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A COMMENTARY

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PREFACE

THIS VOLUME CONTAINS ARTICLES WHICH have appeared under my name, in the Melbourne *Herald* and other Australian journals, since the outbreak of war (with one pre-war paper by way of prelude). They make a sort of diary; a record of what one Australian thought and felt about events in these tremendous months. There is nothing original or profound in them, but I have reason to believe that they did put into words what many other Australians were thinking and feeling about the same events. It is only fair to add that every one of the articles in this selection brought me letters of more or less violent disagreement.

They are re-published in the belief, possibly illusory, that some of those who read them with approval when they first appeared would like to read them again, and to possess them in a handy collective form.

W.M.

Perth,
Western Australia,
February, 1941.

CONTENTS

VICTORY!

(Written in October, 1938)

THE REAL DIFFICULTY ABOUT WRITING FOR the newspapers, I have always felt, is the interval between the writing and the printing. During that interval, things may happen which will make nonsense of what you have written. At the present moment—when I am writing these words—that possibility almost paralyses my pen. The great days range like tides across the face of the world; and by the time you read what I am now writing, you and I may be living on a changed planet, a planet in which everything looks different. Events may have taken place which will have sent our old earth spinning down a new groove.

You may say, if you like, that this is sheer illusion; and that these days are no more momentous than any other days; every day, and every minute, history is being made. And that, of course, is true. History is a continuous whole. All events are links in an unbroken chain. What is happening to-day is bound, by the inescapable logic of fate, to what happened in a palace of Versailles 19 years ago—to go no further back than that. The reader of history watches a steady flight of chickens coming home to roost. Granted. Nevertheless, I find it hard to rise to the philosophic heights from which all days seem equally decisive. There do seem to be certain crucial moments in

history; moments when humanity stands at the fatal cross-roads where its choice determines its destiny. As I write, we are passing through such a moment; and by the time this appears, the choice of roads may have been made. Is it possible to write something which is true now and which will be true then, no matter what may have happened in the interim?

I think it is possible. Whether reason and justice, or unreason and savagery, have won a momentary triumph—no matter which force may seem, for the moment, to be in the ascendancy—a great victory has been won for the good cause, which is the cause of democracy—or, if you prefer, the cause of humanity, the cause of civilization. It is a victory which, no matter what terrors and tribulations may yet be in store for us, may in the long run prove decisive. The powers arrayed against democracy have been defeated, in this sense: that they have been forced to show themselves in their true colours, to show what it is that they really stand for; with the result that in all civilized countries millions of people who were doubtful and hesitant —who wondered whether after all there was not something to be said for a dictatorship—who wondered whether the masses were fit for freedom—who wondered whether liberty was anything but a catchword, and whether democracy was not a complete failure—these millions, I say, doubt no longer; they have been shown, in a flash, the truth—that the way of democracy, difficult and dangerous as it may prove, is the only way to a better world than the present; and that the way of Fascism is the way straight back to the jungle, and the law of the jungle. And I say that this vivid revelation of the true nature of the enemies of democracy is a great victory for the democratic cause all over the world. Let me explain.

I once had the hardihood to maintain, in print, that men would never willingly fight for an abstraction; and I mentioned 'a pale abstraction called democracy.' This was not, as some readers may have imagined, a scoff at democracy; it was intended as a scoff at those who use half-understood abstract nouns without any clear vision of the concrete things for which they stand. Until we know what our words mean we can hardly communicate with one another at all. When we use the word 'Democracy' we think, or ought to think, of men and women and the lives they lead in certain countries; when we speak of 'Fascism' we should have before our eyes the lives of individuals in certain other countries. Abstract nouns are quite unobjectionable—and indeed essential as a kind of shorthand—when you are sure you understand what you really mean by them. The present crisis has made clearer than it ever was before to most of us the difference between these particular abstractions; and I wish here to set forth that difference in words plain and few.

The faith of Democracy has been put into words by an Australian poet; it is the belief, he says,

> That man is God, however low;
> Is man, however high.

To put it more briefly still, it is faith in man; or, in theological terms, the belief that man was made in the image of God. Or, again, to quote Thomas Mann—that great exile from Nazi Germany—'We must define Democracy as that form of government and of society which is inspired above every other with the feeling and consciousness of the dignity of man.'

Faith in man is hard to maintain in the teeth of what we know about men and women—'that odious little race of vermin,' as the Emperor of Brobdingnag styles them

when Gulliver has told him all about them. It would be quite possible for a visitor from Mars to spend a year on our planet and find human beings to be egoists, liars, cowards and bullies; stupid, cruel and dishonest. It is quite possible to fancy angels weeping over the vices and laughing over the follies of man. The heart of man is deceitful, and desperately wicked; there is no need to be sentimental, and ignore the fact of human depravity. But there is a sort of inverted sentimentalism, calling itself realism, which ignores the other side of human nature—the nobility of it, the passion for truth, the devotion to duty, the sense of justice, the comradeship, the readiness to die for a cause, the power of artistic creation—all that makes man different from the lower animals. Democracy, in short, believes that man is a spirit; and treats him as such. Fascism treats him as an animal and nothing more; and, so treated, he tends to become an animal and nothing more. A form of government that appeals to the best in man brings out that best; call upon his better self, and it will respond in a way that astonishes the sceptic. A form of government that appeals to the worst in man brings out that worst, releases unexpected forces of evil. Fascism has no faith in the ordinary man, and believes that he can be ruled only by fear; and fear is the worst poisoner of the human character. The bestial cruelties displayed in German concentration camps have made us ask ourselves what can have become of the once kindly race that gave us our fairy stories and our Christmas trees and the loveliest of songs; how did it come to make way for these brutal sadists? The answer is that a form of government based on a profound contempt for human beings ends by making human beings contemptible.

Fascism is convinced that the ordinary, common man

is not fit for freedom; set him free to do as he pleases, and he will make the most hideous mistakes (to put it mildly). Democracy admits the likelihood of mistakes, but maintains that it is only by being free that a man learns, gradually and painfully, to become fit for freedom.

The faith of democracy is not a blind faith; it is not a shutting of the eyes to the shortcomings of men and women as they now are; but it is a faith in the possibility of improvement. Democracy, in short, believes in education; and the more democratic a country is, the more firmly does it believe in education. In the United States—on the whole, decidedly the most democratic country in the world, in spite of flagrant suppressions of liberty—the enthusiasm for education is inspiring; that extraordinary country is, I suppose, the only country in the world which is actually spending more on education than on defence. The difference between the two forms of government, in this respect, may be put in a nutshell: Democracy believes in education, Fascism believes in propaganda. There is a whole world of meaning in that distinction. Propaganda is a hypnotising, a stupefying, an enslaving force; education is an emancipating force. The belief in education is based on a faith in man, in the power for good latent in the human soul; the belief in propaganda is based on a contempt for man, on a faith only in his capacity for being turned into an efficient machine; military efficiency being the chief end in view. This is really a vital distinction, for it means that Fascism believes in physical force alone, while Democracy believes in the gradual substitution of reason for force, of the spiritual for the material.

But there is another distinction more vital still. There is said to be widespread, if dumb, discontent in the countries ruled by dictators; I don't know whether that is

true or not. But I do know that in the countries calling themselves democracies there is widespread, and not dumb, discontent. Nobody can be satisfied with Democracy as it is now, with all its economic injustices and the poverty and misery and degradation resulting therefrom. Nobody with eyes in his head can fail to see that the blessed word Freedom is for many millions, in all the democracies, a bitter jest; for where there is not economic freedom there is no freedom at all. If the democracies fall into complacency, if they fail to turn sternly self-critical eyes upon their own shortcomings, they are surely doomed. But just here is the very core of our hope in Democracy. It is, by its nature, self-critical. Fascism is, by its nature, self-satisfied; it allows no criticism of itself. Italy proclaims, loudly and proudly, that it has no room for an anti-Fascist. Fascism is so sure that it is right that it can only regard a reformer as an enemy of his country's welfare. The glory of Democracy is that it is not sure that it is right; it is friendly to criticism, to the demand for change. It believes in educating all its people; which means, training them to think for themselves; which means, producing a generation of critics and reformers. Fascism, loudly proclaiming itself to be the perfect form of government, can hardly be expected to tolerate any proposals for reform. It trains its people to refrain from thinking, to do as they are told, to trust its leader, to cheer lustily whenever he speaks, to despise liberty, to be ready to become cannon-fodder when their leader gives the signal; in a word, to be efficient slaves.

The antithesis of Democracy is not Aristocracy, but mob-rule; and Fascism is a form of mob-rule; a nation is turned into a mob, and is used as a mob. Fascism, in the words of a writer whom I have already quoted, is 'the

contempt of pure reason, the denial and violation of truth in favour of power and the interests of the state, the appeal to the lower instincts, to so-called "feeling," the release of stupidity and evil from the discipline of reason and intelligence, the emancipation of blackguardism—in short, a barbaric mob-movement.'

I say that we have won a great victory, whatever defeats and humiliations and miseries may be in store for us. The stars in their courses have fought for Democracy in the last few weeks; what were shadowy abstractions have become clear realities for multitudes hitherto wavering in doubt. What sort of a world is it in which one man, and he of doubtful sanity, can hold the issues of peace and war in the hollow of his hand? It is the sort of world that Fascism brings forth. We know, now, what Fascism means. It means getting your own way by force, or by the threat of force; which is a return to jungle law and a surrender of all that civilization means. We know, too, what Democracy means; what it is that we are called upon to defend—a little seed, of immeasurable value to the future of humanity, though it is insignificant to look at, for it has hardly as yet put forth its first pair of leaves to greet the sun and the wind—the seed of Freedom.

FOR DARK DAYS

I KNOW OF NO FAMOUS SAYING SO GENERALLY misunderstood as Emerson's 'Hitch your waggon to a star.' The phrase is torn from its context and taken as a bit of vague, well-meaning, high-sounding American idealism; it is really a bit of very practical American shrewdness. It has a grotesque touch about it; a homely tang; but when you have taken the trouble to understand it, you see that it states a profound philosophic truth. To find its match in compact wisdom you have to go to the New Testament.

The reason why people misunderstand it is that they have not read the passage in which it occurs. The star that Emerson refers to is not something in the spacious firmament on high; not one of the stars that twinkle in the abyss of night, cold, unfriendly, inconceivably remote and completely mysterious. The star he tells us to hitch our waggon to is the star we live on; the star which is our home; Earth.

We had really no excuse for misunderstanding the saying, for Emerson makes it perfectly clear in some preceding sentences. Thus: 'All our strength and success in the work of our hands depend on our borrowing the aid of the elements. You have seen a carpenter on a ladder with a broad-axe chopping upward chips from a beam. How awkward! at what disadvantages he works! But see

him on the ground, dressing his timber under him. Now, not his feeble muscles, but the force of gravity brings down the axe; that is to say, the planet itself splits his stick.'

We must manage to get the planet to split our stick, and to pull our waggon, and help us in our work generally. We must borrow the aid of the elemental forces. The force of electricity, for instance; it was always there, but we knew it only as lightning, destructive and terrifying; nobody dreamed of its being of any use to us. But when we had studied its ways and understood a little about it, it became our faithful servant, ready to ring our front-door bell, to light our rooms, to carry our messages across the world, to remove mountains. Throw a handful of dust against the wind, and you will get it promptly blown back in your face; but the same wind that makes that rude repartee is ready to turn your windmill or fill your sails and blow you to the desired haven. 'Now that is the wisdom of a man,' says Emerson, 'in every instance of his labour, to hitch his waggon to a star, and see his chore done by the gods themselves.'

Nothing very profound in that, you will say; he is merely telling us what anyone knows who has ever chopped wood or watched a dynamo at work. True; but of course Emerson was not thinking mainly of such forces as gravity or magnetism. You must remember that there are other things in the world besides what can be seen or handled. There are things invisible, intangible, impalpable, yet every whit as real as bread and cheese. You don't need to be a philosopher or a theologian to see that the unseen world exists. Can you measure thirst with a two-foot rule, or put a piece of hunger into a microscope slide? Can you analyse honesty in a chemical laboratory? You can kick

a stone; can you kick a mathematical truth? Can you cool love in a refrigerator, or burn up hatred in a furnace? Yet no one will deny that hunger and thirst and love and hatred and honesty and mathematical truths are intensely real things. They belong to the unseen world.

And this world of unseen things is governed by forces as real as the forces which govern the seen world; as real as electricity or gravity. The love of a mother for her child is as much of a reality as the mother and the child are. Love of money is as real as money is. These forces are what we call spiritual forces, to distinguish them from physical forces.

(I am making statements of a childish simplicity, not because I think you need a childishly simple statement, but because I need it myself. I want to spread the subject out before me like a map; as plain and as clear as a map. I want to see whether my confidence in the ultimate victory of the Allies is merely an example of the easy optimism that comes of an unwillingness to believe unpleasant truths, or whether it is based on reason. In these days, one is terribly afraid of dropping into the optimism which is a form of cowardice).

Before these words appear in print, we may have heard news of a great disaster to our arms; new enemies may have come into the field; unforeseen dangers may be confronting us. But I for one believe, and nothing will shake my belief, that in the long run—after what dark days, at the cost of what sacrifices, no man can foresee—we shall be victorious.

This belief is not based on a comparison of armies or navies or air-forces, nor on statistics of man-power, nor on computations of our economic resources—nor yet on a faith in the superior sagacity of our statesmen or the more

skilful strategy of our generals or the higher courage of our soldiers. It is based on a perception that we are fighting for a cause to which the gods are friendly; or, if you think 'the gods' too personal or too pagan a way of putting it, let us say that we have on our side the great spiritual forces which, in the last resort, control human destinies.

Let us not be complacent and say that of course we of British stock are better people than the Germans. We may be, and we may not; it is not for us to say. What we are justified in saying is, not that we are better people than the Germans, but that the cause for which we are fighting is better than the cause for which the Germans are fighting. Let us be humble about ourselves and proud of our cause.

What are the Germans fighting for? I fancy they are clearer about their war aims than we are. They are fighting that their beloved country, after terrible trials and humiliations, may emerge great and powerful and prosperous; surely a laudable ambition but for one fatal defect—that they do not know how to achieve their purpose except at other people's expense. The greatness they aspire to means trampling on others; their power means the enslavement of others; their prosperity means the robbing of others. Thus they use the noble passion of patriotism for ends which are clearly criminal.

And we—what are we fighting for? At the beginning of the war it was not clear to all of us; to some of us it is still not clear. But it becomes clearer every day, thanks to the enemy; by his actions he makes it plainer, every day, what it is that we are fighting against, and therefore what it is that we are fighting for. Every revelation of German aims and of German methods, in all the naked horror of

the truth, brings us a surer certainty that in defending what Germany is assailing we are working with the great spiritual forces of the universe—the spiritual forces which, in war, as Napoleon said at the close of his life, far outweigh the physical.

In other words, we are fighting for a cause which, in the long run and in the last resort, is undefeatable.

Undefeatable? Surely a dangerous doctrine, you object. If our cause is undefeatable, there is no cause for us to lift a finger in its service; let us sit in armchairs and do crossword puzzles till we hear of its triumph. If the planet will split our stick for us—why, let the planet do it, while we watch the operation from a distance!

No; if you talk like that, you have not understood how the great spiritual forces work. They are undefeatable through their power over the hearts of men; because there is something irresistible in their voices when they call us to put the whole of our energies at their service. As the issues of this war become clearer—as it is made plain in the sight of all men that we are fighting not only for national but for universal ends, for justice and freedom and decent behaviour between man and man and between nation and nation—you will see more and more energy being dedicated to our cause. Party quarrels will disappear. A coalition Government has been formed in Britain and there may yet be one in Australia. Employers and employed will take counsel together to see how they can best serve the common cause. The United States will not resist the call for long—if you read the American papers you can see isolationism crumbling daily. That is the way the great spiritual forces work. So long as we are true to them, they continue to lend us their strength and their invincibility.

TENSION

THERE WAS NOTHING MUCH TO DO OR SEE in Messina—except everything, of course; I mean the general queerness, the rawness and antiquity combined; streets of corrugated iron cottages that made you feel as if you were in a goldfields township in Western Australia; streets of brand-new concrete shops and houses, very modern, rather American; with, round the corner, the ancient cathedral or some other reminder that Messina was a great and famous city when Shakespeare made it the setting for the play he liked the best of all his comedies —and for many centuries before Shakespeare was born. Still, after you have got over the general rumness of infancy and wrinkled age combined in one face, there is nothing much for the traveller to do during his day in port; so we took a tram for the cemetery.

Another queer thing about Messina is that although it is and always will be a very live city—being one of the great ports of the Mediterranean, with a magnificent harbour—it is a city dominated by a cemetery. In fact, the cemetery is more than a cemetery; it is a great public garden, a place, you might almost say, of recreation and refreshment. It rises in terraced slopes till, from the top, you see the whole city mapped out below you—the harbour, with ships of all descriptions—the rocky shores of Calabria, the toe of Italy, across the Strait—the blue waters of the

Strait itself, over which so many prehistoric legends brood. (It is dotted with fishing-boats; for this corner of the world is, the guide-books tell you, 'pescosissimo,' which means, I suppose, 'very fishy.' So are the legends.)

But I didn't set out to write a description of scenery. Coming to the point, we wandered among the gravestones, simple and grandiose, and noted again and again the words, 'morto nel terremoto'—dead in the earthquake. The earthquake—the chief event in the history of Messina; the memory of it haunts the city. The reason why the city is such a queer combination of new and old is that it is mainly a post-earthquake city, with a few pre-earthquake fragments here and there.

Those inscriptions on the stones brought back to my mind a vivid experience of twenty years earlier. I happened to be sojourning in Naples when—on December 29, 1908—the morning papers came out with enormous headlines: 'Messina and Reggio completely destroyed.' There was no letting the public down gently, none of the gradualness with which we are allowed to learn that we have suffered a defeat or a set-back; the nation was bluntly told the truth at once; and even a foreigner could feel the shock of astonishment and dismay that ran through Italy.

Measures of relief were organized with what seemed to me incredible speed. Naples, the port nearest to the disaster, hummed with activity. By next day, the great harbour was alive with moving ships large and small; ships carrying stores—bedding, clothes, food, tents, doctors and nurses and soldiers—to the stricken cities; ships bringing the injured to Naples, where every public building instantly became a hospital. I have since read somewhere that there was a great deal of muddle and confusion. I saw no signs of it, but of course it must have been there.

The Italians are not a very business-like people; rather happy-go-lucky, I think; but I doubt whether any nation in the world would have acted more promptly or more efficiently.

You must remember that this earthquake was not an event which might have been foreseen and prepared for a month beforehand, like the German invasion of Norway; the bolt fell from an absolutely clear sky. The old earth gives no warning before she quakes.

I don't know, to this day, how many people lost their lives in that earthquake. One authority gives the number at 100,000, but I think this includes those who died later of injuries received. As far as I can make out, the number killed outright was somewhere about 75,000.

The word 'earthquake' is rather an exaggeration, for the earth doesn't really quake, but keeps on her course round the sun with perfect steadiness. The French name for it ('tremblement de terre') seems, on the other hand, an understatement; a movement that turns a large city into a heap of ruins in five minutes is surely more than a tremblement. But, once more, the earth doesn't really tremble. One little spot of the earth's skin gives a momentary twitch, like the little twitch you notice when a fly settles on a spot on the skin of a sleeping dog. A little patch of the earth's skin, between Etna and Vesuvius, seems irritable, and apt to twitch. Life, on this thin-skinned patch of our planet's surface, is a precarious business. Another twitch may come at any moment. Luckily, human beings have a marvellous capacity for getting used to precariousness.

Naples takes Vesuvius for granted; she has had time to get used to the menacing look of that mountain; but here was something she had not had time to get used to.

Naples knew fear. You sensed it as you walked about the streets; you read it in the anxious faces, the strained faces. I said just now that every public building had been turned into a hospital, but there was an exception—the churches. As everyone knows, on the continent the churches are open all day to all comers; you can drop in at any time, to gape at the frescoes, to meditate, to pray, or merely to have a rest in the cool half-light. There may be a few other people there, or you may find the church empty. But this week it was quite different. I did not look into a single church that was not full or nearly full of people, praying.

There is nothing like an earthquake or a volcanic eruption to remind men that there are vast elemental forces in the universe, forces which we, who call ourselves masters of our fate, have not yet mastered. Such events tell us how helpless we are; there is nothing to be done. Irreligious people can but trust what they call their luck; and religious people can but throw themselves on the mercy of God. The Southern Italians seemed to be religious, at any rate for the moment.

One day when I was having my hair cut—for you may as well have your hair cut, earthquake or no earthquake—I learnt what it was that was putting the strained look on people's faces. Some years before, it seemed, there had been an earthquake—a minor one—in Messina, and this had been followed about a week later by an earthquake, also minor, in Naples. There is a deep-rooted popular belief that history repeats itself—which it never does, by the way—and now that a vast earthquake had visited Messina, Naples would in all probability be razed to the ground in a week or so.

Of course one ought to have shown these frightened

foreigners how the intrepid spirit of the British race laughs such fears away; but did one? To be candid, one didn't. During the rest of my stay in Naples I was unable to get that story (probably quite untrue) out of my head. Naples—the beautiful city, the siren city—is a city of extremely narrow streets and very high buildings—old palaces and modern tenements crowded with life. Wandering along those streets, it was impossible not to reflect, What a city for an earthquake! and how unlikely one would be to escape with one's life if those masses of masonry should topple and come thundering down! The old saying, 'See Naples and die,' took on a new meaning. And I didn't want to die; or not just yet. There were some persons in Australia with whom I badly wanted to pass the time of day first. . . . In brief, the anxiety painted on the faces of the crowds communicated itself to me, an alien in their midst. The old earth was carrying on a war of nerves against us all; and our nerves came out of it none too well. I learnt one never-to-be-forgotten lesson: that waiting for an earthquake is a horribly demoralizing occupation.

As you have probably guessed, this artless narrative, though it happens to be true, is also a parable, with about seven different morals, too obvious to mention. Of course there is a sense in which we are all waiting for an earthquake; for the strongest of us holds life on a precarious tenure. But in a special sense, it has fallen to the lot of various countries, particularly in Europe, for months and in some instances for years past, to wait for an earthquake; to wait, to listen, to watch little clouds in the sky, to waver between hopes and fears, to wonder when the blow will fall and what the ruin will be like when their world topples over, and what is to become of them

and of all they cherish in life. There is nothing worse for the human mind than to remain over-long in a state of helpless suspense. We in Australia can hardly realize what it must be like to live in a country over which the sword of Damocles hangs by a single hair. The uncertainty poisons life for a whole nation. The soul of man is not fashioned to endure such a state of things. It is an intolerable evil. It must be put an end to. One of our chief purposes in this war must be to put an end to it, and to restore to a nerve-racked world some measure of confidence in the stability of the house we are building.

