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The Meaning
of ADULT
EDUCATION

by Eduard C.
Lindeman

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Social Discovery*

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**THE MEANING OF
ADULT EDUCATION**

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To
ALFRED DWIGHT SHEFFIELD

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FOREWORD

FOREWORD

"EACH of us," wrote Anatole France, "must even be allowed to possess two or three philosophies at the same time," for the purpose, I presume, of saving our thought from the deadly formality of consistency. No one can write about education, particularly adult education, without deserting at various points all "schools" of pedagogy, psychology and philosophy. Incongruities are obvious: one cannot, for example, be a determinist and at the same time advocate education; nor can idealism be made to fit the actualities of life without recognition of the material limitations which surround living organisms. One cannot, that is, make use of these opposed points of view if they are conceived to be mutually-exclusive. But it is pre-

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cisely because I do not so regard them that all are included in this essay. Light comes from learning—just as creation comes everywhere—through integrations, syntheses, not through exclusions.

The essay which follows will be best understood in the light of personal experience. My formal education began at the age of twenty-one—after I had spent twelve years in various occupations and industries. I could, of course, speak the English language (at least, the Americanized version which workers used) but it was not my natural medium of communication. My initiation to formal education was, next to the unsuccessful attempt to adjust myself to automatic machines, the most perplexing and baffling experience of my existence. The desire somehow to free education from stifling ritual, formalism and institutionalism was probably

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born in those frantic hours spent over books which mystified and confused my mind. I had already earned my way in the world from the age of nine, had learned the ship-building trade, had participated in strikes, and somehow none of the learning I was asked to do seemed to bear even the remotest relation to my experience. Out of this confusion worse confounded (confounded confusion, some one has called it) grew the hope that some day education might be brought out of college halls and into the lives of the people who do the work of the world. Later I came to see that these very people who perform productive tasks were themselves creating the experience out of which education might emerge.

In 1920 I visited Denmark, not primarily to study education but to pick up lost ancestral threads—a quest which arose from my dislo-

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cated youth. Here I came into contact with a civilization which, by sheer contrast with hate-ridden Europe, seemed like a cultural oasis in the desert of nationalism. Whereas the victorious nations were grasping for territory, Danish statesmen were conducting a scientific study to determine how much of Schleswig-Holstein might be regarded as being integral to Denmark. All of it was within their reach, for Germany was incapable of making effective protest even through the doubtful means of plebiscites; they, the Danes, wanted not what overheated nationalism might have demanded but merely what scientific research could validate. And then I saw farmers studying in peoples' colleges (Volkshochschulen), studying for the purposes of making life more interesting; these same farmers were members of comprehensive coöperative enterprises—dairies, creameries,

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cheese-factories, egg-shipping associations, slaughtering-plants, banks, stores, insurance societies, et cetera—enterprises which performed so many economic functions that the farmers were freed for other activities; and there could be found neither wealth nor poverty in the land.¹ Here, it seemed to me, was a culture which included many of the attributes which have been desired since the time of the early Greeks; besides, it was founded upon rigorous science and a degree of economic freedom—both of which were absent in Greek culture.

Beneath the easily-recognizable distinctions in Danish life—collective economic organization, interest in literature, art and recreation, absence of imperialism, et cetera—one finds an educational ferment such as motivates no other people in the modern world. Since the days of Grundtvig, which were also the days of Den-

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mark's material and spiritual impotence, Danish adults have striven to close "the yawning abyss between life and enlightenment." "What the enemy has taken from us by force from without, we must regain by education from within," they said and forthwith laid the foundations for a system of education which continues so long as life lasts. Adult education, one begins to learn after prolonged observation, has not merely changed citizens from illiteracy to literacy; it has rebuilt the total structure of life's values.

Can adult education do as much for us? Our situation is, obviously, out of range of comparison: we are a large nation in area and in population; we possess no homogeneous culture; and we have already become wealthy. In addition, we have become habituated to a method of achievement which is in essence antithetical to intelligence. We measure results

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quantitatively. We could have an adult education movement in America almost overnight; advertising psychologists and super-salesmen could "put it over" for us for a cash consideration. But, what gets "put over" never stays "put." The chief danger which confronts adult education lies in the possibility that we may "Americanize" it before we understand its meaning.

I have therefore chosen the theme: *The Meaning of Adult Education*. The topic is, obviously, preliminary. We shall discover *our* meanings when we are engaged in the process of adult education, not in advance. My treatment of the theme is also partial since I have, following the advice of Walt Whitman, "let myself go free." The material which composes this essay has been brewing for years but it has been formulated within a short space of time—

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short, that is, for one who is accustomed to aim at accuracy of statement. It goes forth, not primarily to explain and convince, but to challenge. I trust that proper credit has been given to those whose thought has stimulated mine.

"Greystone"

High Bridge,

New Jersey.

August, 1926.

I

**FOR THOSE WHO NEED TO BE
LEARNERS**

"We need, then, to reintegrate, to synthesize, to bind up together the different forces and influences in our national life. We need a greater courage: seriousness, a greater courage in self-knowledge, a greater unity; and changes in the machinery of our education which leave our religious and political life in their existing incoherence, or even add to it, will not serve our purpose."

—A. E. ZIMMERN.

"The principle we wish to establish is that the important thing in this connection is an increased demand on the part of all kinds of people for educational facilities, which may roughly be termed non-vocational, since they are concerned really with restoring balance to a man who has, of necessity, developed to a great extent one or other of his characteristics for the purposes of his livelihood or for the satisfaction of his reasonable desires."

—ALBERT MANSBRIDGE.

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EDUCATION conceived as preparation for life locks the learning process within a vicious circle. Youth educated in terms of adult ideas and taught to think of learning as a process which ends when real life begins will make no better use of intelligence than the elders who prescribe the system. Brief and rebellious moments occur when youth sees this fallacy clearly, but alas, the pressure of adult civilization is too great; in the end young people fit into the pattern, succumb to the tradition of their elders—indeed, become elderly-minded before their time. Education within the vicious circle becomes not a joyous enterprise but rather something to be endured because it leads to a satisfying end. But there can be no genuine joy in the end if means are irritating, painful.

Generally therefore those who have "completed" a standardized regimen of education promptly turn their faces in the opposite direction. Humor, but more of pathos lurks in the caricature of the college graduate standing in cap and gown, diploma in hand, shouting: "Educated, b'gosh!" Henceforth, while devoting himself to life, he will think of education as a necessary annoyance for succeeding youths. For him, this life for which he has suffered the affliction of learning will come to be a series of dull, uninteresting, degrading capitulations to the stereotyped pattern of his "set." Within a single decade he will be out of touch with the world of intelligence, or what is worse, he will still be using the intellectual coins of his college days; he will find difficulty in reading serious books; he will have become inured to the jargon of his particular profession and will af-

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fect derision for all "highbrows"; he will, in short, have become a typical adult who holds the bag of education—the game of learning having long since slipped by him.

Obviously, extension of the quantity of educational facilities cannot break the circle. Once the belief was current that if only education were free to all intelligence would become the proper tool for managing the affairs of the world. We have gone even further and have made certain levels of education compulsory. But the result has been disappointing; we have succeeded merely in formalizing, mechanizing, educational processes. The spirit and meaning of education cannot be enhanced by addition, by the easy method of giving the same dose to more individuals. If learning is to be revived, quickened so as to become once more an adventure, we shall have need of new concepts,

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new motives, new methods; we shall need to experiment with the qualitative aspects of education.

A fresh hope is astir. From many quarters comes the call to a new kind of education with its initial assumption affirming that *education is life*—not a mere preparation for an unknown kind of future living. Consequently all static concepts of education which relegate the learning process to the period of youth are abandoned. The whole of life is learning, therefore education can have no endings. This new venture is called *adult education*—not because it is confined to adults but because adulthood, maturity, defines its limits. The concept is inclusive. The fact that manual workers of Great Britain and farmers of Denmark have conducted the initial experiments which now inspire us does not imply that adult education is

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designed solely for these classes. No one, probably, needs adult education so much as the college graduate for it is he who makes the most doubtful assumptions concerning the function of learning.

Secondly, education conceived as a process coterminous with life revolves about *non-vocational* ideals. In this world of specialists every one will of necessity learn to do his work, and if education of any variety can assist in this and in the further end of helping the worker to see the meaning of his labor, it will be education of a high order. But adult education more accurately defined begins where vocational education leaves off. Its purpose is to put meaning into the whole of life. Workers, those who perform essential services, will naturally discover more values in continuing education than will those for whom all knowledge is merely

decorative or conversational. The possibilities of enriching the activities of labor itself grow less for all workers who manipulate automatic machines. If the good life, the life interfused with meaning and with joy, is to come to these, opportunities for expressing more of the total personality than is called forth by machines will be needed. Their lives will be quickened into creative activities in proportion as they learn to make fruitful use of leisure.

Thirdly, the approach to adult education will be via the route of *situations*, not subjects. Our academic system has grown in reverse order: subjects and teachers constitute the starting-point, students are secondary. In conventional education the student is required to adjust himself to an established curriculum; in adult education the curriculum is built around the student's needs and interests. Every adult

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person finds himself in specific situations with respect to his work, his recreation, his family-life, his community-life, et cetera—situations which call for adjustments. Adult education begins at this point. Subject-matter is brought into the situation, is put to work, when needed. Texts and teachers play a new and secondary rôle in this type of education; they must give way to the primary importance of the learner. (Indeed, as we shall see later, the teacher of adults becomes also a learner.) The situation-approach to education means that the learning process is at the outset given a setting of reality. Intelligence performs its function in relation to actualities, not abstractions.

In the fourth place, the resource of highest value in adult education is the *learner's experience*. If education is life, then life is also education. Too much of learning consists of vicari-

ous substitution of some one else's experience and knowledge. Psychology is teaching us, however, that we learn what we do, and that therefore all genuine education will keep doing and thinking together. Life becomes rational, meaningful, as we learn to be intelligent about the things we do and the things that happen to us. If we lived sensibly, we should all discover that the attractions of experiences increase as we grow older. Correspondingly, we should find cumulative joys in searching out the reasonable meaning of the events in which we play parts. In teaching children it may be necessary to anticipate objective experience by uses of imagination but adult experience is already there waiting to be appropriated. Experience is the adult learner's living textbook.

Authoritative teaching, examinations which preclude original thinking, rigid pedagogical

formulae—all of these have no place in adult education. "Friends educating each other," says Yeaxlee,² and perhaps Walt Whitman saw accurately with his fervent democratic vision what the new educational experiment implied when he wrote: "learn from the simple—teach the wise." Small groups of aspiring adults who desire to keep their minds fresh and vigorous; who begin to learn by confronting pertinent situations; who dig down into the reservoirs of their experience before resorting to texts and secondary facts; who are led in the discussion by teachers who are also searchers after wisdom and not oracles: this constitutes the setting for adult education, the modern quest for life's meaning.

But where does one search for life's meaning? If adult education is not to fall into the pitfalls which have vulgarized public education, caution

must be exercised in striving for answers to this query. For example, once the assumption is made that human nature is uniform, common and static—that all human beings will find meaning in identical goals, ends or aims—the standardizing process begins: teachers are trained according to orthodox and regulated methods; they teach prescribed subjects to large classes of children who must all pass the same examination; in short, if we accept the standard of uniformity, it follows that we expect, e.g., mathematics, to mean as much to one student as to another. Teaching methods which proceed from this assumption must necessarily become autocratic; if we assume that all values and meanings apply equally to all persons, we may then justify ourselves in using a forcing-method of teaching. On the other hand, if we take for granted that human nature is varied, changing

and fluid, we will know that life's meanings are conditioned by the individual. We will then entertain a new respect for personality.

Since the individual personality is not before us we are driven to generalization. In what areas do most people appear to find life's meaning? We have only one pragmatic guide: meaning must reside in the things for which people strive, the goals which they set for themselves, their wants, needs, desires and wishes. Even here our criterion is applicable only to those whose lives are already dedicated to aspirations and ambitions which belong to the higher levels of human achievement. The adult able to break the habits of slovenly mentality and willing to devote himself seriously to study when study no longer holds forth the lure of pecuniary gain is, one must admit, a personality in whom many negative aims and de-

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sires have already been eliminated. Under examination, and viewed from the standpoint of adult education, such personalities seem to want among other things, intelligence, power, self-expression, freedom, creativity, appreciation, enjoyment, fellowship. Or, stated in terms of the Greek ideal, they are searchers after the good life. They want to count for something; they want their experiences to be vivid and meaningful; they want their talents to be utilized; they want to know beauty and joy; and they want all of these realizations of their total personalities to be shared in communities of fellowship. Briefly they want to improve themselves; this is their realistic and primary aim. But they want also to change the social order so that vital personalities will be creating a new environment in which their aspirations may be properly expressed.

II

**TO THOSE WHO HAVE FAITH IN
INTELLIGENCE**

"Thinking cannot be the function of an exclusive caste, still less a function which can be inherited. . . . The first task of intelligence is the establishment of a civilized standard of life."

—C. DELISLE BURNS.

"The most important scientific question of to-day is one that is philosophical: namely, the validity of Science itself as a means of interpreting experience and of acquiring knowledge in respect of what we call the world about us."

—F. G. CROOKSHANK.

"For reason is experimental intelligence, conceived after the pattern of science, and used in the creation of social arts; it has something to do. . . . Intelligence is not something possessed once for all. It is in constant process of forming, and its retention requires constant alertness in observing consequences, an open-minded will to learn and courage in readjustment."

—JOHN DEWEY.

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PSYCHOLOGISTS have not yet told us what intelligence is nor how it operates. In fact those psychologists who lay claim to superior wisdom insist that the intellectual process—thinking—has very little to do with the actualities of life. Real adjustment, they affirm, takes place on motor levels; what we are pleased to call thinking is merely a human apology, i.e., a way of rationalizing conduct. Thinking furnishes no energy for acting but merely uses left-over energies for purposes of justifying actions.

We cannot stop here to engage in the current controversy. Before taking sides, it will probably be advisable to view this conflict (which may turn out to be intellectual in character)

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with perspective. Fashions come and go in scientific as well as in religious dogmas. At least it seems true that intelligence must henceforth take its place with emotion, impulse and neuro-muscular activity—not superior to but co-ordinate with these other drives and controls of behavior. Reason has not been dethroned but rather democratized. Conduct is best suited to the purposes of the organism which proceeds from harmonious synthesis (integration) of mental, emotional, instinctive and motor levels. Rational conduct is not predominantly intellectual; rather it is conduct in which reason or thought plays a proper part. And rational conduct, no matter what certain psychologists say, is still the goal of both civilized and so-called uncivilized people. Thought is somehow mixed with action and although we can no longer lay claim to superior capacities for thinking, we are

not likely to abandon the attempt to understand its nature and function. "Man is unwilling to remain in ignorance of the motives of his own conduct," writes Unamuno, the great distruster of reason. The more rational of us may add: he will never be satisfied to leave off trying to understand the meaning of his conduct to himself, to his environment, to society and to the universe.

If then "intelligence has something to do," what can its function be? More precisely, in the interests of what purposes may adults be induced to increase their intelligence? The advantages of *skill*—proficiency in doing something—are obvious. We must adjust ourselves with respect to some aspect of skill or be eliminated from the lists of effective persons in the modern world. The utilities of *information*—accumulation and retention of facts—are like-

wise apparent. And the bulk of our conventional education consists of a pursuit for *knowledge*: a way of comparing facts and noting their relevancy within categories. (Intelligence includes these various aspects of learning, but performs an additional function.) Intelligence is *reasonable*: seeks out the logic of events; is *objective*: seeks the factual reality which lies back of appearances; is *critical*: views isolated facts and phenomena in relation to *milieux*: presses facts to the level of relation to other relevant facts; is *tentative*: arrives at conclusions which are easily revised. These are all significant functions and combine to designate a human being of desirable qualities. To intelligence, however, belongs another and transcendent service.

An intelligent person sees facts, not merely in relation to each other but in relation to him-

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self. Indeed, one of the first marks of intelligence is to recognize that "mental views of the real are aspects of reality." Intelligence then becomes a way of appropriating facts—a way of integrating facts with the total aspects of personality. Only the educated specialist naïvely sees facts as discreet, objective and external units of experience. He speaks of the "laws of nature" as if man's mind were not somehow mixed with the formulation of those laws. Facts, objectively discovered and described in so far as language and mathematical symbols will permit, are empirically important but not nearly so important in an ultimate sense as the method of their discovery and man's disposition of them in the affairs of the world. From the place where the capitalist stands, private ownership of property and the tools of production appears to be conducive to the high-

est human welfare; to the rationalizing capitalist, acquisition and ownership, and welfare are the pertinent factors of this equation; taken together all three constitute another significant fact. But many persons who are not capitalists reverse this formula; looking out upon the scene from another point of view (i.e., as another organism or personality in a partially different environment) these people see the capitalist and his idea-system as inimical to the highest human welfare. Intelligence steps in with the aim of seeing as many relevant facts as can possibly be revealed; its first discovery will be that both the capitalist and the anti-capitalist have filtered facts through the meshes of their personalities and that consequently they have in reality created two new sets of facts. The most significant aspect of this knowledge is its relation to the interests and values of the respective per-

sons. Again intelligence enters, not to discredit one or the other person but to seek a method for validating the involved interests. Briefly, one of the functions of intelligence—its critical mission—is to give full recognition to the personal equation in all fact-finding and fact-using.

Intelligence is, moreover, experimental. Not all of man's behavior consists of immediate responses to specific stimuli. Our significant acts are those which we "stop to think" about. Whatever concept we may utilize for describing the nature of stimulus, it still remains true that completed responses may be postponed. When we deliberate about two or more courses of action we are interrupting the stimulus, delaying the total response. However short the interval between stimulus and response, here is intellect's opportunity. Intelligence cannot

force the organism to do something outside its capacity but it can—either by means of past experience or projected experience—test consequences. It cannot wholly determine action, nor can it foreordain results but it can bring both to the level of awareness or consciousness. The person who knows what he is doing has taken the first step toward intelligent behavior. *The person who knows what he wants to do and why is intelligent.* But he cannot learn the how and the why of conduct by rules and precepts and other persons' experiences; he must experiment on his own behalf. Intelligence is goodness in the sense that one cannot purposefully or positively experience the good unless conscious experimentation in the realm of values accompanies activity. Habitual goodness lacks dynamic qualities—is in fact not goodness in any real or living sense. Our habits

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can aid us in remaining alive in a changing world but only intelligence can furnish the means for progressive adjustments. Intelligence is not merely the capacity which enables us to profit by experience; it is the function of personality which gives experience its past, present and future meaning. Habits belong to existence, intelligence to living. Life becomes a creative venture in proportion to the amount and quality of intelligence which accompanies conduct.

Psychologically speaking, intelligence is the ability to learn, the capacity to solve problems, to utilize knowledge in evolving, continuing accommodations to changing environments. Intelligent persons are teachable, adaptable. Since life is growth—continuous change—and since environments are never static, new situations are forever arising, and each new situa-

tion confronted makes fresh demands upon intelligence. Knowledge and fact are relative to situations. Consequently growing personalities are conditioned by evolving intellectual capacities. We can conceive of a static intelligence only in terms of the paradox of static organisms. Education is the process and experience is the means for achieving evolutionary intelligence. The end is life transfused with meaning.

That the quantity and the quality of intelligence or ability to learn varies with individuals goes without saying. This does not imply, however, that education should be limited to those who happen to possess this capacity in terms of preconceived and arbitrary norms. If we are to make the most effective use of whatever quantity of intelligence is available, we shall need to grant the right of each personality to

rise to its own level. This means that increased inventiveness will be required to discover the kind of education which will most effectively meet the needs of varying capacities. Formal educational discipline cannot be accepted as the criterion for ability to learn. The fact that over half the children in our public schools stop at the eighth grade and that only ten to twelve per cent of those who enter high school complete the course may constitute an indictment, not against intelligence, but rather against the formalism of our educational system.

Adult education presents a challenge to static concepts of intelligence, to the standardized limitations of conventional education and to the theory which restricts educational facilities to an intellectual class. Apologists for the status quo in education frequently assert that the great majority of adults are not interested in learn-

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ing, are not motivated in the direction of continuing education; if they possessed these incentives, they would, naturally, take advantage of the numerous free educational opportunities provided by public agencies. This argument begs the question and misconceives the problem. We shall never know how many adults desire intelligence regarding themselves and the world in which they live until education once more escapes the patterns of conformity. Adult education is an attempt to discover a new method and create a new incentive for learning; its implications are qualitative, not quantitative. Adult learners are precisely those whose intellectual aspirations are least likely to be aroused by the rigid, uncompromising requirements of authoritative, conventionalized institutions of learning.

III

WITH RESPECT TO THE USE OF POWER

"We can have power only over ourselves. . . . This kind of power, power-with, is what democracy should mean in politics or industry, but as we have not taken the means to get a genuine power, pseudo-power has leapt into the saddle."

—M. P. FOLLETT.

"Obviously the appeal to force can only show who is strong, not who is wrong."

—M. C. OTTO.

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"KNOWLEDGE and human power," said Francis Bacon, "are synonymous, since the ignorance of the cause frustrates the effect." Man feels himself propelled, motivated, controlled by forces external to himself. When the mood of pessimism overtakes him he comes to believe that the ultimate meaning of life is restricted to these involuntary effects which constitute his behavior and which proceed from unknown causes. But never "in our dejection do we sink" beyond the sight of hope; melancholia is temporary. Human nature is predisposed to optimism. We never wholly abandon the struggle to become what Disraeli thought us to be; namely, the "instruments who create circumstances."

Science, curiously enough, furnishes grounds

for both our expectations and illusions. Scientific discoveries present cumulative evidence of our dependence upon inexorable natural laws, but it is likewise the scientist who teaches us that "the earth yields; step by step death itself gives ground; and shall we think of the stars only to fear them and to read our fate in them?"³ Indeed, Western Civilization has become so far imbued with scientific elation that we all tend to agree with Singer in defining progress as "the measure of man's coöperation with man in the conquest of nature."⁴ Our world is dynamic precisely because of this faith in man's capacity to direct his destiny. And, we still believe with Bacon that the power which gives man this assurance within the order of nature is his capacity for knowledge. We obey his injunction "to begin to form an acquaintance with things" with the

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accompanying confidence that our knowledge *of* will lead to control *over* the objects of our environment. Our achievements have been prodigious. We can, by taking thought, change into man's servants forces once inimical to his welfare; we can equip the white man for life in the tropics although it is not "natural" that he should live there; we can design machines which do the work of men; we are able to shrink distances and defy time; in short, we can by the applications of science alter, transform the natural environment. Human beings exercise *power over* nature.

Limits to this exercise of power are obvious. Man succeeds in accommodating himself and his purposes to the order of nature by means of adjustments *to* and *with*, not against natural processes. Human nature is itself a part of the order of nature and cannot escape its

naturalness. We are free and independent only insofar as freedom and independence are aspects of organic activity in a changing environment. The power which we exert over natural forces is germane, not external to nature's domain. We build false hopes when, as Bukharin says, we enter the "confusion between the *feeling* of independence, and real *objective* independence.⁶ Nevertheless, our power over nature, such as it is, has been achieved by intellectual processes. Scientific method is a discovery, if not an invention, of man's mind. Moreover, this power which utilizes natural forces has come to be also the most potent manipulator of our lives. Inhabitants of the modern world must somehow effect an adjustment between the knowledge of nature (science) and their thinking. We are all subject to this power; we should all also so far

as possible understand its significance. The hiatus between a life dominated increasingly by science and a life rationalized in terms of unscientific or anti-scientific thought represents one of the most appalling deficiencies of our civilization. The remedy does not lie in simply adding more scientific subjects to school curricula. Only by sustained continuous intellectual effort can we keep abreast of our science and its ensuing power over our lives. If we stop for ever so brief a time, dynamic science will leap ahead of our comprehension. Adult education presumes, then, to serve as one of the means by which the mind may be kept fresh for the assimilation of that knowledge which is synonymous with power.

The urge to power is a many-faceted motivation for our behavior. We desire power over nature and, alas, many of us also strive for

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power over other human beings. Indeed, during the rise of capitalism power over natural resources and forces has frequently been appropriated solely as a means for accumulating wealth; and wealth is, for us at least, the symbol of power over others. The "Great Society" has come to be a vast net-work of power-groups, each vying with the other for supremacy. Nationalism and imperialism are merely outward manifestations of this "pseudo-power" which degrades us all; beneath these more glamorous units lies the pervading economic structure of our civilization based upon a doubtful competitive ethic and avowedly designed to benefit the crafty, the strong and the truculent. Industrial organization evolves steadily into a complex of separatist groups—financiers, employers, stockholders, workers, consumers—each of which

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learns in time to conceive of its interests in terms of ultimate opposition to the interests of the others. The system can operate only under the dispensation of discontinuous truces. Warfare is the rule of the game.

Nothing positive results from mere shifts of power; this is the lesson which labor movements need to learn. If half the time devoted to revolutionary propaganda could be directed toward refining the aspirations of workers, a real transformation would sooner or later take place. Premature workers' control may, indeed, do nothing more than accentuate old evils: the desire to do unto others what they have been accustomed to do unto us is an invariable by-product of sudden power-exchanges. If workers bring into industrial control nothing better in the way of a philosophy of power than the present concept of capital-

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ists and employers, the net gain will be zero. We stand in need of a revolution of the mind—not a mere exchange of power-groups—before an economic revolution can transform industry into a coöperative enterprise, before “power *over*” is transposed into “power *with*” in industry. Labor will inject a new and creative element into the control of economic forces when workers are actuated by cleaner motives, sharper intellectual insights and finer wills. In the meantime, labor’s future strategy will, without doubt, depart gradually from its struggle-technique, that is, from the irrational method of attempting to prove who is wrong by demonstrating who is strong. The trade union of the future will be a creating, not merely a fighting, organization. This implies, obviously, a transformation of trade union habits, habits which are now so deeply

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imbedded in the behavior-patterns of the older leaders that they will find it difficult if not impossible to make the adjustment. Workers' education, already the most vital sector of the adult education movement, forecasts a new phase of industrial readjustment: the displacement of the use of force by the use of intelligence. Through the process will come new accessions of power for the worker, but if his education results in real intelligence as distinguished from mere mental cunning, it will be power which leads to new concurrences and integrations, not to the renewal of old frictions. Labor will come into its own when workers discover better motives for production and finer meanings for life.

We desire, if we are normal human beings, power over our environments, over the mechanized forces which surround us, over the fac-

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tors which control our labors: power, that is, over the external objects and energies with respect to which our significant conduct is conditioned. We refuse to acknowledge ourselves "creatures of circumstances"; if there is for us a potential area of choice, we mean to find it. And so we go forth with our scientific tools and technologies to conquer nature, to develop ever-increasing resources of power. Likewise, some set forth to learn the methods for conquering people, confident also that power vested in themselves will validate the assumption that men shape events. Success in both spheres is ours: man with his little but restless brain has transfigured the face of the earth and dictators now rule in seven nations. We are capable of developing sufficient intelligence to secure at least partial control over things and we know

how to govern people by coercion. But we have thus far failed completely in devising intelligent procedures for socializing power. We still stumble along in the sphere of human relations with no guide other than the worn-out, discredited, cruel presumption that power is achieved by victory over another person or group: that *my* advantage must mean *your* disability; that efficacy for *me* can exist only through *your* disqualification.

No human being can safely be trusted with power until he has learned how to exercise power over himself. We are slowly coming to see that all "power-grabbers" and dictators who reach out for unusual power are in reality compensating for inner deficiencies of their personalities. To wish for power is thoroughly normal; to want power in order to make my-

self great while you are made small is abnormal. Again a problem, the solution of which depends upon an extension of intelligence, confronts us—one that cannot be transferred to the younger generation. Children do not, it is true, inherit dispositions to power over others; they acquire this urge by watching their elders. They could, by proper educational stimulus, be conditioned for more wholesome social relationships. But the momentous and necessary adjustment which all children must soon or late attack is accommodation to the adult world with its complex of habits, customs, *mores* and traditions. If these compulsions of the adult process are too rigid, no genuine adjustment can take place, only capitulation and compromise. Youth, fluid, generous and adventurous, attempting to adapt its life to adulthood which is rigid, competitive and

contemptuous—this is the perfect equation, the quotient of which is endless and useless conflicts, subterfuge and dishonesty. Somehow we must learn to cleanse the dreams of old men so that the visions seen by young men will not turn into bitterness. “Whoso neglects learning in his youth, loses the past and is dead for the future” and Euripides might have added: whoso neglects learning in old age contaminates the present.

Adults who once more venture forth on the pathway of learning will do well to give attention to Bacon’s advice; knowledge is surely one of the chief aspects of power. And, he who would be at home in the modern world will need to “form an acquaintance with things.” If, however, he is content to remain on this level, he will fall short of the genuine power which is wisdom. To find the clew for educa-

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tional effort which includes knowledge of the self he will need to go beyond Bacon, perhaps to the Greeks. "Know thyself" taught Socrates. "Learning is ever in the freshness of its youth, even for the old," said Æschylus.

IV

IN VIEW OF THE NEED FOR SELF-EXPRESSION

"O to be self-balanced for contingencies."

—WALT WHITMAN.

**"For in both the life of man and the life of nature,
individuality remains the irreducible surd."**

—HORACE KALLEN.

IN VIEW OF THE NEED FOR SELF-EXPRESSION

INTELLIGENCE is consciousness in action—behavior with a purpose. The person who is vividly aware of his activity as well as the goal toward which the activity is directed becomes conscious of both his powers and limitations. We evaluate a personality by two generalized questions: What constitutes the validity of his goals? And, is his behavior effective with respect to his chosen goals or ends? If we disapprove of his ends, we will naturally condemn both his ends and means. On the other hand, if we sanction his ends but suspect his means, we will regard him as a deficient personality but capable of being educated. Vocational education is designed to equip students with the proper means for arriving at their selected

goals. Adult education goes beyond the means and demands new sanctions, new vindications of ends.

In the previous chapter we have dealt with power—one of the ends or goals for which people strive. Power itself, that is, directive energy, is not to be condemned but we need to ask pertinent questions regarding the manner of its use. Power-over, even when exercised by the most benevolent of despots, invariably debases both those who command and those who obey. Any force, in fact, which by its function deprives those concerned from participation and choice belittles and degrades their personalities. The king, dictator, employer or teacher who does things for others which they might have accomplished for themselves thereby weakens the capacity and worth of citizens, workers and students. Personality has func-

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tions which, if not brought into action, disintegrate. A functional personality is hence one which realizes its powers, that is, somehow gets itself expressed. Therefore only those selves which have been self-discovered can get realized, expressed. Knowledge of the self discloses what the self is capable of expressing.

In the modern world of specialism only a small sector of personality is set into motion through vocational activities. We all tend to become specialists—which means that we all tend to become fractional personalities. This involves not merely an immediate loss to ourselves—a shrinking of our personalities—but in addition is a great loss to the world since we cannot have broad and generous societies composed of narrow and limited citizens. Educators, aware of the responsibility of the school to the child's evolving self, have pro-

posed innumerable experiments for encouraging self-expression on the part of beginning pupils. Some schools—still too few in number—base their entire approach to the education of the child upon methods of discovering latent interests, urges to self-expression. These experimental efforts are to be encouraged. Nevertheless, the child reared in an educational atmosphere of self-expression will be rudely shocked to find that he has somehow to make his way in a community which regards self-expression as an aspect of abnormality—a community which asks for but one of the functions of the multiple self. Again we see that a society of articulate selves will never be created by youth; the task belongs to those adults who still retain sufficient courage to refuse social representation on the basis of fragmentary personality.

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Adults who make bold to revive the once vivid interests of their total personalities will need to submit themselves to a process of *reëducation*. Their habit-systems will resist; the vocational organization in which they labor will continue its demand for specialized, partial functions; they will need to be motivated by ends which are either exterior or in opposition to the incentives which lead to pecuniary success. The whole of these environmental resistances tends to tempt the organism toward conformity; why go through the bothersome toil of reëducating my habits if the present ones serve to keep me alive, well-fed, well-clothed and well-housed? Most Americans will probably find no satisfactory answer to this argument so long as our unique prosperity endures. The eye of the needle is forever small for those tempted into self-indulgence by

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wealth. Some, however, are coming to believe with William James that "the squalid cash interpretation put on the word success is our national disease." They also look upon some of our absurd educational assumptions as symptoms of this same illness: we could not have developed such barren maturity, such lack of intellectual interest in adults, had we not first of all misconceived our goals. ". . . if life is to be lived not only, but won to excellency," we shall do well to listen to these few who point out to us the impossibility of building a wholesome society out of partially starved personalities.

What then are intelligent personalities to express, give forth? First of all: individuality, uniqueness, difference. Personality is in essence a synthesis of the bodily and mental functions acting in relation to environment.

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Such synthesis can never be the same in two organisms. Individuality is the qualitative relation between elements of personality. We live and move in a social environment but we have our being within the organic unity of particularized selves. Difference is the base of personal integrity. Only the unintelligent fear what differs from themselves. We should, if we were bravely intelligent, beg individuals to give us their difference, not their sameness. Nothing exciting can happen in a world of uniformities and homogeneities. Divergence is the factor which induces a life of succeeding contingencies—a life, that is, in which individual conduct is of import.⁶

Communities on the road toward intelligence recognize "that creation comes from the impact of diversities"⁷ but thus far the privileges of freely expressing individual difference have

been restricted mainly to artists and the extremely wealthy. The latter are exempted from the monotonies, not because society expects them to develop productive gifts, but merely because our inverted standards make wealth and privilege synonymous. Artists justify their freedom by their works. Great art is always an expression of a released personality. And, life is not the least of arts. Persons in fiction or life called "characters" are those who have frankly expressed their singular traits—those who have resisted the pattern of conformity. In this sense we can achieve character solely by expressing what is peculiar to ourselves. Many persons attain this level of zestful living by virtue of native gifts; others need to fortify themselves against conventional routine through the exercise of intelligence. We lose our timidity and gain the courage of

self in proportion to our knowledge of what life is about. Adults who have learned to respect those values which can arise through individual expression alone already live in the land where life's meaning may be discovered.

Personalities, conscious of their powers and appreciative of their individualities, will inevitably feel the urge to participate in public affairs; they will wish for some share in creating the environment which furnishes the stimulating background for their lives. Mere *feeling* of difference may lead to idiosyncrasy; differences which do not get themselves realized in action may readily become negative regrets and frustrations. Once we lose the sense of active, directive participation in affairs, we sink to the level of inaction, or what is worse, silent opposition. Politics and industry, for example, provide unusual opportunities for self-express-

sion to those who have the power to manipulate. The citizen, however, progressively loses interest in government, and the worker grows apathetic over the efficiency of industry because each in his sphere feels that governing and managing make no use of his personal gifts. Merely voting, that is, counting each personality as one, does not, as Miss Follett⁸ has demonstrated, reach to the bottom of the difficulty. We have, indeed, become weary of being counted; we want to count for something.

If we are to create opportunities which will call forth contributory personalities, small beginnings in the realm of the manageable will bring more rapid progress than attempts at reforming such vast and unwieldy units as industry and the state. Each of us is capable of bringing intelligent influence to bear somewhere—in home, neighborhood, community,

trade union, coöperative society, trade association, et cetera. Adult education specifically aims to train individuals for a more fruitful participation in those smaller collective units which do so much to mold significant experience. All education worthy of the name aspires to become art rather than skill, and adult education is devoted to the task of training individuals in "the art of transmuting . . . experience into influence";⁹ the adult learner becomes "*a spokesman for ideas*"—ideas which represent his personality and which constitute his peculiar contribution to life. We need, then, to be educated for self-expression because individuality is the most precious gift we have to bring to the world—and further, because the personal self can never be adequately represented by proxy. Personality becomes dynamic in terms of intelligent self-expression.

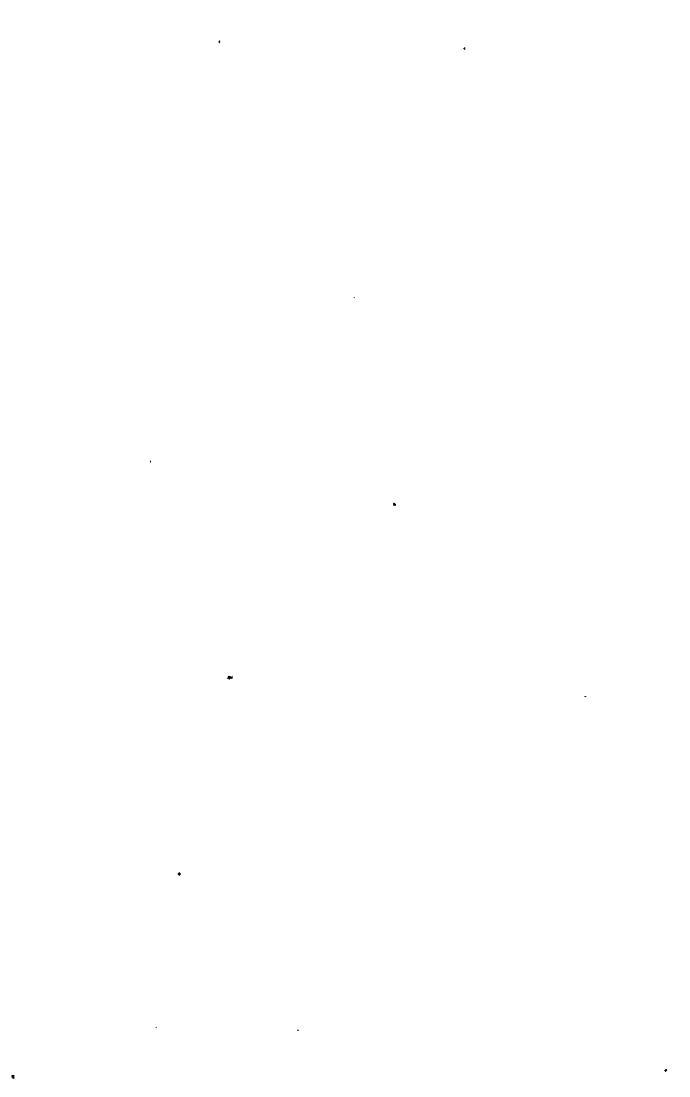
One of the aspects of diversity in human beings which conventional education too frequently overlooks is the variety of recreational or enjoyable experiences. Recreation, like most other elements in modern life, tends to become stereotyped, standardized. We are all supposed to enjoy baseball; and if we are college students, football and dancing; if club members, auction bridge or golf; et cetera, et cetera. The hours of play, alas, come to be also compelling hours. But, this is a denial of the very essence of play. Necessity may lead us to capitulate to machine-industry with its consequent limitations of movement and self-expression, but what compulsion exists to make you pretend to enjoy the same pleasures which fascinate me? Play is nothing but exercise if it does not permit the free expression of personal inclination, individual enjoyment. Recreation,

should above all else be movements of freedom, response which call into play the total personality, activity of grace, release, gladness. Here, if anywhere, individual choice must be supreme, else even in play we learn to abandon personal integrity and worth. Adult educators will be alert to discover what activities give joy to particular students; they will be on the watch to uncover temperamental hobbies, pursuits which may seem ludicrous to others but which to the doer bring peculiar satisfactions. Indeed, adult education will have justified itself if it does nothing more than make adults happier in their hours of leisure. Grown-up moderns are pathetic precisely because they know how to achieve everything save pure delight for its own sake. Even in games, the end—victory—and not the process is dominant. When my thought is upon adult education memory invariably re-

calls the Danish farmer who spent his leisure hours painting scenes of his farm and neighborhood. One of the canvases—showing a typical Danish rural scene—which adorned his modest home pleased me so much that I offered to purchase it; he not only refused the bargain but severely reprimanded me for presuming to place a pecuniary valuation upon the product of his recreation. Necessity compelled him to be a farmer but he had all his life dreamed of expressing himself in art. He was a most efficient farmer but farming did not bring into play the whole of his personality. A young German instructor in his local folk-school (school for adults) had released in him this aspiration to paint and had aided him toward skill; now at the age of fifty he finds felicity in painting pictures which express something of his personality—something which necessary work could

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never have called forth. Even this activity did not exhaust his individual resources: I recall a memorable night spent in his home when the topic of discussion was the poetry of Walt Whitman—the American who knew how to “let himself go free.” He called our Walt “the Danish farmer’s poet” and shame taunts me still when I think of all he found in Whitman’s poems—all that had escaped me.



V

**FOR THOSE WHO REQUIRE
FREEDOM**

“. . . and a man is free in whom all capacities for activity and enjoyment flow out to the extent of their strength. . . . It has been assumed that freedom means the absence of limitation, which is correct but misleading; for it explains by a negative, and has therefore led to the absurdities of individualism . . . the value of freedom lies in the original impulse, and not in the absence of an obstacle.”

—C. DELISLE BURNS.

“Learning does not liberate men from superstition when their souls are cowed or perplexed.”

—GEORGE SANTAYANA.

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THE times are not attuned for a sympathetic reception of ideas on freedom. If John Stuart Mill's *Essay on Liberty* were to be given to the contemporary public for the first time, it would surely fall upon barren ground. We now think of power and freedom in Machiavelian terms: we continue to talk about freedom while we acquire power for its suppression. And all because we have persistently misconceived the nature of liberty!

Our error may be traced in at least three directions: (a) freedom was thought of in terms of absence of control—a purely negative concept; (b) freedom was associated with the spurious theological doctrine of free will; (c) all practical means for achieving freedom were

vitiating by false separations of inseparable unities—individual versus society, citizen versus state, will versus instinct, et cetera. We have, in short, consistently sought to be free *from* things which appeared as obstacles: Rousseau sought liberation from civilization, Jonathan Edwards strove to endow human nature with a will which would free him from all bodily and worldly compulsions, and John Stuart Mill envisaged individuals freed from the constraints of public opinion. The *naïveté* of these negative strivings for freedom are revealed the moment we attempt to visualize an individual cut off from the civilization of his time, endowed with a will dissociated from his body, and existing in a society which allows only *his* opinions to count. We then begin to see that human beings can never be free *from* anything save in a most superficial sense; we

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cannot be parts of a natural universe, a civilization and a society and at the same time also be separated from these wholes of which we are parts. There is no "One and the Many,"—merely many ones in the one. The doctrine of freedom *from* is not merely static and negative; it is also irrational and harmful. The personality on the way toward disintegration strives to be free from realities; or, perhaps it is more correct to say that the attempt to escape realities is the first indication of a disintegrating personality. Only the insane complete the process.

Human nature cannot violate nature. We exist within a natural environment and all our behavior is a response to, a function of, the multitudinous stimuli which arise either within or without our bodies and operate according to natural laws which we dimly understand.

Stimuli or causes are somehow related to responses or effects in us as well as in the universe of which we are parts. We can therefore be free only within the scheme of nature. Successful human adjustment is never wholly *to* or *against* nature, but always partially *with*; we cannot be free *from* ourselves or the natural objects which surround us, and consequently the only freedom worth talking about is *freedom-with*.

The intelligent alone are free for only by knowing what it is we can be free *with*, can we find freedom at all. "Nothing," writes Arthur Ponsonby, "is more pathetic than the confidence with which humanity believes it can master vast forces which are quite obviously beyond human regulation." Nothing, perhaps, save the brutality, waste and suffering which result because man despairs of mastering the minute forces

which are obviously within his control. Man is, fortunately or otherwise, equipped with a so-called higher brain center, the cortex, which enables him, unlike other animals, to react to his environment with a certain degree of choice or freedom; he is less dependent upon instinctive responses. "It is the function of the cortex which enables man to indulge in reflective thought, and so acquire his great ascendancy over the animals."¹⁰ Higher mental processes emerge by virtue of the cortical functions of association, correlation and integration. Voluntary conduct is, then, not an inversion of natural processes but rather a new combination of factors. The manner in which these new emergents of behavior arise has been explained by Lloyd Morgan,¹¹ John Dewey,¹² Edwin Holt,¹³ M. P. Follett,¹⁴ R. G. Gordon¹⁵ and others and need not be further elaborated here.

For present purposes it is sufficient to know that an area of relative freedom of thought-action exists for man and that the hypothesis upon which this assumption rests is of supreme importance to education.

We are free in proportion to the number of things we can create (not *de novo* out of nothing) or invent by utilizing what we already have. We do not discard old patterns of behavior in favor of new: we combine old ones with the result that new patterns emerge. Thus inventions on the physical or mechanical level are always recombinations of existing elements. And we now know by better means than mere analogy that the process of intellectual integration is similar. Freedom is an achievement, not a gift. We do not acquire freedom—we grow into freedom. Alas, many of us are still wistful, disappointed seekers. “He was always,”

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writes Walter Pater, of Watteau, "a seeker after something in the world that is there in no satisfying measure, or not at all." And, many of us still go groping about in the vain hope that freedom may be *found* or bought by some political or legal expedient.

The first step toward liberation is taken when an individual begins to understand what inhibits, frustrates, subjugates him. We learn to be free when we know what we desire freedom for and what stands in the way of our desire. Psycho-therapy has taught us that the first look must be within, not without. Most of the barriers to freedom have been self-constructed, self-induced. We already know, empirically at least, that many of our desires and wishes are validated and many obstacles dissolved by means of bringing our submerged conflicts to the level of consciousness. In one sense, free-

dom is conscious conduct. The psycho-therapeutic specialist does not "cure" his patient; he merely assists the patient in learning the methods of self-recovery. And the method is self-knowledge.

In another sense we become free when we discover the limitations and extent of our capacities. Much of the discontent among adults is due to fruitless striving after impractical or impossible objectives. We set Utopian goals, impossible targets, and then sink into thralldom because our Utopias never arrive and our shots all miss the mark. We suffer the bitterness of impotency because we have all along striven for an ideal beyond our capacities. On the other hand, if we take life as it is and begin our experimentations in behavior in terms of possible and manageable ideals, we will always be conscious of growth

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and renewal. We can save ourselves from furtive fantasy only by keeping our aims within the area of the real and the possible. Not that all adults should begin their reëducation by submitting to intelligence tests, forthwith to order their future lives on the basis of their limitations—a process patently stultifying and inimical to growth. On the contrary, the implication is that “one change always leaves a babbitting on which another can be built”—that we increase our capacities by means of achievements which are now possible. Limits of freedom are reached only when we have exhausted all of the possibilities within grasp of growing capacities. “Every important satisfaction of an old want creates a new one,” says Dewey,¹⁰ and so every attainment in the ordering of our conscious conduct gives rise to new possibilities.

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Attention to the sources of freedom which lie within human personality should not close our eyes to the fact that many of the forces which enslave us are environmental. In a static environment, individuals cannot change in the direction of freedom. We want freedom because we believe it will increase our happiness but sooner or later we are sure to discover that individuals cannot be free in a feudal society. We need continuing education in order to learn awareness of ourselves as behaving organisms but we also need more knowledge concerning those external factors of which our behavior is a constant function. The aim should be, not to teach adult students that, e.g., a subject called economics exists and needs to be studied but rather that there are economic factors in his total situations and that he must somehow come to know how to deal with these if his total

situations are to emerge as progressive sequences of living. The old debate over environment versus heredity (or organism) has lost its meaning now that we have come to see that organism-environment are two interacting parts of a unified equation. We can progress not by giving attention to either organism or environment, but to both and in relation to each other. Propaganda organizations will of course make use of adult education as a means to achieve their preconceived environmental ends—which, unhappily, will lead to further illusions concerning education. The doctrinaire revolutionist who sees the problem of freedom in terms of a binding environment and an enslaving social and economic order will naturally seek education as a force to release him and his fellow-believers; he will, indeed, construct a faith in the possibility of altering his entire life

after the revolution which changes the social order. This point of view is easily condemned on theoretic grounds, but even educators ought not to lose sight of the fact that revolutions are occasionally necessary. We may, for example, so far exaggerate the incentives and motives which are derived from capitalism and profit-production as to cause the entire educational system to become a direct response to this system and to lead to its further emphasis. At present the majority of college graduates in the United States probably leave college with increased rather than with diminished profit motives. At any rate, they do very little either as critics or experimenters to create new motives. If this system, both on its economic and educational sides, becomes too rigid and too oppressive and incapable of sincere self-criticism, nothing short of violent revolution will suffice

to change its direction. But if adults approach education with the end-in-view that their new knowledge is to be the instrument of a probable future revolution, they will almost certainly defeat the very purposes of learning. Revolutions are essential only when the true learning process has broken down, failed. We revolt when we can no longer think or when we are assured that thinking has lost its efficacy. Revolution is the last resort of a society which has lost faith in intelligence.

The egotist is slave to his own limitations; the freedom which he verbally affirms is in essence an artificial separation of himself from others. "I listened for the echo," says Nietzsche's *Disappointed One*, "and I heard only praise." Why disappointed? Because self-praise feeds upon itself, is absurd since it has no reliable reference and leads to void. The

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sense of freedom arrives when we become sufficiently intelligent to face both ourselves and our environments critically, that is, with the feeling that both may be projected as evolutions. Freedom is a creative relatedness between personality and the manageable aspects of the universe. Since nothing possesses meaning save in relation to something else, it follows that freedom becomes significant when viewed in relation to its proper references. To be free from bondage is preliminary; dynamic freedom stirs the personality in the direction of radical, causative, originaive activity. The function of freedom is to create.

In summary, those individuals are free who know their powers and capacities as well as their limitations; who seek a way of life which utilizes their total personalities; who aim to alter their conduct in relation to a changing en-

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vironment in which they are conscious of being active agents. Each of these components of freedom is dependent upon a degree of intelligence and is realizable in terms of education. Both the amount of intelligence and learning essential for free self-expression varies with individuals. Freedom can never be absolute. None of us is self-determined. Self is relative to other selves and to the inclusive environment. We live in freedom when we are conscious of a degree of self-direction proportionate to our capacities.



VI

FOR THOSE WHO WOULD CREATE

"The common problem, yours, mine, everyone's,
Is—not to fancy what were fair in life
Provided it could be—but, finding first
What may be, then find how to make it fair
Up to our means;"

—Quoted by HARRY SNELL.

"Only if to each moment of life there is vividly
present the sense that it is a moment of creation, and
equally present a satisfaction in the vision of what
is to be created, can the moment be a joyous one."

—EDGAR A. SINGER.

FOR THOSE WHO WOULD CREATE

INTELLIGENCE for power, power for self-expression, and the self expressing its objectives in a context of relative freedom: this is the sequence which leads to creative living. But, what are we to create? What is the meaning of power, self-expression and freedom with respect to the total complex of life? Each of these aspects of progressive personalities isolated and left standing by itself becomes a symbol of abnormality: the over-intelligent become intellectual at the expense of social usefulness; those who concentrate on self-expression for its own sake evolve toward egotism; those who accumulate power without full recognition of its social nature turn out to be dictators and arbitrary masters who must have

their slaves; and those who seek to make freedom an absolutist goal come ultimately to be detached, balked cynics.

Intelligence, power, self-expression and freedom come to have meaning only when we see them as coöperating parts of a functioning whole: the integrated personality. Only the intelligent can have justifiable power; only those conscious of power, inner resources, can achieve adequate self-expression; and, in the end, only the free can create. Consequently, the adult learner who sets forth to educate himself in terms of any single objective will defeat his ends. We do not, as learners, first secure intelligence, next power, then self-expression, and last freedom. On the contrary, we experience these aspects of personality as concurrences, as forces which flow into each other at moments of creativity.

Most normal youths feel at some time or other during the untamed years a distinct urge toward creativeness. Which of us has not brought his imaginary invention, poem, novel, drama, painting to the red glow of half-realization in some sublime moment of aspiration? And who from the plane of compelling maturity has not looked backward with bitterness upon the unrealized dream? In a poignant dialogue between father and son at commencement time, the elder speaks:

“Has college standardized you as it did your father; has it stood you in a mold, made conventional and neat and proper your ideas of life; or has there come from somewhere some thought or hope of something different, more true, more genuine, more joyful, if you want to put it that way, than what you and I and the alumni of all our

universities, for the most part, have come to regard as the safe and sane norm of excellence, a tailor-made pattern, all alike, and so deadly dull that all life has departed from it? . . . Forgive me. Your father, you see, was momentarily living old days over again, or what might have been old days had things been otherwise. He is well along in years, you know; his clothes fit well; he is not worried about the grocer's bill nor his insurance payment; he has never been black-balled at a club nor sneered at in the street, nor driven out of town, nor tarred and feathered or anything else exciting. He was just wondering if he hadn't missed something." "

And, this is the tragedy of modern life: even those who win the badge of what we call success find themselves defeated at maturity; de-

feated because their personalities have become sterile, uncreative. To me nothing is more pitiful than the frantic efforts of art-collecting on the part of the aged rich—the mere urge to collect being so patently a compensation for the failure to create. The newly rich man who purchased books by the yard for his expensive new library and selected them on the basis of the color of bindings represents the tragic absurdity of an inverted culture.

Adult education presumes that the creative spark may be kept alive throughout life, and moreover, that it may be rekindled in those adults who are willing to devote a portion of their energies to the process of becoming intelligent. Once more it becomes necessary to propose inclusive definitions: if life is learning and learning is life, then creativeness is a possibility in all spheres of activity to which significance

is attached. The verb "to create" has too long remained the private possession of those who call themselves artists. Life is also one of the creative arts, else its ultimate meaning is boredom. A well-organized and adequately expressed life deserves to be called beautiful no less than a well-conceived statue. Esthetics suffers by reason of its artificial isolation, its exclusiveness. Beauty is not discovered solely by contemplation of beautiful objects; beauty is experiencing. Indeed, passive contemplation of beauty in objects or in terms of abstract conceptions may, and often does, become a hindrance to the process of bringing forth active participations in creative experiences. The esthete invariably degenerates to the level of impotency. He may perceive beauty but is rarely capable of translating his perceptions in terms of the whole of life. To him beauty is

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not merely an experience to be enjoyed but forever remains a goddess to be worshiped.

Our Danish farmer who painted pictures of genuine quality in his hours of leisure was in addition an active participator in a creative society. He was a member of some dozen or more coöperative associations: social inventions which performed economic services so efficiently that much of his energy could be utilized in the pursuit of higher ends. Moreover, he did not travel to Venice to paint the formal beauties of St. Marks; he found his subjects on his farmstead and in his neighborhood. Consequently his indigenous art exerted a profound influence upon his total life and the life of his community as well. Between life and art no artificial demarcation was erected and all the cant about art and beauty which makes the conversations of esthetes so superficial was

absent. He talked less about art because he lived artistically.

Whenever we are presented with the opportunity of bringing beauty out of ugliness, harmony out of conflict, good-will out of hatred, potency out of sterility, intelligence out of ignorance, in short, whenever it becomes possible to add a new quality to experience, we stand in the presence of creation. The moment may come unforeseen, and therefore we ought always to face life in a creative mood. We may be called on the morrow to a committee-meeting of our fellows to discuss problems of importance. If we enter the discussion with our minds riveted to a preconceived conclusion, the creative spirit will depart from our deliberations; we will come out as we went in, unchanged and unaffected by what might have been a lively coöperative ven-

ture. On the next day an issue of state impends; the formalists of politics have prejudged the case by stating its form in terms of opposites, mutually-exclusive factors; if we merely choose one or the other of these prearranged solutions, we express merely the least common denominator of our personalities, not our best. Or, if we are trade unionists who imagine that our best chances of success lie in the use of force rather than in intelligence, our efforts will lead to successive restatements and reformulations of static situations. On the other hand, if we faced every conflict in life as an opportunity for creativeness, most of the drabness, futility and wastefulness of human intercourse could be transmuted into exciting adventures.

We have already learned in part that we must allow those who wish to be called spe-

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cialists in art a degree of freedom which is not common to all. By their ensuing creativeness, artists and geniuses justify the liberties we permit them. And, we shall eventually learn that a similar sort of freedom must be granted to those who wish to create new ways of life—new industrial, social, economic, educational, international experiments. If living too is to become one of the creative arts, we must discover solvents for those hard partitions which separate life into compartments. We cannot expect youth to reform our rigid institutions if their education proceeds from adult sources and their personalities have to find expression in a context of adult compulsions. The rigidities of adulthood need loosening before anything creative can happen in the sphere of social control. And we need not await the tide of numbers: a small group of adults in a single com-

munity seriously concerned about the values of creative living is sufficient to alter the quality of the total community process.

The creative mood is more than an attitude of expectancy. Many persons approach adulthood with Micawber-like confidence in the coming event, the glorious adventure which is bound to happen *to* them, and cumulatively lose capacity to achieve; their imaginative projections lead to such exaggerated introspections and fantasies that they can compensate for their failure to create only by further and more extravagant conceits. In the end they either reach absurd limits of ineffectiveness or drop suddenly to the level of cynicism and despair. Creativeness is always futuristic, anticipatory, but its futurism emanates from the plane of actuality; its "impossibles" are distillations from "possibles." Creativeness is intrinsic and

seems fortuitous merely because we fail to see all of the relations between the creator and the combining factors of his creation. Further, creativeness is less dependent upon its ends than its means; the creative process, not the created object, is of supreme importance. We are not all equipped by temperament, organic integration or environmental surroundings to produce works of art but we can all live artistically.

VII

TO THOSE WHO APPRECIATE

"Annette, who instinctively loved the light, had sought for it where she could, in those university studies which in her set were regarded as pretentious. But the light she had found there had been much filtered; it was the light of lecture-rooms and libraries, refracted, never direct."

—ROMAIN ROLLAND.

"Integrating art and life would mean so transforming life that the purposes of art become the purposes of life as well."

—LEO STEIN.

"For art fixes those standards of enjoyment and appreciation with which other things are compared; it selects the objects of future desires; it stimulates effort."

—JOHN DEWEY.

TO THOSE WHO APPRECIATE

THE classic tradition in art is one of the many hurdles which adult learners must jump before they can participate freely and creatively in cultural enjoyments. Nothing so effectively dampens the ardors of appreciation as to be told by some formalist that the object being appreciated is unworthy, in bad taste. The proper retort is, of course, *Whose* taste? To this the conventionalist can only reply, Mine—which obviously answers nothing. Our mentor can thereupon refer us to the specimens from which his standards are derived and if he happens to be a professional teacher of art, he will persist until we succumb to Philistinism and pretend to enjoy what he enjoys. But enjoyment is not simulation, reference to pat-

terns and specimens, imitative worship; the essence of enjoyment is critical appreciation. And to appreciate is to assimilate, to appropriate, to make one's own. Appreciation is creative, not passive. But one valid reference for artistic standards exists, namely, the individual who appreciates, enjoys. Every attempt to formulate collective norms must fail by reason of individual variations. My enjoyment can be your enjoyment only in terms of superficial agreements; beneath these common factors lies the uniqueness which is forever yours or mine. Enjoyment can never be mutual because those who enjoy are separate organisms living in differing relations of time and space. Moreover, the function of enjoying is derived from organic integrations which may be similar but never identical. The foregoing does not imply that enjoyments cannot be

shared. Indeed, it may be justifiable to believe that language, communication itself, arose out of the compulsions to share enjoyments as well as dangers. All of us, save the misanthropic and the snobbish, feel the urge to accelerate and intensify our enjoyments by social means, but we succeed merely in stimulating others to their enjoyment. In the search for appreciative and enjoyable experience each goes his way alone. What is enjoyed registers itself ultimately within a psycho-physical process which is the foundation of individual personality. The shareable portions are new social products which may be called *our* enjoyments in the sense that they are derivatives of discreet individual enjoyments.

Adult education, wherever it endures long enough to pass through the "bread and butter" stage, invariably evolves toward cultural ends.

In Denmark, Germany and England the development has been unmistakably in this direction. Classes may begin with the study of economic problems but before the learning process has gone far the vague consciousness that man does not live by bread alone becomes manifest; the demand that learning shall point the way toward what is euphemistically called the "higher life" is never wholly submerged even among those over-serious persons who wish to improve the world without being conscious of the need of improvement in themselves. The relevancy of the above introductory paragraph and the present chapter is drawn from this presumed and insistent claim that education shall somehow lift us above monotonous necessities into the realm of pure enjoyments.

