of rearing the children. This is influenced unfavourably both by riches and by poverty. Rich people are fatally tempted to get their work done for them by hired help; or, perhaps I ought to say, compelled to do so: a large establishment with many social claims leaves no time for work in the home. And that impairs the parental relation; parents who do not work personally for their children lose their hold upon them. Very poor people find domestic conditions difficult for an opposite reason; they are so cramped, starved and harassed that a clean and tidy life is impossible. The children are a torment, and the parents cannot bring them up properly and enjoy them. If it were possible, therefore, to increase the amount of wealth possessed by the community and to divide it more equally, the result would be that many more persons would have opportunity of enjoying family life to the full and of developing its characteristic affections.

§ 2. *Whereas individualism both limits the number of those who can fully enjoy family life, and also aggravates the anti-social element in the family.*

I have already protested against the claim of individualists to be the defenders of the family. The "stately homes of England," with their tall

ancestral trees and bounding deer and gliding swans, may be very beautiful and stately, but they are not typical centres of domestic affection ; they are altogether too big and pretentious for the natural needs of the family, and are full of alien mercenary service. The "cottage homes of England" are often very dirty, as anyone may see by exploring the streets of Bethnal Green ; in many of them the dirt is so plentiful that it quite chokes the domestic affection. Between these two extremes lie the modest, comfortable homes of the upper hand-workers and of the professional class ; homes which are affectionate, and neither stately nor dirty. The individualists, who are partly foolish, like Mrs. Hemans, partly canting and dishonest, are fighting to maintain the extremes ; the socialist is trying to strengthen and extend the wholesome middle state.

I have spoken before also of the anti-social tendency which is implicit in family life. The monogamous family is the best institution which has been invented by man so far ; but there is an element of narrowness and exclusiveness in it. We may deplore this, but it is quite inevitable. Persons whose circumstances compel them to take in boarders or 'paying guests' always feel that their family life is impaired, however pleasant and acceptable the guests may be personally. This naturally repellent and semi-hostile attitude towards the outside world is aggravated by individualism.

And it is very easy for a family man to be hard and even unscrupulous in his dealings with the outside world ; as the proverb says, "A family man is capable of anything." He probably does not

like it—the remorseless economic pressure drives him to it ; he must use any sort of weapon against the rivals who would destroy his home. The more devoted a tradesman is to his home, the less he can afford to cherish public spirit, or to enjoy fine intellectual interests, or even to show a nice sense of honour in commercial dealing. The urgent claims of his family, the dreadful apprehension of seeing them in distress, stinted of the means of life or at least of the opportunities of culture, harden his heart and pervert his sense of justice. And so individualism not only restricts the number of those who have domestic affections, but converts it partially into a principle of bitterness and demoralization.

§ 3. *Friendship is based upon community of interest, which will prevail under socialism.*

The reader may have anticipated my line of argument as to the effect of socialism upon the kind of affection which we call friendship. The foundation of friendship is community of interest ; liking the same objects, enjoying the same activities, and getting mutual help in pursuing them. Golf is a bond of friendship, so is partnership in any institution ; closest of all is the common interest of parents in the welfare of their children. Such are the conditions under which people take pleasure in each others' society. Friendship decays when interests diverge ; when one of the friends loses his taste for golf, when men dissolve partnership and become rivals in

business. Rivalry and conflict of interest make men dislike each other ; and, when they meet, they experience feelings of displeasure.

As between men, the best condition perhaps for the formation of friendships is co-operation in some fairly extensive institution, which is big enough to give each man some choice of friends, but not so big as to prevent the individual from regarding it with affection, as a single object which is well within his mental grasp. The point may be illustrated from army life. The British Army is too big and too various to be loved as a whole : but a regiment of cavalry, say, may be regarded with great affection ; the officers form a society which is of suitable size for making friendships. Co-operations or partnerships draw men together closely where the members have an important share in managing the institution, where each man really counts, and devoted service tells and is recognized. And they should be partnerships which are not tainted by private greed ; the relation is at its best where men live by the institution and live without anxiety, but are not fighting with each other or against the world.

These conditions, so favourable to the growth of friendship, will prevail throughout society under socialism. A certain number of our institutions are already socialized, or at least organized upon semi-collectivist principles ; such are the government services, including the army and navy, most of our schools and other places of education, and most of our religious institutions. Anyone who has been employed in a department of the public service, such for example as the British Museum, recognizes the kindness and honesty which prevail



there. What is lacking is strenuousness ; and what has prevented the nation from adopting such institutions more widely is our failure so far to find a substitute for the stimulus of private gain. But people who are in a position to compare them with ordinary commercial institutions recognize their moral superiority. I suppose it is this which is the truly attractive side of monastic life ; the security, the good-fellowship, the freedom from sordid rivalry and suspicion, and, where the community has practical activities, such as education, the sense of mutual helpfulness in a worthy task. In the society of the future most of the work of industry and commerce will be done by organizations which are as unselfish as a Jesuit community.

§ 4. *Whereas individualist competition produces conflict of interest.*

Under a competitive system men's interests are upon the whole opposed to each other ; and this is especially true of the commercial classes. They are not the most intellectual element of the community—that pre-eminence belongs rather to professional men ; but what they lack in brilliance they gain in solidity. They ought to be the most solidly moral of all classes, and the most kindly. As it is, they are, owing to the influence of “beneficent private war,” the most individualistic and mutually repellent.

Working men combine in mutual-aid societies and trades-unions ; they have, at least, a common interest in protecting themselves against misfortune and oppression. Rich men join in clubs for pleasure ; not a very fruitful sort of combination, but better



than none at all. Commercial men, though naturally friendly souls as a rule, are trained by their circumstances to dislike each other. In Hobbes's phrase they "have no pleasure (but on the contrary a great deal of grief) in keeping company." Hobbes himself was brought up in the family of a country tradesman. He is only giving a new form to the old proverb, which doubtless he knew very well, that "Two of a trade can never agree."

§ 5. *Socialism will raise the standard of morality in business life.*

If one were asked to sum up the moral effects of commercial competition in a phrase, one might use the terms 'trickery' and 'hatred.' Though the majority of commercial men may be honest enough, yet in so large a body there will always be some rogues, or at least men who resort to 'sharp practice'; and these have a bad influence upon the general level of conduct.

In some professions competition has been regulated by rules which are known as professional etiquette; among doctors of medicine, for example, the bitterness of the struggle is mitigated in this way. The rules can be maintained, because the profession is organized and issues licences to those who desire to practise in it. The licence was originally an intellectual qualification; but it has come to be used for moral purposes, and can be withdrawn for professional 'misconduct,' such as advertising, which is not intrinsically reprehensible. Similar regulation is enjoyed by the legal profession. But among commercial men there is no regulation, and they therefore

experience the demoralizing influence of competition to the full.

In the state of the future there will be much more regulation and organization than there is now, of commerce and industry as of everything else ; and it will be directed, as it rarely is now, towards moral no less than towards material ends. The result will be that many careers, which now are not considered as fit for a gentleman, will be despised no longer. The occupations which we count as genteel are mainly those which have been socialized more or less—the government services, the church, education—or are regulated so as to mitigate the influence of competition. For it is not merely the physical character of a kind of work that makes it desirable or undesirable. There is indeed nothing intrinsically degrading in manufacture, or commerce, or distribution. His Majesty's dockyards and arsenals manufacture, the Paymaster-General does commercial work, and the Army Service Corps does distribution ; and yet gentlemen are pleased to be employed in all those services, and go through them with their gentility unimpaired. The reason is that, while they are doing commercial work, they are not compelled to adopt commercial morality.

In the character of the gentleman there are two main components, which come from very diverse sources ; one is a proper susceptibility to female influence, the other is courage and truth in behaviour towards men. Now courage and truth are not easy virtues to practise in individualist commerce. It is hard for the employer to feel calmly courageous against rivals who can resort to every kind of subterranean warfare. And it is hard for the employee

to stand up against an employer who has his future entirely in his hands and can ruin him by an irresponsible act of will. In the presence of these dangers the bravest feel fear, and resort to the natural defence of the fearful, trickery.

In deprecating the severity of commercial competition I do not mean to imply that there will be no competition in the socialist state. I have already said how essential to manliness it is that men should compete with each other. My complaint against individualist commercial competition is that it is underhand and rancorous, and that its prizes are bad. We see good competition in institutions which are purified and ennobled by the collectivist spirit ; in a department of the civil service, in a warship or a regiment, perhaps best of all in a college. College students compete continually in their studies and for the honours which are given for athletic skill and devotion. An Oxford undergraduate values highly the privilege of rowing in his college boat, a service which in itself is laborious and exacting ; and still more highly the much more laborious privilege of rowing for his university. But if he fails he feels no bitterness, nor does he resort to stratagem to gain success ; because he has confidence in the judgment of those who rule the competition. The prizes of such contests, if one can speak of prizes, are of the old Greek kind ; the right to wear a certain shade of hat-ribbon, or a minutely different style of trimming on a boating blazer ; or, greatest prize of all, a small blue cap with two crossed oars embroidered in white above the peak.