LOUVAIN AGAIN

CAN YOU BEAR ANOTHER TRAVEL TALK? The city I speak of to-day gave me, when I sojourned there, something of the same impression as Messina; it was queer with the same kind of queerness; for here, too, were brand-new buildings cheek-by-jowl with buildings ancient and venerable. Louvain, like Messina, was a city of tragic memories and renewed hopes; but the ruins which one still saw here and there were reminders, not of an earthquake, but of a crime, a crime whose brutality was matched by its stupidity.

I went there to represent an Australian university at the festival of the 500th anniversary of the founding of the University of Louvain. We were a mixed crowd; for the universities of all the world—with, of course, the exception of Germany—were proud to send delegates to salute this old and famous seat of learning. I think we represented something more than universities; for all mankind, by a deep instinct, admires that which, in a transitory world, endures. And here was an institution which had endured for 500 years; which had been struck down many times in the course of those centuries, and had always risen again.

Belgium is a little world between two larger worlds, the Latin and the Germanic. It has lived under the domination of various powers; Spain, Austria, France, Germany in turn; it has been the arena for the armies of

modern Europe. It is hard for us to realize what it must be like to live in an arena. Reading European history, one sometimes thinks it might have been an act of mercy to deport all the Belgians and leave their country as an empty place strictly reserved for battles. It must be horrible for children to grow up in a region which is bound to be devastated whenever a war breaks out in Europe.

That was what I thought I read on the faces of the people who lined the streets of Louvain to watch us pass in procession, in our many-coloured academic raiment, through the city. It was not merely that they were not happy faces; you very seldom see really happy faces in a crowd in any city; but in these faces I saw, or fancied I saw, a strained and anxious look. The young people had something in their eyes which showed that they knew more of the tragic side of life than young people ought to know.

They were surrounded by reminders of their city's agony. The children who were too young to remember the night when Hell was let loose on Louvain—August 25, 1914—saw every day the ancient shell-scarred buildings, the broken towers of the Cathedral, the patched-up walls, and, above all, the very new-looking houses everywhere. In the square outside the railway station was a strange memorial, a sort of obelisk made of slabs of stone laid in pairs crosswise, such as a child builds out of blocks. An inscription told us that each slab in this tall structure was placed there in memory of a citizen put to death by the Germans in 1914. (I wonder what the Germans have done with that memorial to-day). All these things were ever-present reminders to young and old of what the city had endured a dozen years before this festival.

One of the greatest of the new buildings was the University Library, built—mainly by the generosity of the American public—on the site of the old library which the Germans had chosen to burn to the ground. The Rector of the University, who had been Rector when the Germans came, told us how, about midnight, the library had been set fire to, and how 300,000 volumes, thousands of manuscripts, and all the university archives of five centuries, had gone up in flames. The spectacle, he said, would never be effaced from the memory of those who witnessed it. The other buildings of the University were levelled with the ground; and when all was over, the German officer placed in command of Louvain asked one of the Professors whether the University was now entirely destroyed. We do not know whether this question was simply a bit of German truculence, or whether it was asked with a sincere desire for information, so that the work of demolition might not be left incomplete through an oversight. The Germans like to be thorough.

Why did the Germans burn that library? I have often asked myself that question, and have never been able to answer it. I can only suppose that the mind of the commanding officer worked somewhat in this way: Louvain was in a sense the spiritual centre of Belgium; the University was one of the oldest in Europe, and at one time was regarded as second only to the University of Paris, and drew to itself, to the number of 8,000, students from all European countries; in its library was enshrined what was most permanent in the University's life and traditions; therefore let us show our scorn of all that sort of thing by burning the library! At any rate, all who have any regard for the things of the mind can understand with what rage and despair the Rector must have watched

the destruction of that treasure. There was a kind of symbolism in the act. The brute in man had met the spirit in man, and the brute prevailed—for the time.

But there, before our eyes, was the magnificent new library building, housing a new collection of books—some of which, one was glad to know, Germany had been compelled to contribute—and there, too, were the new University halls, including finer Science and Engineering departments than the University had possessed before the invasion, to remind us that though the brute may prevail for a season, it does not in the long run prevail. The brute in man is mortal; the spirit of man is everlasting.

Enduring, indeed, Louvain must be, we reflected as the Rector in his speech unrolled the history of the University. Surely no other university in the world has been so often martyred, so often left for dead. Away back in the days of our own Queen Bess, the Spanish garrison had sacked the town and burned the colleges. A century later, in the time of Marlborough's campaigns in Flanders, the University had been turned into a military barrack. Nearly a century later, when the French revolutionary armies were trying to drive the Austrians out of the Low Countries, the University buildings were put up to public auction. Rather more than a century later (in 1914) the Germans had come to Louvain. And yet, after all these vicissitudes, here she was, re-risen from storm and fire, full of activity and of plans for the future. The Rector told us that, when the German commandant inquired if the University was yet completely destroyed, the proper answer would have been, 'Destroyed? Certainly not; only buried, in a winding sheet of cinders. She has acquired, in the course of ages, a habit of resurrection, and she will throw off this winding-sheet the moment the country is

set free.' And that would have been a true prophecy; for here she was.

Here she was; but where is she to-day? She has been martyred once again; but the details of her martyrdom have not yet come to hand, so far as I know. What has happened to the new library, with its tall tower? What has become of the new medical school? Has the old Hotel de Ville, where the city fathers entertained us with wine and sandwiches, escaped the bombardment? I ask myself a sadder question than these. The buildings will be rebuilt; the University, pride of the city, will live again; but what of the boys and girls who were given a holiday that they might watch, with grave and curious eyes, our procession along the streets? Have the girls, mothers now, fled shrieking with their babies from the burning city, to be machine-gunned by German bombers on the country roads? In the long history of human warfare I can find no record of a crime so abominable as Germany's treatment of the fugitives in this campaign.

They tell us we must take long views when we speak of other nations, and that is true. At the beginning of last century, the Germans were our gallant allies and the French our detested enemies. In 1854 the Turks were our gallant allies; in 1914 they were our deadly enemies; today they are our gallant allies. In 1915 the Italians were our gallant allies; to-day they are singing hymns of hate about us. The moral seems to be—Don't say too much against a foreign nation to-day, because you may have to unsay it all to-morrow, when we are that nation's ally. Take long views.

For my part, I try to. I try to look at men and events of the present time as they will appear a century hence, or even ten centuries hence. Most things will look different

after a thousand years; but if civilization advances, that machine-gunning of the fugitives will seem, a thousand years hence, an even more unspeakable bestiality than it seems to us. The men who could devise, the men who could command, and the men who could perpetrate that crime can only be the dregs of humanity. And yet we must feel a kind of gratitude to them, for they have given, to all doubters and waverers, a clear demonstration of what Nazism means.

THE ANTI-PROPAGANDA RACKET

To judge by a recent article in the New York 'Times,' and another, of about the same date, in the 'Herald-Tribune,' intelligent people in the United States are beginning to wake up to a truth which we in Australia will have to realize sooner or later, and the sooner the better: the truth, namely, that the most cunning, the most subtle, the most dangerous kind of propaganda is the propaganda which disguises itself as an attack on propaganda.

I want to talk about this, because it seems to me rather important that we should be clear-headed about it; and the best way to become clear-headed about a thing is to talk it over with one's friends. In America the friends of Germany seem to be making skilful and continuous use of a peculiarly insidious poison gas. We on this side of the Pacific shall be wise if we learn to know that gas when we smell it; so that the first whiff of it may put us on our guard.

The first cobweb we must clear away from our brains is the notion that propaganda is an evil thing. If it were really an evil thing, then certain drastic reforms would be long overdue. For instance, we must close all our schools, places where very wicked persons called teachers are doing evil on five days in the week. We must close all our churches, for the very purpose of their existence

is this evil practice. We must have all preachers, no matter what they preach, taken out and hanged, preferably in public, to deter others. We must abolish all newspapers; for all their advertisements and nine-tenths of the remainder of their contents are pure propaganda. (The printing of news is one of the most powerful kinds of propaganda; the word 'gospel' means nothing more than 'good news,' as any dictionary will remind you). To make a political speech will be an indictable offence. Most books will have to be burnt by the common hangman. The reading of our greatest poets will be a secret vice. From our wireless sets we shall hear nothing but crooning. . . . When these reforms take place I shall not be interested; I shall be, if still alive, in a concentration camp, expiating my sins, which are as scarlet. And you?—has your life been quite blameless? Have you never tried to tell the truth, or what you regarded as the truth, to anyone else? If you have—or even if you have ever told a lie, with intent to be believed, you too have been guilty of the crime of propaganda.

Of course this is all nonsense. Propaganda is emphatically not an evil thing; it is the indispensable instrument of human progress. By its means, one man's discoveries—and all discoveries are made by one man to begin with—are made known to his fellow-men; by its means, one generation gives the next the results of its experience. By propaganda, the garnered wisdom of the race is given permanence and the great human traditions are handed down.

Of course—to make an end of these platitudes—saying that propaganda is an evil thing is about as sensible as saying that a piece of rope is an evil thing. A piece of rope may be used to strangle your mother, or to rescue

somebody from drowning. Propaganda has an even greater variety of uses. Obviously, it is an evil thing when it is used to give currency to a lie, and a good thing when it is used to give currency to a truth.

So, when we are confronted with a statement clearly intended to mould our opinion on some important matter, it will not do to yawn and say, 'Oh, this is just propaganda!' What we have got to ask ourselves, if we are not going to be cowardly shirkers of the duty laid upon all who have brains in their skulls, is not, 'Is it propaganda?' but 'Is it true?' That is what matters. If it is true, it doesn't matter in the least whether it is propaganda or not.

Bearing this in mind, you will understand what the anti-propaganda campaign in the United States really means. (For the present, I don't propose to discuss what is happening nearer home.) The friends of Germany don't say, 'What the German propagandists tell us is true, and what the Allied propagandists tell us is false.' That would be blatant and crude; their method is far more subtle than that. What they say is, 'Distrust all propaganda, no matter from which side it may come!'

This looks as if it were at least impartial, but in reality its whole intention is to prevent America from giving any help to the Allies. What these campaigners say is, in effect, 'Don't listen to anything that comes to you from Europe; it's all lies. This war is simply a war of rival imperialisms; it doesn't matter to us which imperialism wins. All this talk about fighting for freedom and democracy is the kind of thing that made suckers of us in 1917. We are a sentimental, an emotional people; that was what dragged us into the war—and what did we gain by it? Never again must we be fooled by these resounding slogans. Common sense must save us. There

is nothing to choose between these old European empires; for Britain and France to accuse Germany of aggression is a bad case of the pot calling the kettle black. We must beware of the wily intrigues of old-world diplomacy. Democracy will not survive another war; we must save democracy by keeping out of this one. As soon as a nation goes to war, it goes fascist. Our trouble is that we are a terribly gullible people; the Armament Firms, and Big Business, are doing their best to bamboozle us again; well, we must not let them. We have pulled the chestnuts out of the fire for Britain and France once too often. It was we who won the last war; and what came of it? The infamous Versailles Treaty, which brought this present war in its train. There is nothing to choose between the combatants. We must not be suckers this time; we must be wise guys, and leave these quarrelsome Europeans to settle their own squabbles.' And so on, and so on, with endless repetition.

I have never been in the United States; and if I had been I should not be able to say whether the Americans are more gullible than their neighbours. But they must be very gullible indeed if they fail to see that this apparent attack on all propaganda is itself propaganda, clever but somewhat obvious. Its cleverness lies in this, that when you set out to show the entire falsehood of one of the anti-propagandist's arguments, he at once knocks the ground from under your feet by saying, in a loud voice, 'Ah, but this is propaganda; we must stuff our ears against this sort of talk!'

Of course I don't want to suggest that all the anti-propagandists are consciously trying to help the Nazi cause. There are no doubt multitudes of honest isolationists who have no particular sympathy with Germany, who may

even sympathize, on the whole, with the aims of the Allies, but who sincerely believe that their supreme duty is to do what in them lies to keep America out of the war. They are not consciously doing Herr Hitler's work; but they are doing it. They are doing, possibly with the best intentions, exactly what you would do if you were a Nazi emissary sent to the States with the express purpose of doing the best possible service to Germany.

Mr. Lawrence Hunt, in the *New York Times,* states the position forcibly. 'This propaganda against propaganda makes many an average citizen throw up his hands and say, "What can I believe?" Well—you can believe in yourself, your own common sense, your own decent instincts, your own values and traditions which you cherish enough to fight for. These peace-at-any price people who, consciously or unconsciously, are giving daily aid and comfort to Comrades Hitler and Stalin will do some harm and create more confusion before the courageous common sense of America says, "Enough—you're a fake!" They won't succeed, because we'll stop deceiving ourselves when the hour of decision is at hand.'

Our concern, however, is not with America, but with Australia. I mentioned this American campaign only as an illustration of an attitude, which I believe to be a wholly wrong attitude, towards propaganda. The merely sceptical attitude is comfortable for the lazy-minded; but it is not good enough for us. I shall end on a personal note. I have been, during recent months, a persistent propagandist —and what is more, a quite unashamed propagandist. But that is not your concern. It is not your business to ask, when I make a statement about what we are fighting for, 'Is this talkative person a propagandist? Is he a hireling of High Finance? Is he paid by the Armament

Firms? Is he a Tory, a war-monger, a reactionary, a defender of the status quo? What are his hidden motives, anyhow?' I submit that these are all irrelevant questions, and that the only question which you have any business to ask is, 'Is this true?' It may be a difficult question to answer, but to shirk the difficulty by repeating the parrot-cry, 'It's propaganda!' is unworthy of intelligent beings.

BRAINS

'HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF.' THE PERSON who invented that phrase must have been but a shallow student of history—to repeat itself being the one thing that history never does; as anyone can see who looks a little deeper than the surface. The world since its beginning has been in a state of flux; the same set of conditions never recurs; as Browning remarks, 'Nothing can be as it has been before.' . . . And yet, the old saying has something plausible about it; the blunders and tragedies of to-day do often seem to have an extraordinary likeness to the blunders and tragedies of yesterday. On the surface, history does seem to repeat itself, with a heartbreaking monotony; the reason always being mankind's failure to learn the lessons of experience. Our ability to profit by the teachings of the Great War will determine the result of the Greater War into which we are entering. Have we the intelligence to use the lessons which that grim old schoolmaster, Experience, tried to hammer into our heads a quarter of a century ago?

I never read a military text-book in my life; I know less than nothing about the technique of warfare; I have no desire to set up as an armchair strategist. No technical knowledge is needed, but only a little common sense, to enable us to see two facts emerge with crystal clearness from the confused welter of the Great War; two facts which it behoves us all to realize, and to realize quickly,

for the very life of our country may depend upon our prompt acceptance of these facts and our readiness to act upon them.

The first fact is that in modern warfare brain-power counts for far more, and man-power (in the ordinary sense of the term) for far less, than in earlier wars, such as the Napoleonic or even the Franco-Prussian. Machines, which are the product of brain-power—and skill in the use of them, which is the exercise of brain-power—are what count to-day. No sensible person is content to estimate a nation's military strength by counting the number of army divisions it can put in the field. It is quality of equipment and intelligence to use the equipment effectively that matter in modern war; not the size but the quality of the army and navy and air force.

Failure to grasp this fundamental lesson of the Great War has already spelt one fearful tragedy. Poland, as all the world knows, is a great country for horse-breeding; accordingly, the Polish army was one of the most formidable in the world—in cavalry. The Polish leaders appear to have thought a battle might still be won by dashing cavalry charges. Alas! The dashing cavalry charge is now a mere form of mass suicide; a whole brigade of the most magnificent cavalry can be mown down by a few machine-guns. If the Poles were not warned, by those who knew the facts, that cavalry was too vulnerable an arm to be of any use in modern war, it was a great crime on the part of their advisers; if, as seems much more probable, they were warned and refused to believe the warning, it was a signal example of lack of intelligence—lack of the kind of intelligence that adapts itself to new conditions. It was just the same lack of intelligence that led to the greatest tragedy in military history, the tragedy

of Passchendaele, where 250,000 lives were thrown away, with nothing gained worth speaking of, by hurling masses of brave men against an impregnable position. Happily, British and French military authorities appear to have learnt that terribly costly lesson. They understand that the Napoleonic strategy of mass attack is, with mechanized armies, no longer feasible. If that lesson had not been learnt, the result would be a rapid exhaustion of man-power—caused by a failure of brain-power.

I suppose there will be blunders enough in the present conflict before all is over; but it seems plain that that particular blunder is not going to be repeated. There will be no costly offensives such as we saw in the Great War. Economy of life will be the rule for generals. The German command has, we may be sure, learnt its lesson as thoroughly as the Allies. They remember that the great German offensives of 1918 were a blunder. Not only did they not achieve their object; in the words of Captain Liddell Hart, the last of these offensives 'left the attacker incapable of pursuing that object. Worse still, for him, it went so far to complete his exhaustion, morally and physically, that it ensured his losing the war. If ever an army committed suicide, it was the German in 1918.'

Intelligence is scoffed at in Germany to-day; 'We think with our fists' is the somewhat idiotic slogan which has been put into the mouths of the young men of Germany. Any successful prize-fighter of your acquaintance will tell you that you must punch with your fists and think with your brains, and that you must do both, all the time, if you want to win. Unfortunately the Germans, in spite of picturesque slogans, do think with their brains, and very efficient brains, too; hence it comes about that between the armies facing one another to-day there is no marked

inequality in the matter of equipment, and no more likelihood of costly blunders on one side than on the other. And that is why, if the war is to be decided by a military victory, it is likely to last for many years. For all modern strategists are agreed that the defensive, in present-day warfare has an enormous advantage over the offensive; and so neither Germany nor the Allies will be willing to take the offensive. Each side will be content with the defence of its own line, and wait for the other side to attack. If wars to-day were lost or won by armies alone, as in days of old, I should venture to predict another Thirty Years' War.

This brings us to the second fact which emerges from the conflict of 1914-1918—the fact that wars to-day are not fought by armies and navies but by nations. It is, of course, a commonplace that in a modern war there are no non-combatants; old women and new-born babies are not exempt from attack; in fact, any day it may be safer to be in the trenches than to be in London. That, however, is not what I mean by saying that modern wars are waged by nations rather than by armed forces. What I mean is that the issues of victory or defeat depend, to a greater extent than ever before in the world's history, on the industrial efficiency and the economic resources of the nations involved.

The Germans proclaim that they were not beaten in a military sense in 1918; and there is some justification for their boast. In October of that year, Haig himself announced in a dispatch that 'Germany is not broken in a military sense. During the last weeks her armies have withdrawn fighting and in excellent order.' These are the words of the British commander-in-chief, surely a trustworthy witness. But if Germany was not broken in a

military sense, in what sense was she broken, since broken she undoubtedly was? Her armies were exhausted, as her own military historians admit, by the 1918 series of offensives, each of which, Ludendorff promised, would 'finally and decisively conquer the enemy'; but though exhausted, they might have retired, rested on the defensive, and continued the war indefinitely—if they had had good food, plenty of munitions, and a resolute nation behind them. The army did not give way until the nation had gone to pieces. The German army was broken because Germany was broken. The reasons for Germany's collapse are worth study.

We must apply the lesson to the present war—and to all future wars, if there are to be wars in the future. War is not now an affair that can be left to the soldiers; the whole nation must be thoroughly organized if it is to keep up the necessary supplies and stand the unescapable strain. And for organization on such a vast scale what is needed, once more, is—brain-power.

And so I come to the point of this string of platitudes. Our schoolmasters seem to be devotedly attached to the examination system, to which they cling in defiance of all the educational reformers. Well, when a war comes, it is our schoolmasters who have to sit for an examination. It is the hour of their testing. Have we, to meet the instant need, a supply of leaders, of trained intelligence, not hidebound, not the slaves of routine, but alert, agile, resourceful, quick to perceive the new problem and to meet the new demand as it occurs? If we have, we must in justice say to our schoolmasters, Well done, good and faithful servants; you have saved the country. If not, we must regretfully inform them that they have failed in their examination.

To sum up. Since in modern war the total intelligence of a nation is pitted against the total intelligence of another nation—and since the trained and instructed intelligence is more effective, whatever particular job it may be called on to tackle, than the intelligence of the untutored savage —education must be looked on as a permanent part of the defence of a country. I never could understand why the makers of our constitution treated education as a matter for the States rather than for the nation; as if education were not a national concern—as if the kind of education needed by one State might not be the kind needed by another—as if Queensland needed a different kind of arithmetic from Tasmania, and as if the best way of learning French in Victoria might not be the best way in New South Wales. I suppose it is no use proposing an amendment of the constitution; but I do propose an amendment of our way of looking at the matter. Since education is a national concern of the first importance, by hook or by crook the Commonwealth Government must see to it that no State is lagging behind the rest, through lack of money or through failure to grasp the importance of its task. Australia cannot afford to have any State getting anything less than the very best education the resources of the country as a whole can provide.

Of course the coming of a war is a sign of defective intelligence somewhere; it is a stupid way of settling our differences. When it does come, it throws a fierce light on the intelligence of every country taking part in it; and perhaps a still more searching test of brain-power is the peace that is made when a war ends. The point of this article is, that when we are confronted by the appalling expenditure of wealth to serve the needs of war, we are apt to think that we must economize on education; as if

education were a luxury, to be put aside till better times return. To mistake education for a luxury is about the greatest blunder a nation can make, and the mother of a vast progeny of blunders.

LABELS

I SAW BY THE PAPERS THE OTHER DAY THAT Sir Thomas Bavin had been speaking of the new order of things which he hopes will emerge from the present welter; whereupon Mr. W. M. Hughes is reported to have asked, in his most suspicious manner, 'What is this new order of yours?—is it something in the nature of socialism?' (I have forgotten what his exact words were, but that was the gist of his inquiry.) It happens that I have a great respect for Mr. Hughes, on account of his past achievements; moreover, I rather think that most of us regard him with what, for lack of a more definite word, I can only call personal affection. It is felt even by those who most violently disagree with his politics. Australia has a friendly feeling for him; the ability to evoke such a feeling is rare among politicians.