"Education is preparation for life." How

grim and serious and final this sounds! At commencement time life with all its weighty problems is made to fall suddenly upon the shoulders of the educated young. At last they are equipped to face the hard and stubborn world with a will to subdue it, to bring it to terms, to make it yield success. Along the way, contact has been made with a few so-called humanistic or cultural ideas but these after all were offered as decorative badges to be worn as tokens of a "finished" education. Who, indeed, can presume to call himself educated until he can make the same stereotyped references to the classics which his professor has prescribed? Yes, we must have some "culture" to round out the learning process; it may come in packets neatly bound, easily digested, selected from the best academic stocks, and guaranteed not to interfere with the serious business of life, but

we must at all costs pay our respects to the goddess of classicism. The question of enjoyment does not enter the equation of this officialized culture—the problem is to get every one inoculated whether he likes it or not. Courageously reversing this process, the leadership of adult education will be able to bring forth new cultural values: instead of indoctrinating students with a preconceived standard of what constitutes good music, painting, literature et cetera, it will begin by discovering what individuals genuinely enjoy. And, if reeducated adults happen to enjoy something which the academicians frown upon, there will be no apologies. Adult education might by such candid means give American art a new impetus; it could at any rate aid greatly in the much-needed procedure of transforming a growing artistic snobbery into an indigenous folk-ex-

pression. We can never attain artistic eminence so long as our artists are obliged to secure their training, their inspiration and their standards of appreciation in Europe. On the other hand, our artists can never find a congenial and stimulating environment for their work in this country so long as appreciation remains the inherited prerogative of a coterie of so-called cultured people. ✓ In short, adult education may justly be expected to do something toward democratizing art.

At first glance it appears, especially to those who are executively-minded, that "the ideal aim of intelligence seems to be the rational control of human life."¹⁸ But adults who realize their educational deficiencies are apt to become too earnest in their search for rationality. In their determination to run down the reasons for things they are too frequently tempted to

abandon the joy of things. After all, we ought not to exalt reason unduly: it was undoubtedly the last of our faculties to arrive in the fitful march of evolution, and our feelings are probably still as fundamental as our thoughts. Feelings, sentiments and emotions lie very close to the center of organic function and are regulative in a degree which makes thinking seem to be still an uncertain experiment. But it is useless to discuss feelings and emotions as if these were aspects of personality separable from thinking and reasoning. In the present state of our development these are already interdependent functions and it seems highly probable that evolution is now proceeding, not by creating new organs, but by further integrations of existing organs and functions. It is therefore to be expected that as personalities, that is, partially integrated unities, we shall need to

anticipate our greatest enjoyments, not as pure emotion, but as emotion interpenetrated with intelligence. Conversely, if adult education is to save itself from degenerating into another type of intellectualism, it will teach people how to make their thinking glow with the warmth of honest feeling. When driven to definitions modern critics invariably end by giving art to the emotive or affective phase of personality and science and logic to the reflective or rational—thus hoping to evade the real issue; this obviously relegates art to the realm of sheer accident. The alternative assumption seems to be, at least from the viewpoint of education, that emotions and intelligence are continuous and varying aspects of a single process and that the finest emotions are those which shine through intelligence, and the finest intelligence that which is reflected in the light of its appropriate

feeling. "I prefer to feel rather than understand," writes Anatole France in that exquisite letter to M. Charles Maurice, and then proceeds to elaborate his understanding. But we cannot feel and then understand; feelings may predominate over intelligence but they cannot annihilate it; likewise, to understand anything always partakes somewhat of "getting the feel" of its properties and qualities. Feeling adds warmth to understanding and understanding gives meaning to feelings.

Adult educators may well take as their guide in the realm of appreciation the words of Whitehead: "What we want is to draw out habits of æsthetic apprehension. . . . The habit of art is the habit of enjoying vivid values."¹⁹ "How to bring this sense of order and beauty into the lives of the ordinary men and women of our country"²⁰ constitutes one of

the central tasks of adult education. But we must learn to draw out as well as "bring in" the sense of beauty since the latter process inevitably runs the risk of reducing appreciation to passive rather than creative enjoyment. We get a more intense feeling of beauty and more valid meanings when the "sense of beauty" is an accompaniment of some activity. Games, dancing, and the drama may, when not professionalized, furnish the best opportunities for bringing forth values which are susceptible of vivid enjoyment. The highest æsthetic values are probably not those which somehow get themselves registered in books, paintings, statues, but rather those which are realized in motion, in participating activity.

Teachers of adult classes who are called to serve in the interest of evoking æsthetic appreciations will be sorely tempted to increase

“that already large amount of ineffectual striving for æsthetic conformity” which restrains art from fulfilling its true mission in life. “What then is the function of the serious critics of art and letters, and how do they differ from the tub-thumper, be he more or less refined? Their function is, I imagine, to coöperate with other teaching powers in the development of active intelligence. It is to analyze, explain and illustrate, so that choice may be made relevant to need.”²¹ And, one might add, so that choice may be made relevant to growth and capacity. No one knows his æsthetic needs until he is well along the road of æsthetic experience. Appreciation is not merely a way of *finding* values; it is also a way of discovering, creating values. Art is essentially a form of mental release; its inception may lie in feelings but its result to the personality is “intellectual

enrichment." Artistic experience is immediately enjoyed but also leaves its residue of "enjoyed meanings," to use Dewey's term." And a meaning is always a fermentation which, because of its potential relatedness to other meanings opens the way toward successive enjoyments and enlarged meanings. Their eyes closed to the uses of beauty in life by their preoccupation with the problem of the nature of beauty, tired critics frequently leave the impression that art is an ingenious futility. "Entire freedom from enthusiasm was looked upon as almost equivalent to culture and ripe scholarship," writes Brandes of the second empire," and one surmises that this "second empire" of pedantry becomes the ultimate haven of many professional critics. But appreciation lacks enjoyable content and becomes a new kind of unwarranted specialism—a specialism in un-

related sophistication—whenever critical attitudes eliminate spontaneity and eagerness. Adult education can at least aid in delivering us from that abject fear of expressing our quick and enthusiastic enjoyments—the fear to which we have become habituated under the discipline of professional criticism. There are people who do not know whether they think the play which they have seen is “good” or “bad” until their favorite critic has delivered himself of his oracular judgment in the press the following day. To them, nothing can ever be spontaneously enjoyable—save in a post-mortem conversational sense.

Among intelligent adults an “art-spirit” which can come only through candid and cultivated appreciation is needed. Such a spirit at work among people would inevitably find expression in collective ideals and aspirations.

Goldenweiser,²⁴ speaking of the offices of art in primitive societies, explains in part how art became integrated with life: "The attractiveness and suggestiveness of these symbols, their simultaneous presentation to a large number of devotees, the ease with which multifarious associations are absorbed by these objects, only to be reawakened and refreshed in the minds of the beholder, transform the symbolic art object into a veritable perpetuator of a large part of the culture of a tribe, that part of the culture, moreover, which is emotionally most valuable as well as most clearly representative of the collective ideas of the group." Here we see clearly what is meant by an art-spirit or art-impulse at work in a society. But this is an account of how art became a carrier and intensifier of culture before division of labor sent modern civilizations along new paths of de-

velopment; the spontaneous flow of art-impulses, which apparently animated pre-civilization societies, has now to make its way as a competitor among many powerful alternatives.

Adult education, it is to be hoped, will revivify this spirit and thereby extend and give new meanings to the values inherent in appreciation. Certainly, art can never be a liberating force in a society which automatically restricts its cultivation to those who have leisure by virtue of their private wealth. Art, its appreciation and enjoyment, belongs to those who have or are capable of having, "intrinsic sensibility" and the highest function of adult education may well be the discovery and release of these qualities of sensibility among the many.

VIII

TO AN AGE OF SPECIALISM

"Effective knowledge is professionalized knowledge, supported by a restricted acquaintance with useful subjects subservient to it. . . .

"This situation has its dangers. It produces minds in a groove. Each profession makes progress, but it is progress in its own groove. . . .

"The dangers arising from this aspect of professionalism are great, particularly in our democratic societies. The directive force of reason is weakened. The leading intellects lack balance. They see this set of circumstances, or that set: but not both sets together. The task of coördination is left to those who lack either the force or the character to succeed in some definite career. In short, the specialized functions of the community are performed better and more progressively, but the generalized direction lacks vision. . . .

"The point is that the discoveries of the nineteenth century were in the direction of professionalism, so that we are left with no expansion of wisdom and with greater need of it. . . . Wisdom is the fruit of balanced development."

—A. N. WHITEHEAD.

"I take it that what the particularist mainly needs is a philosophy and general culture which shall enable him to see his own point of view in something like its true relation to the whole of thought. It is hard to believe, for example, that an economist who also reads Plato or Emerson comprehendingly could adhere to economic determinism."

—CHARLES HORTON COOLEY.

TO AN AGE OF SPECIALISM

THE evils of specialism have been duly noted by college presidents, publicists and philosophers—noticed, verbally proscribed and then left to multiply. Here stands a real dilemma: the division of knowledge goes speedily on with infinity as its goal whereas man's comprehending capacity is distinctly limited. Moreover, knowledge can be expanded only by the method of specialism: when one science or branch of science becomes too complex for complete comprehension by a single mind, its problems must be sub-divided, delimited; succeeding scientists concentrate upon a fraction of the total subject-matter and attain success by means of this very concentration upon particularized objects and processes. Generalization may set new problems but specialism alone discovers new facts.

The moment curricula became responsive to

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research as distinguished from scholasticism, colleges and universities became subject to the rule of specialization. College presidents who entered the field of education when science was still the intruder and not the controller may remonstrate against specialism as vociferously as they please; faculties will subdivide under their noses. They may go on visualizing the Renaissance ideal of cultured professionalism, but their graduates will continue to be circumscribed specialists who know a great deal about one sphere of knowledge and not much about anything else. Indeed, the phenomenal quantitative expansion of colleges and universities during the past two decades may be regarded, in part at least, as a direct response to specialization. Higher education, so-called, has come to be predominantly a form of vocational training.

Industry presents the same picture. Reformists may bemoan the fact that the modern factory-worker sees merely a small portion of the finished product and does not understand its relationship to the whole. Ten years hence he will see even a smaller portion. Mass production can succeed only by eliminating so far as possible all waste motion—an act which can apparently be achieved only by subdividing and simplifying the individual worker's task. The man who now places a nut on a bolt and gives six turns in passing may later give three turns, and eventually one. Indeed, he may come at last to be merely a tender of machines which perform all other necessary manipulative functions.

Development of less than a century of applied science has thrown government into veritable chaos. The older concept of the political

state is no longer tenable. The significant problems which confront modern states are primarily technical, not political, in character. The British Parliament is asked to decide a crucial question concerning coal mines: Can the mines be managed under private ownership and at the same time pay wages sufficient for a decent standard of life, and if so, how? Here is a question which involves technological information with respect to mining efficiency; economic information as to foreign markets, distribution, capitalization, et cetera; and sociological factors relevant to a decent standard of living. But this is precisely the sort of a question with which a democratically-chosen parliament is least able to deal. In fact, the problem involved is given political reference, not because it is political in character but because its consequences disturb the order and

unity of the state. In a moment of crisis the government of the United States began construction of a gigantic hydro-electric plant in one of the southern states. Congress has ever since been debating the question of its disposal: cast in the political mold, the problem became, not what is the efficient course of action, but how can this technical question be decided in terms of party prestige and sectional advantage, that is, how can a technical matter be made to appear political.

Suggested escapes from the dilemma of specialism may be condensed into three general propositions:

- I. In academic *education* experiments proceed in three directions:²⁵
 1. Required *orientation or survey courses* which are designed to give the student a broad and comprehensive acquaintance

with world history, the evolution of civilization, the growth of ideas, the span of social and political progress, the march of science, the requirements of citizenship, et cetera.

2. Curriculum adjustments which provide for a limited amount of specialization within a context of broad fundamental training.
3. Restriction of undergraduate study to so-called liberal subjects and reserving intensive specialization for post-graduates.

Criticism: (a) Orientation courses are likely to contribute to superficial knowledge of many facts without understanding of their depth and significance. Such courses are chiefly useful in aiding students to discover interests and dispositions. (b) Limited specialization does not meet the demands of the present generation of

college students; they want technical and "practical" courses which can be put to use. (c) Graduate study is still considered—perhaps deservedly—to be a luxury suitable possibly for the person doomed to a life of scholarship but not worthy of the man of action. The weight of the above criticism falls directly upon educational misconceptions, and chiefly upon that misconception which regards education as a reflex of industry. So long as our primary standards of valuation are pecuniary, educational institutions will be able to make but feeble resistances to specialism.

II. In *industry* escape is for the most part sought in:

1. Trade Unionism, or collective struggles for increased wages, decreased hours of labor and improved conditions.

2. Works' councils or various schemes for coördinating the various specialized elements in the industry.
3. A wider participation in recreations and amusements after working hours.
4. Psychic compensation in the form of allegiance to some Utopian scheme for reorganizing the whole of economic life and thereafter the incentives and satisfactions of life itself.

Criticism: (a) Trade Unionism, insofar as it does not get itself translated into new practices within industry, remains a fighting and not a creating, educating force; so long as its aims are merely to get more or less of what its members already have, it will be a compensation for specialized labor, not a solution for its inherent problems. (b) This criticism holds

true for the remaining three avenues of escape; each of these methods leaves the individual worker still a specialist whose daily tasks call forth diminishing fractions of his personality. (Industrial managers, technicians, bosses—those whose work gives them a sense of being in control—are caught in the same trap; they are perhaps less conscious of the disservices of specialism because of a wider range of sociable and recreational opportunities in the community.)

III. In *government*,²⁸ among the numerous proposals to be considered, the most significant are:

1. Commissions, boards and other extra- or quasi- or semi-governmental bodies composed of experts and frequently endowed with judicial and executive powers but usually restricted to advisory recom-

mendations made either to the executive, judicial or legislative branches of government. (Interstate Commerce Commission, Tariff Commission, e.g.)

2. Employment of municipal managers, technologists with engineering training, who are vested with powers of decision over technical issues—sometimes sharing this authority with a small body of elected commissioners or aldermen.
3. Wider use of technical experts by governmental departments.
4. Restricting the decision of popular suffrage to the selection of persons and not to choice between issues.

Criticism: As will be noted at once all of these schemes tend to increase specialization while they leave the citizen with diminished functions. He, the citizen, is not to grow into

fuller citizenship by these means; on the contrary, to be a citizen under the rule of experts is to be restricted to giving a mild "yes" or an emphatic "no" to some one else's decisions. But this reduces citizenship to a false logical base; questions which can be answered by yes or no are seldom worth asking. When the function of citizenship loses its creativeness it also loses its meaning.

We are committed, it must be repeated, to the process of division of labor, to specialism. The problem resolves itself ultimately into the query: *How can society secure the highest services of specialists?* We may get a very efficient service of experts in one of two ways: by subordinating them to the will of a dictator who determines the ends for which they shall labor, or by transferring executive powers to specialists themselves. In either case, we must be

prepared to make corresponding sacrifices. Admittedly, more efficient results will be accomplished when power tends to become absolute and centralized. But is this the highest service we may expect of specialists? Power vested in dictators and executive specialists means power taken from the citizen. It may be that citizens make poor use of power when they possess it, but that consideration is for the moment irrelevant. When the sense of power is gone, what incentives are left for the increase of knowledge? The functions of citizenship, like all functions, atrophy when not used.

Our choice is not limited to leaving the experts alone, subordinating them to dictators, or placing them under the control of poorly informed publics. But one hesitates to propose alternatives. The signs are none too hopeful. It may be that democracy reared on impossible

metaphysical foundations must decay more or less completely before we find our way with science. Mussolini may be the true prophet of our time: Liberalism, democracy and parliamentary government may, as he so vehemently affirms, have fulfilled their functions. At any rate, the liberal has lost his effectiveness, parliaments have ceased to function, or function badly, and democracy is fast becoming a term used to denote illusion. Yet, I do not regard these as signals of despair; the fact that our modern political, economic and social structures and processes are disintegrating makes experiment feasible. We have once more reached one of those historical periods which seems like a dead-end because the shell of old institutions and habits, although crumbling, still possesses sufficient resiliency to prevent the new from bursting forth. In like periods of the past,

thinkers with vision turned occasion to account by imagining and portraying perfect societies, Utopias. The function of Utopias is to set activity toward new goals, to visualize the consequences of changed conduct, to re-direct ideals. We need not lose ourselves in fanciful, legendary and unrealizable dreams but if we do not utilize our present difficulties as opportunities for equally adventurous challenges to the future, we shall deserve to be recorded a generation of people who possessed many things but lacked courage and vision for high ventures.

Possibilities for promising experiments lie open in many directions but we must confine our discussion to those which seem especially pertinent to our present theme. In the first place, experts and specialists whose functions become external to the people whom they serve have been miseducated. They have, in

Cooley's "words, become "particularists," that is, persons who behave as if "one phase of the process" were "the source of all others." Consequently the impact of their function, when it includes educative contact (which is seldom), is forever education in a false direction. The specialist who becomes protagonist for a particularist point of view has already deserted the spirit of science; he labors under the "*illusion of centrality*" which keeps him and his disciples from recognizing "that the life-process is an evolving whole of mutually interacting parts, any of which is effect as well as cause." Specialists can contribute to the increase of wisdom (as distinguished from knowledge) by dealing with parts in such manner that they become useful in explaining wholes. Educational institutions can, of course, assist in this program by acknowledging that one of the primary aims

of learning is to induce an "organic view" of life; they can discover how it happens that students develop blind-spots—those negative adaptations which pave the way for specialism. But in the end specialists and experts must conduct experiments in the atmosphere of their functions. It is one thing to hold an intellectual conviction against particularism and quite another to live organically—especially if living means making one's way in competition with other specialists. We shall secure the highest services of experts when they learn to integrate their functions with respect to specific problems. Integration is not a verbal exercise but a method by which active differences interpenetrate. Six medical specialists, each examining that portion of the organism upon which he has specialized, will come away with six varying explanations of cause and effect;

their specialized knowledge can be fruitfully integrated only when the six points of view are focussed upon the organism as a whole.

Specialists can, then, help to save themselves and us as well by integrating their functions. But this is not enough. We, the objects of specialists' attention, must somehow become aware of what is being done to us and with us; we must become active participants in the process. At this point many thinkers abandon the trail; overwhelmed by the complexity of modern knowledge and the paucity of intelligence, they fall back upon some externalism, some easy division: government of the lesser minds by the best, master and servant, commanders and obeyers, executives and submissives, knowers and doers, et cetera. The problem, however, will not be dismissed so readily: when our division seems fixed and secure in one sphere, flux

breaks out in another. The only relatively permanent method for "keeping people in their places" is to vest power in hereditary castes. Even then biological processes tend to defeat our purposes. But there is another and simpler approach. We capitulate to experts because we attempt to understand too much, and failing in this, we abandon the ways of intelligence altogether. My conception of adult education points toward a continuing process of evaluating experiences, a method of awareness through which we learn to become alert in the discovery of meanings. Now the specialist enters the equation of our lives when meanings have become confused or lost; we stand baffled in the face of an adjustment lacking courage for the next step because we have no sure knowledge of what it may mean to us. The expert cuts the cord of uncertainty; he speaks as one hav-

ing authority, and we, having transferred decision to him, act upon his word and thereby achieve the adjustment. But alas, this is merely a superficial aspect of the true adjusting process. When next we confront a similar difficulty, another expert will need to be consulted; in the end, if this were the essence of expert service, life would become a chronic succession of consultations in the presence of specialists. The only meanings possible would be those purchasable from experts. This is, however, precisely what any person with a grain of intellectual self-respect will refuse to do—to take his meanings second-hand. An adjustment precipitates meanings when it facilitates future adjustments, that is, when it is accompanied by an intellectual process which becomes instrumental to the whole of intelligence. We consult, for example, an oculist because we have

been annoyed by difficulties in reading. (The sequence of adjustment: annoyance felt, difficulty recognized, cause of difficulty discovered, cause removed, difficulty lessened, annoyance diminished.) We begin by contributing to his technique since he could not diagnose the difficulty properly without knowing what effects it had produced. Insofar as our interpretation corresponds with his external observation, we are both engaged in discovery. Now, the ordinary layman cannot be expected to know all the intricacies of eye-structure and function but here is one isolated feature which is of primary interest to him at the moment. How much of this can he comprehend? If he can understand merely enough to be intelligent in carrying out the oculist's instructions, the experience will have been profitable. If he can understand sufficient to experiment with his reading-habits,

to see some of the relations between cause and effect and to seek improvement within this relation, he will have participated in a true educative experience. And if he can see further into the relations between the use of his eyes and his total bodily functions, he will begin to experience meanings—that is, be in a position to gather the fruits of real learning. We can utilize expert functions for educative purposes if we begin by giving attention to those relevant features which are within our capacities. When we comprehend relevant portions, i.e., relevant to our present interest, of what the expert is doing, we are in position to become participants in the expert's services.

In conclusion, opportunities for turning experience to account educationally will be multiplied if we delimit the area of our functions as well as the size of our problems. Experience,

the stuff out of which education is grown, is after all a homely matter. The affairs of home, neighborhood and local community are vastly more important educationally than those more distant events which seem so enchanting. Experience is, first of all, doing something; second, doing something that makes a difference; third, knowing what difference it makes. Our personalities count for something, enjoy experiences in proportion to the effectiveness of our actions. Now it is all very wholesome to join with world societies dedicated to bring peace to mankind, but peace will come only when individual human beings learn to act, to behave in the direction of peace. Blessed is the man whose talk bears a direct relation to his acts. Otherwise, behavior and conversation may become so far separated as to dissociate aspects of personality. We can always talk

glibly about problems, yes, even suggest the only possible solution, when we are far enough removed from the scene to allow our activities to escape the consequences of our talk. We can all be experts—a long way from home. And somehow modern life tends to accelerate our long-distance propensities. Each new invention in the field of communication is at first greeted as another boon to human relations. Does it not bring us closer together? And will we not therefore learn to have more respect for and good-will toward each other? This naïve manner of placing human relations upon the quantity-contact basis probably stands in the way of our making the best use of communication inventions. It undoubtedly causes us to overlook the fact that highly-developed means of communication are indispensable to highly-centralized forms of social control. Some im-

portant differences persisted in the various regions of the United States before we all read the same syndicated news, listened to the same radio announcers, witnessed the same motion pictures, ate the same food, wore the same clothes, et cetera. Rapid means of transportation and communication tend to standardize us and therefore render us easier of control by single authorities.

The life of simplicity is gone forever. Telephones, radios, aeroplanes, automobiles as well as specialists are integral to our industrialized civilization and we must work our way through, not around, them. The present argument allows for as many conveniences and as many experts as we can afford—and as many as we can understand. Our personalities can be redeemed if we insist upon a proper share in the solution of problems which specifically con-

cern us. This means giving more attention to small groups; it means as much decentralization, diversity and local autonomy as is consistent with order. Indeed, we may well sacrifice order, if enforced externally, for valid difference. Our hopes flow from the simple conviction that diversity is more likely to make life interesting than is conformity, and from the further conviction that active participation in interesting affairs furnishes proper stimulations for intellectual growth. The chief disservice for which specialism is accountable is externalism; specialists ask too little of us. And they will ask still less in the future unless we supply enough intelligence to bridge the gap between experts and experience.

IX

AS DYNAMIC FOR COLLECTIVE ENTERPRISE

"The problem is not how to produce great men, but how to produce great societies."

—A. N. WHITEHEAD.

"Modern life is complicated by the fact that we pursue our most vital interests not as individuals but as members of organized groups. Questions of conduct, therefore, are apt to take the form not simply of what is right or wrong for one of us to do, but of what is best to do under circumstances that require co-operation with others of our group or of other groups who may not share our views. Our social ideals, therefore—such ideals as godliness, patriotism, liberty, charity, democracy—must get something more than a vague mass acceptance. In the organized society of to-day our movements are complex. The 'plot' of its collective life is dramatic: its action centers on the revaluating of these ideals—on applying them to situations within which must be encompassed an adjustment of various interests. To play their due part these interests must first be understood, and to be understood they must be allowed to speak for themselves."

—A. D. SHEFFIELD.

AS DYNAMIC FOR COLLECTIVE ENTERPRISE

EMPHASIS has been placed in the foregoing chapters upon education with respect to individual personalities. Education has been viewed as a process which goes on within psycho-physical organisms—organisms whose objectives range from satisfaction of simple physiological needs to intellectual curiosity concerning the universe itself. Education is behaving and behavior is a manifestation of activity of a discreet organism. Again, education is peculiarly a kind of behavior through which organisms attempt to adjust themselves to external or internal factors which, having set up frictions, call for new adjustment. Without the compulsions of struggle, learning

could never have arisen as a means of adjustment. Friction, strain, struggle, conflict, tension, stress: these are states or situations which cannot endure since they are always accompanied by pain; consequently organisms strive by every means within their capacity to find an adjustment which will free them from painful feelings. Most of the energy generated or made potential by the metabolic process, save that utilized in habitual, automatized behavior, is consumed by these adjusting and readjusting activities.

If, then, we want to know what education is good for, we must ask: What kinds of adjustments are being required of individuals? After we have determined the nature of impending adjustments we then need to inquire: In what ways can education aid and accelerate the adjusting process? Further refined, our ques-

tion becomes: What kinds of learning will lead toward adjustments which in turn lead to higher adjustments? Or, is our scheme of education compatible with an evolutionary concept of growing personalities?

We have already seen that evolving personalities follow the path of learning in an attempt to adjust themselves to a world in which knowledge leads to power, power leads to self-expression, freedom and creativity, creative freedom leads to enjoyable experience, and finally, a world in which knowledge goes forward under a discipline of specialization. These considerations as stated converge to emphasize individual aspects of education. We now must recognize the fact that these qualities which are enhanced by intellectual effort become meaningful only when seen in social contexts. Intelligence, like freedom, is

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relative, not merely to ignorance or to bondage, but also to intelligence and freedom in other human beings. Education proceeds by means of communication, and all forms of communication are social products. Self-expression takes on meaning in relation to other selves. Behavior belongs to individuals but conduct is social.

From many sources of social theory and social practice comes the insistent appeal to bring people together, to overcome individualism. The call is gratuitous. People are being brought together, willy-nilly. They have no alternative. Every persistent need of the human organism is brought soon or late within the area of collective means. Vital needs left without the scope of collectivity, either as control or means, eventuate as incidences of unadjustment. The individualist of modern life

not only finds his normal aspirations balked but he himself becomes an inhibition to the enhancement of his own aims.

The potential needs of the human organism are unlimited. Each need satisfied releases energies which flow into channels of renewed discontent; the new or unused energy disrupts the harmony of life, or is dissipated. And, most needs lie without the organism,—are environmental. To meet the need is to confront the environment—the socialized environment of the modern world. Man does not “make up his mind” to be social. He is caught within a social *milieu*. He is social by virtue of his enlarging needs. He cannot even select the precise kind of sociality within whose circle he must function to meet these needs.

Obnoxious as the view may be to all who cling to intellectual predispositions of indi-

vidualism this is the realism with which modern man must come to terms. The tender-minded patriot proclaims: There are no classes! His orotund eloquence is soon modulated to conform to the atmosphere of the committee-room, where, if he succeeds in initiating activity, he must deal with classes. The farmer may not wish to belong to a class, but his collective activities are exempted by statutes from certain restraints imposed upon the collective activities of business corporations. Coal miners may not belong to a class but when the conglomerate of classes wants coal, the patriot must deal with representatives of collectivist coal miners. No logical squirmings or sentimental predilections can overcome the reality of so much realism. Nor can the problem be approached by subtle intellectual maneuvers. Some people who cannot honestly evade the

recognition of classes in the functional sense, insist that their real objection is not to classes but to class-consciousness. The distinction is not without merit. It splits life into discreet compartments and the particles may be more easily manipulated than the whole. In substance the position of the intellectual individualist is dualistic; he says: Be a member of your class if you must but see to it that your mind does not find you out. Act collectively but think individualistically. Join the trade union but do not become a trade unionist. Collectivism in function—individualism in thought!

Modern psychology may be considerably confused about many things but on this point it is both logically and empirically clear: "Beware how you isolate thinking from doing." The potential revolutions of the future are in-

cient in the current hiatus between thought and activity. Thinking as a process of rationalizing—how this good word has suffered!—activity in terms of reality must assume contemporaneous qualities. Activity in the present with corresponding thought-evaluation in the past represents man's persistent dilemma. When thinking is unable to catch up with doing, the results of the doing eventuate in man's undoing. In a primary sense, modern collectivism has its roots in science and industrial technique whereas individualism has its origins in historical, philosophical and religious traditions. The application of science to materials in the effort to meet evolving human needs leads inevitably to cumulative collectivism. The material compulsion *ris a tergo* is to live the collective life. On the psychological side stands the equal compulsion to think the col-

lective life. Bankers, manufacturers, merchants, wage-earners, physicians, teachers, farmers—all must pool their interests under definite forms of collective action or suffer the defeat of those interests. Collectivism is the road to power, the predominant reality of modern life. To exercise that power without integration with the intellectual process is to court social suicide. Collectivism in function with a corresponding individualism in thought produces a divided social structure, an uncontrollable social organization and a mystifying social process.

How can education supply directive energy for collective enterprises? The most concise answer is threefold: (a) by revealing the nature of the social process; (b) by transforming the battle of interests from warfare into creative conflict; (c) by developing a method for

social functions which will make the collective life an educational experience. The first two points will be briefly considered here and the last forms the theme for our concluding chapter.

The social process is essentially a "contact between minds." ²⁸ The "*community* of me and you" represents the beginning of society. Minds which interact remain forever functions of separate organisms; the relations *between* constitute social phenomena. There is no super-mind, no group-mind, which is a summation of individual minds, but there are, as Burns aptly states, "mind-groups," that is, psychological resultants of the relation between separate minds. Let us imagine four persons, A, B, C and D, responding to each other with A as the innovator or initiator of contact. B then responds to A with the result that B's re-

sponse is $b \times a$; C now responds to $(b \times a)$ or BA and his total response is $c \times (b \times a)$; D's response is $d \times [c \times (b \times a)]$, et cetera. We see that each succeeding response carries with it not merely additions of previous response and stimuli but rather interpenetrated relations between (indicated by the multiplication sign $\times$) foregoing relations. This process goes on in all sorts of contact between persons and it at once becomes apparent that the resulting relations will evolve as meanings or understandings in proportion to the degree in which each responding person is intelligent about the quality of his response and its direction. Many frictions on the level of social relations arise from the fact that we respond to others dishonestly or unintelligently. Once we become aware of the fact that our responses emerge as new relations which in turn become stimuli directing

and influencing all future responses, we begin to see how important it is to make our contacts with others an intellectual concern.

Next we need to understand how it happens that we get involved in groups, associations, collectivities which formulate standards of behavior. We sooner or later come to feel that we cannot always follow our desires and wishes; we need to ask how our proposed act will be evaluated by some group or groups to which we have given allegiance. An individual trade unionist may not wish to go on strike but if his union has through its officials called a strike, he will follow their orders, not his wishes. A citizen may regard his nation's war as an iniquity but when the government has opened hostilities he too will be conscripted. Situations of this sort are usually confronted with ethical principles: what is the right or the

wrong course of action? Pacifists will, for example, decide the problem of war in advance and on purely ethical grounds. The basic moral principle of the pacifist—inviolability of the individual conscience—assumes that in a conflict between individual and group the higher values lie with the individual. This procedure, of course, prejudges the specific issue: the pacifist, like all absolutists, comes into situations, not with an open-minded desire for facts, but with determination that however the problem is solved his *a priori* solution is to undergo no alteration. Consequently, few educational influences emerge from pacifist propaganda; situations which can be met by the simple process of applying a preconceived general rule need not be dealt with intelligently. In addition, these general rules which force conduct into channels already marked out pre-

vent even moralists from exercising a truly moral influence; evolving, creative, intelligent conduct flies out of the window when absolutism enters the door. Infallibility and wisdom hold nothing in common.

Ethics of the either-or variety falsify situations involving conflicts between individuals and groups. Objectivity is lost the moment individual conduct is conceived as something separable from social conduct. Values arise out of the social process; what is called "conscience" is merely a system of beliefs or fears which epitomize socially derived valuations. If we turn our attention to the functional groupings which characterize modern life, we begin to realize that social organizations are means for achieving individual ends. We merge our personalities with other personalities

because we believe that our interests will thereby be advanced. Society is a process, not an end or goal—a process of interacting individuals. Collectivism is a representation of individual interests.²⁹ Groups will arise whenever two or more people identify a common interest which to them seems worthy of perpetuation or enhancement. And, conflicts between groups will occur so long as interests are variable. Education for collective life begins when interests are intelligently scrutinized and validified, and since interests vary continuously in growing personalities, this validifying process must continue so long as we regard ourselves as functional beings. Modern life calls for increasing varieties of adjustment to collective techniques; if education cannot direct collective enterprises into creative channels, we

are doomed to a warfare between groups in which unrelated power and ruthlessness remain the only criteria of survival.

"We are born to struggle as the sparks fly upward, but not necessarily to brutality and waste." And, we are destined to prosecute our interests collectively, but not necessarily by defeating or annihilating other groups. Nor can we find our way in placid acquiescence, in sacrifice of our interests. To overcome and to be overcome are both negative procedures. Sentimentality is often more mischievous than savagery.

We need to be candid concerning our interests and candor implies willingness to submit our claims to every conceivable test. Employers who offer wages less than they expect to pay, trade unionists who ask for more than they expect to get, politicians who represent

private interests under the guise of public service—these are falsifications of the social process. How absurd to pretend that we can get what we want by concealing what we want! And, how tragic to reduce social relations to the barren status of unscrupulous bargaining. Our alternative is “open diplomacy”—the assumption that what we want is worth wanting, possesses sufficient integrity to stand comparison and is capable of making its way on merits and not through coercion.

But honesty is not enough; it is easily conceivable that conflict among honest people might result in nothing more than unintegrated righteousness. Religionists are often enough honest in their convictions but the conflict implies that factors which are now in opposition are capable of synthesis. Diversity is eternal but specific diversities rise to creative levels

when they combine to produce new unities. We need to learn, not merely to be frank, but to make frankness articulate. Intelligent, explicit, unconfused presentation of difference provides a setting for our interests from which valid meanings may be expected.³⁰ These are requisites for creative conflict.

We are now on the threshold, equipped with proper attitudes and dispositions but still incapable of transforming collective warfare into creative conflict. Method is still lacking. Like the scientist, we may foresee what research and experiment may bring forth but until we have developed a method for taking the next step, our foreknowledge remains impotent. The vast unused stores of energy which are potential in collective enterprises will be released when we become intelligent enough to discover ways of turning wasteful warfare into

productive integrations. For, after all, conflict is not in itself creative. It is merely preliminary to experiments which may or may not emerge as creative resultants.

Social organization has long been a favorite subject for speculation and generalization; the present demand is for specific analysis. We know almost nothing concerning the multiform changes in conduct which flow from responses to collective enterprises, and the various aspects of group functioning, such as representation, consent, leadership, et cetera, are still shrouded in mystery or submerged in traditions. And this is peculiarly the sphere in which conscious experimentation is most likely to prove fruitful. Man can affect his biological future slightly; he can develop but probably not increase his intellectual capacity; these being avenues of evolution which have apparently

achieved completion or near-completion. And even the meager opportunities for biological and mental improvement are dependent upon the discovery and utilization of social means.

Adult education as a movement is here presented with a challenging opportunity. Adults who go forth on the long road which leads to intelligence will discover before they have traveled far that mere self-improvement is a delusion. Intelligence is itself a relative term—a term which possesses little or no meaning save when used as a comparative. One individual is intelligent—less or more—with respect to other persons; and the significant components of his intelligence are derivatives of social processes. So-called native intelligence is not in reality intelligence but merely capacity for accumulating or developing intelligence. Functional intelligence is social in its origins, in its

materials and in its uses. Consequently, we do not pursue the path of learning solely for the purpose of putting more knowledge into our own behavior. Knowing-behavior, which is intelligence, is social in two directions: it takes others into account and it calls forth more intelligent responses from others. If then learning adults wish to live in a social environment in which their intellectual alertness will count for something (will get itself realized, i.e., in power, creative expression, freedom, et cetera) they will be as eager to improve their collective enterprises, their groups, as they are to improve themselves. Orthodox education may be a preparation for life but adult education is an agitating instrumentality for changing life. Institutions, groups and organizations come within the scope of continuing, advancing learning insofar as these collective agencies

furnish the medium for educational experience. When collective functions no longer make room for the free play of intellectual diversity, they abandon the right to claim allegiance from intelligent persons. It is no accident that the most virile adult education of our time parallels functional organizations: farmer-coöperators of Denmark and trade unionists of Great Britain. Adult education will become an agency of progress if its short-time goal of self-improvement can be made compatible with a long-time, experimental but resolute policy of changing the social order. Changing individuals in continuous adjustment to changing social functions—this is the bilateral though unified purpose of adult learning. Manifestly, these aims cannot be realized until adult educators evolve a method adequate to the purpose.

X

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"A method which permits us to determine only cases of stereotyped activity and leaves us helpless in the face of changed conditions is not a scientific method at all, and becomes less and less practically useful with the continual increase of fluidity in modern social life."

—W. I. THOMAS.

"In the root sense of the words, instruction is building in, whereas education is leading out."

—C. P. CONGER.

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ADULT education is a process through which learners become aware of significant experience. Recognition of significance leads to evaluation. Meanings accompany experience when we know what is happening and what importance the event includes for our personalities. A friend comes excitedly into your presence exclaiming: "I have had an experience!" Immediately you become consciously expectant: you want to know what has caused this new vivification of his personality and what interpretation he will place upon it. If you know him intimately, you will make quick guesses: he usually sees difficulties where others see opportunities and therefore you feel certain that his interpretation will be in the direc-

tion of pessimism; or he sees opportunities where others see difficulties and therefore you know that whatever has happened will be incorporated into his personality as an added increment of optimism. In either case you will be observing a personality in the process of evaluating experience; you see him in a new and dramatic setting and you know that whatever meaning he attaches to his experience it will either enrich or impoverish his life.

The real distinction between educated and uneducated persons is not to be found in such superficial criteria as academic degrees, formal study or accumulation of facts; indeed, formal learning may, and often does, lead people into narrow scholarship and out of life. Educated persons find their satisfactions in bringing knowledge to bear upon experience, and the best-informed person is still ignorant if his

knowing is not also a lively ingredient of his living. But it is not wholly correct to say, "Bring knowledge to bear upon experience"; knowledge, rather, emerges from experience. Intelligence is the light which reveals educational opportunities in experience. Life is experiencing and intelligent living is a way of making experience an educational adventure. To be educated is not to be informed but to find illumination in informed living. Periods of intellectual awakening are correctly named "enlightenments" for it is then that lovers of wisdom focus the light of learning upon experience and thereby discover new meanings for life, new reasons for living.

Our lives are successive valuations of experience: in youth we need to extract from life its highest yield of emotional experience (how fatal it is when schools attempt to make little

intellectuals out of children who need so much to *feel* the world!) but if intelligence does not enter to temper, to give meaning to emotions, we shall grow old without growing up. Growth should be a process of integrating emotions with thought, an evolving capacity for feeling more deeply and thinking more clearly. Educative experience spans the whole of life. And experience proceeds from any situation to which adjustment is made with accompanying mental release. Experiences can never happen twice for we move forward into time as changing organisms; education, by the same token, can never stop without abandoning personality to the barren existence of instinctive, habitual responses. Even cynics who pretend that all experience ends in illusion continue to intellectualize their illusions, to search for the meaning of meaningless life.

Conventional education has somehow become enslaved to a false premise: knowledge is conceived to be a precipitation, a sediment of the experience of others; it is neatly divided into subjects which in turn are parceled out to students, not because students express eagerness or interest, but because the subjects fit into a traditional scheme—so much mathematics, so much history, so much language, et cetera, and above all so much regard for disciplinary values as to make even the study of interesting subjects an uninteresting task. Happy the student whose teacher knows more than his subject. And brave the teacher who dares to reveal his special subject in the context of the whole of life and learning.

Subjects, we need to be reminded, are merely convenient labels for portions of knowledge to which specialists have given attention. Re-

search is probably clarified by the departmentalizing of knowledge; the investigator who calls himself an economist will undoubtedly profit by delimiting the area of his inquiry, by specifying his problems. If, on the other hand, teachers assume that education can be achieved by the same procedure, they will ultimately succeed in reversing the true educative process; their students will be induced to view education as mastery of subjects instead of mastery of life. After all, it requires no more than common insight to perceive that life does not present itself to us in the form of experiences some of which may be labeled economic, some psychic, some social, some linguistic, et cetera. It may be well enough to be taught that there are phenomena which are predominantly economic, et cetera, but there can never be a purely economic experience. The falsest view of life,

as in the fable of the blindfolded men and the elephant, is one which rests upon some particularism as its point of reference. For example, in purchasing a pair of shoes a man certainly goes through motions which fit the category of economics; but no economist who is not also aware of the psychological cogitations which have preceded the sale can make a proper interpretation of the event; and these mental preliminaries are also accompanied by social implications: one does not buy even a pair of shoes without in some manner influencing or being influenced by others. Did the man buy the right pair of shoes—right with respect to the shape of his foot, the kind of use to which the shoes will be put, his income, his knowledge of leather and shoe-manufacturing? Did he pay the right price? Were the shoes made in a union shop? Was the salesman who sold the

shoes under-paid? This is, of course, an absurd refinement of illustration but it requires a simple absurdity to demonstrate how pedantic it is to assume that we can understand life by studying subjects.

Many educators who have come to realize that most of their subject-matter disappears from the minds of students shortly after graduation fall back upon the consolation that at least students have been disciplined—they will know how to find knowledge even if they do not possess it. This apology carries the premise another step in the wrong direction: our minds, our personalities, are not repositories into which knowledge is dumped in the hope that it can be reclaimed in the hour of need. If we could fish in the waters of memory for needed knowledge, our catches would be perpetual disappointments: knowledge like fish, either grows or dies.

And if knowledge grows, it is because knowing was once a part of experiencing.

Arguments directed against the subject-approach in education, even when sufficiently forceful to win intellectual approval of educators, will make little headway until accompanying experiments are made possible. Our conventional system of education—from kindergarten to university—is committed to subjects. Preoccupation with the content of education has so far overbalanced pedagogical thought that schoolmen now find their center of interest in curriculum-making: the process of transforming the school into a department-store bargain counter. The system derives its chief momentum from subject-teaching—a method which is compatible with a perverted and shallow pragmatism and profitable to an industrial order which requires technicians, not

educated men and women. The method is also congenial to, if indeed it did not evolve from, the conception which views education as something from which one graduates. How could the various "points" and entrance requirements and degree requisites be determined—how, indeed, would any one know when education was finished—if institutions of learning were deprived of this convenient measuring-rod of subjects? Happily, students of the universities and colleges possess wit enough to see the serio-comic response which is made to subject-controlled education: they call those who take it all too seriously "credit-baggers" and "degree-hunters."

Adult education, happily, requires neither entrance nor exit examinations. Adult learners attend classes voluntarily and they leave whenever the teaching falls below the standard of

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interest. What they learn converges upon life, not upon commencement and diploma. The external tokens of education are removed so that the learning process may stand or fall on its intrinsic merits. (It would be an *experience* for conventional teachers who call the roll, cover the subject in so many weeks, and grade their students within a fraction of a point if they had to make their way as teachers on no other basis than ability to interest voluntary students.) And because adult education is free from the yoke of subject-tradition, its builders are able to experiment boldly even in the sacrosanct sphere of pedagogical method. Indeed, if adult education is to produce a difference of quality in the use of intelligence, its promoters will do well to devote their major concern to method and not content.

Life is confronted in the form of situations,

occasions which necessitate action. Education is a method for giving situations a setting, for analyzing complex wholes into manageable, understandable parts, and a method which points out the path of action which, if followed, will bring the circumstance within the area of experiment. Since that education is best which most adequately helps us to meet situations, the best teaching method is one which emerges from situation-experiences. Or, in Dewey's words, "The trained mind is one that best grasps the degree of observation, forming of ideas, reasoning and experimental testing required in any special case, and that profits the most, in future thinking, by mistakes made in the past. What is important is that the mind should be sensitive to problems and skilled in methods of attack and solution." "We shall have need, before any given situation

is properly confronted, of all the relevant experience of others which bears upon our case—experience which has been stored away in books and that which comes freshly from researches and expert knowledge.

Situations arise when our aims or purposes are impeded, when our wishes fall beneath our present capacities. Conscious effort needs therefore to be directed along two channels: (a) inward toward the wish, its incidence, its validity, its realizability and its integrity with respect to our total personality; and (b) outward toward the circumstances which, for the moment, act as barriers to the fulfillment of the wish. This analysis of the situation furnishes the first set of problems with which we shall have to deal. A college professor writes to explain the situation in which he finds himself with respect to an antagonistic administra-

tion. He is not, so far as his description reveals, aware of any problem arising within his personality. Before a letter—suggesting that he make an analysis of his situation in terms of his past activities and their contributory relation to his purposes—can reach him, he is discharged and now writes for recommendations for another position. He is over-conscious of the outward circumstances and is therefore not capable of sensitizing himself for the inner analysis. The situation has led to no educative experiences and his present mood of resentment will undoubtedly accentuate the personality difficulties which in turn will inevitably lead to similar situations. On the other hand, people who find all the problems within themselves, drop below the level of adjustment through self-depreciation. We have then in every situation a series of problems some of

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which are predominantly relevant to the behaving personality, some to the impeding environment and some to the situation-as-a-whole which includes various forms of relatedness between the individual and his circumstances. Such problems may be classified for purposes of analysis by asking three questions: (a) What part of my personality is here involved about which I need further enlightenment? (b) What further information do I need concerning the various aspects of the impeding environment? (c) What do I need to know about the nature of my relatedness to important phases of the circumstances when the situation is viewed as a whole?

With this much preparation or readiness to meet the situation, we may now proceed to its intelligent consideration, assuming of course, that the situation is regarded as one out of

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which we mean to derive educative experience. A small number of self-dependent individuals possess sufficient perspicacity and diligence to follow the pathway toward action, that is, arrive at solutions for situations which are satisfying to themselves, without further assistance. It is doubtful, however, whether or not their experiences should be called in the highest sense educational. Most of us find ourselves in significant situations which involve others, situations which are explicitly or implicitly social; we might lift ourselves by our own bootstraps but we might also find that we had lifted ourselves out of, above the situation, not through it. Many "self-made" business men find in later years that worship of their maker is not enough; they become almost sentimental in giving credit to their colleagues and workers—after the time has passed when these collabora-

tors might have shared in the attendant creative experiences. Most of us, if we are intent upon making experience yield its intellectual content, need to *discuss* our situations with those who are concerned with us, with those who are likely to be influenced and with those who have special information which is relevant to our needs.

Discussion is more than talk. We think in verbal forms, and on the whole those who are able to vocalize their ideas, transmit them expressively to others, are more likely to live adequately than those who are inarticulate. But mere talking has no more educational content than bellowing, mooing, barking. Conversation may, indeed, turn back upon itself—as it so frequently does among those who use language as a medium of gossip—and come to be a closed circuit: closed with respect to

vocabulary as well as ideas. (A persistent demand has come to express ideas in one-syllable words—to popularize; this is one way of circumscribing language. If an idea cannot be accurately expressed in one-syllable words, it is a falsification of the idea to make the attempt; besides, it degrades those who read or listen by depriving them of incentives for making higher uses of language.) Words become habits—whereupon they lose their teaching function. Think of the countless words spoken aimlessly, pointlessly, futilely about that universal subject of conversation, the weather! Nobody does anything about it, as Mark Twain remarked, and in spite of the fact that we have a rapidly-growing science of weather it is probably true that superstition is more rampant in this sphere of thought than in any other save that of death. The talk of most people about

weather has gone round and round the circle of sameness until they are unable to make weather-words jump the groove of habit. Consequently they receive no education from a prodigious amount of talk about a fascinating theme. Pointless talk which follows no rules and consists of simple, quick responses proceeding from one person to another may, of course, become extremely entertaining, and this is putting vocal chords and language to good uses; we should, however, value this sort of talk for what it is, namely, recreation, not education. (We might even pay more attention to the playful possibilities of words when used in serious contexts.)

Discussion is organized talk. When two or more persons exchange experiences for the purpose of throwing light upon a situation, and when the confronting of the situation is itself

regarded as an educative opportunity, a tacit recognition to the effect that certain rules are to be followed, is present. If, for example, the group exceeds five or six in number, it usually becomes necessary to agree upon a chairman or leader whose functions will be to keep the discussion going, to maintain its direction, to enlist active participation of all members of the group, to point out discrepancies and relations, to sum up arguments, facts and conclusions, et cetera. When discussion is used as method for adult teaching, the teacher becomes group-chairman; he no longer sets problems and then casts about with various kinds of bait until he gets back his preconceived answer; nor is he the oracle who supplies answers which students carry off in their notebooks; his function is not to profess but to evoke—to draw out, not pour in; he performs in various degrees the office of

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interlocutor (one who questions and interprets), prolocutor (one who brings all expressions before the group), coach (one who trains individuals for team-play), and strategist (one who organizes parts into wholes and keeps the total action aligned with the group's purpose). The teacher or chairman does not organize discussion—he keeps it in organized channels.⁸² Whatever he brings to the group in the form of opinions, facts and experiences must be open to question and criticism on the same terms as the contributions of other participants.

Debates also follow rules but these are of no value to discussion. The debater selects his conclusion in advance and then proceeds to gather facts and opinions to prove his case. His aim is victory, not enlightenment. He represents "militarism in the intellect."

life.”³³ In debates we can win only by excluding other points of view whereas in discussions we can achieve only by inclusions. Purposeless conversation may have too little point but debate has too much. The naïve assumption that all questions have two sides distorts debates at the outset; every question has as many sides as there are interests involved and no situation is properly confronted until all relevant interests have been considered. “Where a debate makes much of logic, conference makes more of psychology. It deals not so much with arguments as with reasons. The distinction is important. A man’s arguments are the reasons that recite well. They do his heart credit, and his logical head. His reasons—more truly so-called—are things that lie deeper. They are the meaning to him of his own experience.”³⁴ Rules for discussion will consequently be compatible with

the fundamental purpose of conference which is, not to defeat any one, but rather to arrive at a joint conclusion. These rules or guides will moreover be consistent with the aim of adult education which is to make "arriving," not concluding, an educative venture. And, one of the more important rules to bear in mind is this: discussion does not solve situations; it reveals experimental roads to action; real solutions are behavioristic not intellectualistic. After we have recognized a situation, analyzed its involved problems and sought for relevant information and experience, we are prepared to envisage the consequences of various lines of action. Ensuing activities are functions of personalities; each person who sets forth to experiment in the light of the direction provided by preceding discussion will experience unique qualities. Education has been forwarded by

the group process; subsequent activity brings this educative process within the scope of deeper realities, the realities of necessitous living. Discussion is neither substitute for scientific method nor refuge for those who, being too timid to live experimentally, hide from the actualities of life. Orderly thinking carries us within sight of new departures in behavior—is analogous to hypothesis in scientific method. Activities ultimately validate or invalidate thought, but it is thinking which liberates action from instinctive, habitual forms. Discussion leads to experimental attitudes and also provides a social medium in which experimentalism can count for something. We do not ✓ “think through” problems; we act through. Thinking carries us only so far, then action must follow or we become lost in the wilderness of verbalism.

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The situation-approach to learning involves, then, (a) recognition of what constitutes a situation; (b) analysis of the situation into its constituent problems; (c) discussion of these problems in the light of available and needed experiences and information; (d) utilization of available information and experience for purposes of (e) formulating experimental solutions; (f) acting upon experimental propositions with a view of testing, and if necessary, revamping the assumptions which discussion has reavealed.* The subject-approach to

* These steps have been arranged in the following order in the pamphlet issued by the Inquiry, 129 East 52d Street, New York City, called *Creative Discussion*:

- "(1) What situation have we here?
- (2) What sort of problem does it show?
- (3) What new information does it involve?
- (4) What action will set us on towards a solution?"

education, on the contrary, begins by filling the student's mind with specialized sequences of systematized information which he is expected to recall and use in future situations. But, specialized information, content material, will come into the equation of learning with freshness and vigor if it comes when actually needed. Otherwise our activities will be constantly carrying us on into new adjustments while our memories are surfeited with old information.

It will be readily seen that adult education calls for a new kind of text-book as well as a new type of teacher. Under conventional educational systems both teacher and text attempt to make situations fit subjects whereas the demand is to make subjects serve situations. Teachers of youth assume that their function is to condition students for a preconceived kind of

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conduct; teachers of adults, on the other hand, will need to be alert in learning how the practical experiences of life can enliven subjects. The purpose of adult education is to give meaning to the categories of experiences, not to classifications of knowledge. Specialists who wish to participate in adult learning will need to do considerable collaborating among themselves before they learn how to relate their subdivided knowledge to current situations. It is perhaps true that no single group in modern life stands in greater need of adult education than experts, specialists: those who continue to know "more and more about less and less."

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"There are two ways of taking the present world-wide agitation. We may take it negatively, as an evidence of disintegration, or positively, as a search for new meanings."

—M. C. OTTO.

MODERN life derives its momentum from three interrelated sources: *science*, *specialism* and *industrialism*. The combined impact of these forces distinguishes our time from all previous periods of history. We are modern in the sense that our behavior is predominantly a response to scientific discoveries, experts and machine-production. "The world is now faced with a self-evolving system, which it cannot stop." ³⁵ Where will it take us? There is no knowing.

We can be moderately certain of but one conclusion: adjustments to the propelling forces in the modern world cannot be fruitfully achieved until intellectual, moral and spiritual values emerge which are capable of giving direction and meaning to life. Our ideas and our activities now come from science; our ideals are traditional. The forces which impel are dynamic; the means which control are impotent. We still attempt to bring the modern world into the context of unworkable political theory, superannuated ethics, irrational religion and inept education.

Optimistic interpreters explain this hiatus in modern life in terms of time alone: they contend that science and the technologies are merely ahead of our capacities for adjustment—that we will soon catch up; or, if it happens that we never can catch up, that our knowledge

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of things will always be in advance of our ability to control, we may rest content in acknowledging the inevitable "lag." This view furnishes a convenient name for one aspect of the process but, like so many explanations which stop when a suitable symbol has been found, it illumines the theme but slightly. If life is to become merely adjustment *to* the compulsions of science, specialism and industry, the worth of human personality and experience will cumulatively deteriorate. If life is to have more meaning than is implied in making up time, in overcoming lags, we shall need to learn how to make adjustments *of*, not *to*; we shall need to learn how to relate ourselves to material forces in such manner as to produce qualitative differences in both. If thinking can come abreast of doing only retrospectively, that is, long after the doing has exerted its

dominant influence, it will be scarcely worth the trouble to learn how to think. If, on the other hand, intelligence is able to expand our powers, utilize our reserve energies in more complete self-expression and creativeness, reveal to us the only freedom of which we are capable, illumine our enjoyments, integrate our personalities and lead us to dynamic fellowship—if, to sum up, intelligence is the price which man is obliged to pay for continuous growth, no effort directed toward its increase can be wasted.

✓ Growth is the goal of life. Power, knowledge, freedom, enjoyment, creativity—these and all other immediate ends for which we strive are contributory to the one ultimate goal which is to grow, to become. And the meaning of life is always an emergent concomitant of striving. Otherwise, life is illusion, for ends

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which can be achieved—which are conceived in terms of static qualities—leave the self without further incentives to growth. If there is at once a tragic and heroic side to life, it lies in this: there are no realizable ultimate goals which can be reached without depriving us—in the very act of consummation—of their meaning.

Q.—“Does effort become impossible the moment success is seen to be impossible?”

A.—“No. But it at once becomes irrational.”

Reply by Forberg: “Unquestionably that is so, if success be the final aim of effort, the goal the final aim of the runner. But what if the striving were a final aim in itself! What if there were no goal to be

attained or, what is the same thing for the runner, only a goal set at an infinite distance? What if the goal were there for the sake of the race, not the race for the sake of the goal?"

—FRIEDERICH CARL FORBERG'S
Apologie seines angeblichen Atheismus.

If then the meaning of life is to be discovered in becoming, education can serve as revealer only insofar as the learning process is continuous—coterminous with the functions of personality. Education is superficially conceived when viewed as a preparation for life. Education *is* life.

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* The Publications Committee of this organization is now preparing bibliographies.

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I

THE END OF LAISSEZ-FAIRE

**THE ORIGINS OF
INDIVIDUALISM**

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGINS OF INDIVIDUALISM

THE disposition towards public affairs, which we conveniently sum up as Individualism and *laissez-faire*, drew its sustenance from many different rivulets of thought and springs of feeling. For more than a hundred years our philosophers ruled us, because, by a miracle, they nearly all agreed, or seemed to agree, on this one thing. We do not dance even yet to a new tune. But a change is in the air. We hear but indistinctly what were once the clearest and most distinguishable voices which have ever instructed political mankind. The orchestra of diverse instruments, the chorus of articulate sound, is receding at last into the distance.

THE END OF LAISSEZ-FAIRE

At the end of the seventeenth century the divine right of monarchs gave place to Natural Liberty and to the Compact, and the divine right of the Church to the principle of Toleration, and to the view that a church is "a voluntary society of men,"¹ coming together, in a way which is "absolutely free and spontaneous."¹ Fifty years later the divine origin and absolute voice of duty gave place to the calculations of Utility. In the hands of Locke and Hume these doctrines founded Individualism. The Compact presumed rights in the individual; the new ethics, being no more than a scientific study of the consequences of rational self-love, placed the individual at the centre. "The sole trouble Virtue demands," said Hume, "is that of just Cal-

¹ Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*.

THE ORIGINS OF INDIVIDUALISM

cultation, and a steady preference of the greater Happiness.”² These ideas accorded with the practical notions of conservatives and of lawyers. They furnished a satisfactory intellectual foundation to the rights of property and to the liberty of the individual in possession to do what he liked with himself and with his own. This was one of the contributions of the eighteenth century to the air we still breathe.

The purpose of promoting the Individual was to depose the Monarch and the Church; the effect—through the new ethical significance attributed to Contract—was to buttress Property and Prescription. But it was not long before the claims of Society raised themselves anew against the individ-

² *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, section lx.

THE END OF LAISSEZ-FAIRE

ual. Paley^{*} and Bentham accepted utilitarian hedonism from the hands of Hume and his predecessors, but enlarged it into *social* utility. Rousseau took the Social Contract from Locke and drew out of it the General Will. In both cases the transition was made by virtue of the new emphasis laid on Equality. "Locke applies his Social Contract to modify the natural equality of mankind, so far as that phrase implies equality of property or even of privilege, in consideration of general security. In Rousseau's version equality is

^{*} "I omit," says Archdeacon Paley, "much usual declamation upon the dignity and capacity of our nature, the superiority of the soul to the body, of the rational to the animal part of our constitution; upon the worthiness, refinement, and delicacy of some satisfactions, and the meanness, grossness, and sensuality of others: because I hold that pleasures differ in nothing but in continuance and intensity."—*Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy*, Bk. I, chap. 6.

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not only the starting-point but the goal.”⁴

Paley and Bentham reached the same destination, but by different routes. Paley avoided an egoistic conclusion to his hedonism by a God from the machine. “Virtue,” he says, “is the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness”—in this way bringing back *I* and *others* to a parity. Bentham reached the same result by pure reason. There is no rational ground, he argued, for preferring the happiness of one individual, even oneself, to that of any other. Hence the greatest happiness of the greatest number is the sole rational object of conduct—taking Utility from Hume, but forgetting that sage man’s cynical

⁴ Leslie Stephen, *English Thought in Eighteenth Century*, ii, 192.

corollary: "'Tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger. 'Tis not contrary to reason for me to choose my total ruin to prevent the least uneasiness of an Indian, or person totally unknown to me. . . . Reason is and ought to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them."

Rousseau derived equality from the State of Nature, Paley from the Will of God, Bentham from a mathematical law of Indifference. Equality and Altruism had thus entered political philosophy to balance Contract and Egoism, and from the conjunctions of the ideas of Rousseau and Bentham sprang Democracy and Utilitarian Socialism.

This is the second current—sprung from

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long-dead controversies, and carried on its way by long-exploded sophistries—which still permeates our atmosphere of thought. But it did not drive out the former current. It mixed with it. The early nineteenth century performed the miraculous union. It harmonised the conservative individualism of Locke, Hume, Johnson, and Burke with the Socialism and democratic egalitarianism of Rousseau, Paley, Bentham, and Godwin.*

It would have been difficult to achieve this harmony of opposites if it had not been

* Godwin carried *laissez-faire* so far that he thought *all* government an evil, in which Bentham almost agreed with him. The doctrine of equality becomes with him one of extreme individualism, verging on anarchy. "The universal exercise of private judgment," he says, "is a doctrine so unspeakably beautiful that the true politician will certainly feel infinite reluctance in admitting the idea of interfering with it."