Not only is commercial competition bad in itself, but its chief prize is demoralizing. The

mere possession of great riches tends to injure a man's character: it means an unreasonable and greedy claim upon the stock of goods produced by the community; it means a dangerous power over the minds and bodies of those around him; it means an enervating and degrading idleness, or at least the liberty to refuse to work. The children of those who have achieved eminent commercial success are none the better for their inheritance; they degenerate under the influence of riches, and lose the vigorous, grasping abilities of their fathers.

Assuredly there will be competition in the socialist state, but it will be the competition of good sportsmen. There will be wealth in the prizes, but not hereditary wealth. What will appeal most to the imagination will be honours, distinctions and records of service; above all, posts of honourable employment in which further service can be done. Such things may seem unsubstantial to the commercial mind; and yet to other minds as precious as the wreath of wild olive in the ancient Olympic games.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE INFLUENCE OF WOMAN

§ I. *Under socialism the influence of woman will be increased, which will make society more refined.*

ALREADY the influence of woman is very great in English society. Superficially this is shown by marks of outward respect, raising of hats, fetching of chairs and so forth; in a deeper way by the deference which we pay to female ideas in regard to conduct and morals. When female influence is withdrawn, as with Englishmen who go to work alone in barbarous countries, there often occurs a sad moral declension. But usually it is not permanent; the restoration of female influence soon pulls the ordinary Englishman back up to the level on which he was originally trained.

The degree to which woman exercises influence in a society is one test of civilization. This may be illustrated in various ways: by comparing our own society with other contemporary societies of lower culture; by comparing the England of to-day with the England of the past; by comparing the upper with the lower classes in present society. For comparison we need not adduce quite savage or barbarous nations; take such a country as Persia, which stands comparatively high in the scale. Persian ladies make it a rule never to appear in public:

if by any accident a woman of good position does appear, the national code of politeness enjoins that she should be completely ignored; any act of friendliness or deference would be interpreted with a sinister meaning. One may draw another illustration from South Africa, where Boers and British live as neighbours under precisely similar conditions. The Boers are an excellent race, superior to us in some elementary qualities, but inferior in culture; and it is very noticeable how they are wanting in courtesy and forms of respect for women. Similarly we may measure the distance by which we have advanced beyond the England of Shakespeare's time by noting how much there is in his plays which female influence would not allow us to tolerate to-day.

In the England of the future, female influence should be much increased. The outward forms of respect may not be greater—may even be diminished; but women will have more real power. This, I believe, will make for good. The general effect may be described as an enhancement in the refinement of society. Women are naturally more refined than men, or are at least more susceptible to refining influences. They dislike more strongly than men objects which are dirty and coarse, and conduct which is offensive and violent; they are more sensitive to the thoughts and feelings of the people around them. Where they have power, they impose their preferences upon general society. Some of the refinement which they produce is merely æsthetic and expressed in outward behaviour; but much of it is concerned with serious morality.

The personal sources of influence which women



possess are various, many in number and liable to change with changing conditions; unlike the influence of man, which has always rested upon his strength, courage and mental vigour. The primitive source of female influence, sex, always remains the most powerful of all; but it does not avail by itself to put women into a strong social position, as we may see by their treatment among savages. In more civilized conditions the sex-power of women is reinforced by their capacities for making a home and educating children; by their personal beauty and æsthetic value generally; and by their refinement and good taste. As men improve they are able to appreciate more highly those qualities in women; and so women have come to the position which they enjoy in good English society. But that is considerably short, I think, of what we shall see in the future, when women are better than they are now and are better able to make their tastes prevail.

All the present sources of female influence ought to be enhanced in the future; because the country will be wealthier than it is now and the wealth better distributed. The standard of physical vigour and beauty should be much higher; there should be more homes, and more opportunities of making homes beautiful; and more families of children. Poverty depresses women and prevents them from developing their æsthetic gifts. Excess of wealth spoils them another way; it encourages the frivolous element of their nature and makes them into playthings of men, elegant perhaps, but certainly not wholesome.

The power which these sources of influence confer upon women now will be greatly strengthened by

the economic independence which they will have under socialism. Possession of wealth and social prestige always strengthens the possessor and enhances the potency of any other gift which may happen to belong to him. If two men are equally eloquent, and one is very rich and the other poor, the former will always be heard with more respect. The heroine of a fairy story is always a princess; though the standard of beauty and virtue among the daughters of kings is no higher than among the daughters of merchants.

§ 2. *Increase of female influence will have no counter-  
vailing drawback; such faults as women now  
display are due mainly to their economic  
dependence.*

Will there be a set-off against the advantages which may be expected from an increase in female influence? I think not; but it is easy to explain why some people may think so. The faults which women display are familiar enough, mainly through the influence of literature. Female faults are very effective for literary purposes; an absurd woman can always be made funny and a bad woman tragic. But female virtues do not make good 'copy'; unlike the masculine virtues, which are so exciting and spectacular. On the whole, women are not inferior to men in their capacity for virtue; their most conspicuous faults are due to the injustice under which they have suffered. What will be generally admitted is that they have great superiority in the conservative virtues, those which preserve for society the good things already achieved by the

race. And these virtues seem to be the most fundamental of all; for to maintain what we possess is even more important than to add to our store.

The economic injustice from which women have suffered has aggravated the failings to which they are naturally inclined and has diminished their natural virtues.

Women can never be as brave as men, because of their muscular inferiority. Now, when a creature which is weak finds itself opposed to a powerful enemy, it is always inclined to resort to trickery. Here then we have a natural female failing; but it is aggravated when economic weakness is added to physical. For ages women have been compelled to scheme and cajole for the share of wealth which should be theirs of right. Where women have independence and are exempt from any sort of bullying, they become nearly as honest as men. We need fear no declension of veracity and honour through female influence in the socialist state.

Another natural female failing is an excessive love of personal adornment, the chief motive of which is coquetry. Well-educated and sensible women have little of the fault; but there are so many of our female citizens who are neither well-educated nor sensible. And so we see women wasting great quantities of wealth upon frippery which is certainly not useful and often not even beautiful. For this they neglect their household duties and their children; sometimes they injure their own health and diminish the comfort of those around them.

A great part of this folly, which at present brings so much contempt upon women, is due to their economic

dependence. The natural relation of the sexes is that the male should do all the courting. The rule is very old and deep-seated among mankind, and is supposed to hold good among all classes and in all countries; it is a reproach to a woman that she lays herself out to attract. But among the upper classes of our society the pressure of economic conditions is too strong; if girls want husbands, they must bestir themselves and take active steps to attract notice. As a lady once remarked to me, "The girls who get married are the girls who want to get married." Working people are in a more natural position: an unmarried workman is a very forlorn and comfortless creature; he needs a wife so much that the working girl need not worry herself about artificial enticements, even if she could afford them. But a bachelor of the upper classes is in a different position; he can hire a housekeeper. As a rule he looks out for a girl with money; not an inheritance in prospect, but with present possessions.<sup>1</sup> A portionless bride stands under deep economic obligations to her husband. Portionless spinsters, therefore, feel bound to seek strong reinforcements to their natural attractions. Hence the mute appeal of dress and ornament; earrings, feathers, flounces, sharp-pointed shoes and bangles are nothing but an advertisement of the wearer's great desire for matrimony. The appeal is amusing or painful, according to the observer's frame of mind; it becomes really pathetic when we know that the lady is seeking for a bridegroom who will

<sup>1</sup> This is very noticeable on the Continent. Young men of student age often announce very plainly that they mean to 'marry money.'

consent to share with her an income which he probably thinks is hardly enough for one.

There is no reason to fear that women will be dowdy under socialism. Intelligent women are hardly ever dowdy; they know it is their mission to be ornamental and to humanize the world with their grace and beauty. The change which socialism will make is that there will be a much larger number of women who have good taste and the means of indulging it, and that the good motive of desiring to be beautiful will not be exaggerated till it becomes a vice and leads to foolishness.

The most characteristic virtue of woman, which is modesty, is impaired by economic dependence. Modesty is a kind of reserve and requires some strength of character. Any sort of strong conduct is made more difficult when the agent is weak economically.

I have already alluded to the husband-hunting of the upper-class maiden. A result of the competitive search for husbands is that forwardness becomes a factor in race-survival, and that the more reserved women tend to leave no descendants.