I hope therefore that Mr. Hughes will forgive me for drawing your attention to the fact that this question of his is a beautiful illustration of a human weakness against which we have to fight every day; the weakness for labels. Before he would express an opinion about Sir Thomas Bavin's proposal, he must know what label to stick on it. I hope I am not jumping at conclusions in an unwarrantable manner when I assume that what he meant was that if the new order was 'something in the nature of socialism' it was damned in advance—damned by its label.

I don't know what Sir Thomas Bavin's new order is like; if I know him at all, I fancy it is an order more just, more liberal, and more humane than anything Australia has seen hitherto; but that is not my present point. My point is that he might very well have replied to Mr. Hughes, 'Confound this mania for labelling everything! Isn't it possible to look at my proposals on their merits? If they are good proposals, no label you can stick on them will make them bad; and if they are bad, no label I could stick on them would make them good.'

It seems a trivial subject—the kind of topic a writer for newspapers falls back upon when he can't think of anything better. But it is not a trivial subject at all; it is an immensely serious subject. This weakness for labels vitiates your thinking—and mine—more than we know. We need to bring it into the light of consciousness. To be aware of our own weaknesses is the first step towards overcoming them, and being strong.

A few years ago I ventured to draw attention to the fact that the Italian Government had, in the course of a year, given 250,000 children a holiday of three weeks, the inland children at the seaside, the coast children in the mountains. I thought, and still think, this an excellent idea. Was it socialism? Was it communism? Was it fascism? I neither know nor care; if it helps to bring health and happiness to a quarter of a million children, it is good, whatever the label may be. Now that Italy is at war with us, I almost, but not quite, tremble to suggest it for Australia, because it will be given a still more damning label; it will be called an Italian notion. I shall be asked if I am really unpatriotic enough to suggest that any good thing could come out of Italy. Fancy proposing to take a leaf out of Mussolini's book!

Yes, I know it is terribly un-British. But consider for a minute. Is there anything really wrong about stealing our enemy's ideas? There is a certain new drug which, I am told, is of immense value in the treatment of certain diseases. It is a German discovery; are our doctors unpatriotic to make use of it? Should they let their patients go on suffering rather than admit that anything useful could come out of Germany? If the Germans still had the secret of its manufacture, should our chemists not set to work to find out the secret?—and, meanwhile, should we not try to get supplies through neutrals? Be honest with yourself; you know perfectly well that if your health were at stake you would swallow a drug with the most unpronounceable German name; and if the bottle were labelled 'Made in Germany' you would not put up your arms in a frenzy of patriotism and say, 'Never!'

And so, if that idea of a change of air provided for all schoolchildren whose parents cannot afford to pay for it strikes us as a good one, let us not reject it because it wears the label, 'Made in Italy.' In fact, my present feeling about Germany and Italy is that we should steal all we can from them; so long as we don't steal their idea of how people ought to behave towards one another, their political philosophy. That they can keep; and much good may it do them!

After that digression, I come back to the subject of labels. The rest of this article is going to be fearfully egotistical. (The reason why in these articles I write so much about myself is that I was taught at school to write only on subjects one knew something about; and, little as one knows about oneself, one does know more about oneself than about anything else. Also, confess that you find yourself the most interesting of all topics.)

Well, then, I confess that I find myself constantly bewildered by this labelling habit. For instance, it just happens that, so far as I can make out what the communists are driving at, I dislike communism; at least, I should hate to live in such a world as seems to be desired by such communists as have unburdened their souls to me. But that doesn't prevent me from being labelled a communist. It seems to me that anyone who is deeply discontented with the present order of things is promptly labelled a communist by people—and they are in the majority—who can't be bothered asking what a label means before they use it. Not long ago a not very bright politician accused me, on the strength of some writings of mine, of being a communist; and when I ventured to ask, in print, what he meant by communism, I was promptly told that the communist who wants to know what communism means is the really dangerous kind of communist. It seems one must suffer labels gladly, and not ask what they mean.

What puzzles me is that I also get letters accusing me of being a hireling of capitalism. 'This capitalism, which you are paid to defend,' a correspondent in Queensland wrote the other day. It would not be so bad to be labelled a capitalist; I rather fancy that to be a capitalist might be rather pleasant; it is generally understood that his lot has its alleviations. But 'hireling of capitalism' has a less alluring sound; in fact, I believe it is meant to be offensive; and before settling down to wear that label I really do want to know what capitalism means.

If it means the use of accumulated savings for creative purposes, I am prepared to defend it, if it needs defending; but if it means—as I fancy it does vaguely mean to most people—a system of society presided over by the idea of profit; if, in short, it means our present arrangements,

with all they involve in the way of social injustice; if it means the hard, callous, and inhuman rule of money; then capitalism must manage to do without my services. There is not enough gold in the Bank of England—or, rather, in the United States—to pay the salary that would hire me.

'Well, if the man is not a communist, and not a hireling of capitalism, what on earth is he?' There you are, looking round as usual for a label. If I explained to you just what sort of Australia I want to see after the war, I fancy the label you would fall back on would be 'crank.' And if I asked you what the label meant, you would stand on your dignity and refuse to answer. Naturally.

What is the meaning of this inveterate love of labels? From what strange primitive instinct does it spring? What is its cure? That a cure is needed I am certain. The evil it does is incalculable. Here, for instance, is a man who has been driven out of Germany by Hitler and his ravening swine; a man who is anti-Nazi in every fibre of his outraged being; a man who would work for us with a will if we gave him the chance; and what do we do with him? Well, the first thing we do is to fit him out with a label; we call him an 'enemy alien,' and the mischief is done. If he is an enemy, it is only because we make him so; he would have been a friendly alien, and a most useful friend, if we had not put that foolish label on him. He is not even an alien, in any real sense of the word.

In the name of common sense, let us try to judge measures, and men, on their merits, and not by some half-understood label that some nebulous-minded person has stuck on them. If a man is willing to enlist in our army, do we insist on knowing, before we can allow him to fight for us, whether he is a reformer or a reactionary or a liberal or a conservative or a capitalist or a socialist or an

Anglican or a Hard-Shell Baptist or an agnostic or a realist or an idealist? All these things are irrelevant; we ask only whether he is fit to serve the cause; and that is the only question we need ask about any measure, or any man or woman.

Let us band together, my brethren, to put an end to this evil idolatry of the label. Let each of us try to conquer the weakness in himself. If we cannot pledge ourselves to use no more labels, let us at least solemnly vow to use no labels whose meaning we don't understand.

CONVERSION BY CABLE

TO RETURN FOR A MOMENT TO THE THREADbare subject of propaganda. In a previous paper I had the hardihood to accuse the newspapers—all newspapers—of being unblushing propagandists; the accusation being based on the fact that news—the mere recording of events—is a form of propaganda. I shall now venture to go further, and say that of all forms of propaganda the most potent, the most quickly effective, the surest of producing results, is news.

If you doubt this, consider what has happened in Australia during the last few weeks. Those of us who for months past have been preaching, with endless repetition, that Australia must wake up to the realities and recognize that the war was a matter of life and death to her, might have gone on talking about right and justice and freedom and civilization till all was blue, without creating a ripple on the more or less placid surface of the collective mind, or at any rate the mind of a large section of our people. That which no amount of what is commonly called propaganda could have achieved in years has been done in a few weeks by the kind of propaganda called news. King Leopold of Belgium has been a better propagandist for the Allies than Dr. Goebbels and all his hired orators have been for the other side. The public mind is hardened against preachers; it is open to conversion by the eloquence of events.

To use the method of parable: Australia may be likened to a young man who, having heard the chimes at midnight with some boon companions, is sleeping fairly late in the morning, with his door securely locked against intruders. There mingles with his morning dreams a dull hammering noise; between sleep and waking, he drowsily wonders what it means. Is it someone in the distance chopping wood, or is it the man next door finishing that hen-coop of his? Not that it matters, of course; only he wishes people would be more considerate, and not start their noisy activities so early in the day. And then, all of a sudden, the noise seems to grow loud and insistent, and he realizes that someone is hammering at his own door and shouting to him that the house is on fire. He is out of bed at a single bound, fully awake in a moment.

The noise that woke Australia was the noise of bombs in France and Belgium. The Minister for the Army told us, in a broadcast the other evening, how astonishing—'staggering' was the word he used—was Australia's immediate response to this piece of propaganda.

Yes, Australia is awake at last, and will not sleep again till the night comes and her day's work is done; she understands what that work is, what the war means, what it means for her. She sees what a tremendous force of evil has been loosed on this planet, and in what peril stands all that she values most in life. Stilled now are the shrill voices telling us that this is a capitalist's war, or an imperialist war, or a war to serve the interests of a Tory clique in England; silent the tongues of those who 'disapprove of the war'—not silenced by any human censor, I hope, but by the censorship of events. (That noble American woman, Margaret Fuller, once announced to an admiring circle, 'I accept the universe'; and when this was

reported to Carlyle, his concise comment was, 'She'd better.' We have to accept the universe whether we like it or not, and the same with the war; to disapprove of the war is as if a man in Messina, during the earthquake I was writing of the other day, had stood with folded arms, looked sourly around him at the rocking and toppling buildings and said, 'I disapprove of this earthquake.')

Thus a piece of news from the other side of the world has done something to the mind of Australia that no amount of exhortation could ever have done. It has brought more than an awakening; it has brought something nearly approaching unanimity to a people hitherto divided. With quite negligible exceptions, we are of one mind now; bound together by a common purpose in the face of a common danger. If we are wise, we shall note that this unity is the unity of a democratic people, a unity springing spontaneously from within, not imposed from without; and we shall pray that our country may never know that other kind of unity, the German kind, the unity that has to be maintained by armies of spies and informers.

We are awake, and at one; and this change—that it is a change no one who is quite honest with himself will deny—has been brought about, not by any preaching, not by any upbraiding or exhorting, but by a piece of news.

And I would have you observe, for this is the main point, that the piece of news was a piece of bad news, bad beyond anything we had dreamt of in nightmares. We learnt that the enemy was far more formidable than we had known, far stronger than anyone outside Germany had known; and that he was prepared to throw his men on the slaughter-heaps without counting the cost. We learnt that the veteran commander in whose intelligence we had put our trust had been badly out-generalled, and

dismissed for his blunders. We learnt that the German drive across France and Belgium was something the like of which, for power and intensity, the world had never seen. We learnt that Belgium had surrendered. We learnt of the threatened encirclement of a combined British and French army. We learnt that Britain was in imminent danger of blockade and invasion. Into a single fortnight there could hardly have been packed another item of appalling news. And the effect of this news on the mind of Australia was to awaken us and to call up all our reserves of energy and resolution.

Surely it is a tremendous lesson for those who have been given the responsibility of deciding what we are to be told and what we are not to be told. If you want to get the best out of the Australian people, tell us everything; that is the moral. It is no good walking delicately and hesitating whether to tell us the best news lest it make us unduly optimistic, and hesitating whether to tell us the worst news lest it throw us into a panic; tell us everything. That is the moral, and our rulers will be wise if they heed it. In the past months we have suspected that things were happening of which we were not told, and the suspicion has worked like a poison in multitudes of minds.

The rulers of Germany know very well that they must not tell their people everything. We may be quite certain that the German public as yet knows nothing of the vast sacrifice of German lives which the Blitzkrieg has already cost; their rulers are fearful of a collapse of the nation's morale if the nation knew the facts. We are not Germans; neither are we children. The experience in the last few weeks shows that bad news, far from weakening our morale, acts as a tonic. We can look in the ugly face of fact.

We are not children; and, what is more, we are of British stock. Men and women of our race are not in the habit of being demoralized by bad news. It was of Britain that Emerson said 'that she sees a little better in a cloudy day, and that in storm of battle and calamity she has a secret vigour and a pulse like a cannon.' That was said a century ago, but the same kind of thing is being said of her to-day by Emerson's fellow-countrymen.

It is on all accounts undesirable to practise such boastings as the Gentiles use; better to be conscious of the weaknesses of our race than to cultivate a sense of superiority to the foreigner. But there are moments when being proud of our kindred is merely looking facts in the face; and such a moment is now. For the news that has come to us in the past fortnight has not been all bad news; it has been glorious news, for it told of a matchless feat of arms. Signor Mussolini is fond of talking about 'these degenerate pluto-democracies.' Does he read the news? and does he find, in the fighting round Dunkerque, signs of degeneracy in Britain? On what page of his own country's history (and it was a glorious history, centuries ago) will he read of greater courage, endurance or devotion? We shall not know the whole story for some time yet, but enough has come through to tell us that men of our race have fought a rear-guard action such as distant generations will read of with a thrill of pride. Those who describe it for us use words as 'gallant,' 'heroic,' 'magnificent.' How poor a thing language sometimes seems!

But I have wandered from the point, which is, that the truth is the best kind of propaganda. The Germans are enthusiastic propagandists, but they have seen fit to use a propaganda which consists partly of lies and partly of half-truths. There can be no denying that the method has

been used skilfully, especially in the United States. It is not effective in the long run, though in the short run it may seem to succeed. Watch, and you will see that the events of the past few weeks, plainly narrated, have had more power to sway American opinion than a torrent of plausible statements of the case for Germany. When you are fighting for evil, you must necessarily tell lies if you wish to win the world's sympathies; but when you are fighting for the right, all you need tell is the truth. The mere stark facts of Germany's dealings with subjugated peoples, the facts of her advance through France and Belgium and her treatment of civilians who were in her way, have revealed to the world what the Nazi philosophy of life really is and what it would be like to live in a world that had capitulated to the Nazi spirit. All the small neutral nations of Europe knew it long ago; they would all have joined us if they had dared, for their sympathies were wholly with us; and their prayers for our victory go up to heaven every day. And now the facts, without any propaganda from us, have convinced the Americans, too; their sympathies are with us, and though they may contrive to keep out of the war—though they may think they can help us best by keeping out of the war—they will help us. The great republic may remain neutral in name, but it will not be neutral in spirit; its own soul will not let it.

And so I come back to my old theme: there is nothing to be said against propaganda as such. The word has acquired an ill-repute because it has so often meant telling lies. That is propaganda of the wrong sort. The right sort of propaganda means telling the truth, and it is, by long odds, the more powerful sort. Great is the truth, and will prevail; at least, I believe it will prevail; if I doubted this I should doubt whether life is worth living. Of course,

that is a doubt which lurks in many minds just now, in many countries. But such an incident as the defence of Calais the other day should put an end to such misgivings. So long as men can be found who will do things like that, the human race is worth belonging to. Life is worth living so long as men can find in life anything worth dying for.

PRAYER—FOR WHAT?

THE TEACHING OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IS directed against unrighteousness; that of the New Testament, against self-righteousness. Without setting up as a biblical scholar, or as a theologian, one may surely say that this difference is a fundamental one, staring you in the face if you make the slightest effort to compare the two collections of writings.

The Old Testament writers were the mouthpieces of a race that laid more stress on conduct—on morality, or righteousness, or the distinction between right and wrong—than any other race known to history. Conduct was the central theme of Israel's thought and feeling. It would seem ludicrous to begin to illustrate this by quotations; for the whole of Old Testament hums with morality. The Jewish Carlyles and Ruskins whom we call the Prophets could think of hardly anything else; and the man who compiled the collection of aphorisms known as 'The Proverbs' laid all the stress on it. ('As righteousness tendeth to life, so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death'; and 'As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more; but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.')

The Jews were the only race I know of who could even make lyrical poetry out of morality. The contrast between the 'righteous' and the 'unrighteous,' or 'wicked,' or

'ungodly,' is the theme of more than half the poems in that remarkable anthology known as 'The Book of Psalms.' The very first lyric in that collection dwells on the rewards coming to the righteous person—'his leaf shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper'—whereas the unrighteous person is 'like the chaff which the wind driveth away.' 'Judge me, O Lord,' says another of these poets, 'according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.' 'Be virtuous and you will be happy' is the conclusion at which these old poets almost always arrive—though the greatest of them all, who was indeed one of the great poets of the world, suspected that the truth was not quite so simple. He painted a perfectly righteous person whose reward was not happiness but a complication of miseries—financial ruin, domestic bereavement, and an attack of boils so exasperating that, at great length and with fiery eloquence, he cursed the day he was born. But, though the creator of the drama of Job presented, without solving, the problem of evil, you notice that his theme was the everlasting Jewish theme—righteousness. To him, as to all the Old Testament writers, there was a perfectly clear-cut distinction between the righteous and the unrighteous—the good man and the bad man—without any fine shades.

When you open the New Testament you enter a different world. I doubt whether Christ was much interested in what is commonly called morality, or conduct, except in so far as your conduct is a sign of your state of mind. The older Jewish prophets and poets cared intensely for what a man does; Christ shifted the emphasis and cared only for what a man is. He never denounced what his contemporaries called wickedness—departures, that is, from the conventional morality of the day. What he did denounce

was the sin of self-righteousness—the hard unloving nature, the complacent person, sure of his own virtue and intolerant of the weaknesses of others.

Here again, to multiply quotations would be absurd, for no one has ever read the Gospels with his wits awake who has not seen this. The Pharisees were not denounced as unrighteous persons—nobody could have called them that; they were an entirely respectable class, good churchgoers, doing with meticulous exactness all their church told them to do. Their sin was self-righteousness.

The truth about this vice was enshrined in three immortal stories: the story of the good Samaritan, the member of a despised race, whose active goodness contrasts so shiningly with the self-satisfied priest and the complacent Levite; the story of the prodigal son who sowed wild oats with so lavish a hand, and of the odious elder brother, so conscious of his own superior virtue; and, simplest and most emphatic of all, the story of the Pharisee, proud of fasting twice a week, who thanked God he was not as other men, and the publican, who offered up the only prayer fit for our erring race—'God be merciful to me a sinner.' (The prayer, in this story, has an accent of deep sincerity; the publican is not to be likened to those who rattle off every Sunday the statement that they are 'miserable sinners,' not feeling at all miserable and not acutely conscious of being sinners.)

When a woman, frowned on by society, made her way into a room where Christ was at a party and knelt down and bathed his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head, the host, a highly respectable person, murmured that if Christ had been what he pretended to be he would have seen what sort of woman she was, 'for,' said he, 'she is a sinner.' Can't you see his disapproving

face and hear his shocked voice? But we owe him a deep debt of gratitude, for he brought from Christ the saying which of all his sayings seems to me the clearest revelation of the divine: 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much.' It was, and still is, a hard saying for the austere moralist to swallow. It summed up Christ's attitude towards self-righteousness. It is the very core of the New Testament.

That we become more religious when we find ourselves in a tight corner is a fact which provides the scoffer with obvious matter for gibes. That we ought to have had national days of prayer in peace-time, and neglected to have them, does not seem to me a sound argument against having them when we are at war. It is sad, no doubt, that comfort and prosperity make us forget the things that matter most in life; and that we need to be in the fell clutch of circumstance before we remember to lift our minds, if only for a time, from the finite to the infinite, from the temporary to the eternal; shutting our ears to the deafening clatter of events and hearing the higher voices. It is sad that human nature should need the pinch of adversity to make it rise above itself; but it seems to be true, and if it is true we had better accept it. And if a man finds that he cannot commune with the universe in silence and solitude—that he needs the company of his fellow-men—then to church, by all means, let him go.

But it seems to me that the value of a national day of prayer depends entirely on the spirit in which we approach it. The real meaning of prayer—its only meaning, for me at least—is expressed in George Meredith's aphorism: 'Who rises from prayer a better man, his prayer is answered.' To pray for victory—or to pray for peace, which is the same thing, since we do not want a peace imposed

on us by a victorious enemy—is surely a kind of blasphemy. To prescribe a course of action for the ruler of the universe, to hope to deflect his will, to bring it into accord with our desires, is the way of the primitive savage.

The savage tries by prayer to affect the minds of his gods; the civilized man knows that the only use of prayer is to affect his own mind. The only prayer we can legitimately offer is the prayer that we may become better men; this is the kind of prayer that is answered. The only prayer that we should offer as a nation is that we may become a better nation, more fit to be the instrument of the almighty will, more worthy of the great cause for which we are fighting to-day against the embattled forces of evil.

Coming back full-circle to my starting-point, the value of the national day of prayer depends on whether we come to it in the spirit of the Pharisee or in the spirit of the publican in the parable. So I suggest that our day of national prayer should be a day of national humiliation and self-abasement; that we should forget, for one day, the crimes of our enemies, and remember our own shortcomings; that we should pray, not for victory over our enemies, but for victory over ourselves; that together we should seek divine help to keep us firm in our resolve to build a better Australia, more just, more compassionate, more brotherly, more faithful to the highest ideals that humanity has conceived in its moments of insight. That is a prayer which, if we pray it sincerely, will be answered.

HOPE

I WAS DUE TO WRITE THIS ARTICLE EARLIER, but did not do so; partly because, from various causes, I was sick at heart, which is the worst kind of sickness! and partly because I had nothing to say that seemed worth saying. To talk about anything but the war would be like fiddling while Rome was burning; and to talk about the war seemed superfluous, while everybody else is doing the same. In such circumstances, why talk at all? you ask. Precisely; why indeed? So I retired into myself, and reread Wordsworth.

Nevertheless, here I am, talking again. Why this inconsistent behaviour? Well, I have discovered that there are some things that I am desperately anxious to say to my fellow-countrymen; and, if the censorship permits, I mean to say them. I don't for a moment suppose that many people will listen to my thin and piping voice while so many powerful and eloquent preachers are telling us, with trumpet tongues, what we ought to be thinking and how we ought to be feeling about the present state of the world; especially as what I have to say will be to a large extent a protest against what is being said by some of the most popular of these preachers. Still, there are times when it becomes a duty to speak the truth as one sees it, whether one has any hope of being listened to or not. To be afraid

to say the unpopular thing is the most despicable form of cowardice. . . . To-day, however, I am merely going to explain why I have been rereading Wordsworth.

It is not his poems about daisies and butterflies that I have been reading, nor those about children, such as 'Lucy Gray' or 'We Are Seven,' excellent as these are. I speak rather of the poems in which we hear the clear voice of the man whom we now see to have been the true prophet of Britain in an era singularly like our own; the time when our great-grandfathers were fighting to the death for the very objects for which the soldiers of the British Commonwealth are fighting to-day—for the independence of their own countries and the freedom of all the free peoples of the world. Everyone agrees that Wordsworth was the greatest English poet of that age; what some of us had forgotten was that the great poet was also a great statesman, and that all his life long he was intensely preoccupied with public affairs—that, as he said himself, 'he had given twelve hours' thought to the conditions and prospects of society for one to poetry.' Neither Dante nor Milton showed a more passionate concern for the welfare of his native land, or watched public events with a keener understanding of their meaning.