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for the Political Economists who sprang into prominence just at the right moment. The idea of a divine harmony between private advantage and the public good is already apparent in Paley. But it was the Economists who gave the notion a good scientific basis. Suppose that by the working of natural laws individuals pursuing their own interests with enlightenment in conditions of freedom always tend to promote the general interest at the same time! Our philosophical difficulties are resolved—at least for the practical man, who can then concentrate his efforts on securing the necessary conditions of freedom. To the philosophical doctrine that Government has no right to interfere, and the divine miracle that it has no need to interfere, there is added a scientific proof that

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its interference is inexpedient. This is the third current of thought, just discoverable in Adam Smith, who was ready in the main to allow the public good to rest on "the natural effort of every individual to better his own condition," but not fully and self-consciously developed until the nineteenth century begins. The principle of *laissez-faire* had arrived to harmonise Individualism and Socialism, and to make at one Hume's Egoism with the Greatest Good of the Greatest Number. The political philosopher could retire in favour of the business man—for the latter could attain the philosopher's *summum bonum* by just pursuing his own private profit.

Yet some other ingredients were also needed to complete the pudding. First the corruption and incompetence of eighteenth-

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century government, many legacies of which survived into the nineteenth. The Individualism of the political philosophers pointed to *laissez-faire*. The divine or scientific harmony (as the case might be) between private interest and public advantage pointed to *laissez-faire*. But above all, the ineptitude of public administrators strongly prejudiced the practical man in favour of *laissez-faire*—a sentiment which has by no means disappeared. Almost everything which the State did in the eighteenth century in excess of its minimum functions was, or seemed, injurious or unsuccessful.

On the other hand, material progress between 1750 and 1850 came from individual initiative, and owed almost nothing to the directive influence of organised so-

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ciety as a whole. Thus practical experience reinforced *a priori* reasoning. The philosophers and the economists told us that for certain deep reasons unfettered private enterprise would promote the greatest good of the whole. What could suit the business man better? And could an observer, looking about him, deny that the blessings of improvement which distinguished the age he lived in were traceable to the activities of individuals "on the make"? Thus the ground was fertile for a doctrine that, whether on divine, natural, or scientific grounds, State Action should be narrowly confined and economic life left, unregulated so far as may be, to the skill and good sense of individual citizens actuated by the admirable motive of trying to get on in the world.

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By the time that the influence of Paley and his like was waning, the innovations of Darwin were shaking the foundations of belief. Nothing could seem more opposed than the old doctrine and the new—the doctrine which looked on the world as the work of the divine Watchmaker and the doctrine which seemed to draw all things out of Chance, Chaos, and Old Time. But at this one point the new ideas bolstered up the old. The Economists were teaching that wealth, commerce, and machinery were the children of free competition—that free competition built London. But the Darwinians could go one better than that—free competition had built Man. The human eye was no longer the demonstration of Design, miraculously contriving all things for the best; it was the supreme achieve-

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ment of Chance, operating under conditions of free competition and *laissez-faire*. The principle of the Survival of the Fittest could be regarded as a vast generalisation of the Ricardian economics. Socialistic interferences became, in the light of this grander synthesis, not merely inexpedient, but impious, as calculated to retard the onward movement of the mighty process by which we ourselves had risen like Aphrodite out of the primeval slime of Ocean.

Therefore I trace the peculiar unity of the everyday political philosophy of the nineteenth century to the success with which it harmonised diversified and warring schools and united all good things to a single end. Hume and Paley, Burke and Rousseau, Godwin and Malthus, Cobbett and Huskisson, Bentham and Coleridge,

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Darwin and the Bishop of Oxford, were all, it was discovered, preaching practically the same thing—Individualism and *laissez-faire*. This was the Church of England and those her apostles, whilst the company of the economists were there to prove that the least deviation into impiety involved financial ruin.

These reasons and this atmosphere are the explanations, whether we know it or not—and most of us in these degenerate days are largely ignorant in the matter—why we feel such a strong bias in favour of *laissez-faire*, and why State action to regulate the value of money, or the course of investment, or the population, provoke such passionate suspicions. We have not read these authors; we should consider their arguments preposterous if they were to fall

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into our hands. Nevertheless we should not, I fancy, think as we do, if Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Rousseau, Paley, Adam Smith, Bentham, and Miss Martineau had not thought and written as they did. A study of the history of opinion is a necessary preliminary to the emancipation of the mind. I do not know which makes a man more conservative—to know nothing but the present, or nothing but the past.

**LAISSEZ-FAIRE AND THE
ECONOMISTS**

CHAPTER II

LAISSEZ-FAIRE AND THE ECONOMISTS

I HAVE said that it was the economists who furnished the scientific pretext by which the practical man could solve the contradiction between egoism and socialism which emerged out of the philosophising of the eighteenth century and the decay of revealed religion. But having said this for shortness' sake, I hasten to qualify it. This is what the economists are *supposed* to have said. No such doctrine is really to be found in the writings of the greatest authorities. It is what the popularisers and the vulgarisers said. It is what the Utilitarians, who admitted Hume's egoism and Bentham's egalitarianism at the same time,

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were *driven* to believe in, if they were to effect a synthesis.¹ The language of the economists lent itself to the *laissez-faire* interpretation. But the popularity of the doctrine must be laid at the door of the political philosophers of the day, whom it happened to suit, rather than of the political economists.

The maxim *laissez-nous faire* is traditionally attributed to the merchant Legendre addressing Colbert sometime towards the end of the seventeenth century.² But there is no doubt that the first writer to use the phrase, and to use it in clear association

¹ One can sympathise with the view of Coleridge, as summarised by Leslie Stephen, that "the Utilitarians destroyed every element of cohesion, made Society a struggle of selfish interests, and struck at the very roots of all order, patriotism, poetry, and religion."

² "Que faut-il faire pour vous aider?" asked Colbert. "Nous laisser faire," answered Legendre.

with the doctrine, is the Marquis d'Argenson about 1751.³ The Marquis was the first man to wax passionate on the economic advantages of Governments leaving trade alone. To govern better, he said, one must govern less.⁴ The true cause of the decline of our manufactures, he declared, is the protection we have given to them.⁵ "Laissez faire, telle devrait être la devise de

³ For the history of the phrase, *vide* Oncken, "Die Maxime Laissez-faire et laissez passer," from whom most of the following quotations are taken. The claims of the Marquis d'Argenson were overlooked until Oncken put them forward, partly because the relevant passages published during his lifetime were anonymous (*Journal Œconomique*, 1751), and partly because his works were not published in full (though probably passed privately from hand to hand during his lifetime) until 1858 (*Mémoires et Journal inédit du Marquis d'Argenson*).

⁴ "Pour gouverner mieux, il faudrait gouverner moins."

⁵ "On ne peut dire autant de nos fabriques: la vraie cause de leur declin, c'est la protection outrée qu'on leur accorde."

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toute puissance publique, depuis que le monde est civilisé." "Detestable principe que celui de ne vouloir notre grandeur que par l'abaissement de nos voisins! Il n'y a que la méchanceté et la malignité du cœur de satisfaites dans ce principe, et l'intérêt y est opposé. Laissez faire, morbleu! Laissez faire!!"

Here we have the economic doctrine of *laissez-faire*, with its most fervent expression in Free Trade, fully clothed. The phrases and the idea must have passed current in Paris from that time on. But they were slow to establish themselves in Literature; and the tradition associating with them the Physiocrats, and particularly de Gournay and Quesnay, finds little support in the writings of this school, though they were, of course, proponents of the essential

harmony of social and individual interests. The phrase *laissez-faire* is not to be found in the works of Adam Smith, of Ricardo, or of Malthus. Even the idea is not present in a dogmatic form in any of these authors. Adam Smith, of course, was a Free Trader and an opponent of many eighteenth-century restrictions on trade. But his attitude towards the Navigation Acts and the Usury laws shows that he was not dogmatic. Even his famous passage about "the invisible hand" reflects the philosophy which we associate with Paley rather than the economic dogma of *laissez-faire*. As Sidgwick and Cliff Leslie have pointed out, Adam Smith's advocacy of the "obvious and simple system of natural liberty" is derived from his theistic and optimistic view of the order of the world, as set forth in his

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Theory of Moral Sentiments, rather than from any proposition of Political Economy proper.⁶ The phrase *laissez-faire* was, I think, first brought into popular usage in England by a well-known passage of Dr Franklin's.⁷ It is not, indeed, until we come to the later works of Bentham—who was not an economist at all—that we discover the rule of *laissez-faire*, in the shape in which our grandfathers knew it, adopted into the service of the Utilitarian philosophy. For example, in *A Manual of Political Economy*,⁸ he writes: "The general rule is that nothing ought to be done or attempted by government; the motto or

⁶ Sidgwick, *Principles of Political Economy*, p. 20.

⁷ Bentham uses the expression "*laissez-nous faire*," *Works*, p. 440.

⁸ Written in 1793, a chapter published in the *Bibliothèque Britannique* in 1798, and the whole first printed in Bowring's edition of his *Works* (1843).

watchword of government, on these occasions, ought to be—*Be quiet*. . . . The request which agriculture, manufacturers, and commerce present to governments is as modest and reasonable as that which Diogenes made to Alexander: Stand out of my sunshine."

From this time on it was the political campaign for Free Trade, the influence of the so-called Manchester School and of the Benthamite Utilitarians, the utterances of secondary economic authorities, and the educational stories of Miss Martineau and Mrs. Marcet, that fixed *laissez-faire* in the popular mind as the practical conclusion of orthodox Political Economy—with this great difference, that the Malthusian view of Population having been accepted in the meantime by this same school of thought,

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the optimistic *laissez-faire* of the last half of the eighteenth century gives place to the pessimistic *laissez-faire* of the first half of the nineteenth century.⁹

In Mrs. Marcet's *Conversations on Political Economy* (1817) Caroline stands out as long as she can in favour of controlling the expenditure of the rich. But by page 418 she has to admit defeat:

"*Caroline.*—The more I learn upon this subject, the more I feel convinced that the interests of nations, as well as those of individuals, so far from being opposed to each other, are in the most perfect unison.

⁹ Cf. Sidgwick (*op. cit.*, p. 22): "Even those economists, who adhered in the main to Adam Smith's limitations of the sphere of government, enforced these limitations sadly rather than triumphantly; not as admirers of the social order at present resulting from 'natural liberty,' but as convinced that it is at least preferable to any artificial order that government might be able to substitute for it."

"Mrs. B.—Liberal and enlarged views will always lead to similar conclusions, and teach us to cherish sentiments of universal benevolence towards each other; hence the superiority of science over mere practical knowledge."

By 1850 the *Easy Lessons on Money Matters for the Use of Young People*, by Archbishop Whately, which the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge was distributing wholesale, do not admit even of those doubts which Mrs. B. allowed Caroline occasionally to entertain. "More harm than good is likely to be done," the little book concludes, "by almost any interference of Government with men's money transactions, whether letting and leasing, or buying and selling of any kind." *True* liberty is "that every man should be left

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free to dispose of his own property, his own time, and strength, and skill, in whatever way he himself may think fit, provided he does no wrong to his neighbours."

In short, the dogma had got hold of the educational machine; it had become a copybook maxim. The Political Philosophy, which the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had forged in order to throw down Kings and Prelates, had been made milk for babes, and had literally entered the nursery.

Finally, in the works of Bastiat we reach the most extravagant and rhapsodical expression of the Political Economist's religion. In his *Harmonies Economiques*, "I undertake," he says, "to demonstrate the Harmony of those laws of Providence which govern human society. What makes

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these laws harmonious and not discordant is, that all principles, all motives, all springs of action, all interests, co-operate towards a grand final result. . . . And that result is, the indefinite approximation of all classes towards a level, which is always rising; in other words, the *equalisation* of individuals in the general *amelioration*." And when, like other priests, he drafts his *Credo*, it runs as follows: "I believe that He who has arranged the material universe has not withheld His regard from the arrangements of the social world. I believe that He has combined and caused to move in harmony free agents as well as inert molecules. . . . I believe that the invincible social tendency is a constant approximation of men towards a common ~~moral~~ intellectual, and physical level, with, at the

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same time, a progressive and indefinite elevation of that level. I believe that all that is necessary to the gradual and peaceful development of humanity is that its tendencies should not be disturbed, nor have the liberty of their movements destroyed."

From the time of John Stuart Mill, economists of authority have been in strong reaction against all such ideas. "Scarcely a single English economist of repute," as Professor Cannan has expressed it, "will join in a frontal attack upon Socialism in general," though, as he also adds, "nearly every economist, whether of repute or not, is always ready to pick holes in most socialistic proposals."¹⁰ Economists no longer

¹⁰ *Theories of Production and Distribution*, p. 494.

have any link with the theological or political philosophies out of which the dogma of Social Harmony was born, and their scientific analysis leads them to no such conclusions.

Cairnes, in the Introductory Lecture on "Political Economy and *Laissez-Faire*," which he delivered at University College, London, in 1870, was perhaps the first orthodox economist to deliver a frontal attack upon *laissez-faire* in general. "The maxim of *laissez-faire*," he declared, "has no scientific basis whatever, but is at best a mere handy rule of practice."¹¹ This, for

¹¹ Cairnes well described the "prevailing notion" in the following passage from the same lecture: "The prevailing notion is that P.E. undertakes to show that wealth may be most rapidly accumulated and most fairly distributed; that is to say, that human well-being may be most effectually promoted, by the simple process of leaving people to themselves; leaving individuals, that is to say, to follow the promptings of self-interest,

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fifty years past, has been the view of all leading economists. Some of the most important work of Alfred Marshall—to take one instance—was directed to the elucidation of the leading cases in which private interest and social interest are *not* harmonious. Nevertheless the guarded and undogmatic attitude of the best economists has not prevailed against the general opinion that an individualistic *laissez-faire* is both what they ought to teach and what in fact they do teach.

unrestrained either by the State or by public opinion, so long as they abstain from force and fraud. This is the doctrine commonly known as *laissez-faire*; and accordingly political economy is, I think, very generally regarded as a sort of scientific rendering of this maxim—a vindication of freedom of individual enterprise and of contract as the one and sufficient solution of all industrial problems.”

**THE ASSUMPTIONS OF
ECONOMIC INDIVIDUALISM**

CHAPTER III

THE ASSUMPTIONS OF ECONOMIC INDIVIDUALISM

ECONOMISTS, like other scientists, have chosen the hypothesis from which they set out, and which they offer to beginners, because it is the simplest, and not because it is the nearest to the facts. Partly for this reason, but partly, I admit, because they have been biassed by the traditions of the subject, they have begun by assuming a state of affairs where the ideal distribution of productive resources can be brought about through individuals acting independently by the method of trial and error in such a way that those individuals who move in the right direction will destroy by com-

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petition those who move in the wrong direction. This implies that there must be no mercy or protection for those who embark their capital or their labour in the wrong direction. It is a method of bringing the most successful profit-makers to the top by a ruthless struggle for survival, which selects the most efficient by the bankruptcy of the less efficient. It does not count the cost of the struggle, but looks only to the benefits of the final result which are assumed to be lasting and permanent, once it has been attained. The object of life being to crop the leaves off the branches up to the greatest possible height, the likeliest way of achieving this end is to leave the giraffes with the longest necks to starve out those whose necks are shorter.

Corresponding to this method of attain-

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ing the ideal distribution of the instruments of production between different purposes, there is a similar assumption as to how to attain the ideal distribution of what is available for consumption. Each individual will discover what amongst the possible objects of consumption *he* wants most by the method of trial and error "at the margin," and in this way not only will each consumer come to distribute his consumption most advantageously, but each object of consumption will find its way into the mouth of the consumer whose relish for it is greatest compared with that of the others, because that consumer will outbid the rest.

Thus, if only we leave the giraffes to themselves, (1) the maximum quantity of leaves will be cropped because the giraffes with the longest necks will, by dint

of starving out the others, get nearest to the trees; (2) each giraffe will make for the leaves which he finds most succulent amongst those in reach; and (3) the giraffes whose relish for a given leaf is greatest will crane most to reach it. In this way more and juicier leaves will be swallowed, and each individual leaf will reach the throat which thinks it deserves most effort.

This assumption, however, of conditions where unhindered natural selection leads to progress, is only one of the two provisional assumptions which, taken as literal truth, have become the twin buttresses of *laissez-faire*. The other one is the efficacy, and, indeed, the necessity, of the opportunity for unlimited private money-making as an *incentive* to maximum effort. Profit accrues, under *laissez-faire*, to the individual who,

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whether by skill or good fortune, is found with his productive resources in the right place at the right time. A system which allows the skilful or fortunate individual to reap the whole fruits of this conjuncture evidently offers an immense incentive to the practice of the art of being in the right place at the right time. Thus one of the most powerful of human motives, namely, the love of money, is harnessed to the task of distributing economic resources in the way best calculated to increase wealth.

The parallelism between economic *laissez-faire* and Darwinianism, already briefly noted, is now seen, as Herbert Spencer was foremost to recognise, to be very close indeed. Just as Darwin invoked sexual love, acting through sexual selection, as an adjunct to Natural Selection by competition

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to direct evolution along lines which should be desirable as well as effective, so the individualist invokes the love of money, acting through the pursuit of profit, as an adjutant to Natural Selection, to bring about the production on the greatest possible scale of what is most strongly desired as measured by exchange value.

The beauty and the simplicity of such a theory are so great that it is easy to forget that it follows not from the actual facts, but from an incomplete hypothesis introduced for the sake of simplicity. The conclusion that individuals acting independently for their own advantage will produce the greatest aggregate of wealth, depends on a variety of unreal assumptions to the effect that the processes of production and consumption are in no way organic,

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that there exists a sufficient foreknowledge of conditions and requirements, and that there are adequate opportunities of obtaining this foreknowledge. For economists generally reserve for a later stage of their argument the complications which arise—(1) when the efficient units of production are large relatively to the units of consumption, (2) when overhead costs or joint costs are present, (3) when internal economies tend to the aggregation of production, (4) when the time required for adjustments is long, (5) when ignorance prevails over knowledge, and (6) when monopolies and combinations interfere with equality in bargaining—they reserve, that is to say, for a later stage their analysis of the actual facts. Moreover, many of those who recognise that the simplified hypothesis does

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not accurately correspond to fact conclude nevertheless that it does represent what is "natural" and therefore ideal. They regard the simplified hypothesis as health, and the further complications as disease.

There are also other considerations, which rightly bring into the calculation the cost and character of the competitive struggle itself, and the tendency for wealth to be distributed where it is not appreciated most. If we have the welfare of the giraffes at heart, we must not overlook the sufferings of the shorter necks who are starved out, or the sweet leaves which fall to the ground and are trampled underfoot in the struggle, or the overfeeding of the long-necked ones, or the evil look of anxiety or struggling greediness which overcasts the mild faces of the herd.

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The principles of *laissez-faire* have had other allies besides economic text-books. They have been reinforced by the poor quality of the opponent proposals—Protectionism on one hand, and Marxian Socialism on the other. Yet these doctrines are both characterised, not only or chiefly by their infringing the general presumption in favour of *laissez-faire*, but by mere logical fallacy. Both are examples of poor thinking, of inability to analyse a process and follow it out to its conclusion. The arguments against them, though reinforced by the principle of *laissez-faire*, do not strictly require it. Of the two, Protectionism is at least plausible, and the forces making for its popularity are nothing to wonder at. But Marxian Socialism must always remain a portent to the historians of Opinion—

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how a doctrine so illogical and so dull can have exercised so powerful and enduring an influence over the minds of men, and, through them, the events of history. At any rate, the obvious scientific deficiencies of these two schools greatly contributed to the prestige and authority of nineteenth-century *laissez-faire*.

Nor has the most notable divergence into centralised social action on a great scale—the conduct of the late war—encouraged reformers or dispelled old-fashioned prejudices. There is much to be said on both sides. War experience in the organisation of socialised production has left some observers anxious to repeat it in peace conditions. War socialism unquestionably achieved a production of wealth on a scale far greater than we ever knew in Peace, for

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though the goods and services delivered were destined for immediate and fruitless extinction, none the less they were wealth. Nevertheless the dissipation of effort was also prodigious, and the atmosphere of waste and not counting the cost was disgusting to any thrifty or provident spirit.

Finally, Individualism and *laissez-faire* could not, in spite of their deep roots in the political and moral philosophies of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, have secured their lasting hold over the conduct of public affairs, if it had not been for their conformity with the needs and wishes of the business world of the day. They gave full scope to our erstwhile heroes, the great business men. "At least one-half of the best ability in the Western world," Marshall used to say, "is engaged

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in business." A great part of "the higher imagination" of the age was thus employed. It was on the activities of these men that our hopes of Progress were centred. "Men of this class," Marshall wrote,¹ "live in constantly shifting visions, fashioned in their own brains, of various routes to their desired end; of the difficulties which Nature will oppose to them on each route, and of the contrivances by which they hope to get the better of her opposition. This imagination gains little credit with the people, because it is not allowed to run riot; its strength is disciplined by a stronger will; and its highest glory is to have attained great ends by means so simple that no one will know, and none but experts will even

¹ "The Social Possibilities of Economic Chivalry," *Economic Journal* (1907), xvii, p. 9.

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guess, how a dozen other expedients, each suggesting as much brilliancy to the hasty observer, were set aside in favour of it. The imagination of such a man is employed, like that of the master chess-player, in forecasting the obstacles which may be opposed to the successful issue of his far-reaching projects, and constantly rejecting brilliant suggestions because he has pictured to himself the counter-strokes to them. His strong nervous force is at the opposite extreme of human nature from that nervous irresponsibility which conceives hasty Utopian schemes, and which is rather to be compared to the bold facility of a weak player, who will speedily solve the most difficult chess problem by taking on himself to move the black men as well as the white."

This is a fine picture of the great Captain

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of Industry, the Master-Individualist, who serves us in serving himself, just as any other artist does. Yet this one, in his turn, is becoming a tarnished idol. We grow more doubtful whether it is he who will lead us into Paradise by the hand.

These many elements have contributed to the current intellectual bias, the mental make-up, the orthodoxy of the day. The compelling force of many of the original reasons has disappeared, but, as usual, the vitality of the conclusions outlasts them. To suggest social action for the public good to the City of London is like discussing the *Origin of Species* with a Bishop sixty years ago. The first reaction is not intellectual, but moral. An orthodoxy is in question, and the more persuasive the arguments the graver the offence. Nevertheless, ventu-

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ring into the den of the lethargic monster, at any rate I have traced his claims and pedigree so as to show that he has ruled over us rather by hereditary right than by personal merit.

**THE FUTURE ORGANISATION
OF SOCIETY**

CHAPTER IV

THE FUTURE ORGANISATION OF SOCIETY

LET us clear from the ground the metaphysical or general principles upon which, from time to time, *laissez-faire* has been founded. It is *not* true that individuals possess a prescriptive "natural liberty" in their economic activities. There is *no* "compact" conferring perpetual rights on those who Have or on those who Acquire. The world is *not* so governed from above that private and social interest always coincide. It is *not* so managed here below that in practice they coincide. It is *not* a correct deduction from the Principles of Economics that enlightened self-interest always operates in the public interest. Nor is it

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true that self-interest generally *is* enlightened; more often individuals acting separately to promote their own ends are too ignorant or too weak to attain even these. Experience does *not* show that individuals, when they make up a social unit, are always less clear-sighted than when they act separately.

We cannot therefore settle on abstract grounds, but must handle on its merits in detail what Burke termed "one of the finest problems in legislation, namely, to determine what the State ought to take upon itself to direct by the public wisdom, and what it ought to leave, with as little interference as possible, to individual exertion."¹ We have to discriminate between

¹ Quoted by M'Culloch in his *Principles of Political Economy*.

what Bentham, in his forgotten but useful nomenclature, used to term *Agenda* and *Non-Agenda*, and to do this without Bentham's prior presumption that interference is, at the same time, "generally needless" and "generally pernicious."² Perhaps the chief task of Economists at this hour is to distinguish afresh the *Agenda* of Government from the *Non-Agenda*; and the companion task of Politics is to devise forms of Government within a Democracy which shall be capable of accomplishing the *Agenda*. I will illustrate what I have in mind by two examples.

(1) I believe that in many cases the ideal size for the unit of control and organisation lies somewhere between the individual and

² Bentham's *Manual of Political Economy*, published posthumously, in Bowring's edition (1843).

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the modern State. I suggest, therefore, that progress lies in the growth and the recognition of semi-autonomous bodies within the State—bodies whose criterion of action within their own fields is solely the public good as they understand it, and from whose deliberations motives of private advantage are excluded, though some place it may still be necessary to leave, until the ambit of men's altruism grows wider, to the separate advantage of particular groups, classes, or faculties—bodies which in the ordinary course of affairs are mainly autonomous within their prescribed limitations, but are subject in the last resort to the sovereignty of the democracy expressed through Parliament.

I propose a return, it may be said, towards mediæval conceptions of separate

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autonomies. But, in England at any rate, corporations are a mode of government which has never ceased to be important and is sympathetic to our institutions. It is easy to give examples, from what already exists, of separate autonomies which have attained or are approaching the mode I designate—the Universities, the Bank of England, the Port of London Authority, even perhaps the Railway Companies. In the United States there are doubtless analogous instances.

But more interesting than these is the trend of Joint Stock Institutions, when they have reached a certain age and size, to approximate to the status of public corporations rather than that of individualistic private enterprise. One of the most interesting and unnoticed developments of re-

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cent decades has been the tendency of big enterprise to socialise itself. A point arrives in the growth of a big institution—particularly a big railway or big public utility enterprise, but also a big bank or a big insurance company—at which the owners of the capital, *i.e.* the shareholders, are almost entirely dissociated from the management, with the result that the direct personal interest of the latter in the making of great profit becomes quite secondary. When this stage is reached, the general stability and reputation of the institution are more considered by the management than the maximum of profit for the shareholders. The shareholders must be satisfied by conventionally adequate dividends; but once this is secured, the direct interest of the management often consists in avoiding criticism

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from the public and from the customers of the concern. This is particularly the case if their great size or semi-monopolistic position renders them conspicuous in the public eye and vulnerable to public attack. The extreme instance, perhaps, of this tendency in the case of an institution, theoretically the unrestricted property of private persons, is the Bank of England. It is almost true to say that there is no class of persons in the Kingdom of whom the Governor of the Bank of England thinks less when he decides on his policy than of his shareholders. Their rights, in excess of their conventional dividend, have already sunk to the neighborhood of zero. But the same thing is partly true of many other big institutions. They are, as time goes on, socialising themselves.

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Not that this is unmixed gain. The same causes promote conservatism and a waning of enterprise. In fact, we already have in these cases many of the faults as well as the advantages of State Socialism. Nevertheless we see here, I think, a natural line of evolution. The battle of Socialism against unlimited private profit is being won in detail hour by hour. In these particular fields—it remains acute elsewhere—this is no longer the pressing problem. There is, for instance, no so-called important political question so really unimportant, so irrelevant to the re-organisation of the economic life of Great Britain, as the Nationalisation of the Railways.

It is true that many big undertakings, particularly Public Utility enterprises and other business requiring a large fixed capi-

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tal, still need to be semi-socialised. But we must keep our minds flexible regarding the forms of this semi-socialism. We must take full advantage of the natural tendencies of the day, and we must probably prefer semi-autonomous corporations to organs of the Central Government for which Ministers of State are directly responsible.

I criticise doctrinaire State Socialism, not because it seeks to engage men's altruistic impulses in the service of Society, or because it departs from *laissez-faire*, or because it takes away from man's natural liberty to make a million, or because it has courage for bold experiments. All these things I applaud. I criticise it because it misses the significance of what is actually happening; because it is, in fact, little better than a dusty survival of a plan to meet

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the problems of fifty years ago, based on a misunderstanding of what someone said a hundred years ago. Nineteenth-century State Socialism sprang from Bentham, free competition, etc., and is in some respects a clearer, in some respects a more muddled version of just the same philosophy as underlies nineteenth-century individualism. Both equally laid all their stress on freedom, the one negatively to avoid limitations on existing freedom, the other positively to destroy natural or acquired monopolies. They are different reactions to the same intellectual atmosphere.

(2) I come next to a criterion of *Agenda* which is particularly relevant to what it is urgent and desirable to do in the near future. We must aim at separating those services which are *technically social* from

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those which are *technically individual*. The most important *Agenda* of the State relate not to those activities which private individuals are already fulfilling, but to those functions which fall outside the sphere of the individual, to those decisions which are made by *no one* if the State does not make them. The important thing for Government is not to do things which individuals are doing already, and to do them a little better or a little worse; but to do those things which at present are not done at all.

It is not within the scope of my purpose on this occasion to develop practical policies. I limit myself, therefore, to naming some instances of what I mean from amongst those problems about which I happen to have thought most.

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Many of the greatest economic evils of our time are the fruits of risk, uncertainty, and ignorance. It is because particular individuals, fortunate in situation or in abilities, are able to take advantage of uncertainty and ignorance, and also because for the same reason big business is often a lottery, that great inequalities of wealth come about; and these same factors are also the cause of the Unemployment of Labour, or the disappointment of reasonable business expectations, and of the impairment of efficiency and production. Yet the cure lies outside the operations of individuals; it may even be to the interest of individuals to aggravate the disease. I believe that the cure for these things is partly to be sought in the deliberate control of the currency and of credit by a central institution, and

partly in the collection and dissemination on a great scale of data relating to the business situation, including the full publicity, by law if necessary, of all business facts which it is useful to know.

My second example relates to Savings and Investment. I believe that some co-ordinated act of intelligent judgment is required as to the scale on which it is desirable that the community as a whole should save, the scale on which these savings should go abroad in the form of foreign investments, and whether the present organisation of the investment market distributes savings along the most nationally productive channels. I do not think that these matters should be left entirely to the chances of private judgment and private profits, as they are at present.

My third example concerns Population. The time has already come when each country needs a considered national policy about what size of Population, whether larger or smaller than at present or the same, is most expedient. And having settled this policy, we must take steps to carry it into operation. The time may arrive a little later when the community as a whole must pay attention to the innate quality as well as to the mere numbers of its future members.

THE MONEY MOTIVE

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opinion are likely to be waged in the coming years not round technical questions, where the arguments on either side are mainly economic, but round those which, for want of better words, may be called psychological or, perhaps, moral.

In Europe, or at least in some parts of Europe—but not, I think, in the United States of America—there is a latent reaction, somewhat widespread, against basing Society to the extent that we do upon fostering, encouraging, and protecting the money-motives of individuals. A preference for arranging our affairs in such a way as to appeal to the money-motive as little as possible, rather than as much as possible, need not be *a priori*, but may be based on the comparison of experiences. Different persons, according to their choice of profession,

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find the money-motive playing a large or a small part in their daily lives, and historians can tell us about other phases of social organisation in which this motive has played a much smaller part than it does now. Most religions and most philosophies deprecate, to say the least of it, a way of life mainly influenced by considerations of personal money profit. On the other hand, most men to-day reject ascetic notions and do not doubt the real advantages of wealth. Moreover, it seems obvious to them that we cannot do without the money-motive, and that, apart from certain admitted abuses, it does its job well. In the result the average man averts his attention from the problem, and has no clear idea what he really thinks and feels about the whole confounded matter.

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Confusion of thought and feeling leads to confusion of speech. Many people, who are really objecting to Capitalism as a way of life, argue as though they were objecting to it on the ground of its inefficiency in attaining its own objects. Contrariwise, devotees of Capitalism are often unduly conservative, and reject reforms in its technique, which might really strengthen and preserve it, for fear that they may prove to be first steps away from Capitalism itself. Nevertheless a time may be coming when we shall get clearer than at present as to when we are talking about Capitalism as an efficient or inefficient technique, and when we are talking about it as desirable or objectionable in itself. For my part, I think that Capitalism, wisely managed, can probably be made more efficient for attain-

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ing economic ends than any alternative system yet in sight, but that in itself it is in many ways extremely objectionable. Our problem is to work out a social organisation which shall be as efficient as possible without offending our notions of a satisfactory way of life.

The next step forward must come, not from political agitation or premature experiments, but from thought. We need by an effort of the mind to elucidate our own feelings. At present our sympathy and our judgment are liable to be on different sides, which is a painful and paralysing state of mind. In the field of action reformers will not be successful until they can steadily pursue a clear and definite object with their intellects and their feelings in tune. There is no party in the world at present which

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appears to me to be pursuing right aims by right methods. Material Poverty provides the incentive to change precisely in situations where there is very little margin for experiments. Material Prosperity removes the incentive just when it might be safe to take a chance. Europe lacks the means, America the will, to make a move. We need a new set of convictions which spring naturally from a candid examination of our own inner feelings in relation to the outside facts.

II

A SHORT VIEW OF RUSSIA

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE following chapters are not based on intimate knowledge or close experience, and claim no authority as such. They are merely the impressions, for what they are worth, of an observer, whose prejudices were not specially calculated to distort his sight, endeavouring to convey, as best he can, how Russia struck him (September, 1925).

I use not infrequently in what follows the epithet *religious* as applicable to the disciples of Lenin. Judging from letters which I received when these chapters were appearing in the *Nation* and *The New Republic*, I believe that Englishmen and

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Americans will see what I mean; but in Russia there are few, I gather, who approve or understand this use of language. To the Bolshevists themselves the word will sound as stupid and offensive, mere vulgar abuse—as though I were to call the Archbishop of Canterbury a bolshevist (which, however, he may indeed deserve, if he seriously pursues the Gospel precepts); for they claim to be just the opposite. Religion, mysticism, idealism—it is part of the Leninist's creed that all such matters are trumpery and trash, whereas they themselves are materialists, realists, of the earth earthy. Have they not, but the other day, ordained that in the libraries of the proletarian clubs "the section on religion must contain solely anti-religious literature"?

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There may be good reasons out of the past why religion should have a nasty taste in Russian mouths. There may be a consistent and intelligible use of language by which High Church mystics are alone religious and those who try to find a better path on earth are irreligious, by which the cries of dancing dervishes are religious and the Sermon on the Mount irreligious, by which Rasputin was religious and Tolstoy irreligious. Let me, therefore, explain in advance that, when I say that Leninism may be inspired with religious fervour, I do not suggest that the Commissars are High Church mystics, dancing dervishes, or Rasputins in mufti.

To American readers these explanations are probably not needed. For in the English-speaking world we have long recog-

nised that there are two branches of religion—high and low, mystical sleep-walkers and practical idealists. There are two distinct sublimations of materialistic egotism—one in which the ego is merged in the nameless mystic union, another in which it is merged in the pursuit of an ideal life for the whole community of men. The participants of the first may neglect or ignore the second; many followers of the second condemn what seems to them the idle indulgence or self-deceptions of the first. It has been the peculiarity of some great religious leaders that they have belonged to both classes at once. At any rate, when I speak of religion I include both, and not the former only.

Some instances from our latter-day celebrities may illustrate my explanation. Cer-

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tain of the politicians of France, M. Poincaré, for example, followed hard by some of the politicians of the United States, seem to me to be amongst the most irreligious men now in the world; Trotsky, Mr. Bernard Shaw, and Mr Baldwin, each in his way, amongst the most religious. I do not forget that Trotsky has written:

“To accept the Workers’ Revolution in the name of a high ideal means not only to reject it, but to slander it. All the social illusions which mankind has raved about in religion, poetry, morals, or philosophy, served only the purpose of deceiving and blinding the oppressed. The Socialist Revolution tears the cover off ‘illusions,’ off ‘elevating,’ as well as off humiliating deceptions, and washes off in blood reality’s make-up. The Revolution is strong to the extent to which it is realistic, rational, strategic, and mathematical. Can it be that

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the Revolution, the same one which is now before us, the first since the earth began, needs the seasoning of romantic outbursts, as a cat *ragout* needs hare sauce?"

For he has also looked forward to "a society which will have thrown off the pinching and stultifying worry about one's daily bread . . . in which the liberated egotism of man—a mighty force!—will be directed wholly towards the understanding, the transformation, and the betterment of the Universe." Trotsky himself does not confuse the means with the end:

"The Revolution itself is not yet the Kingdom of Freedom. On the contrary, it is developing the features of 'necessity' to the greatest degree. . . . Revolutionary literature cannot but be imbued with a spirit of social hatred, which is a creative

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historic factor in the epoch of proletarian dictatorship. But under Socialism solidarity will be the basis of society. Literature and Art will be tuned to a different key. All the emotions which we revolutionaries, at the present time, feel apprehensive of naming—so much have they been worn thin by hypocrites and vulgarians—such as disinterested friendship, love for one's neighbour, sympathy, will be the mighty ringing chords of Socialist poetry."

One has a feeling that such sentiments would not come with equal sincerity or seriousness or emotional force from the lips, for example, of Signor Mussolini or of President Calvin Coolidge. The Duce may be a rake susceptible of being reformed, and the President a respectable person whose salvation is out of the question. What are they really? I cannot certainly

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say;—these matters, which are often palpable at close quarters, are hard to distinguish at a distance. Before I went to Russia I was in similar doubts about the Communists. The following short account of what I thought I learnt on the spot and could not have learnt elsewhere, is a partial answer.

**WHAT IS THE COMMUNIST
FAITH?**

CHAPTER II

WHAT IS THE COMMUNIST FAITH?

It is extraordinarily difficult to be fair-minded about Russia. And even with fair-mindedness, how is a true impression to be conveyed of something so unfamiliar, shifting, and contradictory, of which no one in England has a background of knowledge or experience? No English newspaper has a regular correspondent resident in Russia. We rightly attach small credence to what the Soviet authorities say about themselves. Most of our news is from prejudiced Labour deputations or from prejudiced *émigrés*. Thus a belt of fog separates us from what goes on in the other world where the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics

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rules and experiments and evolves a kind of order. Russia is suffering the penalty of years of "propaganda," which, by taking away credence from words, almost destroys, in the end, the means of communication at a distance.

Leninism is a combination of two things which Europeans have kept for some centuries in different compartments of the soul—religion and business. We are shocked because the religion is new, and contemptuous because the business, being subordinated to the religion instead of the other way round, is highly inefficient.

Like other new religions, Leninism derives its power not from the multitude but from a small minority of enthusiastic converts, whose zeal and intolerance make each one the equal in strength of a hundred in-

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differentists. Like other new religions, it is led by those who can combine the new spirit, perhaps sincerely, with seeing a good deal more than their followers, politicians with at least an average dose of political cynicism, who can smile as well as frown, volatile experimentalists, released by religion from truth and mercy but not blinded to facts and expediency, and open therefore to the charge (superficial and useless though it is where politicians, lay or ecclesiastical, are concerned) of hypocrisy. Like other new religions, it seems to take the colour and gaiety and freedom out of everyday life and to offer a drab substitute in the square wooden faces of its devotees. Like other new religions, it persecutes without justice or pity those who actively resist it. Like other new religions, it is unscrupulous.

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Like other new religions, it is filled with missionary ardour and œcumenical ambitions. But to say that Leninism is the faith of a persecuting and propagating minority of fanatics led by hypocrites is, after all, to say no more nor less than that it is a religion and not merely a party, and Lenin a Mahomet, not a Bismarck. If we want to frighten ourselves in our capitalist easy-chairs, we can picture the Communists of Russia as though the early Christians led by Attila were using the equipment of the Holy Inquisition and the Jesuit missions to enforce the literal economics of the New Testament; but when we want to comfort ourselves in the same chairs, can we hopefully repeat that these economics are fortunately so contrary to human nature that

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they cannot finance either missionaries or armies and will surely end in defeat?

There are three questions to answer. Is the new religion partly true or sympathetic to the souls of modern men? Is it on the material side so inefficient as to render it incapable to survive? Will it, in the course of time, with sufficient dilution and added impurity, catch the multitude?

As for the first question, those who are completely satisfied by Christian capitalism or by egotistic capitalism untempered by subterfuge will not hesitate how to answer it; for they either have a religion or need none. But many, in this age without religion, are bound to feel a strong emotional curiosity towards any religion which is really new and not merely a recrudes-

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cence of old ones and has proved its motive force; and all the more when the new thing comes out of Russia, the beautiful and foolish youngest son of the European family, with hair on his head, nearer both to the earth and to heaven than his bald brothers in the West—who, having been born two centuries later, has been able to pick up the middle-aged disillusionment of the rest of the family before he has lost the genius of youth or become addicted to comfort and to habits. I sympathise with those who seek for something good in Soviet Russia.

But when we come to the actual thing, what is one to say? For me, brought up in a free air undarkened by the horrors of religion, with nothing to be afraid of, Red Russia holds too much which is detestable. Comfort and habits let us be ready to forgo,

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but I am not ready for a creed which does not care how much it destroys the liberty and security of daily life, which uses deliberately the weapons of persecution, destruction, and international strife. How can I admire a policy which finds a characteristic expression in spending millions to suborn spies in every family and group at home, and to stir up trouble abroad? Perhaps this is no worse and has more purpose than the greedy, warlike, and imperialist propensities of other Governments; but it must be far better than these to shift me out of my rut. How can I accept a doctrine which sets up as its bible, above and beyond criticism, an obsolete economic textbook which I know to be not only scientifically erroneous but without interest or application for the modern world? How can I

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adopt a creed which, preferring the mud to the fish, exalts the boorish proletariat above the bourgeois and the intelligentsia who, with whatever faults, are the quality in life and surely carry the seeds of all human advancement? Even if we need a religion, how can we find it in the turbid rubbish of the red bookshops? It is hard for an educated, decent, intelligent son of Western Europe to find his ideals here, unless he has first suffered some strange and horrid process of conversion which has changed all his values.

Yet we shall miss the essence of the new religion if we stop at this point. The Communist may justly reply that all these things belong not to his ultimate Faith but to the tactics of Revolution. For he believes in two things: the introduction of a New

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Order upon earth, and the *method* of the Revolution as the *only* means thereto.¹ The New Order must not be judged either by the horrors of the Revolution or by the privations of the transitionary period. The Revolution is to be a supreme example of the means justified by the end. The soldier of the Revolution must crucify his own human nature, becoming unscrupulous and ruthless, and suffering himself a life without security or joy—but as the means to his purpose and not its end.

What, then, is the essence of the new religion as a New Order upon earth? Looking from outside, I do not clearly know. Sometimes its mouthpieces speak as though

¹ In these chapters I use the term "Communism" to mean the New Order, and not, as is the practice in British Labour politics, to mean the Revolution as a means thereto.

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it was purely materialistic and technical in just the same sense that modern capitalism is—as though, that is to say, Communism merely claimed to be in the long run a superior technical instrument for obtaining the same materialistic economic benefits as capitalism offers, that in time it will cause the fields to yield more and the forces of Nature to be more straitly harnessed. In this case there is no religion after all, nothing but a bluff to facilitate a change to what may or may not be a better economic technique. But I suspect that, in fact, such talk is largely a reaction against the charges of economic inefficiency which we on our side launch, and that at the heart of Russian Communism there is something else of more concern to mankind.

In one respect Communism but follows

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other famous religions. It exalts the common man and makes him everything. Here there is nothing new. But there is another factor in it which also is not new, but which may, nevertheless, in a changed form and a new setting, contribute something to the true religion of the future, if there be any true religion. *Leninism is absolutely, defiantly non-supernatural, and its emotional and ethical essence centres about the individual's and the community's attitude towards the Love of Money.*

I do not mean that Russian Communism alters, or even seeks to alter, human nature, that it makes Jews less avaricious or Russians less extravagant than they were before. I do not merely mean that it sets up a new ideal. I mean that it tries to construct a framework of society in which pe-

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cuniary motives as influencing action shall have a changed relative importance, in which social approbations shall be differently distributed, and where behaviour, which previously was normal and respectable, ceases to be either the one or the other.

In England to-day a talented and virtuous youth, about to enter the world, will balance the advantages of entering the Civil Service and of seeking a fortune in business; and public opinion will esteem him not less if he prefers the second. Money-making, as such, on as large a scale as possible, is not less respectable socially, perhaps more so, than a life devoted to the service of the State or of Religion, Education, Learning, or Art. But in the Russia of the future it is intended that the career of money-making, as such, will simply not occur to a

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respectable young man as a possible opening, any more than the career of a gentleman burglar or acquiring skill in forgery and embezzlement. Even the most admirable aspects of the love of money in our existing society, such as thrift and saving, and the attainment of financial security and independence for one's self and one's family, whilst not deemed morally wrong, will be rendered so difficult and impracticable as to be not worth while. Everyone should work for the community—the new creed runs—and, if he does his duty, the community will uphold him.

This system does not mean a complete levelling down of incomes—at least at the present stage. A clever and successful person in Soviet Russia has a bigger income and a better time than other people. The

commissar with £5 a week (*plus* sundry free services, a motor-car, a flat, a box at the ballet, etc., etc.) lives well enough, but not *in the least* like a rich man in London. The successful professor or civil servant with £6 or £7 a week (*minus* sundry impositions) has, perhaps, a real income three times those of the proletarian workers and six times those of the poorer peasants. Some peasants are three or four times richer than others. A man who is out of work receives part pay, not full pay. But no one can afford on these incomes, with high Russian prices and stiff progressive taxes, to save anything worth saving; it is hard enough to live day by day. The progressive taxation and the mode of assessing rents and other charges are such that it is actually disadvantageous to have an ac-

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knowledgeed income exceeding £8 to £10 a week. Nor is there any possibility of large gains except by taking the same sort of risks as attach to bribery and embezzlement elsewhere—not that bribery and embezzlement have disappeared in Russia or are even rare, but anyone whose extravagance or whose instincts drive him to such courses runs serious risk of detection and penalties which include death.

Nor, at the present stage, does the system involve the actual prohibition of buying and selling at a profit. The policy is not to forbid these professions, but to render them precarious and disgraceful. The private trader is a sort of permitted outlaw, without privileges or protection, like the Jew in the Middle Ages—an outlet for those who have overwhelming instincts in this direction,

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but not a natural or agreeable job for the normal man.

The effect of these social changes has been, I think, to make a real change in the predominant attitude towards money, and will probably make a far greater change when a new generation has grown up which has known nothing else. People in Russia, if only because of their poverty, are very greedy for money—at least as greedy as elsewhere. But money-making and money-accumulating cannot enter into the life-calculations of a rational man who accepts the Soviet rule in the way in which they enter into ours. A Society, of which this is even partially true, is a tremendous innovation.

Now all this may prove Utopian, or destructive of true welfare, though, perhaps,

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not so Utopian, pursued in an intense religious spirit, as it would be if it were pursued in a matter-of-fact way. But is it appropriate to assume, as most of us have assumed hitherto, that it is insincere or wicked?

**THE ECONOMICS OF SOVIET
RUSSIA**

CHAPTER III

THE ECONOMICS OF SOVIET RUSSIA

WE shall not understand Leninism unless we view it as being at the same time a persecuting and missionary religion and an experimental economic technique. What of the second aspect—Is the economic technique so inefficient that it courts disaster?

The economic system of Soviet Russia has undergone and is undergoing such rapid changes that it is impossible to obtain a precise and accurate account of it. The method of trial-and-error is unreservedly employed. No one has ever been more frankly experimentalist than Lenin was in everything which did not touch the central truths of his Faith. At first there was much confusion as to what was essential and what

not. For example, the doctrine held at the outset that money must be abolished for most purposes is now seen to be erroneous, there being nothing inconsistent with the essence of Communism in continuing to use money as an instrument of distribution and calculation. The Government has also come round to the view that it is wiser to combine a policy of limited toleration with intermittent teasing and harrying towards (for example) the old intelligentsia who have stuck to their country, towards private traders, and even towards foreign capitalists, rather than to attempt to crush out these elements altogether—trusting on the one hand to the complete control of the educational machine and the upbringing of the young, and on the other hand to the gradual improvement of the technique of State trad-

ing and to the growth of State capital, to dispense with these pagan auxiliaries in course of time. Thus almost all the members of the non-Communist intelligentsia with pre-war educations are now in the service of the Government, often in important and responsible posts with relatively high salaries; private trade is again lawful, though precarious and difficult; and foreign capitalists, who grant short-period trade credits against Government imports into Russia, can reckon for the present with some certainty, in my opinion, that they will see their money back in due course. The fluctuating pursuits of these expediencies make it difficult to generalise about anything in Soviet Russia. Almost everything one can say about the country is true and false at the same time—which is the reason

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why friendly and hostile critics can each in good faith produce totally different pictures of the same thing.

A further difficulty in estimating the efficiency of the economic system is caused by the hard material conditions attending its earlier years, which would have tried severely any economic system. The material losses and disorganisation of the Great War were followed by those of a succession of civil wars, by outlawry from the rest of the world, and by several bad harvests. The bad harvests were partly due to bad management as well as to bad luck. Nevertheless the Soviet experimentalists can fairly claim, I think, that at least five years of peace and fair weather must elapse before they can be judged merely by results.

If one is to make any generalisation in

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present conditions, it must be this—that at a low level of efficiency the system does function and possesses elements of permanence. I estimate the truth above the economic condition of Russia in its present phase to be roughly as follows.

Russia is now a country of about 140,000,000 inhabitants, of whom six-sevenths are rural and agricultural in their life and one-seventh is urban and industrial. The urban and industrial population, which is what the casual visitor sees, is not self-supporting—it lives, that is to say, at a standard of life which is higher than its output justifies. This excess expenditure on the part of the town population is covered by the exploitation of the peasant, which is only practicable because the town population is a numerically small proportion of

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the whole country. Thus the Communist Government is able to pamper (comparatively speaking) the proletarian worker, who is of course its especial care, by exploiting the peasant; whilst the peasant, in spite of this exploitation, desires no change of Government, because he has been given his land. In this way a certain equilibrium has been established both in the economic sphere and in the political, which gives the Soviet Government a breathing space in which to try its hand at a serious economic reorganization.

The official method of exploiting the peasants is not so much by taxation—though the land tax is an important item in the budget—as by price policy. The monopoly of import and export trade and the virtual control of industrial output enable the

authorities to maintain relative prices at levels highly disadvantageous to the peasant. They buy his wheat from him much below the world price, and they sell to him textile and other manufactured goods appreciably above the world price,¹ the difference providing a fund out of which can be financed their high overhead costs and the general inefficiency of manufacture and distribution. The monopoly of import and export trade, by permitting a divorce between the internal and external price-levels, can be operated in such a way as to main-

¹ The National Commissariat for Inland Trade for Northern Caucasia reported in September, 1925, that the peasantry were refraining from offering as much corn as they could because of the unfavourable position with regard to manufactured goods. Peasants were declaring that "grain prices were good but the costs of wearing apparel incredible." The Commissariat considered that the peasants should obtain about three yards of cloth for a pood (36 lbs.) of grain, whereas in fact they receive less than a yard.

tain the parity of foreign exchange in spite of a depreciation in the purchasing power of the money. The real value of the rouble inside Russia is, admittedly, much depreciated compared with its external value as measured by the current exchange.

These devices, though effective for their purpose at present, and perhaps inevitable for a time, involve two disastrous factors of inefficiency. The low value of agricultural products in terms of industrial products is a serious deterrent to the output of the former, which is the real wealth of the country. The fundamental problem of the Soviet Government is to get itself into a sufficiently strong financial position to be able to pay the peasant more nearly the real value of his produce—which would surely have the effect of giving him both the means

and the incentive to a far higher output. Meanwhile the pampering of the proletarian workers of the towns, whose real incomes are something like double those of the peasants, and are said to have reached, allowing for everything, nearly 80 per cent. of their pre-war level, renders town life far too attractive in comparison with country life. The stimulus to migration from the country to the town is much greater than is justified by the power of industry, with its impaired equipment and deficiency of working capital, to absorb new workers. Nothing would stop the migration, if it were not for the housing difficulties and the lack of employment now offering in the towns—a peasant arriving at Moscow is notified at the station that he can find neither work nor lodging. But these deter-

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rents are only effective after the towns have become overcrowded and unemployment has reached unheard-of proportions. For two years unemployment had been severe and increasing, and when I was in Russia (September, 1925) from 20 to 25 per cent. of the industrial workers of Russia were unemployed—say 1,500,000 men out of a total of 6,000,000. Some but not all of these men received from their trade a dole representing about a third of their normal wages, which, even so, is not much inferior to the working income of the poorer peasants, with the result that this vast army of unemployed is a heavy burden on the financial resources of the State establishments. This condition of affairs serves but to enforce a lesson of bourgeois economics as being equally applicable in a Communist State,

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namely, that it impairs wealth to interfere with the normal levels of relative prices or with the normal levels of relative wages so as to make some occupations unduly attractive as compared with others. But it also teaches that similar evils can arise in totally different conditions from totally different causes; for the Russian problem of relative wages and relative prices out-of-gear is partly the same as Great Britain's problem.

Thus the real income of the Russian peasant is not much more than half what it used to be, whilst the Russian industrial worker suffers overcrowding and unemployment as never before. Nevertheless there is, beyond doubt, a certain measure of political and economic stability. The Soviet State is *not* so inefficient as to be unable to survive. It has lived through much

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worse times than the present. It has established an organisation, covering all the activities of economic life, which is inefficient on normal standards, but which has been evolved out of chaos and the void, yet does exist and function. It has set up a standard of life, which is low compared with ours, but which has been evolved out of starvation and death, yet does provide some comforts. Everyone agrees that the improvement in the last year is enormous. Last year's harvest (1925) was tolerably good. Conditions were manifestly on the up-grade. Some of the grandiose schemes of the new *régime* are beginning to take actual shape. Leningrad will soon be supplied with power and light from one of the largest and most modern generating stations in the world. The plant-breeding

establishments, which are to supply the peasant with better seeds on the latest Mendelian lines, are extensive and well-equipped.

After a long debate with Zinovieff, two Communist iron-sides who attended him stepped forward to speak to me a last word with the full faith of fanaticism in their eyes. "We make you a prophecy," they said. "Ten years hence the level of life in Russia will be higher than it was before the war, and in the rest of Europe it will be lower than it was before the war." Having regard to the natural wealth of Russia and to the inefficiency of the old *régime*, having regard also to the problems of Western Europe and our apparent inability to handle them, can we feel entirely confident that the comrades will not prove right?

**COMMUNISM'S POWER TO
SURVIVE**

CHAPTER IV

COMMUNISM'S POWER TO SURVIVE

MY third question is not yet answered. Can Communism in the course of time, with sufficient dilution and added impurity, catch the multitude?

I cannot answer what only time will show. But I feel confident of one conclusion—that if Communism achieves a certain success, it will achieve it, not as an improved economic technique, but as a religion. The tendency of our conventional criticisms is to make two opposed mistakes. We hate Communism so much, regarded as a religion, that we exaggerate its economic inefficiency; and we are so much impressed

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by its economic inefficiency that we underestimate it as a religion.

On the economic side I cannot perceive that Russian Communism has made any contribution to our economic problems of intellectual interest or scientific value. I do not think that it contains, or is likely to contain, any piece of useful economic technique which we could not apply, if we chose, with equal or greater success in a society which retained all the marks, I will not say of nineteenth-century individualistic capitalism, but of British bourgeois ideals. Theoretically at least, I do not believe that there is any economic improvement for which Revolution is a necessary instrument. On the other hand, we have everything to lose by the methods of violent change. In Western industrial conditions

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the tactics of Red Revolution would throw the whole population into a pit of poverty and death.

But as a religion what are its forces? Perhaps they are considerable. The exaltation of the common man is a dogma which has caught the multitude before now. *Any* religion and the bond which unites co-religionists have power against the egotistic atomism of the irreligious.

For modern capitalism is absolutely irreligious, without internal union, without much public spirit, often, though not always, a mere congeries of possessors and pursuers. Such a system has to be immensely, not merely moderately, successful to survive. In the nineteenth century it was in a certain sense idealistic; at any rate it was a united and self-confident system.

THE END OF LAISSEZ-FAIRE

It was not only immensely successful, but held out hopes of a continuing crescendo of prospective successes. To-day it is only moderately successful. If irreligious Capitalism is ultimately to defeat all the forms and variants of religious Communism which are likely to spring up in the coming years, it is not enough that it should be economically more efficient—it must be many times as efficient.

We used to believe that modern capitalism was capable, not merely of maintaining the existing standards of life, but of leading us gradually into an economic paradise where we should be comparatively free from economic cares. Now we doubt whether the business man is leading us to a destination far better than our present place. Regarded as a means he is tolerable ;

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regarded as an end he is not so satisfactory. One begins to wonder whether the material advantages of keeping business and religion in different compartments are sufficient to balance the moral disadvantages. The Protestant and Puritan could separate them comfortably because the first activity pertained to earth and the second to heaven, which was elsewhere. The believer in progress could separate them comfortably because he regarded the first as the means to the establishment of heaven upon earth hereafter. But there is a third state of mind, in which we do not fully believe either in a heaven which is elsewhere or in progress as a sure means towards a heaven upon earth hereafter; and if heaven is not elsewhere and not hereafter, it must be here and now or not at all. If there is no moral

objective in economic progress, then it follows that we must not sacrifice, even for a day, moral to material advantage—in other words, that we may no longer keep business and religion in separate compartments of the soul. In so far as a man's thoughts are capable of straying along these paths, he will be ready to search with curiosity for something at the heart of Communism quite different from the picture of its outward parts which our Press paints.

At any rate to me it seems clearer every day that the moral problem of our age is concerned with the love of money, with the habitual appeal to the money motive in nine-tenths of the activities of life, with the universal striving after individual economic security as the prime object of endeavor, with the social approbation of money as the

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measure of constructive success, and with the social appeal to the hoarding instinct as the foundation of the necessary provision for the family and for the future. The decaying religions around us, which have less and less interest for most people unless it be as an agreeable form of magical ceremonial or of social observance, have lost their moral significance just because—unlike some of their earlier versions—they do not touch in the least degree on these essential matters. A revolution in our ways of thinking and feeling about money may become the growing purpose of contemporary embodiments of the ideal. Perhaps, therefore, Russian Communism does represent the first confused stirrings of a great religion.

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

THE visitor to Russia from the outside, who tries without prejudice to catch the atmosphere, must alternate, I think, between two moods—oppression and elation. Sir Martin Conway, in his true and sincere volume on *Art Treasures in Soviet Russia*, writes thus of his departure out of the country:

“ . . . After a very long halt the train moved on about half a mile to the Finnish frontier, where passports, visas, and luggage were again examined much less meticulously. The station was new built, a pleasant place, simple, clean, and convenient, and served with much courtesy. It

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has a charming refreshment room, where simple but nicely cooked food was supplied in an atmosphere of hospitality.

“It seems a churlish thing for me to say, after all the kindness shown to me in Russia, but if I am to tell the whole truth I must here put on record that in this frontier station of Finland I experienced a sense as of the removal of a great weight which had been oppressing me. I cannot explain just how this weight had been felt. I did not experience the imposition of it on entering Russia, but as the days passed it seemed slowly to accumulate. The sense of freedom gradually disappeared. Though everyone was kind one felt the presence of an oppression, not on oneself, but all-pervading. Never have I felt so completely a stranger in a strange land; with successive days what at first was a dim feeling took more definite shape and condensed into an ever-increasingly conscious oppression. I imagine one might have passed through the same expe-

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rience in the Russia of the Tsars. Americans often praise what they call the 'air of liberty' which they claim as characteristic of their country. They possess it in common with all the English-speaking dominions. The moral atmosphere of Russia is a very different compound of emotional chemistry.

"The part of Finland through which our train now bore us was not different in physical character from the lands across the frontier, but we found ourselves passing 'nice little properties' and the signs of comfort and even prosperity. . . ."

The mood of oppression could not be better conveyed. In part, no doubt, it is the fruit of Red Revolution—there is much in Russia to make one pray that one's own country may achieve its goal not in that way. In part, perhaps, it is the fruit of some beastliness in the Russian nature—or

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in the Russian and Jewish natures when, as now, they are allied together. But in part it is one face of the superb earnestness of Red Russia, of the high seriousness, which in its other aspect appears as the Spirit of Elation. There never was anyone so *serious* as the Russian of the Revolution, serious even in his gaiety and abandon of spirit—so serious that sometimes he can forget to-morrow and sometimes he can forget to-day. Often this seriousness is crude and stupid and boring in the extreme. The average Communist is *discoloured* just as the Methodists of every age have been. The tenseness of the atmosphere is more than one is used to support, and a longing comes for the frivolous ease of London.

Yet the elation, when that is felt, is very great. Here—one feels at moments—in

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spite of poverty, stupidity, and oppression, is the Laboratory of Life. Here the chemicals are being mixed in new combinations, and stink and explode. Something—there is just a chance—might come out. And even a chance gives to what is happening in Russia more importance than what is happening (let us say) in the United States of America.

I think that it is partly reasonable to be afraid of Russia, like the gentlemen who write to the *Times*. But if Russia is going to be a force in the outside world, it will not be the result of Mr Zinovieff's money. Russia will never matter seriously to the rest of us, unless it be as a moral force. So, now the deeds are done and there is no going back, I should like to give Russia her chance; to help and not to hinder. For

how much rather, even after allowing for everything, if I were a Russian, would I contribute my quota of activity to Soviet Russia than to Tsarist Russia! I could not subscribe to the new official faith any more than to the old. I should detest the actions of the new tyrants not less than those of the old. But I should feel that my eyes were turned towards, and no longer away from, the possibilities of things; that out of the cruelty and stupidity of Old Russia nothing could ever emerge, but that beneath the cruelty and stupidity of New Russia some speck of the ideal may lie hid.