Much more serious is the mischief of what is called the Social Evil. It would not be appropriate to enter upon a discussion of the matter here. I only wish to say once more that its main cause is economic; men who have money are able to buy women who have none. When this cause has been removed, society would have to deal only with such irregularity as is due to passion: and there ought to be no more difficulty in dealing with this than with other passionate outbursts, such as revenge for example. The ill-success in dealing



with sexual vice in the past has been due to lack of female co-operation.

§ 3. *Women approve of the kind of male character which is brave, without being cruel.*

It seems possible to say more in detail what kind of improvements are likely to be made in the characters of men by an extension of the influence of women.

Although there will be more refinement, there will not be more softness or disinclination to face danger. Just because women are not physically brave themselves, they need the bravery of men. The influence of women in stimulating men to show courage may be seen very plainly in primitive societies ; there is nothing which an Indian ' brave ' or warrior dreads more than the jeers and reproaches of the women, if he fails to protect them against their enemies. Women are naturally unwilling that war should begin ; but, when it has begun, they are passionately eager for victory.<sup>1</sup> But, though women dislike cowardice, they also dislike savagery and cruelty. The man who is brave is willing to fight, and in the heat of action he does not mind inflicting pain. The man who is cruel enjoys inflicting pain apart from fighting. This character is greatly disliked by women. Cruel women certainly exist ; but the vice is less common among them than among men. As a rule, they are disagreeably affected by

<sup>1</sup> This was very noticeable in England during the Great War.



the sight of suffering. And so, in any society where female influence is strong, measures are taken against cruelty: against the maltreatment of animals and children, and against allowing human beings to endure the extreme privations of want. It is well-known that there is a marked difference in the treatment of animals as between the English and some other European nations, the Spanish for example. And I think this is mainly due to the greater influence of women in our society.

#### § 4. *Which is temperate.*

We may hope in the future to see a great improvement in temperance, i.e. restraint in the use of alcohol. Intemperance is a failing to which the most energetic races seem to be specially inclined. The main effect of alcohol upon man is to weaken self-control, so that the agent responds more readily and violently to stimuli, to impressions from without or to thoughts from within. That suits the men of the North European races; they like outbursts of violent activity. A good form of the tendency appears in devotion to strenuous athletics; a bad form in bouts of drinking, which give the same happy, explosive feeling in another way. A game of Rugby football and a drunken 'binge' are things of very different effect and value; but they seem to be prompted by similar conditions of mind and body.

The dynamic nature of women is very different; their energy is more continuous, but less capable of extreme efforts. The games they love are quieter and less contentious. In a way they are more ex-

citable than men; easily moved to laughter or tears, easily cheered up or depressed: but their excitements are comparatively superficial, and do not manifest themselves in the major movements of the body. No decent woman likes to lose her self-control. Intemperance in woman argues a much more serious deterioration than in man.

There are many things in drunkenness that disgust women: the stinking breath, the vomiting, the loud, coarse, blethering talk, the clumsy, ineffective movements, the mental and moral obtuseness and selfishness. It is mainly through the increased influence of women that drinking habits are regarded with less indulgence now than formerly. In *Pickwick* they are treated as amiable and amusing, a trifling infirmity of excellent men—like taking snuff. In one of Lever's novels there is a phrase in which the hero speaks with admiration of some squires in an Irish county as "the hardest-drinking set of gentlemen it was ever my fortune to meet." In my own boyhood I remember that the sight of a notorious drunkard being trundled home through the village on a wheelbarrow was regarded as eminently funny; I understand that the standard in English country life has now changed.

Advocates of temperance have alienated the sympathy of thoughtful men by insisting solely upon measures of repression, instead of considering what the psychological needs are which make men drink, and how those needs can be satisfied wholesomely. They have been building puny barriers against a flood which should be diverted into profitable side-channels. Englishmen will never cease to crave for drink so long as their lives are dull

and monotonous and they are denied proper outlets for their explosive energies. The advocates of temperance should exert themselves to give boys a taste for athletic games, and provide full opportunities for indulging in them. Another remedy is to see that young men have abundant opportunities of female society; the more that men are brought under the influence of decent women, the less likely they are to lapse into intemperance. Temperance reformers have given the impression that they view as ideal the young man who is too poor-spirited ever to break out into a 'spree,' and too shy and backward to laugh and joke with young women.

When society has been reformed in accordance with the best psychological advice, no undue tenderness will be shown towards those weak and vicious persons who persist in drinking to excess. Women suffer horribly from the intemperance of sons and husbands; and when they have full political power they will take measures to protect themselves. Perhaps they may even insist on 'prohibition,' a measure which would not do the nation any harm, but which seems undesirable at present in view of the strong feeling against it in the minds of many excellent people; it has the disadvantage also that it can be evaded easily by subterfuges which injure the social standard of morality.

§ 5. *And in which the sex-instinct is gratified by faint stimulation.*

It is not derogatory to women to say that their interest in the business of reproduction is deeper than men's and occupies relatively a greater part

of their life. In man the passion is more acute and violently stimulative upon occasion, in woman it is much quieter ; but it is more pervasive, because it belongs more to the central region of consciousness. When the influence of man is exclusively predominant in a society, the tone in regard to sex is coarse and the interest is intermittent ; in the best minds there is a note of contempt towards the whole matter.<sup>1</sup> Not so in a society where women have their proper share of influence.

The sort of man whom women like is one who is far from being sexually cold, but differs widely from the direct passionateness of the savage. He may be passionate enough upon occasion ; indeed, ought to be. But in general his sexual interest, though continuous, is moderate and well-controlled, and is directed more upon the secondary qualities of women—their beauty, their grace and liveliness, their conversation, their dress, and all the pleasing attributes in which men do not share. To such men female society is a tonic or stimulant ; they are cheered by it, take thought about their appearance, talk and laugh more than usual, and make efforts to shine in conversation. Being so much dependent upon women for happiness, they are attentive and sympathetic to them, think much of their likes and dislikes, and are compliant with their reasonable demands. All this faint gratification of the instinct is no proper substitute for having a wife of one's own ; in fact, we are inclined to despise a ladies' man who has never married. But

<sup>1</sup> This was so in ancient Rome, especially among the philosophers. The modern philosopher is far otherwise.

it is in this way that sex becomes an influence promoting culture and civilization.

Here, I think, we have the element which, when added to a punctilious sense of honour, makes up the character of the gentleman; gentlemen do not tell lies, and they do not treat women merely as females.

What is at the back of much of the opposition to socialism is the fear that in the socialist state there will be no gentility. The fear is ill-founded, if my analysis of gentility was correct. There will be more gentility under socialism because, when wealth is better distributed, men will have more leisure to appreciate the finer points of women, and women themselves will reach a higher level of attractiveness and culture. And, as women will have more power than in society, the boor will find himself everywhere sharply discouraged; but a pleasing social manner will conduce to prosperity, even more than it does to-day.

#### § 6. *And is sublimated.*

In cultured society the sex impulse is moderated, not only by faint gratification, but also by 'sublimation.' An elementary passion is sublimed when its force is partly drawn off into channels of higher activity. Among animals we may see how one kind of excitement diffuses itself through other parts of the system; in a menagerie, for example, the wolf, when feeding-time draws near, paces fiercely and restlessly up and down its cage. Among men we may illustrate sublimation from what happens in regard to the satisfaction of hunger. All men,



savage and civilized, like eating ; and so far they are similar. But the pleasure of the savage is more direct ; more like that of animals, who care nothing for the circumstances of their meal. Contrast the attitude which the civilized man adopts towards feeding ; besides the direct pleasure, he experiences a pleasant stimulation which diffuses itself widely through many channels, and makes him take an interest in objects which are connected only in an indirect way with food. Men like to have pleasant company over their meals ; or at least an interesting book, if no company is to be had : they are affected by details accompanying the food, such as the decoration of the room, the character of the service, the quality of the table-ware and cutlery. These refinements mean nothing to the savage, but much to the civilized man ; they make all the difference between a meal which is enjoyable and one which is merely a natural necessity, perhaps even between good digestion and dyspepsia. Such are some of the ways in which men become refined in the matter of eating, and in which the most fundamental of all our appetites takes on a new meaning without losing the old.

In the passion of sex the possibilities of refinement and sublimation are much greater. This is because the object of the passion, woman, has many more interesting aspects even than food ; and, as being a human personality, is connected with more of our higher activities and powers. Man gains the favour of woman not only by the distinctively manly qualities of action, but also by displaying the gifts of fine intelligence and artistic capacity ; for they are manifestly valuable in a husband. Thus can



we explain some of the most pleasing and characteristic qualities of young men. Normally they are interested in the physical excellence of men, and in the attractive secondary qualities of women; they play athletic games and write love-poetry—all that explains itself. But furthermore they carry their ardour and enthusiasm into fields which seem widely different, but with which a sex connection is not obscurely traceable. Young men of good quality, when they feel themselves coming into the powers of manhood, are disposed to appreciate all noble and beautiful objects and to embark upon spiritual adventures and discoveries; they are captivated by ideals and eager for hard and strange philosophical inquiries; they look down far-stretching vistas of science and art. All this is a secondary effect of sexual passion, and at the same time a way of mitigating its violence. Women, although they may not have reasoned the matter out, know what to look for in young men, and what style of life is good for them. They like those ardent souls, and discern in them the rich possibilities of their future.