As we read him, we feel as if he were speaking to us rather than to his contemporaries. (This is true of all the greatest poets, and only of the greatest.) In the days of the Napoleonic struggle, it was Scott, and not Wordsworth, who swayed the minds of men. Scott was by far the most popular poet of the moment, and was listened to by multitudes at a time when Wordsworth was but little regarded. Wordsworth's influence was felt by a small circle only; to-day, when we go back to him, we can see how much clearer was his vision and how much loftier

his wisdom than anything to be found in the ringing rhymes of the more popular singer.

What message does Wordsworth bring from the Napoleonic time to our own? A message, in the first place, of faith and hope. In a sonnet not so well known as it ought to be, he claims for his poetry this praise at least, that it

> Did not shrink from hope
> In the worst moments of these evil days;
> From hope, the paramount duty that Heaven lays,
> For its own honour, on man's suffering heart.

Other poets have spoken of hope as a pleasure, or a refuge, or an anodyne; but for Wordsworth it is something more; it is a duty, the paramount duty laid upon man's suffering heart for its own honour. These are not mere words; they express an intense and never-faltering conviction, which finds voice over and over again in those verses in which he rebukes the abject attitude of those many men of little faith around him. He does not praise hope because hopefulness pays; because, in the homelier words of Hosea Biglow,

> Folks thet's afeared to fail are sure o' failin'.

He preaches hope because for him it means faith in the sacred cause for which his country is fighting. His was not that easy optimism which is merely a moral opium. He never for a moment doubted that if England clearly recognized that her supreme duty was to oppose lawless tyranny she might absolutely count upon victory.

In the patriotism of Wordsworth there was nothing jingoistic. England has never lacked sons to tell her faithfully of her shortcomings, and assuredly this great lover of his country was not one to keep silence when he saw her going, as he thought, astray. For a time, indeed,

when England first made war upon the French revolutionaries, he was almost in despair; one of the most patriotic of men, he had to rejoice over the defeat of his country's arms, for he believed her to be siding with tyranny against the liberators of mankind. But when Napoleon took the helm, and the poet saw that England was fighting, not merely for her own liberty, but for the liberty of the world—when England became, in his eyes, 'a bulwark for the cause of men,' and when he saw that Earth's best hopes rested with her—then in truth he became the inspired spokesman of the faith that was in the soul of England, and the poet whose words may well help to keep that faith aflame in us to-day.

Read once more the sonnet which he wrote immediately after Jena, when Prussia lay under the heel of Napoleon:

> Another year!—another deadly blow!
> Another mighty Empire overthrown!
> And we are left, or shall be left, alone;
> The last that dare to struggle with the Foe.
> 'Tis well! from this day forward we shall know
> That in ourselves our safety must be sought;
> That by our own right hands it must be wrought,
> That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low.
> O Dastard whom such foretaste does not cheer!
> We shall exult, if they who rule the land
> Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
> Wise, upright, valiant . . .

At the moment when Wordsworth wrote those words, England was nearer to despair than ever before or since. She herself was divided in opinion; the Whigs, almost to a man, were vehemently opposed to further resistance of Napoleon. England stood practically alone, with no colonies that could send her men or money; the whole of Continental Europe, roughly speaking, was subject to Napoleon's will; whenever he fought (on land) it was to gain a new victory; there was a deeply-rooted belief, in

England, that he was invincible, except on the sea. It was to an England so circumstanced that Wordsworth spoke, bidding her keep in mind the nature of the cause for which she fought, and announcing that hope was a paramount duty.

It was not only in verse that he expressed his views on public affairs. The most famous of his prose works, the pamphlet on the Convention of Cintra, has an extraordinary appositeness at the present moment. In this tract he showed himself fifty years ahead of his time by enunciating the doctrine that every State in Europe ought to be inhabited by people feeling themselves to be one nation; that no nation ought to be governed by a foreign power; that national independence is the condition of every other sort of freedom, and the source of all progress along the path of civilization; and that every independent nation is interested in the maintenance of the independence of every other nation. Any State which possesses enormous military power and uses that power to menace the legitimate independence of other peoples must be relentlessly assailed. 'We ought not,' he says, 'to make peace with France on any account till she is humiliated, and her power brought within reasonable bounds.' Till then, 'it is our duty and our interest to be at war with her.' To this high duty he rallied the wavering spirits of his countrymen by reminding them of their national traditions, in a poem which has become part of the common heritage of the English-speaking race; a poem so well known that one is half-ashamed to quote it, but which one does quote, nevertheless, because it cannot be quoted too often:

> It is not to be thought of that the flood
> Of British freedom, which, to the open sea
> Of the world's praise, from dark antiquity
> Hath flowed, 'with pomp of waters, unwithstood,'

Roused though it be full often to a mood
Which spurns the check of salutary bands,
That this most famous Stream in bogs and sands
Should perish; and to evil and to good
Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung
Armoury of the invincible Knights of old;
We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held. In everything we are sprung
Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

An eminent Australian politician admonished us the other day not to worry about war aims, but only about winning the war. This is a doctrine which Wordsworth would have treated with profound contempt. According to him, a nation which thinks only of victory, and forgets the cause it is fighting for, will not achieve victory. It is well that a country should have faith in itself, but unless it has faith in something beyond itself, it will not endure to the end, through the days of darkness and disaster which must come in any prolonged war. It is abundantly evident that the strength of armies and navies and air force is not all that matters in a modern war; that what matters still more is the courage, energy, endurance and determination of the whole nation; qualities that will not be displayed by a nation that does not know why it is fighting. Therefore, despite the high authority above quoted, I think we do need to worry about our war aims—or, if not to worry, at least to make them clear to ourselves. It is not enough to desire victory; we must know what sort of victory we want. Do we want a victory like that of 1918, leaving in a rich soil the seeds of another war twenty years later? If not, it is very necessary that we should clear our own minds on the question, What are we fighting for? We must try to look at this question in plain daylight, and not see it through a fog of rhetorical phrases. . . . To

clear my own mind, I propose to think aloud on the subject in a subsequent article.

Meanwhile I am glad to have reminded you, in these days of babble and bewilderment, of the man who has been called the most English of English poets. His insight and foresight, his large sanity, his profound passion for justice and liberty, mark him as the poet, not of a century ago, but of to-day, and of all days.

'DECENT AND DAUNTLESS'

'THE PLUNGE OF CIVILIZATION INTO THIS abyss of blood and darkness by the wanton feat of those two infamous autocrats is a thing that so gives away the whole long age during which we have supposed the world to be, with whatever abatement, gradually bettering, that to have to take it all now for what the treacherous years were all the while really making for and meaning is too tragic for any words.'

This sentence is not taken from a speech by Mr. Churchill; and the two infamous autocrats are not Messrs. Hitler and Mussolini. It is from a private letter written in August, 1914, by a great American, Henry James. The rulers referred to were, of course, the Kaisers of Germany and of Austria.

How exactly the words fit the present time! and how poignantly they express what was then and what still is in the minds of those of us who were alive when Victoria was on the throne! The Nineteenth Century has been called the century of hope. It was not quite an age of peace; or, if it was, there were a good many more or less violent interruptions. But it was pretty generally felt that war was an anachronism, and that the age of peace was near. We were not blind to the ills of our social system; but we felt sure that education was on the march and that those ills would assuredly give way before the

onslaught of reason and benevolence. On the whole, we were fairly complacent about the defects of our civilization —especially if we were among the more fortunate—telling one another that, anyhow, the world was moving steadily towards a better time.

And then came 1914, and the great disillusionment. So this monster was what had been lying all the time in the womb of that fair and placid Victorian Era! This horror was the young hopeful born of that century of hope! Many must have felt just as Henry James did when he spoke of the 'treacherous years'; as he felt when he wrote, to a friend of about his own age (he was 71): 'You and I should have been spared this wreck of our belief that through the long years we had seen civilization grow and the worst become impossible. The tide that bore us along was then all the while moving to this as its grand Niagara—yet what a blessing we didn't know it!'

Was it a blessing? I wonder. Yes, I suppose ignorance is bliss—while it lasts; I suppose we should envy the blessed dead who were laid in their graves before the storm broke. But we who have lived to endure its onset can hardly help feeling that if our ignorance was bliss, it was not a bliss that we should have indulged in. Why did no one warn us of the trick the sleek smooth-spoken years were getting ready to play us? The answer is that we had plenty of warnings, but we took no notice. We told our Carlyles and Ruskins and Matthew Arnolds they were prophets of evil, with bees in their bonnets. 'Don't you see the progress we are making?'—we asked them; 'look at our education system; look at the splendid discoveries of science; look at the magnificent rise in the standard of living. We are not perfect yet, but we are making great strides towards perfection. War is already

obsolete, and poverty will soon be unknown.' And the roar of Niagara grew louder as we glided happily along the stream of progress.

What made me turn to the volumes of Henry James's letters was this. My radio told me the other morning that a church in London had been wrecked, and that the grave of Milton lay under a mass of broken masonry. For good reasons, we have not been told much about the actual details of the destruction in London; for all we know, or did know at the moment when I was writing this article, many of the most beautiful things in London, things that pilgrims from all the world visit, may have been bombed. Here, at least, was one detail given us: the old church of St. Giles, in Cripplegate, had been bombed. And I remembered that what one felt about that sort of warfare had been put into words by Henry James in 1914 when he heard of the bombardment of Rheims Cathedral. (At the moment when he wrote, the destruction was not so complete as he had been led to believe; later on, the Germans took the trouble to smash the cathedral more thoroughly.)

'Rheims,' he wrote, 'is the most unspeakable and immeasurable horror and infamy—and what is appalling and heart-breaking is that it's "for ever and ever" . . . There it was—and now all the tears of rage of all the bereft millions and all the crowding curses of all the wondering ages will never bring a stone of it back.'

Of course I don't mean that the bombing of St. Giles' has anything in common with the bombardment of Rheims. The latter crime—'the most hideous crime ever perpetrated against the mind of man,' Henry James calls it—was deliberate; a piece of ape-like spite directed against another nation's heritage of beauty; whereas the bombing of St.

Giles' was an accident—the kind of accident that might easily happen to anyone who was scattering bombs casually over a city as one sprinkles sugar over a plate of strawberries and cream. One wonders whether it was quite an accident that buildings round St. Paul's were bombed the other night. I suppose we must give the bombers the benefit of the doubt.

Possibly you will think the language of Henry James exaggerated, and declare that the machine-gunning of a single baby is in essence a more hideous crime than the bombardment of an ancient cathedral. I shall not argue the point; both are hideous crimes. Henry James was an artist to his finger-tips; and the wanton destruction of a beautiful thing, a thing that had come down to us from bygone ages as one of the high achievements of man the artifex, was to him an incomprehensible and unforgivable crime. I forget just how the Germans tried to explain away their treatment of the cathedral of Rheims. If they had destroyed St. Paul's last week, I make no doubt that the German people would have been told that a vast munitions factory had been hidden under the dome.

I don't write articles on literature these days, and even if I did I don't know that I could compress into a column my reasons for believing Henry James to be a novelist of the very first rank. The booksellers tell me that his books are very seldom asked for now; no matter—they will be asked for a century hence. During the last years of his life, he was anything but a best-seller, though the general public had a vague idea that this American who had lived in England for 40 years was a great man, though it didn't read his books. But a few months before his death he did something that the public could understand and appreciate. Telling his friends that he wished in some

way to show his admiration for this 'decent and dauntless nation,' he applied for naturalization; and the most distinguished American writer of the day became a British subject. The Home Secretary, Sir John Simon, brushed away all the usual red tape and put the matter through in a day or two. The Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, was proud to be one of the four sponsors required. Everybody in England—even those who had never read a line of his writing—was delighted, knowing that a great man had paid England a great compliment. His compatriots across the Atlantic—I gather from his letters—looked askance at the gesture at first, but it made some of them sit up and ask themselves salutary questions; which was, partly, why he did it.

I think he was the first American to understand—certainly the first to put into words—the great moral issues involved in that struggle, the struggle that is still going on. He spoke of 'the insanity of ferocity and presumption against which Europe is making a stand.' But it was not merely a matter of understanding what was at stake; it was a matter of profound emotion. His love of England and of France was of long standing, and now it became a consuming passion, when he saw these two fighting for everything in life that he believed in. 'We sleep and wake and live and breathe only the War,' he wrote while he was still officially the citizen of a neutral country. 'To all who listened to him in those days,' writes an Englishman who has since become famous, 'it must have seemed that he gave us what we lacked—a voice; there was a trumpet note in it that was heard nowhere else and that alone rose to the height of truth. For a while it was as though the burden of age had slipped from him: he lived in the lives of all who were acting and

suffering—especially of the young, who acted and suffered most.'

So feeling, he watched his own country with growing impatience. He knew that she must be drawn into the war sooner or later. 'I believe the truculence of Germany may be trusted, from one month or one week to another now, to force the American hand.' So it did, but he died before it happened; meanwhile his patience had snapped. 'I am afraid I suffer almost more than I can endure from the terms of precautionary "friendship" on which my country is content to remain with the author of such systematic abominations—I cover my head with my mantle in presence of so much wordy amicable discussing and conversing and reassuring and postponing, all the while that such hideous evil and cruelty rages.'

He loved his own country even better than he loved Britain or France; but he loved most passionately of all the cause for which Britain was fighting then and is fighting to-day. And so he took the step which was the only public gesture possible to him: he became a British subject. . . . . He died at the beginning of 1916, absolutely confident of the victory which was still so far away.

ON SNIFFING

THE WORD 'SUPERIOR' GIVES US A FINE illustration of a fact known to all students of language; the fact that words, like eggs, tend to go bad. There are hundreds of examples in our own language. Perhaps the most famous is 'villain'; it is not easy to explain how a word meaning a peasant occupier of land came in the course of centuries to mean a scoundrel. Generally speaking, this word-degeneration has been due to the kindliness of the ordinary human being. For instance, people were too kind-hearted, too considerate, to call an idiot an idiot—they preferred to call him 'happy,' and the word for happy, at that time, was 'silly.' Later, since the only happy people on this queer planet of ours are the ignorant, it came to mean 'simple, unsophisticated'; and later still, from being used as a polite description of a fool, it acquired its present meaning. Take, again, the word 'enormity,' which originally meant simply any departure from the normal; a specially saintly character could be described as an enormity. But gradually, since the kind of abnormality that most often meets the eye is abnormal wickedness, the word got its present moral significance.

I could bore you with a long list of such words—words now disreputable, once thoroughly respectable; words that have seen better days. That very word 'respectable' is a notorious example. It once meant just what it appeared

to mean, 'worthy of respect'; but who, to-day, would not feel insulted if you called him respectable? Respectability has become almost a vice. At its best, the word has a flavour of contempt—as when you call a man a respectable billiard player. Once it was pleasant to be called 'good-hearted,' but nowadays the word is practically the same as 'weak-headed.' It was once a compliment to be called 'well-meaning'; to-day that is a term you never apply to a man except when he is not there.

'Superior' has endured a like deterioration. Once, but it was long ago, when you called a man a superior person, you meant what you said; you meant that he was a better man, morally or intellectually or both, than the common run of men. But now you mean something quite different; when you call a man superior you allude, not to his possession of certain qualities, but to his consciousness of possessing them; or, more frequently, to his too conspicuous belief—possibly ill-founded—that he possesses those qualities. When you say, 'For Heaven's sake, don't be so superior,' you mean, 'Don't give yourself such airs.' The superior person looks down his nose at the weaknesses and follies of us common mortals; his habitual expression is the sniff. 'Superior' has come, by the process I have spoken of, to mean 'insufferable.' But the superior person is not literally insufferable; you can suffer him all right, provided you have a good temper and a sense of humour.

One of the greatest poets of the nineteenth century, Matthew Arnold, is tainted (in his prose, never in his verse) with this vice; and Chesterton has hit him off in a happy phrase: 'Arnold kept a smile of heart-broken forbearance, as of the teacher in an idiot school, that was enormously insulting.' A friend of mine who gives admirable public addresses marred by a shade of superiority

was once described to me as 'the Almighty talking to a black beetle.' How well we know that feeling of being black beetles, or pupils in an idiot school, being lectured to from an enormous height. When I am reading one of our younger literary critics I pass through three stages. In the first, I am conscious of being a miserable worm. Since worms turn, the second stage is of exasperation. In the third stage, a sense of humour comes to my rescue, and I see the superior person as a bit of a joke.

I like Ian Maclaren's quotation from the prayer of a Scottish minister: 'and we pray thee, O Lord, to succour our friends wrecked on the Falkland Islands, which, as Thou knowest, are in the South Atlantic Ocean.' To carry your superiority to such lengths as to give the Deity a lesson in elementary geography was perhaps possible only in Scotland, a country which produced that other preacher who, in the course of a sermon, began a sentence with the words, 'The Lord said (and rightly said) . . . .' Superiority is a disease very prevalent among two classes of men, clergymen and judges. This is no doubt due to the fact that in the pulpit, and on the bench, you can say what you please, and nobody contradicts you. It is very dangerous to be in a position where you are not contradicted. Cases of the malady have also been known among university professors.

The superior person becomes, in the sphere of morals and religion, the self-righteous person. On the whole, and after due consideration, I conclude that self-righteousness is the very deadliest of the Seven Deadly Sins; the most detestable of vices, because it spoils whatever virtue you may possess; a weed that poisons every flower in the garden. Also because it is the one incurable vice. You can never argue a man out of it, because your arguments

are, to him, merely signs of your perversity. You can never laugh him out of it, because your ridicule glances off his impenetrable armour. A glimpse of himself as he really is might help, but he never sees himself in the cold light of day; this vice blurs all mirrors.

I mentioned judges and clergymen just now as persons who need to be especially on their guard against this vice, but there is a third class of men still more exposed to the inroads of the disease—I mean dictators. Just try to imagine what it would be like to be a dictator for even one year—surrounded by flatterers—breathing nothing all day long but good thick strong stupefying incense-smoke—your lightest word received as if divinely inspired,—knowing that a nation speaks of you with bated breath—how long do you think you could retain any trace of the Christian virtue of humility? How long could you keep alive your sense of humour, the blessed faculty that saves a man's soul alive by enabling him to laugh at himself, and so to see himself as his Maker sees him? William Morris announced that no man is good enough to be another man's master; how can any man who is master of a whole nation be expected to keep his balance, preserving some measure of that humility which is essential to sanity?

I am not going to join my voice to those denouncing Herr Hitler; the chorus is loud enough already. What I wish to to point out is that the key to his character is self-righteousness. He is the most 'superior' man now alive, and the head of the most 'superior' nation. His people have deified him because they find in him the mouthpiece of their superiority to all other nations. Their defeat in the Great War, and their subsequent treatment by other (greatly inferior) nations such as the British and the French, wounded them to the soul, destroying

their faith in the justice of God; for how could it happen, in a just universe, that the greatest and wisest and best of all nations should be beaten to its knees by nations so grossly inferior to it in every way? They were made miserable, but they were not made humble; they never lost their belief that, though betrayed and persecuted, they were the fine flower of humanity. And Herr Hitler came along and vindicated their belief in themselves, and set them once more on the pedestal on which they love to sit, looking down on the rest of humanity. If a superior person is insufferable, what shall be said of a superior nation? It is a spectacle at once deplorable and laughable.

'My country, right or wrong!' has been rightly held up to obloquy as an immoral slogan implying that the distinction between right and wrong is a matter of no moment. But there is this to be said for that slogan: whoever used it did seem to recognize that his country might possibly be in the wrong. No German could bring himself to say 'my country, right or wrong,' because no German could bring himself to admit the possibility of his country being wrong: I mean, of course, no typical German, no German capable of speaking what is in Germany's mind.

The Englishman has always had the Scots to laugh at; and the Scot has found the English more or less of a joke; and both have made fun of the Irish, and the Irish have made fun of both; a very happy arrangement, each race with two candid critics beside it to tell it just where it fell short of the sublime. I rather think this has been one of the luckiest chances in our history. Because of it, we of the British breed are humorously self-critical; we can scoff at ourselves as the Germans cannot do; they would be a happier race if they could. But I must beware of

such comparisons; because to acquit ourselves of self-righteousness would be a lamentable exhibition of that very vice; and the whole purpose of this article—the point of it—is to suggest that we should strive against that weakness for self-glorification which has helped to make Germany so exasperating to her despised neighbours.

But, after all, it is with ourselves, as individuals, that we must begin. It is ourselves that we have to warn against the danger of becoming superior persons. We have to learn to recognize that persons whose tastes are not ours—even people who like listening to the crooner—are, after all, our fellow-creatures, possibly our betters both in intelligence and in character. The weakness of much of our literature to-day is that it is written for the few, by persons who despise the many; whereas the really great literature has been written by men of a large and liberal humanity, men like Shakespeare and Fielding and Dickens, men who saw no steep inequality between themselves and the common man; finding beauty and splendour in obscure and unregarded corners, and recognizing that a star may be reflected as brightly from a mud puddle in a back street as from the stretch of water aptly named Lake Superior.

UNESSENTIAL CHRISTIANITY

ALL THE WORLD OVER PEOPLE ARE SPEAKING of 'this queer war.' It is felt to be unlike any other we have ever heard of or read about. Certain features of it puzzle and perplex us. The only persons who do not feel their minds somewhat bewildered by it are, I imagine, those who have no minds to bewilder.

And this feeling, the feeling that we are up against something unique, something unprecedented, is not simply due to the fact that the war is being waged with new weapons, and therefore by new methods (for new weapons always mean a new strategy, and military genius means quickness to adopt the necessary changes in the art of warfare). In that sense, every war has been 'queer' since fighting began. Because this is the first time that fully mechanised armies have faced one another, it was bound to seem a queer war to those who had not thought beforehand of what these new armaments would mean when they came to be used. In that sense, the war is not really queer at all; nothing has happened that was not foreseen by the best military experts, such as Captain Liddell Hart.

No, its queerness goes far deeper than that. The reason why we are puzzled and perplexed by it is that we have not yet realized how vast and world-embracing are the events we are witnessing. Here in Australia, life seems fairly normal; the trams are still running, the shops have

had a reasonably good Christmas, cocktail parties have been more plentiful than usual, dwellers in suburban villas continue to water their hydrangeas, life wears a placid surface; it is difficult to realize that the world is undergoing an upheaval for the like of which we shall search history in vain. No one can say what sort of a world we shall be living in when the earthquake has passed; all we know is that it will be profoundly different from the world we are living in to-day.