The
RUSSIAN
Land



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I

**IN THE DEAF VILLAGES OF THE
NORTH**



I

IN THE DEAF VILLAGES OF THE NORTH

"If you want to know the peasant," said Kalinin, Russia's president, to me, "start in with one of our far away governments, go to some backward *volost*, and to the 'deafest' village. They'll be primitive, but informing."

In pursuit of the "deaf" villages—far away places into which the voice of the world does not penetrate—we found ourselves, after six days by river, at Pinega, two hundred and fifty miles in the wilderness east of Archangel.

RUSSIA

Pinega is so remote that it was for centuries a place to which the tsar exiled his rebels; and here, to-day, we met a few banished enemies of the Soviet. It is so northern that it is drenched in summer with the perpetual light of the white nights; at first alluring to us, then nerve-irritating. It is so isolated that the first boat, coming after the ice-break-up in the spring, is hailed as a messenger out of another world.

For all this, Pinega didn't seem very primitive or deaf. And though the boat ran no further up the river, the road did. From this road for ten versts we could look back upon the glowing domed church that the Great Catherine had built as a spiritual outpost of her Empire.

Then, heading into the forest, our wagon joggled on for hours through pines and firs and larches. A sharp turn and out of this green-walled tunnel we emerged upon the river bank. Here before us, like a shimmering canvas, lay the flower fields of the Pinega, in this place eight miles long.

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These meadows, that a few weeks earlier lay under the brown spring floods, were now flooded deep with flowers. It was as if the North, casting off her long winter's austerity, had flung herself into a madcap riot of flaming yellows and pinks and purples; as if all her colors and all her perfumes, finding no other vent, had here burst forth in a wild extravaganza. Through golden pools of buttercups and cascades of daisies, we plunged into blue seas of bluebells and red seas of clover. Above all, the giant Queen Anne's Lace raced and tossed like whitecaps before the stiff breeze blowing.

It was a magic breeze, for when it ceased the flowers vanished and only dark wheeling mosquito clouds danced before our eyes. Up from the earth, from all sides, they rose in blinding swarms. In size and vigor they were as remarkable as the flowers; the meadows had brought them forth together. Now, as if avenging the flowers crushed beneath our wheels, they fell upon us in battalions, stab-

bing our skins with their sharp lances, drawing blood in forty places.

"Devoured by mosquitoes," is here not just a phrase. In his "Year in the North," Michaelov describes two twelve-year-old berry-pickers driven into the bog by mosquitoes and perishing under their assaults. On the other hand, our driver was not even greatly annoyed by these stinging hordes. But that proves nothing. Like all Russian peasants, half hardened, half immune to pests, he would be equally indifferent in a room full of cockroaches or a bed full of a more bloodthirsty tribe.

Forewarned, we had armed ourselves with turpentine and citronella, usually discouraging to the ordinary mosquitoes; but these mosquitoes lapped them up like alluring nectars. We were sorry now that we hadn't brought along a highly recommended secretion of reindeer horn, one whiff of which would dismay a bear or a polecat.

The best device proved to be a special net (*komarnik*), which slipped down over our

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heads and hung to our waists in long folds like a veil, transferring us into a sort of etherialized Ku Klux Klansmen. Even so arrayed, an occasional lusty mosquito came plunging through the meshes. This was irritating, still one could bear it.

Quite unendurable, however, was the humming that went on ceaselessly, maddeningly, within half an inch of our ears, without let-up, without change of key. The right vibrating note of a violin, long maintained, it is said, will set the steel framework of a bridge or skyscraper to rocking. That may not be true. But it is true that the ceaseless singing of mosquitoes will set the net-work of nerves a-jangling almost to the breaking point. Certainly these mosquito armies must have played their part in breaking the morale of the Allied Expedition which in 1918 floundered about in these forest bogs and fields.

"At midnight the cold comes and the mosquitoes go," said our driver reassuringly.

But he was wrong, for though it became al-

most freezing, this only served to tune up the mosquito choirs to a more exasperating pitch. They were water-proof too, quite heedless of the rain that now came drizzling down.

To pass from misery to misery, we began bumping over a long corduroy road running through a swamp. Under the horses' hoofs the logs moved up and down like piano-keys. Now sinking into the mire, now suddenly rising up, now holding firm, they sent a series of violent jolts through the wagon into our spinal columns.

From all this we were reduced to a half dazed condition. Through the weird spectral light that the white night poured over the landscape, we moved forward hour after hour, as in a dream. I remember now only indistinctly crossing a primitive rope-ferry, the rafters of a burned village rearing up like black skeletons, and our entry into the village of Pochezrye in sheets of rain.

Here I recall a big peasant generously welcoming us into his *izba*, driving out a couple

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of dogs, prodding up sleeping figures from the floor, saying, "Katya! Katya!" and lifting a little girl, scratching her face, out of a feather bed and motioning me into it. I literally fell asleep. Into its warm quiet depth I sank away from the pursuing light and rain and cold and mosquitoes, down into a featherly nirvana.

Ten hours later I was awakened by the entrance of the little girl Katya who was still scratching her face. I felt apologetic for having ousted her from her bed.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"Smallpox! Black smallpox!" she feebly drawled.

"She's got chickenpox, or she's crazy!" I commented to myself, lapsing into sleep again.

This time I was aroused by her brother, hunting a birchbark pail. He was grumbling about having to go berry-picking alone.

"Why doesn't your sister go with you?" I asked.

"Sick," he replied, "she's got black smallpox."

"Smallpox!" I gasped.

"Yeh!" he answered nonchalantly. "That's why she slept in your bed instead of on the floor."

My hair rose on end, and I rose with them. No one ever got up out of a feather bed into his clothes and out of a room as fast as I did. I was off in a furious, frightened search of facts. I found them, each one more sinister than the other. Here they were without one redeeming feature.

Smallpox was epidemic in the village; fifteen had already died of it; the little girl Katya was just beginning to convalesce, and was, consequently, in the most infectious stage; there was no doctor in this village, nor the next, nor for fifty versts.

"A primitive, far-away 'deaf' village," Kalinin had recommended. Well, here it was, up to all specifications. And very informing too, quite as he had said. But was I going to bring this information out?

Being outraged at my big smiling host was

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only fatuity. In sheer good faith and hospitality he had given me the best bed in the house. What then was I so terribly wrought up over? This he couldn't understand, nor could any of the villagers who flocked around. They were deeply interested in me as a man from America, but not at all as a man who had just slept in a smallpox bed. Most of them had been doing that every night for a week or two. Then why hadn't they gotten it? The germ theory I talked about sounded far fetched and fanciful. Better their own theory: To each man his destined lot, and no escaping it; it's Fate that metes out good and evil, life, death and smallpox.

"It's quite simple," said an old *mujik*, "you get it or you don't. You die or you don't." Incontrovertible, but distressing doctrine.

Amidst hearty "good-bys" and "come agains," and with the pocked face of little Katya peering at us from the window, we fled the village. We made record speed, heedless of mosquitoes, mud and jounces, our minds all centered on calling up the symptoms of small-

pox and feeling them one by one creeping upon us. So we came galloping into Troophino, the *volost* center. Here was authority, and before it I laid my case solemnly, like an international incident. These peasant officials tried hard to be serious over it as I appeared to expect. But it was evident that the germ theory had feeble hold on them. Nor could they comprehend a person getting so excited over what might occur to him.

"But you got a good night's sleep," queried one old fatalist.

"Yes."

"And you haven't got smallpox?"

"No."

"Well, then, what are you worrying about?"

However, we did get here some encouraging information: There was a Medical Point at Peremen, thirty-six versts up the river. Vaccine had already arrived there, and the fight against infection was being carried on by the *feldsher* (assistant doctor) Popov.

"Devil take him!" laughed an old *mujik*,

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limping about, slapping his sides. "He scratches skin off folks. If they swell up, he says they won't get smallpox. *Gospody! Gospody! Lord! Lord!*"

Scratching people with a needle to ward off disease: to such lunacy had they come in these degenerate days. His mirth-provoking ridicule would have been a delight to any anti-vaccinist. He himself was a champion of the remedies inherited from the fathers, the old charms and conjurations that have stood the test of time. These are by no means public property, but are still surrounded with secrecy. The incantation regarded as most efficacious against smallpox was to be three times repeated thus:

Saint Pantelimon! Saint Martyr Oor! Put out the fire; quench the pain; ward off the arrows of hell from thy servant . . . name.

Gnomes of the Forest! Send this bird of hell to the wild beasts; let it pock them with its beak.

Wicked Seed! Plant your roots into the earth, not into the face.

Clear Water! Pour thy cleansing floods
upon the pocked face, and wash it smooth
and clean.

All Saints! Pray for your suffering servant.

Whispered thrice, then written on paper, this spell was to be kept tied around the neck of the patient until he got well. If he didn't get well, if he died, it didn't imply that the incantation was at fault, it only implied that something was wrong in its recital.

This is not, as it might appear, simply a crafty evasion. For an incantation is based upon faith in the magic power of the Word. The exact words were fixed upon in a secret treaty, long ago, made with the unseen powers. To change one word, one syllable in the formula, is to break the spell. But to repeat these words rightly is to speed them from the tongue, like an arrow to its goal, and bring recovery to the patient.

This particular smallpox incantation is no longer all pagan; it has been modified by Christianity. The saints have crept in alongside

the heathen gnomes. It has become half a prayer: a request to the unseen powers. The pure incantation is a command: a calling up of the secret treaty with full confidence in its automatic execution. Its usual ending is: "My word is sure" or "My words are firm, harder than stone, stickier than glue, saltier than salt, tougher than steel. What is meant, that shall be fulfilled."

So ends the incantation which Ivan Bogovoy, president of the Archangel Soviet, gave me as the accepted remedy for malaria: "Instead of our quinine," he said, "the sufferer is sprinkled with bog water, and with a spell they seek to drive out the devil spirits which they think are shaking him and rattling teeth."

In peasant theory evil spirits are at the root of most diseases. It has happened that the medical corps sent to relieve an epidemic have been taken as the evil spirits themselves. The peasants sought to get rid of the disease by killing the doctors. When the doctors arrived in the cholera districts of Kem, all doors were

barred and the women screamed at them from the windows:

"Go away, you devils! Why do you come here to kill our children?"

"Listen!" cried the doctors, "we come to save your children. To vaccinate them. You don't understand!"

"Yes, we understand very well!" cried the women, "you want to stamp them with the seal of Anti-Christ!"

All such preventive measures the peasants have looked upon as waste of energy. Like our old fatalist of Troophino, they believe that there is enough real trouble without worrying about something that doesn't yet exist. In rare cases, however, they sought to prevent the entry of plague by building a ring of bonfires around their village, and even scaring it off by gunfire.

The old beliefs, carrying down the centuries, though often deep concealed, still come flaming forth in crises. But they are dying. Faith in the old incantations is passing with the passing generation. Only the Old Believers kept up a

stubborn fight against vaccination. The twelve million peasants that Russia sent to forty fronts in the great wars brought back to the village the ferment of new ideas—the new viewpoint. Now as we rode forward we were joined everywhere by people on horse and foot, pushing on to Permen, to the vaccination center.

Passing under a sign, "Sanitary Point," we enter a big rough-log room, filled with a long line of peasants, sleeves rolled up. It slowly moves forward towards a little white-aproned figure in a corner by the window. This the *feldsher*, Popov, pressing his silver lancet upon the bare arms, one by one, as they are brought before him. With a few quick strokes he scuffs off the skin, three crimson spots appear, and the next arm is laid before him. Scarcely looking up, he cries out occasionally:

"Keep line! Don't touch your arm!"

The circle moves slowly round again, and he rubs in the vaccine. Intent, concentrated, only the strange apparition of an American causes him to break his almost rhythmic motion.

I overwhelm him with questions about incubation period, fever symptoms, etc.

For answer he digs up a circular that came with the vaccine from the Health Commissariat. He reads it aloud, but in it there is nothing about these matters. He hasn't any books on smallpox. And if he did have books, how would he find time to read them? He has to tend all the sprains, fractures, cancers, hysteria, fevers, births and deaths, in a province as large as some whole kingdoms. On top of all this routine comes this scourge—he and his needle, alone, pitted against it.

Finishing off his ninetieth case for the day, we walk over to his house for dinner. There is much fish, for there has been a big catch on the river. So it goes: meat in plenty when the hunters have a run of luck; bread in plenty, if an August frost does not blight the crops. When all these fail, he falls back on the \$3.00 a month he gets from the government—sometimes. He was stinted in income and training and equipment, but withal he was efficient.

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The vaccination he gave me took beautifully.

It would never occur to him that he was brave. These men of the North are all brave. With them it is ever a hazard of life in cold and storm, flood and pestilence. Always living close to death; but always so calm and quiet and unexcited about it. It was quite strange to me.

And in their minds, this American, so unquiet, so very much agitated in the face of disease and death. That probably was a bit strange to them.

The farther we went up the river, the deeper we pushed into the Russian past. The streets with their big block houses were like Old Novgorod. A mist lifting from a village might be the curtain going up on a setting of "Prince Igor" in the Moscow Opera.

But these were real log houses, real peasant women in high fantastic head-dress, and peasant girls dancing in their rainbow colored costumes. Here were living conjurers and exorcisms to fire the hearts of fickle lads with love.

Here too were the *bilini*, the great epics reciting the valorous deeds of the mythical knights of old, taking us back into the very twilight of Slavonic history.

Once these *bilini* singers were found all over the vast reaches of Russia; now only in these forest fastnesses. And even here we hunted long. At last in Vigara, in response to our inquiries, the children said: "There she is our singing little grandmother—*babooshka!*"

And out of the little door of a little log house came a little old lady, more than eighty years of age and less than eighty pounds in weight. It was as if she came out of a fairy tale. But she had no magic powers and was heartbroken, because her table was bare—not even bread to offer us.

"It is only song we came for," we explained.

"Good!" she exclaimed. "I'll sing for you two weeks long." And forthwith she began the epic of Ilya, the Great Warrior of Prince Vladimir, the Russian King Arthur.

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Ilya is the son of a peasant, for thirty-three years a cripple. Passing strangers give him a draught of water. Strength at once comes into his limbs. He feels that he can lift the earth. With his father's blessing, he fares forth against the bandits. The vibration of his bowstring hurls them from their horses. His arrow splits an oak to pieces. A stone, striking his head, rebounds and kills its thrower. He ties Nightingale Robber to his saddle and brings him a captive to Prince Vladimir, holding high revel in the halls of Kiev. Now begin his exploits against the Tartars.

"Aren't you tired?" I asked after listening half an hour to Ilya's defying the Tartar Khan.

She did not hear me. She was no longer in this little hut, but in distant Kiev, hearing the bells ring from the towers; riding with Ilya across the plains to battle. She was lost in her work, a perfect artist with perfect breath control. Her voice, although faint with its eighty years, was steadfast. It threatened to

flow on for hours. But at last Ilya killed the Tartar Khan, and taking advantage of this, I asked her to write some verses in my book. She smiled and shook her head. She was illiterate. Of all the *bilini* singers, hardly any can read or write. They don't care to. "It puts out the memory," they say.

Their memories are indeed astounding. Our singer Marya Krivopolenova (Crooked-log) knows one hundred thousand verses. More than even has been written down by Ozorovskaya. Another, Fernov, knew seventy epics, enough for two months' non-stop singing—about ten thousand printed pages. But only recently has this vast collection of poetry been printed. It has been carried down the centuries by word of mouth. Thus, the songs listened to this day, passing on from generation to generation, came at last to an old seal-fisher of the Arctic. He was the uncle of our singer, Marya. As a little girl she learned them, and kept singing them through the gay days of her

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life; through the gray years of hunger and wandering.

But there is no one to learn the old epics from her. She is the last of her race. The troubadours of France and the bards of ancient Wales have gone. Now, before one's eyes, in the North, one can see the great race of *bilini* singers passing away.

Why should boys and girls of to-day tax their memories with these epics when they soon may find them all in the books? How, too, can the old tales hold their thrill and glamor for a generation that has lived through ten years of war and revolution? To these peasants who marched away with twelve million fellow-peasants in the army of the Tsar, the armies of the past are rather insignificant. Insignificant, too, the travels of Ilya to the hunter of this village, who, with the Russian Division in France, marched under the Arch of Triumph and across the desert sands of Algiers. And to the lad, down river, who dropped a bomb on

a munition train and blew a whole town to bits, Ilya's smashing an oak to splinters doesn't seem so wondrous.

Moreover, how can any wonder of the far-away and long ago compete with an actual living wonder? And one has come right here in Chakolo village, two versts away. The children were impatient for us to see it. So bidding good-by to the last of the *bilini* singers, we hurried over to gaze upon this new wonder—the first, the only creamery for hundreds of versts along the Pinega.

We arrived in time to join the crowd marveling at the mystery of the strange machine separating cream from milk. It was a magic apparatus, doing in an instant that which for the peasant had always taken a day. The separator was from America, the churn from Germany and the molder from England. Thus Russian cream, completing its circuit, came forth delicious yellow butter.

To one who has known for months only the

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poor, tasteless or rancid stuff that among the villagers passes for butter, it was a revelation. And when one saw out of the same sort of milk that the peasants spoiled issuing these appetizing golden creations, it was like a miracle.

The miracle-maker was a spare, slightly bent man with deep-socketed eyes, ascetic, intellectual—Peter Tabirin. Centuries ago he might have been Peter the Hermit, crusading against the Mohammedans. But living in this political age, he was Peter the Rebel, crusading against the Tsar, against the great war, against the Bolsheviks, against the Whites and, finally, crusading against all enemies of the Soviet. His life has been one of battle, hunger, arrest, prison, escape.

Weary of political strife, he flung it aside, and for two years gave himself to the study and practice of dairying. Now, with zeal backed by technical skill, he had become a fervent apostle of butter to these peasants of the Upper Pinega. He had chosen this village, Chakolo,

for its hardy breed of cattle, able to graze a living out of the forest. Here, too, in the big bends of the river, were grass meadows and wide sweeping flower-fields. For crusaders, of course, there are only battle fields.

The life of strife left behind in politics, Peter Tabirin now took up on the economic front. He had to build a structure out of logs; to bring the machinery here and set it up; to train a staff of boys; to organize a Coöperative; to drill a peasantry in sanitation; to introduce the new concepts of science into minds casting off the old superstitions. To do all this one must have not only zeal and knowledge, but an understanding of the customs and prejudices of a backwoods Russian village.

Here, for example, when an animal is lost in the forest, the peasants consult the local wizard where to find it. Here, when a cow is up for sale, one may still hear an old *baba* saying: "No, she's the wrong color. The master will not like her!" The "master" whose taste in

color is so respected is not, as one may suppose, her husband, but the house-spirit—the *domovoy*. He may like white cattle; on the other hand, he may prefer black or spotted. At all costs, he must be pleased; for it he dislikes the cow he may cause her to go dry or sick or lead her astray in the woods.

Not so long ago, scarcely any event was initiated without referring to the *domovoy*. Moving into the new house with a pot of burning embers, raked from the old stove, the peasant cried out, "Welcome, Grandfather, into the new house!" Bringing a newly purchased animal into the shed, the owner, bowing to each of the four corners of the building, said, "Here is a shaggy beast for thee, Master. Love him. Give him to eat and drink!"

But the days of the *domovoy* are nearly over. Talking with Igor, the fourteen year old chief of the churning squad, I said:

"Perhaps some of them will take up lodging in the new creamery."

"They have already!" he replied. "You can find them over there in the milk pails. Peter Tabirin calls them bacteria."

"So the old *domovoys* are all gone," I sighed with mock solemnity.

"Yes," he answered with a laugh, "they were all killed off in the Revolution."

Not only to the boys and soldiers, but even to many of the older generation the *domovoys* are dead. Other institutions and ideas, cherished for centuries, are likewise dying. They were picturesque to read about, but they held the village in darkness and fear, chaining it to the past. The Revolution came like a whirlwind blasting these old views, blowing away the miasmas and superstitions—breathing into the villages the impulse to a new life.

That's why Peter Tabirin, who once fought the Communist Revolution, now supports it. Devastating and destructive though it is, it clears the way for the future. It continues to release the forces that make possible enterprises like his. It lightens tenfold the tasks of the

IN THE DEAF VILLAGES OF THE NORTH

teacher and agronomist. Once these pioneers were voices crying in the village wildernesses. Sometimes they were driven out and even killed. Now the wilderness rises up eager to hear them and give heed.

One may still find in Russia thousands of villages sunk in muck and misery, festured with disease and ignorance—but no longer can one find villages that are deaf. Out of the slumber of ages they are waking to the new voices calling to them.



II

VLAS, THE OLD BELIEVER



II

VLAS, THE OLD BELIEVER

IN the famine year, Kvalinsk bazaar was a place of the dead. The black log elevators stood empty-bellied as the people, the last grain blown from their cracks. No cattle, no dogs, nor cats, nor pigeons—all had been eaten. In the Bread Row the corpses were corded like wood.

That was five years ago. To-day the bazaar is stacked with food. Yellow piles of millet, green pyramids of watermelons, golden mounds

of wheat and rye. Most gay the red and rose mountains of the Apple Row, and moving amongst them a huge mountain of flesh on two short, stocky legs of enormous girth.

"How are you, Vlas Alexsevich?" I called to him.

"I'm two hundred and eighty pounds—five pounds gain this week," he replied exultingly. "*Slava Bogoo!* Glory to God. I'm recovering."

By "recovery," the old man meant getting back the three hundred and sixty pounds that hung upon his five-foot frame in the days before the Revolution. Then he was a veritable behemoth. But his was not the fat of sloth and indulgence, for, from the days when he went barefoot in winter, Vlas never spared himself.

A big wheat harvest across the Volga? There was Vlas buying early, rushing it across the steppe and up river to Kazan. Horses to buy from the Kirghiz a thousand versts away? There was Vlas, waging war on the natives who

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stole the laggard ones from his drove, stealing twice as many in revenge. A caterpillar raid on his orchards? No sleep nor rest for Vlas until the last pest was gone. A big wall-on-wall fight on *Maslanitsa*? Vlas was in the thick of it, his great ham fists swinging till the last man was down. Vlas carries the scars of battle. "My left ear knocked deaf by a whaling blow on my right ear," as he proudly explains.

No, Vlas' immense diameter was not the fat of inaction. He got it by taking to the table the same enterprise he took into work and business and fighting. In normal times this zest for food is quite abnormal, but on Saints' Days, surrounded by his many ikons and his dowager daughters, swathed in his Old Believer *kaftan*, waited on by his wife Shura—it passes all degrees of abnormality.

"Come on Saint John's Eve," urged the old man, "and bring your *baba*."

We came at six to find Shura, majestic in a green *sarafan* with silver buttons reaching to

her feet, bringing on the *pirogi*, a kind of pasty. A peculiar Slav failing are the *pirogi*. No Russian housewife can rest easy with a plain piece of dough. She is impelled to wrap it round something—rice, liver, cheese, cabbage, fish . . . anything she can lay hands on—this, baked, becomes a *pirog*. There were five kinds around the samovar and over all the fragrance of cherry-tea.

“Fill the glasses to the brim!” said Vlas.

“The intelligentsia don’t do that any more,” corrected Shura, passing the tiny morsels of sugar through which the Russians usually suck their tea.

“The intelligentsia don’t do that any more,” snorted Vlas gleefully. “They put the sugar, not in their mouths, but in their glasses.” He ran our glasses over with three splashing lumps, and piled our plates with herring, sterlet, caviar red and black, and eggs. Then sweets to satiation, brined apples, pickled preserves, all-flower honey and four sorts of spicy jams.

This, I presumed, was the supper. It proved

to be but a preliminary skirmish to a long series of soups, tongues, hams, fish, joints. Crowning all the great pies—ten American pies in one—almost rivaling Vlas in circumference, and following one another down into his enormous maw.

Vlas ate like an Old Believer of the old school. What that means one may find by turning to Gogol's story of Aphanasy Ivanovich. His stomach was in lineal descent from that old gormand, who after gorging all day would get up at night to begin again; who found the cure of all diseases, including indigestion, in more abundant eating.

I paid my compliments to Vlas' food, his great capacity and to his size.

"Huh!" said the old man, shaking his head sadly. "What I might be now if it hadn't been for the Revolution!"

This pre-Revolutionary *Papasha*—as he was called by daughters and sons-in-law—became the subject of half-boasting, half-bantering comment.

"Luckily *Papasha* didn't fall in with Brikovka peasants in the hunger year," said son-in-law Lukas, the tar and rope trader, "he would have made a month's meat supply for the village."

"Or turned into candles, he would have lit the churches till Ilya's Day," said son-in-law Feodor, the cloth merchant.

"*Papasha* doesn't like the Revolution, but he might have died long ago if there had been none." This from younger daughter Lina.

To her remark I gave point, by citing cases of people saved from untimely graves, thanks to the work, hunger and rigors imposed on them by the Revolution. There was Madame Rimsky-Korsakov of S. In the old days she rose at noon full of ailments, a hardship to walk around her boudoir. The Revolution took away her money and gave her six people to help support. Now she is up before dawn, dragging great sacks of black bread and potatoes back from the bazaar, four versts away. The

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troubles of others give her no time to dwell on her own.

Then the old epicure, the landlord I met on a Volga steamer. In the old days of high living, he had catarrh of the stomach and half the doctors of Germany prescribing for him. The Revolution took away his delicacies and put him on a diet of black bread and cabbage soup—when he could get them. “The best specialist was the Revolution,” said he. “It gave me a stomach that digests nails.”

Vlas, it would seem, was another example of the saving power of the Revolution, fear and famine frying off great slabs of the fat that was smothering and choking him. All this to Vlas, of course, was sheerest nonsense, as ridiculous as making the sign of the cross with three fingers instead of two. To him food and fat are good things in themselves—the more the better.

Indeed, his chief grievance it seems against the Revolution was not for the six expropriated

datchas, or the three hundred poods of tallow, the six hundred poods of salt beef it took out of his cellar, but for the four poods of fat it took off his belly. His set aim is to win it back, and the old man beams satisfaction at his growing circumference making progress on the road to "recovery."

"More vodka!" cried Vlas. Out of big jorums he kept the red and white vodka gurgling, drinking with each guest in turn, and when he had drunk everybody full, drinking by himself—twenty tumblers. The only apparent effect of it all was to liven up his legs and set him capering across the floor snapping his fingers.

I complimented him on the nimbleness of his legs.

"Yes," said Vlas, slapping them. "Woolen stockings on them all summer and they never sweat or stink. I got them as captain of my ship on the Volga."

"You mean your uncle's old barge," scoffed Shura.

Passing this over, Vlas resumed: "My grandfather lived to be a hundred and sixteen years."

"One hundred and six!" put in Shura.

"Well, one hundred and ten," conceded Vlas.

"Hundred and six! and not a year longer."

Vlas sullenly capitulated. Shura always puts a blight on his stories. When she is absent his grandfather grows to be one hundred and twenty-six. His own one thousand *verst* journey to the Kirghiz becomes three thousand. Ten thousand horses were frozen to death before his eyes. His broken leg hung by the skin like a hinge. Like "Lightnin'," who boasted that he drove a swarm of bees across the American continent without losing a bee, Vlas' tales have sweep and imagination.

But none of this when Shura is around. Besides an irritation arising from a too close and constant conjugal life, Shura harbors against Vlas an incident of long ago. She was not consulted about her husband. He was picked out by her father as was the procedure in those days. Not on that score does she base her

grievance. But on her wedding night some one knowing Vlas' weakness, came and cried into the bedroom window.

"Eh, Vlas! A big wall-on-wall fight in the next village!"

"And the good-for-nothing," said Shura with terrible venom, "jumped into his clothes, fought all night and didn't come back till morning."

"Yes," said Vlas sheepishly, "and it's been eating her for forty-two years. When she's buried she'll still be talking about it."

"I ran home," continued Shura, "but my father beat me with a halter, and drove me back. If I had said anything my husband would have beaten me with his fists. But those days are over. They don't dare do that any more."

"More's the pity," commented Vlas gloomily. "The Revolution has spoiled everything—even the women. In the old days women used to weep at weddings. Now it's the men."

But Vlas' rancor against the Revolution for

putting rebellion into Shura is softened by the fact that at the same time it has made her an economic asset. In the new land code, the wife has equal claims to the land with the husband. To Vlas' two dessyatines of orchard are added the two that are Shura's in her own right.

This orchard is Shura's great wide *terem*. Majestic, strong featured, with a soft blue cashmere shawl pinned under her chin, she looks the *boyarina* one sees so often in the Moscow opera. Here all summer from dawn to dark she is pruning and scraping and spraying her beloved trees.

"*Mamasha* is so much in the orchard," said daughter Lina, "that she looks like it. Her hair is as white as the spring blossoms and her cheeks are as red as the autumn apples."

"She doesn't ever go to the theater," said Vlas approvingly. "The nightingales and cuckoos are horns and balalaikas to her."

This was Vlas' one poetic outburst. His own approach to the orchard is highly practical. Pulling down a branch he counts the little

green knobs, calculates the number of poods the tree will bear, and puts a corresponding number of leaves in his pocket. At last the leaves all laid out and counted he announces, "As she stands two hundred barrels, one thousand rubles!"

A record crop this year. But apples are an uncertain quantity. Next year there may be none at all. So Vlas doesn't depend only on his apples. He is a cereal expert. His season begins when the first wagons come creaking in from the villages laden with the first offerings of the grain-fields.

Along the lines of peasant wagons moves Vlas. Down goes his arm deep dredging into an open sack. Up it comes with a bursting handful. He sniffs it, hefts it, tosses it, sifts it, then cries out: "116," "130," "132," figures defining the quality of grain. He can do it with his eyes shut and never make a mistake.

"I never cheat a peasant and they never cheat me," Vlas asseverates solemnly.

"How is that?" I ask him.

"I knock them down when they try it—or at least I did before the Revolution."

This is not an idle boast, for there are authentic stories of Vlas in the old days cleaning up half the bazaar.

In those days Vlas was a buyer for private traders, speculators and merchants. Now individuals have been replaced by institutions. Now the log elevators standing like block houses along the river front flaunt the signs Bread Products, *Gosbank*, *Goob Coop*. Now Vlas is a "red merchant" buying for the Coöperative—a huge impersonal corporation. He can't bargain with it, nor joke and drink vodka with it as he did with his former masters. Vlas misses that. But it doesn't affect the zeal and energy and conscientiousness of his work.

He is the oldest buyer in the market, but the most active. When the grain sledges cross the frozen Volga, Vlas is up before dawn to meet them. When the red flag goes up on the central *kiosk* announcing the opening of the market, Vlas, with all the gusto of an old wall

fighter, plunges into the thick of the buying, his great globe body rolling in and out among the sledges, puffing, shouting, scolding, joking, chiding. This is Vlas' element: food in the raw, food in abundance, mountains of it, chuting into elevators, filling the barges—food going out to feed the world. And Vlas is part of the process. The joy of it shines in his face. It exalts. It intoxicates. It transfigures him.

On these big grain days a veritable revolution is wrought in his property-loving soul. The crass old individualist is socialized. "My orchard," "my house," gives way to "our wheat," "our Russia," "our coöperative."

"Look what our coöperative has given me!" he cries, digging a paper out of his pocket and reading: "In recognition of faithful services performed by Vlas Alexseovich Podkletnov."

"See!" says the old man. "There's the seal. There's the sickle and hammer!" The same pride as a Red Armyist in his Service Medal.

"You know our country is great," Vlas goes on. "In the Kuban the crop ripens a month

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earlier than here. They talk of ordering me down there this season. Anywhere they send me I'll go, even to America. But they wouldn't let me in, would they? They would say I'm a Bolshevik."

Old Believer Vlas arrested as a Bolshevik! His great carcass heaves with laughter. Suddenly he stops, saying:

"But I'm just like a Communist. I've got a red card. I'm a Union man." He shows me a tiny red book certifying his membership in the Union of Soviet Employees, and recounts its privileges: Nine rubles a month out-of-work benefit; forty rubles at the birth of a child; free medicine.

"But what good is that to me?" says Vlas regretfully, "I'm never out of work, never sick and my *baba* is too old for babies."

Vlas, however, is a good Union man. Dues paid to date, not a black mark on the pages for reprimands and reproofs, and on Soviet holidays Vlas always in the front ranks near the tribune, his good right ear glued to the speaker.

Maybe he can get a clew as to what the Revolution was about. To what purpose it took away his *datchas*, beef and tallow, his Falstaffian figure and the spirit of obedience that once was Shura's. Another grievance against the Revolution is that it loosed on him bandits and bourgeois-baiters. Though he tried hard to make himself inconspicuous, his nine poods too magnificently incarnated their conception of a *bourzhôey*, and made him the target for their terror, rapacity and humor.

One night robbers came demanding five thousand rubles. On his refusal they led him down to an ice hole in the Volga, saying: "Pray your prayers, old man, then down the river under the ice to Astrakhan!" A hundred times he crossed himself, then turned to find the bandits had vanished.

Another time a saber was flashing above his head. "Shall I carve him?" asked the swordsman. "No! He's a full blooded old devil. Too big a mess he would make."

Again he was whisked away from his sam-

ovar to run the gauntlet of the Red Chambers. Four rifles blazed at him in the dark and he fell unconscious. Coming to, Vlas felt about for blood and holes in himself. There were none. It was a hoax with blank cartridges.

Naturally enough, these memories rankle in his breast, and occasionally smoldering resentment flashes into fire. But he tries valiantly to let bygones be bygones, to forget and forgive. All in all, the old man is a remarkable case of adaptation to the new system of life and ideas.

One thing that helps reconcile Vlas to the new order is that, to Vlas, as to all sectants, the Revolution means freedom in religion, a release from the persecutions with which the State Church hounded them since 1665. It exiled them to the far off forests and wastes of Russia. It confiscated the treasures out of their churches. It broke up their monasteries down on the Irtysh River. It closed their asylums and divinity schools. It fell on them with fire and sword.

It is noteworthy that the Communists have used no measure against the Orthodox State

Church that that church has not used for centuries against the non-conforming faiths. In fact, it went far beyond anything the Communists ever attempted. No slanders were too base, no cruelties too vicious.

The Old Believers were declared a menace to the state and put outside the law. Their nostrils were ripped by pincers. Their children were made bastards and torn from their parents. Seals were put upon their altars and gates, their clergy were forbidden to perform their offices. More than once Vlas has brought a priest at night, disguised as a merchant, to conduct worship. And to ward off a raid on his church Vlas often carried hush money to the police.

One time the Procurator charges "a serious crime against Old Believers of Kvalinsk for the ringing of bells from their belfries, thus luring and tempting citizens to attend their services, a scandal not permitted in Saratov or Kuzentzk." Orders were issued by the Governor to muffle the bells.

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The Revolution of 1905 took the seals off the altars. The Revolution of 1917 gave them equal rights alongside of the other faiths. With right of assembly, they used to convene in Kvalinsk a unity council of three branches of the Old Believers. Hither came three hundred delegates out of Old Moscow, out of the forests of Archangel, the valleys of the Caucasus and the Caspian steppes—out of the Russia of far away and long ago. Had I not known Vlas, I would have wondered how this strange, weird assembly of figures could have survived the Revolution. Big, hulking merchants who might have stepped out of the marts of Old Novgorod. Gaunt hollow-eyed monks who might have stepped down out of the ikon frames. Priests with fanatic devotion to the ancient ritual, like their forefathers ready to be burnt to death for it and equally ready to burn others.

“A foreigner! A spy!” thundered at me a giant virgin-bearded Cossack of the Don. “Put him out!”

They did so. But old Vlas smuggled me in again. And in course of time they grew tolerant of me. I even lured one of them, a Siberian priest, to my house. Five goblets of wine and the pent-up hatred against the old State Church broke out in a flaming tirade:

"Snuff pinchers! They make the sign of the cross with thumb and two fingers. Cowards! They couldn't compete with the true faith and put seals on our altars. Liars! They founded their religion on deceit. So they betray everybody, even those who confess to them. Why, if some one confessed to me that he killed the Tsar, it would be my secret forever. Police spies, charlatans, wolves. . . ."

In contrast with such extremists Vlas is a modernist and has departed far from the faith of his fathers.

The strictest Old Believers will not touch tea or sugar, nor potatoes, for they were unknown before the days of Nikon. But to Vlas all food is good.

The strictest Old Believers, holding that

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false religion defiles a man in body and soul, keep themselves sternly aloof from the "worldly" and unclean. In the villages, zealots often refused to shake the hand I proffered and the bowl I ate from—as I found later—was the one from which the cat was fed. Any other dish I defiled would have to be broken or thrown away. When I told Vlas of this he only laughed and to prove that he had no such prejudices made me drink from the same bowl with him.

The Revolution has done much damage to Vlas' observance of the ancient customs and conventions. Even for those to which he conforms he gives secular and not religious reasons.

The strictest Old Believers lay no razor to their face, for the beardless may not enter heaven. Bandits once waylaid Old Believers with the demand, "Your money or your beard!" If the beard was severed it was gathered up to be buried with its owner lest at the gates of Paradise he be unrecognized. When I asked Vlas why he doesn't cut his whiskers off, he

shook his head and said: "Do I want to look like a dog?"

The strictest Old Believers use no tobacco. It was unknown before Nikon and the Scriptures say: "Not what entereth into the mouth, but what cometh out, defiles a man." Vlas bases his abjuration of smoking on purely physiological grounds. It will cut down his weight. "Do I want to look like a weasel?"

To Vlas sheer size and bulk are virtues in themselves. He is proud of his big self, his big daughters, his big ikons, his big cross with the legend "*Vladika!* Ward off my enemies." Proudest of all of his enormous *Nomakanon*, the laws and Scripture in archaic red and black Slavonic script. To Vlas a magic spell lies in its great dimensions, in its great age—more than three hundred years he boasts. The very reading of it has a healing power.

This Vlas was doing in a loud voice when I came to say good-by. The room oven-hot, the ikon lamps a-lit, a sizzling samovar, haunches of pork and beef and pies on the table, and the

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old man—barefooted, in his black *kaftan*, vodka pouring into him, sweat pouring out of him—was sing-songing a prayer out of his holy book.

“Just curing myself of a cold,” said Vlas apologetically.

Good health to Vlas! Hoch to Vlas!

Maybe long after the ascetic Bernard Shaw has finished his meatless, wineless days, this voracious flesh-eating, vodka-drinking, Bible-reading, union-carded Old Believer will continue to stand a bulwark of his ancient faith, refuting all laws of physiology and hygiene and some of the tenets of Marxism.

III
THE VALLEY OF WINE



III

THE VALLEY OF WINE

ON a clear May morning we started out on the highroad that runs east from Tiflis. Behind us lay the "stony girdle of the globe"—so the Caucasus was known to the ancients—sending its white peaks high up to mingle with the white clouds of the summer sky. Before us in the distance were peculiar clouds of another color. Here and there along the highroad they rose in columns, now standing still, now moving slightly toward us—big, billowing

clouds of dust. I had been reading local history, and beneath these rolling clouds I could see the Persians riding to sack the Georgian cities, the Golden Horde, in its migration from Asia into the West, and Timur the Tatar.

But nothing so frightful and fantastic. It was the spring migration of the sheep to the mountains. In hundreds of thousands they came—one, two or three thousand in a flock—headed by a big, important buck and assistant he-goats showing the way and flanked by weary-eyed dogs and shepherds. Out of the hot, blazing valley they follow this road that leads to the hill trails and up to the cool springs and succulent grass of the mountain meadows. Into rich pasturage, but into no shepherds' paradise. For up there are avalanches, hail-storms and wolves—and worst of all, there are the sheep raiders. The story of last year's raid we heard from a passing shepherd.

"We had moved up into dangerous passes," he said. "But the night was pitch-dark, and we were well hidden in the hollows. So we

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felt safe. Suddenly at midnight a flame shot from a cliff. It was a rocket. Another and another followed until the whole mountain was alight. There was gun-firing, yelling, the rush of a hundred horsemen. We were all bound and gagged and our sheep driven off—six thousand of them. All that was left for us was the spring's shearings and fifty skins of sheep-cheese."

It would have been interesting to follow the sheep—slow-moving avalanches of wool going up the mountains. But Arakel, my companion, said, "No, we must hold to our goal," and Arakel generally has his way. Between his big bushy beard and big bushy astrakhan cap blazed a pair of snapping eyes, quick as his lithe body, compelling as his will. That will had been tempered in furnace and field, by flogging and Siberian exile, by sixty years' fighting for freedom. Now, as if in compensation for the youth it robbed him of, the Revolution had given him a pension and turned him out to play. He was free to go whither his fancy took him.

To-day it was taking him into Kakhetia, into the Valley of Wine.

There was a foretaste of that valley in the red and amber vintages of the goatskins sold along the way at a ruble or two a skinful. The emptied skins were left at the next station for refilling. Omar dreaming of his body after death wrapt in winding-sheet of vineleaf, how he must have envied those goats so graciously fated to have their skins filled again and yet again. The old Persian must have had these Georgian neighbors in mind when he wrote his verses.

For wine runs in the Georgian's veins. Along with his mother's milk he gets his father's wine. Everywhere one sees fruits of the vine and the vine itself. Even over the façades of churches it climbs chiseled in stone, funny-faced lions blandly munching at the grapes. And the most sacred relic in Georgia, the cross the Virgin Mary placed in the hand of Saint Nina as she slept, is appropriately a grape-vine. Nina herself is buried in her con-

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vent at Signakh—the gateway to this Valley of Wine.

From here our road ran through fifty versts of vineyards—tendrils and leaves all in brilliant early summer green—a sight moving the old Georgian with us to philosophic comment. “Nature,” he said, “by soil and climate appor-tions a nation its beverage as she does its food. Just as beer is ordained for Germans and *kumiss*, or mare’s milk, for the nomads of Kirghiz steppes, so wine is the natural drink of the Georgians.” Otherwise why did the grapes grow here so gloriously? Could any one answer that? No one could. Thereupon the company untied the leg of another goatskin and drank to the good fortune that placed them here in Georgia, where wine runs out of the soil.

Redder still is the fluid that has run into this soil. Every pass and hill and highroad has for centuries been soaked in blood. Twenty times, big armies have penetrated into this Valley of Wine, burning and plundering, robbing it of everything but its beauty. This warring past

is reflected in the crumbling ruins of forts that crown the heights. It shows itself in the dress of the peasants—across the breast runs a row of cartridge-pockets and from the belt hangs a silver *kinjhal*, or poniard. It is in the greeting that Arakel flings to the men who line up as we drive through the gate at Tsinindal.

“Be victorious!”—“*Gaumerjabo!*” he cries out.

“And may the victory be yours!”—“*Gaumerjos!*” rings back the gallant answer.

Despite their warlike words these men are not warriors going forth to battle. They are vine-growers, very peaceful and poor. Rather, they *were* poor until the Revolution came and gave to each his “norm” of vine-growing land. Thus it came about that all had wine to sell. But they got so little for it—five cents for a bottle that in Tiflis sold for fifty cents. A hundred bottles for a pair of boots. So they became traders themselves, founding a coöperative, which any one might join by bringing in ten *vedros*, two hundred bottles.

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To-day is the first big meeting. The officials are down from Tiflis. Interest is at high pitch. The big cool aromatic shed is crammed to the doors with all manner of men, ranging from ex-Prince Chavchavadze to his ex-lackey and the one-time village beggar. But now there is neither prince nor pauper. "All toiling peasants." All coöperators.

At one end was a great trough, where last fall in shifts of day and night, knee-deep, they tramped out the grapes with their feet.

"Primitive!" I exclaimed.

"Yes," said Arakel, who, though a modernist, has always a good word for the old. "But in one way feet are better than machines. They press out only the sweet juice of the grapes without the bitter juice of the stems." He pointed out the course of the juice piped from the big troughs into enormous jars set in the ground and tamped down with earth.

Above this lake of wine the meeting is called to order. It runs like a well-oiled machine. And so it is. For a flying battalion of Com-

munists has arrived and in caucus has fixed the procedure in advance. Everything goes according to program: the report on last year's gains, the fight against phylloxera by the grafting on of American roots, the donation of six hundred rubles for water-supply. All this proceeds amidst a drum-fire of oratory praising the peasants as "arbiters of their destiny," "creators of a new world," congratulating them on their "initiative," "independence."

Are these merely words and phrases? So it seems. For the only part these peasants take in the proceeding is to chorus "Yes! Yes!" to all proposals of the officials. Compliments apparently suffice to make them docile. So the machine slips along smoothly until it comes to the election of three directors at salaries of one hundred fifty rubles a month. For these posts three Communists have been slated. But no sooner are their names read than, in a withering blast from the benches, breaks a hurricane of "No! No! No!"

The machine stops dead, and there is no

starting it again. Finally an old blind peasant gets the floor and says: "Now it is the custom to praise the peasants as in old days it was to abuse us. They used to call us sheep, and there is a lot of truth in that. We are a big flock going one way because others are going that way too. But the sheep don't pick their own path. It's the goats that show them. The directors are the goats. If the goats lose their heads and go over the cliff, the sheep follow them. On the other hand, sure-footed goats lead the flock up into good pasturage. Much, very much, depends upon the leaders. Let us see that we choose wise ones."

More speeches follow and at last the sense of the peasants expresses itself thus: "We will take one Communist, because he will make it easier to deal with the government. But the other two directors must be our old specialists: men whom we know and who know their business." The Communists, be it said, know a storm when it blows, and they bend to it. So it is ordained, and so it is voted. Then seven

peasants are elected to look after the directors, and the assembly files out of the building, sniffing various savory smells now exhaling from the yard. A feast is now the order of the day.

The Georgian is by nature addicted to feasting. His life is an almost unbroken series of them. His christening, his marriage, his advent into this world, his going out—all are hailed by special feasts. Even when he lies moldering in the grave, his friends meet on three different occasions and solemnly gorge themselves in his memory. There are feasts to celebrate the spring sowing, the autumn reaping; feasts in honor of horses and cows, in honor of worms that they may be merciful to the crops, in honor of birds that they may be merciless to the worms. In the autumn comes a week's festival for Saint George. All the other saints are fêted, likewise all the great church holidays. Now come the six new holidays of the Revolution. The Georgian greets

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them with a cheer. Six new occasions for a feast.

To-day was an especially glorious occasion. So, while the meeting was on, the fires had been blazing in the big brick oven, and the steam, in fragrant columns, had been rising from the bubbling caldrons. Now the peasants told off as waiters were unrolling cylinders of linen across the grass, striping the green meadows white. The company, doubling up its plastic Asiatic legs, sat down, and presently the cloths were strewn with bundles of pungent grasses and cresses and armfuls of *choorek*, or Caucasian barley bread. We had seen this bread in the making. In the bottom of a big tiled kiln set in the earth a fire was kindled. Around the inside of the kiln was plastered the dough, which the hot air-blasts, rising from the bottom, quickly turned into bread.

"Rather primitive," I had again remarked to Arakel.

"Yes, but good bread," he rejoined. "I set

up in my house a modern stove with a closed oven. In a month my wife made me take it out. She said she liked bread baked in the old way, in the free air, not in a prison."

It was indeed most admirable bread. It served us not only as food but as a plate and napkin. With it too we handled the lamb now served up in various guises. First it came as soup seasoned with a strange herb. Then out of the caldrons it came as stew, and out of the oven roasted. Each form seemed more delicious than the other. I extolled the Georgian cooks for their skill in bringing out the essential flavors of the lamb.

"And you may praise the good grass of the mountain meadows for putting the flavors into it," said one feaster.

"And the good air," said another.

"And the good view," added Arakel quite seriously.

This was the first time I had heard that animals were affected by scenery, and I said so.

"Not only lambs," asseverated Arakel sol-

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emly, "but all animals. My goats, for example. I just cut through an opening that gives them a wide outlook. At once they showed their appreciation."

Further tributes to the esthetic nature of lambs were warmly paid by the two mountaineers at the left—holding up a lamb-leg on their daggers. Little benefit the lambs got out of the eulogies. The gorging went steadily on. It is hardly correct, however, to say that the Georgians gorge themselves. Their feasts are rather more like a drowning operation. They are founded not on bread and meat but on wine. Holding that there is nothing to buy half so precious as the stuff they sell, these vintners devote a goodly portion of their products to themselves. The Georgian admires his wine and wants you to admire it too. You best can praise it by drinking it.

The chief drinker was the old landlord, Shakro. He was the pride of the valley, having met the heavyweight drinkers from all parts and drunk them all down. His record at one

sitting was an incredible amount—some thirty or forty bottles—contradicting all the known laws of inner expansion. In his stomach must lie the secret of the fourth dimension. He saved himself from bursting by a girdle that encircled his enormous waist like a barrel-hoop. In fact he resembled nothing in this world so much as a barrel.

It was a prodigious feat to hold the title of champion in such a company—for they were all noble drinkers, and their insatiable thirst kept the tankard-carriers on the run, dipping the wine out of the cisterns, bringing it dripping across the grass and pouring it into vessels of varied shape and form, also made out of the local soil. Among them was a peculiar cup such as only a Georgian might devise. Into it ran a tube from another cup. Thus, while appearing to drink a single cupful, in reality one drank two. Likewise there was a flagon with a quaintly twisted neck, the favorite of the old patriarch, who sat opposite me. With a free swing of the arm he flung it above his head and

kept it tilted there as the contents with gratifying sound gurgled first through the long neck of the flagon and then down his own throat. He drained it as if it were a tumbler. Once I tried to interrupt the process with the offer of a cigarette. He took it with his free hand, first touching my wrist with a light, graceful motion—the way the Georgians have for saying “Thank you” wordlessly—but not for a second did the steady downpour of liquor stop.

In this feat he was ably accompanied by his cronies on the right and left. They finished their flagons; then, as is the wont of an older generation, they began to berate the rising generation for departing from the way marked out by their fathers. Specifically the grievance against the young was their disregard of ancestral drinking codes and customs. The rising generation did not drink enough.

“Look around you,” said the first old patriarch. “There are a dozen young fellows who haven’t finished a single tankard yet.”

“And my nephew comes home with loose talk

about too much wine wrinkling up the liver," snorted the second. "As if I hadn't fed my liver wine for seventy years."

The third dwelt at length upon a scandalous situation that was developing. Things had come to such a pass, he averred, that the young fellows, about a hundred of them, had actually made a compact to limit themselves to a bottle a day—a very bad omen, boding no good for the future.

"In America," I interjected consolingly, "a bottle a day—thirty bottles a month—would be considered heavy drinking."

But they would not be comforted and continued to lament the decay of morals and drinking.

"And the reason for all this?" I inquired.

"Right there is one reason," said the first old patriarch, blinking derisively at the presiding officer of the feast—the *tamada*. The *tamada* is a peculiarly Georgian institution. He is elected by the assembly by virtue of the prime qualities of his nerve, stomach and

tongue. His job is to put discipline into the feast and efficiency into the drinking. He must keep the wine and wit flowing. He must see that the goblets are filled to the brim and emptied to the bottom. He must be on the watch for those transgressing the rules of the feast and prescribe the penalties. Woe to the culprit who lags a bit behind in his cups! The tamada, spying him out forthwith, presents him with a big Caucasian ibex-horn, which the unfortunate laggard must drain at a draft. Such are some of the laws of the feast. To-day, however, they were largely in abeyance, and therefore was the ire of the older generation aroused.

But the tamada, if not strict in discipline, was eloquent in speech. He called the toasts:

"To the coöperators, who, throwing off a thousand years' guardianship of prince and landlord, have become their own guardians;

"To the revolutionary peasants, refusing to let others exploit their toil and by the same token refusing to exploit the toil of others;

"To Lado and Arakel, who from their childhood fought for freedom and now live to see their struggle crowned with victory."

These were toasts of the tamada. Then followed the toasts of the peasants, continuing long after the official feast was finished:

"To the Power now bringing peace amongst the tribes;

"To the Earth—out of it we mold these bowls and out of it we draw the refreshing wine we pour into them."

The wine often poured over the edges of the bowls and spilled upon the ground. I commented on this loss.

"Never mind, let the Earth drink too," was the answer.

Care enough they had taken in pruning, picking and treading the grape. Care-free they would enjoy the fruit of their labor. Give the Earth her libations too.

Many toasts were raised to Vermishev, once owner of the estate on which the coöperative stood, and to-day reëlected director: "To our

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comrade who found this land a hunting-place for bears and wolves and turned it into a garden. The work he began we promise to carry on."

"Remarkable the warm good-will of the peasants toward their one-time landlord," said I to Arakel.

But Arakel was not inclined to idealizing. "Good-will!" he gruffly interjected. "Why shouldn't they have good-will toward him? They've got his estates to divide among themselves. They've got his brains to run their coöperative. If anything is remarkable, it's the good-will of the landlords toward those who stripped them."

There was none who had been stripped more than ex-Prince Chavchavadze, the chief of the old nobility. The Revolution had taken from him honor, office and income. It had given him the pinch of hunger, the strain of unaccustomed toil. Worry and want had shrunken his huge body to almost half. But it was still an impressive figure; it still could flame with elo-

quence. The gist of his speech was in the closing words: "We had big estates. We held high office. But were we happy then? No. Not half so happy as we are to-day surrounded by our peasant comrades."

It was a noble flight of feeling and apparently arose from deep within the man. Such a fervor of fraternity must have swept that assembly of French nobles on the eve of the great Revolution, when they declared their lands forfeit to the people. History records that they afterward repented of their rash bestowal and fought valiantly in the counter-revolution to hold their estates.

For just this reason Arakel was not impressed by the rapture of Chavchavadze. "It doesn't have any material basis," he explained. "To-day he may have genuine emotions. But to-morrow he goes out into the fields. He sweats and burns and itches. He thinks of the good old days. He gets to longing for them. From this, it's only a few steps to fighting for them. So he is always a possible counter-revolutionist."

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In Arakel's opinion the one proprietor whose loyalty to the new order was on a sound economic foundation was Shakro. He is one of the ironies of the Revolution. He had poured his property down his throat until he became at last a landless landlord. Then came the Revolution with its slogan: "To each man the land that he can till." Shakro declared that he could cultivate two *dessyatines*, or about five and a half acres, and asked for it. The outraged Communists exclaimed that the Revolution came not to give land to the landlords but to take it away from them. Shakro stood by the letter of the law, however, the peasants stood with him and he came into his own again.

Now he sat smiling into his sixth tankard, surrounded by his rapt admirers and roaring out a song of glory to the Revolution. But, though his voice boomed up from his vast interior, big and resonant, it was lost in the choruses that broke out here and there or rolled together in thundering symphonies.

"Our music is all based upon the mountains,"

announced Arakel. "Like the main ranges, the main motives go steadily on. Listen and you will hear the tenors climbing the peaks, then coming back to . . ."

His fantasy was cut short by some one calling the toast: "To the sweet songs of Georgia and our fathers who wrote them."

Followed a song enchanting in melody and boundless in praise of Georgia. But reason enough for this extravagance of feeling. The scene before us was an extravagant loveliness. Across twenty versts of sloping fields, bright yellow with the mustard-flower, and old vineyards, crimson with the poppy, we looked down to the silver Alazan, gleaming through its meadows. Then our eyes rose up to snow-crested summits hung now with the pink and purple mists of evening. No wonder that English devotee of Georgia, Wardrop, wrote: "It is more beautiful than anything I had ever seen or imagined."

But maybe he too was deep in Kakhetian wine—surely a magic draft. It not only made

old men's voices soft and organ-like; hearts too under its spell became ever more expansive. With glowing affection a big mountaineer took me in his iron grasp and clutching me to his bearded bosom vowed eternal alliance between the two great powers—Kakhetia and America. This was the nearest approach to an act of violence that I saw the entire day. There was no unseemliness of word or gesture. It was an untarnished bacchanal of brotherhood.

We awoke next morning to a haggling dispute outside over bed and board and wages. But not a word about wine. The reason was quite simple. Wine being here regarded as a basic necessity, it is assumed that each workman gets as much as he wants.

As a protest against this unlimited consumption—Menik explained to us—had come the compact of the hundred young fellows, a sort of Georgian Young Men's Temperance Association, Limited—thirty bottles a month. "We don't say that wine in itself is bad; we simply say that too much of it is bad."

"But if wine is good, how can one get too much of it?" was the retort of the first old patriarch.

"But you know very well that they get too much wine. Only a month ago didn't two men die after a week's debauch?"

"Foolishness!" snorted the old man. "They got to sweating and, going to sleep in a draft, they both died from a cold. That's all."

Thus the debate went on, each man being called upon to declare himself—no neutrals tolerated. Arakel, though he belonged to the older generation, staunchly took sides with the young, going so far as to state that alcohol was "poison"—a very extreme position. But he held it valiantly, fortifying himself with frequent drafts from a goatskin.

Finally came my turn. As diplomatically as possible I broke to them the dreadful news that America prohibited vodka, whisky, gin, beer—and wine.

"Wine, too?" they repeated, dumfounded.

"Wine, too," I bravely reiterated.

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When they revived from their shellshock, I went on to explain that America had eighty per cent of the automobiles of the world, likewise fifty per cent of the locomotives, sixty per cent of the elevators. It was one big machine, so that the fogging of the brain with alcohol, the trembling of the hand at the wheel or throttle, spelled disaster. A man's nerves must be steady.

"Steady nerves!" cried the old man in protest. "Well, let them drink wine. That's what it's for—to make the nerves steady."

To my skeptical smile he replied by pouring out a big bowlful and drinking it. Then a second and a third. Filling the fourth bowl to the brim, he placed it on his head, and, calling to me, "I'll show you," he stepped out into that wild, graceful dance of the Caucasus—the *lezghinka*.

Stamping the ground in ever faster measure, he suddenly unsheathed two daggers and, placing the tips of the gleaming blades on his eyes, launched out into the most complex figure.

I looked to see the daggers draw blood or the bowl fall shattering to the ground. One slight misstep or jerk would have done it. But nothing jerked except my own nerves. At last he came out of the dance, whirling like a dervish. With a fine gesture he stuck the two daggers into the table, placing the bowl between them. He nodded to me and laughed. It was as if he said: "There they are, three irrefutable arguments for drinking."

"Such a feat is beyond any American," I said quite truthfully. But the older generation would not allow my profuse compliments to divert them from their main issue. Their morale was fine after the signal exploits of their champion. In their glee was also an element of serious concern over the fate of America, going into a dry and sear decline. And they had an excellent example to hand—the Moslem. Many times I heard the argument: The Mohammedans once ruled Asia. They penetrated into Europe. They were as power-

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ful as America. But they drank no wine. Where are they to-day?"

"If Mahomet hadn't forbidden wine, we might all be Moslems ourselves," said one of the vine-growers. "They sacked our cities. They wasted our land. They did convert certain tribes—the Ossetins. But we clung to our faith and wine."

But what Mahomet failed to do with the sword the Communists essay to do with the word. A profane and sacrilegious crew. They have invaded this very Valley of Wine with crude posters picturing a Georgian gagged and bound by alcohol. Beneath are the words: "Wine weakens will, mind, body"; "Out of the taverns into the schools."

Outrageous blasphemy to these votaries of wine. Our guide looked at the poster and past the vineyards rolling down for forty miles. Then, pointing out a tavern across the way, he said, "There's a good place to get a round of drinks."

IV

IN THE VILLAGE OF SALVATION



IV

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AGAIN I am on the road that runs over the Vladimir hills to the village of Salvation. It was Yanyshhev who first led me here, in the fateful summer of 1917. He is dead now. So are thousands of his comrades. So are millions of other Russians, who perished of bullets and hunger and horror in the revolutionary hurricane that swept the land, changing institutions and ideas to their foundations, changing the very course of history.

Yet, with all these changes, one has no sense of change here. All is quite as it was on that

summer day years ago. The same creaking cart; the same wayside talk about cattle and crops and plagues of grasshoppers; the same wide billowing waves of wheat sweeping away to the horizon; and out of these green seas, like great white cliffs, the same white churches lifting their blue and gold domes above the huts of the villages clustering around them. From a rise in the road, six years ago, I counted twenty-four of these churches. But to-day the air is clearer, and I can count thirty-six, standing sentinel across these plains that bear the name of Vladimir.

It was this Vladimir that first brought Christianity to Russia a thousand years ago. A colored lithograph of that historic event hangs in almost every peasant's hut; the half-naked, half-savage Slavs stand waist-deep in the water of the Dnieper, while Saint Vladimir baptizes them into the Orthodox faith.

How well these Slavs have kept the faith, nurtured it and lavished on it their wealth, bear witness these great edifices that capture the eyes

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with form and color and pour the music of their bells into the ears, intent on dominating the mind as they dominate the landscape. They stand there so massive, so enduring, so unchanged by the revolutionary storm.