If the influence of woman by a disastrous miracle were suddenly to cease, art would perish quite and philosophy come near to perishing. So long as Englishwomen are cultured and maintain their influence, there is no fear that those higher spiritual energies will suffer; or that, as some anti-socialists profess to fear, our society will be reduced to a dead level of commonplace materialism.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE

§ 1. *There cannot be a high intellectual level under individualism.*

I REMEMBER once listening to an essay written by an Oxford tutor, attacking the proposals of socialism because of the intellectual decline which they would cause. He drew a gloomy picture of a community of small people without any sort of intellectual distinction or social 'style,' living in small brick villas with the week's washing hanging out in the back-garden. All this seems to me to illustrate an old mental confusion. 'At present,' the tutor must have argued to himself, 'small people living in simple surroundings do not care much for intellectual things. Socialism will simplify the lives of the directing classes; therefore they will be less intellectual.' In the discussion which followed the reading of the essay someone pointed out that an expensive establishment does not confer any real intellectual distinction; and that intellectual interests are not extinguished by having the family washing done at home, provided that there are other causes which quicken them.

Sad indeed would be the prospect if social progress led inevitably to an intellectual level lower than that which prevails to-day. I have mentioned already some of the graver defects of individualist

society ; but, to a mind preoccupied with philosophic and literary interests, there is nothing more grievous than our intellectual deadness and the discouragements which oppress original thinking. The minds of working people are always interesting, because of their closeness to nature and the facts of life ; especially those who follow occupations, such as agriculture, which are primitively congenial to man. They do not themselves study, but they richly repay others for studying them. Professional men, such as lawyers and doctors, must be intelligent in order to do their work efficiently, and they have a fund of wisdom gained in their wide experience of life. But professional men do not set the tone in our society ; that is determined by our dominant class, the idle rich.

It would be a miracle if the rich were anything but indifferent to intellect. Somewhere in a book on English public-schools I have seen reflections upon the educational results of the system as exemplified by the pupils of Eton. Year by year there passes out of that great institution a stream of youths, good-natured, well-mannered, well-grown, but without intellectual interests, rather with a cynicism about the value of intellect and a contempt for knowledge. All this agrees closely with my own first-hand experience of a great school nearly equal in social standing to Eton. If I remember rightly, the author I am thinking of attributes this failure to the educational system of the school. Surely it is due rather to the social system in which the boys were reared. These boys are not fools ; they observe well enough what goes on around them. It is evident to them that their parents have no use

for knowledge, at least not for possessing it themselves: they can hire knowledge, if they want it. They thrive and are leaders of society by virtue of wealth; they are respected for what they own, not for what they know. Whyever should a boy of this class want to learn; why should he 'swot' to acquire the poor accomplishments of the 'ushers' whom his father pays to teach him?

The rich are at least removed above the pressure of economic competition; and so there are scattered among them not a few who value things of intellect. But, with the commercial people who are in the thick of the struggle, the pressure is too severe to allow the growth of intellectual interests. There are none so poor intellectually as these people, and none whose minds are less interesting to explore. The whole class is penetrated by a spirit of competitive rancour which prevents a man from taking a kindly interest in his fellows, and by a spirit of private greed which looks upon the world with a hungry gaze, indifferent to everything but what can be turned into money.

So long as our individualism endures, we can never expect much improvement in our intellectual life. In such a society a man devoted to intellectual discovery must be viewed as something strange—half crank, half prodigy. Such men have a bad time in a world dominated by alien interests, and find themselves continually in opposition.

§ 2. *Under socialism there will be more scope for intelligence in the daily business of life.*

Now for the prospects under socialism. And first let us try to get clear ideas about good intelligence

and the conditions under which it arises. We ought not to begin with the highest forms, the writer and the artist. These men appear in a strange fashion ; at present our analysis is unequal to discerning from what causes they spring : but it is certain that they appear only in a society in which there is plenty of intelligence of a lower kind, and which has reached a fair standard of general culture.

The main work of intelligence is to guide the movements of the body. The more elaborate the movements by which a creature gets its living, the higher its intelligence. The earliest advances depend therefore upon improvements in methods of procuring food. The first and greatest step of all was made when our remote ancestors took to hunting ; for that needs quicker and more varied movement than the vegetable feeding of apes. Another great function of intelligence is to foresee the future and provide for it. This is why the agriculturist is in advance of the hunter, because he is always thinking of the change of seasons and providing for future years. Then comes the stage of machinery, which needs a grade of intelligence higher still.

In the next generation or two there will be probably, quite apart from the developments of socialism, an increased application of machinery and of scientific methods to the raising of food and to processes of manufacture. But socialism will greatly increase this tendency. It will be recognized that a high *per capita* production of wealth is necessary to an advanced culture, and systematic efforts will be made to secure it. The increased application of machinery to agriculture will cause by itself a great advance in the intelligence of our population.



If mechanical production is regulated in accordance with the general interests of the community, the results will be good ; but, if our individualist system goes on, there are grave dangers to be feared. The tendency of the individualist employer, who aims at 'scientific management,' is to put all intelligent work into the hands of a select class, while reducing the rank and file of labour to the condition of living tools, who repeat a limited set of movements without variation. In this way output may be increased and expenses reduced, which is naturally the supreme concern of the employer. But in reference to general welfare the question must always be raised whether increase of output will compensate for the degradation of the workman. I hope that in the future this difficulty will be faced, and an attempt made to solve it upon psychological and moral principles. There will always be monotonous work to be done ; but this hurts nobody, so long as there is not too much of it and it is mixed up with something more intellectual. And so perhaps, in the future, arrangements will be made by which factory labour will be alternated with, say, gardening ; or the work of a clerk with that of an engineer, and so on. There may be some loss in quantity of output ; but this will be compensated by increase of intelligence, and as a consequence by increase of happiness.

In every society the main supply of men of higher intelligence comes from the professions. Now those who talk about the decay of intelligence under socialism ignore the obvious consideration that the demand for professional skill will be at least as great then as it is now. There will certainly be more education, more medicine and more scientific research ; law



probably will be greatly reduced, because there will be less private property to quarrel over ; there will probably be more art and literature, and perhaps not less religion. And professional men will not be demoralized, as they are now, by commercialism. They will be able to devote themselves whole-heartedly to their work, instead of worrying about their daily bread and forming schemes for outdoing their rivals.

§ 3. *While political conditions will be favourable to the highest intellectual production.*

It is an interesting line of speculation to conjecture what effect socialism will have upon the highest kind of intellectual production. Will literary men, artists and creative minds generally be encouraged more than they are now? It is the opinion of writers such as Mr. Mallock that they certainly will not. Let us consider, however, what are the conditions under which creative work reaches the highest level—in the field of literature for example. The general conditions can be stated, I think ; though we cannot say exactly from what causes men of genius arise.

The most fundamental condition is that there should be a certain level of wealth and intelligence ; not only because literary men need patronage, i.e. persons to buy their books or otherwise provide them with the necessaries of life, but because such men do not appear at all in very poor and backward societies. Now I have endeavoured to show that both in wealth and intelligence the socialist state will have a great advantage over the individualist. Nor is it likely that patronage will be lacking to

creative men, such, for example, as novelists. Mr. Wells has made the suggestion that every writer who has proved himself capable of first-rate work should be pensioned and raised above the fear of want, with the certainty that he will continue to produce for the mere pleasure and glory of it. This seems to me just the sort of proposal which would commend itself to a socialist state; not merely because it would enable novelists to live, but because it would decommercialize them: it would substitute a modest and assured competence for the possibility of large uncertain gains. English literary history has few cases of gifted novelists who have starved, but many cases of genius spoilt by writing for money: look at Scott and Dickens; or one might find examples nearer to our own day.

Patronage, however, in the sense of money rewards, is not the most important condition for the production of first-rate creative work. The Athenian dramatists seem to have written without any money rewards at all; while, on the other hand, under the Roman Empire after the golden age there was plenty of patronage, but very little first-rate work. I will try to explain the condition that I am thinking of, so that we may know how far we can expect to see it under socialism.