With the tremendous changes that are coming to us it would be absurd to try to deal in a brief and breezy newspaper column. I limit myself to one particular point: the fact that what is challenged is the way of life which, for the sake of brevity, we may call the Christian ethic—the Christian idea of right and wrong. What strikes me as extraordinary is that the Christian churches, whose business is, presumably, to uphold that ethic in the teeth of all challengers, continue to quarrel among themselves about unessential matters, instead of agreeing in the face of the common danger to sink their differences and show a united front to a united foe. The churches seem unable to realize that Christianity to-day is fighting for its life, against an enemy more formidable than any that has threatened it since the days of Nero. The church, in Nero's time, was small, united and invincible; the church of to-day is large, disunited and frail. Surely the time has come for the churches to make a determined effort to join forces. It is at least doubtful whether Herr Hitler would have dared to embark on his career of persecution if the German Roman Catholics and the German Protestants could only have agreed to help one another to resist; in their disunion was his opportunity, and he was quick to seize it.

Of course I know that when I say the churches quarrel about unessential matters, I lay myself open to the retort, from a champion of every church in turn, 'Who are you, to say what are unessential matters and what are not? The points on which we differ from other churches are not trifles, as you ignorantly assume, but essentials of our faith. Would you have us compromise with false doctrine? Would you have us hypocritically pretend to be at one with those whom we believe to be the upholders of dangerous and damnable errors? A creed on which all the churches could agree would be a milk-and-water affair with all the vital elements left out. Away with such a betrayal of the truth, such a pact with the devil!'

Yes, I know; but we are talking of different things. I am not so fool-hardy as to suggest that the churches should try to arrive at a common basis of theological doctrine—subscribe to a common creed. Before the ink was dry on their signatures differences of interpretation would arise; sects would spring into being again; till men are made on a uniform pattern, there will be religious sects. Unity of that kind—a common set of theological doctrines—is not the unity I propose; but something quite different and, I believe, far more practicable.

When I speak of Christianity fighting for its life I do not mean by Christianity a collection of theological beliefs —neither the doctrine of the Trinity, nor the doctrine of the Atonement, neither Justification by Faith nor Papal Infallibility. Herr Hitler does not mind the doctrine of the Atonement in the least, you may be sure. What he, following his master, Nietzsche, is assailing with the utmost venom is not a certain theological doctrine but a certain way of life. If you read Nietzsche you will find that it was never the Christian religion that he attacked,

but the Christian morality, which he was pleased to call a slave-morality, a way of life unfit for free men.

Christianity, as I am using the term, is not the monopoly of the churches; it is the faith, the tradition, of multitudes of men who have never been inside a church in their lives and who would violently repudiate the name of Christians. The Christian ethic, the tradition of Christendom in the matter of the conduct of life, is what is at stake to-day. We call it the Christian ethic because, though there is much in it that was taught by men of religious genius in pre-Christian centuries, it was first set forth in its fulness, with divine clarity and simplicity and power, by the Preacher of Galilee.

Theological controversy is a tangled wood in which we are apt to lose our way; but the Christian ethic is such as a child or a primitive savage can grasp. That we should do to others as we should like them to do to us; that we should regard all men as brothers, members of one human family; that we should respect the rights of the weak; that we should help the poor, comfort the distressed, raise up the fallen; that we should be charitable in our judgment of others; that goodwill always, and hatred never, should govern our relations with our fellow-men; a few such simple rules—which, though simple, cut deep into life—make up the Christian ethic and the tradition of our civilization. We are so apt to take it for granted as the proper way of life—whether we ourselves live up to it or not, and probably none of us does—that we find it hard to realize that it has been challenged, denied and repudiated by whole nations.

Now when I say the churches quarrel about unessentials, I mean that the points about which they differ are outside this Christian ethic; and I firmly believe that they are

points about which Christ himself would not have been greatly concerned. We can imagine Him smiling—or more probably weeping—at the sight of his professed followers disputing over the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception as if that doctrine, or any doctrine, were of more importance than obeying His behests. For Christianity is not a theological creed, but a way of life; and I take it that the Church came into existence for no other purpose than to commend that way of life to mankind.

Creeds, rituals, ceremonies, hierarchies, dogmas, all of what we may call unessential Christianity—all these things are dust in the balance when weighed against essential Christianity, the way of life prescribed by Christ for the governance of human society. The churches, greatly concerned with unessential Christianity, have been steadily losing their influence for two centuries. Essential Christianity has been as steadily gaining ground, inspiring every movement that has made for the betterment of civilization.

And now it is essential Christianity that has been challenged by great and powerful enemies, who make a mock of this way of life, who deny that the weak have any rights, who assert the right of the strong to do whatever their strength permits, who treat the idea of human brotherhood as a piece of mawkish sentimentalism, who glorify might as the only rule of life. That challenge we have taken up; and unless we are victorious, the world must face the prospect of a new Dark Age.

At this tremendous and crucial moment in the world's history, may we not plead with the leaders of all the churches to take thought, and consider where they stand in relation to one another? Surely, in face of the common and deadly menace to the cause for which they stand, they should band themselves together and seek the strength

which union can alone give them. Let them keep their separate identities and cling to their separate creeds; but let them drop all sectarian animosities and form a great organization for the furtherance of that Christian ethic in which they all, in spite of their differences, do believe. United, they can regain much of the influence they have lost through their quarrelling, and draw to them multitudes now indifferent or hostile. It strikes me that the most Christian thing a churchman could do at this moment would be to strive for the creation of a comprehensive body in which all the Christian churches might come together as comrades-in-arms, a Christian chivalry, linked by a common devotion to the cause and a common obedience to the commands of their captain Christ. What a power such an army might be in the world!

THE FOUNDATIONS

IN REPLY TO SUNDRY CORRESPONDENTS I can only say—I am very sorry that my harping so much on one string seems to annoy you so much; but I can harp on no other, just at present. It would be pure affectation for me to point out that if these weekly articles of mine exasperate you, your obvious remedy is to cease to read them. All you have to do is, once a week, to be firm about it; when you see the offending name at the top of an article then imitate the action of the tiger—stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood—and skip to the next column.

There are some writers who can say with perfect honesty that, having written what they wanted to write, they don't much care whether anybody reads what they have written. I can't climb to those serene heights of detachment. I do care. To be quite frank, I am desperately anxious that you should read my articles, even though it may cost you some exasperation. This is not vanity. It would be quite different if I were writing on what are called 'literary' subjects—Shakespeare's use of the semi-colon, the history of the sonnet in Patagonia, or other interesting but not terribly urgent topics—topics in which, about a century ago, I used to be interested. But nowadays my topic—as you shrewdly perceive, I have only one—does strike me as of terrible urgency, for you and me and everybody; and so I have become absurdly anxious to be

read. I don't want you to agree; but I do want you to read. Bacon's rule is still a good one. 'Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider.' It is my belief that weighing and considering is not Australia's strong point. She has many virtues, which need not be enumerated here. I am concerned, rather, with her one vice—the vice of not thinking, or not thinking hard enough.

As I see the present situation, we shall not begin to think fruitfully, we shall not get a glimpse of things as they really are, so long as we think of the war as merely another war, even though we call it the greatest war in history, as I believe it will before long be seen to be. We are not merely engaged in a war; we are caught in the maelstrom of a world-upheaval for whose like we shall search the pages of history in vain. Tennyson speaks of 'that world-earthquake, Waterloo'; but we are witnessing events compared with which the whole Napoleonic struggle was a mere incident. These are times when we are tempted to think despairingly of man as the helpless plaything of vast elemental forces, of nations as corks driven anywhither at the will of wild wave and furious hurricane. And in the midst of this cataclysm, wiseacres come forward with neat little formulae to explain everything—'a capitalist war,' 'the defence of democracy,' 'a fight for freedom,' or even 'Hitler's assault on the British Empire.' Herr Hitler, the most conspicuous person on this planet to-day, is no more than a windlestraw whirled about by gusts of fate.

We must give up our search for a neat little formula. An earthquake is not explained by the fact that somebody has dropped a brick on the ground somewhere. The worst of these simple explanations is that they are used as a

substitute for thinking; and thinking is what we are desperately in need of if we are to control our own destinies. We need skilful pilotage if we are not to drift helplessly, perhaps to perdition. Our task to-day is the shaping of a new world; and the kind of world we shape will depend on how many of us are wide awake, how many of us have tried to understand what is happening to the world.

Of all these formulae the least inadequate, if we really think out what it means, is that we are fighting in defence of civilization. This, it seems to me, can be really useful, provided we don't use it too glibly. According to some of my correspondents, it is a nonsensical phrase, because Germany is a civilized nation if ever there was one. So, in a sense, she is; but in what sense? Not in the sense in which we use the word, for when we speak of civilization, we really mean western civilization, civilization in the European tradition. Germany has deserted and betrayed this tradition.

What do we mean by western civilization? Dorothy Thompson, in a recent article in the New York 'Herald-Tribune,' has given a description which seems to me to be wonderfully compact and true. She defines western civilization as 'the synthesis of three things—the Christian ethic, the scientific spirit and the rule of law.' She goes on to explain what she means. 'The essence of the Christian ethic is that the weak have rights as well as the strong, and that the strong must set limitations upon their own power. The essence of the scientific spirit is that the search for truth transcends the State and may not be limited or suppressed by the State; it presumes the separation of state and culture, i.e., the separation of culture from force. The essence of rule of law is that contract is superior to

arbitrary force; it presumes a continuity of relationships, constantly being modified but of universal application at each moment, and from whose sovereignty no one is exempt, not the King, not the President, not the powerful, not the weak.'

Before you begin to look for flaws in this description, I suggest that you might learn it by heart. The Christian ethic; the scientific spirit; and the rule of law; remember that statement of the bases of our civilization. It is no answer to say that our civilization has never yet lived up to these three principles; that the strong have often trampled on the weak; that the spirit of science—of free search for the truth—has often been sent to the stake; that the powerful have often defied the law. We must add to Dorothy Thompson's formula the fact that western civilization is not a state of being but a process of becoming. It is very far from complete, but it is a movement in what we believe to be the right direction; a movement guided by those three far-shining stars. This is the European tradition. A civilization based on those three principles is Europe's contribution to the world. That particular combination of principles is to be found nowhere in the world but in regions lived in and ruled by Europeans or descendants of Europeans.

Take those three principles one by one, and you see that the German Government has betrayed them all—betrayed the great tradition of the German people. Germany, under the evil spell of that Government, has not merely failed to live up to those principles—we have all done that—but she has flouted them and defied them and declared herself in favour of a different civilization altogether; she has set out to make a different civilization prevail.

She has declared, speaking through the lips of her authoritative teachers, that the Christian ethic, the idea that the weak have rights as well as the strong, is all nonsense, that the only meaning of right is the strength to enforce your will on another; they have persecuted the weak with utter savagery. She has declared that the free search for truth is all nonsense; she has driven her best thinkers into exile, and warned all her teachers that truth is not their concern; that truth, in fact, does not matter; that what matters is the strengthening of the present regime. She has declared that the rule of universal law is all nonsense, that the idea of one law for a German and a Jew—or a Czech or a Pole—is fantastic; she puts men to death without the pretence of a trial. Highly civilized in many ways, she has rebelled against civilization as we understand the term. She is putting the whole strength of her intelligence, her organizing ability, and her patriotism, into her assault on western civilization. She has made an enormously formidable combination with other enemies of that civilization.

Members of Australia's fighting forces have taken their places there from various motives; some from a natural love of adventure, some from weariness of the monotonies of a peace which gave them nothing to do in the world, some because they believe Australia to be in danger, some because they believe the British Empire to be in danger. What is at stake is something bigger than any of these things, and I think it a thousand pities that a single soldier should leave our shores without realizing what the issues are which have to be settled. We need cherish no hopes of an early peace; the question which has to be settled is so vast that we must look forward to years of struggle. We shall need all our strength; and one great source of

strength is a clear idea of why we are fighting. We are fighting in defence of a civilization which with all its defects has raised man's life on earth to higher heights, material and spiritual, than the world has ever known before, and which contains in it the promise and the potency of the highest life we can conceive. We are not fighting for capitalism, nor for parliamentary government, nor for democracy as we understand it to-day, nor for any other temporary makeshift which has been useful in its time and which we may hope to see superseded by something better. We are defending something which is not accidental or temporary, but essential and eternal; a cause worth living for, worth fighting for, and even worth dying for.

THE EMPIRE

I WONDER HOW MANY OF MY CONTEMPORARIES remember an elderly bachelor of gentlemanly manners who in my young days was a well-known figure in Melbourne and whose sayings were quoted far and wide. He called himself a lawyer, but he never practised at the bar—at least, not at that sort of bar. The other sort knew him well. He lived on what English relatives sent him to keep him at a sufficient distance from England and on whatever his persuasive tongue could extract from anybody he met. He had a genius for borrowing. I heard of only one occasion when his talent failed him. That was when he approached a respected judge generally believed to have sown a few wild oats in his earlier life. He appears to have received moral admonitions, but no money, for an acquaintance, meeting him on the stairs as he came despondently from the judge's chambers, heard him mutter, 'There is no one so hard on the practising drunkard as the reformed one.'

Exactly the same judgment is frequently passed and not by our enemies only, but by many of ourselves, on the British Empire. Herr Hitler, for instance, holds us up to derision unceasingly for the airs of moral superiority which, so he declares, we assume without the least justification. He and his propagandists are constantly harping on this string. 'Who are these exasperating self-

righteous people,' they ask, 'who are so fond of condemning us as aggressors, as if they themselves had not been the most aggressive nation in the world? Have they forgotten their own past? Do they expect us to believe that they won their vast Empire without aggression? Having annexed one-fifth of the habitable surface of the earth, they sit amid their plunder and preach sanctimonious sermons to anyone who ventures to follow their example. Their Union Jack is a highly respectable emblem and they want us to forget —perhaps they themselves manage to forget—that for centuries they used to fly the Jolly Roger. There is no one so hard on the practising pirate as the reformed one.'

So say our foreign critics and there are other critics, not foreign, who have a sneaking feeling that there is a good deal of truth in their contention. 'After all,' they say, 'we don't want to be hypocrites and pretend to ourselves that we won our Empire by any other means than by naval and military aggression. We are fighting for the right to keep what we have. As to how we came into possession of it, perhaps the less said the better. There are many things in our imperial history of which we ought to be ashamed. Let us be honest and confess it.'

Have you never met people, perfectly loyal and patriotic people, who in their praiseworthy hatred of smugness and hypocrisy are willing to admit that we have waded through slaughter to an Empire? I have and I honour them for their desire to be honest but not for their knowledge of the history of their own race. I do not believe in jingoism, but neither do I believe in vague generalizations not based on a close study of facts. Such study will, I believe, force us to the conclusion, paradoxical as it may seem, that the British nation has never been greedy of territory or of power and that, whatever may be said of this or that

regrettable incident, the making of the British Empire is not an achievement to be ashamed of, but one to be proud of. Taking it as a whole, it has been inspired by the noblest political ideal that has ever lived in the tide of time.

Henri Beraud, writing in the columns of the venomously anti-British journal, 'Gringoire,' goes through the history of England with a fine-tooth comb and has brought to light many ancient crimes. He goes back as far as to the martyrdom of Joan of Arc, as if the French had had no share in that crime. It seems to me that there is no sense in raking among the ashes of one another's past. If we judge one another's history by the moral standards of to-day, there is no nation on earth that can be held guiltless—not one. Every nation with a history has had blackguards among its rulers, doing blackguardly things. When Dr. Goebbels defends a German action by saying that we ourselves did exactly the same thing centuries ago, one possible reply, if we are feeling too lazy to look up the facts and find out whether they have not been twisted out of shape by this ingenious little person whose name ought to have been Doctor Garbles, would be, 'Yes, all right. Perhaps we did the same—centuries ago, but we wouldn't do it now. Are *you* satisfied to have reached to-day the state of civilization which *we* reached and left behind centuries ago?'

But that is not the real reply. The real reply, I think, is that it is not detached incidents that count. What counts is the national attitude towards those incidents, the national reaction to them. If we are going to be ashamed of every foolish or cruel thing done by individual Englishmen down the centuries we shall be hanging our heads permanently. For my part, I am not conscious of any sense of shame on

account of any scoundrel, any fool or any coward whom my race may have brought forth. I do not personally blush to think of Governor Eyre losing his head and slaughtering innocent people in Jamaica, but I am proud to remember that he was brought to trial for it. I do not blush for General Dyer because he got into a panic and ordered his troops to fire on an unarmed mob at Amritsar, but I am proud to remember that the conscience of the British people condemned his action swiftly and summarily. Warren Hastings was a great statesman who did a great service not merely to his own country, but to the people of India and the attack on him was unjust and absurd. Yet the trial of Warren Hastings is one of the incidents in our Imperial history of which we have reason to be proud, for it showed that the conscience of Britain was awake in those early years of the building of the Empire. Our ancestors at that moment understood that there were two possible kinds of empire—one based on power and greed, using military strength for the subjugation and exploitation of a conquered race; the other based on a sense of responsibility for the welfare of the subject people. It was because people suspected Hastings of working for the first kind, the piratical kind, that he was brought to trial; because that was the sort of empire which the British people as a whole was determined to have nothing to do with.

India will serve better than any other part of the Empire as an illustration of the two main ideas which run like hidden threads through the fabric of the Empire. As all the world knows, our Indian adventure started with a mere trading enterprise—with greed of gain, if you like to give it a bad name—and all the world knows the scandalous stories of the servants of the East India

Company who came home with ruined livers and princely fortunes to spend the evening of their days in England after years of strenuous looting in India. It was when the people of Britain felt that unrestricted trading was bringing disgrace on the British name that the Government, against its will, intervened and took control and our Indian Empire began.

As we look back on its history we can see, if we look below the surface, the two ideas which have been more or less clear in the minds of the architects of this extraordinary structure. The first idea was that power implied duty; that, if it was to be our destiny to rule India, it was our duty to give to India good government, peace, the rule of law and, as far as possible, material well-being. The second idea was that it was our duty to give India such an education as would fit her ultimately to do without us and to govern herself; in other words, the idea of freedom. It is because we have, with whatever blunders, been faithful to the first idea that the great majority of Indians to-day dread the prospect of severance from Britain. It is because we have been faithful to the second idea that the Indian Congress is to-day demanding dominion status. We may think Gandhi a nuisance at the present moment, but we ought to feel proud that our rule in India has been such as to make Gandhi possible, however inconvenient the result may be for ourselves.

Many people fail to realize just what our Indian achievement means, because they forget that India is not so much a country as a continent. It is, in fact, about the same size as Europe, with Russia left out. When our critics say, 'The Indian nation demands self-government and you have no right to reject that demand,' they forget that there is no such thing as an Indian nation. There is

a huge population, about one-sixth of the total population of the globe, consisting of many nations with different creeds, different languages, different social systems. Before we came to India it was a warring chaos and to give self-government to India to-morrow would be to bring chaos back again. But self-government is the goal we want these people to aim at, because self-government, whose other name is freedom, is the star by which the genius of our race has always steered. When we steered by another star we lost America and we have not forgotten that lesson. Ever since that disaster we have thought of Empire as a partnership of free nations, free to dissolve partnership when they will.

You are going to say this article is a mere piece of flag-flapping jingoism. I have inveighed often enough against national self-righteousness and self-glorification, but it seems to me that to go to the other extreme, to shake our heads over our heroic past and to be ashamed of the most wonderful political structure that any race has ever built, is at least equally vicious. The only way to steer between these two vices is to take the trouble to find out the facts and to weigh them, the good with the evil, coolly and dispassionately turning ourselves into foreigners and looking at our history through the eyes of impartial aliens. Anyone who does that will see that, in spite of many blunders and some crimes, the story of the Empire is not something to be ashamed of, but something to be immensely proud of, if pride is ever permissible to mortal frailty.

THEY

LIFE MUST BE A QUEER AFFAIR FOR THOSE human beings who distrust human nature; because life is full of occasions when we have to put our lives and fates into the hands of other men, whether we trust them or not. The most glaring of these occasions—though fortunately not the most frequent—is a surgical operation. Your last thought, before the anaesthetic has quite extinguished thinking, is, 'I hope he knows his job.' You hope his knife will not slip; you hope he knows what he is cutting, and why; your life depends on his skill and his knowledge. You hang your chance of life, not merely on the kind of man he is to-day, but on his character years ago when he was a medical student, and in the years between, when he was picking up experience.

Some of us go through life without any surgical operations, but none of us can go through life without constantly depending, in the same way, on the character, skill and knowledge of somebody else—somebody whom you may never have seen, somebody whose name you have never heard, but somebody whom you implicitly trust to do his duty. You sleep sound in the express train as it thunders through the night; because you trust the ordinary human being. If you distrusted humanity you would not be able to sleep a wink; you would lie shivering with misgivings. The engine-driver may be a fool, or drunk; the men in the signal boxes may be asleep; the men who

laid the line may have been careless; there may be bad workmanship in the engine; there are all sorts of dire possibilities to keep you awake, unless you are prepared to trust other men, men about whom you know nothing except that they are human beings, and therefore likely to do their duty.

On a trip to Java last year I had a striking reminder of the truth of this. One night we had a gale; not merely what passengers call a gale, but what old, experienced sailors called a gale. The captain, we learnt next day, had been on the bridge all night. The chief engineer confessed to me that he had been anxious, and that he too had been up all night. And yet I could not discover a single passenger who had lain awake—except, of course, the unfortunates who were seasick.

That has often struck me in the course of sea voyages. We go pounding along through the night without a thought of the perils of the deep. (I am speaking, of course, of voyages in time of peace.) If we wake, we think of some trivial thing, like the game of deck quoits we are going to play next day, not of shipwrecks, collisions, leaks or fires. I suppose there is an element of fatalism in our confidence; if we are going to be wrecked, well, we are going to be wrecked; we, at least, can do nothing to avert it. But mainly our peace of mind is due to the confidence in 'them.' Who are 'they'? The men on the bridge, the men in the engine-room, the men who steer, the men who watch, the men who built the ship, the men who saw to it that there was not a flaw in the propeller shaft, the men who riveted the plates, all sorts of obscure and unregarded men who did and are doing their job, the job for which they are paid their wage—and a pretty miserable wage it may in some cases be.