Is the faith they enshrine unchanged? How has it weathered the gale?

I would have put these questions to the old priest of Salvation village. But he had passed on. And when we knocked on the door of the parish-house it was a new priest, a tall fair-haired Slav of thirty-five, who invited us in with a smile. It was a somewhat anxious smile. For why should a Communist and an inquisitive stranger from America appear in this little far-away village? But he could not long harbor suspicions. He was too amiable by nature. And there were other excellent reasons for being good-natured.

Six months earlier, in a neighboring village, he had been the teacher, "Popov." Then he had been ordained a priest and become "Little Father" (*Batushka*) Popov. And, by marry-

ing the daughter of the old priest of Salvation parish, he had at once secured a pretty and capable wife, an excellent house and garden, and a parish whose revenues were not deeply cut into by the currents of anti-religion.

Being seated, the Communist felt impelled forthwith to introduce some anti-religion into the young priest's mind: "How could all the animals have gotten into the ark?" "Where did Cain get his wife?" "Why do the atheist peasants of France get bigger crops than the religious peasants of Russia?" and similar assaults upon the foundations of the faith. The young priest was as awkward in religious controversy as in the new gown in which he was robed. He amiably and disgracefully yielded point after point, taking a stand only upon the Doctrine of Holy Water. But it was a firm stand.

"Take two bottles," he explained to me, as an outsider. "Fill one with just ordinary water. Fill the other with water that has been blessed in the proper way. Let them stand

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a few months—the ordinary water may be spoiled, but the consecrated water will be just as fresh as new.”

“Did you ever do that experiment?” asks the Communist.

Father Popov was quite dumbfounded. For to him, as to tens of millions of members of the Orthodox Church, this is as plain matter of fact. This is the way water acts. Heat water and it boils; freeze water and it solidifies into ice; consecrate water and it stays unspoiled. What is there to experiment about? And how can you argue with a person who does not even know the common properties of water?

Father Popov was exasperated. His mild voice was rising in irritation when a voice from the kitchen diplomatically called him out to fix the samovar. Returning evidently with fresh instructions from his wife, who, as a priest's daughter, was better versed in ecclesiastical and parochial matters, he evaded further debate, valiantly confining his talk to his

garden, his orchard and his hives. Even the Communist's jeer against Beneficent Deity putting stings into bees and worms into apples failed to lure him into further argument. He stolidly refused to justify the ways of God to a Communist.

His wife meanwhile laid the table, proud of her white linen but apologetic for lack of white bread. "Last year the worms ate the wheat all up," she said. "They ate it up in the fields just as it was ripening for the harvest; the grasshoppers and worms came in armies."

"And to-morrow," said the young priest, his native good humor once more asserting itself, "there is to be a procession around the fields of the east village. There will be a special service against all these plagues. If you would like to go with us, come along. Please come along!"

Next morning we wake to the tolling of the bells and slide down out of the hay-mow in time to see the procession forming in the church yard. The village elder is grumbling away:

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"What is the matter, Ivan Mikhilovich? Where are the women to-day? Not even enough to carry the ikons!"

He shakes his head dourly. But the little girls are delighted. That means that they too will have ikons to carry. They stand eagerly, in pairs, before the church steps, and soon one of those great grave faces of the Saints, lacquered on board, is framed on either side by two shining-faced little girls. Little ikons for the little girls. Big ikons for the big girls. And last of all comes the wonder-working ikon.

"Careful! Very careful! Ivan Mikhilovich," cautions the village elder.

Why so careful? This is just another wooden lady with a wooden heart. So it seems. But once this wooden heart dripped blood. Struck by a careless hand, out of this unanimated board trickled real drops of ruddy blood. To prove the miracle, Father Popov points out the crimson stains, still visible. His morale to-day is greatly improved by the priestly garments in which he is swathed.

Adjusting the differences between the bearers of the Candle and the Cross, two mischievous young imps in black, he calls out to the standard-bearers. The men lift the banners, the bells break into a wild clangor, and the procession moves through the gates of the village and skirts the edges of the meadows.

East and west the grain fields roll away in rippling waves, their long leaves hung with dew-drops, their budding ears rich with the promise of life. But only the *promise*. Nine months these peasants have labored, plowing, scattering the seeds, watching the green blades push through the soil, growing up into stalks. Four weeks more and these green fields will stand brown and golden under the summer sun. Then harvest time, the russet sheaves, the beat of the flail on the threshing-floor—and bread for the coming winter. The life poured into the fields they shall reap again five-fold. *Maybe!*

For against these fields is camped an enemy, a ravaging, pillaging enemy. From all sides,

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creeping forward, flying the air, mining the earth, striking with fang and tooth and claw—armies of worms, hosts of caterpillars. That is why we go forth with banners to battle with the insects. Around these fields we are to-day to draw a magic circle. With cross and candle, prayer and holy water we are to build a barrier against ant and mouse and caterpillar. They shall not pass!

Let the earth blest by Thee bring forth fruit in its time. Allow not upon it any vermin, insect, rust, burning heat or withering wind bringing destruction. . . .

chants the priest.

Deliver us from our enemies!
Have mercy upon us,
Holy Triphon, pray for us!

respond the people.

"In the twentieth century!" exclaims the Communist reproachfully. "Just think. . . ."

But how can one think? The far-away voice of the church bell and the voice of the whis-

pering wheat field, and the song of the lark, and the soft laughter of children mingle with the reverberant voice of the priest, reading, out of the Slavonic, a prayer which is poetry:

Ye who created the skies and earth, who beautified the heavens with starry lights to shine upon the earth, and who adorned the earth with cereals and grass and various plants and flowers. . . .

Ten centuries slip away and I am back in the Middle Ages, walking in a solemn procession. Only this to-day is not too solemn. For the children, laughing, chase butterflies and pluck the buttercups and daisies; they twist them into chains to hang about their necks, or twine them into garlands for the ikons; the sun flashes back the silver of the robes and crosses; the golden banners wave above the women dressed in red and orange and brightest blue; and we move along the borders of the field—a caravan of color.

Four versts and we halt just where a brook, white with water-lilies, pours its heavy incense

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on the meadows. With faces and ikons looking to the altar-cross in the center, the people range into a circle and the service begins. It is a comprehensive service. First, general praise to the heavenly powers. Second, general exhortation to the people. Then it becomes specific. It calls up the third party, the cause of this procession. Their names are all written in the book. And the priest calls them out, naming them by name:

Worms and grasshoppers!
Mice and rats!
Ants, moles and reptiles!
Flies and horseflies and hornets!
And all flying things that wreak
Destruction . . .

he cries in a loud voice,

I forbid you in the name of the Savior come on earth to suffer for men. I forbid you in the name of the all-seeing cherubim and seraphim who fly around the heavenly throne, I forbid you in the name of the angels and the millions of heavenly spirits standing in the glory of God. I forbid you to touch

any tree, fruitful or unfruitful, or leaf or plant or flower. I forbid you to bring any woe upon the fields of these people!

And the priest, dipping the *hyssop* (the long brush) in the water, raises it above his head and flings it until the drops fall a tiny shower upon the field, to the North, the South, the East and the West, and upon the heads of the people singing:

Pray for us, Saint Triphon!

Saint Triphon got the martyr's crown and died for Jesus.

Holy Triphon, pray for us!

Surely, were there any pity or poetry in the soul of a worm, it could not spoil the fields of these poor folks, standing devoutly with bowed heads, trusting in the magic of these words come down through the ages. For these are not merely the words of their parish-priest.

They are the words of Saint Triphon, the martyr of Asia Minor, who, according to the chronicles, "The son of a poor péasant, from

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babyhood loved the Almighty and under the Roman Empire suffered death by steel and fire." They are the words with which "in the third century he delivered his land from the plague of worms and insects, the destroyers leaving forthwith at his command."

Now, after sixteen centuries, these peasants of Salvation, in the voice of their priest, hear the voice of the mighty Saint thundering to the enemies of their fields this his IMPRECATION, (as printed in the "Tchiti-minei" on page 179):

If ye obey me not, meekest and humblest of God's servants, if ye leave not this place and go to arid mountains and sandy deserts,—then the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will send by my prayer armies of birds to destroy ye. Ye shall perish by iron and lead. Ye will be caught and slain. By the Great Name written on stone, I adjure you! Like wax before fire, melt and disappear! Away from these fields! Away and perish!

Harsh, hard words. So unlike that gentle

Saint of Italy, friend to the lowliest of creatures, speaking softly to birds and worms and beetles he met along the way.

But Saint Triphon of Asia Minor is no Saint Francis of Assisi. He makes no appeal to the better nature of the worms. He believes only in their total depravity. He gives them no alternative but death. Death in far off wastes, or here in these green wheat fields. So harshly dealt with, shall they be blamed if they choose to perish in the succulent grain—and have the grain fields perish with them?

It is this hard fact that stares the peasants in the face. Despite the procession last year and the year before, it is not the insects, but their fields, that perish. And so the task of Saint Triphon grows harder. He has not only to drive the worms from the fields, but to drive the worms of doubt and disbelief beginning to gnaw at the hearts of the people. Else faith, too, shall perish. And much faith is needed, even to keep a procession marching under the heat of this midsummer day.

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Hotter and hotter grows the sun. Heavier and heavier grow the banners. Sharper and sharper grow the corners of the ikons. And, like the flowers that hung upon the ikons, more and more wilted grow the spirits of the marchers.

Thus we come to an arm of wheat jutting out of the main fields like a promontory. There it is two long versts around it, but across just a few steps. How easy to take the short way across, flashes into every mind. All turn hopefully to the village elder to give the word. But he is not to be compromised. He only mumbles something about the long walk being very tiring to the children, and wearily mops his brow. But the banner-bearers, weighed with their heavy burdens, are more zealous.

"Strange, in this field there never were many worms," declares the first one.

"And it really isn't part of the main fields," says the second.

"Well, then, let's cut across it," blurts out Ivan Mikhilovich.

"Yes! Yes!" chime in a score of voices.

Only one, an old *baba*, objects. To her the point of ceremony is its exact and precise performance. In this lies its efficacy. No short cuts in the ritual, no short cuts in the marching. But she is overruled. Even the priest, perspiring under his heavy robe, is against her. And, moving forward, we are soon waist-deep in the waving sea of wheat, the priest atoning for his slight irregularity by vigorously flinging far out upon the uncircumscribed field generous portions of the holy water.

It is now almost all sprinkled upon the fields. The vessel is lighter, and so is the spirit of the village elder who carries it. He falls back for a little conversation.

"Ah, but you should have been here before the Revolution," he says. "Then everybody in the village took part. Those were real processions, like you must have in America."

I told him that in America we had no processions at all.

"No, really, is that so?" he exclaimed. "And

you have good wheat—lots of it. You sent it to our starving brothers on the Volga. I thank you for it.” He took off his hat and bowed to me.

“Yes,” I went on rather provokingly. “We raise crops, not by processions but by plows, deep-cutting plows and irrigation and chemical protection against insects.”

“Quite so,” he answered conciliatingly. “Maybe we ought to do more of that. That is what Fedosiev all the time is telling us. But he talks too much. Besides, he doesn’t go to church any more. And he doesn’t believe in the saints.”

“Well, you believe in them,” I continued cruelly, “but what good does it do? Does it really save your harvest from the worms?”

This thrust went too deep. He became grieved, almost hostile. Only after a long silence he went on to recount instances of harvests saved by processions. “If this fails to-day, it is because we fail. It is our lack of faith, God punishes us for our sins. Our vil-

lage has grown indifferent and pleasure-loving."

And as if to point his homily, across the pasture came the shouts of the young fellows playing *gorodki*, the crash of the flying clubs, and the cry of the score at the top of their lungs.

This was too much for Ivan Mikhilovich. At best his piety was none too robust. And it was sorely strained by wrestling all day with a heavy banner.

"Devil take them!" he exploded. "We walk our legs off while these scoundrels play games, or sleep their heads off all day. And it's their wheat as much as ours. As for me, I swear never to go to a procession again—not until every man in the village goes too."

Boom! Boom! goes the big bell in the church tower. Tinkle! Tinkle! Tinkle! go all the little bells, awakening in unison to the sudden energy of the bell-ringer. It is like good music to our tired limbs. It sets our blood tingling. We pick up our step, and soon again are passing into the churchyard. The ikons and banner set up in their niches;

the cross is once more placed on the altar. Relieved of his sacred office, the young imp of a cross-bearer gives a good whack to the young imp of a candle-bearer, the girls call out good-bys to one another; and the young priest hurries home to break his long fast.

That evening I met Fedosiev and told him, by the way, about my pilgrimage of the day.

"So I had heard," he replied, "and I think none the more of you for it."

I have known Fedosiev a long time and he makes free to tell me what he feels. Not that he is rude or impolite. On the contrary, he is both in heart and manners a gentleman. Likewise a scholar. So alert, so wide in knowledge, so facile in expression. One would wonder at the miracle of the peasant Fedosiev, had not Tolstoy told us of such men in the "dark villages." "We should go to them and sit at their feet," he said, "they can be our teachers and prophets."

To his fellow-villagers, of course, Fedosiev seems anything but a prophet. He is just a

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peasant who goes away in the winter to work as a chimney-builder and brings back a lot of strange notions, extremely irritating to the older peasants. Insistently he points out the shame of Russia producing, per *dessyatine*, less than one third as much as Belgium or England. And he tells the peasants it is their shame, and calls them to cast off the old "grandfather ways." But with all his reformistic zeal, Fedosiev has much of the tolerance of the philosopher. I was surprised, then, to hear him in such dogmatic disapproval of the procession.

"But it was beautiful," I insisted. "It was like some ancient pageant of nature, a happy festival of the fields."

"For you, maybe," responded Fedosiev. "But not for the *mujiks*. They didn't take a day off in midsummer for a festival, or walk fifteen versts just to give themselves a good time. They did it for a definite purpose; to destroy the insects. It was an agricultural expedition. And, as such, it was sheer waste of energy. That isn't the way you raise wheat in

IN THE VILLAGE OF SALVATION

America. You don't frighten insects away from the crops with ikons, but spray them with chemicals. You don't sprinkle the fields with a bucket of water, you run great irrigation ditches into them. You don't wave banners above the fields, you put fertilizers into them."

"But as a procession, as a carnival, it was picturesque," I provocatively insisted.

"Sorry you weren't around to help celebrate Frola and Lavra day," rejoined Fedosiev, a little ironical. "The peasants decorate the horses with ribbons and flowers and lead them past the priest to be sprinkled with holy water. In an epidemic they do the same—or used to. And it is all very picturesque. But when an epidemic kills off half the horses in the village, it isn't so picturesque. That isn't the way you treat a sick horse in America, is it? You don't stick a candle up before the ikons of Frola and Lavra. You take them to a veterinary, don't you?"

"You talk just like the Communists," I said, knowing that Fedosiev as a Left Socialist

Revolutionist had his own particular grievances against them.

"But here the Communists are right," he answered. "To make room for the new, a lot of the old must be blasted out. And the Russian *mujik* clings to his old ideas, his old customs, his old three-field system, his old way of putting things into the hands of the saints instead of taking things into his own hands. His *neechevo* (it doesn't matter) is just his old Asiatic fatalism. His orthodox religion is just his old heathenism dressed up in the Christian names. His so-called piety is just his old superstition and medievalism. Our villagers are a thousand years behind the times; look at the tree! That shows how deep we are in the Middle Ages."

He was pointing to one of the black-feathered trees, so characteristic of the village greens in this province of Vladimir. They are black feathered with multitudes of crows and ravens crowding their branches. They are so thick that one could not throw a stone without

hitting a half-score of them. But that wouldn't even occur to a Russian. He would as soon think of stoning the village sheep as stoning the village ravens. The black flocks flying above the houses are as immune from harm as the white flocks nibbling the grass in the meadows. Freely the black-winged battalions maneuver through the air; now soaring down into a tree, and in a moment its glistening green becomes black; now lighting upon the church, turning the golden cupolas to soot. But these birds serve not only as an ornament of the trees and temples. They belong to the winged battalions with which Saint Triphon threatened the insects.

"True," says Fedosiev, "they destroy many of the pests, but still more they destroy the sprouting wheat and rye. They serve the *mujik* in the same primitive way as do our wooden plows and carts and *izbas*."

In Fedosiev's program the crows and ravens are likewise doomed to extinction. No longer will they wheel above the house-tops of the

villages, flinging swift dark shadows on the ground. No longer, like the ancient Romans, will the inhabitants mark their comings and goings as signals and portents of the changing seasons. With the old ideas and old customs disappear much of the old beauty and charm and mystery.

"So much the less of poetry and romance in life," I assert.

"So much the more of wheat and sanitation, of schools and science," says Fedosiev.

V

COMRADE HARVEST



V

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I

"How are things in Russia?" I called out of the car window to the Red Army patrol at the Riga frontier. For answer he pulled out of his pockets two loaves and holding them aloft, waved them laughing. Bread, to him, was the symbol of prosperity.

With all workers and peasants I soon found it was the same. It was likewise the measure of value. Invariably into all our conversations would be injected the questions:

"How much is it a pound in America?"

"How many *poods* for an *arsheen* of cloth?" By bread they sought to get at the real conditions in America.

To the young giant striking north through the Archangel forest with three fifteen-pound loaves strapped to his back, bread was a measure of time. Usually, he explained, he told time by the sun.

"But there is no sun. There's been none for a week," I said.

"Then I tell it by the black bread in my belly. When I eat one pound, I am hungry in three hours. Two pounds, and in four or five hours the worm demands to be fed." He was a sort of human time-glass, with bread, instead of sand, running through him.

Most illuminating of all, the attitude of the rain-drenched man in Samara taking refuge from a June storm in my doorway. To my condolences over his wetting he replied:

"*Neechevo! Neechevo!* (Never mind!) This isn't rain. It is gold coming down from the sky. It means bread for us all."

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Where else in the world would a man with dripping clothes and chattering teeth dwell upon the social implications of the rain? Where else would he do anything, but curse it?

In such contacts I got an insight into the significance of bread in Russian life. It grew with my growing knowledge of the language. "Bread plowing" is the Russian word for agriculture. "Bread-bearing," the word for fertility. "Bread-bearer," another term for peasant. "Bread and salt," (*kheeb-sol*) means hospitality. Always I was finding new words for bread, the cereals from which it was made, the processes of its making. Sometimes the words came easily out of my dictionary. Sometimes painfully, as once on the lower deck of a Volga steamer.

While munching away at a chunk of bread, I was startled by a sudden cry of "Papa! Papa!" I looked up to see a baby stretching out his arms to me. By a stony indifferent countenance I sought to disavow my paternity before the public, and went on doggedly eating

my bread. But the wretched child kept insistently repeating "Papa!"

With deep hatred I glared at the brat, and in turn felt the eyes of the passengers critically focusing on me. It went on, to my increasing discomfort, until suddenly the child wriggled out of his mother's arms, began crawling towards me. Cold sweat on my brow. The bread fell from my hands to the floor. The child grabbed it, and, holding it out to its mother, gurgled "Papa!"

Slava Bogoo! It was not me, but the bread that was *papa*, the curious name that the children give it all over Russia. The hostile glances of the public were not directed against me as a father disowning his offspring, but as a stingy man refusing bread to a hungry baby.

The Russian not only lavishes on bread every term of affection, he waxes lyrical over it.

Only the golden wheat fields know
The secret of their love.
Stand up erect bright ears
And hide the sweethearts true.

Thus goes on the favorite song of the village youth, *The Peddler* of Nekrasov. Bread appears in hundreds of songs and proverbs and in legends like this: "Fair and rosy did our Buckwheat grow. They invited her to visit Tsargrad. Off she set with Honorable Oats and Golden Barley. Princes and Boyars met her at the high stone gates. They set her on the oaken table to feast. As a guest has our Buckwheat come to us."

Not only in legends but in life bread receives homage as a personage. At the peasant's board it occupies the place of honor. Never must it be laid upon its side or top, always it must be placed upright. Thus, "Bread turns the table into an altar." The piece that falls upon the floor is picked up by a peasant who may even kiss it reverently. The children are warned that every crumb swept from the table means one less golden apple for them to pick in Paradise. Even the drops of *kuas* must not be tossed out of a glass, for it is made of bread. The loaf must be always cut to the right.

Some peasants will only break bread,—to cut it with a knife would be disrespect.

Not only the peasants pay honor to bread, but with bread they pay honors to others. It is in the hands of the relative welcoming the soldier home from the front. It rides at the head of the wedding procession. It is set on the table in front of the house as a tribute to the dead. With gifts of bread and salt the boyars greeted the tsars, and to-day, in the back villages, Kalinin is met by *mujiks* bringing him trenchers with these ancient symbols of hospitality.

The American says, "Give me the luxuries of life, and I can dispense with the necessities." When he prays, "Give us this day our daily bread," he means meat, eggs, cake and ice-cream. Not the Russian. He means literally bread.

"Six days without bread. Six days I starved!" exclaimed the skipper of a water-melon boat, ending his tale about the big storm that stranded him on a sand bar in the Volga.

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"But you had some four thousand water-melons on board!" I pointed out.

"Yes," he added, "and we had fish and eggs. But no bread!" So he was starving.

If this seems far fetched, spread your table with the most ravishing dishes, but no bread. Then watch the eyes of your peasant guest constantly hunting about for bread. "Without bread," says the Russian proverb, "the palace is a prison. With bread, it is Paradise under a pine tree."

Bread is the only thing he cannot do without. In famine years a ten *pood* cow he will trade for two *poods* of flour.

II

Bread is the life of the Russian peasant. It is likewise the life of the Russian state. Hard bent are her statesmen in building the industries. But for decades yet her riches will come not from her iron and textile factories, but from her bread factories; not from the gold fields of Siberia, but from the vast grain fields,

spreading a cloth of gold over the Russian land. In them reposes the might and power of the state. On them hangs the weal and woe of the nation.

"May the stalks be like reeds, the grain like peas and from every grain sown may we gather a thousand!" This prayer of the heathen Chuvash around the *kasha* kettle in the fields of Yeromkhin is the prayer of all Russians at the time of sowing. From the day the seed is put in the ground until the crops are gathered in, a close and anxious watch is kept upon it. Its general condition from infancy to maturity is telegraphed to Moscow from all parts of the country. Its symptoms are carefully diagnosed by specialists, like a board of consulting physicians, recording pulse, temperature and blood-pressure. Its state of health is daily bulletined by the newspapers, with space and captions worthy of the first citizen of the republic.

These bulletins begin in the fall with the sowing of the winter cereals:

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Kharkov, October 10. Abundant warm rains are falling throughout the Ukraine, East of the Don and along the Black Sea Littoral.—Winter wheat stands at 5 balls.

Irkutsk, October 15. Continuous dry weather through Siberia had been extremely unfavorable and winter rye is rated as low as 2 balls.

Tambov, November 1. Heavy snow falling over the Central Districts had laid a protecting cover on the fields. All crops went under the snow at 3 balls.

In the five-ball system, the peculiar standard which Russians use in various fields, five means excellent, three average, one poor, etc. It is on this marking that the cereals are rated in the bulletins, even in their infancy and first early growth, until they disappear under the snow. But even then they do not disappear from the newspapers. Now there are bulletins upon the snow blanket and the cereals sleeping under it.

Odessa, November 10. Strong sun has

melted away the snow, leaving the fields exposed to freezing winds.

Smolensk, March 15. An early thaw followed by bitter cold has spread an ice film over the ground. Winter wheat which went under the snow at 3 balls is coming out at two.

As spring moves on into an early summer, the bulletins come thicker and faster, taking ever more space in the papers. The public watches the crop scores with the same keen interest that it watches the baseball scores on the boards in front of the big newspapers in America. Always there is a series of disasters to record. August frosts in Archangel, blighting the oats. Cloud bursts in the Kuban laying low the wheat, preventing its flowering. Floods on the Kama. Hail the size of duck's eggs in Vladimir. Ground fleas and pea-elephant in Yaroslavl. Gophers and marmots in South Siberia.

All quite normal. It spells loss but not disaster. Only when some great scourge looms up does the public become tense and excited.

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Then the bulletins take on the language of war. Bread, backed by all the resources of the Republic, fighting against the destroying forces. Thus in 1926 the battle is recorded:

THE GRASSHOPPER FRONT

Rostov-on-the-Don, July 15. The general situation in all sections is worse. Two new grasshopper armies are reported flying out of the Kalmik steppes. Favoring west winds expediting their advance. In the Terek the spring crops were decimated by the first army which is moving up on the right bank of the Volga.

Stavropol is declared in a state of siege. *Troikas* with extraordinary powers have been organized and all civil and military forces mobilized. Scouting aeroplanes and cavalry patrols are reporting new movements of the enemy. Special trains with the chemical command and anti-grasshopper "artillery" rushed to the Don section have been delayed by insect masses clogging the rails. Telegrams marked "Grasshopper" take precedence over all others. All efforts are con-

centrated on reaping the crops of the poor peasants.

Timaki, July 18. The orchards and gardens of the Kurort were saved by the heroic efforts of the workers in the Rest Houses and Sanatoriums. In readiness for the invaders, the people of Kabardoo were armed with pots, pans, scythes, stove screens. At the first sighting of the enemy in the sky, such a hellish noise was made by these instruments and the jangling church bells that they gave up their attempted landing and passed on.

The first army, bivouacking at night in the Volga meadows, attempted in the morning to cross the river, but was thrown back by great smoke curtains of burning straw and brush. In some places the fires were smothered by locust masses falling into them. The aeroplanes are hindered, in gas and arsenic spraying of cocoon breeding places, by the presence of people and cattle in the fields. Trenches have been dug on the borders of Stalingrad. The Kalmik Ispolkom has made heroic efforts to stop the flight of new hordes from the steppes. Under the pressure of unfavorable winds three armies

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are retreating to Dagestan. In the Kara-Kassak Oases the enemy has been liquidated.

At last the invaders are expelled. But behind them is a devastated area as big as Belgium. This same year there is drought in the Tartar Republic. Unprecedented hail lays an ice-coating a foot deep over tens of thousands of *dessyatines*. The Volga flood smothers two hundred thousand *dessyatines*.

Even so, 1926 is a banner year and the papers break out in extravagant cartoons of Comrade Harvest and Comrade Peasant dancing a roundelay of joy together. There is not enough twine and hemp to bind and bag the grain, not enough cars and elevators to carry and store it. So vast is Soviet Union it can well stand the shocks that would wreck a small country.

III

It is only when disaster is piled upon disaster that the catastrophe becomes nation-wide, and famine stalks over the land. This has

occurred in the history of Russia at not infrequent intervals and each time has left its impression on the oral tradition.

Every epoch in which the country has been stirred to its depths—the troubled times of Boris Godoonov, Stenka Razin, Peter the Great, Pugatchev—has brought forth a host of curious tales and legends. The hunger years have particularly incited the folk-imagination to the creation of these weirdest legends in the weirdest, most fantastic forms. The famine of 1912 produced the black cow, the bull and deer speaking with human voice. Still more prolific was the last and most terrible famine of 1921-22. One widespread tale, a prediction of the coming horrors, crops up in various places and guises. Here is a Siberian version of it:

In the spring of this year a *mujik* was driving his empty wagon to Tuloon. On the way he caught up with an old *baba* who cried out from the roadside:

“Give me a lift, little uncle!”

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"Don't you see," replied the *mujik*, "the horse is tired. Twenty versts we've gone already and it's heavy going."

"Anyhow," repeated the *baba*, "give me a lift. I'm light as a feather." So insistently did she beg that at last the *mujik* told her to climb on. They drove ahead, but in a short time the horse was panting, all covered with foam.

"Eh!" exclaimed the *mujik*, "you said you didn't weigh anything, but you're as heavy as a cow. The horse can hardly drag us."

"*Neechevo*," said the *baba*. "Just look over your left shoulder." The *mujik* looked and turned white with horror. All around lay droves of cattle, dead and dying.

"Now," said the *baba*, "take a look over your right shoulder." The *mujik* looked and saw great stacks of corn and wheat, but all drooping and without ears.

"And now glance upward," said the *baba*. So he did and there was a long black procession of people with coffins and lighted candles.

"Here I get off," said the *baba*. "Have a care. I warn you to say nothing to any one or I shall trample you to death." The *mujik* turned around and saw beneath the skirts of the *baba* not a woman's feet, but the hoofs of a cow. Thus, according to popular legend, was prophesied the widespread famine of 1921-22.

Hardest hit of all were the bread-bearing provinces of Saratov and Samara. Here all depends upon the caprices of the sky. Here is special significance to the peasant proverb, "It is not the earth that gives the harvest, but the sky." This year it flings down abundant rains, and the crops spring luxuriant from the rich black loam. Next year only sunshine, and the crops shrivel and vanish before the eyes. One may read the story of these dread dry years in the Old Chronicles (*Letopis*) preserved in the parish churches. Thus from Ivanovka on the Volga:

1880.—Blue skies all summer, the harvest was from two to six *poods* a *dessyatine*. Complaints about hunger more and more in-

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crease. Our answer to all those asking for the sake of Christ: "We ourselves are beggars."

1890.—A cloudless spring. The hunger-wounded, after four non-harvest years took heart, but from May 22, seventy days, not a drop of rain. Again despair.

"Blue sky. Cloudless blue sky." These are the fair words that always preface the story of crop disaster in the Volga Basin. So it was in the horror year of 1921. The blue skies of May and June turn brazen in July. Ninety rainless days. The crops burn to the roots. The cattle turn into bone-racks. The camel humps—reserve food—shrink to flapping bunches of skin. The granaries stand empty-bellied like the people. The last grain is blown from the cracks. The last bread, mixed with grass, sawdust, and horse-dung, is eaten. Despair seizes the villages. They sell their houses and horses for ten *poods*, five *poods*, even a few pounds of flour. Panic drives them into flight to Moscow, Siberia, the Ukraine. On top of

hunger, plague and typhus. No lights in the town. No wheeling flocks of pigeons. The stricken fall dead in the streets. Frozen corpses are corded in front of the hospital. The dead wagons cart them away to trenches.

One of those death wagons now brings me word to Kvalinsk from the island, and I ask the driver to tell me about the famine.

"There is nothing to tell," he replies. "We ate our bread. When that was gone, we ate rats, cats, grass and weeds. When they were gone, we ate each other—then we died."

There, in brief, is the story of 1921. The living that one meets are survivors of a holocaust. All of them have a soul-shriving story of that hunger hell through which they passed—all these peasants thronging the bazaar to-day, shouting, trading, singing, scolding, offering their products to the passerby.

"Dear little doves! Sweet little swans! Stop and look!" cries a woman in a red *sarafan* and yellow *platok*, standing by a cow-drawn cart piled with potatoes. An old man fixes an

appraising eye upon them and the little woman breaks out again more eloquently.

"Don't call them potatoes, little uncle. They're just sugar—only a ruble a sack."

"Come, come! Have you no God?" retorts the old man. "Fifty kopecks would be a robbery."

"What? Would I sin! That's for the young ones who have forgotten their Lord God, not for us, old ones, who smell of our coffins."

"Sixty kopecks!" says the old man crossing himself. "And God forgive you for asking a ruble for such a big food."

"A sin on my soul for stealing from my children!" declares the little woman. "But take them as a gift at eighty kopecks."

The old man carries them off at seventy kopecks—all of them. The money knotted in her handkerchief, the little woman munches a chunk of black bread, her eyes glistening eagerness.

"Tell me about the famine year, little aunt," say I.

"My white hairs will tell you," she answers, pushing back her yellow *platok* displaying a whitened head. "Before the famine they were brown as our wheat land.

"We were not rich, for the grain levy stripped us. But we had a camel and in 1920 we planted four *dessyatines* with bread.

"In November my *mujik*, coming back from the Volga, said there was a bad omen for next year's harvest—the ice had frozen smooth as a mirror. That's the sign the men believe in. But we women take our signs from the cattle after the winter when they are driven to pasture. That spring the pope said the prayers and sprinkled them, the cow-herd raised his whip. We shivered when we saw a red cow pushing ahead—if she went first it meant a fire. A white cow horned past her and we crossed ourselves for joy—for a white cow foretells a harvest. Then suddenly the red and white cows locked horns and as the cow-herd's whip cracked, three black cows plunged ahead, taking the lead as the herd broke for pasture.

" 'Virgin of Kazan! Save us from hunger!' I prayed. The Communists laugh at this. But what do they know, the Without Godders?

"Well, bread came up all green in April, then it stood still. It never grew high enough for a mouse to hide in. Six Sundays the rain prayers were said in the church. Six times we carried ikons round the fields. But no rain. The sins of the people were too great. Once Ilya's thunder chariot rumbled across the sky, but there was not rain enough to wet a calf.

"Thirty *poods* of seed we put in the earth—only six were born to be reaped. Ten *poods* we got from our cow and clothes that we sold. It wasn't so bad in the fall. For there were gophers that Shura caught in the meadows and there were crows. Misha got them by climbing trees at night, snatching them from their roost. Then there was a leg from the Tartar's horse that died; the hide we boiled in the *stchee* with nettles, the bones we ground into flour. We put everything into the bread—acorns and willow bark. At first the children cried, because

it was bitter. Then they cried, because there was so little of it.

"Then my *mujik* said, 'Bread won't come to the belly, the belly must go after bread.' So he and Shura went away with the camel that looked like a ghost. The peasants of Penza had never seen a camel. The Anti-Christ, they called it. With their ikons they came out and knelt before the camel, praying: 'O Little Mother of Smolensk! Carry it away from us! Let it go back to the evil on the Volga, only take it away from us!'

"But the poor camel died. My *mujik* died. Only Shura came back, bringing a sack of flour. If the children had had their way, they would have eaten the flour raw, eaten it in a day. When I went out I had to tie them up with a chain. Soon this bread was gone, but it was March and there were birds and swamp roots and green bark. 'We can eat anything, even oak-leaves like the camel!' Shura would say, trying to make the little ones laugh.

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"They died before the relief kitchen opened, and now only Shura and I are left."

"And the new cow," I reminded her.

"Yes, and there's two hundred *poods* of potatoes this fall, and one hundred *poods* of wheat. God has forgiven our sins."

I turn into the *izvoschik* row and listen to the story of Inazarov, the Tartar.

"One morning, Tagir, my son, drove down by the mosque to sell a load of birch leaves. He didn't come back by night. I went up and down the bazaar a hundred times, there was no trace of him. Next day a peasant said he saw him driving off towards the big white church.

"I got the militia, and following tracks of Tagir's *lapti* in the snow, we came to the house of a man from the Eternal Khutor. We burst open the gate. The man swore he had never seen my son. But we found birch leaves in the courtyard. Then my horse's bridle. Then fresh horse meat salted away in barrels. Finally, we pried up the kitchen floor, and

there under the boards, was Tagir and another boy, their heads hammered in. 'Allah! Punish him!' I cried. Before the militia could stop me I nearly brained the *Shaitan* (devil), with a *duga*. They bound his hands and with a rope around his neck led him to the jail while we rushed on him and beat his back with knouts. Three days later he died, but the judge let me go. 'Any man would have done the same,' he said."

A few months later not only the horse, but the boys would have been salted away in barrels. To such desperation were people driven by starvation—to corpse-eating and cannibalism. Out of bushes human wolves sprang on the defenseless and killed them. Eight corpses were stolen at night from the morgue that Tsibushkin, the Mordvinian, was guarding. Fingers and ears were found in the meat jelly sold in the bazaar. The meat-pies at the wharf had unusual sweetness—human flesh. A taste for it developed. Brothers devoured sisters. Parents their children. Mothers the

baby at their breast. Secret instructions came out of Moscow to be lenient with the flesh eaters. In the jail they were put in separate cells to keep them from tearing each other to pieces.

The triumph of Hunger over Man! Mad-dened by starvation, he sinks below the level of the beast.

But the record is not all grisly and ghastly. If the famine year showed the depths to which human spirit may fall, it showed likewise the heights to which it can rise. The triumph of Man over Hunger. Men starving themselves to death to save others from starving. Not only dying for family and children, but for society.

Walking over the hill with Obrosikhin, the Red Commander, I drew from him the story of his Bolshevik father, peasant of Brikovka village: "Night and day he worked on famine relief. When I came back from the North with flour I didn't know him. He filled the doorway, looking like a giant swelled up by

hunger. Half of his grain he had given to the poor. His share of the bread I brought, he pretended to eat, but he gave that away too. I called him a fool; but he laughed. And he died laughing."

He did not die in vain. In his son, the Red Commander, and in his daughter—devoted servants of Communism—the Bolshevik father lives on.

In the same spirit was the story of the gray-*shubaed*, deep-eyed man crouched up on the wharf awaiting the night steamer.

"I was still in the cavalry at Kazan when news of the famine came. With eighty rubles collected by my comrades, I bought two bags of flour and hurried on to Buzuluk. Everything, everybody had a shrunken starving look. I didn't know my own home, no red geraniums in the windows, no straw on the roof. A strange, gaunt woman answered my knock.

" 'Come and sit down,' she said. But a sudden fear came over me, and I could not. I asked for my mother.

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“ ‘Died on the way to Kazan for flour,’ she replied.

“ ‘My father?’ I questioned.

“ ‘Died of typhus.’

“ ‘My four brothers?’ I named them each in turn. Three were dead from hunger. The youngest in the hospital. I covered my face with my hands and said, ‘I will sit down while you tell me again, that I may believe what you say is true.’

“I got up and went up to find my brother. I found him dead. His head was swollen like a tub. In his mouth was still the grass he had been chewing. I ran out on the street, ran into an old woman, knocking her down. One bag of flour was still in my arms, I threw it at her and ran on and on into the face of a storm. The snow was blinding me, a fire within was burning me and I fell.

“I woke up in a typhus barrack. From a skeleton on the next cot I learned how my eldest brother had died. He was a Communist in charge of an American Relief Kitchen. The

food was rationed out for children only. Those were his orders, and that was the way he carried them out. He died of starvation. A week later came the order to ration the staff-workers as well—but it came a week too late!"

"You too are a Communist?" I asked.

"Yes, the world needs happiness."

"And your job now?"

"I'm an agronomist. The world needs bread."

IV

"The world needs bread!"

Well, the world has bread. The Volga Basin is full of it. Nature has relented. Bread once more in the bread basket of the world. These fields burned bare in the famine of 1921, and the half-famine of 1924, are staggering with the biggest harvest in decades.

Bread! Bread! Bread!

It pours down from the hills in long files of creaking wagons, and in camel caravans out of the steppe under the harvest moon. It pours

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into cavernous maws of the big elevators along the river front, into the roaring mills grinding away night and day. It pours life into the veins of the Russian state, loosing the tides of trade and commerce. It puts shining new shoes and dresses upon the girls. It sets forges glowing and anvils ringing in the blacksmith shops. It calls the pigeons back from the dead and sets them in blue flocks wheeling above the bazaar. It brings up deep welling songs from the new recruits rolling in from the villages. It puts laughter and hope into the masses of peasants crowding into the autumn fair.

This year it is a Harvest Festival. A Carnival of Bread. For it the bakers have turned out tens of thousands of loaves. They are stacked up all over the place.

Bread in bags! waiting to be carried on steamers.

Bread in cords! ready to be loaded into wagons for the workers on the new irrigation dam across the Volga.

Bread on legs! long files of it, marching into

the Tartar Children's Home. That's the way it seems, so enormous are the loaves borne on the heads of the little laughing Tartar boys. The beggars' sacks are crammed with bread, and the bazaar dog, that goes from stall to stall standing on his hind legs a-begging, has grown so fat, he wobbles. An Epicurean now, he wrinkles his nose at the black bread—white bread, or none at all.

As for the peasants, there is no holding them in. The harvest has gone to their heads, and with the help of vodka, all peasant caution and concealment are thrown to the winds. To-day no lamentations about taxes, high prices on city products, low prices on village products. To-day the peasants are boasting.

"I tell you, Victor Mikhilovitch, one hundred and fifty *poods* from every *dessyatine*."

"Believe me or not, Ivan Petrovitch, I got two hundred. I don't know where to store it."

This is solemn truth. The teacher Matvey of Yershovka tells me, if there were no debts and taxes to pay, his wheat would suffice for

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twenty years; from this one harvest the village could eat white bread for seven years.

In the samovar tent by the grain *kiosk* the peasants, packed three deep around the tables, are in deliriums of delight.

"Hey, there, American!" they cry, beckoning me with vodka bottles. "Come in and drink a toast to the harvest and Little Mother Earth."

"Two more years like this and we can dam up the Volga with it, we'll build a wheat mountain to the moon," says Red Beard Borodin of Popovka.

"*Yeh Bogoo!* We'll flood up Europe with it," exclaims another. "American wheat has had its way too long in the streets of Europe. Now Volga wheat is coming on and boost him off the sidewalk. Like this!" He made a long lunging kick. I made as if to write this down in my note-book.

"No! No!" interrupted Peter Ivanovich. "American Wheat was good to us in the famine year. He saved our lives. Put it down this

way: When American Wheat meets Volga Wheat in Europe, he will take his cap off and say, 'Oh, good morning, Volga Wheat! So you are here also. My high respects to you!' Like this!" He made a low sweeping bow.

Laughter. Another samovar. More vodka. The clapping of hands marking the clinching of bargains in the cattle market. Songs from the *mogarich* drinkers out of the tavern windows. Clatter of hammers and boards on new buildings going up. Crowds of buyers, ten rows deep, at the all-coöperative counters. The rumble of tractors taking the hill back of the town.

And this is Kvalinsk, the *volost* hardest hit by the famine on all the right bank of the Volga; and across the river is Pugachev, in all Russia no district so famine-scourged.

Traveling along the highroads, one still finds marks of that famine: Here the white trunk of willow peeled of its bark for food. There a nailed-up house whose owner never returned from his long pilgrimage after bread.

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A coughing *mujik* with the city disease—tuberculosis—off to the peasant palace in Livadia. Deepest of all the famine mark on the budget—a third of all *volost* expenditures going to the five orphan-houses.

But all these scars are healing. Healing fast. Deep and fertile is the black Volga soil. Deep and mighty the virility of the Russian peasant. Tremendous the recuperative forces of the Soviet lands.

VI

THE BOLSHEVIST BOY SCOUTS



VI

THE BOLSHEVIST BOY SCOUTS

It was a gala day when I visited the Dikanka school. There was an exhibition of embroidery—cross-stitch towels by the boys, dresses by the girls. There was chorus singing of “Beyond the Stone Mountains,” “In the Meadows by the Birch Trees.” Then a chant of the Revolution with the words: “Holy army of labor.”

“Stop!” cried Natalie Alexandrovna. “In-

stead of 'holy' it should be 'battling.'” And so they sang it. The children liked best the song that closed each verse with a shout of *Slava! Slava! Glory! Glory!* Followed the “Hopak” and “Snowstorm,” danced to the thrumming of the balalaikas. Then out in the yard for a game of cat-and-mouse. The new *Volost* President and I took our turns, racing in and out of the wide circle, until at last the big American mouse fell into the paws of the little Ukrainian cat, to the shrieking joy of the children, and we were friends for life.

Next day I was merrily shaking hands with all my friends, until in one hand I met a sharp rebuff. It shot straight above the boy's head, and was rigidly held there, as he said: “With Young Leninists hand-shaking is abolished. It wastes time; it spreads disease.”

Thus I met Panas, my first Young Leninist, or Pioneer, and next night was guided by him to their quarters in an old house beyond the church. To our knock on the door came a challenge:

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"Who goes there? Friend of the workers and peasants—or enemy?"

"Friends! Let us enter!"

There was a scuffle of feet, voices mumbling, "I've lost the key!" "Oh, you ninny!" Then the door opened into a room dimly lit by a smoking lamp and a candle. On the walls were immense portraits of Lenin and the poet Schevchenko and, in big Ukrainian letters, the "Laws of the Pioneers."

A pioneer is true to the business of the working class, and to the biddings of Ilyich.

A Pioneer is younger brother to the *Komsomols* and Communists.

A Pioneer does not smoke, drink or swear.

A Pioneer is kind to useful animals—against grasshoppers, mice and prairie dogs he wages a merciless fight.

A Pioneer studies hard. He who does not love books is no Pioneer at all.

A Pioneer sits, stands and walks not bending over. Otherwise he will look like a bent, broken old man, and his heart will not work rightly.

A Pioneer washes himself carefully, not forgetting his neck and ears. Remembering the teeth are friends of the stomach, he cleans them daily.

There were five more similar injunctions. They are not the standard Pioneer Laws, but a special version made by Ladyr, the leader, or *Vojak* as he is called. He was a stocky, swarthy, benign lad of sixteen, lost in an enormous overcoat inherited from a soldier and altered only by cutting off the sleeves at the elbows. His father was killed by the Whites, and he lived with his mother in a house which I might find by "going down the East Lane till you see a lopsided hut with a lopsided goat inside a lopsided fence—that's where we live!" There were no marks of poverty on his wit or imagination.

He led us to a seat behind a table, facing about sixty children, and the interrupted debate on washing the floors for the October holidays was resumed. In the boys' opinion that had "always been a woman's job."

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"Yes," says *Vojak* Ladyr. "But it will not always be. The boys must not dodge the hard and dirty jobs. If they do they are not Pioneers."

Ten-year-old Luzenko takes up the cudgel for the girls. He holds that Pioneers should not be divided into boys and girls, but into the big and the little. The former should wash the floors, the latter gather leaves and weave garlands. So it was voted, and the club took up cases of discipline.

"Marfa Lisovik, you have been absent twice. What for?"

She hesitates, and finally blurts out: "I was afraid of the dark."

"Huh!" snorts Ladyr. "In foreign lands they put Pioneers in prisons and torture them, and our Pioneer is afraid of the dark!"

Marfa protests that prison has no terrors for her, but each night when she was about to set out for the club, *babushka* told her tales of Baba Yaga, so terrible that when she opened the door it put a shiver in her back. Cunning

old *babushka*! Less resourceful, it seems, were other *babas* in keeping their children away from the club. The usual device was to take them to church. Such was the excuse given by two Pioneers. This provokes the *Vojak* to a lengthy discourse on religion. I learn that as long as children are economically dependent on parents, they must obey. If commanded to go to church, the Pioneer must go, but he should strive not to pray or cross himself, and, if possible, not light a candle before an ikon. In the same spirit, at weddings or christenings, if a Pioneer is offered a glass of *samogon* by his father, he may take it, but must strive not to drink it, but to pour it on the floor or out of the window.

It is evident that to *Vojak* Ladyr parents are thorns in the flesh. But he accepts them philosophically. None of the usual flippancy of youth in his treatment of them. Carefully he explains to the Pioneers how the elder generation have grown up in religion and drink and private property; that they are not to be

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blamed for their bad ideas, habits and prejudices, but to be treated with kindly tact. Humor them, don't antagonize them.

Not in vain his teachings, the fruit of it most apparent in my first Pioneer, Panas. To my question why hand-shaking was abolished, he explains that two hundred thousand Russians had died of typhus, twenty thousand of whom must have gotten the germs by shaking hands.

I point out that, while in the papers there was a campaign against hand-shaking, and in Soviet offices there are signs against it, it goes on just the same, even amongst Communists and *Komsomols*.

"Yes," he replies. "But one must be patient with the elder generation. They won't change very much. They can't be cured. It is for Young Leninists to show the way." Critical but tolerant.

Follows now the administration of the oath to a new Pioneer. The *Vojak* has none of the paraphernalia of the city Pioneers—no whistle or drums, or red kerchiefs—only the salute, the

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five fingers of the right hand close clasped together, raised above the head. The fingers are the five continents where there are oppressed, for whose freedom fights the Pioneer. Held above the head to show that their interests are higher than all.

The candidate now repeats the oath: "I give my promise and strengthen it with my solemn word that I will be true to the toilers, will toil hard myself, follow the commandments of Ilyich, the laws and customs of the Pioneers."

"You are now a Pioneer in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. In the fight for the toilers be ready!" declares the *Vojak* impressively.

"Always ready!" replies the boy. Hard for a bashful boy to be so long the focus of all eyes. In the happy relief from the strain he shoves his hands into his pockets.

"He violates Law Eight!" pipes up a boy. The *Vojak* confirms the young constitutionalist, quoting: "A Pioneer putting his hands into his pockets is not *always ready*."

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Now the Political Lottery. Orator Luzenko and another favorite are elected judges, and take their places on the bench beside the *Vojak*. Five pencil stubs are produced, and go scribbling on paper held on walls, knees and neighbors' backs. The slips are rolled, put into a hat and shaken up. Each Pioneer in turn draws one out.

"Well, let's see what question you've got?" says the *Vojak* to the boy in the front row, and taking the slip he reads:

"What did the October Revolution give the people?"

"Land, factories and freedom," comes the glib response.

"What is Communism?"

"A society where there will be no war, no rich and poor, but all free toilers," just as glibly.

"What class does a Pioneer never help?"

"Those who exploit the toil of others—rich, bandits and *nepmen*."

These are easy questions, studied in the club

over and over again. Nearly every Pioneer knows the answers to them by heart.

"Who was Comrade Lib—nit?" mumbles a girl reading her own slip.

"Liebknecht," corrects Ladyr, "who was he?"

"I don't know," falters the girl.

"Judges, judges! Write her down!" cry several voices with satisfaction, and the judges solemnly reply, "She is written!" Another gets written down because he confuses Bakunin and Bucharin. The questions: "Whom should one obey—father or mother?" "Which is better—an ox or a horse?" are ruled out as non-political. Other questions: "Where was Schevchenko born?" "Who was Kerensky?" And finally, taking a slip from a little girl, the *Vojak* reads, "Who is Ladyr?"

Great joy, the audience breaking into wild peals of childish laughter, when the little girl stammers:

"Why, it's you!"

More joy when Judge Magas, himself un-

able to tell when Lenin was born, has to write himself down. Merriest of all when the *Vojak* attempts to tell "What is specialization?" One way, then another, he wrestles with it, and finally gives it up, saying it is in his head all right, but he can't explain it. The merciless judges write him down.

At last the questions are finished. The names of the "written down" are read and the offenders are summoned before the High Court of the Political Lottery. "Pioneer Kalnik!" says Judge Panas sternly. "You didn't know the answer, you must therefore recite a verse."

"No, no!" cry several voices. "Make him sing!"

"Pioneers!" interrupts Ladyr. "You chose the judges. Let them determine the punishments."

The culprit recites a verse from Schevchenko.

"Pioneer Drooshko, a riddle! What is it that has no eyes, but shows the way to others—has no brains, but knows how to count?"

"It is the sign-post marking the versts."

"Next riddle! What has forty coats—none of them ever buttoned?"

"A cabbage!"

Another defaulter dances the "Hopak." Then the judges make up a chorus of several of the "written down." Among their songs is a ditty of the New Year masqueraders, full of dire threats to houses which do not give them gifts.

If you do not give me eggs,
I will break your chickens' legs!

The *Vojak* protests that these words violate Law Four. Pioneers should be kind to animals and not break their legs. Moreover the chickens might belong to a poor peasant, and even if they belonged to a *kulak*, Pioneers must never proceed by acts of individual violence.

On the whole, the *Vojak* is well satisfied with the Political Lottery. Another night it goes wrong, and he orders a trial. For judges, five children are chosen. The defender is young

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orator Luzenko. Ladyr himself is prosecutor. He begins:

“We need discipline, Comrade Pioneers! Some members act as if they were not in a club, but a bazaar, and go chattering like *babas* at a village well. Then there are irrelevant questions. For instance, ‘Who were the gladiators?’ Probably the author of this has just read a book about them and wants to make boast of it. Before such a question is given it should be studied. The worst social criminals are the prompters. They often prompt the wrong answers. I ask the judges to rule that every prompter and every one prompted be excluded from the club for two nights. That their names be written down on the blackboard and, for three offenses, declared members of the Counter-Revolution and excluded altogether.”

The defender makes no attempt to ward off the prosecutor's attack on Pioneers' discipline and the character of questions. He declares

that "His accusations against promptings are unfundamental. Let him say who were prompters and who were prompted. Besides, if a Pioneer knows the answer, it is hard not to whisper it, and the Pioneer who doesn't know the answer will know if he is prompted a little. The demands of the prosecutor are too hard, and I ask the judges to refuse them."

"Judges!" shouts the prosecutor, "the defender doesn't know the first principles of Communism. I tell you prompting is never right. No one ever prompted Lenin, and no one who follows him will depend on somebody else's brains—but on his own. My demands are just and I confirm them!"

The trial closes with the *Vojak* in great indignation. The judges go out into the corridor to confer. In a half-hour they return with the verdict:

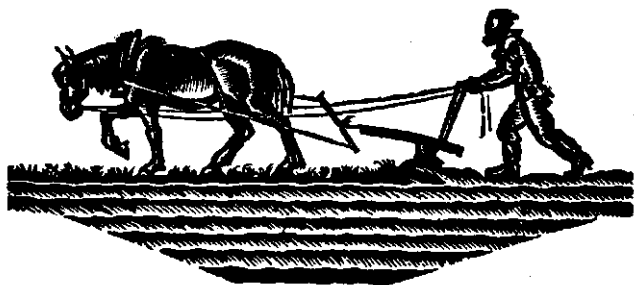
"In order that the work shall pass more organizedly the High Court of the Political Lottery declares that: (1) Pioneers must behave themselves more in conformity with the prin-

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ciples of Communism. (2) Questions must be based only on the subjects studied. Songs, verses and riddles must be learned in advance. (3) Prompters and prompted shall be declared renegade Pioneers in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and before the working class of the whole world."

VII

**COMRADE COUNT MEDEM SEES IT
THROUGH**



VII

COMRADE COUNT MEDEM SEES IT THROUGH

Dusk in the old *volost* town of Khvalynsk. An autumn wind howls round the red tribunal that looms from the square. A bent figure with a flickering lantern and tray huddles up by a black wall, waiting. This is Klukhin, eighteen years the Mayor of Kvalinsk, now a hawker of cigarettes.

"Good evening, Michael Ivanovich," says a man coming up with a sack of potatoes on his back.

"My respects to you, Count," says the ex-

mayor, starting up. "What will you have?"

"A package of *makhorka*," says the sack-carrier, fumbling ten kopecks out of his pocket.

So I first met Alexander Ottovich Medem, one-time Marshal of Nobility, Count in his own right, his father Governor of Old Novgorod, his lineage going back to the Baltic barons and Peter the Great.

The Medem estate lies near the Waterless Village, on the high bluffs of the Volga. A little lower, the under-cutting current, in 1902, washed down two hundred cottages. Had the Count's manor house stood on the bluffs it would have gone down with them. It stands safely back from the Volga on a treeless plain set in an oasis of springs and willows, white-edged against the black soil by a palisade of birches.

Back of it a massive red brick pile looms against the horizon like a cathedral—the Count's distillery, that produced one hundred thousand *vedros* of alcohol a year. On either side, long, low, black sheds stabling eight hun-

dred cows, oxen and horses. To the east, the crosses of the Orthodox villages, furnishing the estate its muscles and sinews. To the north, the crescents of the Moslem villages, in harvest time moving out *en masse* with dogs, goats and children, turning the estate into a Tartar *stan*. More than a thousand Mussulmen, in the morning, making their prayers toward Mecca, and at night setting the plain blazing with their camp fires.

"What kind of landlord was the Count?" I asked an old *mujik* of Waterless Village.

"A good man," he replied, "always helping others. One rainy day, the wagon of a poor Tartar stuck in the mud. The Count, driving up in his *troika*, saw that the bony hack of a horse couldn't pull it out. He unharnessed one of his own and gave it to the poor fellow. Gave it to him outright. He was always doing this." This tale, in varying versions, I was to hear a hundred times. Now it is a Mordvinian that gets a horse free. Now a Chuvash. Now a Russian. A mania for giving away his horses,

it seems, possessed the Count. If all the tales were true, how did he have any horses left? I went to the Count for the truth about the matter.

"Yes," he vaguely recalled, "I think my father once did give a horse to a Tartar."

That horse has grown now into hundreds, and continues to grow. The legend of the horse-giving Medem promising to take its place alongside of Stenka Razin. It suits the peasants. In dramatic form, it puts their approval on the Count and the conduct of his affairs. Not that they grow lyric about the golden past. On the contrary, they still sing songs about the black and bitter days toiling on the Count's estate.

They were sung for me by two Blagodatno peasants, Andrey Shookhin and Koozma Oreshkin, with long-drawn-out, wailing refrains. Finishing, they remarked: "But it was easier with him than with the other landlords." They told of being driven from Easter merrymaking out to the plowing, and of the horse whose

teeth grabbed them by their hair and held them while they were knouted. Then they added: "But the Count was not to blame. It was the devil overseers, our own brothers, who did it."

The Count, like the Tsar, was able to deflect the people's anger on his subordinates. Peasants no longer say the Tsar was a good man. That belief is utterly and irrevocably dead. But they do say the Count was a good man. One hears it on every side. Of course, "good" is a term of relativity. It is the shining contrast of the Count against the dark background of other landlords that wins for him the ascription of "good," the favor and esteem of the peasants.

He was not high-handed, like his neighbors the Davidovs, putting a ruble fine on every chicken that flew on to his grounds. He didn't flaunt his wealth, like Shekhalov, but in the fodder famine gave his horses the same ration as the peasant horses. He didn't rack-rent his tenants, like Tschukin, but let out his land at moderate sums. He didn't signalize his home-

coming, like Vorontzov Dashkova, with a fanfare of trumpets and bells, riding down a lantern-strewn way through lines of kneeling villagers. He wasn't a waster, like Korsakov, hanging over the American Bar in Paris, chasing butterflies along the Riviera. He didn't sell his estate, like Prince Golitzin, and move to the city.

He lived with the peasants. He helped the burned-out find logs for new houses. He helped the Tartars steal their brides, loaning them horses. He worked out a plow best suited to the local soil and sold it at cost—twenty-one rubles. He wasn't afraid to drive a furrow, crack the whip over the oxen or lend a hand pulling a horse out of the Volga. He once carried a sick pony home on his back. He was a working count, like the great Count of Tula, who pointed his preachments about the dignity of labor by laboring himself.

An observation by the side. Count Tolstoy may have actually plowed more ground than Count Medem. Yet in the week that I was in

Yasnaya Polyana, I heard from no peasant the unqualified praise of Tolstoy that almost every peasant gives to Medem. Maybe, to the Tolstoy peasants, the acts of their Count had a smack of theatricalism—too moralistic and romantic.

Count Medem had more of the smell of earth on him, more reality in his work, and, unlike Tolstoy, he was able to communicate the spirit of it to his family. His sister, Maria Ottovna, was a doctor to the women. The Countess nursed many through the cholera epidemic. In the pleasant idyllism pictured by Turgenev in "Gentlefolks' Nests," the years rolled by, until comes that fateful year in the history of the Russian people—the summer of 1917.

The Count is roused one morning by a loud clatter in his courtyard. He looks out to see it filled with wagons—hundreds of them. He dresses hurriedly and goes out to the balcony.

"Good morning, *mujiks*, brothers. What did you come for?"

"Our wheat, our rye, our millet!" comes the

answer, laughing. The keys are brought out, the door unlocked, the granaries are emptied.

"Now the grain underground!" Always the Count believed the hiding place of these reserves was a secret. But the peasants know all. The grain goes. Then the horses and oxen. Then the land. They divided, plowed it, harrowed it and sowed it. "Just as we had done for the Count, we did now for ourselves. The land was ours now. All of it ours," exclaimed the old peasant rapturously, telling me the story of the seizure of the estate.

"And yet you will say he was a good landlord," I interjected.

"No!" he replied. "There is no such thing as a good landlord. He was a good man. But the land was never his, no more than the winds that blow over it or the Volga water that flow by it."

Let the Count show Nicholas the First's grant to his ancestors. Let him show the great seals on his own deed of inheritance. What of them? To the peasant, right to the soil is

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not vested in papers and titles but in one's hands, in one's ability to till, in one's self. When these hands cannot do it, their right to it is gone. It passes automatically into the hands that can. That's what it was doing on this fair morning in the summer of 1917.

These peasants clamoring into the courtyard had no feeling of being engaged in an act of spoliation. It was an act of restoration, an act of liberalism, the deliberate transfer of the land into the hands of its legitimate owners. Against Comrade Count Medem—as they now call him—there was no animosity. They gave him his share of the soil, tools and horses, and left him undisturbed in his manor house, and there were no excesses.

“If only Russia had had good landlords!” exclaim those who imagine that that might have staved off the Revolution. But could any one be more abounding in good works than the good Count of the Volga? Yet, though they had been a hundredfold greater, they couldn't have saved his land. But they did save his life.

And considering the fierce passions engendered by the Revolution, which put most counts in the graveyard or to flight into foreign lands, this is not a trifle. And be it said that these peasants were as resolutely insistent on the Count's right to life as to their own right to the land.