Granted that a society has wealth and intelligence and that it is not rent by civil strife or oppressed by foreign domination, we may expect to see high literary production in it, if its politics are good; by which phrase I mean that its political activity is full of life and deeply interesting, and the state as a whole an object of admiration to enthusiastic minds. This was so in the most brilliant epochs,

the Periclean in Athens, the Augustan in Rome and the Elizabethan in England. What is very much against literature is a hopeless condition of public affairs—a savage tyranny, a wooden bureaucracy, an ecclesiastical domination such as that of the Papacy in Central Italy. There are many ways of securing political vitality. The fault of the Roman imperial system was that it had no principle of progress; it had many good points under Augustus, but was certain to degenerate into despotism. The merit of democracy is that it is more adaptable than the others, and renews its vigour under various conditions.

A good condition of politics stimulates the minds of literary men; it gives them something to say and motives for saying it well. If a man finds himself in a mean and trivial environment, he may have all the gifts of the stylist and yet feel no call to exert them. The state is the greatest and most magnificent of human institutions, and dominates the mental attitude of all cultured men. We see this even in poets who are essentially frivolous, such as Horace and Ovid; they would never have written with all that exquisite finish, but for the exaltation of spirit which came to them from the imperial greatness of Rome.

And it is only when political affairs are favourable that we can expect to find a good standard of taste in the public. When the ruling class has the opportunity of an honourable career in which a man can display his best qualities, then its tone rises: it gives a sympathetic hearing to first-rate genius; it appreciates high themes of literature and is keenly critical of workmanship. We think of Mæcenæ

and his circle mainly as the generous patrons of the Augustan poets ; but perhaps their talk was even more helpful than their gifts of money and farms.

Whether socialism will be favourable to literature must depend upon the quality of the ruling class and the effect which the system has upon their minds. Will the service of the state attract men of large views and enterprising character ? Will it appeal to their imagination and inflame their enthusiasm, Will it make them feel that they are contributing to exalt the national greatness ? I see no reason to doubt that this spirit will prevail in the England of the future ; and, if this is so, we may be sure that gifted men will arise to put into literary form the aspirations of the governors of the commonwealth.

§ 4. *And original thinking will not be repressed, as it is now, by orthodoxy.*

Upon philosophy and thought generally the influence of political conditions is perhaps even greater than upon fine literature, and so we need not fear any speculative decline under socialism. At any rate there will not be then, as there are now, agencies which set themselves against inquiry and embitter the lives of original men. In that reactionary book of his, *The Man versus The State*, Herbert Spencer represented socialism as a sort of super-Prussianism, in which men would be drilled and regimented to the extinction of all individuality. Whyever should socialists want to repress individuality ? Men do not persecute unless they are in danger. We know why the Inquisition wanted to burn Galileo ; it was because he threatened the

basic ideas of Catholicism, and consequently the revenues of its priests. But how can socialism be hurt by any advance of science or philosophy?

There are two great organized forces in our present society, the church and the capitalist system, which rest upon foundations that have much to fear from the inquiries of original men. The hatred of novelty in the leaders of these systems, their intolerance and Toryism, are not the expression of a blind herd-instinct, but a well-founded anticipation of danger. Rousseau's life-story is the classic example of the sufferings which a corrupt society will inflict upon a thinker who questions the foundations upon which it stands. So it is to-day, though the sinister powers set about their work less openly. The Christian churches have lost the authority which enabled them to burn Giordano Bruno and Vanini, and to drive Rousseau from exile to exile; but their influence is still very great and pervasive. It is practically impossible for a thinker holding an official position to teach freely in regard to religion. This is the main cause why the level of philosophic study in this country is much lower than it might be. By far the most interesting part of philosophy is metaphysics, and all metaphysical inquiries issue in religion; unless a thinker can show the bearing of his speculations upon the relation of man to God and upon the destiny of the human soul, he loses half his power. Greek philosophy is so splendidly stimulating to us, even after all these centuries, because its teachers always spoke with perfect freedom about those great questions. The deadening hand of orthodoxy was never laid upon them.

I think that socialism will put an end to the incubus



of ecclesiastical domination. This does not mean that socialist principles are inconsistent with Christianity, or indeed prejudice religious controversies in any way. The common sense of the matter is that religious systems at all times all over the world are extremely conservative; whereas a socialist society should be progressive and adaptable. A socialist state must therefore, in its own interest, confine ministers of religion to their own sphere; they should not be allowed to interfere officially with government, nor law-making, and above all not with education. It is doubtful whether any educational establishments ought to be tolerated which are under sectarian control or are committed in any way to religious creeds. When this reform is carried through there will be a universal gain in freedom of thought and much more opportunity for original men.

§ 5. *And by capitalism.*

Ecclesiastical bodies are well organized and their tyranny over thought is palpable; that of capitalism is more indefinite, but even more potent and widely spread. Capitalism represses speculative originality, not of set design, but because moneyed men vaguely feel that it is dangerous. Any thinker who is really interested in society is sure to question the foundations of our social structure and to put forward proposals for mitigating the domination of the rich. It is inevitable therefore that all the great host of persons who are committed to support the capitalist system should be inclined to discourage originality.

The most potent agency for intellectual purposes, outside the schools, is the newspaper press. The



ordinary Englishman reads few books, and those of poor quality for the most part ; but he reads newspapers continually, largely as a relief from boredom. Now the newspapers of our day are necessarily capitalist : they can be established and carried on only by very rich men ; they draw their chief revenue from advertisements which are inserted by, or appeal to, the capitalist classes. The mainstay of a newspaper consists in its advertising contracts, which are made for large amounts and for considerable periods of time. Journalists are as enlightened as any class in the community ; perhaps more than any, because they know so much of what is going on behind the scenes. But they are quite in the hands of capitalists and must shape their policy in accordance with the interests of their employers.

To affront the mighty power of capitalism is hazardous, and most of the rash spirits who attempt it fare badly. It would be hopeless, but that capitalists quarrel among themselves, and so the man who wants to tell the truth does get some measure of opportunity. The simplest method of suppressing unwelcome opinions is by neglect. Leave a revolutionary book unnoticed in the newspapers, and most people will never hear of it. When this becomes impossible, men of anti-capitalist opinions are abused without any regard for truth or probability. In my own younger days Messrs. Hyndman and Cunnings-Graham were conspicuous platform-advocates of socialism ; and I remember that from reading Tory newspapers I formed an idea of them as a pair of disreputable and seedy adventurers. Years afterwards I learnt with amazement that one was an unimpeachable specimen of upper middle-class

respectability, and the other an aristocrat, whose only failing was the super-excellence of his clothing. In America at the present time Mr. Upton Sinclair, who has earned the gratitude of the civilized world by his exposures of capitalistic methods, is suffering a bitter and unscrupulous persecution from mercenary journalists.

Under socialism the character of the press must be greatly changed and perhaps its influence upon public opinion will be diminished. We shall probably read these daily sheets much less; because, for one thing, their financial, amatory and criminal 'sensations' will have ceased to interest us or have ceased altogether. The great advertising revenue will diminish—perhaps be made illegal, as a system of public dupery. What newspapers are left will use words to enlighten and not to darken counsel, and will receive with intelligent criticism any new ideas which promise to help mankind in the development of its spiritual life.

## CHAPTER XIV

### HAPPINESS

§ I. *The citizens of the socialist commonwealth will be well-disposed towards it and towards each other.*

IT is time to sum up the general relations in which commonwealth and citizens will stand to each other under socialism, and to indicate the results which may be expected for the increase of happiness.

The whole organization of the community to which I have given the name of commonwealth will be directed towards the welfare of the citizens, and there will be no interest which will thwart this aim. In our own society at present the promotion of welfare is greatly obstructed by privilege. All around us there are institutions about which we can only say that they came into existence somehow, perhaps by the operation of some sinister interest, and that they have never been changed, because some one or other profits by them. Take for example the leasehold system as applied to house-property. From the standpoint of public utility it is utterly indefensible—even conservative writers speak bitterly of it—and yet it continues to exist. The leasehold system and many other things of the kind are the result of “beneficent private war.” Under the stress of private war men have established privileges

in different parts of the community—fortified castles, as it were, in which wealth may be accumulated and guarded against enemies. Speaking without metaphor, we may say that privileges consist in claims upon the stock of wealth produced by the community without corresponding performance of service. Our landowning class, for example, enjoys vast privileges; and there are many others. Most of these privileges are handed on from generation to generation in virtue of the privilege of birth. At present the commonwealth sanctions such claims to the detriment of the general body of citizens.

When the government uses its vast power in favour of privileges, the mass of the citizens must be ill-disposed towards it. They must feel that they are being held down and exploited by the holders of privileges, and mocked by the apologists who set out to persuade them that the privileges of the rich are really conducive to the welfare of the poor. On the other hand, where the citizens are convinced that the commonwealth is aiming singlemindedly at their welfare, and that it is using for the purpose all the science which is available, they must be well-disposed towards it. Possibly a citizen here and there may be discontented on points of detail; but this need not alienate him from the commonwealth, so long as he is convinced that it is animated by goodwill. In any case he has full liberty of advocating some other system and of persuading his fellow-citizens to adopt it.