'Everywhere,' says Chesterton, 'men have made the way for us with sweat and submission. We may fling ourselves into a hammock in a fit of divine carelessness. But we are glad that the net-maker did not make the hammock in a fit of divine carelessness. We may jump upon a child's rocking-horse for a joke. But we are glad that the carpenter did not leave the legs of it unglued for a joke.' The examples are perhaps a little Chestertonian; less startling illustrations of the same truth meet us at every turn—whether we drop a letter in the pillar-box in full assurance that it will reach its destination next morning, or swallow a tablespoonful of medicine with complete confidence that our chemist has not misread the prescription and given us potassium cyanide instead of potassium bromide. Everywhere, if we open our eyes, is the multitudinous vision of simple men doing their job faithfully. They take for granted that they must do their duty; we, in turn, take for granted that they have done it, and stake our lives on it without noticing what a tribute we are paying every day to the nobility of the common man.

To Carlyle and those who think like him, the history of civilization is the history of a few great men. There is a truth in that, but the truth becomes a falsehood if we forget that the medal has another side. I like, myself, to read the biographies of the heroes and exemplars of mankind, the saints and sages, the captains and the kings. But to dwell too long on the peaks of human character and achievement, and to forget the noble stuff of which our common humanity is woven, is to misunderstand life.

I am led to make these remarks by the collapse of France. What was it that really collapsed? Certainly not the courage, the endurance, the patience or the patriotism

of the common French soldier. British soldiers who were on the spot will not hear a word against the French fighting men. They fought with extraordinary gallantry against impossible odds, and they were ready to go on fighting to the last for the sacred soil of France. They were overwhelmed by weight of numbers, and terribly overmatched in mechanical equipment, but not in courage. They were let down by their leaders; by the folly of the army chiefs, and by the corruption of the politicians. It is a long and complicated story, of which we shall know the full truth some day. Meanwhile we know enough to see that if honour has been lost in France, it is not the honour of the French people as a whole. The common men, the undistinguished women, the persons whose names never get into the papers—these, not the traitors who led them into the abyss, are the real France. 'I firmly believe,' says Mme. Tabouis, 'that the real France, perhaps sooner than we think, will live again.' They will find leaders worthy of them. The trouble in every country is to find leaders worthy of the common people.

Britain to-day is especially proud of the achievements of the Royal Air Force. Now it seems to me that of all forms of warfare, fighting in the air is the most individualistic; that is to say, it depends less on strategy, and more on the courage and skill and resourcefulness of the individual, than any other kind of fighting. The air force is an army in which the private in the ranks is the all-important factor. We are told that so many Messerschmidts were shot down, that so many Spitfires played a part, that so many of our machines failed to return; and in the whole story nobody's name is mentioned. The air force has already covered itself with glory, through the deeds of heroes whose names we do not know and probably shall

never know. Britain pins her hope of victory on a number of obscure persons about whom she knows nothing—except that they can be trusted, living or dying, to do their duty.

Mr. J. B. Priestley, in a broadcast talk the other day, said, far better than I can say it, what I am trying to say. 'I pin my faith—and this is no idle rhetorical statement, but an expression of all I believe and act upon—on the courage and skill and endurance of the ordinary English people, on the men who designed and made the Hurricanes and Spitfires and Boulton Defiants, on the young men who fly them and think nothing of taking on half a dozen enemy machines at once, on the soldiers who fought their way back yard by yard against overwhelming odds to Dunkerque, on the men on the Clyde and the Tyne who build the great ships, and the sailors who have never failed our trust in them, in every quarter of the world.'

The real hero of the war to-day, the hero who renews our faith in democracy, if it needed renewal, is the British public, the mass of ordinary and apparently quite unheroic men and women in town and country, in city slum and suburban villa, the coster and the clerk, the small tradesman, the farm labourer—everybody, in short. This ordinary person is standing up to an extraordinary ordeal; he is facing something worse than the certainty of death, and that is the uncertainty of death; waiting for an unseen enemy to spring. Unless the accounts which are reaching us are all romances—which is absurd—the commonplace, everyday, humdrum, undistinguished Briton is bearing himself, in this searching hour, with a calm and courage and patience and determination which fill us with pride; not with astonishment, because to be astonished at his behaviour would be to insult our breed—for we Australians

are of his family, inheriting the same high traditions of conduct in crisis.—

> In everything we are sprung
> Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

Let us pray that we, the common people of Australia, when our ordeal comes, may remember the seed whereof we are come, and confront the hour with the same stubborn equanimity.

The common man, the ordinary woman—it is on our qualities that the greatness of a nation depends. I am not suggesting that Carlyle is wrong, and that we have no need of great men. We need leaders, and shall need them in the farthest future the eye can reach; but a nation whose common people are of the right stuff will always produce the leaders it needs. Not the greatest captains of men—not Caesar nor Alexander, nor Marlborough nor Napoleon—could have effected anything with armies of degenerates. Marlborough's descendant who is Prime Minister of Britain could do nothing, for all his fine qualities, without the virtues—in the fighting forces, in the munition shops, throughout the kingdom, throughout the Empire—of common persons. And that is why Democracy is the best form of government, and why both Fascism and Communism must ultimately fail; for these treat the common man as a machine, while Democracy treats him as a man. Treat him as a machine, and he becomes a machine; treat him as a man, and he behaves as a man should. Trust him; and he will not let you down. That is the democratic faith.

MORE HERESIES

'CHRISTIANITY HAS NOT BEEN TRIED AND found wanting; it has been found difficult and not tried.' This saying of G. K. Chesterton's has been quoted often; perhaps too often; perhaps we have repeated it sometimes without asking ourselves what, precisely, it means; it may have tended to become a parrot-cry. Mr. H. G. Wells, at any rate, will have none of it.

In his latest book, 'The New World Order,' he speaks of various types of revolution; beginning with the type whose foremost representative is the great French Revolution, which, he says, is associated in our minds with 'visions of street barricades made of paving-stones and overturned vehicles, ragged mobs armed with impromptu weapons and inspired by defiant songs, prisons broken and a general jail delivery, palaces stormed, a great hunting of ladies and gentlemen, decapitated but still beautiful heads on pikes, regicides of the most sinister quality, the busy guillotine, a crescendo of disorder ending in a whiff of grape-shot . . .'

The revolution so graphically described in this thumbnail sketch—which, I need scarcely say, Mr. Wells does not imagine to be a complete picture of one of the greatest events in history—was, according to him, the ultimate phase of a long period of rule by the Church. The King of France, officially described as the 'Most Christian King,

the eldest son of the Church,' was the absolute master of the economic life of the community; the Church controlled its intellectual life and the education of the people. That furious, hungry, brutal and desperate mob was the outcome. And so—Mr. Wells concludes—'it is absurd to parrot that Christianity has never been tried. Christianity in its most highly developed form has been tried and tried again. It was tried for centuries fully and completely, in Spain, France, Italy.' He goes on to point out that for centuries before the Revolution Christianity had had unchallenged power in France; it had taught exactly what it chose to teach; it had dominated the common life entirely; it cannot have reaped anything it did not sow, for no other sowers were allowed. And—'that hideous mob of murderous ragamuffins we are so familiar with in pictures of the period was the final harvest of its regime.'

Well, personally, I am with Chesterton rather than with Wells. I hope—though of course one never knows—that I am not a parrot; but I am still prepared to repeat the statement that Christianity has never been tried. Tried, that is, on a national scale. Of course it has been tried individually; you have been unlucky if you can point to no-one, in the whole circle of your acquaintance, who has applied Christian principles to the conduct of life. But when we look at the conduct of the national life as a whole, I think every student of history will agree that Christianity, in this field, has not yet been tried.

It seems to me perfectly preposterous for Mr. Wells to say that for centuries before the French Revolution Christianity had had 'unchallenged power,' in France; that it had 'dominated the common life'; and so on. What on earth does Mr. Wells mean by 'Christianity'? For centuries before the Revolution, the common people of France

groaned under the heel of an iron tyranny. For centuries the French peasant had all he could do—and sometimes more than he could do—to keep body and soul together. The great landholders taxed their tenants to starvation point, and beyond it. A true picture of social conditions in pre-Revolutionary France, in city and country alike, makes us wonder that the Revolution was so long in coming; and it would have come later still but for the preparation made by men such as Voltaire, with his furious hatred of injustice, and Rousseau with his passion for human rights. Does Mr. Wells imagine—does any sane person for a fraction of a second pretend to believe—that all the cruelty and callousness and injustice of the old regime—all the infamies against which Voltaire protested till the day of his death—all the intolerable things which at last goaded a desperate people into revolt—were the result of the unchallenged power of Christianity?

I should rather say that an examination of the facts leads to an exactly opposite conclusion; namely, that for centuries before the Revolution Christianity in France had been powerless. 'That hideous mob of murderous ragamuffins' was not the outcome of long ages of Christian rule; it was the outcome of long ages of un-Christian rule. It was not a sign of the failure of Christianity; it was a sign of the failure of trying to govern a nation on the opposite of Christian principles. Whatever else had been tried, by the ruling classes in France before the Revolution, Christianity had not been tried. The Revolution itself was an attempt to apply Christian principles to life; the watchwords of the Revolution—Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—are the names of three Christian ideals.

What then? Mr. Wells is far too intelligent a man to mistake a church for Christianity; and therefore it is

difficult to acquit him of deliberately clouding the issue by speaking of two quite different things as if they were one and the same. He must know perfectly well that the failure of the church to be Christian is not at all the same thing as the failure of Christianity. When he speaks of the pre-Revolution church in France as 'Christianity in its most highly developed form,' he is speaking as if the putting together of an elaborate piece of ecclesiastical machinery were the development of a living soul. Surely he is treating us as children when he talks as if albs and chasubles and other priestly vestments, and incense and chantings and intonings and stained-glass windows and processions and ritual generally, were the soul of Christianity!

The church in eighteenth-century France—and in England of the same period, for the fox-hunting parson was not a whit more Christian than the courtly abbé—took sides with the rich against the poor, with the oppressor against the oppressed, with the strong against the weak, with the seigneur (or the squire) against the peasant. It taught the masses only one duty, the duty of obedience; and in its treatment of the sin of discontent it was merciless. All this was a failure in Christianity, not the failure of Christianity, a religion which, according to Chesterton—a devout churchman, remember—has never been tried! How would it be if, learning from its past mistakes, the church were to try Christianity to-morrow?

Why on earth (says the tired reader) do you keep on chipping at the churches? Who are you, whose whole theological learning could probably be written on the back of a post-card, to give yourself superior airs? If the churches have failed, what other institution has not been a failure? It is not the churches that need scolding, but

the people who don't support the churches in their effort to save the world; people like you, in fact. Anyway, why keep hammering away at the same weariful theme?

I keep hammering away at it, my dear tired reader, because I see, with a dreadful clarity, how instant is the world's need of a re-statement of Christianity—a new creed, if you will—and a new plan of campaign, a resolute and united effort by the churches to put that creed into action, to apply it to present-day problems, social, industrial, economic, international—all the problems that baffle and bewilder us and make us like sheep without a shepherd.

Some readers of a previous paper of mine on this topic have accused me of making the childish mistake of supposing Christianity to be merely a system of ethics—a set of rules for the conduct of life. I am well aware that Christianity is something that cuts much deeper than any morality, and implies a certain attitude to the universe—a fundamental belief about the meaning of life. What we call the Christian ethic is the application of this fundamental belief to our way of living.

But—I have maintained and still maintain that, in the present desperate state of the world, it is on this side of Christianity—on the application of it to the business of living—that the churches must concentrate if they are not going to fail humanity in the hour of its sorest need. To be a Christian in one's private dealings with one's fellows is not enough. To be personally perfect (if anybody could achieve perfection) is not enough. What the world needs is not a multitude of perfect individuals, but an organization —even an organization of very imperfect individuals—a church militant; we need to give to our desire for a better civilization the force of an organized religion.

The church is still a force in the world, but its present

influence is trivial compared with what its influence would be if—after a clear restatement of its ideas in terms of modern life—it came out to fight for the application of those ideas to all our dealings, national and international; to fight against the iniquities and inequities, the greeds and the cruelties, that have brought the world to its present pass; to wrestle 'not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.'

I don't suppose these remarks will be taken the least notice of by church leaders, except perhaps to stir a faint resentment against a presumptuous outsider who has dared to suggest that all is not well with them. The greatest enemy of the churches is their own self-complacency. They might mean everything to the world; at present, they mean very little; within a century, unless they awaken to the realities of the situation, they will mean nothing at all.

CONSCRIPTION OF BRAINS

THREE WEEKS BEFORE HER BLACK DAY CAME to France and to the world, you may have noticed, printed in an inconspicuous corner of your newspaper, a cabled message which might well have filled all our minds with forebodings; it seemed to condense into a couple of sentences the prologue to a tragedy. Here are the exact words, which have stuck in my mind as among the saddest I have ever read: 'It is officially stated that General Gamelin is is Paris. He has complete liberty, but no military command.'

General Gamelin, the generalissimo, the commander-in-chief of the armies of France and Britain, the great soldier, in whose military genius the Allied Governments had put their trust, was still at liberty! The French Government had not thought it necessary to put him in prison! How he himself was feeling about it all, the cables did not tell us. He is probably engaged on the writing of his memoirs; those of us who live long enough will be able to read them, and judge him more justly than anyone can do at the present moment. All we can be sure of is that he was relieved of his command because the Government held that he had made a disastrous blunder, and that the German break-through on the Meuse was due to his lack of intelligence. It may be, for all we know, that he has been made a scapegoat, and punished for the blunders of his subor-

dinates. What we do know is that the break-through was due, not to any lack of valour on the part of the French soldiers, but to what seems an incredible lack of foresight on the part of those who had planned the defence of the country.

Mr. Churchill has said, very wisely, that if we spend too much time quarrelling over the past we may lose the future. This is no time for recriminations. It is no use crying over spilt milk; I know no proverb that contains so much profound wisdom as that. But the proverb does not tell us not to learn a lesson from spilt milk; wisdom bids us look for the causes of the disaster, and take measures to prevent, if we can, the spilling of more milk.

On the very same day on which that cable about General Gamelin appeared, I noticed in my newspaper an Australian item which seemed to me to be a singular comment on it. Somebody in one of our capital cities said, in a speech which the paper thought worth reporting, that he was 'sick of mealy-mouthed talk about intelligence. Damn intelligence.' (Applause.) It is only just to add that he explained that he was only damning any kind of intelligence which would not lead to the winning of the war; not the right kind of intelligence. As far as I know, there are not different kinds of intelligence; intelligence is indivisible; you are either intelligent or not. I believe in democracy, whole-heartedly; but I can't help seeing that one of the weaknesses of democracy at its present stage of development is its tendency to damn intelligence.

One of our public men told us the other day, in a broadcast talk, that the time for thinking had gone by, and that what was needed at the moment was courage on the part of our soldiers and hard work on the part of all of us. Courage and industry are invaluable virtues. But what

I want to point out—and I hope you will not dismiss this remark as mealy-mouthed talk—is that a society which is in the habit of damning intelligence damns its industry to futility and damns its soldiers to destruction. This is the lesson of the spilt milk of which General Gamelin stands as the symbol.

In the Irish language there is a phrase, 'barna buill,' which may be roughly translated 'the gap of danger.' We are standing in the barna buill to-day, if ever a people stood there; and we may be forgiven for asking ourselves, with some anxiety, whether all is being done that can be done. May we not plead with our rulers, on whom we have just conferred full powers to conscript wealth and to conscript man-power, that they should also conscript brain-power; that they should make the utmost possible use of our great resources of intelligence and specialized knowledge?

Not for the sake of crying over spilt milk, but to remind you how much milk (and blood) can be spilt through lack of intelligence, or rather through the failure to set the best intelligence to work on the problems of the moment, let me give you a few illustrations from the last war. Haig announced that the machine-gun was a much over-rated weapon, and that two per battalion were more than sufficient. Kitchener thought that four might be allowed, but that 'anything above four may be counted a luxury.' Luckily Mr. Lloyd George listened to other advisers; and before the end of the war the number was more than forty per battalion.

Kitchener, when at last he was persuaded to look at the performance of a tank, pronounced it 'a pretty mechanical toy,' adding that 'the war would never be won by such machines.' After the war was over, Ludendorff endorsed

the saying of a German historian that 'it was not the genius of General Foch that defeated us, but "General Tank".'

As on land, so at sea. 'It is an historical fact,' wrote Lord Fisher, 'that the British Navy stubbornly resists change'; and he gives as examples the Admiralty's opposition to the introduction of steam, iron ships, breechloading guns, the turbine, the torpedo, wireless and aircraft. Both the War Office and the Admiralty looked at aeroplanes and refused to have anything to do with them; we can read to this day the solemn pronouncement of a committee of naval experts that aeroplanes 'cannot be of any practical assistance to the Naval Service.' A year or two later came the Battle of Jutland. The historian of that battle tells us that 'the successful escape of the German High Sea Fleet was largely due to the lack of efficient air scouting.'

If there were any point in giving a long list of such instances of unreceptiveness to new ideas any student of the history of the Great War could provide you with it. If you reply that, in spite of these blunders, we won the war, I think there are three answers: first, that we came within an ace of losing the war; secondly that each of these blunders cost us a tremendous price in human life; thirdly, that luckily for us the enemy made an even greater number of blunders.

You sometimes hear people say that 'Britain always muddles through,' as if it were something to be proud of. Muddling through is not a thing to be proud of. It is a kind of success, but an incredibly costly kind. Moreover, the nation that trusts in its tradition of muddling through may muddle once too often. Remember that we are confronting an enemy who so far has shown a singular absence of muddle, an extraordinary efficiency in the preparation for, and the conduct of, war.

'In your own hands, on your own heads, the sin and the saving lie,' according to Kipling. I would change one word of this admonition; what I am trying to suggest is that our salvation lies not *on*, but, *in* our heads. The evolution of warfare has transferred the battle to the brain.

And that is why some of us have read with disquietude the statement lately made by Professor Dakin, of Sydney, that 'many scientific bodies have expressed their willingness to help, but the general response from the Government has been negligible.' About the middle of last year, he tells us, 'the Australian National Research Council arranged for a detailed register to be taken of all scientists in Australia, setting out the type of work which each could do. We are still waiting for an answer from the Government.' Since he spoke, the answer may have come, for all I know; let us hope it has. But only last week I heard a distinguished chemist say that, though the chemists of Australia were anxious to help in the national effort, it seemed that there was nothing for them to do. And this in an age when, as everyone knows, chemistry has become a vital factor in warfare! Chemistry was not of much account in the days of Crecy and Agincourt; but that was some time ago.

Every man who has had a scientific training should be not merely requested to come in if he wants to, but required to come in; there should be an immediate conscription of scientists. The bravest army in the world, led by the greatest strategist in the world, may be thrown away for lack of scientific work behind the lines. Chemists and physicists seem to be the most obviously needed; geologists and biologists less obviously but not less urgently. In my opinion there should be set up at once a sort of clearing-house of ideas, where all suggestions may be sent and may

be examined by men of scientific training and fresh, receptive mind. For lack of such a body, the tragedy of the tank may be repeated.

I suggest, too, that the trained economists of Australia should be conscripted for scientific work. They should be directed to scrap all the ideas they have imbibed from orthodox text-books of economics, which were not written for a quite unprecedented emergency. They should be asked to receive and examine suggestions for financing the war, and for dealing with the financial chaos which will come when the war is over, and which, if we use our best minds to the best purpose, will not find us unprepared.

I suggest also that every military training camp should contain a psychologist, with a number of trained assistants. The duty of these scientists would be to observe men in their daily routine and discover for what form of work each man is best fitted, so as to get the most effective service from each. And if you think this would be a fantastically absurd thing to do, I can only reply that the Germans do not think so; they are doing it. To every division of the German army a number of psychologists are attached. It will not do to think we have nothing to learn from the Germans in the matter of efficient war-making.

This is not a criticism of the Government; it is a suggestion to the Government; a plea for the fuller use of the trained brains of our nation. Some politicians are in the habit of attacking our universities for one reason and another. The only feeling we ought to have about our universities is regret that we have not treated them more liberally and made them more efficient than they have been able to be, coupled with gratitude for the work they have managed to do, for the trained minds they have sent

forth to the service of their country. For we may not blink the fact that modern war is a science, a science involving all the other sciences. It may be an unpalatable fact, but a fact it is, and one which the enemy fully recognizes, that the way to victory lies through the university laboratory. Therefore, I say again, let us conscript intelligence—which is only too anxious to serve us, if we will only let it—and so make up for our defficiency in man-power by our efficiency in brain-power.

LEADERSHIP

THERE IS A PASSAGE IN THE 'CREEVEY PAPERS' which is of rather special interest just now. On the eve of Waterloo, Creevey met Wellington in the public park at Brussels, and said, with his usual cool cheek, 'Will you let me ask you, Duke, what you think you will make of it?' 'He stopped, and said in the most natural manner, "By God! I think Blucher and myself can do the thing." . . . Then, seeing a private soldier of one of our infantry regiments enter the park, gaping about at the statues and images,—"There," he said, pointing at the soldier, "it all depends on that article whether we do the business or not".'

We can see, of course, what the Duke meant; and we can see that he did not literally mean what he said. To be perfectly accurate he should have said 'partly depends'; because it also depended on whether there was a leader intelligent enough to make such arrangements as would put 'that article' in the right place at the right moment. It was natural that Wellington, the leader, should say to himself, 'My plans are all right; everything depends now on that man over there, and such as he.' It would have been equally natural for that private, if he had had a pal with him, to say, 'We're all right; everything depends on that cove over there with the big nose and the cocked hat.' Both would have been right, of course.

Some remarks of mine, to which I gave the rather silly

title of 'They,' have brought me a kindly remonstrance from one of Australia's highest authorities on the art and science of war. The gist of his criticism was that, while I had spoken the truth about our dependence on the virtues of the common man, I had spoiled it all by ignoring the importance of the uncommon man; I had spoken as if the private in the ranks were all that mattered, and as if the army leader did not count. It is true—so ran the criticism—that success, in war as in peace, depends on the whole nation's strength of fibre; but it depends, also and equally, on the intelligence of the nation's leaders. Democracy is all right, but democracy doesn't mean everybody running hither and thither at his or her own sweet will. Democracy means that we choose our leaders; not that we are all so wise and good that we can do without leaders. Leadership is essential, to an army and to a nation.

I heartily agree with this criticism, which is really a criticism of my incapacity for clear statement. Heavens above! how badly I must have written, to give the impression of preaching that leadership was of no moment! If leadership is of no moment, our visit to the polling booth last Saturday was a joke—the worst kind of joke, the compulsory kind.