When a band of *Frontovics* landed at Waterless Village, declaring "Death to all *pome-tschiiks!*" the peasants put in the proviso—"except Medem!" When the bandits were loose in the forest, six old peasants galloped beside him as a bodyguard through versts of winter storm. When the Count was lying in the Cheka prison, condemned to death, they drew up a big petition for his release. When the 1921 famine tightened its grip on the Volga basin, out of their scanty stores they brought him flour and products—and continued to do so. When at last he was ejected from the manor house, they loaded up their wagons with furniture and brought them to him in town.

And here in Khvalynsk he lives, a debonair

figure in his shining high boots and blue velvet Tartar hat, edged with sable. Not a tinge of gray in his bushy beard. A man without a worry, one would imagine—not a man with a household of seven, one an embecile for eighteen years, dressed, fed and put to bed like a baby. A man of leisure, one might imagine, spending his time traveling from resort to resort instead of from jail to jail. Nine times he was arrested; thrice sentenced to be shot.

It is said that a man is equal to any disaster, provided it is great enough. Count Medem is a striking example of this. Certainly he can't complain about the dimensions of his misfortune or his fall. From a palace to a three-room house. From a drove of eight hundred horses and cattle, to one cow and five chickens. From Marshal of the Nobility, to a commoner without a vote. From a man of wealth to a water-drawer. Sometimes ninety buckets a day to carry. "I have a thirsty garden," he says with a smile.

"It's his religion that sustains him," his

friends assert. The Count is, indeed, a strict keeper of the fasts; candle in hand, he kneels for hours in the monastic church; he likes, like Dostoyevsky, to contemplate the peasants as the "God bearers." Not less devout are others of the old nobility, but sour and gloomy; one avoids them like a plague.

The Count, however, always sparkles with jests and laughter. He laughs at everything. The soldiers shooting the eyes out of a portrait of Alexander III and using it as a prop for a potato bin; the peasants knowing the secret of his underground stores; the Tartar cutting up one of his racing horses for meat; the old *mujik* lugging off the stone lions to grace his cattle-shed. He laughs at himself; burying in his garden the golden snuff-box, a gift to his ancestors from Catherine the Great, and never able to find it again; entrusting his silver plate to an officer's wife, who later married a Chekist; taking orders from those to whom he once gave orders; plodding on foot when he once rode in a *troika*.

"Why shouldn't one laugh? What can one do about it? So it was predestined, so it must be!"

With such happy fatalism he met the disasters of the Revolution. His friends in town professed this philosophy, and regaled him with it after the summer storm of 1917 had struck him and stripped him.

"Why, Count, it is inevitable. It's the Revolution!" they said, shrugging their shoulders, thinly veiling their bourgeois satisfaction in the downfall of a noble.

The Count bided his time. It came in the autumn, when this self-same bourgeoisie, bowled over by the blasts of October, crept whimpering to him for consolation. His turn to be calmly philosophic. "It's inevitable," he repeated, with a lift of the eyebrows. "It's the Revolution. It's all you wanted. Don't you remember how happy you were when the Tsar fell, Pavel Nikolaevitch? And, by the way, where is that nice red flag you were waving then? And you! Ivan Petrovich! how about

'Revolution Bringing New Life to Old Russia?' Lovely article that!"

With sardonic glee he watched the Revolution go down the social scale, until into the villages whistled the winter winds of 1918-20, laying tribute on the rich peasants, stripping the grain away from the very ones who had first stripped him. To all their sorrowing and raging his jocular reply: "Why, brothers, it's the Revolution. So it was predestined—so it needs must be."

There was no restraining the Count's humor and wit and satire. He carried them into his ordeals of trials and cross-questionings. Quite likely they helped carry him through. One night he took his last horse out of hiding to exercise on the Volga ice. A Commissar spied him. The Count spied the Commissar and at once sent the horse to his White Guard brother hiding in a Tartar village. At headquarters next morning, the Commissar asked:

"Where is your horse?"

"With my brother," the Count replied.

"And where is your brother?"

"With my horse."

"Come, now, be serious!" said the Commissar.

"I am serious," replied the Count. "I don't want to lose my horse or my brother."

Again, a servant, in revenge for his interference with her amours, reported a revolver hidden in the Count's piano. He returned to find a searching squad in his room.

"Very serious, Count, we have found a weapon."

"How could you help finding it when you knew where it was?"

"You know it is against Proletarian Law to conceal weapons?"

"Quite true!" he replied, "but for counts it makes an exception." Luckily, he could produce a revolver-permit signed by a previous Commissar.

But even at the risk of his neck he would indulge his humor. Most of the Bolshevik captors, it seems, appreciated a White who came

before them—not cringing or whining—but with laughter and repartee. But he was suspect, and always they were on his trail.

“They must have liked my company,” says the Count. “Always they were inviting me to come and sit with them.”

Arrests, protocols, inquisitions without number. What does it show? The diabolical effort of the Bolsheviki to trap an innocent man at all costs, as the Whites would say? Or shall it be written down as a singular example of their infinite patience amidst perils and perplexities, their determination not to do injustice? A Counter-Revolutionist at heart. Why didn't they kill him and be done with it?

The Count often wonders at it himself. “But so it was predestined to be.” Fate gave him his life and he makes the most of it.

He still has the Volga. The view from the high bluffs across the steppe, the Count declares, is unequalled in the world. When his friends urge him to come to crowded Moscow,

he exclaims: "Leave the Volga to live in a rabbit warren! Never!"

Then there are his books—French, English, German, a thousand volumes. True, not on his own shelves, but in the public library. But they are his to browse in, and now he has time to indulge to the full his literary and historical tastes.

There are his five daughters and nieces. Two of them are choir singers, the eldest a teacher of French and English, at a hundred rubles a month. Their accomplishments are no longer the decorations of gentlewomen, they have been turned to the service of society and the winning of bread.

Nor has the Count lost interest in his old estate. Now it is a *Sovkhoz*, a Soviet Farm. These model farms are generally held by the peasants in high contempt. "Very useful to us they are," they remark sarcastically, "they show us how to conduct our farming." *Sovkhoz* Number 68 is a shining exception. The

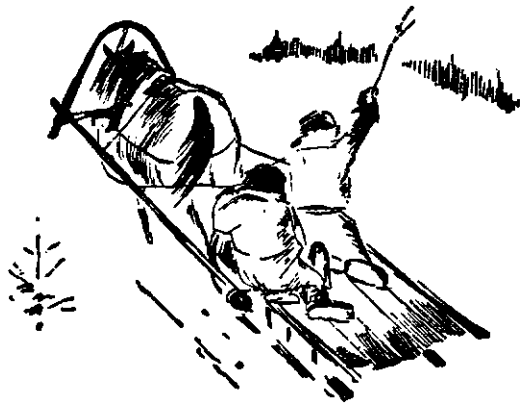
fields, once plowed by the Count's two hundred oxen, are now turned by ten chugging tractors. The white brick edifice, that once housed the Count's family, now houses twelve labor families and a village school. It is piped and steam-heated, fuel furnished by the straw that formerly was thrown away. And it shows a profit, thanks to the Communist managers. One of them, Pugachev, former lackey of the Count, occasionally spends a night in town talking with his former master about seeds, soil and drainage on the old estate.

The Count often contradicts himself. Now the old Black Hundred has the upper hand, now the modernist. He will declare that all Communists are scoundrels or blockheads, then sit up till morning with them, arguing agriculture and religion. He will quote Dostoyevsky as prophesying that Russia will pass into the hands of the Jews, then swear fidelity to the one Jew in the town. He will lament the passing of the great statesmen of Russia, then read with admiration the speeches of the Soviet

leaders, and chortle over the diplomatic thrusts of Chicherin.

On one point, however, there is never wavering or doubt—the ultimate destiny of Russia and its place in the world. While bourgeoisie fall on their knees before the cultures, civilizations and governments of the West—not the Count. He views them with the cynicism of an old Slavophil. Bringing back my London papers and New York magazines, he exclaims: “What are they coming to in Europe and America? Madhouses! Idiots! What they need is a Revolution!”

VIII
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VIII

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I

FIFTEEN cases for the People's Court have piled up in the back villages of Khvalynsk Volost. That means a hundred peasants, each making a twenty- or thirty-verst journey down from the hills to Khvalynsk.

"Instead of coming to you, we are asking the Court to come to us." This is the request that Red-beard Lopukhov from Pine Tar Village delivers to Judge Khonin.

"But the Court has no funds for travel," explains the Judge.

"If you will come, we will furnish horses, food, lodging," says the emissary.

"Agreed," replies the Judge.

A bitter cold December day when the *yemshik* drew up before our doors. I fitted myself into the prosecutor's felt boots (*valenki*), the prosecutor into the Judge's; the Judge confiscated his boy's. Loading ourselves into a twig basket resembling a bathtub on runners, we climbed up the gully road. A long drive buffeting the wind on the high plateau above the Volga, and at last Pine Tar Village and into a big wall-on-wall fight proceeding in honor of the first fall of snow.

Pine Tar is a big village—six hundred and fifty houses, and a center for many near-by hamlets.

A well-to-do village. Drawing a double income by adding to its grain fields great onion beds irrigated by many springs.

A cunning village. "Six hundred *dessyatines*

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sowed" were the returns officially made to the tax appraiser. Hail beat down the crops, and claims were put in for twelve hundred *dessyatines* damaged.

A stubborn village. Sixty thousand *poods* was the grain requisition levied on it in 1919. The village heads announced, "Thirty thousand is all that we will give." Commissars came, arrested the village heads, sent them off to Khvalynsk. A new assembly was called, new heads elected, but the same reply: "Thirty thousand we will give, and not one *pood* more." They in turn were arrested and a Red division billeted in the village. The peasants hid their grain in the earth, sold it to Tartars in the night, carried it off in boots and aprons, distilled it into *samogon*; anything but give it up to the threatening Commissars, who, after a year's effort, gathered in but fifteen thousand *poods*—half what the village agreed to give.

An Old Believers' village. Founded by the Sharpshooters (*streltzi*) exiled thither after the revolt against Peter the Great, and enduring

century-long persecution from the Orthodox State Church. Their bells were silenced; even the repairing of their prayer house was forbidden; and by special order of the Tsar sentinels were placed at the doors to bar all entrance.

Now the bells swing free, and their soft chiming at evening dusk led me to the prayer house.

Opening the door, I stepped into the Middle Ages—into a big-bearded, black-caftaned peasant mass, white-framed by long rows of *platok*-headed women. In the center an enormous book was held aloft in many upstretched arms, the strange Slavonic script lit by a gigantic green candle, while out of the painted pages forty peasants chanted the ancient liturgy, calling, with incredible rapidity, "God's mercy on us!" surely not less than a thousand times. Even the Judge, who holds a Tolstoyan animus against the Church, but whom I induced to look in, admitted it was weirdly impressive.

Jeweled ikons, white incense clouds, golden-clad priests swaying with the censers, wor-

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shippers in deep prostrations to the floor, endless signing of the cross in unison, hundreds of candle flames pin-pricking the dark, and somber, big-eyed saints gazing down from their silver frames. I might have succumbed to the mesmerism of the ceremony were it not for profane thoughts about the combustibility of those long beards waving so freely among the candles. Were virgin beards somehow fireproof? Or do they sometimes burn up? For Old Believers this would be a twofold tragedy: the loss of decoration in this world and of a passport into the next.

With these prophet-bearded men in great flowing coats the village looks as though it had stepped out of the Old Testament. And the resemblance is not merely superficial.

II

It was with the old patriarchal family, the Agaphonovs, that the Court was lodged. Four generations inhabiting two rooms, and on top of them came we—six in number. Samovar

and soup were set up by *babushka*, and out of the Judge's sausage roll, the prosecutor's apples, and the defender's meat, we made a communal feast. After the roster of the morrow's cases, crimes of the village were called for. The Soviet jurists were young, but they already had a professional taste for crime, like doctors for disease. All that evening we heard the crimes of Pine Tar Village, past, present, and prospective.

They began with the story of what had happened at this very table around which we sat. Here, one saint's day, sat two big *mujiks*, Vassily Nazarovich and Yegor Luda, celebrating their lifelong friendship in demijohns of vodka. They sang the old songs together, kissed, embraced, calling each other "Little red sun," "Blue dove," "Little white dove"—all the Russian terms of endearment. But all so inadequate to the exaltation of their feelings! Nothing left but that peculiar means by which the peasant expresses the extremes of his affection—the fists.

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"For love's sake, Vassily," said Yegor, "let's go out and fight!"

The two giants, squaring off, rushed at each other like bulls, voices crying, bodies crushing, fists thudding, crimsoning the snow with blood. Finally a sledge-hammer blow on Yegor's temple, knocking him dead.

Vassily, grief-stricken, wanted to kill himself. But so obviously it was "a fight for love's sake" that Vassily's sentence was nominal—three months' jail and the injunction never to fight again.

The greatest tragedy in the village annals was in the blizzard of 1912, on a howling night that muffled every sound. It happened in the *izba* next door. Zakhar, a sober, God-fearing, industrious *mujik*, suddenly picked up the usual instrument of peasant execution, an ax, and proceeded to chop his family to pieces. The six-year-old son desperately rushed the father, but was shoved out of doors, and beat his way through the storm to the Agaphonovs. When Jacob pushed his way into the house he

found blood spurts on the ceiling, the daughter headless, the wife in shreds, and Zakhar on top of the stove, smoking.

The murder has passed into poetry, a long epic ballad that was half sung, half recited by son Jacob in a steady monotone. Under its influence Grandfather Ivan, on top of his stove, drifted off to sleep.

Time for all to turn in. The last baby was put in a springing cradle hung from the ceiling. Father Anton and his wife lay on the bed. Son Jacob and wife stretched out on the floor. Likewise grandson Feodor and tangles of children. Likewise the Court. Removing coats, we stretched out in a row, trying to sleep in the equatorial heat engendered by this mass of humanity and two mammoth stoves. Too much for me. I went out to the cow shed. Later, judge and prosecutor came out to bunk with me in the straw, to brush away the snow that sifted through the cracks, and to speculate upon the ferocious passions that lie latent in these mild, blue-eyed, apostle-faced peasants.

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III

In the morning we found the hall for the court filled with smoke and fumes from a leaking stove. "Impossible!" said the Judge. The schoolhouse was proposed—that meant turning out the children. "Impossible!" said the Judge. Some one said, "Why not open the windows?" Attention, skeptics about the advance of revolutionary ideas among the masses! In a Russian village in winter time the windows were opened! As the smoke and fumes went out the crowd came in, and straightway the hall was warming up with a thousand oxygen-burning lungs.

"Before court opens, let's have a meeting," said the Judge. The theory of Soviet law and legislation was the subject of the Judge's discourse. It was formal, heavy with verbiage. Deeply impressed were his auditors: A learned man is the Judge. He knows the law.

A practical man is the Judge. He knows peasant life, too. This is manifest in the informal talk that follows on the moot questions

of the village: why boys steal grain; why families are breaking up; why daughters-in-law have become unmanageable. Homely, colloquial, to the point. The peasants were delighted. The cry, "*Pravilno! Pravilno!*" ("Right! Right!") grew louder and louder.

The Judge had attained his end. The competence of the Court had been established.

Meanwhile Lopukhov individualized for me some outstanding figures in the roaring, surging peasant mass.

Andrew Kooznetzov, the biggest *kvas* drinker. Zotey, the strongest man: getting under the belly of a horse and clutching the four legs together, he carried it out of the stable. Babinkov, a Russian southpaw, his left fist a battering ram that always smashes a way to victory in the wall-on-wall fighting. Boodilin, one-time hawker of reserved seats in Paradise to the Mordvinians—"Few places left; buy now!" Gregory Isachev, for thirty years the chief chosen by the village for bribing officials; he never met a judge, surveyor, or *chin-*

ovnik he couldn't give a present to for the general weal of the village—some Commissars to his credit, too. Jacob Beloogin, renowned horse thief, but never caught at it. Nikolai Kolgin, champion *samogon* distiller, his stuff eighty per cent strong. Vassily Lopukhov, who wants the return of monarchy: "The birds," he says, "have a tsar—the eagle; the bees a queen; even the geese a *vozhaty*." Isaac Emelianov, breathing slaughter against the Orthodox priest who ran away with the Whites to Siberia and now lives in a neighboring parish. Isaac says, "Let the priest show his head in Pine Tar and I will kill him." Metrophanov, hell-roaring cavalryman, soured against Moscow because it doesn't declare war on somebody—Poland, China, Africa, it's all the same to him.

In the sea of peasant gray was one fleck of vivid color, the new red-slashed uniform of the "militioneer." He was a singularly aloof individual. Only his uniform to indicate that he had any connection with the Court and with the prisoners. In reality there were no pris-

oners. For in a Russian village one's share of the land is more binding than bail or prison bars. The procedure is very simple. An inspector investigates, draws up a protocol; the accused is notified when to appear for trial.

Everything is ready. Khonin introduces the cojudges (*zasedateli*), the peasants Kootishev and Damitov, who, as they are drawn from another village, Boltinovka, are assumed to be without partiality or prejudice. He explains that he acts as President of the Court, the cojudges having equal powers with himself. He declares the court open and calls the first case.

IV

"Gorbooshev—Anisim Simonovitch."

"Birthplace?"

"Pine Tar Village."

"Age?"

"Thirty-three."

"Married?"

"Yes."

"Property?"

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"Boots and clothes I stand up in."

"Do you challenge any member of the Court?"

"No."

"Do you have confidence in your judges to give you a fair trial?"

"I do."

Gorbooshev has a peasant's body, big, well built. A peasant's face, broad and smiling. But in voice and bearing is all the urbanity of a man of affairs. And so he is—or was. One-time Tsar officer, one-time Red Commander, one-time Communist, one-time Moscow Co-operator. Now standing before the bar of Pine Tar Village.

Drunk in the Khvalynsk market. Singing drunk on the Volga steamer. Sprawling drunk on the herring wharf at Volsk. But what of that? In Russia a man preserves the inalienable right to get drunk. Gorbooshev has inherited rights as well. He comes from a long line of notorious drinkers. His father, a most religious man,—compelling his family every

morning to rise at three o'clock and pray before his forty ikons until five,—was a drunkard. So were his grandfather and great-grandfather. Gorbooshev's appetite has come down a long way and grown in the coming.

It is not drunkenness, however, that Gorbooshev is charged with, but his drinking up nine hundred rubles of the Pine Tar Coöperative, of which he was president and buyer. Sometimes it was a whiff from a *samogon* still that started up his thirst. Sometimes private traders primed the willing victim with vodka, and he sold them the wares of the Coöperative cheap in order to get money for more vodka.

All these exploits Gorbooshev explains in detail. He palliates nothing, conceals nothing, confesses all. All so objectively that it might be the misdeeds and debauches of some one else he is describing—so completely identifying himself with the community that he actually gets to grieving with it over the misfortune of having such a president. Their affliction is his affliction. And by a reverse process his weak-

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ness is their weakness. All of them—somehow the Court, too, whom he addresses as “Comrade judges”—are in the muck together, and somehow all together they must get out of it.

Now the defender, Vasiyev. He shows that Gorbooshev’s vodka spreeing was not unmitigated evil. True, certain traders plied him with vodka for their ends; but he in turn plied other traders with vodka, selling them onions at fifty kopecks above the market price, on this one deal alone making an extra profit of sixteen hundred rubles for the Pine Tar onion growers.

Next the prosecutor, Bolshakov. He picks up the onions and, so to speak, rubs them into the defender’s eyes. He shows that the onion buyers Gorbooshev corrupted were agents of the main Coöperative. “Out of the main Coöperative come all our goods; out of this corruption come higher prices. Cloth leaving Moscow at thirty kopecks brings fifty kopecks in Pine Tar—thanks to these criminals. As once horse stealing was epidemic in the village, now it is Coöperative stealing. Moscow cries

out, 'Stop these thieves!' There they stopped them with bullets, shooting sixteen of these enemies of the Soviet. We don't ask you to shoot Gorbooshev, but to put him where such birds belong—in a cage."

Acid, stinging words, taking the smile off the face of Gorbooshev. Like a great hurt child, he stands fingering the Lenin badge on his coat.

"Enemy of the Soviet?" Didn't he twenty times risk his life for that Soviet, leading his troops against the Whites? "Criminal?" Wasn't it he who put his feeble Coöperative on its feet, raising its capital from one hundred to twelve thousand rubles? "Thief?" He hadn't forged any documents, falsified any accounts. True, he took a little money. Not for his pocket, but for his throat, to slake the burning thirst there. And everybody else's thirst

"If he had only one bottle of vodka, he would give you half of it," whispers a peasant wife. Greater love hath no man than this.

"How am I to blame? With the same

thirst, in the same position, anybody might have done the same." That's the way he feels. And that's the way most of the peasants feel, touched with pity when Gorbooshev, discouraged by the grilling, gives it up and throws himself upon the mercy of the Court. Had he turned round and thrown himself upon the mercy of the peasants, the Court in all probability would have been assailed by a storm of voices crying, "Forgive! Forgive!" Knowing his peasants, Gorbooshev knows this well. He has fallen a long way, but not so far as this.

The case is closed. The judges retire to prepare the verdict. There are calls from the floor: "The American! The American! Tell us about your land across the sea!"

I compare the two countries, peoples and food, incidentally touching on the relative leanness of Americans. A voice calls out: "If, as you say, the Americans are thinner than we are, why is it that you, citizen Williams, are so full-blooded?" (*Polnokrovny*—polite word for "fat.")

I explain: "It's because I've been in Russia three years and eaten much bread and *kasha*."

"And drunk much vodka and *samogon*," mumbles a *mujik* in the center.

I break to them the dread news that in American all liquor—vodka, whiskey, wine, beer—is forbidden. A general groan, and an old man rising to ask, "Is this the reason, then, comrade, you came to live with us in Russia?"

"And if it is a free country," puts in another, "why do they stop vodka?"

One reason I offer is the vast number of factories, trains, and automobiles in America. A worker a little unsteady from alcohol may kill many people and destroy valuable machines.

"That means, brother *mujiks*," shouts a voice from the back, "if we are going to have tractors we must give up vodka."

Bursts of laughter and cries of "Never! Never!"

Our pleasant colloquy is interrupted by the

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cry: "The Court assembles!" The peasants rise, and Khonin reads the verdict:—

"In the name of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republics, the People's Court of the Sixth District [and so forth], hearing the case of Gorbooshev, age thirty-three [and so forth], for misappropriation of funds [and so forth], declares him guilty, and sentences him to one year in prison. But taking into consideration his services in organizing the Coöperative, his frank confession [and so forth], ten months of this term are made conditional. Two months to serve."

From the formal decision the Judge at once passes to an informal interpretation. "We bring in a sentence of guilty on one man. It might well be a sentence of guilty on a thousand men—upon all of you. You saw your president drinking. Some of you drank with him. You knew vodka costs money. You knew where he got it. But you did nothing about it. Never shall we have social institu-

tions until we have social responsibility." Pointing the moral of the strong man broken by strong drink, he declares a recess.

Now the peasants' verdict on the verdict.

"Too hard! Sitting in a cage—what good will that do?" Against this majority a few voices declare the sentence too soft. Gorbooshev's wife thinks he ought to have a year. Gorbooshev himself thinks it about right. At any rate, he can't get anything to drink for two months.

V

"Goorlev!" calls the secretary clerk.

An overcoatless peasant, carrying a silver-headed cane, steps forward. He is charged with "insulting the Government" in the person of five members of the Soviet of Yelkhovka, a near-by village. They testify that he called them "impostors, bandits, and thieves," and that when they refused his demands he cried out: "I'm a Communist, and I'll show you who runs Russia." This is an old feud. Even here

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the five peasants keep slyly baiting hot-tempered Goorlev. Maybe they will provoke another explosion.

"They are all *koolaks* conspiring against me!" he declares. Swathed in enormous *tooloops*, they do have a distinctly kulak look. But it turns out that not one has more than a single horse or two cows. They are "middle" peasants. Beaten on point after point, the Communist calls up his record in the Revolution. While these five skulked at home, he fought. "Are not my services to be taken into consideration?"

"When you stand before a commission of the Communist Party, they are," replies the Judge; "but not here. This is a Soviet court. In it you stand like any other citizen."

The Court's verdict, however, is inconsistent with this statement. "Fifteen days of compulsory labor. *Taking into account that Goorlev is a Communist*, thirty days extra. A copy of this sentence to be sent to the Party."

Next came two lads up for insulting a girl.

They had painted her door with tar—in a Russian village no slur is worse than this. As is smeared the peasant's door, so is smeared the peasant's daughter. The culprits, frightened, declare they will never do it again. They are let off with a lecture on hooliganism and staying up all night till rooster crow.

Next, a village *baba* who performed criminal operations. Wires and spindles were her surgical instruments. Taking court exhibit A, a bent, rusted knitting needle, which she used in her last case, the Judge asked:—

“Is this clean?”

“According to us—clean.”

“Where did you keep the needle?”

“On the ikon shelf.”

“Did you ever disinfect it before using?”

“Sometimes sprinkled it with holy water.”

She is given six months, but when she promises to cease the practice, sentence is made conditional.

“Now,” says the Judge, “let us look into this evil. We hold that the right to bear a child or

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not rests with the woman. If she is sick, or has too large a family, or there is dire necessity, she can come to the Khvalynsk hospital, where skilled physicians will perform the operation free. But how is it generally done? By ignorant *babas* like this one, often crippling or killing the mothers. Who is to blame for that? You men—you fathers. A girl goes 'walking'; nature takes her course. Something happens. The frightened girl must hide it or be driven from home, beaten half to death by her father. But did none of you men go walking before you were married? Do you drive your sons from home, beat them half to death, when they go walking? How is the woman more to blame than the man? Equal rights for all. This is the Soviet position. The village too must come to this."

VI

Through such homilies the Judge attains one of the objects set before the People's Court. It becomes a school of citizenship. When the at-

tention of the hearers flagged, he would refresh the courtroom—and himself—with a story. Most of the stories were like the following, ironic reflections upon the old order.

In Ivanovka Village the old *starosta* was in trouble over the taxes. One night the inspector, a fierce, mustached, foot-stamping giant, came driving up in his *troika*.

Without seeing the *starosta*, he put up at the pope's house. A sleepless night for the already worried *starosta*. Worse still, in the morning a poor *mujik* tried to commit suicide by hanging himself in his shed. He was cut down, still breathing, and the *starosta*, terribly wrought up, ran off to the inspector to report. Dripping sweat, cap in hand, he stood quaking before the door for a long time, not daring to knock. Finally, crossing himself, he pushed it open, thrust his white head in, and, coughing slightly to attract attention, mumbled:—

"Your Highness, I'm the *starosta*."

"Well!" roared the inspector, turning to him.

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"Please, sir, there is a *mujik* who just hanged himself out there."

"What did you do?"

"We took him down, Your Highness."

"Took him down?" bellowed the inspector, pounding the table. "*Svoloch*, pig! By what right? You should have placed guards and reported to the authorities. I'll teach you—"

But the *starosta* was off to the shed, where he found the *mujik* just gaining consciousness. Taking on the tone and manner of the inspector, he roared to the crowd: "*Svoloch*, pigs! Go home! Disperse! And you guards pick up the man and hang him again."

"But he's alive!" they protested.

"No matter. The inspector has commanded it. Hang him up, and you guards stand at attention."

Hardly was the gasping victim strung up when the inspector arrived on the scene.

"Your Highness," said the *starosta*, again crossing himself and bending low, "he begged

not to be hung up. But we did it just as Your Highness ordered."

The story is not so fantastic as might seem. As Nastyrev, a great peasant jurist, says: "In the eyes of the *mujik*, law is something terrible, mysterious, incomprehensible, in the name of which the Government terrorizes, abuses, and mutilates, whips out arrears in taxes, exiles to Siberia, disembowels corpses, pulls down houses, kills stock, drafts into the army, *ad infinitum*." And Kocharovsky, another old authority on peasant life, says, "The rôle of law in the life of the peasant is something similar to a dreadful natural phenomenon; the purpose of it is not understood, but its power is felt to be irresistible."

Every old peasant knows how the officers of the law, arbitrary and aloof and sacrosanct, used to encourage a blind submission to authority, a slavish groveling before them.

VII

In glaring contrast to this old officialdom was the conduct of the new personnel, removing from the court every formality except rising to hear the verdict; wearing no insignia of party or office, unless the red worsted scrolls on the Judge's Novgorod felt boots may be accounted such; sharing with the peasants the decisions and application of the law; taking them into the secret of the making of laws and of judges.

"How did you become a judge?" asked the old Agaphonov.

"The Party told me to go and be a judge. 'How can I?' I asked. 'Simple enough,' they answered. 'Start judging, and you will be a judge.' So I did—and here I am."

All barriers with the Judge were down. He made himself utterly accessible. Each day he held court till seven. Then in our quarters a samovar court till midnight, son Jacob dispensing tea, the Judge dispensing stories and counsel to all who came.

It is like a confessional. A newly married soldier suddenly remembering he has a second wife in the Ukraine. A young Tartar bumping his wife off his wagon and stove in order to bring on a miscarriage. Another girl with child. Shall she give birth to it out of wedlock?

"Of course," says the Judge.

"But it has no means of support," says the girl.

"It has a father, hasn't it?" says the Judge. "If he won't pay, tell him you will bring him into court and make him."

Rarely he thus calls up the strong arm of the law, always offering services of mediation, reconciling hastily married and hastily repentant youth, hot-tempered sons with despotic fathers, and to all would-be litigants quoting the proverb, "Don't go into the courts. The bast shoe will cost more than the felt boot."

All this good fellowship of the Judge the younger generation accepts in a natural, matter-of-fact way. But the elders cannot get out of

their heads the ancient conception of a judge.

One night came a delegation of four, the spokesman the very image of Ilya Moorometz in the Tretyakov Gallery. With beard sweeping the floor as he bowed, he began with the ancient formula of address to officials:—

“Your Highness!”

“S-sh! Hush!” mumbled the others, tugging at his coat. This salutation they knew wasn’t right. But what is right?

“Mister!”

“Comrade!”

“Citizen!”

Each salutation, old and new, they try in turn, while the Judge keeps repeating, “Sit down!” He has to force them into the chairs. But they could not be at ease. For with them holds strong the old idea of a judge as a dignitary of great power, and incidentally of great venality. A personage to be feared—and to be bribed.

“A gift to the judge, the case is decided,” goes an old Russian proverb. Every old peas-

ant knows that, well remembering the old officials junketing with the richer peasants at the Elder's house. There behind the closed doors, around a demijohn of vodka, many cases were decided, generally in favor of the owner of the demijohn or the man who kept it filled.

Over in Yelshanka another Ilya Moorometz, carrying on the old tradition, slipped the Judge a bottle of vodka. Khonin brought the bottle to court, placed it on the table, and told the peasants what had happened.

"I've got the vodka, and, according to Statute 114 of the Criminal Code, the giver gets one year in prison. However, let him go. He was raised in the old ways. But we want new ways. We Communists are trying to clean out the dishonest and put in the honest; then you come around trying to corrupt us. Men are weak. So long as there are peasant bribe-givers, there will be official bribe-takers. To your cry, 'Give us honest officials!' we answer, 'Give us honest peasants.' "

But Khonin has no cause to complain about

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his constituency. To a people nurtured in the institutions of autocracy, he comes with the most ultrademocratic of institutions. To a people for centuries kept aloof and in fear of their officials, he comes with ultra *camaraderie*, hands down and defenseless. I was on the lookout for some one to presume upon this with a gratuitous familiarity, some back-slipping act of rustic boorishness. But there was none. These peasants were worthy of the democracy they were getting. The more he democratized his bearing, the more respect and deference he received. Before one's eyes one could watch the rise of the authority of the Court and the prestige of the Soviet.

Conversely, too, one may see the authority of the ancient faith and the prestige of the old institutions failing. Each trip has its devastating effect. One expedition of the Judge into the village is about equal to one ton of propaganda literature.

"Come to supper!" "Comrade Judge, come over and we'll set up a samovar." Scores of

these invitations besiege him. So the Judge enters into the homes of the strictest sectarians, to whom any one not an Old Believer is unclean, a "worldly" man who contaminates even the dishes out of which he eats. Afterward they must be broken to pieces, or cleansed by a long ceremonial. When an Old Believer *baba* serves the Judge a plate of cabbage, he warns her, "It will cost you forty *epitoms* or forty kopecks to get a new plate."

But she laughs. Isn't the Judge for women? Hasn't he praised the "milk and blood" cheeks of her ten-year-old Marusya? Somehow the Judge is one of their own, and to him the religious interdictions do not apply. So the breach in the old customs is made. Maybe not always for the common good.

Smoking, for example. As hats for women and razors for men, so tobacco in the Old Believers' code is forbidden to all. And the Judge smokes. Four years ago he took up the habit, but he carries it on with all the zeal of a new

convert. In the intermission after the Gorboshev case, he asked the peasants:—

“Now will you let me take a smoke?”

“Smoke! Smoke!” was the loud reply.

At his quarters he always laid the box of Cannon cigarettes on the table. Anybody might take one. But, as befitting Old Believers, no one did. So stood their forbears against tobacco in the days of Peter the Great; so stand their sons to-day. Thus I wrote it down, and thus my testimony would stand had I not observed one night Foma Karpovitch strangely edging his cap over to the box. Presently some cigarettes disappeared. Then Foma disappeared.

A few minutes later I opened the door of the cow shed to find three forty-year-old *mujiks* coughing and blowing smoke through their beards. They tried to look innocent, then laughed, and, like bad boys caught smoking in the barn, swore me not to tell.

“*Papasha*,” said Foma, “would abuse us

dreadfully; maybe they would try us before the church." Foma, however, was not to be caught napping. His line of defense was all laid out. The Old Believers' interdiction against smoking is based on the text, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man."

"Look!" said Foma, emitting a stream of smoke through his nostrils to the great admiration of his fellow accomplices. "It doesn't come out of my mouth, but out of my nose."

"Evidently the making of a first-class judge in Foma," was Khonin's comment when I told him the story.

A keen sense of the comic spirit in life has the Judge. It makes him look at all things humorously, objectively—even judges.

"To what end fines and jails?" he philosophized. "How ridiculous to make men good by doing them evil! How presumptuous to make one man arbiter of the fate of his fellow men!"

These are the ideas of Tolstoy, Hugo, Zola,

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picked up in youth, reflected now in his conversation. Once I heard a public outburst of them. It was at Popovka, where he set forth the theory of Soviet law:—

Not rigid framework into which the peasant must fit his life, but flexible forms, adjusting themselves to the central practice and interest of the peasants. Not codes springing ready-made from the brains of autocratic rulers, but rules of life drawn up by the people themselves. Followed a referendum upon the proposed change in the marriage code: to declare all marriages legally valid, whether registered in the Soviet or not. Incidentally, though this would raise the status of Church marriages, ninety-five per cent of the peasants voted against it.

Now rose the peasant Borodin, enthusiastically exclaiming, "Who would ever dream that the Court would travel out to us, that it would consult with us about the laws? I tell you, brother *mujiks*, that this is good!"

Khonin rose, saying, "And I will tell you something better. That is, the day will come

when there will be no need for a court to come to you—when there will be no militia or codes or jails; no judges, no prosecutors.”

This is Khonin the dreamer, indulging in visions of the Communist society to be. Khonin the realist knows that, in the society that is, the Court must continue to function; that his task is to make it function more effectively, to make himself more efficient. That's the reason why, at the call of the Party, this winter, he is reluctantly leaving his village for Saratov, to take a year's course of study to fill up the gaps in his knowledge.

IX

**WHO BURNED THE KOCHOOBEY
PALACE AND WHY?**



IX

WHO BURNED THE KOCHOOBEY PALACE AND WHY?

But Kochoobey was rich and proud,
Not in his long-maned horses,
Nor the gold tribute of the Crimean Hordes
Nor in his fertile farms,
But in his beautiful daughter.

THUS Pushkin's famous poem, *Poltava*, begins, recounting the glories of the famous Kochoobeys. My guide pointed out the great oak under which the old Mazepa made love to that "beautiful daughter," Maria. That is about all that remains intact of the great estate

that lies on the edge of Dikanka village. The rest is ruins.

A long tumbling brick wall; this was once the deer-park. A stagnant pond out of which statues thrust up broken arms and legs; this was the lake, once dotted white with swans. The butt of a palm tree crowning a cinder-heap; this was the orangery. A line of fire-gutted buildings; these were the stables of the long-maned racing horses. Some ring bolts in a pile of bricks; these chained the hunting pack, whose cries one time wakened the countryside.

Beyond this desolation, past great green spaces, stood the glistening white portico of the palace, columns and walls so clean and straight it seemed the palace was intact. But it was only a white shell enclosing a burnt brick and tangled *débris*. After the fire came the spoilers, sacking it to the last bolt and window frame. Then came the treasure hunters. Last of all the vandals.

"Before and after the fire." Thus local history is reckoned from that unforgettable

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night in the winter 1919, when a red tongue of fire leaped out of the dark, climbed about the tops of the trees, grew into a pillar of flame, fountaining into the sky, mahogany, paintings, rugs and tapestries. Two nights and a day it frightened and fascinated the countryside for fifty miles round. A magnificent conflagration—the funeral pyre of feudalism.

One of the peasants told me how it happened: "A band of partisans rode out of the forest one day and camped on the grounds. At night we saw them suddenly saddle and gallop away. An hour later the palace was flaming."

"Yes, that's the way it started," affirmed a second, "the partisans set it afire."

Thus I heard the story from a score of peasants, and so I would have recorded it had not the palace overseer one time, in talking about the library, remarked: "That's probably where the fire began. Some boys playing there may have knocked a lighted candle into the papers."

Both versions I related to a Poltava cattle-

dealer. "Neither boys nor partisans," said he, "it was the peasants themselves who fired the palace. They laid straw in the cellar and waited their opportunity. The partisans out of the forest gave it to them. As they rode away the peasants touched it off. So they escape responsibility, always saying, 'The partisans did it!'" This I take to be the true version.

At any rate one thing is very clear. I never heard one peasant regret that the palace was gone. But why were they glad? And to what extent was it the sweet sense of gratified revenge against the Kochoobeys?

Against the prince himself I could not find particular ill-will. He was hard working, tramped around in worn-out shoes, greeted everybody affably, refused a Court Minister's portfolio, saying, "I can't be always kissing ladies' hands." Quite a democrat. He was easy on his peasants, renting out his land for seven rubles a *dessyatine* when it was twelve

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elsewhere, in slack season keeping their horses busy hauling at four kopecks a *pood*.

For the son there was warm feeling. "Maybe you'll meet him in London or Paris," said a young peasant to me. "He was a good fellow and a wizard with the stringed instruments. Tell him to come back and we'll make him chief commissar of our Balalaika Club."

For the brother, a magnificent drinker, there was admiration. He drank himself fat and bankrupt, then took to wife Stolypin's niece with a seven million ruble dowry.

It was on the Princess that the anger of the peasants converged. Evidence of this I found on a marble pillar in the big pasture. Out of a camp-fire some shepherd had drawn a lop-eared, three-breasted lady with a long spear-pointed tail. Below in strong Ukrainian "All Princesses! To hell with them!" Maybe this rustic artist had once been lashed off the place by the Princess' tongue. Or he had not lifted his cap to her. Homage to caste and rank she

demanded at all costs. Let the *mujik* be rolling drunk; let him beat his wife; but let him be deferential. Then all was forgiven. But damned forever was the wretch who once mistook her for the veterinary's wife.

Terrorist and termagant, but a great lover of animals—a skilled horsewoman, a devotee to dogs, her affection particularly concentrated on a little white pet terrier, Looloo. The dog had her own cook, wardrobe and servant. When Looloo died the grief-stricken Princess had an island made in the lake, set with shrubs and flowers.

"There's where the bitch buried her bitch," said our peasant guide, pointing to the lake below. "Looloo's Island we had to call it. A whole island for a dog. And to us she grudged a crust of bread, a log of fire-wood, or even to put foot on her estate."

"She-devil! Maybe now she would like a stick of fire wood herself. She'd have to ask for it. So Princess, you would like to walk through the estate?" His voice and manner

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were now in droll imitation of her. "Sorry, *tovarisch* Princess, you'll have to go back and get permission from the Soviet."

The war, it seemed, softened or scared her and she took to giving presents to the conscripts. "When I was enlisted," said young Cheiben, "she called me to the palace and gave me a ten ruble gold piece. 'Brave boy,' she said, 'go fight for your fatherland and freedom!'

"And sure enough," continued Cheiben, "I got a certain amount of both. I'm going to curse the Soviet to-day about the taxes—that's freedom. As for fatherland, I've got fifteen *dessyatines* of the Kochoobey estate."

Cheiben was vengeful, but ironically, pleasantly so. Bitter shrilled the vengeance in an old soldier describing the raid on the mausoleum of Sergius Victorovitch Kochoobey: "First we smashed the stone coffin, then the oak and the zinc."

"Maybe it was the gold cross around his neck, the jewels and money you were after?" I suggested.

"No!" said the old man scornfully. "I was after the old devil himself. He stole the land from my fathers. God curse his soul!" he screamed, with hate-contorted face making a deep slashing stab with his crutch. "I put a knife through his chest."

Vengeance against even the dead. Not blind, indiscriminate, however, but directed against those who had injured them. The bones of Leo Victorovitch lie undisturbed; he gave the forest to the village. Sergius Victorovitch took the forest back; it was his tomb that was desecrated. It was into his ribs that this old soldier savagely thrust his knife.

Revenge played its part in the palace burning. But, to my mind, a small part. The fact remains that, for two years after the outbreak of the Revolution, the palace was untouched. It was as if the peasants said to it: "Remember, in the old days, you have been a source of insult and injury to us. But for these sins of the past we will not punish you. We put you on good behavior." Unfortunately the palace did

not mend its ways. Indeed it became worse. With the return of the Whites, one time, came the former superintendent, imposing a levy of one hundred and sixty thousand rubles on the peasants. To their remonstrations he replied: "Be thankful it is so little. Some day, on your knees, at the gates, you will be begging a little bran to stop the gnawing in your bellies."

Yet, such was the nature of the palace, now humiliating them, now threatening hunger and death. Here is the letter of a runaway landlord of Tula to his peasants:

"Brother Mujiks: Go on as you have begun. Divide all the furnishings of my manor-house. Take my cattle and the hay to feed them with. One thing I ask of you! Don't chop down my lime trees. These I will need to hang you on when I return. . . ."

"When I return! Damn him!" Let there be nothing to return to. They hewed the lime-trees down.

So it was in Yurievskaya. When the landlord Kovalevsky fled, the peasants settled old

scores with the manager and divided up the furnishings and live stock. Then came the Skoropadsky Government (the Whites) and an officer, appearing before the Peasant Committee, announced:

"Sheep, cows, beds, books, carpets—back to Sir Kovalevsky. He who has eaten the sheep, get into the skin and crawl back on all fours himself!" He led his finger twice around the face of his watch. "Twenty-four hours—the time limit! If one sack of corn, one spoon, one hen is missing . . . this!" The officer drew his finger across his throat. "And this!" He struck a match, meaning the village would be fired.

Dawn next day and over the long road leading to the estate stood great dust clouds, beaten up by the wheat and hay laden wagons, by the hoofs of the bleating, neighing, grunting, bellowing beasts, while through the tangle stumbled women with mirrors, old men with bird-sigges, boys with wagon-wheels, plows and rases. Everything and everybody, for the way

was long, the time was short and the big guns were trained upon the village.

Forward they pressed to the gates from which two lines of soldiers stretched to the manor-house. Down this lane of bayonets the peasants passed, each to lay his loot at the feet of Kovalevsky.

"It was like the great Judgment Day," said a peasant, "each of us bringing his own sins, piling them on the heap. When the Whites left a second time we touched nothing. We burned the palace down."

"Why didn't you take the things again? There was no one to stop you."

"Take them again," he soliloquized. "Maybe give them back again. Go through hell again? No, we couldn't do that!"

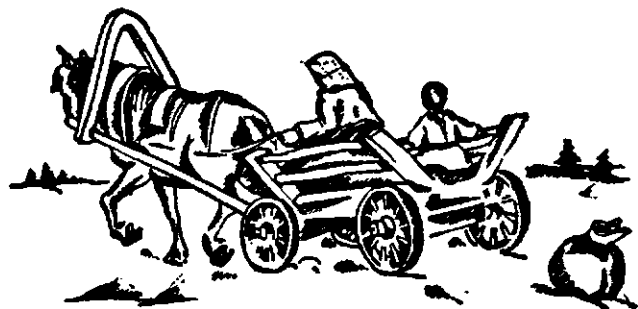
In flames and smoke they blotted out the scene of their humiliation, their degradations of the past. More than that, by this act they were blotting out the humiliations that might be, the degradations of the future. Wiping them out forever.

So it was with the palace of the Kochoobeys, standing above the village. Menacing, arbitrary, pregnant with evil. As Leo, the good Kochoobey, gave way to Sergius the bad, so the kindly prince might give way to the unbridled Princess, the Princess to some one worse. Then what new affronts, insults and injuries? The ruins of the palace were the assurance that these things should not be. In this guarantee of the future, more than in the sweet sense of gratified revenge for the past, lies the general peasant satisfaction over its destruction.

Of course, there was another and more basic reason for this satisfaction. Anybody with the slightest knowledge of the peasants, and the object which they sought to attain through the Revolution, knows what this is. How fully, magnificently the Revolution realized that object I never understood until I met Pitrenko.

X

AMERICA COMES TO DIKANKA



X

AMERICA COMES TO DIKANKA

ALEXANDER ANDREEVITCH PITRENKO introduced himself one morning in the Dikanka bazaar, exclaiming: "I've got a letter from America. From the Silver Republic!" Taken aback for a moment, then I understood—it was from the Argentine Republic. From Buenos Ayres, his brother was writing: "Now is the time to come. A new section is opening up. You can buy land for twenty rubles an acre."

All his life Alexander Andreevitch Pitrenko had lived cramped up on one acre of land. All his life he had dreamed of wide expanses, long

black furrows turning behind a yoke of cream-colored oxen, wide pasture for the oxen to graze upon. Always these lands were in America. For him America was just another word for land. Years ago his brother had gone away, while here in Dikanka he had awaited a letter almost breathlessly. Now it had come telling of new ranches opening to settlers, telling Alexander Andreevitch to come along.

"When are you going?" I asked him.

"I'm not going at all," he answered. "I don't have to go to America. America has come to me."

Instead of journeying ten thousands of miles across seas, Alexander Andreevitch had only to cross the road to the Soviet Land Bureau. Here was his dream come true. Land, not at low prices—but for the asking, for nothing at all—good land too, better than in America, rich black loam.

He had gotten fifteen acres of it, an orchard, three years' exemption from all taxes. So, only ten versts away from his old home, he became

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a settler and in a dugout sodden with grass he lived like a pioneer. Now and then a strange pioneer loneliness came upon him, relieved by a drive down to the village.

Around Dikanka hundreds of Pitrenkos had been set up with a complete farm, thousands had added to their holdings.

To the peasants, the Revolution was an act of Creation. Fire, storm, blaze and thunder of cannons—the convulsion of a continent—then out of this chaos, land emerging, vast areas of it and theirs to have and to hold.

To this end the peasant had battled for centuries, fighting under the banners raised by the Pugachevs and Stenka Razins, suffering floggings and exiles, beaten back again and again, but through the darkest nights of Russian reaction, ever dreaming of the day when the land would be his. And now it was his. The dream was reality. Forty million *dessyatines*—an area as large as England—had passed into his hands. Every peasant in the Ukraine nearly doubled his holding. Fifty-five per cent of the

land belonged to the peasant. Then the Revolution and ninety-six per cent of it was his.

"The lands of the crown, the monasteries and the landlord, are hereby declared the property of the nation forever." Thus reads the land decree passed on the night of November 7, 1917, while the smoke had hardly died from the guns of the Aurora firing over the Winter Palace. Thus the miracle is recorded.

Alongside of this stupendous fact goes another almost as stupendous—the passing over of the fact in silence. One would think that pæans of joy would signalize such magnificent realization of their hopes. Instead of that, a silence almost universal. Out of thousands of peasants whom I have picked up in casual conversation, I can count upon my fingers the Pitrenkos who volunteered, "I got a *dessyatine* of land out of the Revolution." All the others sedulously concealed it. As in Dikanka, so elsewhere.

There was the loquacious basket weaver from Novgorod, with whom I had converse for many

months. This barefooted *batrak* had received a ten-*dessyatine khutor*, as I learned a year later and accidentally. From him not a word.

There is the garden village of Zhoozhin, three versts from Moscow, where the peasants have increased their holdings two, three, and even five fold. From them you may hear long discourse about fruit stealers, bad roads, laziness of laborers—everything under heaven. But about their rich inheritance, never a hint.

There are the peasants down in the bread-basket of the world—the Volga basin. How often, on the ferry gliding across the river, they have told me dismal tales of the *mgla*, the Dryer (*Sookhoyer*), the grasshopper invasion, the blunders of the state grain buyers and Soviet agronomists. But the land carved out for them of the Medem, Davidov, Dacboronsky estates, and out of the *kulak* tracts—rich black steppe soil in which the wheat grows rank like weeds—about this never a word. Never a word until they see that I am not an innocent. Then they will admit it, but with reser-

vations and evasions, concealing the amount of their gain.

Is this the silence of dread? The fear that he may have to return the land and pay with stripes on his back for taking it? In the early years of the Revolution there were certain peasants whom nothing could induce to settle on the landlord's estates. But now this plays no part, for the peasant is pretty well convinced that the landlord has gone to stay.

The real reason for this silence one must find in the peculiar peasant minds and conceptions. First of all his attitude towards land and its ownership. The American would say simply enough: "The land belongs to him who owns it." The Russian peasant says: "The land belongs to him who works it." In the words of the delegate to the Peasant Congress of 1905. "Land is the gift of God like air and water. Only he who applies his labor to it should have it, each according to his needs." This is the only fundamental inviolate right,

all other claims are fictitious. Why then make a fuss over the getting of his simple rights?

Furthermore why should he make great ado over the restitution of that which was stolen from him? Sometimes it was stolen in the grand manner of Ekaterina bestowing largesses upon her lovers.

Sometimes it was piecemeal by trickery as with the old Kochoobey. "Himself a Cossack, he robbed even the Cossacks." When troops from the north were billeted on the village, good order was maintained in the houses of Kochoobey's serfs, while in the houses of the poor Cossacks the soldiers caroused, plundered and violated at will. A Cossack would go to Kochoobey protesting:

"Why come to me?" the old Prince would say. "I can protect only my own peasants."

"Make me one of yours then!" the victim would plead.

His name was accordingly written down in "the book"—with his name went his land.

Thus by indirect action the boundaries of the Prince were extended five, ten or fifty *dessyatines*.

Sometimes it was direct action as in the case of Cheiben, of the ten ruble gold piece, related to me. "My great grandfather had fifteen *dessyatines* of woodland which took the eye of the old Prince. One morning great-grandfather went out to chop down trees and found forest guards there who told him to keep off. When he wouldn't, they gave him the *nagaika*—five strokes a *dessyatine*. It's my land now and I've got a *nagaika* for any Kochoobey who steps on it."

The Revolution was the repatriation of the soil. The Cheibens were simply coming into their own. Why then should they break forth into pœans of praise for getting that which by every natural and legal right was theirs? Especially when they had redeemed it in the battle and blood of seven years' civil war.

It is the Communist, of course, who directed this battle and led it to success. The peasant

knows this very well. It is the basis of a deep fundamental allegiance to the Communist. It is deep in his consciousness, though it may not be upon his lips. So the peasant deceives the foreigner—sometimes even the Communist—and always the great *emigrés* statesmen of Paris, Prague and London think that because the peasant doesn't express gratitude he doesn't feel it; because he isn't loud in his loyalty he doesn't have it; fools, deceiving themselves because they want to be deceived. Do they think that the peasant can ever forget the political party that put forty million *dessyatines* of land under his feet?

Besides the peasant's conviction that in obtaining the land he is obtaining only his rights, there is another consideration that holds him back from breaking forth into psalms of rejoicing, and particularly restrains him from thanksgiving to the Communist. In the craftiness of his peasant soul he knows that benefits received mean obligations incurred—duties to fulfill—services to perform—to acknowledge

favours is to assume responsibilities. Better then say nothing about these benefits. Better not talk about what the Revolution has given him, but what it is taking away from him. Better concentrate, for example, on taxes.

That's what Dibenko was doing one morning I came into the Soviet. Taxes were robbery. The Soviet, brigands! He called on me as an American to behold in him a man brought to ruin. I stopped his eloquence with the curt question:

"How much land, Dibenko, did you have before the Revolution?"

"None!" was his reluctant answer.

"How many *dessyatines* now?"

"Twelve," more reluctantly.

"How much a *dessyatine* is it worth? If you had had to buy it now, how much would you have had to pay?"

Dibenko tried to wriggle away, but I pinned him down. He had to admit that his land was the best black loam—worth four hundred rubles a *dessyatine* at the lowest estimate—four thou-

sand, eight hundred rubles it would have cost him. And his taxes were forty-six rubles! Not one per cent interest on the value of his land received gratis.

"Now honestly, Dibenko," I asked him, taking him aside, "about the land, why is it that you never say a word?"

"Why should I?" he laughed. "I've got as much as I want. The land isn't troubling me. I'm going to talk about what is troubling me."

Thus all over the Soviet Union the peasants, like Dibenko, as deliberate policy are keeping to the front their grievances. In meeting, *izba*, boat, train, one can hear them chanting the litany of their woes: high taxes, high prices, of city goods, low prices on grain, lack of horses, misdeeds of Communists and the Soviet—all the evils that, justly or unjustly, have been laid to the account of the Revolution.

Scarcely a hint from the peasants about benefits received from the Revolution: deliverance from servile obedience to officers and landlords; the right to his own language, culture and re-

tion; the path of learning cleared for him right into the university; the right of free and unlimited criticism; the shortening of war service; the hundreds of new cultural devices; mail bag-posts, *izba* reading rooms, tractors and electricity—and above all, that supreme conquest of the Revolution—the land. Of all this on the lips of the peasant scarcely a word.

But does this mean that he is not fully aware of these conquests of the Revolution, and the political party which helped him achieve them?

If you will, call the peasant crafty, ungrateful, cunning, but do not call him a fool.

XI

**THE ABBESS, THE ARCHEOLOGIST
AND THE AGITATOR**



XI

THE ABBESS, THE ARCHEOLOGIST AND THE AGITATOR

A RADIANT June morning on the rolling plains of Vladimir. Deeper than the white snow blanket dropped down by winter skies is the green one in which the land has clothed itself. The lush green of lusty meadow grass, the dark green of oat and wheat and barley. A vast carpet of billowing green shot through with cornflower blue, silver sheened by the breezes.

We follow a trail that runs through high walls of flowering grain, through birch groves

bursting into song, down into little glades drifted deep with daisies, up again on ridges from which the cereal sea sweeps toward the west. And just when our spirits are flagging in the noonday heat, a hill top, and from it a sudden vision of breath-taking beauty. In the white clouds on the far horizon, floating above the vast expanse of shimmering green, a cluster of domes and belfries, high turrets and golden cupolas glittering in the sun.

So unexpected, so entrancing that for the moment I thought it a phantasy, one of those optical illusions that tantalize the thirsty, tired traveler of the desert. But, unlike a mirage, it stood still, grew bigger, bolder in outline, and from one of the belfries came the faint booming of a bell. Not a phantom city in the clouds, but a city set on a hill above the river Kamenka—the ancient city of Suzdal.

In the dim historic past—before Moscow was known—Suzdal was capital of the Northern Slavs, citadel of refugees from raiding hordes and robbers; lustrous with the names of Vassily

the Dark, Yurev the Long-armed, Andrew, Lover of God, and with the exploits of the ten thousand marching against Magnus the Swede.

Then the Mongols came rolling over her ramparts; Mahmet tearing the cross from the breast of the Suzdal prince to send as a mocking present to his wife; Suzdal bishops, with bared heads, carrying tribute to the Volga Khans. But out of her blood-stained ashes the city rose again in splendor. The blue falcon fluttering from her walls in welcome to Ivan the Terrible returning in triumph from the conquest of Kazan. Out of Suzdal gates Pozharsky fared forth to drive the Poles from Russia, and into the far corners of the land Suzdal merchants carried the famed products of her painters and weavers.

A vast mausoleum of memories. Long since princes and *boyars* and warriors have turned to dust. Trade and industry have ebbed away. The thriving city has shrunk to a village, the green fields now creeping down the long streets and across the great squares, once echoing to

the fanfare of drums and trumpets, the herds go kicking up the dust. Gone the actors in the great dramas. Gone the ancient pomp and pageantry. All gone, save a few hundred cowed and hooded figures and the pilgrims to the shrines in summer. Only in the bazaar, a faint flare up of the old life on market day when the peasants come thronging in.

Still on the green plains of Vladimir, for centuries to come, will stand these massive monuments witnessing to the one time power and splendor of Suzdal: the earth wall against which rolled the Golden Hordes; the vast establishments of the monastic orders; the churches and cathedrals crowded with star-fretted domes, with myriads of cupolas, emerald and gold and Chinese blue.

Some five and thirty mammoth "summer" churches—any one a landmark in an American city—and nestling beside them as many "winter" churches. All of them built for eternity. Not with modern three brick walls, but sixteen bricks deep and often twice or thrice that num-

ber. The more bricks, the more glory to God. With like prodigality the interior decorators lavished their gold and paint and lacquer. And everywhere a reek of religious riches and relics.

In the first church we entered, an array of trophies that would put an Italian shrine to shame: blond lock from the Mother of God; a finger of her mother Ann; a piece of the robe of Jesus; wood from His cradle; wisdom tooth of Moses; thumb-nail of Isaiah. In all sixty relics, brought from Byzantium by the first Greek emissaries and imposed upon the credulity of the early Slavs.

In the afternoon our wanderings brought us to the walls of a monastery, rising like red cliffs above the river. Massive bastions and turrets loopholed for cannons and arquebuses proclaimed that these walls were built, not as a symbol of separation from the world and its temptations, but as a fortress against besieging enemies with guns and battering rams. Through a high gate with a barbican we passed into a wide court and through a maze of build-

ings came to the portal of the cathedral, against which drays were loading with bales and boxes.

We followed the sound of voices up to the great altar screen guarding the sanctuary forbidden to women. Such is the rule of the Orthodox Church, and such is the force of tradition long enforced that Woskova—though ten years a Communist agitator—in reflex obedience to old habits, hesitated to enter.

"Oh, come on in!" boomed out a big bluff voice. "That isn't a church. It's a museum."

Thus we came to meet the special Commission for Liquidation of the Monasteries. It was composed of six members—half of them Communists, all sons of local Suzdal peasants working under the direction of Romonovsky, archeologist and art expert.

"The best art treasures go to Moscow, or the new museum here," he explained, "the saleable material is sold for the school fund, the rest goes into the junk heap."

"This, for example, goes there," said the peasant Potashin, giving a battered arch-

bishop's mitre a kick that sent it spinning through the altar-gates into the middle of the nave. Here was a curious agglomeration of nondescript ikons, amulets, tattered cowls and surplices, candle ends, moth-eaten altar cloths, Lives of Monks, chromos of Saint Seraphim conversing with a bear, another Saint braiding his ankle-long beard to keep it from dragging on the ground—the huge pile strewn with dead and dying pearls and emitting the acrid sickening odor of stale incense.

“Have a cigarette!” said a tall man in Red Army uniform. “I smoke them all day. Keeps the damned incense smell out of my nostrils. A whole year I’ve been on this job and I’m sick of it.”

“But we’ve got to go slowly,” put in Romonovsky, “or we’ll make a mistake. Even so we almost lost this ikon here. Luckily we scratched it and saw it had been painted over. Some ignorant monk most likely. Scraping it carefully we uncovered a rare example of the Novgorod period. Worth its weight in gold.”

"Here's one worth its weight in wood," laughed a square-bearded peasant from Palexo lugging out an enormous ikon of the Last Judgment, depicting the devil as a monkey with a spiked tail shoving heretics, thieves, Tartars and drunkards into the flames of hell. "My own father painted it. The monks gave him eight hundred rubles and with six workmen he finished it in a month. I remember it well: fifty rubles were laid out for vodka and they all went on a three days' drunk in the woods."

"What your fathers build up you are destroying," I put in provocatively.

"And with the greatest joy," burst forth the Red Armyist.

Such venom in the speaker, that I at once set him down as a former priest or Seminarist—in Russia generally a safe assumption. Particular virulence against religion is almost always the direct product of an ecclesiastical institution. Theological seminaries, it seems, were wholesale incubators of skeptics and atheists. To them the Communist Party is

indebted for nearly all its leading anti-religious propagandists, now as zealous against the faith as one time for it.