And the citizens must be well-disposed towards each other; they are co-operators together in the noblest and most beneficent of all great institutions. There is a well-known magnificent passage of Burke

about the citizen's proper attitude to the state. "It is to be looked on with reverence, because it is not a partnership in things subservient only to the gross animal existence of a temporary and perishable nature. It is a partnership in all science ; a partnership in all art ; a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection." The words do not agree very well with Burke's own Whiggism, and with his attacks upon the principles of the French Revolution ; but they describe well enough men's relations to each other under socialism. And therefore there will be general friendship ; for nothing promotes that so much as working together in order to achieve excellent purposes.

§ 2. *They will then have it in their power to be happy.*

Under these circumstances the citizens must upon the whole be happy. Apart from physical well being, the main conditions of happiness are congenial work and friendly relations with one's fellow-men. A socialist community will certainly be a busy one and ought to be a friendly one. This then is one solid result which we could show for all the elaborate organization of socialism, a great increase in the happiness of the citizens.

Happiness is distinct from virtue ; but it is a condition of virtue, and also a result of it. When a man is miserable from physical disease, it is impossible for him to be fully virtuous ; because the disease hinders him from feeling those interests which are the main part of virtue. And he is injured similarly by causes of unhappiness which are not physical, such as by evil political conditions in his

country. If the government for example is in the hands of unsympathetic aliens, as it was in Northern Italy under the Austrian domination, then the activities of public life are poisoned, and patriots become conspirators, with all the moral deterioration that conspiracy involves. And so it is also when men are made unhappy through wrongs inflicted by internal oppression from their own countrymen; as when they are embittered by the persecutions of religious bigotry, or by the economic oppression of employers and capitalists. Such things prevent men from taking an interest in their neighbours, except as fellow-rebels against an evil system which is spoiling their lives. On the other hand, when a man's health is good, when he is able to enjoy the life of his home and when he is free to co-operate with his neighbours in excellent activities, then he has full opportunity to lead a virtuous life; and if he does so, the result will be happiness.

Society cannot be organized directly for happiness; it is not man's primary business to be happy—apart from the fact that the conditions of happiness are all indefinite, all dependent upon the infinitely various capacities of men. We should not care to work and plan for the happiness of a "city of pigs," such as is described in Plato's *Republic*. No statesman in Australia would make it part of his programme to secure the happiness of the poor native tribes; he might not wish them to suffer, but he would not see moral value in the gross pleasures which satisfy the ordinary 'blackfellow.' But in a civilized community statesmen can as a practical matter look out for manifestations of unhappiness, and, when they see them, consider if they cannot be re-



moved somehow by readjustment of the commonwealth.

So I think it will be under socialism. There will be no pledge that everyone is to be made happy. The directing statesmen will have their definite moral standards and will see that they are observed, even at the cost of some unhappiness. It is very likely, for example, that the stricter regulations which will be made to check various kinds of intemperate excess will make some men unhappy. There will always be some unhappiness somewhere, till that indefinitely distant millennial period when the nature of man is perfectly adjusted to a perfectly civilized life. The existence of unhappiness in a community will not necessarily call for political reform; though, when it becomes considerable, it will be regarded as a danger-signal. What we may hope from a socialist organization of society is that on the one hand it will remove disabling causes of unhappiness, and on the other hand promote those various interests which are the content or filling of a virtuous life. When the individual man is able to satisfy those interests without hindrance, he is necessarily happy.

## CHAPTER XV

### STANDARDS OF TASTE

§ I. *The moral reform which socialism will involve will change our standards of taste.*

To begin at this point in my book to offer criticism upon our standards of taste may seem like venturing late into a new field of inquiry ; but in this way I hope to illustrate further the improvement which reform of our social organization will produce in character. The defects in our standards of taste which I wish to mention are those only which can be traced plainly to features of society with which this book has hitherto concerned itself. I believe that in the future we shall cease to admire many things we now deem admirable, and admire many things to which we are now indifferent ; socialism will change our morality, and with new moral standards we shall have new standards of taste.

We know well how sharply we disagree with standards which are current in societies remote from our own. In the Icelandic sagas we recognize many fine things, but are disgusted by their blood-thirstiness and cruelty. *The Arabian Nights* (in expurgated translations) are still read with pleasure by children ; but to an adult mind they are almost intolerable because of the wretched social conditions which they reveal—the insolence of sultans and

slavemasters, and the degradation of women. The same point might be illustrated from plastic art. Much work which Orientals prize is condemned by us. Take such an object as the Chinese vase in Matthew Arnold's poem.

And as a cunning workman in Pekin  
Pricks with vermilion some clear porcelain vase,  
An emperor's gift—at early morn he paints,  
And all day long, and when night comes the lamp  
Lights up his studious forehead and thin hands.

Vases in this style are no longer pleasing to a sensitive mind ; they are full of mechanical and slavish labour, they must have meant a dull, unhappy life for the workers who produced them. Similar thoughts occur to us when we visit the Pyramids of Egypt : we think with pity of the thousands of wretched captives, straining in the heat at the great stone blocks under the whips of the foremen ; we think with detestation of the proud king who looked on from his lofty canopied seat at the men who were slaving for his glory and gloated over their sufferings.

I think that in the same way a better distribution of wealth will make us revise many of our present æsthetic judgements. In previous chapters I have attempted to say what moral changes may be expected to result from socialism ; but any statement has always had to be made in abstract terms, and therefore be wanting in vividness. I hope a few pages of æsthetic criticism, showing by examples how the new moral standards will take effect upon taste, will bring the standards themselves more plainly before the reader's mind.

§ 2. *We shall cease to admire many of our present objects of decoration, because they are slavish.*

The changes which may be expected will be due largely to a change in the character of our leading class. In England the influence of the leading class is especially great, because the mass of the people have so little independent power of æsthetic judgement. For some reason or other the artistic capacities of the English are not above mediocrity; we show poorly as compared with a truly gifted nation, the ancient Greeks for example, or the modern French.

With the present constitution of society our leading class is, and must be, plutocratic. For historical reasons we in England are somewhat ashamed of this fact, and loath to recognize it frankly. The practical omnipotence of wealth is more apparent in America; there the social constitution is the same as ours, but its realities are not camouflaged as they are with us by picturesque survivals of antiquity—titles, coats of arms, pedigrees and pretentious hyphenated names. Every American knows who are the leaders of society, and why they hold that enviable position. There is no show anywhere in America of standing up against money: the lawyers are entirely in the hands of the capitalists; capitalists have a strong hold upon higher education; every journalist knows that he can write only such things as capitalists approve; the politicians take their stand upon capitalist platforms. The domination of our leading class is based upon the solid realities of wealth and power; but it goes far beyond practical affairs, and enslaves the ima-

gination also of the classes below them. We poorer men cannot hope to lead those lives of good fortune, but we can read about them and enjoy their aspirations and emotions at second-hand; we occupy houses and buy furniture which imitate theirs at a distance; and we wear clothes which we hope that our wealthy neighbours will not utterly despise.

Now, socialism will end the supremacy of riches. The men who will lead society in the future will be different; and so they will admire different things in art and literature.

In criticizing plutocratic taste it will be convenient to begin with decoration, by which I mean the ordinary adornment of objects of use and pleasure, such as houses, furniture and clothes. Other matters may be more important artistically, but this shows most plainly the artistic sensibility of the people.

About the middle of last century Ruskin wrote a book full of beautiful enthusiasm which he called the *Seven Lamps of Architecture*; it is sometimes mentioned, but not often read, I fear, by the present generation. It is doubtful if Ruskin could be called a socialist in the modern sense; but there was never a mind more truly in harmony with the spirit of socialism, or more definitely opposed to the plutocratic ideals of his day. To his devout and reverent mind life appeared under the image of a vast Gothic cathedral; and upon one of its many altars the genius of architecture had set its seven lamps, those of Sacrifice, Truth, Power, Beauty, Life, Memory and Obedience. Now modern society, competitive and plutocratic, seems to me something very different from this; it suggests rather a great stall in a market-place at evening, kept by

a cheap-jack, or travelling auctioneer, full of bad and gaudy merchandise which the cheap-jack is vaunting at the top of his brazen voice. In front of the stall are large naphtha lamps or flares throwing their flickering light upon the outspread merchandise. These flares I think of as being like the principles of taste in our society.