We are so used to thinking of democracy as government of the people by the people for the people that we are apt to forget the important fact, that without leadership there can be no government by the people. A people without a leader; sheep without a shepherd. We tell one another that we do not want, and will not have, a Fuehrer of a Duce—each of which ill-smelling words means, translated into English, 'Leader.' We do not in the least object to the Germans for having a leader; we all need one. We do not object to Herr Hitler for being a leader; the reason we

would object to having a Hitler of our own is precisely because he is not a leader at all, but a driver. Signor Mussolini is not really a Duce; if he had been, Italy would not be at war. He is not a leader, but a boss. Democracy will not be driven, will not be bossed; but it will be led, and in fact it cries out for leadership.

Recent news from London has been enormously reassuring for all who believe in democracy. That story of the unexploded bomb beside St. Paul's was one hardly to be listened to without tears coming to one's eyes; and we know that when the full tale of London's ordeal comes to be told, it will contain thousands of such stories of danger faced with heroic courage and a kind of humorous imperturbability by the rank and file of that nation which Mussolini is so fond of calling decadent. There will be stories of the same kind from all over Britain, from all the cities and towns and little villages that have been put to the test. I believe that if hell were let loose in Australia we should not shame our breed. If the survival of the British Commonwealth depends wholly on the quality of the people—the common people—we are as safe as the Bank of England; in fact, a great deal safer.

To those who had listened to foreign propaganda and wondered whether after all there might not be some truth in the accusation of decadence—to all who had dreamed evil dreams of a panic-stricken population fleeing helter-skelter along the English roads, the news must have brought enormous relief as well as a rebuke to their lack of faith in freedom. The British stock is as sound as a bell. The people of England have demonstrated it in the sight of all the world. Democracy on that side of it is all right; but there is the other side, the leadership side.

Tolstoy, in that greatest of all prose epics, *War and*

Peace, expounds a theory of war as a clash of mighty forces which even a Napoleon is quite unable to control. He describes one battle which Napoleon won despite the fact that hardly any of his orders were carried out. He argues from this that in war leadership counts for nothing or next to nothing.

The facts of the present war seem to show that, given anything like equality in the character of 'that article'—the individual fighting man—leadership is everything. I see no reason to believe that, man for man, the German soldier is superior to the soldier of Poland or of any other country now lying helpless under Hitler's hoof. It was not the better quality of the soldiers, nor was it the mere weight of numbers, that gave Germany her thundering successes. She won them by superior equipment and by superior strategy; that is, by superior leadership; for leadership includes planning beforehand.

Somebody has said that 'wars are won or lost before they are begun'; and certainly Germany had won her war with Poland long before a shot was fired or a bomb dropped, because her army chiefs had understood the conditions of modern warfare and the Polish leaders had not.

And the victory over France, as we can now very plainly see, was a victory of leadership. They tell you it is easy to be wise after the event—though personally I have not found it easy to be wise at any time—but no great wisdom is needed to see the almost incredible stupidity of the French leaders. Leaving the bridges over the Meuse and the Albert Canal for the Germans to cross whenever it suited them may have been a piece of treachery; but leaving the least strongly fortified sector of the French front to be defended by a few weak divisions thinly spread along the line can only have been a blunder. A fatal blunder.

It is an open secret now that Mr. Hore-Belisha quarrelled with French (and British) army leaders about the state of the French defences along the Belgian frontier. He—backed, as we now know, by certain representatives of the Dominions—strongly urged that work on these defences should be speeded up; his criticisms were so bitterly resented that he had to leave the War Office. What other reasons there may have been for his dismissal we can only guess; but on this point his insight was all too quickly justified by tragic events.

We are going to win the war; but we came, as we can all see now, within an ace of losing it. If Germany had struck in the early months of the war as hard as she has struck since, it is difficult to see how we could have escaped tremendous if not irreparable disaster. The gods were kind to us; we were granted a respite, in which to learn our lesson and take measures accordingly. If Hitler had not missed his chance, and we had lost the war, it is plain that the calamity would not have been the fault of 'that article,' who is as sound to-day as he was in Wellington's day; it would have been the result of bad leadership, leadership by men who resented criticism and whose minds were unreceptive to new ideas.

As with an army, so with a nation; its destiny is shaped by the quality of its leaders just as much as by the quality of its common people like you and me. The purpose of these disjointed remarks is to point out that in peace and war—especially in war—leadership is a matter of life and death to a democracy; also to condemn and impugn and utterly deny the popular notion that the job of a democratic leader is simply to carry out the will of his sovereign lord the people. His job is infinitely harder than that; and it is infinitely harder than the job of a dictator with obse-

quious lieutenants at his beck and call, a Press to be his mouthpiece, and a Gestapo to silence objectors. The job of a democratic leader is to lead. It is not true that he is there to do what the nation wants done; if he is content to do that, he may be an admirable executive officer, but he is no leader. Often, a democracy does not know what it wants; often, what it wants is not what it ought to want; to give it what it wanted might be like giving a dyspeptic child the jam tarts it clamours for. The real leader has a conscience of his own, which he will not suppress at the bidding of the crowd. His task is to persuade the nation to want what his conscience tells him it ought to want. He speaks and acts for the better self of the nation, for its intelligence, its sanity, its sense of justice, its courage and energy and determination.

There was an instant and bone-deep change in the whole frame of Britain when Mr. Churchill succeeded Mr. Chamberlain. The British democracy felt that here at last was the leader it needed; and hope was re-awakened. Which goes to show that democracy, to survive, needs not only the right kind of common man, but, in a crisis, the right kind of uncommon man.

A NIGHTMARE

AN ENGLISH MAGAZINE, 'THE COUNTRYMAN,' has been asking its readers to say what their hopes and fears are, and how they are occupying their minds in these dark days. One of the most notable of the replies came from John Masefield, who wrote that in the forefront of his thoughts was 'the ever-present hope that this war may end before the minds of the nations have been made savage.'

A longer statement came from J. B. Priestley, who spoke of patriotism true and false. 'It is the falsest and most treacherous patriotism to trample on liberty, tolerance, fairmindedness; to neglect literature, music, art, drama, philosophy, the study and appreciation of nature; to close down the life of the mind and the spirit in order to win a victory that will then turn into a defeat. We can overthrow Nazism only by staying as much unlike it as possible.'

Both of these utterances deserve thinking about; more especially, perhaps, that of the Poet Laureate. How long must the war go on before the minds of the nations are made savage? So far, I believe, the mind of Australia is fairly clear of savagery—at least of savagery towards Germany. Some Australians appear to take a pretty savage view of other Australians; the normal condition within every community, I fancy. But as far as our attitude towards Germany is concerned, we certainly feel no violent

hatred. Apathy rather than savagery is the note. Whether our apathy is due to our philosophic detachment, or to our good nature, or to our more or less complete failure to realize what is at stake, the apathy is there; and much as we may deplore it, it has a good side to it. It means that our vision of things is not distorted by passion; we can still see clear. And the meaning of John Masefield's saying, I take it, is that he hopes peace will be made by people who see clear, rather than by people who see red. People who see clear sometimes make a good peace; people who see red invariably make a bad peace.

How long will it be before we begin to see red? I look into my own mind, and feel afraid. Things are happening on the other side of the world which it is almost impossible for any decent person to read about with philosophic detachment. For example, I have just finished reading the full text of the report sent to Pope Pius XII by Cardinal Hlond, the Primate of Poland, on conditions in that part of Poland occupied by Germany. This document, which reads like the account of some horrible nightmare, has the accent of truth; there are no rhetorical phrases in it, no outbursts of indignation; and yet the facts set forth in it are such that every now and then one says to oneself, 'No! No! This can't be true! Human beings don't behave like this!' But they do, it seems; and after reading the Cardinal's unemotional memorandum, one sees the truth of what a recent American commentator has said, 'The difficulty of telling the truth about the Nazis is, and always has been, that the truth is so monstrous that the ordinary human being cannot bring himself to believe it. The greatest advantage that the Nazis have had in this world is the incredulity of the human race.'

I am not going to copy out any passages from this grisly

record of the abysmal depths of brutality into which humanity can fall. If you enjoy shuddering, read the report for yourself; and, while you are about it, you might also read a recently published book entitled *Dachau: The Nazi Hell,* an account, by a former prisoner, of one of those concentration camps in which German youth receives its training in bestiality. The man whose notes are here put together managed to escape, after five months in the camp, and found refuge in England. But he was a broken man, physically and mentally, and although in England he found security, he failed to find a respite from appalling memories; and he committed suicide a month or two ago.

I don't mention this book, nor yet the Cardinal's report, for the sake of introducing some atrocity stories; but merely to illustrate the ease with which you and I can slip into savagery. Reading these plain narratives, I found myself becoming a sheer savage; I, a normally mild and reasonable being, saw red.

For the moment, it seemed to me that the nation that could produce such unspeakable brutes as the officers in charge of the Dachau camp, and their even more unspeakable underlings, was beyond redemption; that the people who, with calculated and commanded cruelty, are exterminating a whole population (torturing them before destroying them) were beyond the pale of humanity. I forgot all the decent and kindly Germans I have known; I forgot the millions of just such persons in Germany to-day, persons who, as the news from Poland trickles through to them (if it ever does) will be stricken at heart to know that their country is perpetrating such crimes against humanity; I forgot that we have no quarrel with the German people, but only with the evil gang in whose grip they are held. I forgot all the great things they have

given to our common life—the music of Beethoven, the poetry of Heine, the thought of Kant, the researches of Einstein—I forgot everything except those hell-hounds of Dachau camp and the inhuman torturers of Poland; and I hated Germany and all things German with an intensity which would have done credit to a good Nazi thinking of England.

But, I am thankful to say, the mood only lasted for a few minutes. It is entirely unreasonable, and the mark of a savage, not to make a distinction between the Nazi gang and the German people. There are stern and severe persons in our midst who say that this is rank sentimentalism, and that the German people, which has taken Hitler to its heart, must accept the consequences. Ask yourself honestly what you would do if you were in Germany to-day and hated Hitler and all his works. If you say that you would at any rate not sit down tamely under that tyranny—that you would at least make some kind of public protest—I can only say that I admire your intrepid character, which is far beyond anything I can aspire to. There are millions of Germans to-day who loathe the Hitler regime; and many of them, no doubt, are in the German army; but what can they do? They are in the toils; they are helpless. And we must not forget the still greater number of Germans who, although they hate its brutalities, accept the Nazi régime because they have been brought up to see in that régime the only hope for their country's future. They have heard, day in day out, about the encirclement of Germany by her relentless enemies; and they have been taught that England's dearest wish is to crush Germany. We cannot tell them that neither England nor any other country wishes to crush Germany; we cannot tell them anything: somebody has cut the telephone wires. They

are not to blame for believing what they have been taught to believe—except in so far as we are all to blame for precisely that fault.

I regret to notice that this paper has taken the bit between its teeth and carried me in a somewhat different direction from what I intended at the start. It was Mr. Priestley's utterance, not Mr. Masefield's, that I meant to dwell on. It is too late now; and I don't know that it matters. Will you kindly go back and read the second paragraph of this article over again? And will you follow up the reading of it with a few moments of silent reflection?

I shall just add a few sentences (assuming that you have done what you were asked to do.) Who won the Great War? The military victory, of course, went to the Allies; but whose was the only victory that matters, the spiritual victory? We set out to teach the enemy the falsehood of the belief that might is right. Did we succeed? If that lesson sank into the soul of the German people, we did what we set out to do, and the victory was ours; but did the Germans really learn the lesson? On the other hand, did German efficiency beget in us a sort of admiration for their methods; did we become, to a certain extent, Prussianized? Then, to that extent, the Germans won the war.

Every war—what little knowledge of history I have tells me—has been a method of exchanging ideas between opposing nations; in the age-long struggles between France and Britain, we learned much from one another. But, alas! it is equally true that in every war the defeated nation infects the victorious nation with its own peculiar diseases. This is what Mr. Priestley means when he talks about 'winning a victory which will then turn into a defeat.' It is not only the Nazis of Germany we have to fight;

we have to fight Nazism wherever it may show its ugly head. Australia, as we must all admit if we are honest with ourselves, is not at present a wholly united nation; there are dissentient voices. Any attempt to force unity upon the nation, any violent silencing of those voices—however sure we may be that those voices are uttering falsehood—would be an Australian brand of Nazism. Every government must be sorely tempted at times to go in for the suppression of freedom of speech; people say such foolish, such perverse, such mischievous things. If we yield to that temptation, Herr Hitler has won a victory on the Australian front.

HOW LONG, O LORD?

WHEN ANYONE ASKS YOU WHETHER THIS is going to be a long or a short war, you had better reply that since it began a few thousand years ago, it may very well last a few thousand years more.

If you think this is an idle paradox or a piece of ill-timed flippancy, I am sorry; for in these dark days, when we are fighting for our existence, or at least for all that makes existence worth having, I should hate to be paradoxical or flippant. We are fighting for our existence, but we are fighting for something more; and to understand what that something more is, we must realize that this war is a campaign in a war that has been going on for centuries.

Going on continuously; going on at times when the school history-books tell us that peace reigned on earth. With one weapon or another—with bows and arrows, with tanks and incendiary bombs, with racks and thumb-screws, with sand-bags and money-bags, we have been waging this war for thousands of years.

The precise date of its beginning I don't know, and neither does anybody else. I know only that it began when certain ideas emerged from the darkness of chaos and primeval night; certain ideas which brought with them not peace but a sword. The fight round these ideas is the history of civilization. I know no other way of defining civilization than this; that in the mind of the

civilized man these ideas have become habits, and feel at home; in the mind of the savage these same ideas are still shy and shrinking strangers.

Let us have an illustration. When did the idea of Justice first take shape in the human mind—the idea that there is such a thing as fair dealing between man and man, and that this is a valuable thing, a thing to be sought after? I don't know, and neither do you. We know that Plato, more than two thousand years ago, devoted a great part of his greatest book to the question, What, precisely, is Justice? He took for granted that everybody used the word, and that everybody knew justice to be a good thing; but he wanted everybody to be quite clear about which acts were just and which unjust. He wanted the Greeks to be fully civilized men, and he saw that the idea of justice was an essential part of civilization. Many centuries before Plato a race quite unlike the Greeks in ever so many ways, living in Palestine, had shown, through the words of their poets and men of letters, that they not only possessed the idea of justice, but were obsessed by it. They used for it a word which has been translated into English as 'Righteousness,' but they meant exactly what Plato meant by 'Justice.'

Or again—at what point in the dark backward and abysm of time did the idea of Freedom first make its appearance in the mind of man? Nobody knows. Rousseau begins his epoch-making book with the quite untrue assertion that 'Man was born free, and is everywhere in chains.' What he might have said truly was that 'Man was born in chains, and is everywhere struggling to be free.' The baby is not free in any sense of the word; it is the absolute slave of physical needs, absolutely dependent on others for the fulfilment of those imperative needs if it

is to live. The primitive savage is hardly more free than the baby; he is hemmed in by circumstances which he does not in the least know how to surmount, ruled by powers against which it has never occurred to him to rebel. Here again, the idea of Freedom—that explosive idea—comes down from a region hidden from us by the mists of time. Plato talked little about freedom, being more concerned with other matters; but the Athens where he lived seems to have taken for granted that freedom was a condition of all noble living. True, those people's civilization was based on slavery; but that merely means that they thought of civilization as something that could be enjoyed only by the few. Freedom for all was beyond the scope of their vision.

How to reconcile freedom with order, so as to make a free society possible—and how to reconcile freedom with national strength, so as to make the continued life of the nation possible amid a hostile world—these were two problems which the Greeks did not solve; but they tried to solve them, and their effort was a sign that they were a highly civilized people.

Civilization is based on half-a-dozen simple ideas which we can label quite easily, remembering always that labels are apt to be misleading. Justice, freedom, mercy, good faith, are ideas which we know to be roots of civilization; so is the idea of seeking the truth for its own sake; and so is the idea of the rights of the weak—the idea, that is, that there is such a thing as right apart from might. Of none of these notions can we point to the beginning. All we know is that in the mind of the primitive savage of to-day, as studied by the anthropologist, they can be seen feebly struggling towards the light.

These ideas have always had to be fought for, and this

present war is only a phase of the age-old conflict, in which untold multitudes of men have lost their lives. Civilization has not been a peaceful process, but a furious and a bloody one, though its goal may be peace. The man of science in his laboratory may seem to be leading a tranquil life; but to give him that tranquillity, to set him free to pursue his researches, countless generations of nameless and forgotten men have laid down their lives. Science has had its martyrs ever since the idea of truth for truth's sake dawned on the mind of man. In like manner, every single one of the ideas I have mentioned has had to be fought for, inch by painful inch. There is, and always has been, a tremendous force in the world hostile to civilization and yielding ground only after desperate battles.

And in this long war, as we all know, civilization has had its set-backs—periods in which the lamps seem to have gone out—dark ages, long and short. It may be that we are in for a new dark age. A great and powerful nation has thrown overboard at least four of those basic ideas I have mentioned: justice, mercy, good faith, the rights of the weak. Germany has hurled them all away with jeers and curses. We cannot accuse her of hurling away the idea of freedom, but the freedom she still worships is the freedom of Germany alone; and, moreover, the freedom of the individual man and woman—even the German man and woman—has become for her a meaningless phrase.

Now you will find, if you read your history with care, that the freedom for which men have been willing to lay down their lives has not always been the freedom of their tribe from interference by other tribes; they have died also for the freedom of the individual. One question that ought to be settled by the present war is whether a nation

of slaves fights better than a nation which has striven all through its history for the freedom of the individual. Britain's greatest contribution to civilization has been her insistence on the rights of the individual; on what we call civil liberty. Her insular position gave her the chance, and therefore laid on her the duty of putting the emphasis on this side of the idea of freedom.

With the coming of air warfare Britain lost her insular position. So far as warfare is concerned, there is no longer such a thing as an island. In the military sense, Western Australia is more nearly an island than Tasmania is, in relation to the rest of the Commonwealth.

But while Britain was still an island, still protected by her moat, she was able to work out her own problems more or less unmolested by foreign powers; and, so privileged, she led the way towards the solution of a problem not yet finally solved anywhere: the problem of reconciling individual liberty with order and with national strength. The ideas which I have spoken of as the roots of civilization got a chance of developing in Britain as nowhere else in the world. The idea of justice, for instance, grew so well on British soil that foreigners who regard the Englishman as a beast, admit, grudgingly, that he is a just beast; and the phrase, 'British fair play,' has come to have a meaning beyond the Anglo-Saxon boundaries. And the idea of good faith, of keeping one's promise, seems also to have been cultivated by perfidious Albion with some success; witness the fact that all over Spanish America there is a common expression, 'on the word of an Englishman,' meaning 'honour bright.' I don't believe in vainglorying, but the fact that this phrase has sprung into existence in those countries is a fact, and our modesty cannot prevent it from being a fact.

Experience teaches me that the reaction of many readers to these remarks will be to say, Words, words, words!—what sense is there in all this talk about ideas, when we know that the only idea that matters to-day is the idea of how to win the war? What is the sense of talking about a war that lasts for centuries when we have to meet an enemy who plans a Blitzkrieg?

Well, I have maintained in these pages, over and over again, that nations fight the better for understanding what they are fighting about; and therefore I don't think it waste of time to remind ourselves now and then that this war is only a new chapter in a very long serial, the story of certain ideas for which men have done battle since the red dawn of history. Signor Mussolini spoke truly when he told cheering crowds the other day that 'this fight is a fight against ancient conceptions.'

THE ISSUE

THERE ARE THREE MAIN WAYS OF LOOKING at the news of the day—three attitudes that one may adopt, according to the type of mind (if any) that one possesses. I am not saying that there are not a score of other attitudes; but I maintain that there are three principal ones, three that you come across every day, if you are not a hermit. Let me illustrate by the late deplorable earthquake in Turkey, with its sequels.

The first attitude is that of innocent, unsophisticated persons like me. We believe there has been a tremendous earthquake in Turkey, followed by widespread floods; that many thousands of persons—of course we are not sure of the exact number—have been killed by the earthquake or drowned by the floods; that whole villages have been wiped out of existence; that many homeless and starving persons have been driven to the verge of madness; that famished wolves are attacking human beings; that other countries are humanely helping the distressed country, with money and with food and clothing; and that it would not be a bad thing if a Turkish Relief Fund were inaugurated in Australia. (Probably this suggestion is belated.) To put it shortly, we believe that the statements cabled to our country and appearing in our newspapers are substantially correct. There has been a terrible earthquake in Turkey.

The second attitude is that of the more knowing people,

the people who are not to be caught with chaff. They tell us, with a somewhat exasperating smile, that the Turks would be hugely amused if they heard of a Turkish Relief Fund being started in Australia. How do we know the Turks need any relief? How do we know there has been an earthquake in Turkey? 'We have read about it in the papers,' we reply. They snort with derision. 'Surely you are not so childlike, at this time of day, as to believe a thing just because you see it in print? All this stuff about earthquakes and floods and wolves is pure propaganda. There may have been a bit of a tremor, recorded by delicate instruments; that was what gave the idea to the propaganda-mongers. All that has been built up on that slender foundation, all the heart-rending and blood-curdling stuff, was invented by somebody with a graphic pen at the orders of the British Government, to win the world's sympathy for the Turks, who were so lately our deadly foes that it is a little difficult to persuade us all of a sudden to regard them as devoted pals of ours. It was necessary, for this purpose, to let loose a flood of sloppy sentimentalism; and so the propaganda-machine was set to work, and lo! earthquakes, floods, famine, madness, wolves and what not. You notice that the Germans, an intelligent people, have not been taken in by the propaganda; they have not only sent no money to the Turkish Government, but they have not uttered one word of sympathy. They do not believe in the earthquake, and neither do I. There has been no earthquake in Turkey.'

This is the second attitude; the simple and satisfying attitude of the propaganda-maniac. When you ask him why he believes that the Germans have uttered no word of sympathy, he replies promptly but somewhat inconsistently that he read it in the papers last Tuesday. That

is your way, if your mind is of this type; when something appears in the papers which you want to believe, it is a trustworthy statement; when something appears which you don't want to believe, it is pure propaganda.

The third attitude is quite different. There has been an earthquake in Turkey, right enough; probably with more attendant horrors than the papers have told us of. And there will be more earthquakes in the future, and more, and more, till we deal with the cause of earthquakes, which is—Capitalism. What you will not see in the papers will be the amount of money made out of this earthquake by the profiteers. The whole disaster has been deliberately brought about by the underground engineering of the money power—the ruthless and omnipotent oligarchy of international financiers, mostly Jews, operating from New York. All disasters have been brought about by capitalism in its unscrupulous greed of power, and there is no reason to think the Turkish earthquake an exception. Turkey will have to borrow great sums of money because of it, and so will fall deeper and deeper into the power of high finance, which already rules most of the world.