Such was the case with this man Tikhomirov. Marked by extreme devoutness as a peasant boy, at seventeen years of age he was sent to the Florinsky Seminary in Vladimir. He liked religious art and specialized in it. Still more he liked the old Archbishop in his angry moments roaring at him in strange languages and in his softer moods playing chess.

One summer the young candidate for priesthood was sent out to a little hermitage in the deep woods of Novgorod. Hither also in late June came the peasant girls to mow the grass in the forest clearings. They came with gala spirit. For the monks too were in the meadows, wetting the scythes of the girls, plaiting flowers in their hair, and on cold nights inviting them to sleep in the hermitage. Hay-making by day. Fun-making by night. An idyl of love and laughter. But always the danger of a sudden visit from the Archbishop. To guard

against this sentinels were posted along the road. One dark night they fell asleep, and the Archbishop came down upon the place, taking it by storm. The monks rushed into the chapel, the girls squealing up into the bell-tower or scrambling over the walls, and after them the infuriated Archbishop with his staff laying out right and left.

The impression of moral vigor made by the old Archbishop was spoiled by the motive he gave for it. "The church is our blacksmith-shop in which we get our living. We have got to keep it in order."

This unhappy figure of speech was more of a shock to the sensitive young idealist than the escapades of the monks. War, the church blessing the slaughter of millions of *mujiks*, life in the wide world, had put the finishing touches on his doubts. There remained not a vestige of faith in religion. Apparently only a deep cynicism.

Now a deeper tinge to this cynicism by the exposures the Revolution had made in the

monasteries—in this particular monastery, in the relics of the founder, the Blessed Saint Evfimy, beside the pried-up lid of whose shrine we were standing.

The full impact of this is clear only to one who understands the peculiar doctrine of the Russian Church about relics. It holds that the text, "Thou shalt not suffer thine holy one to see corruption," is not a figure of speech, but a fact. Holiness in life brings wholeness in death. The reward of righteousness is a body incorruptible that age shall not wither nor time decay. As it was so shall it be forever, free from rust and rot.

With some bodies this is actually what happened. They were naturally embalmed in the chalk or lime-soil in which they were buried. Shut away from moisture, they were long preserved intact, flesh uncontaminated and skin uncracked. Thus, dug up decades or maybe centuries later, their pristine purity and freshness was hailed as evidence of God's favor. Ringing bells proclaimed the miracle, and in

solemn processional the remains were carried into the cathedral and laid away in a reliquary all swaddled in silks and silver except for a tiny portion of a hand or brow exposed for the devout to kiss.

From far and wide the pilgrims came bringing offerings of gold and silver and copper. So grew the monastery in wealth and prestige inciting the envy of its rivals. They too yearned for relics, fervently praying for them. When no answer came to their prayers they sometimes answered them themselves. They fabricated relics.

How this was done the Revolution has disclosed. With doctors and cameras and crow-bars, it came down upon the shrines and in presence of officials of church and state the tombs were opened. Wonders indeed brought to light!

Instead of the uncorrupted bodies of the Saints, moldering skeletons and bones sometimes not of men but animals! Sticks of wood wound with cloth and cotton-wool and covered

with wax. Figures of corsets and skirts and ladies' stockings. With what Gargantuan laughter the jolly friars and their consorts must have made the Saints in effigy? With what gross frauds the credulity of the faithful were fed! On what crumbling foundations these temples raised, reared their cupolas and crosses to the sky! To what mercenary ends was exploited the name and fame won by the vigils and virtues and self-denial of the sturdy monks of old!

Such a one was Evfimy, founder of this monastery. A hair-shirted hermit, shriving his body for the good of his soul. A toil-lover, a well-digger, a stone-chiseler, baking bread for the hungry, tending the victims of the Black Death. A lover of peace reconciling princes and warriors and at eighty-eight years dying with the words: "God is love. Love is beauty. Love one another!"

That was in 1401. In 1507 the Archimandrite proclaimed to the world the finding of Evfimy's body fresh and uncorrupted as it had

been buried a century ago. It was laid away in an imposing shrine that each decade grew more magnificent adding to itself new relics: his miter, his breviary, the great crosier which smote Cyprian the Glutton; the iron chains which mortified his flesh.

From all over the Russian land the pilgrims came to gaze upon the silver sarcophagus and the face of the Saint embossed in precious stones upon the cover. In gratitude they gave the monks their coins, and listened to the tales of marvels issuing from the shrine:

Gerasim the Idiot restored to his senses; Ivan the Paralytic set up on his legs again; Patric the Fisherman cured of palsy. In an apparition Evfimy had come revealing the hiding place of the stolen monastic treasure; in the flesh, rubbing his balsam into Nikodim's aching limbs; while the cures wrought by his healing honey-*kvas* were without number.

In detail all these miracles are recorded in Saint Evfimy's Five Hundredth Anniversary Book issued by the Ecclesiastical Censor of St.

Petersburg in 1904. It closes with these words: "So ends the chronicles written by mortal hand. But never in all the ages will end the wonders that flow forth from this incorruptible body."

"Now I'll show you the incorruptible body," said Tikhomirov, turning to the shrine. Throwing off silken winding-sheet, fumbling through cotton-wool and wadding, he brought to light a few brown, bleached bones and a crumbling skull—a sorry exhibit even as a skeleton.

"When I was a boy," continued Tikhomirov, "my mother brought me to this shrine. She told me that here was one so holy that God had preserved him for five hundred years. A deep impression it made on me, for my dog had just died and in four days he smelt bad. With fear and quaking I stood on tiptoe and kissed the little round hole in this cloth and felt as though I were kissing the very hand of God. And see! all the time beneath this cloth this skull was grinning at me."

Picking up a bone he brought it crashing

down upon the coffin. "Sacrilege!" exclaimed one of the Communists provocatively.

"Sacrilege!" reëchoed Tikhomirov. "It was the yarns and fables and greed of the dirty, bloated priests that did sacrilege to Evfimy. I do sacrilege to no honest man."

"Well, he was an honest man. Is he to blame for what the priests did to him after death? He deserves to have his bones left in peace."

"Those are no more Evfimy's bones than yours," retorted Tikhomirov. "The first bones the fakirs dug up in the cemetery. The first ones they laid their lying hands on. Maybe a dog's bones! They made a fool and dupe out of me."

"But why get mad about it? So long as you didn't know it was a hoax, you were happy. Much happier than you are now."

"You would make a better priest than a Communist," roared Tikhomirov. "It was all lies and corruption and deceit."

"But there were honest men in the church,"

I put in mildly. "They must have protested against its crimes and deceptions."

"Of course there were!" he answered. "But what became of them? Come with me and I'll show you what end they came to."

Down into a deep crypt he led us, stumbling and groping through the dark until stopped by a green molded wall. Lighting a candle, he thrust it through a grate opening into a black musty dungeon hung with rusting chains and ring bolts. A blast of cold foul air and the guttering candle went out.

"That's how the good men flickered out. And see the deviltry of it! They put the torture chamber exactly under the altar. Spiritual love of the brethren!"

The stone cage evidently was reserved for hardened heretics. For others, there were the usual iron barred cells—a long corridor of them. The massive walls built to keep Tartars from getting into the monasteries came more and more to serve another purpose—to keep reformers and protestants from getting out.

Hither, too, were brought rebels against the state, like the Decembrists, and other unfortunates who had incurred the royal displeasure, including many divorced wives of the Tsars. Unhappy Tsarinas! With their thrones losing their freedom. No Tsar, it seems, could rest easy until the high stone walls of a convent stood between him and his former consort. When of her own free will she would not betake herself to a nunnery, she was taken there by force.

Thus came to Suzdal, Ann, fifth wife of Ivan the Terrible; Avdotia, wife of Peter the Great . . . a long line of noble and royal spouses, ending their strange stormy careers in the quiet of the Suzdal cloisters. In the archives were lengthy chronicles reciting their lusts, loves, intrigues, sainthood, devilhood, sufferings and miracles. Piles of ancient scrolls and modern brochures, impossible to wade through. I drew one out at random—a record written by Abbess Melitini on “The Life of the Great Princess Solomona, known in the Veil as Sophie.”

It begins with seven superlatives acclaiming the virtues of this orphan girl, a descendant of the Golden Horde. In the quiet seclusion of the *terem* she grew up a flower of grace, comeliness, modesty and piety. For such prizes the royal emissaries were hunting high and low over the Russian land. Great Prince Vassily was to take unto himself a bride, and of all the maidens good and beautiful, the loveliest and the best was to sit beside him on the throne.

By imperial *ukase*, Solomona, with fifteen hundred other maidens, was brought to the court in Moscow. A first general review reduced this number to five hundred. A second culling left a hundred and eight who were quartered in nine chambers of the Kremlin. Now the intensive inspection began in earnest. Solemn oaths from parents to conceal no defects in their daughters; attestations from physicians as to the virginity of the candidates; *boyars* debating their respective charms and merits; and Vassily, hidden behind secret panels and portières, making his own appraisal.

On the day of the great decision solemn services were held in the cathedral. Over black velvet carpets one by one the maidens came curtseying past the throne, waving their silken *mantikas*. "All eyes were fixed on the Great Prince, all hearts were frozen." Almost last came Solomona, and as she bowed low Vassily stepped down from the throne, lifted up the trembling girl, gave her his ring and a golden cross for all the court to kiss.

Thus at sixteen the orphan Tartar girl became queen of Moscow, the great *boyarinas* her ladies-in-waiting, the trumpeters heralding her comings and goings, the great prelates bringing her symbolic presents of bread, *kvas* and cabbage. A life of perfect bliss and harmony for the royal pair.

One rift however in the hymeneal lute that widened with the years. Solomona was childless. A-hunting in the woods Vassily would break into tears lamenting: "The birds have their young, the bears their cubs, the fishes swim

with their little ones in the deeps. Only I am without issue!"

Imploring the saints for a child, Solomona went on long pilgrimages, lavishing alms on cripples and beggars, covering the shrines with her own handiwork in silk and satin. Still no heir to the throne and the *boyars* were mumbling: "Let the unfruitful vine be cast from the vineyard!"

Vassily long held out against divorce. But, dazzled by the charms of Elena (mother-to-be of Ivan the Terrible), he capitulated. Solomona was ordered to be shorn and hooded and taken to a nunnery, an insult that set her dormant Tartar blood a-boiling and turned her into a lashing, tearing tigress that the bishops could not tame with whips.

Once within the convent, time wore down her fury, and graciously as she carried the crown she wore the veil. In life a very gentle perfect nun and after death famed as the Suzdal Wonder Worker. Besides the usual mir-

acles of healing at her shrine one glorious act of high revenge is recorded. That was in 1609 when Lisovsky was turning the Russian cities into ashes. Up surged the Tartar blood in Solomona's ghostly veins. Out of the tomb she rose, a hooded wraith and with burning candle fell upon the invader, scorching and flaying his right arm till it shriveled up and he fled in terror from the land.

With this story ends the record. An excellent chronicler, the Abbess Melitini, with a modern reporter's flair for news and a feminist delight in the gusty passions of Solomona.

Next morning we set forth to Pokrov nunnery—the shrine of Solomona. All the way Romonovsky was pointing out the technique of cupolas and domes, exulting over the treasures that lay beneath them. A devout votary of art, he judged others by their attitude towards it. All honor to the monks and nuns of old who devised these glories in stone and brick, in gold and lacquer. Deep contempt for their un-

worthy successors of to-day who painted over the ikons of the masters and marred the ancient architecture by hideous towers and bastions. Wreckers and wastrels despoiling the treasures they had inherited. With a sense of high service to the cause of art he was taking the control of them out of the hands of "these ignoramuses, the hooded vandals and barbarians of to-day."

This flow of imprecations was interrupted at the convent gate by a sudden "Good morning! Ivan Pokrovich!"

The greeting came from a tall comely person with big brown eyes peering out from under a snow-white hood, and a rope of big black beads dangling from her neck. The Abbess of the convent.

"Good morning, Marya Ivanovna," replied Romonovsky, "I'll take the keys to Trinity to-day."

"That was the pride of our nunnery," sighed the Abbess, "the heart of it all."

"And a rare example of sixteenth century

style," Romonovsky briskly went on. "Notice particularly the griffons and spandrels above the door. Also the cubic columns . . ."

"Through that door," interrupted the Abbess, "I must have passed a thousand times to midnight mass."

". . . the cubic columns," continued Romonovsky, "which harmonize with the balustrades of the stairway."

". . . and up that stairway," persisted the Abbess, "for fourteen years I went every evening to vespers."

". . . all in Byzantine style," continued Romonovsky, "but showing already definite Russian influence."

Thus the conversation, or rather the two monologues, jumped along on two distinct planes never remotely impinging on one another. Grotesque, impossible! It was a choice between the archeologist and the Abbess.

Art and architecture, I reasoned, would be here to gaze upon for centuries to come. But not the Abbess. Presently she would disappear

and with her the last of the long line that reached back into the thirteenth century. So I chose the Abbess and through a labyrinth she led us to a house banked high with lilacs.

"The priory!" she exclaimed stately and imperiously. "Here I received His Highness the Emperor."

We entered the house swarming now with orphans of the war, waifs of the hunger time, living on black bread and soup. Amazing the amount of noise, laughter and piano-thumping that came out of this meager diet.

"Once it was so quiet and orderly," sighed the Abbess. "And now look at it! Disorder and dirt and shouting."

"And once," blurted out the Communist girl irrepressibly, "it sheltered five or six nuns, and now it shelters a hundred children. Isn't that much better?"

"This is the service of man," replied the Abbess with quiet dignity. "But there is something higher. There is the service of God."

"And what's that?" queried the Communist.

"Why, that was what all our whole life was devoted to. Up in the morning at four. Matins from five to eight. Selling ikons and candles and holy water to pilgrims. Vespers. Then our needle-work. Almost any price we asked for our lace and embroideries. Fourteen years with hardly a moment of grief or worry. Now see what I've come to!"

Through the wooden dormitories she led us to her little "cell" fragrant with flowers and spotlessly clean as the white bands on her nun's attire. She served us carrot tea and bread prepared with sugar-beet juice, sweet as cake. Then she laid out before us her little treasures and heirlooms, crosses of crystal, bone and Ural stone. Last and most precious of all a china cup.

"The very one the Tsar drank out of when he visited us in 1913? Such a kind and good and gentle soul. But, oh, so tired. He stayed with us a long time, resting."

The Abbess was transfigured as she spoke, a luminous tenderness in her big brown eyes, her

whole person vibrant with a strange magnetism of blended sensualism and mysticism, piety and voluptuous feeling. Small wonder the tired Tsar long tarried in her room.

Brooding over sweet remembrances she fell into a reverie out of which she was jarred by the query of the Communist.

"But the Revolution! What did you do when the Tsar was overthrown?"

"We prayed to God."

"And then the second revolution—the Bolshevik?"

"We didn't know one from the other. We only knew that Antichrist was loose, that terrible things were going on in the world, and we prayed God that our nunnery should be spared."

"That was terribly egoistic, wasn't it?" continued the Communist relentlessly. "All the world filled with hungry and wounded and dying and you off in your little corner praying God to look after you."

"Maybe it was. But that's the way we were taught—to pray."

"Well, it didn't help you very much, did it?" said the Communist brutally.

"That was God's will," replied the Abbess softly. Then for the first time losing self-control she turned upon her heckler and burst out:

"But you! You don't know the meaning of that!"

"Quite so, but I know the meaning of economic determinism, class solidarity and the proletarian revolution!"

Strange meaningless phrases that baffled the Abbess and left her staring blankly at the Communist as a creature from another world. One thing only the two women had in common. Both were daughters of peasants. That was all. The one at fourteen years of age had gone into a factory, the other into a nunnery. The one had made her own way through twenty countries; the other had lived in a little world bounded by high stone walls. The one had

known hunger, strikes, jail and carried the scars of them; the other had known the sheltered life in a privileged order. The dreams of the one had been filled with pictures of the blessed life together with the saints in glory; the visions of the other concerned the building in this world of a brotherhood for all.

In the persons of these two women the thirteenth century came face to face with the twentieth. Wider than the gulf between the Abbess and the archeologist was this that stretched between her and the agitator. They were universes apart, speaking alien tongues, thinking alien thoughts. A tense impossible situation, happily resolved by the Communist rising and walking out of the "cell."

One more ordeal of the Abbess was over, and in glad relief she flung off all caution or reserve. A long litany of her woes mingled with weird stories of punishments visited upon the persecutors of God's people: The blasphemer struck blind by the ikon of the Virgin that wept tears of blood; the son miraculously born to Saint

Sophie to avenge her wrongs; the comet with a tail like a cross that terrorized the Tartar raiders into panic and death; the sacred sea-gulls of Solovetz that saved the monastery from the bombardment of the British Squadron—they flew out by thousands, completely hiding the island with their wings, or pecking at the eyes of the gunners to put them off their aim.

I listened attentively, not crossing or contradicting her as did those Antichrists, the archeologist and the agitator, while the Abbess continued to pour forth her most secret hopes and hates and pent-up passions:

“God is trying his people. But the Mother of God will not forget us. Faithful unto Her, we will be faithful unto us. All the pains we suffer shall be inflicted on our enemies a hundredfold. A miracle will come, a sheet of lightning, an earthquake to destroy the Antichrists, and restore us the nunnery. But how long! How long! Surely the time must be at hand!”

The Abbess paused and gathered up her little heirlooms. Last of all she wiped the china cup and set it in its place upon the ikon shelf, remarking, half musingly, half in query:

"How long will it be before he returns to us?"

For the moment I was puzzled, not guessing that she was speaking of the Tsar. Then I said:

"But he's dead!"

"No, he isn't dead," she asserted firmly. "He was saved by a soldier. Anya heard all about it when she was in Moscow. I'll call her in."

There entered a bent, wrinkled old nun who, after drinking some cold carrot tea, related the legend that afterwards I was to hear in varying versions. This is the substance of it:

When Kerensky was in power he placed the Tsar in a little cottage in a side street of Tsarskoe Selo. There in a tiny garden with shrubs and flower-beds and vegetables the Tsar would work all day with spade and water-

sprinkler. One day as he approached the gate, the sentinel, lowering his bayonet, challenged:

"Citizen! Stand back!"

"Citizen!" exclaimed the Tsar, with a bitter smile. "Since when am I 'citizen'?"

The soldier was deeply touched. He, a simple soldier addressing his monarch as "citizen." Red with shame he bowed before the Tsar, saying:

"Forgive me, Your Majesty! If you want to be free give me your overcoat and sprinkler and take my uniform and rifle!"

Hastily donning the disguise, the Tsar said, "When I am on the throne again I'll make you Minister and give you a palace!"

The soldier began watering the flowers, while the Tsar stood on guard. When the relief patrol came up he walked out of the gate and went abroad. But later he returned to Russia, to the Monastery of Sarov. There in cassock and wooden sandals, feeding on bread and water, he prays for sinful Russia, waiting till God shall make him Emperor again.

Also a new story about two billions of gold, deposited in a Paris bank by Maria Fedorovna, the Tsar's mother, as a bequest to the Russian people on one condition: they should put an end to the Soviet.

"It would be just like her," nodded the Abbess. "The Tsar himself was always giving things away. He gave me a beautiful golden cross for the altar."

Thus amidst the wreck of their little world, the Abbess and her sisterhood now reached back to sweet memories of the happy past, now buoyed up their spirits with apocalyptic visions of the happy future, restoring the Tsar to his throne, the nuns to their nunneries, in dreams and legends saving themselves from utter desolation and despair. It needed but one reason for hope, one touch of reality to drive out all these phantasies.

This hope and reality entered the room in the person of a hard-headed, hard-legged nun who had footed it most of the way from Nijni. Astounding news she brought with her. The

Pechersky Convent was now the Pechersky Commune! And the nuns were Communards! The old order had been reconstituted as an artel of workers. Under the new name they retained their "cells" and one of their chapels. They had been granted a tract of land. They were tilling it and they were contented.

If this could be done in Nijni, why not in Suzdal? On the way she had put this question to the Volost Soviet and the answer had been: "Nothing in the law to prevent it." As a commune they had rights to a certain norm of plowland and pasture—maybe garden plots in which to grow mint and chicory.

A sudden full face about in the conversation. Out of the clouds the little sisterhood came down to earth. Literally so. The room hummed with questions about land. How much land and where? How divide the time between chapel services and field work? Where to find money for plows and seeds?

"We can find it in our needles," said the nun from Nijni. "We can sew Soviet emblems

and slogans on red banners like the Pechersky Convent is doing."

Some murmurings against this.

"Why not?" insisted the nun from Nijni. "If we are going to use hammers and sickles in our work, why not embroider them on banners?"

A chorus of "Yeses!" For the first time a little laughter. There were even good words for Communists. And they had just been calling them Antichrists, calling on God to destroy them! Such was the revolution wrought by the prospect of land and income. Most marked the ravages of economic determinism on the Abbess. Three hours earlier rigidly limiting "services of God" to vigils, prayers, fasting and candle-burning. Now to these works of merit adding—plowing, harvesting, threshing.

A return to the soil. At the same time a return to the thirteenth century, to the first principles of the monastic orders, to the traditions of the forest-felling, stone-cutting, swamp-draining monks of old. For those first convents

and hermitages were built by the straining muscles of the inmates who lived within them. In the sweat of their faces the Black Sea Coast was planted with orange and mandarin groves. With their calloused hands the rocky barren islands of Solovetz were reclaimed from the Arctic Seas. With peasant respect for physical toil went respect for the toilers. Even Peter the Great had to be cautious in his mild measures against the monasteries, fearing to rouse the people to resistance.

Centuries pass. Riches come rolling into the monasteries, fat rolling up on the friars. The old story of wealth, corruption and moral decline. And everywhere crying opportunities for a toiling, serving, teaching order. Around Suzdal an illiterate peasantry, sixty per cent unable to read or write, a primitive system of agriculture, roads through which the horses flounder belly-deep in mud.

But what matters this to the fable-spinning, flesh-wallowing, ease-loving monks of to-day? Even the suggestion that it was their concern

would be met with amazement or lofty disdain. So complete their break with the toiling tradition, so total their estrangement from the masses.

Now the Revolution had a terrible need of these masses. All the bells of the monasteries beating a furious alarm, calling the peasants to rise and come to their aid against the Reds. But not a hand raised in their defense. All loyalty and allegiance has long since been forfeited. Without hindrance the Soviet proceeds—not as Peter the Great to restrict the monastic orders—but to abolish, suppress, extinguish them altogether.

I enter the market-square just as the drays laden with the spoils from Evfimiy Monastery go driving through the peasant throng. On the rough cobbles they swing from side to side like huge censers, throwing off the fumes of incense from bales of cassocks, robes and altar-cloths. In vain I scan the faces of the peasants for some sign of dissent or disapproval. They sniff the pungent odor. They joke and chaffer. They

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pass the rusty alms' box bearing the legend, "Give to the Glory of Martyr of God Evfimy," and gather round a red and black poster showing a hand thrust out through prison bars appealing, "Give for the relief of revolutionists in foreign jails."

That night we walked on top of the earth embankment winding round the town. Against these ramparts rolled the Golden Hordes of Batai Khan, their slopes now gay with daisies and dandelions growing out of soil soaked with the blood of Christian and infidel. In full splendor the June moon rose behind the low hills and striking cupola and turret, flung strange cubic spheric shadows across our path. The river like a silver snake sprawled across the plain. On the far meadows, blurred outlines of the grazing herds. A perfume-laden breeze blowing from the honeysuckle bastion. The chiming of a bell singularly soft and sweet. And yellow gleaming amidst the jumble

of buildings below us, the little candle-lit window of the Abbess.

To Tikhomirov I spoke about the plans of the Abbess and her toiling commune.

He shrugged his shoulders. "Too late! New times! The bricks that went into monasteries we will put into roads and bridges and electric stations. The gold and pictures they put on the altar-screen we will put into schools and clubs. In Russia the convent, cloister days are gone forever."

"But the age-old needs of the soul! Since time began, man has built retreats and refuges to flee from the sins and sorrows and torments of the world."

"If it were a world without sorrow and torment, a just and happy world, he wouldn't want to flee from it. That's the kind of world we are going to build."

"Going to—yes. But what have you built?"

"Not much as yet. We've been busy clearing away the débris. Besides, we've had but

RUSSIA

ten years while they had ten centuries. Give us twenty, thirty years more and we'll build a world of peace between nations and races, a classless, warless world, a world without slaves or idlers . . ."

He took off his red-starred helmet. His mask of cynicism dropped away. In glowing words rose up a vision of the future—fair and alluring as the golden city a few days ago gleaming before us on the distant plains—the vision of the good society that through centuries has haunted the dreamers and lovers of mankind.

The Monastic Age may have passed in Russia, but not the Age of Faith.



HALF THE BATTLE

BY BARCLAY BARON

*"To conquer hate would be to end the
strife of all the ages, but for men to
know one another is not difficult, and
it is half the battle."*

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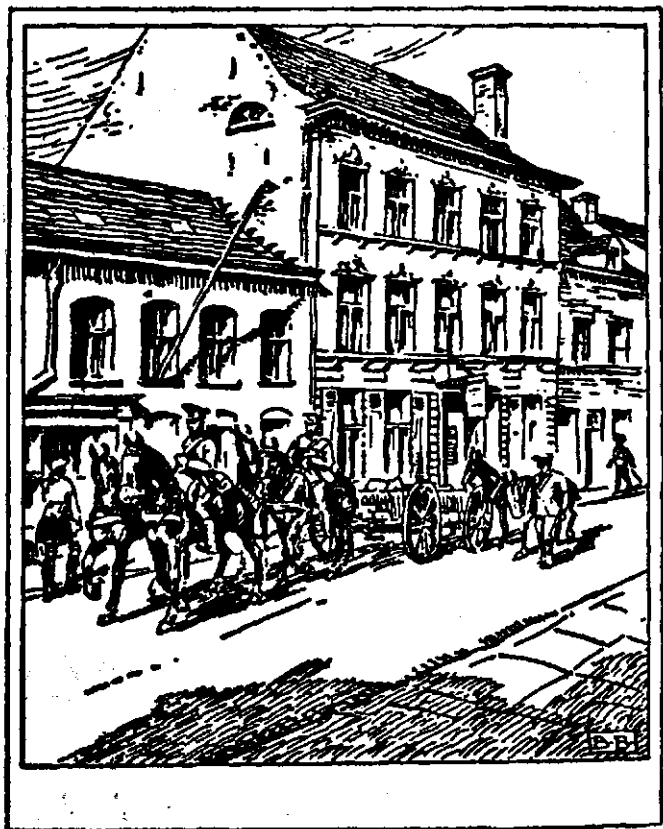
A NOTE ON NAMES.

1. *Talbot House*, in Poperinghe, opened on December 15, 1915, was named after Gilbert Talbot, Lieut., Rifle Brigade, who was killed at Hooze on July 30, 1915. He was the youngest son of the Bishop of Winchester, and of him it has been said that he would have been to English public life what Rupert Brooke began to be to English letters. His elder brother, Neville Talbot, then senior padre of the 6th Division and now Bishop of Pretoria, helped to found the House. *Little Talbot House* in Ypres was named after its parent in Poperinghe.

2. *Toc H.* is merely an affectionate diminutive for *Talbot House*. It explains itself to soldiers, but needs translation for the benefit of others. To avoid dangerous confusions between A and K, or between B, D and T, etc., in transmitting messages orally, the Army signaller used an alphabet of his own, which began *Ack* (e.g., *Ack Emma*=a.m.), *Beer*, *C*, *Don* . . . and in which *Toc* stood for T. *Toc H.*, therefore=T.H.—*Talbot House*. This form of the name was not adopted just for fun, but because a Woman's Settlement in Camberwell, London, S.E. (founded by Dr. Talbot when Bishop of Southwark) already bore the name *Talbot House* before the war, and confusion would have been inevitable.

3. *Mark* has long been a term in the Army to denote a particular pattern in a series of anything; cartridges and shells, for instance, are stamped *Mark So-and-so*. It has been adopted by *Toc H.* as a convenient way of naming its hostels, in the order of their foundation, *Mark I*, *Mark II*, etc.

The story of the House in the war has been told much more adequately in *Tales of Talbot House*, by Rev. P. B. Clayton (Revised Edition, 2/6). The following pages are but an impression of the place, not a substitute for that book.



Talbot House, Poperinghe.

HALF THE BATTLE

CHAPTER I

THE HOUSE THAT LOVE BUILT

FOR over four years, as most people still remember, the enemy looked towards Ypres as one of his most coveted goals, and expended on it daily, almost hourly effort of some kind, not to mention three battles for it on the grand scale. The ancient city itself, together with many miles of farm-land in front of it and several behind, recorded this history most faithfully; day by day it grew shabbier and yet more glorious, less habitable and more inhabited. What it lost in commercial value to the Belgian citizen, it more than gained to the British race as a symbol of unity of idea and fortitude of body, mind and spirit.

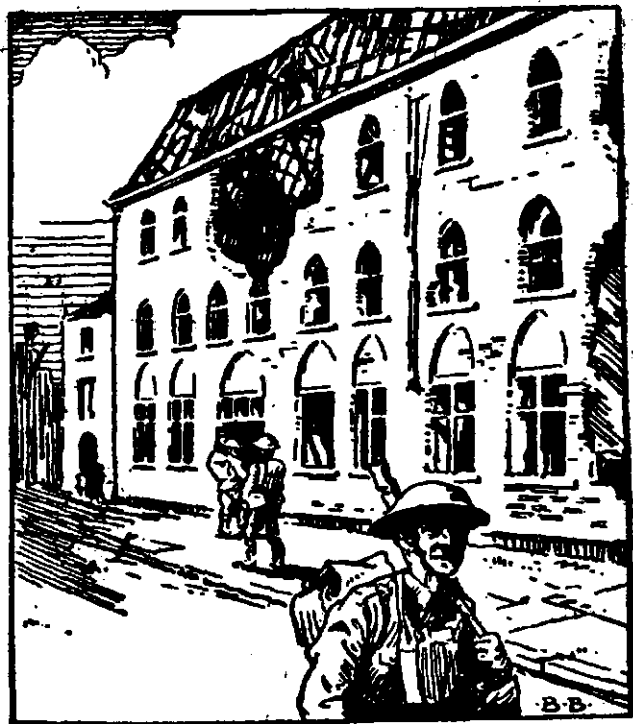
In the course of the struggle almost every division in the British Army took its turn among the goal-keepers of Ypres. They marched up by day or by night in an endless succession—Londoners, Scotsmen, the men of Tyneside or the Midlands or the West Country, Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders—and they whistled as they marched, some because they had so little conception of what they were going to and others because they knew only too well. As they marched down again they were apt to whistle still, partly for the sake of the "rest" ahead and partly to forget the nameless things which they had left behind. On this return journey they always covered a little less of the road, for keeping goal at Ypres cost our side alone 250,000 men dead during the four years.

There was, indeed, for the vast majority of men, only one road which led to and from Ypres. It ran out westward by the railway station on to the monotonous and sodden levels of this Flanders country; it ran pretty straight and if produced, after the manner of Euclid, it would have landed, like William the Conqueror, at Pevensey on the Sussex coast. This fact, though stated with rather less topographical accuracy, provided the uppermost thought in the minds of the men who used the road out of Ypres. The trees which should have made a sleepy road pleasant in summer, had been reduced to dissolute skeletons by the wear and tear of war, and the marching surface, originally a ribbon of *pavé* between two borders of deepish mud, had been transformed into creditable macadam by steam-rollers and the shovels of Labour Battalions, agents equally deliberate, but equally sure. The wayside scenery was "nothing to write home about": with the brave and curious exception of the Goldfish Château, the houses for the first few straight miles had no roofs or other outstanding features. At Vlammertinghe there was a kink in this monotonous stretch which, on market day before this history opens, had called attention to a "good pull-up for carmen," but a cross-road and a railway station, occurring just in front of it, made loitering in war-time unhealthy. For the rest, marching men noticed nothing in "Vlam." save the upstanding angle of the church tower (an obelisk to commemorate a former civilisation), a windmill on the left-hand side with a red cross over the roof and many stretchers in the yard, and an immense hop warehouse opposite. The road for the succeeding miles was just as featureless and as muddy, until it arrived and halted in an enormous paved square, the dirty palm of a deformed hand, whose five fingers of streets spread out vaguely into the surrounding country. This was "Pop.," a place so graceless in itself and so void of interest that the pre-war or strictly

post-war tourist can hope to imagine neither the halo of light (strictly behind shutters) and laughter which surrounded it, nor yet the swift terror which often descended into it from 1914 to 1918. It was the first collection of houses, to one coming out of Ypres, which still served their proper purpose as homes and not mere hiding-places. It contained the first shops, where real buttons and tobacco and souvenir handkerchiefs could still be bought from real shopkeepers. You could still order omelettes from old women who, at some risk of their lives be it duly said, learnt to make them in unprecedented quantity, to speak excellent English and to grow rich. You could sit in an *estaminet* with so-called beer and very palpable music—above ground. And you could even go to the pictures every evening if so minded.

So much has been said only to show that Poperinghe held a particular and unique position in regard to the Ypres Salient. A freak of geography and the plans of the German General Staff made it what it was to our men—no longer an absurd and squalid village, but, in the words of a song then current, something like "a little bit of Heaven." But what now concerns us specially is that in the very heart of it, within sight of the square and facing into the street which held most of the ceaseless traffic of the war in those parts, there stood a house which summed up more completely than anything else the character of Pop. at its best. It had the light and warmth and noise of a super-*estaminet*, and its drinks, if different, were certainly not less comforting. Its music was better, its laughter had more grounds, and its entertainment was far more varied. If the average Belgian *gasthuis* was only rather like a public house in the Mile End Road, the furnishing of this House was, in patches, exactly like everybody's home in England, Scotland or overseas. There was real wallpaper on the walls (and no "recreation hut for the troops," could boast of these

homely pink roses), suggestions of a mat on the floor here and there, pictures in frames not even of propaganda patriotism, but normally domestic, curtains which turned not only a dark face to the German night-flier, but a cheerful one to the lighted room within, and chairs with arms and real cushions. These simple things being in such a place and under the imminent shadow of the work which went on ceaselessly so few miles away, were valued out of all proportion to their intrinsic beauty. Nor was this all or the chief contribution of the House to the soldier. The relaxation, refreshment and encouragement sought by men who had come out of the line yesterday or were going into it this evening consisted of more than a chair, a cup of tea or even a piano: they did not live by bread alone. Here the House, being indeed a tall house and not a dug-out under the ground or a wooden hut squatting upon it, was well adapted to meet their need. Its different floors provided exactly the comparative degrees of space and quietness by which a man rises from the satisfaction of his most elementary to that of his most fundamental necessities. He side-stepped out of the street (and out of the war as far as might be) on to the ground floor, leaving his mules outside or his pack just inside the front door, and he found the drought in his throat and the hole in his middle immediately confronted by the canteen. Here the primitive pleasure of making a noise with one's boots and one's voice suffered no check. Here, also, there was a concert room in the garden, where the organized use of both was encouraged, and a garden itself where a man might lie at length in summer digesting his biscuits and even dozing a little. The very notices which abounded and blossomed to meet every emergency, put the visitor, whatever his rank, at full ease. As he crossed the threshold he was greeted by that ~~man~~ which pointed at him with the legend, not "It's your money we want," but "*Pessi-*



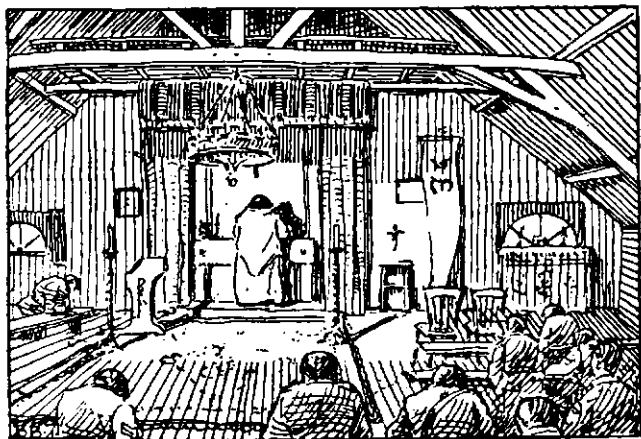
Little Talbot House, Ypres.

mists, *emergency exit.*" A grin crept over his face at this word of command, and he was at once disqualified to act on it. With the second notice, printed very plain, his welcome was made complete. It ran: "*If you are in the habit of spitting on the carpet at home, please spit here.*" Each man acted according—in spite of there being no visible carpet. The ground floor, then, left no doubt that the house was out to cater for a man's bodily needs.

To climb the stairs, winding and not too well-lighted, was to ascend to the realm of the human mind. The very notice at the half-way turn indicated that much: "*No Amy Robsart stunts on these stairs, please,*" and the next step put a man in the Library ("*This is a Library, not a Dormitory,*" he was warned in print) to discover or re-discover the literary allusion. The food provided ranged from Nat Gould to Bimetalism and Pastoral Theology, and it was all thumb-marked and consumed by somebody sooner or later. On this floor also was the Chaplain's room, of which a word later, for it was the pivot round which the kaleidoscope of the House revolved.

A man might, and often did, however, climb still higher, past a maze of smaller rooms all full of something for somebody, until he came to the foot of a ladder. This was a very proper figure of "the steep ascent of Heaven," or of that ladder which the patriarch and, more recently, the poet saw "'twixt Heaven and Charing Cross"—that prosaic-romantic Charing Cross where perhaps a man had said his real good-bye a week ago when he entrained with his draft, and at which it is quite conceivable that he may be detrain'd a week hence into an ambulance. The ladder was short and only intended for the passage of one Belgian to inspect his hops or his lumber in the great loft to which it gave access. As it was, a hundred and fifty men required to make use of it at once, and as an exit for them in a moment of danger it would

have been merely preposterous. In point of fact, this loft, though at the top of the building, which was in itself a storey higher than those on either side of it, was never evacuated when in use on the occasions, none too rare, of shelling or bombing in the town round about. For it had an air of serenity and safety which compelled all its visitors; it seemed so surely to be possessed by the Presence which men came to seek in



The Upper Room at Poperinghe

it, that "neither death nor life, things present or things to come" were of account just then. This loft stretched over the whole area of the house, its largest room, in peace time its least-regarded, but now the crown of all the work and thought and happiness and fresh resolve which went on continually beneath it. It was in this upper room that tens of thousands of men found the best gift among many in the House.

This chapel became in process of time not only the most beautiful place in the House, but in all Pop. Its very centre was the simplest of its features—the old,

worn carpenter's bench transported from an outhouse and found most fitting as an altar for the Carpenter of Nazareth. Every ornament used in it had some honourable history as a spontaneous offering of love or as a memorial of someone much loved. And every week of the war added to its greatest enrichment, as men knelt to receive the Body broken and the Blood poured out, the hallowing of their own offering of body and blood from which they had just returned or to which they were about to go. Thus, without paradox, the foundation-stone of the House was built into the top of it; this was at once its highest and its simplest, its most fundamental and most intelligible secret.

Such was the House in Poperinghe. Its welcome was given as we have suggested to almost every Division in the British Army in turn. Its chapel served a parish co-extensive with the whole Ypres Salient; some of its parishioners were to be found on every front in the war, and those who survive are now scattered across the world. In the winter of 1917, just two years after its opening (December 15th, 1915), a smaller edition of it captured the slightly shop-soiled lace factory in the Rue de Lille at Ypres. This was a true Daughter House (it would be absurd, under the circumstances, to call it a "Chapel-of-Ease") and carried on the same things in the same spirit—with such limitations as were obvious to all dwellers in that much-tested place. No one save the enemy was to blame for the shortness of its history. But even those six months were worth it beyond all computation.

* * * * *

"There was," said *Punch*, "a Talbot House in Poperinghe from 1915 to 1918, and it had an annexe in Little Talbot House in Ypres from the November of 1917 to the dark days before the final counter-stroke in 1918. Both were in the danger zone; both brought a corner of Heaven into the Hell of men's and officers' lives."

CHAPTER II

WHAT'S THE GAME?

THE British soldier—to the great scandal of the German professional—persisted in regarding war as for the time being, the National Game, an “International” of unexampled dimensions. He could, therefore, never quite cure himself of the habit of being funny about it, and that very often when he was most in earnest or most utterly wearied. Whereas the enemy kicked off with the solemn boast that six weeks would see him win, our side grew accustomed to say that “the last ten years would be the worst.” This was, on the surface, a jest, but it contained hidden in it a complete summary of the confident doggedness and shy gallantry of a team which was to suffer reverses but not to know defeat. To the average player on this incalculable field, with its shifty touch-line and its puzzling change of rules, the war was undeniably an interesting and exciting game at irregular intervals, infinitely more risky than Rugger on a frosty day, but also, in the long run (and it *was* so long), by far the most boring game in which he had ever taken part. It was unfamiliar and uncongenial, but he picked it up wonderfully soon, and by the time that perfectly respectable British citizens (whether earls from Earl’s Court or pork-butchers from Plymouth or bronco busters from the Far West) had learnt to imitate the gait of reptiles and settled down for weeks, months, whole years, to share the homes of rats, it seemed as if war, as a whole, had become too grim and too

squalidly business-like to be classed as an adventure. Yet a game the war remained to the end. Sportsmanship, under extreme provocation at times, continued to be prized, and loyalty to a team—a regiment or a platoon—always moved the soldier when speeches about "Civilisation" or "The Empire" left him cold. Those who were actually engaged in winning knew that the "fixture" had not been of their making, and that much thought on the subject would be intolerable. The world, since the war, seems to be gaining an insight into the reckless stupidity of this game as a whole; what it has never fully realised, and seems likely soon to forget, is the patience, confidence, good humour and simplicity of courage shown from first to last by countless men, without names in history, who took part. After all, the game was redeemed from being nothing more than the Devil's grandest joke by the spirit of these players, which rose so high and endured so steadily, uncomplaining and selfless except in the least things, and which won at long last.

The job of Talbot House in Poperinghe (which was behind the touch-line, though sometimes near being over it) was, as we have seen, to fortify the men who kept goal before Ypres, to receive with every kind of comfort available those who came off the field, and to cheer those who were on their way to it. At every turn it made use of the sporting frame of mind of the soldier, his amazing humour which seemed to rise in inverse ratio to his comfort and which was the cloak of his courage, his craving to take rest by absorbing himself in games of any kind, his constant endeavour to "keep fit" not only in body, but in mind and spirit. Even his offers of service to the House, made shyly in his scanty spare time, were to be taken as evidences of that sporting nature which enjoys giving and striving when there is no need. Voluntary labour, from the renewing of pen-nibs by a subaltern in the library, to the carving of candlesticks by a corporal

for the chapel, helped to make the House what it was—to every man a playground and a possession, not a charity.

But there is one characteristic of British sport on which Talbot House laid a special hold—its unequalled power of drawing men together. It is obvious enough in peace-time that men, who on normal working days live and move poles apart, are best able to rub minds, as well as shoulders, at Lord's or during a Cup-tie. Whatever be their occupations during the day, the final scores in the stop-press provide the literature of three-quarters of them, without distinction of class, on the homeward suburban train. This is the national bond, and the war gave fuller proof of it than any other game. Men in Flanders were drawn close together, out of many smaller worlds of their own into one, not only by a common obedience and a common adversity, but by precisely that feeling which converts eleven individuals into one Soccer team. The words *Everyman's Club* on the notice-board which swung over the heads of all who passed in and out of the doors of Talbot House from 1915 to 1918 did not betoken merely a general heartiness, but bore a precise meaning. It meant that both officers and "Other Ranks" were freemen of every part of this place, and that the list of its committee of management might start with a corps commander but would certainly end with a private.

And that meaning was made almost shockingly clear by a further notice-board on one of the doors on the first floor of the house. This board was of unexplained design—like a wooden rainbow standing on a wooden horizon. The rainbow bore the words: *All rank abandon ye who enter here*, and the horizon *Chaplain's Room*.

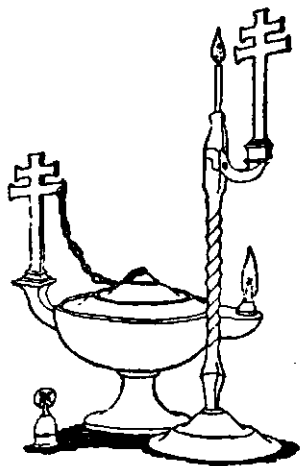
If you would push open the door of this room, as you were intended to do, you would often be able to read the meaning of the notice at a glance. For

seated at a very intimate table there would be an officer, bound in brass and with those strips of red flannel on his collar (whether he were a staff captain or a corps commander did not, in the circumstances, signify) and facing him, their knees almost touching his, two "Other Ranks." Those who know the Army best will appreciate how awkward a situation and a silence was likely to be thus created. But there was a very palpable connecting link in the shape of a man and a teapot, whose comfortable figures were indeed curiously alike. This man was to be recognized as a padre by his heart rather than by his sleeve, for ten to one he was dressed in an old blue blazer with the frayed vestiges of an Oxford college crest on the pocket and a pair of badly creased khaki shorts. The best way to open an Englishman's mouth, it has been said, is to put something into it, and so the tea and cake played a real part in breaking the first embarrassment of silence. Further, tea and cake shared between these four under the peculiar conditions of the time and place, partook of the nature of a simple sacrament. For *here*, at least, as the notice had said, all rank was abandoned; the crossed swords and the worsted chevron alike had been, so to speak, left outside on the doormat. Common ground of interest was certain soon to emerge. It happened, maybe, that the general and the lance-corporal both hailed from Bradford and loved it all the more from not having seen it for six months, and that the gunner had a tale to tell of Australia. Moreover, the padre had something—"light-hearted or high-minded" to say on most subjects. These were just four men, bound in a common cause who had not realised until this afternoon just how closely their real selves belonged to one another.

Now such an incident, the very simplicity of which was its spice and charm, was a commonplace beneath the roof of Talbot House, but might seem at super-

ficial sight to run counter to the whole theory of an army in the field. The rainbow notice was, in point of fact, misinterpreted on one or two occasions by men in authority as being "subversive of discipline." If it came down in obedience to the letter of orders, it always went up again, out of conviction that it did not violate the underlying spirit of all ranks. Although it would appear that the War Office has a special department whose sole purpose is to tie men up in little parcels with different coloured string and to see that the string does not come undone, behind each man's colour and insignia there remains the man himself. Having admitted—what is perfectly obvious—that in so serious a game as war a team of a million or even of ten men cannot be allowed merely to mob about the field, we are brought back to the human character, the soul of individuals, every time, as the secret of success or failure of the whole. Clothed with the little brief authority of two pips on the shoulder or a crown on the forearm, some men did no doubt seek to rule during the war, but these could never become the real leaders; in crisis a follower looks for more than that. But when young Captain Smith, who played cricket for Marlborough only last summer-term, "went West" one dark night on Passchendaele, a hundred Welsh miners, accustomed to his quaint accent in "Form Fours," said little, but deeply mourned a friend. And when plain Colonel Jones was caught in a very tight corner one May morning in '18, his bat-man ("never likely to prove an efficient soldier") did not stop to think whether it was worth while to stake his own life against an impossible chance; he gave it without any thought at all. It must be true that nothing short of the spirit of such understandings between man and man would have availed for the final victory. They were the unspectacular, but the only real glories of war. And so—on a lesser scale only because the proof at the moment was less—the men

round the tea-table at Talbot House became aware of each other's worth. Next day, the Australian gunner chanced to encounter the "Imperial" brass hat in the Rue de Boeschepe, and saluted him—perhaps after a manner not inborn in Australian gunners. The signs of recognition under their official masks might have escaped the notice of any third party, but neither of them had forgotten the cake which they had eaten together, slice for slice, or some of the words that had passed between them the day before. Thus did Talbot House do nothing to subvert that essential military discipline which in the last resort is based upon fear, but it cemented that higher discipline between men which often needs emergency to make it plain, and which is rooted in love. Normal circumstances outside often went against it, but within the walls of "Everyman's Club" it happened normally. But not by mere accident—for this was the game of Talbot House.



CHAPTER III

DARKNESS AND DELIVERANCE

IN Poperinghe, as in every other place on the Western Front, the darkest hours were before the dawn. Christmas Day, 1917, might be taken as an arbitrary date for the gloomiest day of the war. The road from Pop. to Ypres was wrapped in drifting fog, not really dense, but dirty, grey and icy cold. This physical condition, a sort of meaningless inaction of the elements as compared to the bracing violence of a storm, found its counterpart in the mood of our men. The summer campaign had been reduced time and again by bad weather to disappointment, and the autumn had been filled by the unrelenting agony of Passchendaele with its bitter losses and, as it seemed to those engaged, its altogether trifling gains. For the first time, on any general scale, the faith of the men wavered, the mind of the staff appeared to hesitate, and in the heart of the army a more insidious enemy seemed to be taking the field than any it had yet faced. *Morale*, sometimes preached *ad nauseam* to troops when they least needed such encouragement, touched its lowest mark—though only, as the world was to witness soon after, to leap again to its highest. Men who during the years past had cursed cheerfully at every fate now began to murmur in secret. Admitted grievances over rations, leave and pay, hitherto openly grouched about, now took on a turn of intense bitterness. There was some increase in desertion—the fighting man's most tragic lapse—and bad feeling between officers and men was exaggerated into a dangerous threat of disunion. The interminable strain of the war could be borne by men while they were mov-

ing beyond their strength towards impossible objectives, but it brought them nearest to breaking point when they had to sit still. What was it all for? To what purpose did so many of our best friends lie up there, drowned in that damnable mud? When would it end, and after all, how? And this was Christmas Day—back yonder there should be holiday, a cosy room, the kids, the angels' song, the Birthday of Peace. . . .

Before this situation, without serious precedent, the authorities, who work mysteriously somewhere in the background of the grand game, were frankly perplexed. They made an honest effort to restore the failing spirit and they chose the method of still more concert parties, cinemas, football matches—"anything to stop the men thinking too much." Among the diversions to hand, Talbot House and every institution which purveyed buns, billiards, music and general jollity were clearly to be reckoned. There was need now for the House to redouble its effort if it was to shake off the heaviness of spirit which threatened to reign there as everywhere else, and to apply itself with a fresh mind to a new situation. It must be said here, without discourtesy to those same Authorities who had backed the House so splendidly from the start, that its method did not in all things follow the official lead. Beyond the cheerfulness of entertainment in many guises, it sought quietly and steadily to make men think, to bring their grievances into the open of an informal meeting at which officers of true and kindly wisdom were present. This was made known to the Authorities and allowed by them to succeed. And perhaps those four thousand motley books in the library, and the quiet Celebrations or loud-voiced evening services in the chapel lifted heavier loads from men who used them then than at any other time. Even the winter of our greatest discontent came to an end, and the spring drew on.

And then the storm burst. There is no call to attempt the indescribable here, for it has been so often attempted. It will never be forgotten by the survivors? On their heads in those days the ends of the world did indeed seem to have come, and there will always be awe mixed with their thanksgiving. "The March Show" is their common curt phrase, the whole meaning of which strangers can never guess. As far as the Ypres Salient was concerned it was an April-May "show"; March, 1918, passed in an ominous stillness in which all eyes were turned towards the south. It cannot be said that Pop. itself was a quiet or healthy residence by the end of the month, for the enemy began his preparation for attack by a fortnight's systematic shelling of the devoted town and the areas behind it. More civilians than usual were killed and a great many evacuated. Shops put up their shutters, only to have their fronts blown away. Easter Day found Talbot House still open, but its congregations woefully reduced in numbers. By the middle of April only its lower parts were in use and those skilfully sandbagged—with sacks of official "Propaganda" which a kindly department at home had provided for another but not better use. The House, indeed, was officially closed several times, but always with a crack for those who knew the ways of that big, white, double door which since 1915 had forgotten how to shut. It was not until nearly the end of May 1918, that orders no longer to be disregarded brought the close of a long chapter in Everyman's Club. Kemmel Hill had fallen (and those who stand upon it to-day can still guess what that implied to the men in the Salient), the enemy was before the walls of Ypres, though never over them, and lines of trenches were being dug for a retiring army right back to the sea. But the Second Army did not retire on Boulogne. The barometer of its spirit, after a flicker here and there, rose and remained

at Set Fair. The last stage, and perhaps the most wonderful of all in the great game, was being played.

By the summer, as everyone knows, the tide had turned and was flowing back over a desolate country which we had won and held and lost and won again at so unspeakable a price. The darkness rolled back and disclosed the battered little town of Pop. Shopkeepers came again to rebuild their roofs and re-stock their shelves. Talbot House (after a dim period of exile in "Dingley Dell," which is not on any map) actually re-opened its doors, but its customers and its worshippers were gone, its work for the time of War accomplished. To follow the army was at first sight tempting, but the arrival (without means of transport) of the mountain of impedimenta which embodied the House in such a place as Courtrai would have been the signal for the army to move on to Brussels, as surely as carrying an umbrella induces a sunny day.

Poperinghe to-day is an excessively plain little Belgian town, with nothing to offer the curious save memories of a war of which nearly all outward marks have vanished. The wallpaper inside a certain tall house in the main street is varied by a small board, bearing these words:—

"NISI DOMINUS FRUSTRA—*During the Great War this House was famous throughout the British Armies. It was called Talbot House in memory of Lieut. Gilbert Talbot of the Rifle Brigade, who died in action near Sanctuary Wood in July, 1915. The house was rented from its owner, M. Coevoet-Camerlynck, in December, 1915, and remained through three stormy years the playroom of the troops who held the Salient. Providentially immune through all bombardments, Talbot House closed, its work accomplished, in December, 1918. In the Chapel constructed by the Queen's Westminster Rifles, in the large Upper Room, many thousands of Officers and Men received the Blessed Sacrament. P. B. Clayton, Garrison Chaplain.***"**

CHAPTER IV

IS IT PEACE ?

THE Armistice was a fact, and mankind learnt again to live above ground without fear. The process of demobilisation began, and proved to most men to be unexpectedly tedious. Talbot House, to all outward appearance, had already been "demobbed" as one of those many appendages to the military machine which are improvised during an emergency and lose their meaning as soon as it is met. But this was not so. The emergency was not over; and Talbot House still maintained, like other war units, a respectable *cadre* round which, if need were proved, a great body could again be mobilised.

The emergency remained, and, if some of the forms it took were new, the chief of them were age-old. Seen with a longer view than most men fresh from the conflict "over there" could be asked to take, the Great War was but one particularly hot engagement in a greater campaign. Ignorance of each other between men, and between families, and between those larger families called nations, has lain at the root of all tragedies in history. It is the merest truism, though still unlearnt, that ignorance breeds misunderstanding, and that the subsequent stages are mistrust and conflict. Ignorance, whether wilful or careless, at last appears in the light of a sin, and in the end the wages of sin is Death. In the war the most "enlightened" nations of the earth had received these ten-fold wages of their ignorance and misunderstanding of each other. They were paid in the coin of dear lives of ordinary men, Tom, Dick and Harry, whose intimate places at home can never be filled, though other men play substitute for them in the work of every day.

The blindness of the world which knew not what it did had called for their destruction, as many years ago it had sacrificed a Man on a green hill. Their suffering, not by mere analogy but in its very nature, partook of His. For the chastisement of our peace was upon them; they died in order that we might live. Heavy indeed was the burden laid upon these ordinary men, who were in the main neither saints nor heroes, but who were made perfect in suffering. If the ancient Christian Church sometimes adopted a beautiful figure of our Saviour upon the Cross, no longer naked and dying, but robed, crowned, radiant, risen, triumphant, we should set these our friends upright, alive, face forward for some better task, upon the steps at its foot. But the right is ours only on a condition—that we consent to defeat the ignorance between men and nations which had sent them to their deaths. The “war to end war” had been won by men like these, but the question at the root still awaits answer—have men turned their faces from mistrust towards love of each other? If the answer cannot be Yes, then all history will have to admit the unthinkable—that these died in vain.

Meanwhile, one part of the business being done, the survivors came home to the tune of certain catch-phrases of the time. They looked forward to a “month’s real holiday” after this “war to end war.” They were to return to “a land fit for heroes to live in,” and to remake civilian careers in a new atmosphere into which “the brotherhood of the trenches” had been automatically transferred. It is difficult to know whether many men believe these things, or whether it was merely many newspapers which said them. A large number of those returning slipped into the old niche of pre-war work, but found it less satisfying than formerly. To hosts of other soldiers, once more turned citizens, it became clear that Peace had indeed broken out with terrible severity. A great lassi-



"The blindness of the world had called for their destruction"

tude, which excused itself—with some reason—as “war-weariness,” seemed to have paralysed most people, including themselves. That good-natured but formless monster, Public Opinion, shouted and made speeches over them for a time, and then tended to leave them alone because it did not know what to do next. Those who had given their eyesight were gathered into St. Dunstan’s, and what bodies remained to the hopelessly disabled were hidden away in hospitals, where 46,000 of them still lie. On the surface a passionate pursuit of everything frivolous and expensive seemed to rule half the world, but just beneath the surface there was always that immeasurable bereavement, especially in the hearts of women, which time might soften but could never heal, and over the unemployed ex-service man a growing shadow of privation at the moment and doubt for the morrow. Words cannot describe these things to men and women who have never felt them, and to those who have, words are not wanted. During these last four years it has often needed a brave man to be grateful for the “blessings of Peace”—but many men have been brave enough. For others—in proportion so very few—the strain was beyond patience. They saw every more fortunate person as a profiteer at their expense and red revolution as the only escape, a vision of two irreconcilable worlds (in the words of a very modern prophet) “one preaching a Class War, and the other vigorously practising it.” And after all, “*Is it Peace?*” Or has the engagement of 1914-18 made all of us more conscious than we used to be of an age-old warfare which is not yet ended, a campaign which has laid down the temporary weapons of bomb and bayonet only to take up the traditional ones, less honest and not less truly cruel, of indifference and mistrust between men in the relations of every day?

In the doubt and confusion of all this peace-making, even as it was manifested in one small corner of one

city of one country, the *cadre* of Talbot House might well appear an absurd and infinitesimal factor of small worth. But it was alive in the persons of one man or of half a dozen, and round it (as it believed) the body was waiting to be remobilised, whether as one or as half a dozen thousand. Was this still the moment of emergency? And if so, should the order to mobilise be sent out? And would it be obeyed?

The outward conditions of Poperinghe during the war and of London after it were admittedly different. Yet the underlying necessities of those who had exchanged the one for the other had not so completely changed, and the tasks which would confront a fresh-embodied Talbot House, were, strictly considered, none other than those which have filled our first three chapters. Briefly, they would be (1) to provide refreshment of body, mind and spirit, "100 per cent. cheerfulness," for those who went daily in and out of the battle of post-war existence; (2) to make these sportsmen in to a *team* by bringing them (all class-distinction abandoned) to know and love each other, and (3) to remove the causes of disheartenment in men and bitterness between them by helping them to think and discuss and look ahead, ready (as in 1918 they had proved themselves) to make a "great Push" for the service and salvation of the whole community. Here, it was confidently believed, was a tonic for the lassitude, a beacon for the hopelessness, a more excellent way for the revolt of some sorely tried individuals; and for all men, without distinction of wealth and work and schooling, a limitless field of adventure.

This was the dream (as really common-sense people would have accounted it) of Talbot House, but dreams, under certain conditions, may come true. So the call to mobilise was sent out, and it was answered, because the conditions needed were present all the time. These were simple, if very arduous—faith in those who called, and faithfulness in those who responded.

CHAPTER V

VADE MECUM

THIS chapter is to be merely a record of beginnings which have attained certain definite results but as yet no halting-places, for we believe that the practice of counting one's laurels is as nothing to "the glory of going on." It is as well to start fair with a change of name. *Talbot House*, which is a sensible-sounding peace-time name, gave place to *Toc H.*, which would be familiar enough to men fighting in a war, but certainly intriguing to peaceable citizens. The reason for this paradox has already been given (see p. 1), and, after all, it may be no disadvantage for a strange institution to bear a strange title.

The new *Toc H.* did not immediately rise from the warm ashes of the old. In the words of the First Annual Report (1921), "for the year after the Armistice, *Talbot House* made no move towards re-establishment. For this delay there were two good reasons. First, that part of the harvest from the old *House* which formed the spear-head of the Service Candidates' School, had to be gathered and garnered in the old prison at Knutsford, in preparation for their further University training. Secondly, a new beginning, based solely upon backward-looking sentiment, was unlikely to be of any permanent value. It was during this year that clubs without number flourished and faded, having no root; but, while the lapse of time thus self-imposed upon '*Toc H.*' made the beginning when it came a far more uphill thing, the interregnum of twelve months gave an opportunity of re-adjusting the proposed methods of work to the civilian conditions which it was to penetrate. The correspondence concerning the task ahead grew as the year grew older, and on November 15th, 1919, the inaugural meeting was held in a brave little room at 40, Great Smith

Street, when the nucleus of the Executive Committee was appointed.