The flare which blazes brightest over our market-stall is the principle of Domination. English objects of adornment are not so slavish as the Chinese vase (an emperor's gift), but they carry all about them evidences of labour approximating to the servile condition. The plutocratic man lives for domination; it is for that indulgence that he surrounds himself with a great establishment and takes measures to secure for himself on all occasions the evidences of mercenary respect. If we go into the houses of the rich, we see that all the things they use have been made by persons who laboured on them for wages, uncheered by any of the motives which make labour pleasant to men.

Rich houses are comparatively few; and so it would not matter much if this bad principle were limited to them. But it extends downwards through every grade of society. The room in which these words were written, the study of a country rectory, though far removed from magnificence, would illustrate my meaning sufficiently well. Take, for example, the carpet. It is woven in an intricate pattern which has no artistic merit, because it represents nothing in heaven or earth. Its variously coloured figures are quite meaningless, but they would, if they had been woven by hand, have cost the weaver many hours of tedious labour.



The study armchair and the coal-scuttle are ornamented in a style which is equally painful; they are plentifully adorned with grooves and flutings which have a speciously slavish look, though in fact they were made by machine-driven tools. And the same character is seen in the wall-paper, the mouldings of the ceiling, the bookcases, the curtains and other woven stuffs in the room.

§ 3. *Wasteful and full of pretence.*

Another flare is the principle of Waste. Wealth is no pleasure to the plutocratic man unless he can advertise the fact that he is rich; and the easiest means of doing this is to waste conspicuously the wealth which poor men covet, and for the want of which they lead restricted lives. Among barbarians we see this tendency very plainly displayed. Every barbarous chief thinks it necessary to his self-respect that he should waste in a conspicuous way the substance which his subjects provide for him. Not only does he act so himself, using up more food, clothing and house-room than anyone needs for his personal comfort, but he keeps people about him, courtiers, retainers and menials, who waste vicariously for him.<sup>1</sup> In our own society this is one function of the numerous servants who are kept by the very rich. They are literally 'wasters,' persons whose express function it is to consume wealth. Somewhere in one of George Eliot's novels she describes a great English country-house, evidently one which she knew well in her native War-

<sup>1</sup> See T. Veblen's admirable book, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*.

wickshire, in which day by day more food and drink was consumed and more light and firing burnt than in the whole of the neighbouring village. I do not suppose that this profusion was in any way displeasing to the villagers. Poor people do not judge these things from the standpoint of sociology. I once heard a rich man severely blamed by a poor woman because he took the coals off his study fire before going to bed ; she thought it showed a despicable meanness of character. So do the evil standards of our ruling class corrupt the morals of society.

If we cannot ourselves waste expensive things, at least we like to read about those who can. The last English novel which fell into my hands was Mr. Arnold Bennett's *Grand Babylon Hotel*. It was full of opulence. The book was not meant to express Mr. Bennett's own social convictions or his views upon good taste ; it was written as a serial story to enhance the circulation of a periodical. Mr. Bennett knows his public, and he took care to put into his serial what the public wants. It is all about an American millionaire, rich beyond the dreams of avarice, who stays with his lovely daughter at a London hotel of incredible sumptuousness. After many surprising adventures, the young lady marries a German prince, and her father settles upon her a dowry of £200,000 a year. Throughout the tale we move in an atmosphere of lavish expenditure—music rendered by most skilful and highly paid musicians, gilded saloons and thick Turkey carpets, magnificent and obsequious waiters, exquisitely cooked dishes and rare choice wines. The millionaire and his daughter are not represented as getting much enjoyment from all the good cheer ; that would be gross

and even ridiculous. But they can always order the food and wine and send it away half-consumed. At present the public likes to hear of such things, but I do not think it will continue to like them. Youth and beauty are always charming; but the *mise-en-scène* must change from age to age. If Mr. Bennett were writing now, he would not marry his lovely American to a German prince; and, if he were writing thirty years hence, he would not 'locate' her in the Grand Babylon Hotel.

Much of the decoration which we actually use is not really costly, but only pretends to be so. Pretence is the third flare which lights up our cheap-jack market stall. Here we have a twofold baseness; our make-believe ornaments pretend to be wickedly and gloriously wasteful, but are in reality very cheap and machine-made. The rector's study-carpet looks as if the weaver had bent long hours over it, like the vase-painter of Peking; as a fact, the fabric was woven at high speed by a machine, and is cheaper than the roughest hand-made work. There is pretence in all the decoration around us in modern life—everywhere substitutes and disguises: sometimes we simulate expenditure of labour; sometimes we cover cheap material with dear material and pretend that the whole is solid, as when we glue mahogany over deal.

Fortunately decoration now is not so dishonest as it used to be; upper-class people at least no longer 'paint and grain' the woodwork of their homes, or cover brick-houses with a thin layer of stucco, while leaving the brick unadorned in the back elevation. And there is less need to jibe at the pretentious, because Ruskin has dealt so faith-

fully with it. But I venture to differ from Ruskin in one point ; I do not think that expensive materials should be used, merely because they are expensive, in architectural structures or anywhere else. Ruskin justifies such expense by what he calls the Lamp of Sacrifice. The only sacrifice which seems to me good is the personal expenditure of labour and thought upon worthy objects. It does not seem good to set other people to work laboriously upon objects, and then use them, even to decorate a church. But, if wasteful expense is bad, the make-believe of wasteful expense is doubly detestable.

§ 4. *There will be change in literary taste ; much of the old work will become alien to us.*

Literature touches life at more points than decoration ; and therefore social conditions manifest themselves even more decisively in it. And the changes of taste there can be brought more to an objective test. When a book becomes unfashionable, it ceases to be bought and goes out of print ; whereas a piece of furniture may cease to be made, no one quite knows why, and yet be generally approved as good. What I complain of in our literary criticism is that it lags so far behind the times. It is not quick to apprehend the changes which are just beginning to appear—that is excusable : it also goes on praising old work long after it is out of harmony with the whole system of ideas by which we actually live.

There are difficulties in using a contemporary book to illustrate the dependence of literary taste upon standards of morality. Mr. Bennett's serial, men-

tioned above, would have done very well for the purpose; domination and waste flare through it on every page. Still better would have been one of the novels of Mr. W. E. Norris, who always writes about people with large private incomes—county families with country seats and houses in Belgravia. Just because of their wealth, and for no other reason, we are expected to be interested in these people, in their ups and downs of fortune, in their courtships and adulteries. There must be a good sale for this kind of literature—otherwise it would not be produced; there must be a large class of readers who admire this kind of life: but a socialist will only marvel that such things can be. So far from following with sympathy the careers of Mr. Norris's characters, he is tempted to cry out passionately that such people should be abolished from the earth—chloroformed, or at least put through some vigorous but wholesome training which would turn them into useful citizens. But, after all, most of my readers have probably never wasted time over Mr. Norris's books. Something which is better known, some book of Mr. H. G. Wells for example, would illustrate my points only in part; the best contemporary work is already deeply influenced by a spirit akin to socialism. Perhaps the clearest proof of the penetration of such ideas is to be found in the comic papers; the attitude of *Punch* towards rank and wealth is distinctly less respectful to-day than it was twenty years ago.

I will choose for illustration then an old masterpiece, a play of Shakespeare which everyone knows, and which critics are still wont to speak of as entirely admirable. Such a work may be viewed in two



ways ; as an effort of mental construction and insight, or as representing situations, persons and experiences which enlist our sympathies. It may be admired from the former point of view long after we have grown cold to it from the latter. In many of the ancient Greek plays, those wonderfully perfect products of art, the gods are utterly detestable and the passions of the human personages have mostly become alien to us. And so it is with much of Shakespeare.

I choose the play of *Twelfth Night*, not because it is specially suitable, but because it happens to be the last I have seen acted ; the impression from seeing a play is much more powerful than that which we get from reading it. *Twelfth Night* belongs to a period of English society long previous to the establishment of our present plutocracy. The moral objections which the socialist feels to it are partly those which might be evoked by any work pervaded by deep respect for wealth and power ; partly they are evoked by a spirit of domination which bases itself more upon privilege of ancestry than upon wealth. I mention this latter point merely to illustrate the conservatism of our critics ; if they do not see that *Twelfth Night* is utterly out of harmony with present society, they are not likely to appreciate the distinctive standpoint of a socialist's criticism.

I know that *Twelfth Night* is usually spoken of as a charming work of art. I can only say that, as I watched it recently, it made a painful impression on my mind. I give the reasons for the impression, so far as I can analyse them, just for what they are worth.