"Over the turn of the year this nucleus added to its numbers from among other friends of the old House, and supporters of the new, and in February, 1920, a four-roomed flat of the kind that is euphemistically described as 'furnished' became the first home of Talbot House in England. These premises, if adequate to the name, were situated at the top of an old house at 36, Red Lion Square, behind the Fire Station in Southampton Row, and defective as they were in other directions, were hallowed by the coincidence that hence Arthur Stanton started his work upon the Postmen's League.

"In this new beginning, Pettifer (late Pte. A. Pettifer, M.M., No. 237, the Buffs, major-domo of the old House, and now of Mark I) and the Padre kept open house so far as the office premises below permitted; and, in the absence of an effective electric bell, a long string, with a luggage label attached, depended from the upper window. Here the first Hostellers were an ex-R.A.F. Captain, who had made a forced landing in a Government office, and a strolling player, then re-opening what now promises to be a formidable Shakespearean career. From tea-time onwards the sitting-room was full, and the kitchen in constant requisition, as were also the sofa and the easy chairs at an advanced hour. After a month or so, it was plainly an alternative between expansion or a summons from the health authorities of Holborn."

Expansion was the course indicated, and now it was clear that if the fundamental needs of men and the essential spirit of the movement were to be the same in peace as in war, the means by which these things expressed themselves must be conformable to civilian life. Some sort of bricks and mortar there must be, some visible focus, some place of meeting. It was decided, more by circumstances than by any committee, that Toc H. could be to certain men not only a

club but a billet, yet more than a billet—a home. And to the rest of the world it should continue to be Everyman's Club—yet not quite everyman's (for that is too vague to be permanently strong), but the club of its enrolled members. The membership, however, was always to represent every man, for it must embrace “soldier, sailor” (both, in most cases, ex-), “tinker, tailor, gentleman” (which is redundant because it may cover all the others), “apothecary, ploughboy”—and even, to complete the old jingle, “thief” (if to get into a police court by a blunder and out of it into the arms of *Toc H.* is to earn that title).

First, then, a brief history of bricks and mortar of the post-war movement. An appeal for funds was issued in March, 1920, and the immediate response to it enabled the “office” and its motley human attachments to exchange the little, old flat for a real house in Kensington, an historic oasis in the city for a stucco lodge in the wilderness of the West. 8, Queen's Gate Place held the first body of hostellers for two months, by which time it had outgrown its clothes. Under cover of darkness a “flit” was carried out—by means of the traditional barrow of Hoxton rather than the pantechinon of Mayfair. The vast corner house, No. 23, in Queen's Gate Gardens, was occupied without casualties. Troops dug themselves in at once, and set to work to entertain an outraged neighbourhood with the nightly songs of Zion. *Toc H. Mark I* was founded.

Many of the “properties” recalled the white house in Poperinghe to old friends; the identical notices, a little dog-eared with affectionate use, were run up at the right corners, and only the invitation to use the carpet as a spittoon was hung a little too high—out of regard for lady visitors. Two of its features, however, in particular did more than awaken memory; they made it the old House. The first of these was *Private Pettifer*, affectionately known to all and sundry (even to those who appear as *Generals* in the Army

List) as "The General." He had served the House in Pop. from first to last and been almost the only man in the B.E.F. who could control its Padre. He is now supported below stairs by Mrs. P. and family, and he rules the domestic economy of the House from top to bottom with a sure touch and a heart of gold. The stranger who rings up Mark I on the telephone is likely to get his first marching orders from "the General" in person. The second special feature is the chapel, a little place opening quite naturally out of the big Club Room. It is far smaller than the Upper Room at Poperinghe, but it contains all the furnishings which made that so beautiful. The curtains and canopy of the altar are those which Bishop Talbot had sent out to Flanders from his former private chapel. The altar itself is still the old carpenter's bench, with the sawdust of its last workman in the cracks, and the frontal which hides it from view the thank-offering of a Guards' officer. The chalice which stands upon it once a week is that which touched the lips of many thousands of men, some for the first and some for the last time. The inscription upon it to-day reads: *He was seen by above five thousand brethren; but some are fallen asleep.* The very perfect oak carving of Leonardo's *Last Supper*, which forms a reredos, was saved from ruin at Ypres, and purchased with the glad permission of its Belgian owner. More than memory of the past is thus enshrined in Mark I; the spirit of the living present is shown forth daily in the General's cheerful deed and utterance and in the silence of the Upper Room.

For the rest true hilarity begins and spreads upwards to the whole House from the basement kitchen. For if Ruskin found the kitchen to be the most beautiful, because the only appropriately furnished room in the houses of his friends, Toc H. insists on something more than still-life to complete the beauty of its kitchen furniture. Here then, long tables beset with very living men support the vista of the gas range and the

sink. Here meals travel but a few feet from pot to platter—a cook's ideal which is seldom achieved—and are eaten under the very eye of "the General" who devises them. This is the cheerful mess-room of the "family" of twenty-five bachelors which inhabits the House, and is filled to overflowing for several relays of supper on the occasion of the weekly "Guest Night."

On the ground floor there is a lounge with billiards and ping-pong, so that even the postman who delivers a parcel at the front door sometimes cannot resist a passing "knock" with the cue. The stairs, lined with relics of early days and photographs, many of which are marked "R.I.P.," bring to visitor to Club-room and Chapel at the first landing. The Club-room, true to the unhomely type of the Victorian "double drawing-room," is planned as an ill-proportioned L a device which may have had its special point in an age of large families, and is therefore well enough suited to the family of Toc H. On an ordinary evening hostellers can read, write, talk or play cards or the piano in its various corners, and on the Wednesday Guest Night the hero of the evening, standing on the hearth-rug, can make himself seen and heard tolerably well by the crowd in both wings of the room. An oxidised silver tablet mounted on an oak shield upon the wall bears the arms of the "Green Howards" (Yorkshire Regiment) and records that the Club-room is a memorial gift from the regiment. Similar tablets are to be found on the doors or walls of the bedrooms which fill the three floors overhead. Each bears the arms of some regiment, and inscribed below it is some honoured name by which the room is known. Here is "Gerard's Room" or the "Miles Lindsey Room"; here on the wall is their portrait or perhaps their last letter home or some proud phrase about the manner of their life or death. A memorial to one who did not live to come back from the War so simple and perpetual as a little room, where two of his successors

make their home and learn, maybe, to carry on the everyday work that would have been his, appeals to the imaginations of many—both to those who give and those who receive its cheerful comfort. It may very well be that such a token fits the eager spirit of the men who died far more nearly than any graven stone or painted glass. Thus is a living link forged between some one of those "that grow not old" and the succession of youth which, one at a time or in pairs or threes or even fours, according to the floor space, sets the mark of its occupation upon the place.

Such is the outline of Mark I, though the picture, being here drawn from still-life, confesses to gross inadequacy. It may be taken as a general type of the House as it has been re-created in peace time. Every other House, now flourishing or later to be opened, must possess the common features of mess-room and bedrooms, club-room and chapel, and every other House has, at the same time, its own individual personality, more easily perceived than described, its own cherished uniqueness. Probably nothing in the Houses will be more characteristic, because nothing is more cared for, than its chapel, its central shrine. In Mark II a ground-floor room contains furniture and sundry relics from the cellar chapel of Little Talbot House at Ypres and has a memorial window made of fragments of Ypres Cathedral glass. Manchester, excavating boldly behind the coal cellar and the boiler has unearthed a brick-vaulted "crypt," which in its approach will recall many a dug-out of the War, and in its beauty the "early Christian" atmosphere of such ancient shrines as that which, sadly neglected, lies beneath the altar of Repton Church. Birmingham, also below ground, has reproduced the cellar shrine of the 11th Division at Arras. Bristol sets its chapel, reminiscent of the Upper Room at Pop., under the steep-sloping rafters of a big attic, Southampton in the bedroom of the young subaltern to whom the whole House is a noble memorial. The character of each

"Mark" must clearly be affected by its neighbourhood, and as time goes on it is likely enough that distinct types of hostellers, as between one House and another, will emerge. In such case they will be distinguished not by the boundaries of class, but by the special local tasks to which they feel themselves called, and will preserve most jealously that family unity of Toc H. in which every body of members is complementary to every other. Already in London, first home of the new Talbot House but in no sense its limit, three Houses are planted in what house agents call residential neighbourhoods; one stands midway in a street half shops and half cheap lodgings, and a fifth, precursor, it may be supposed, of many more, will be in the heart of factory life and the problems of real poverty. In contrast there is already the magnificent Mark V at Southampton, which came to Toc H.—by an accident of faith, if such paradox be allowed—through the "agony column" of *The Times*. Here is a home, complete and beautiful in every detail, set in over six acres of ground—lawn and stately tree, planted garden and a touch of wild wood—palatial as the home of a group of residents and as the headquarters of a considerable neighbouring branch, a joy to the tired visiting member from some other city, a welcome held out with the first handshake of England to any of the Transatlantic members of Toc H. In the black Yorkshire cities, beside the Clyde, in the Midlands or the West Country the outward show of the Houses will be as wonderfully diverse as the idiom of the men who dwell in them. Only the spirit which rules will not vary in its essence. The fellowship rests upon a common foundation and is one.

The precision of Baedeker is not possible in compiling a guide to the "Marks," for Toc H., as a true movement, moves without waiting for ink to dry. And, after all, these community houses, however individual and reminiscent of the first House in Flanders, do not contain the sum of the life of Toc H. Prophecy in



Mark IV: Manchester

this connection is more than usually inadvisable, but it seems likely that the Houses, put together, will never contain ten per cent. of the total membership. Toc H. is in being and in growth here and there all over the country and, on a yet tiny scale, overseas in places where there is no building but only the cheerful faces and services of its members to proclaim it. At the moment of writing there are in existence over forty of these local branches and an increasing number of groups on their way to becoming branches, not to mention outposts in such remote places as Aberdeen or the Upper Nile, which would be lonelier still but for the knowledge of the brotherhood to which they belong. The stronger branches, whether they count 20 or 200 members, are apt already to meet together once a fortnight for the purpose of hearing someone who is alleged to know his subject, and of pulling him to pieces, if they can, in the friendliest manner afterwards. Most of these gatherings, mindful of the talisman of tea and cake at Poperinghe, begin by drinking tea together, or even by consuming fish and chips in the nearest British equivalent (barring the automatic organ and the omelettes) of an *estaminet*. Most members wear an engraved Toc H. identity disc, which looks wonderfully like gold, on their wrist, and receive a monthly *Journal* which serves to keep touch between the scattered parts of the body and to exchange ideas. By simple outward means such as these, some 5,000 men proclaim their oneness as members of Toc H. It is noteworthy that in return for their subscription—modest, but not for all of them easy in these hard times to come by—the great majority receive little if any material advantages. If a man joins for some visible gain he makes a poor bargain, but if for what he can give of himself, his reward may be greater than Mr. Worldly Wiseman will ever understand. How he takes his place in the ranks, and for what high cause he is enlisted it must be the purpose of the next chapters to tell.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHARTER AND THE LAMP

THE queer hostelry, improvised with so great a measure of success in war time, had found, as we have seen, a local habitation and a name for the long campaign of peace. Both its habitation and its name were ineffably unusual, for both bore the stamp of that unusual personality, the padre, founder and inspirer of Talbot House in every detail since 1915, whom all its adherents know as "Tubby." What may be called the apostolic age in any society must be limited in its duration. Founders and their immediate men do not grow younger, and at the same time, numbers and activities within their society multiply beyond the reach of any controlling pair of hands. Sect and tribe, church and nation follow the same road. Christendom is (or should be) ruled by the spirit of One, but through the hands of many. The power of the sceptre passes into a governance of Parliament: Brother Francis gives place to a Father Prior and Chapter, Dr. Barnardo to a Committee. In the case of Toc H. the personal touch of one man at the very heart of the movement still instigates and inspires, but the burden and multifariousness of the business daily to be done has grown too much for even the broadest pair of shoulders or the most tireless single mind. The new era of a written constitution and of organisation designed for permanence has, therefore, arrived.

A series of events, some of them outwardly picturesque and all of them deeply moving to the understanding heart, served to mark clearly the coming of this new era. These events covered several days and coincided with the seventh anniversary of the birthday of Toc H. On December 14th, 1922, the eve of the birthday itself, the Royal Charter of the movement,

long deliberated by draughtsmen and even longer scrutinized by the Privy Council, was signed by the King. In the grab of breathless unpunctuation and split infinitive, beloved of lawyers, this document makes plain the road, changed in its construction but not in its goal, by which Toc H. must henceforth travel. In the place of one man or of a casual collection of men who had hitherto borne the responsibility in their own names, there is set up by law a corporation which, in the language of the Charter, is "licensed, authorised and for ever hereafter enabled" to hold property and to carry on operations of very various kinds.

Thus is effected what amounts to a change from a private to a public career. Let it be noted that those who have committed the movement to this new stage are alive to the dangers of red-tape law and cold logic, but they are also confident that the spirit which nourishes the body from within will still remain master of the situation. Of the document itself let it suffice here to say that a definite ideal runs strongly behind its portentous phrases—that of the greatest possible local liberty and individual adventure which are compatible with keeping intact a family likeness among all the parts of Toc H. and a deep unity of purpose. The ultimate authority belongs to a council (not more than one hundred in number) which is to be popularly elected to represent the different parts and districts of membership. This body will exercise, let us be confident, a wise parental discipline: wise parents rely chiefly on encouragement and are only heard saying "Don't!" when proper occasion arises, and then with firmness. The real working unit of Toc H.—so the Charter lays down—is the *Branch*, which is accordingly endowed with wide powers of self-government. And the Branch is a recognisable thing, duly constituted with the sanction of the central body, electing its own responsible committee and picking its own mem-

bership. Of the preliminary *Group* the gathering fellowship of like-minded men feeling their way by degrees towards corporate entity in Toc H., the Charter knows nothing. The stages of the movement's growth in any district will normally be upwards from the individual, scattered membership, some perhaps "Foundation Members" who knew the old House in Flanders, and some of the latest recruits from school; these, brought together by some one of them who has energy and ideas, meet, become keenly aware of each other, and form a Group. The Group continues to meet at intervals, discovers openings for its sparetime services, and thus learns its strength and its unity. Headquarters is then petitioned and a branch is duly formed. In many places, though by no means in all, the Branch will some day feel the necessity for a *House* as a home for some of its members and as a club for them all. Houses, unlike poets, should not be born unexpectedly, but made by the long determination and hard labour of a working Branch. And the freehold of the House, once achieved, is held, not by the branch but by the central body, the Corporation of Toc H., as the benevolent parent, for the use of the orderly family. Orderly in the essentials the family is intended to be—else there is no true freedom for the whole. And curiously diverse, individual, venturesome its various Branches are encouraged to become—else there is not freedom for the differing genius of those who bear the family likeness. This is the intention of the Royal Charter of December 14th.

During the evening of December 15th there took place three events which are worthy of notice. The first one was the "induction and institution" of "Tubby" as Vicar of All Hallows, Barking, by the Tower of London. The significance of this event can be read in several directions. In the first place, it is a recognition by the Archbishop of Canterbury, not so much of a person, as of the spiritual value of Toc

H. as a movement. Secondly, it may stand as an excellent proof of the truly interdenominational character of the society. For as Toc H. in its origin was brought into being by a little group of members of the Church of England with whom loyal members by the thousand of other communions found it not only possible, but delightfully natural to co-operate, so now there is neither misgiving nor protest concerning this appointment from members in any quarter of belief or practice. Those whose views most widely differ, be they Roman Catholic or Quaker, would not have it otherwise: they prefer to look forward with hope to the time when their own view shall be in like manner officially represented within Toc H. For there is a world of difference between the *inter-denominational* and the *un-denominational* ideal. The one maintains strong individual conviction and mutual respect as between friends, the other, forced into unlimited compromise in its search for a shapeless, inoffensive "Highest Common Factor" of belief, must betray a nervousness and lack of plain speech which cannot consort with the deepest friendships. All Hallows, then, a building of great and stirring memories and of particular beauty, sole survivor of the Great Fire among the City's riverside churches, has become a cherished shrine of Toc H. as a whole, and of its Anglican members in particular. In the third place, All Hallows provides not only a place of wonderful light, peace and refreshment, comparable to that Upper Room in Poperinghe, for any who care for a few moments to turn aside from the wage-earning warfare of the City, but also a training ground, a university of actual life and labour, for those who are to exercise their ministry in various places in time to come as padres of Toc H.

The second event of the evening of December 15th followed hard upon the first and without the packed congregation in All Hallows leaving their pews. This

was the service of "Family Thanksgiving" in which members, very nearly from Land's End to John o' Groats, took part. They were bidden to "pray, with thankful hearts, for the whole household of Toc H. dispersed throughout the world, and for all who have or shall have rule, authority and leadership therein, that Christ may reign in their hearts by faith, and that they may be rooted and grounded in love." It was a half-hour for the lifting up of hearts, first in thanksgiving for the years past, so few but so crowded and so memorable, and then in dedication anew to the task undertaken. It ended with Blake's burning words:—

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall the sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

The third event of the evening took place in the Guildhall of the City of London. The central figure of a ceremony that will be long remembered was one of the Foundation Members of Toc H. He had slipped into a back pew at All Hallows for the Thanksgiving so unobtrusively that many had been unaware of his coming, but now he was to hold the centre of an immense stage, surrounded by two hundred fellow-members, chosen representatives not only from every part of Great Britain but from the newly born Toc H. in Canada. This member was the Prince of Wales, and his function on this occasion was that of a lamp-lighter of an original kind. For the growing movement, like all living human societies, had at last found a fitting symbol, and it seemed well to all that some ceremony should mark its adoption.

The Toc H. "Lamp of Maintenance" traces its parentage to the first age of Christian history. The little terra-cotta, boat-shaped household lamp of the ancients is found in the catacombs of Rome roughly cast in bronze; a tall stem rises from its handle and blossoms at the top into XP, the Greek initial letters

of the name Christos. The bronze Lamp of Toc H., adhering to the same simple form, has grown somewhat larger and shapelier, and its handle bears the double cross of Lorraine which occupies the upper part of the field in the arms of the City of Ypres. To an arm of this cross the lid is anchored by a chain, and round the margin of the lamp run the words, *In lumine tuo videbimus lumen*—"In Thy light shall we see light." It needs but little thought to find a many sided interpretation of such a symbol. Moreover, the bronze Lamp itself is so tangible and distinctive that nothing could be better fitted to form the insignia of a local Branch of Toc H., the very charter and proof positive of its existence. Every body of members, therefore, desiring to be recognised as a Branch, must first petition the central body for its Lamp; the form of words, engrossed on parchment above the signatures of the members, may vary but will probably contain some such phrases as these: "*Desiring that our Branch, founded upon the rock of Remembrance, may always be lit with the light of brotherly love, we the members in—, here make our petition for a Lamp of Maintenance, and pledge ourselves, by serving daily old and young, rich and poor, hale and sick, to cheer the way of the lonely with the laughter that is learnt of friends, and so preserve a living memorial of those who by laying down their lives in the cause of Humanity kindled anew in the heart of Everyman the embers of the undying fire.*"

Let the final picture at the Guildhall stand out and be long remembered. The delegations from the Branches, three men in each—one to bear the Lamp, another its oak casket and the third a black, purple and gold standard inscribed with the name of the Branch, had advanced in successive pairs from right and left, knelt to the seated Prince of Wales as he touched the lamp-wicks into flame, bowed and passed on to the rear of the moving procession. The forty Branches had come full circle, and been followed by

some of the schools from which, year by year, the young membership of Toc H. is fed. All the Lamps were lit and were ranged, motionless, on the platform as a forest of little golden flames. The Grenadiers' music ceased, the blaze of the big chandeliers suddenly died out over the heads of two thousand standing on-lookers in the hall. Faint and far off the music of the "*Last Post*," as over the sleeping elder brethren in Flanders, filled the place and faded back into silence—silence full not merely of remembrance but of the very presence, it seemed, of those first members of this family who had fought and passed over; full, also, of the living present and of the coming future of this family; then and now and onwards bound in one hope and calling. Then "*Reveille*," strident and challenging, and the voice of singing and the returning blaze of light. Thus did the first lighting of the Lamps of Maintenance symbolize the past, present and future of a living society.

Next morning, December 16th, the hundreds of delegates from the Branches assembled in conference. Opinions were spoken fearlessly and showed, under most divergent guises, how firmly rooted was the underlying unity. At the end a resolution which came as the natural, unforced expression of all minds present, was passed by the standing delegates in these terms: "Remembering with gratitude how God used the Old House to bring home to multitudes of men that behind the ebb and flow of things temporal stand the eternal realities, and to send them forth strengthened to fight at all costs for the setting up of His Kingdom upon Earth: we pledge ourselves to listen always for the voice of God, to strive to know His Will revealed in Christ and to do it fearlessly. Reckoning nothing of the world's opinion or its successes, for ourselves or this our family, we will endeavour to think fairly, to love widely, to witness humbly, to build bravely."

All that Toc H. stands for from the beginning is summed up for the discerning eye in its Lamp. The Lamp lit by sacrifice of faithful lives, the Lamp of service, continuously tended and passed on, well-trimmed, by failing hands of age to each successive generation of youth, the light of laughter and good fellowship, the flame not hid but shining before men, the clear but small and flickering flame which is a human type of the everlasting Light. The Lamp held by a Branch, wheresoever in the world it be, is no dead chimney-piece ornament but a living instrument for the constant use of the household of faith. No Branch meeting is valid unless the Lamp be lit for a few minutes in its midst: all present stand in the darkened room around this tiny flame and remember during thirty seconds of silence "those that grow not old." Thus is the Old House in Flanders and all for which those who used it stood and fell, perpetuated among us. This, therefore, is the Lamp of Maintenance, for we are pledged not only to remember but to maintain and to fulfil.



CHAPTER VII

TO CONQUER HATE

HERE then is a society of men constituted as for permanence, organised and endowed with a living symbol, and manifestly growing. Everything in creation that grows must possess some inmost spring of life, and increases (so, at least, all men of hope and faith believe) for some end. What is the secret of the life and what the ultimate purpose of Toc H.?

It is natural that onlookers should assume Toc H. to be one of the ex-service organisations. It is so—in the sense only that it was born out of the Great War, counted none but serving men as its Foundation Members, and must never cease to keep proud and glad remembrance of those among its fellowship who did not live to come home. But war memories are not the whole secret of its life, nor the preservation of them its ultimate purpose. The ex-service bond is very strong, but cannot be perpetual. A general of the American Civil War is quoted as saying that the limit of a nation's gratitude to the men of its victorious army is six months. In the mind of our own country, the Boer War has already shrunk almost out of sight, and the record of the Veterans of the Crimea is at the very last rays of sunset. Forty years on and the members of any purely ex-service organisation of the Great War will be old men, with ranks every year reduced, who meet under an almost legendary tie of reminiscence, and whose secrets will earn the respect but not the understanding of middle-aged men of the

time. Toc H., therefore, has already been at pains to recruit from the younger generation which was still at school or beginning its apprenticeship or engaged on its first wage-earning job, when the Foundation Members were helping to hold the Ypres Salient. For this is not to remain only a fraternity of the past, prolonged as far as nature will allow into the present, but a movement of brothers, facing continually into the future. The secret of Toc H. is *Fellowship*—but not a fellowship content to dwindle and grow old as it sits round a sinking fire, but kept young with a renewed eagerness and resolve by those who fall in, faster we hope than the tired men fall out, as it marches along the road.

And to what end? The most abrupt and true answer is to be given in three words which happen to contain an anagram of the queer name of Toc H.—“*TO Conquer Hate.*” Reference has already been made to the fatal chain which so often binds the nations of the world, the castes within the nations and the individual good fellows who go to make up these and every human society. To one man’s elementary Ignorance of another is linked Misunderstanding, to Misunderstanding Mistrust (which is another name for Fear), and Fear leads on to Hate, Hate to Conflict and Conflict ends, on a greater or lesser scale, in Death of the conscience if not of the body. The aim of Toc H. is to strike at the furthest link in this chain of human disaster, for, the chain once broken, the prisoner is free to praise God instead of wasting breath in cursing his brother, and to serve the world with gladness in place of clumsily destroying it. Fear and Hate are twin children of darkness and nothing—to use a familiar form of words—but “perfect Love casteth out Fear.”

If the furthest link in the chain which so hampers men’s march is ignorance one of another, the means employed by Toc H. to break it are almost childish

simple. For they are just the natural ways of learning to love, step by step and almost without knowing it, as a child learns to walk every day a little more firmly on its two feet. In each of ten Houses already opened in England a family of men is living the common life. They never really met each other before—mainly because an Oxford graduate, who is destined to be a doctor, has so few chances in the ordinary way of sharing a bedroom with an Elementary ex-scholar who is a motor-mechanic, or even of playing in the same cricket team, much less of embarking with him on a common venture of service. You will prefer not to share a bedroom with any man unless you know him a little, and you cannot do it for long without getting to know all the ins and outs of his character rather well. Even if you only meet your "opposite number" for tea and a smoke once a fortnight you will at least become his acquaintance, if not his friend. Thus, even within the present borders of Toc H., lonely men—whether down on their luck in temporal ways or not—have found companions, and men with prejudiced minds (that is, every one of us, more or less) have seen some new light. The first step, the inmost secret, is to find Fellowship by understanding, and every step after is to express fellowship in service. Toc H., then, exists not only for the mutual "information of its members, but also for their "necessary action."

Now if Christian and Faithful (as in the old tale so often referred to and so seldom read in our times) are setting out thus light-heartedly "to conquer hate" and to find the Celestial City, they will certainly be met by many of the old questioners, doubters and tempters, saying much the same old things, even if their phrases are new since the time of the tinker at Bedford. *Mr. Good-Will* may meet the Toc H. pilgrim with his "an open door is set before thee, and no man can shut it," but those "sturdy rogues," *Faint-*

heart and *Mistrust* will also be in the way. And there is *Timorous* ("the further he went the more danger he met with") and *Mr. Talkative*, "who talks, but does not." And there will certainly be *Young Ignorance* ("I take my pleasure in walking alone") and *Mr. Blindman*, who says "I see clearly that this man is a heretic," and *Mr. High-mind* (who has changed his name to *Snob*), who calls the pilgrim "a sorry scrub." *Mr. Money-Love*, also, is not unknown in our time, with a parrot-cry about "the almighty dollar"—a dreary fellow when he has the chance of being such a jolly one. Their Job's comfort is likely to be applied pretty freely to so young and ambitious a pilgrimage as that of *Toc H*.

First of all, can the plan succeed? (This from *Mr. Faint-heart*). The effort is still being made on so infinitely small a scale in comparison to the population of the world or even of one city: will it ever "cut any ice"? In reply we can only say that we have been told that some seeds become forest trees, and that we must be counted among the witnesses that twelve men—"not many mighty"—came forward years ago from villages in the Near East and turned the world upside down. For our own benefit we shall have to remind ourselves continually that only the right seeds ever produce trees, and that the twelve men only succeeded on very hard conditions which often made their venture look more like failure than success.

Next comes *Mr. Worldly Wiseman*, in attitude a little superior, with his "knowledge of the world," to us dreamers. His knowledge is undeniable, but it is admittedly of his particular part of the world in the year 1923—a world divided whether by relative incomes or accidents of "social standing"—into perfectly definite classes of people by a series of water-tight bulkheads: if these were once left carelessly open or were to be forcibly broken, the whole fair ship of civilised life, with all its decencies and comforts, would

(so he says) flood and founder. Toc H., behind its pleasant and harmless exterior as a Club of Queer Trades, seems to be designed as a tool for forcing the bulkheads between classes—"Are you sure it is wise?" says this comfortable critic. "What we need in the country is discipline. People must be taught their places: a lot of these fellows nowadays are idle and out of hand. Be very careful how you encourage the working classes. Look at Russia!" To him we have such a lot to say, but he has to hurry off, quite friendly and quite unconvinced, to the City, for "time is money."

There comes yet another who does not figure in Bunyan's portrait gallery—though very likely he has this in common with one of the more shady characters that "he is become a gentleman of good quality, yet his great-grandfather was but a waterman, rowing one way and looking another." He is an Englishman by birth and bringing-up: he is certainly neither Scotch nor Canadian. He wants to know whether this Toc H. fellowship among such different men is really and truly "natural": for his part he has a dislike of "bad form" and he is not sure whether the plan of Toc H. is one of the things in life which "simply isn't done" by men of his kind. He may, however, be open to conviction, but mere argument is not the right answer to his question. The proof of the pudding can be eaten—and very welcome—by him at the overcrowded supper-table of any House or Branch on a "guest night." There he may happen to find himself seated between a barrister (ex-colonel) and a plumber (ex-private), and his chair will be on the level—not near the top of a steep slope separating these two. If he begins to talk up to one side and down to the other, he will find himself an obstacle rather than a connecting link in conversation. Being a man of good manners and fine perceptions he will, doubtless, soon appreciate that his two neighbours, if temporarily his

hosts, are so by virtue of their permanent friendship with one another. So he begins to understand, and soon, it may happen, he will begin to serve as well as any other in our ranks. For he is a really sound fellow, if rather painstakingly short-sighted.

Many another figure will come to meet us, puzzled or doubting or actually hostile, but we can face each one. The first generation of Toc H. has proved the worth of fellowship in the ordeal by fire: as for the younger members, spared that hard school, they will find unspeakably much to encourage them in the last testament of one of those who died in the ordeal, with the promise still unfulfilled. "Then said *Mr. Valiant-for-Truth*, 'I am going to my Father's, and though with great difficulty I have got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the trouble I have been at to arrive where I am. My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought his battles, who now will be my rewarder.' When the day that he must go hence was come, many accompanied him to the river-side: into which as he went, he said 'Death, where is thy sting?' And as he went down deeper, he said, 'Grave, where is thy victory?' So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."

In 1918 the eighteen-year-olds turned the scale; and to-day, as in each succeeding generation, the victory of love rests in the hands of the eighteen-year-olds to win or to postpone. To conquer hate would be to end the strife of all the ages, but for men to know one another is not difficult, and it is half the battle.

CHAPTER VIII

PRINCE AND WHIPPING-BOYS

READERS of Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper* will remember that when that simple boy Tom found himself, without choice playing the bewildering rôle of a Prince, he bestowed the first honour of his reign on a simple boy like himself: he gave the accolade to his kneeling subject with the words: "Arise, Humphrey Marlow, Hereditary Grand Whipping-Boy of the Kingdom of England." And Humphrey, greatly abashed, rose—to find his office not only ennobled but henceforth professionally a sine-cure, in that the Prince, being a more enlightened sportsman than his predecessors (or even than Charles II., who had a whipping-boy and presumably lived in a later age than Tom), preferred to receive the punishment of his own misdeeds rather than to see them visited on a paid substitute. At this point, moreover, Humphrey Marlow does not disappear out of the story. He becomes the companion of the Prince, who, very early in the proceedings, "had an hour with him which he counted clear gain, since he got much enlightenment and needful information out of it." The Court was naturally scandalised, for it was even said that they called each other by their Christian names. But Tom was not a Prince for nothing, and could insist on having his way.

Now, if the seventeenth or eighteenth century (it matters not which, if either) abolished the office of whipping-boy from the households of English Princes, the nineteenth century did a great deal to revive it on

a far larger and less picturesque scale. For the whipping-boy system, highly organised as befitted an age of "Mass production," was found to be an essential of "The Industrial Revolution," which, as everyone knows, was the triumphant product of the nineteenth century. Everyone knows—but it is worth while to be reminded of some part, at least, of what happened in that great change in order that the inevitableness of the whipping-boy may become clear.

In the course of a few years your traditional half-dozen handloom weavers in a little tiled shed became merely a picturesque memory. For a great new enlightenment was thrown on them, in the shape of a thousand huge chimneys which were to improve them out of existence altogether: the age of smoke and steel and gold had arrived. The countryside was taken seriously in hand, and taught not to waste its time on larks and wild flowers and clear waters and dreaming trees, which do not pay dividends—at any rate, in nineteenth century currency: on this waste ground the cathedrals of industry, black and businesslike, were erected and in them the great golden image of Production was served unremittingly by hundreds of thousands for twelve or more hours a day. Huge tracts of country underwent this kind of improvement—especially Lancashire, the vales of Southern Yorkshire and patches of the Midlands—and all this could not happen without its effect on the character and fortune of the inhabitants. England, it was confidently believed (in spite of a contrary view held by Mr. Ruskin and a few cranky parsons), became very great, because she became very rich. Yet no one can accuse us of disrespect if we classify this new wealth into at least three rough and unequal parts—the truly immense and imposing richness of a few tens of thousands of families, the comparative well-to-do-ness of a much larger body of people, and the undeniable poverty of a good many millions. From this third class, as was

only natural, the whipping-boys of the nineteenth century were recruited, not to say "pressed," and trained to an unheard-of efficiency in their office. If Charles II had drawn his whipping-boy from a village or, at least, from a London very little bigger than Hyde Park to-day, the Princes of the nineteenth century had theirs provided for them out of the square miles and miles of uniform black streets which made up two-thirds of every well-organised modern city.

It is time to turn to the Princes. Who were they?—indeed, who are they still? Their royalty, in most cases, is less one of blood than of circumstance, and it is—at least, in many cases—none the less real for that, as has been shown in many fields of national need. Their crowns, worn sometimes so modestly as to offend no one, are of gold—for their fathers are the Kings of Industry or belonged in some other way to the first class or the top part of the second of those three into which we said the new wealth of the realm was divided. For the rest they are mainly simple boys who, like Mark Twain's hero, find themselves, without choice, playing the difficult rôle of princes. Their difficulties are indeed very considerable and, on the whole, are those common to all princes in any time or place whatsoever. To begin with, they are not the choosers of their great good-fortune or of its corresponding responsibility, so that they do not always value the one enough or recognise the other. The training they usually receive as rulers is in some respects miserably inadequate, and, like most princes, they live in a charmed and charming circle of their own which hides from them the very naked truth of how the rest of the world lives. Growing up thus in ignorance of other men's lot, they are apt enough to despise them good-naturedly and to be unjust to them thoughtlessly. Their own days are very full and busy, partly in learning those things from books which should fit them to take their places among the rulers of their kingdoms, and partly

in every knightly exercise which can make men fine of body and free of mind. Their wealth, or rather their fathers', has procured for them immunity from almost all the elementary "dirty" work which their own hands would have helped to do in a simpler generation: *that* has now become the province, without choice, of the whipping-boys of their own age who bear a heavy burden—sometimes together with the slings and arrows of an altogether outrageous fortune. But it must expressly be said that, if some of these princes are inhumanly idle, most of them are as good average men as you will find anywhere in the world. More than that, an increasing number of them hear—like the young Prince Buddha from his guarded palace—the discordant cries of the less lucky world outside, and became deeply restless and anxious to help. If you would see the Princes, battalions of them at a time, you will find them in the *Public Schools* of England. And if you would see the whipping-boys—nineteen individuals to every one in those schools—you must look at all the boys between the ages of 14 and 18 in the *factories, mines and workshops* of England.

So the parable has ended—some will exclaim—in that well-worn controversy which circles round the unique public-school system of the country. There is much to be said on both sides, but it will not be said here. All that concerns us, from the point of view of Toc H., is the gap which yawns between the public-school boy and his nineteen industrial brothers of equal age on whom, for his very board and lodging, he ultimately depends. The gap is, apparently, nobody's fault, for you cannot indict anything so arbitrary as a slice of years called the nineteenth century or any creature so short-sighted as the Industrial Revolution. What matters is not recrimination, but the closing of the gap—a gap, in this case, in the living body of a nation, a wound already touched in too many places with poison which, if suffered to run unchecked, might bring death

to the whole body in years to come.

Toc H., in recruiting its post-war members, looks equally to the prince and the whipping-boy, the schools and the factories. And it finds them extraordinarily like Tom and Humphrey in Mark Twain's story—two boys who were strangers and easily become friends. Tom is just as shocked as ever to discover how Humphrey is expected (and become, through long habit, content) to bear the discomforts and limitations which are the price of the pleasure of princes; and Humphrey, for his part (having assured himself that this prince is not less human or more gifted than himself), is forthcoming with "much enlightenment and needful information." As members of Toc H. they fall into calling each other by their Christian names—whether it scandalises royal circles or not. For, if you go to the bottom of the matter, Tom and Humphrey both turn out to be Princes, and will have their way in the end.



Mark V: Southampton

CHAPTER IX

WILLIAM, WILLIE AND BILL

NOW the small class of Princes at one end of a scale and the big mass of whipping-boys at the other do not between them cover every man in the country—and nothing less than every man completes the membership of “Everyman’s Club.” A fine student of human nature has observed that the real cleavage between men in our land is made by the different kinds of schooling which different boys receive, and not by the number of collars worn by them per week, or by the comparative wealth of their fathers. Education in England* has, up to the present, run into three main types of schools, not even a threefold system, for they are very untidily related to one another. An educational ladder is often referred to, but so many of the rungs are missing that a boy’s mind needs abnormally long legs, combined with luck and pluck to climb to the top if he happens to start from the bottom. As it is, the vast majority of boys are sent, free and compulsory, to *Elementary Schools* up to the age of 14 : at that point of physical, mental and spiritual crisis in a boy’s life they go out to take their place in the world’s work beside grown men. Thus do they turn their backs on the school door at the very moment when to others of their contemporaries, more blessed

* This dreadful insularity must be forgiven, for the Scottish people, caring more for learning, has fared better in its system, and the democracies of the Dominions do not repeat or even understand the picturesque anomalies and obstinate vested interests which hamper education in the Old Country.

by an accident of parentage, that door is opening on to its very best prospect—the dawning love of books and day-dreams, comradeship and cricket as a great game. A second order of boyhood, far smaller, but still great in numbers, is meanwhile in the *Secondary Schools*, the varied and imposing array of grammar schools, county schools, company schools, where boys learn by day, both in class room and on cricket ground, but do not sleep at night. On this level a boy wears his school-badge on his cap as symbol of a real corporate life, for which his father pays a very moderate fee. If about 1,200 boys' schools in England come under this category, 127 of them, or one-tenth according to the *Public Schools Year Book* for 1921, stand aside from the rest to form the third type, the *Public Schools*—a name which worries the stranger but seems natural to the Englishman, seeing that these are the only schools in the country for boys between 11 and 18 which are (with a few exceptions) private in their ownership and expensively exclusive in their character. Here a boy not only works and plays, but lives and moves and has his whole being for two-thirds of every year: his fond mother delivers him over bound to the mercies of a schoolmaster. And the schoolmaster, on his side, in most instances, devotes two-thirds of his working hours—from the time when his B.A. gown is painfully new to the day when, as a grey-headed man, he retires on an inadequate pension—to successive generations of such boys. The very closeness of this partnership between men and boys in the service, as they feel it to be, of one school-name, makes for a tradition at once long and narrow and very deep, which distinguishes those who have been subjected to it from other men and exasperates a good many who have not. Foreign observers are wont to admire or caricature the product as “The English Gentleman,” and English history (until very recent years) has accepted it as “the ruling class.”

These three types of training—the first roughly applied to the “working class,” the second to the “lower middle class,” and the third to the “upper middle-plus-upper class”—have been thus set out at a little length because they go a very long way to the creation of the much-laboured “Social Problem,” which is at root a problem, once more, of misunderstanding. It is, therefore, a matter which must vitally concern Toc H., a brotherhood already numbering in its ranks those three eighteen-year-olds: Tom, who went to an elementary school so long ago that it scarcely counts, as he thinks; and Dick, who has knocked about a bit in various offices since he left his grammar school; and Harry, who was at Winchester until last July and who, after seven years of such a life, finds reading for the Bar a tedious and unreal occupation. The first job of “Social Service”—that is, service of that national society to which they were equally born heirs—is thus put before Tom and Dick and Harry at the start as the task of getting to know each other. This, as we have hinted, has not been found by Talbousians so arduous or so unthankful a piece of work as less imaginative people often picture it. Act number I, then, is assumed to be over—and it has been a merry one, full of point and interest. These three individuals in the nation, at all events, have not been permanently held at arm’s length by circumstances, schoolmasters or parents. They now respect each other, like each other, rag each other, teach each other continually. And already they stand together, looking round for a job of service which seems to need someone to do it, and which may find three heads better than one.

Both the means and the spirit which have been brought to bear upon the Social Problem by its would-be solvers have varied very greatly at different stages, but this is not the place to excuse into Queen Elizabeth’s idea of the poor or Lord Shaftesbury’s. The

time when children of six worked fifteen hours a day in mines or were pushed up chimneys to clean them, have gone by (though not so long ago, after all), and even in the oldest villages rows of little girls no longer bob white caps, bountifully provided for such ceremony, to Squire as he passes up the graveyard to church. These things seem to us now as cruel as or comic as many things in our accepted way of life to-day will rightly seem to our successors in the year of Grace 2000. We must not stray further back than yesterday—and that only because to quite a number of people yesterday has not yet clearly given place to to-day.

Yesterday, then (assuming that the war took place, like a most potent Scrooge-vision, in the night between), the elder brothers of our Tom, Dick and Harry were less happy in their relations to one another. It seems that they all received the same name at their christening, but this history will know them by the names invariably used by their respective parents at home. Tom's elder brother Bill was earning what passed for "good money" ("mustn't grumble," he used to say) at the wire works, which was his fifth job since leaving school; Dick's brother Willie went straight from the Haberdasher's School into a large haberdasher's shop in the City—which was merest coincidence, implying no sort of wire-pulling; and William, Harry's elder brother, had passed from Winchester to Cambridge, had just come down, and was supposed to be "eating his dinners" at the Temple, in preparation not so much for the practice of a barrister as the management of a pleasant fortune some day. For the rest, they were all really good fellows, popular with the best people in their respective circles. Bill, probably, had the best natural brain, which he had not been much called upon to test; Willie was a bit of an artist in his own way, and might have done something if anyone had encouraged him, and William certainly had taste, combined with an excellent business head.

William and Willie, as fate would have it, only encountered each other once. Their respective schools did not play each other at cricket, or they might at least have spent one summer afternoon together. As it was, they met with the counter of the haberdasher's shop between them; a very "seasonable" striped tie changed hands and the interview ended with a comment on the Test Match and a frank smile on both sides. William and Bill, however, came across each other at close quarters in odd hours, some of which they happened to spend in the men's club of a School Mission. Such meetings were very genial, but the freedom of both parties was subject to a very clear, if tacit, condition—that William, as a comparative stranger "in them parts," was to decide and command the affair throughout, and that Bill, "man and boy" there for over twenty years and with his old school just round the corner, should fall in with this arrangement as a matter of course. This, it is only just to say, he did—so cheerfully and to their mutual satisfaction, that the old phrase about "ordering one's self lowly and reverently to one's betters" would be solemnly ludicrous as applied to his behaviour. William played his part, by virtue of a divine right, strenuously if intermittently, and modestly and gracefully, as befits a gentleman. Their intercourse was destined to stop at that. For, William's father getting ill, certain family affairs began to loom ahead of him, and he passed out of the phase of "social work," never in the same intimate, glad, human way to know it again. As for Bill, he was annexed by a young lady (he called her his "bird"), and in due course left the club altogether. Only during his last leave from France his young wife came across a photograph signed "Yours sincerely, William Something-or-other" (hand-writing is not taught in the Public Schools) and asked him who it was. "One of the gents at our club—used to be, anyway. Not a bad sport, neither." One may, if one

chose, surmise that William and Bill would have voted on opposite sides at the next Election and have said some excessively bitter and foolish things in the heat of the moment about each other—not as remembered individuals, but under the labels of Genus: “fellow” and Species: Socialist or Capitalist. Not every promise of friendship between two such men as William and Bill has run away like that into the desert sand, but it would be safe to say that by far the greater number—of a total never large—did so in the time we have called yesterday.

* * *

Then came sudden night and the darkness of the war, lighted here and there with intolerable flashes which were brighter than day. One of these revealed for an instant three men, a private, a sergeant and a subaltern, utterly unconscious of each other's individual existence, a mile apart as links in a single ragged line, who stood up simultaneously as the whistle blew and scrambled over a mud bank into the open. The flash of the next instant saw them go down, all three together, sightless faces to the mud, while the line grew yet more ragged in passing on. That one instant wrought truth for these three out of what had seemed an illusion. Bill, Willie and William had sealed their compact together after all.

And the pity of it! That they should have died to realise what, to the great gain of the world and of themselves, they might have lived to enjoy.

CHAPTER X

A FAMILY AFFAIR

TOC H. is, and wishes to remain a family and not merely an institution. This conception lies at the very root of its life. It ruled that large household of faith in Flanders, and it continues to rule what promises to be a still larger household in all the doings of to-day. The family idea is, of course, nearly as old as the hills, and certainly governed the action of men and animals in the Garden of Eden. It is, therefore, the simplest and most natural of all relationships, which is not to say that it is always the easiest to maintain. History contains warning enough of what disasters happen when the family idea breaks down. To take two only—because in the better future of these Toc H. is very vitally concerned—the present condition of industry and of the Church will suffice. Time was when master and man were, in a conscious sense, members of a family. They knew each other intimately over the bench at which both of them worked. They had their differences, as indeed most families do, but however bitter these, they were at least expressed “as man to man,” not distantly by the medium of printed notices or the mouths of trade union officials. There was daily meeting between them, generally a clear understanding and loyalty, and often affection. Those days are gone, and only the most Utopian reformer hopes to see them return in the same form. Machinery and “big business” have taken their place. The directors of a joint-stock company, meeting in a board room in London, have never even seen the faces of the

thousand men who dig coal for them in Wales, much less said "good-morning" to them or eaten in the same room. Family feeling between master and man has not perished utterly from modern industry, but the instances of it are rare enough to be thought specially odd or praiseworthy.

In the other case, that of the Christian Church, the family bond is constantly failing and having to be renewed by conscious effort. Here, as in industry, it is the great scale to which the body has grown which so often overlies and crushes the spirit. Twelve men, all citizens of one little nation, could live together (not without their family quarrels), could walk with their Master and work with Him, could share His portion of suffering and joy, could accept His tokens of their family unity round one supper-table. And in a later time—the body of the church being wonderfully grown and much distraught—a man could come forward, under the simple law of love to every living creature, to found within the Church a true family again: Francis and his first few Italians trod the Apennines, preaching and praising, healing and working, as though these had been the slopes of Galilee. But always the "primitive" order passes, the spirit flowers less easily among the weeds of the letter, love is spread over so wide a field that it grows thin, is cooled by cautiousness or made bitter by intrigue for place and power. The Church visible to-day, by a common turn of phrase, is still "God's family on earth," but how many individual congregations are families in the simplest, truest, most human and so most divine sense? There are church buildings in which that travel-stained fisherman, St. Andrew, were he to enter at 11 o'clock on a Sunday morning, would be hustled behind a pillar by a sidesman who knew his job. There are churches so respectable that merely humble-hearted people feel uncomfortable in them, and others so poor in purse and place that the really "good churchgoer" passes them by.

And yet in every one of these congregations there are so many individuals who would like to follow Love and restore the brotherhood which a multitude of forms and party cries has scattered into a variety of wildernesses. Supposing that, one day, the Church ceased to be mainly an institution (as it is to most people) and became once more a family? Supposing that it ceased to be respectable, and became joyfully dangerous? Supposing that, oblivious of its Sunday clothes, it set out on a series of adventures, as muddy as the war, and as absurdly impossible as the Kingdom of Heaven? Supposing—but we must not suppose too much all at once.

Toc H. is a young creature as yet, and is clearly to be subject to the common range of human temptations. It is, in truth, at present a family, and it clings passionately to the plan of remaining one. As it grows—rapidly and ravenously as any growing family of which we have ever heard—its temptations to become an institution, a machine with ever more perfect mechanism, must increase. Secretaries, printed forms, typewriters and waste-paper baskets already belong to the convenient discomforts of its life, but it persists in regarding them with famous good-humour as its servants and not its masters. After all the most modest human family submits to the necessity of internal discipline and recognises a due division of labour among its members. It is only when one brother does so well for himself in the world that he ceases to write home or, feeling himself so immensely more clever than the rest, tries to manage the whole inheritance, that family dissensions arise and the split comes. Toc H., whatever its failings, has grown by virtue of an inner family feeling, which the onlooker has perhaps regarded rather as one of sheer enjoyment than of what, without much oratory on the subject, it more deeply has been—the spirit of selfless service of each for all. If ever snobbishness from within should shorten its breath

or a great top-hammer of organisation should cramp the style of its limbs, it is to be hoped that Toc H. will decide to join the old soldiers and "simply fade away." Which contingency, in our present temper, we must be excused for being unable to contemplate.

The family system, then, which expresses itself statically, so to speak, in the fellowship of Toc H., must find corresponding expression, dynamically, in



the service which the fellowship sets out to give. In a world in which every single ideal has been so tested that only the deepest-founded loyalties remain unshaken, the idea of "social work" must have suffered change. William's relation to Willie never, as we have seen, got as far as being consciously "work": it remained at the stage of common politeness in a matter of business. William's dealings with Bill, on the other hand, were known as "social work"—to

William himself a hobby combined with a genuine sense of duty, and to his fond aunts as an admirable, if rather wayward, instance of the goodness of his character. On the whole, this was not one of the deepest-founded loyalties in his life, and so the whole idea of it was severely shaken, even before the war intervened. His younger brother Harry, as we have already said, tends to approach Tom and Dick from a different angle. perhaps the difference can be most clearly expressed by saying that, whereas William, before the war, tried to do his social work *for* Bill, Harry, after the war, is setting out to offer his service to the community *alongside* Tom and Dick. An age of patronage (however pleasantly disguised) has now to give place to an age of partnership. Social Service must no longer stand as an outward institution, but spring as an inner impulse out of the family life of men together.

Toc H. has been getting into the way of using one or two simple phrases to sum up its part in this matter of service. It fosters, in the first place, what it calls, for convenience, "*the sheep-dog spirit.*" Now, though dog-fanciers may recognise a special breed of shagginess known at the shows as a sheep-dog, all natural historians are aware that sheep-dogs are born just dogs and, being of any shape or colour, though convenient in size, may be made into sheep-dogs at the instance of the shepherd. The chief characteristics of a complete sheep-dog are three—that it possesses an average intelligence, that it has been properly trained, and that it works for the shepherd and the sheep, not for itself. None other is the outfit and the outlook of the human sheep-dog. He possesses average intelligence (whether it has been encouraged or stultified by a course of Eton or of the Council School is a matter of secondary importance); he is ready to undergo practical training for the service he undertakes; and he works not for himself but for his particular flock of sheep and for the Shepherd from

whom his commission is ultimately derived. Here is your Scout Troop that needs a Scoutmaster, your lads' club which is falling to bits for lack of one or two men to pull it together. Tom and Dick and Harry, bringing average intelligences, very differently trained it may be, to bear on such common problems, learn to do the job by doing it, and round up between them a very presentable and useful flock of boys. There is much less fear, at the moment, that the flocks all over the country should run short than that the sheep-dogs should be worked to a standstill. At least, let no one say that these human dogs, once busy with their flocks, are wont to let their tails droop through boredom or weariness. Most of the Houses of Toc H. have got their flocks already, in the form of a boys' club apiece, not to mention individual efforts with Scouts, etc., and local branches are setting out to meet local needs.

And another name which Toc H. members are beginning to apply to themselves is that of "*stretcher-bearers*" to the community. Here is a delightful boy of seventeen landed in a police court, either because his spirits are too high for the width of his street or because he has no "*people*" worth mentioning. For the moment he is badly down, but the local branch of Toc H., happening to pass that way, may pick him up on its friendly stretcher, wipe his slate for him and call him "*Brother*"—for the first time in his experience. And there is also the member in special difficulties, the ex-soldier with no livelihood, disabled or sick or discouraged, who discovers that the family to which he now belongs has a family pride of its own which will not see him go under. Such simple things have no connection with that highly organised form of "*charity*" which has to buy a two-guinea ticket and dance all night in order to provide the medicine of a sick child in some hospital which the dancer has never set eyes upon, but only with "*charity*" in the old-fashioned sense of Love.

It is not to be supposed that the offices of sheep-dog and stretcher-bearer exhaust the openings of social service for which members of Toc H. are eligible. Wherever men meet in industry, the army, professions, learned and otherwise, the church, the farm, the club, the street—the free spirit, forthcoming towards all men, “the Christmas spirit all the year round” can have play. Service begins at home—to the man next to you in the tram, nearest to you (whether over or under matters not) in the office. If ranks are earned and preserved, as they must be, for the purpose of getting work well done, they may safely be abandoned when men are at their ease—provided Love rules, than whom there is no authority more exacting. And in the greater tasks, sufficient for the strength of the most covetous of real honour, of helping to govern a borough, a city, a county, the nation, is there no room for still more of the disinterested men, wearing—whatever their party convictions—the wristlet badge of Toc H.? Social service must embrace the Cabinet as well as the Scout-patrol.

How far this spirit, which dare claim no merit for itself and which admits no idleness and no condescension in those whom it possesses may change the world about us by being in us, is a matter for time to show. It certainly turns the conventional values of things upside down at every turn. It makes a man oblivious of the fact that his companion does not habitually wear a collar, or induces such presence of mind on a railway journey that he omits to hand the guard a shilling for opening the door and goes off instead to thank the engine driver for preserving his life so skilfully over three hundred hair-raising miles of travel.

Moreover, it is a spirit of adventure and experiment, just as was that spirit which led Samuel Barnett, two generations ago, to bring the West to the East, the undergraduate of Oxford into contact with those who had already graduated in a much rougher and harder

school. The experiment of the University Settlement was new and very daring in its time, and it marked a step forward, taken in faith and justified. To-day this particular solution—the planting of a tiny colony of curious and devoted strangers in the heart of what seemed at first to them a heathen land—is not to be counted as something final, but rather as a stage which we should have outgrown. The land is not more heathen than any other, but the strangers, clinging still to their monastic citadel in the midst of it, remain largely but welcome strangers to the end. Perhaps some Toc H., Mark x, an open house in which men of both kinds, or of all kinds, live together under a family vow, is another step (and, we believe, no small one) towards restoring to men the normal society of which modern life has cheated them. But who shall say that this is a complete solution, or more than a successful experiment? If the spirit which moves these men survives and is continually renewed in their successors (as, please God, it shall be) the understanding between them must grow too forcible to be contained in Mark Anything; it may lead them within a hundred years to seek and to create larger spaces for their life together. The Saxon mud village was good enough for our ancestors, but it would not pass the Medical Officer of Health to-day, and the city of to-day with its ugly palaces and its uglier slums may become even more intolerable to these Toc H. members of a future time. But we must not venture on pictures of a New Jerusalem which shall be built in a land once more green and pleasant. Sufficient for to-day is not only its evil—to be combated while we have strength—but also its amazing hopes.

APPENDIX

SOME OF THE FACTS.

Patron :

H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES, K.G.

Presidents :

LT.-GEN. SIR ROBERT BADEN-POWELL, BT., G.C.V.O.
THE RT. HON. STANLEY BALDWIN, P.C., M.P.
THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.
THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, K.G.
LORD FORSTER, G.C.M.G.
THE REV. J. D. JONES, D.D.
FIELD-MARSHAL LORD PLUMER, G.C.B.
THE REV. J. H. RITSON, D.D.
THE VERY REV. SIR GEORGE ADAM SMITH, D.D.
THE RIGHT REV. JOHN WHITE, D.D.

Hon. Administrator :

P. W. MONIE, C.S.I.

Hon. Treasurer :

WM. A. HURST, O.B.E. .

1. MEMBERSHIP.

Applicants for membership must be proposed and seconded by members and submit to a month's probation before election. The application form requires them to pledge their support to the main objects of Toc H.—fellowship without distinction of class, and unselfish service. On election they receive a membership card, and are entitled to wear a Button-hole Badge, the club tie and blazer (blue with brass buttons and the arms of the City of Ypres on pocket).

2. SUBSCRIPTIONS. .

The subscription for members in any place where a Toc H. House is open is from 5s. to £1 1s. 6d. In all other places the *minimum* subscription is 2s. 6d. The sum of 2s. to 2s. 6d. is paid over to Headquarters from each subscription as the Branch or Group's quota to organising expenses. The annual subscription to the Monthly Toc H. Journal (a link between members all over the world) is 5s., post free. Single copies are sold at 6d.

HOUSES.

- MARK I.—24, Pembridge Gardens, London, W.2.
 " II.—123 St. George's Square, London, S.W.1.
 " III.—148 York Road, London, S.E.1.
 " IV.—Gartness, Victoria Park, Manchester.
 " V.—The Firs, Bassett, Southampton.
 " VI.—77 Clifford Street, Lozells, Birmingham.
 " VII.—15 Fitzroy Square, London, W.1.
 " VIII.—Christ Church Road, Pitsmoor, Sheffield.
 " IX.—29 St. Paul's Road, Clifton, Bristol.
 " X.—Clarendon Street, Hull.
 " XI.—44 Princess Road, Leicester.
 " XII.—Shaw Royd, Halifax, Yorks.
 " Brother's House,"—119 Kennington Park Road, London, S.E.11.
 MARK XIV.—1, Eccles Old Road, Salford.
 " XV.—31 The Common, Woolwich, S.E.18.
 " XVI.—Redville, High Street, Swindon.
 " XVIII.—Greystoke, Grainger Park Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
 ARGENTINE Mark I.—Chacabuco 723, Buenos Aires.
 CANADA Mark I. (c) 11 Kennedy Street, Winnipeg.
 " Mark II. (c) 614 Huron Street, Toronto.
 WASHINGTON Mark I. (U.S.A.), 1,324, 18th Street North-West, Washington, D.C.

(b) *Government.* Each House is supervised by an Honorary Warden, who is appointed by the Central Executive. He is assisted by a House Secretary and a small committee elected by the residents. The housekeeping is in the charge of a Steward, usually an old member of Toc H., and his wife with other help.

(c) *Charges, Accommodation.* The scale of charges is a sliding one, for though the comfort provided is the same for all, it is recognised that incomes vary: it ranges from about 35s. to £2 10s. Guests are charged 6s. a day.

There are some single bedrooms in each House, but, in view of their size, most rooms contain two or three beds.

(d) *Guest-nights.* Where the size of the Club Room allows, a guest-night is held in each House once a week. Each visiting member pays 1s. 6d. for his supper. After supper there is either a talk from the guest of the evening, followed by discussion, or a concert, etc.

(e) *Memorial Rooms.* The Houses of Toc H. have proved to be self-supporting, once they are furnished and filled with residents. To assist the preliminary task, relatives of those who did not return from the War have undertaken the furnishing of various rooms, which bear the name of the man commemorated. A small room can be equipped for

£30, a three-bedded one for £50, and a club-room for £200. But the smallest donations for the furnishing of a House are used with equal care.

4. MEMORIAL CHAPLAINCIES.

It is intended that every House opened by Toc H. shall have a resident Chaplain, who may be of any Christian denomination. Each chaplaincy shall be endowed with the sum of £5,000, which will provide the holder with a small annual income. The Chaplain's whole time will be devoted to the needs of hostellers and other members, and to the "after-care" of young men of all kinds in the district. Five such Chaplaincies have already been endowed.

5. SPORTS AND HOLIDAYS.

The London Branch has an eight-acre sports ground at New Barnet, giving room for cricket, football, tennis and boys' camps.

In 1921 two pilgrimages of fifty members each visited Ypres; in 1922 a party of over 100 members saw the Passion play at Oberammergau; and in 1923 a large pilgrimage in England and a scramble in the Pyrenees was arranged. These "family" parties have been found valuable and are being extended in various directions.

6. SOCIAL SERVICE.

Each Branch has an official called the "Jobmaster" whose duty is to discover openings for the work of its Members in the district. Each resident in a House, if not physically disabled or too heavily pressed with work, carries out a job of social service in his spare time.

One side of the recruiting of the younger generation for service, i.e., that concerned with the public and other secondary schools, is being carried on by the machinery of the Cavendish Association, which was formed in 1913 and incorporated in 1921 with Toc H. The means are simple and entirely natural. Each school or college with which Toc H. is in touch has, as part of its branch organisation, a Correspondent, whose aim is to interest boys or undergraduates in social questions and to bring them in touch with the other half of the world whose experience is so different. The Travelling Secretary of Toc H. and other speakers, are constantly going the round of the schools. At the end of each term lists of boys or undergraduates leaving are sent to Headquarters. A letter is then written to each of these offering to put him in touch with the Jobmaster and other members in his own district.

Further information may be obtained from Toc H. Headquarters, 1, Queen Anne's Gate, London, S.W.1.