The main action of the play is concerned with the love affairs of the Duke of Illyria and the Countess Olivia. Now in himself the Duke is not a notable person ; he stands for no good cause and represents no principle which intelligent people now can uphold. It is not a matter of special importance whom he marries, or whether he marries anyone at all. The mere fact that he and Olivia are represented as young and handsome is enough to give them some interest ; but that by itself is not adequate to carry the action of the play. Shakespeare of course relied upon the interest which must be awakened by their exalted rank. In the Elizabethan age the affairs of a reigning duke were always deeply interesting. But we have got past all that. The proper feeling of to-day is commiseration for this young fellow, who seems to have had some good qualities and was at any rate free from the grosser vices of the tyrant ; we are sorry to see him placed in so lamentable a station of life, and half entertain a hope, which we know to be absurd, that he will have the good sense to hand over his dominions to a republican form of government. As for his palace, his gold-laced robes, his flunkeys and the abject attentions of his courtiers—such things should fill us with disgust. Seeing the gold lace, we think of the poor lace-working women bending with straining eyes over all this costly vanity ; we think of the tailors squatting cross-legged and stitching at the needlework of his slashes and galoons. The flunkeys also do not impress us ; we may be sure that they revenge themselves for their humiliations by jeering at their master when they grow confidential downstairs in the servants' hall.

The secondary comic relief of the play is given by the drinking scenes between Sir Toby Belch, Olivia's uncle, his half-baked friend Sir Andrew Aguecheek, Olivia's domestic clown or jester and other servants. Now to thoughtful persons such scenes are altogether painful. These wretched drunken men reeling about the stage, blethering and bawling their senseless tavern catches, are revolting to those who know what alcoholism really means. In the days of Elizabeth the feeling was different ; ' drunk as a lord ' was not a merely humorous phrase, it represented a recognized privilege of the nobility. In a proper state of society Sir Toby Belch would be secluded in a retreat for dipsomaniacs. At any rate, he and his friend would not be allowed to parade their beastly vices ; and, if they did, no one would laugh at them.

Perhaps the most pitiable character in the play is the Countess Olivia's clown or domestic fool. It was not evident, as I saw the play acted, whether he was really half-witted or only pretended to be so. Probably the former. But, in either case, how shocking ! What are we to think of the good taste and humanity of the proud Countess who kept this poor creature about her house to amuse her at dinner, or whenever her vacant mind had nothing else to occupy it ? Could any English lady of to-day even think of such a thing ?

The principal comic relief of the play, and the chief interest for a modern audience, is given by Malvolio. I know that the misfortunes of Olivia's presumptuous steward are supposed to be amusing ; I can only say that, with every wish to be amused, I could not laugh at them. Malvolio is a dignified

and most respectable servant, who by way of a practical joke on the part of Sir Toby Belch and his friends is induced to make love to his mistress. In punishment for this presumption he is, in a moral sense, pilloried or tarred and feathered for the amusement of the audience. Now the sight of very painful punishments and public humiliations was not at all displeasing to the British in Shakespeare's time. Public hangings were very frequent ; heretics and witches were burnt alive in market-places ; within the lifetime of Shakespeare's father men and women were publicly boiled alive ; every week in London persons were fastened in the pillory, and there, if unpopular, were pelted with rotten eggs and stones, so that they were actually done to death or their eyes knocked out. Such were the punishments which good citizens thought right to inflict upon persons who had forfeited public sympathy. Now, Malvolio was evidently regarded by Shakespeare as having forfeited sympathy by the mere fact of making love to his employer, whatever encouragement he might fancy he had received. There is to-day a strong caste-feeling in England, which is very noticeable and offensive to those who are used to Scottish life, where it hardly exists. But in Elizabethan England it was stronger still. Unequal marriages are not infrequent in our modern plays ; but in Shakespeare's day they would be felt to be intolerably shocking, as displeasing as the marriage of a white girl to a negro is to us, and equally unsuitable to be represented on the stage.

The further we get away from such social conditions, the less we are pleased by the humiliations of Malvolio. Under the best of circumstances a

house-steward or butler is in an unlucky position ; he has no home of his own and no private family, and therefore has only half the dignity of a man. If he goes wrong, he must, of course, be chastised ; but I cannot imagine any decent man of our time getting pleasure from giving the chastisement, or in seeing it given. Two or three generations ago there were parents and schoolmasters who seem to have enjoyed thrashing defenceless little boys—at least Mr. Wackford Squeers is supposed to have done so. And even so late as the days of Charles Dickens there were no doubt persons who enjoyed seeing chastisement inflicted upon butlers who could not hit back at their tormentors. In one of Mark Twain's books there is an account of the tarring and feathering of two unlucky vagabonds who had put an American township up against them. Mark Twain, who must have witnessed a scene of this kind, evidently thought it horrible ; but the mob seems to have enjoyed it. I do not think that a tarring-and-feathering would be enjoyed by the kind of people who read this book ; nor would they really enjoy watching the humiliations of Malvolio, if they did not feel it must be all right because it is Shakespeare.

To sum up, the chief motive of *Twelfth Night* is drawn from caste ; a form of caste which is based partly upon wealth, partly upon ancestry. Any caste-motive has already become somewhat displeasing to modern society, and will be utterly detestable under socialism.

In saying all this I do not mean to put any blame upon our greatest English poet. He was unrivalled in his knowledge of humanity, and made consummate

use of his material. But he was a theatre-lessee with the livelihood of many subordinates in his hands ; he was also an excellent man of business. And he knew what would please his audience. The soundness of his judgement is attested by the fact that he was able to retire on a handsome competence long before the usual age. He worked under the conditions of his time, as every artist must ; we could not expect him to think of the taste of audiences three hundred years after he had passed away.

§ 5. *The standards of taste under socialism will conform to the new social organization.*

As to the standards which will prevail in the future, it is hard to say much more than that they will be in harmony with the new social organization, and will therefore differ greatly from those which prevail now. The following are the social facts which seem likely to have most influence.

There will be little or nothing of what we now call 'money-grubbing.' There ought consequently to be a great increase in the artistic sensibility of the people. When the pressure of all these sordid cares is gone, then the human spirit will grow and flower as God meant that it should. We marvel at the artistic vigour of the Middle Ages ; one of the main conditions, I think, was the absence of economic competition.

Persons who are interested in decoration will do much more with their own hands ; they will not lazily pay people to work for them. If people want their walls decorated, they will mostly do it them-



selves. We shall then not see so much wall-paper with silly conventional patterns turned out by machinery. We shall see many more coloured pictures done by the householders, and fewer colourless engravings bought in shops. The great mass of the pictorial work produced will doubtless show a low degree of skill ; but this will not neutralize its intellectual and moral value for the producers. They will gain the immense advantages which come from first-hand knowledge of artistic processes and from the power to use the tools of the craft. There will still flourish the very skilful professional artists whose works are shown in exhibitions. But the public will study their works more in the hope of learning how their effects are achieved than in the spirit of non-performing connoisseurship which is so common to-day. Great painters will be teachers primarily, just as professional golfers are. All golfers take pleasure in seeing perfect golf ; but they do not wish Vardon and Braid to play their games for them. And so the great landscapists of the future will show us how to paint, and we shall follow their teaching as well as we can ; or we shall ourselves evolve a style, which may be a poor thing but our own.

In a socialist society clothes and furniture will be much simpler than they are now and more home-made. There will be manufacture, of course, otherwise the community would be poor ; but not manufacture of decoration. If ladies for example desire embroidery on their dresses, they will work it themselves. And so of the furniture. And such decoration as our houses contain will be honest ; we shall avoid anything of the character of veneering.



There must also be a great change in architecture. The houses must be smaller and simpler, and all buildings more suitable to wholesome human needs. A college for example would not be built in the style of a great baronial castle, with a formidable towered gateway protecting nothing.<sup>1</sup>

What the changes will be in literature is a subject too vast and too uncertain to be dealt with here; because, even more than with art, the course of development depends always upon personalities whose appearance no one can foresee. In regard to fiction and drama the tendency will be to put the interest more on to development of character and less on to situations. For the literature of the future a great deal of the present situational interest must be quite lacking. There will be very little about money; no ambitions or struggles to gain a fortune or to avoid losing one, no pecuniary intrigues or crimes. The other main interest of our day is the amatory; that will always remain, but greatly changed. We know how we feel towards Thackeray's heroines—poor, innocent Victorian creatures, bullied and patronized by their lovers, with no assets but their sex-attraction and a few domestic virtues. Well, I think that we shall have something of the same feeling towards most of the fictional women of the early twentieth century. They will strike us as insipid and downtrodden. But we shall recognize that most of what we dislike is due to their economic dependence and their pitiable lack of instruction. Anyone who has had the luck to enjoy the friendship of well-educated women knows how

<sup>1</sup> The basest example known to me is Mansfield College, Oxford.

immensely superior they are in attractiveness to the Victorian type of Thackeray. We cannot predict in what forms of literary art the novelist and dramatist of the future will present them ; but we may be sure that the tale of human love, when a master tells it, will not be less beautiful and touching than of old.

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