It is this third attitude—the attitude of those who read every page of history in terms of money, and see in every event a sign of the machinations of the lords of money—that chiefly concerns me at the moment, for a personal reason. Recent articles of mine have brought me a number of more or less abusive, and some violently vituperative, letters. Some of them are couched in kindly and pitying terms, giving me elementary lessons in economics and history in short and simple words such as my infantile mind may be expected to grasp. To other correspondents I seem, on the whole, rather more a knave than a fool, a conscious hireling of capitalism.

The sin with which I am charged is that I believe—or, as some with less politeness prefer to put it, pretend to believe—that in this war we are fighting for the right; for the cause of freedom, not our own freedom only; for the cause of democracy all the world over. This, it seems, is arrant humbug; every country, when it is asked to endure a war, is told that it is fighting for the right, for freedom, for democracy and all the rest of the paraphernalia; when what it is really fighting for is increased power for its lords and masters, whether they be feudal barons or money kings, or else of wilfully covering up the fact that the causes of war are economic causes.

Now I may say, without an undue affectation of modesty, that I don't expect everybody to read everything I write. But I must admit that this particular accusation touches me on the raw; because, as it happens, for years I have been pointing out that the main, though not the sole, cause of war is economic, and that our present money system is such as to make war inevitable. The need of a radical reform in our financial methods has been the bee in my bonnet for years; and I have gradually built up for myself a little reputation, among pitying friends, as a lunatic on money matters, one of those monetary reformers, or currency cranks, the most hopeless kind of cranks. And now to be told that I ignore the economic causes of war, and placidly acquiesce in the present order of things, and urge my fellow-countrymen to side with the present order of things, is certainly a blow to my self-esteem. Blows to one's self-esteem are doubtless salutary, but they are painful.

After this little whimper of wounded vanity, I turn to the main issue, which is far too momentous to be dealt with, even to be touched for a moment, with an egotistical pen.

Can it be that those who speak of this war as a war for freedom and right are talking with their tongues in their cheeks? Are we really fighting, not for that new world order the politicians prate of, but for the prevention of a new world order dreaded by all for whom the present order is a comfortable arrangement? Are we being humbugged into imagining we are defending the rights of man when we are really defending the rights of money? Is all the talk about democracy just words, words, words, the old dodge for hypnotising the people to become cannon-fodder for warring capitalisms and imperialisms? Is the world's best blood being shed for a delusion and a lie?

A profound instinct, in the people of the British Commonwealth, answers these questions in the negative. The vast majority, in this nation, believe that something is being threatened which is so precious that it must be defended to the death; and assuredly this something is not capitalism, but something that was before capitalism was heard of and will endure when capitalism, having served its turn, has been swept away. It is something far too big to be packed into a single word; but perhaps the least inadequate word is civilization.

Civilization does not mean our present civilization; a civilization which has turned the blessing of machinery into the curse of unemployment,—which has frustrated the efforts of men of science and turned their discoveries into instruments of destruction,—which gives men the power to produce abundantly and takes away from them the power to consume what is produced,—which destroys, to keep prices up, products for which people are starving, and restricts production because it has made people too poor to buy,—which has no difficulty in finding vast sums of money for war purposes, but immense difficulty in

finding small sums for the purposes of peace, for giving the mass of mankind proper nourishment, clothing, housing, health, and economic security. Such things are the blots on our civilization; and we know that the cure for them is to become more civilized, not to go back to savagery as the nations we are fighting have done.

If the war goes on for long, we shall see nation after nation being drawn into it. America is desperately anxious to keep out; but she will not be able to, unless peace comes soon. For this is a war in which there can be no real neutrals. There is not a nation anywhere in the world whose interests are not at stake; they will all have to take sides whether they want to or not, because it is a war to determine what sort of world they are going to live in,—a world of free men, free to shape a new and better civilization, or a world of slaves.

THEM UNIVERSITY BLOKES

I DON'T KNOW WHETHER YOU WILL THINK there is anything amiss with the title of this article; but I myself have a sort of a hazy notion that it lacks academic elegance, and also that it breaks some grammatical rule or other. I feel somehow that it isn't the sort of thing I would have written when I was a University Professor, before I left the intelligentsia to become a member of the ignorantsia. In those old days I was in the place where it was demanded of me that I write grammatically, and therefore grammatically I wrote, impugn it whoso list.

But that's all over. I am now in a place where I can assert the British principle of freedom of speech, and make my own rules of grammar. The old bother about 'shall' and 'will' no longer worries me. I say 'between you and I' quite brazenly. The word 'whom' has disappeared from my vocabulary; and a good riddance too. I like to frequently split my infinitives, as a reminder that I have escaped from the house of bondage.

What is all this fuss about 'correct English,' anyway? It is just a form of plagiarism—copying somebody else's way of talking. We are men, not monkeys; why should we be such mimics? Has it ever struck you that what we call an idiom is just a piece of slavish imitation? 'Spick and span' is an English idiom; we must always couple these two words together, because all the best people do. I claim a free-born citizen's right to be simply spick if I

want to be, and at other times to be as span as I please. Let slaves gnash their teeth; as for me, I gnash my shoulders—and shrug my teeth. I snap my fingers at this fetish of 'correct English'—or rather, I snap my toes.

That is a long-winded defence of the phrase I have put at the top of this paper. But, after all, it isn't original; in spite of what I have just said about not plagiarising, I must confess that this phrase is a bit of rank plagiarism. You might call it an idiom, or perhaps a classical quotation. Whenever I, in the days of my slavery, began to give a broadcast talk, in a thousand happy Australian homes some estimable citizen used to ask, 'Who's he?'—and another citizen replied, 'Oh, just one of them university blokes. Try another station.' I fancy the same duologue took place when any of my then colleagues went on the air—or when any of our names appeared at the top of a newspaper article. Most of us were aware of the fact. It was humbling, but no doubt it was good for our souls.

Well, now that I am no longer a university bloke myself I find it possible to look at the species from a distance and write about it objectively. I am not, you will be sorry to hear, going to write about members of the species individually, their personal and private lives and qualities—'University Blokes I Have Known,' a tempting project which must be firmly put aside. I am going to write about the species, not about individuals. Looking at the clan collectively, I am going to point out its incurable defects, the defects which give rise to the duologue I have just quoted. I feel sure my ex-colleagues, if they chance to read this article, will forgive my candour; for, with all their faults, they are a forgiving crowd.

The root of their trouble, I fancy, is their heathenish worship of an abstraction called Truth. It is their religion

to seek always the frozen fact, to see things as they really are, not with blurred outlines, but exactly and precisely. This is the university religion; there are heretics, of course, but they are exceedingly unpopular with the tribe. The true believer agrees with Bacon (himself a university bloke) that 'the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making or wooing of it; the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it; and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it; is the sovereign good of human nature.'

The orthodox university teacher, by insidious propaganda, spreads this idolatry among his students; and though some resist the infection, most of them succumb to the microbe, which is in the air they breathe. They gradually acquire the notion that the truth, however ugly, is the precious thing; and that falsehood however alluring is a thing to be loathed.

Speaking for myself, it was a trying business living with these people. If I had a pet theory of which I was proud, they insisted on asking for its foundations in fact. If I indulged in a nice, broad, sweeping generalization—about, let us say, why the Roman Empire fell—my colleagues, red in tooth and claw, tore it to pieces in no time. A high-sounding piece of rhetoric, which might impress the public, somehow sounded silly in the university common-room. Pleasing sentiments, in which a public audience might be counted on to wallow, made these queer people look as if they were going to vomit. The value of truth was evidently an obsession with them.

You can see, can't you, why the university bloke must be unpopular? A person who makes a religion of seeking the exact, precise, and demonstrable truth can't expect to be liked. To quote Bacon again, 'A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt that if there were

taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy, and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves?' (The modern word for Bacon's 'imaginations as one would' is 'wishful thinking,' which in university circles is regarded as a vice.)

Perhaps the weaknesses of university people can be summed up in a single damning sentence: they have academic minds. All the world knows how bad it is to have an academic mind, as contrasted with the practical mind, the mind of the man who really does things; the man of affairs. This, I suppose, was what an Australian cabinet minister was thinking of when he announced the other day that university graduates were never any good in parliament. He might perhaps have put it more tactfully, seeing that his own political chief is a university graduate; but we all see what he meant, and we all agree. The university man has been trained in other arts than those of the politician. Therefore he feels ill at ease and out of his element in parliament. Whether this is a reflection on the university man, or on parliament, is a question no right-minded person will ask, with parliament such a shining success as it is. Let the academic person stick to his Plato and his microbes and his electrons, and let the practical man direct the practical affairs of the world. He has always done so—with what magnificent results let the present state of the world testify!

Another terrible weakness in our university education is that a man who has been trained to seek the truth before all things, to think honestly, and to demand precision in the use of words, is apt to recognize the windbag, the charlatan and the humbug at sight. Not only

should a person so trained be kept out of parliament, but I even doubt whether he should be allowed a vote. His influence is likely to be so—what's the word?—so subversive.

But perhaps, when all is said, the very worst trait of the university bloke is his conceit,—his belief in himself, and in his mission. He actually wants the whole country to become—I shudder to say it—a kind of university, with everybody in it trained to regard the truth as 'the sovereign good of human nature.' He thinks that therein lies the hope of the world—in the application of trained intelligence to the problems of life. He believes that the present war is a conflict of physical force directed by human brains—as much a battle of wits as a game of chess is. He thinks the best training a country can give to its citizens is a training in the disinterested and fearless search for truth. This is the university ideal, and he would spread, if he could, the cult of that ideal through the length and breadth of the land.

Well, of course, I myself, whose mind has been un-academic for several months now, have a profound sympathy for the estimable citizen above quoted on the subject of them university blokes, and am prepared to jeer with you at the highbrow till further orders. But I have an uneasy feeling that the future is with the highbrow, and not with you and me; that the wide spread of the university idea would transform our country for the better; and that the fostering of our universities, as places where the search for truth is untrammelled and where thought is free and passionate and disinterested, may, on the whole, be our best policy in the long run . . . So it appears that the academic leopard can't change his spots, and that you may still dismiss me as no better than a university bloke.

AN ANCIENT TRIBE

JOHN MORLEY—THAT DEAR AND VENERATED teacher of my youth whom I refuse to think of as Lord Morley—had, in his rare moments of satire, a heavy hand with the branding-iron; as, for example, when he described the man of the world, in a passage which I should like to quote in full, if I could remember the exact words. (I should hate to misquote Morley.) But there is, in this scathing description of a type we all know, one phrase which has stuck in my mind—'His cordiality towards progress and improvement in a general way, and his coldness and antipathy to each progressive proposal in particular.' Heavens above! how well we know him, this hearty fellow, so warm in his sympathy with all the nobler aspirations of mankind, so long as mankind is content to leave them in the air!—such a believer in reform, so long as reform remains an abstract noun!—so stout a champion of freedom of speech, until somebody says something he disagrees with!—so keen on justice, until you want his help to fight some flagrant piece of injustice!—so enthusiastic about moving forward, until you suggest a first step, when he suddenly develops a mule-like enthusiasm for standing still!—how well we know him!

Morley's description is accurate, but not short enough, not portable enough for general use. The Americans, who have a genius for epigram, have found a name for the kind

of man in question; they call him a 'yes-but.' President Roosevelt in a speech the other day put the troubles of the New Deal in a nutshell when he told his audience how his efforts were constantly hampered by the yes-buts. I don't suppose the President coined the name, but I feel pretty sure it comes from the American mint; it has an American ring about it. What an admirable coinage it is! We needed a name for this ancient and ubiquitous tribe. It is strange that, though the yes-buts inherit the earth, we have hitherto not known what to call them. Hail, Columbia!—please accept our thanks.

You see, of course, how felicitous the name is. 'You believe in economic reform, don't you?' 'Yes, but—you mustn't interfere with sound finance.' 'You believe in freedom of speech, I suppose?' 'Yes, but—we can't let those nasty Communists air their poisonous views.' 'You believe in the best education for everybody, you say?' 'Certainly—assuredly—indubitably—yes, but—dash it all, where is the money to come from?' 'You believe we should put down war profiteering, of course?' 'Yes, but—if you start interfering with the course of business, you will soon land us in socialism or something.' 'You believe that ill-nourished children are a disgrace to Australia?' 'Yes, but—you mustn't pauperize people by giving free milk to children.' 'You believe in change?' 'Yes, but—we mustn't go to extremes; moderation, my dear chap, moderation in all things!'

The tribe is of immemorial antiquity. Shakespeare knew the species well; if I had the time and the space I should draw up a list of Shakespearean yes-buts. Also a list from the Bible. 'That fruit is forbidden,' said Adam; 'we must obey the Lord's commands.' And Eve said, 'Yes, but——'

The progenitor of all the tribe was doubtless one of our cave-dwelling ancestors. A hot-headed youngster had grown impatient, and suggested to the patriarch of the family a move to a cleaner, fresher, more spacious cave. 'This place,' he pointed out, 'is intolerably stuffy; the heap of putrid bones at the entrance is most unhygienic; we can't stand up without knocking our heads against the roof of the cave; let's move!' 'I agree with you,' said the patriarch, 'that our cave is not perfect; but it might be worse. It's perhaps a trifle smelly, as you say; yes, but—there's a thundering great plesiosaurus somewhere about, waiting for us; on the whole, young man, I think we'd better stay where we are.' Members of the tribe have been speaking in the same way ever since. Can we wonder that the progress of mankind has been slow, with this powerful four-wheel brake operating the whole time?

The yes-buts have been much in evidence in connection with the proposal—which I have mentioned in these columns more than once—to establish a settlement in the East Kimberley district for Jewish refugees from Poland and other parts of Europe where the Jew is faced with the alternative of finding a home elsewhere or—being exterminated. Dr. Steinberg, acting for the Freelands League, has now been in Australia for many months, explaining, to all who had ears to hear him, exactly what the project means. In case you may have forgotten, I had better give the outline of the scheme once more.

There is a block of land—some 7,000,000 acres in size—in a region which you city-dwellers know practically nothing about, part of it in Western Australian and partly in the Northern Territory. This considerable area is now inhabited by a few dozen white men and I have no idea how many blacks. To all intents and purposes it is one

of the empty spaces we hear about. It is usual for us Australians either hotly to deny that we have any empty spaces or to assert that if we have any empty spaces they are spaces not fit for human habitation. Well, the Freelands League is of the opinion that this particular empty space could be made to support a considerable population; and it is prepared to back its opinion with solid cash. It proposes to buy the whole block, and to settle farmers on it.

The sponsors of the scheme, I understand, think that something like 75,000 refugees might ultimately be settled in this area. You note that I say 'ultimately.' They don't propose to make the mistake so often made in Australian group settlement schemes; they are not going to dump thousands of settlers down on a bit of untested country and tell them they have got to sink or swim; that way tragedy lies. The first immigrants, according to this plan, would not be farmers, but scientists, engineers, irrigation experts, agricultural experts generally, to examine the land's capabilities, to see exactly what needs doing, and to set about getting it done, before settlement on a large scale begins.

Here the person of the type I have been describing intervenes at once. 'Yes, but—the thing will be a failure. Are these Jews going to succeed where we Australians have failed? It will be a failure, and then we shall have all those refugees on our hands.' To which I would reply that there are two facts about the Jews which the objector may not have noticed: first, that they are not, as a race, in the habit of throwing good money down the drain; they will not spend several millions of pounds—it will cost all of that—on a project which is at all likely to fail. And, second, go to Palestine, and see what miracles the Jewish

farmers have wrought on land hitherto pronounced a wilderness. A preliminary investigation has convinced them that the scheme is worth trying; if, later, their highly skilled experts tell them that the prospects are not so good as they were thought to be, they will drop it, and seek a home for their distressed compatriots in some other land.

Meanwhile, the Government of Western Australia—a Labour Government—has given careful study to the proposals, and, on certain conditions which the League has accepted, has agreed. The Australian Council of Trade Unions has agreed; the Trades Councils in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Hobart have agreed; to the best of my belief, the intelligent public opinion of Australia is in favour of the project. All that remains is for the Commonwealth Government to agree.

And that is why I am writing this paper at this particular moment. It would be tragic if Australia were to miss this opportunity of a piece of really constructive statesmanship—a piece of construction in the midst of a destructive world—because of the presence in the Federal Cabinet of some resolute yes-buts. You can hear (with the mind's ear, Horatio) the discussion at Canberra. 'Australia needs immigrants.' 'Yes, but—not Jews; I don't like Jews.' 'Jew or Gentile, we need more people.' 'Yes, but—not till all the people now in Australia are employed.' 'Providing the new settlers with all the things they need would create employment for many hundreds of Australians.' 'Yes, but—we don't want a solid block of aliens anywhere in Australia.' 'Don't you feel that Australia ought to do something to show some practical sympathy with Herr Hitler's victims?' 'Yes, but—oh, well, there's no need to let sentiment come in. This is a business question.' 'From a purely business point of view, this deal

would unquestionably be to Australia's advantage.' 'Yes, but—we must choose our own immigrants; I want people from Britain.' (To which last objection, if I were Mr. Menzies, I should adopt the objector's own pet phrase, and reply, 'Yes, but—you won't get them. If you had studied the facts of Britain's birth-rate you would long ago have given up the hope of seeing any considerable revival of emigration to Australia from the Mother Country.')

To make an end: when I first heard of this proposal, I was very doubtful; having made some study of the arguments in its favour, and more especially of the arguments against it, I am quite clear in my own mind that the former greatly outweigh the latter. The proposal appeals to what is best in us, our compassion for the victims of a brutal tyranny; and it appeals to what is not the worst in us, our desire for our own economic welfare. A year ago I wrote, 'When the project is submitted to the arbitrament of public opinion, Australia will be on her trial; it will be a test of her humaneness—and of her intelligence.' Well, public opinion has now been tested; it is plain that our people as a whole are humane enough and intelligent enough to welcome the experiment. It remains to be seen whether our rulers are responsive to public opinion.

GLOATING

THE STATEMENTS I AM GOING TO MAKE to-day will strike some readers as platitudes and others as paradoxes. Some people will think them too self-evident and obvious and hackneyed to be worth the trouble of putting on paper; some will call them the bleatings of a sentimentalist. I expect to be styled a pacifist—and also to receive abusive letters denouncing me as a pro-German, an accusation which (heaven knows why) has already been hurled at me by several correspondents. To all critics I can but reply, in the words of the poet, 'Friend, call me what you will; no jot care I.'

This sounds horribly egotistical. But I do want, once and for all, to make a personal statement about these writings of mine, to remove any possible misconceptions as to their purpose from the minds of those who do me the honour of reading them. I am no longer as young as I was; in other words, I am too old to care very much whether I write the popular thing or the unpopular thing. I am in a place where it is permitted to me to say what I think; and therefore what I think I say, impugn it whoso list. Enough of my Ego!—a personage whom I habitually try (though you may not believe it) to prevent from poking his nose into these pages. Having got this preliminary statement off my chest, I hope to keep the intrusive creature at bay for a month.

A great poet of the Victorian Era, Coventry Patmore, once wrote four lines of doggerel which are probably better known than the magnificent poetry of 'The Unknown Eros.' This epigram dates from the time of the Franco-Prussian War; it is a free, but not unfair, translation into rhyme of the German Emperor's famous telegram from Woerth to the Empress. It runs—

> This is to say, my dear Augusta,
> We've had another awful buster:
> Ten thousand Frenchmen sent below!
> Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Does this verse strike you as comic, or tragic? It was meant to make the Emperor's telegram look ridiculous; yet his exultation was perfectly natural in the circumstances; he was the head of a nation at war, and he naturally rejoiced over the slaughter of a hostile army. What the verse really makes ridiculous is not the Emperor, but war itself; not the horrible sentiments expressed in the telegram, but war, which rouses such sentiments in the hearts of men who, in peacetime, may be perfectly humane and kindly. That is why to force war upon the world, as the Germans have forced this war on the world, is to commit a hideous crime against humanity—not merely a crime against those who have to suffer directly, not merely against those whom war kills or cripples or bereaves, but against humanity; because it makes humanity cruel-minded.

Let us make no mistake about it; we have to strain every nerve to win the war; cost what victory may, the cost of defeat would be far more terrible. To lose the war would be to let loose upon the world a power nothing less than Satanic; a world dominated by the spirit which dominates Germany to-day would be a world unendurable by the free spirit of man; a slave world. There has been left to

us no peaceful way of saving the world from an intolerable evil; there is no way but the ancient way, the dread way of war.

But we must be realists and not sentimentalists. Sentimentalism may be defined as a refusal to face facts. Realism is the facing of facts—hard facts, any facts. If a thing is so, let us not try to persuade ourselves it is not so.

For example: when British naval units the other day dashed into the Skager Rack and the Cattegat and torpedoed transports carrying German troops to Norway, we all experienced a thrill of exultation. It heartened us all to know that the British Navy was still true to its glorious traditions; and also to know that Germany's nefarious enterprise was not to go unchecked. Yes, but if we were realists, exultation was not the only feeling in our minds. We faced the hard facts; among them, the fact that the bodies washed ashore on the Norwegian coast were the bodies of drowned men, or perhaps of mere boys, pink-faced, simple-minded, possibly rather stupid youths, caught without a chance of resistance or escape; many of whom had wondered why they were being sent to Norway; but all of whom believed that they were serving their beloved country—also the fact that in German homes mothers and sisters and wives and sweethearts were mourning for the unreturning men and boys they loved. I say that if the thought of those drowned soldiers brought us only exultation and delight, without a touch of pity for these poor victims of their ruler's wickedness—if we did not, for a moment at least, share the sorrow of the mourners—then a disaster has happened to our own souls: we have become cruel-minded. If you say this is sentimentalism, I reply that it is not. It is the opposite; it is realism; it is looking facts in the face.

Take another example. In the early stages of the war in Finland, I heard a radio speaker talking very gaily of the extermination of a large body of Russian troops—'Russian hordes' was his exact phrase. The word 'horde' was a sign of sentimentalism; a large body of British troops is an army, but a large body of Russian troops is a horde. Those of us who were realists, however badly we wanted to hear of a Russian defeat, did not think of hordes, but of individual Russian soldiers, marching across the snow in the darkness to fight people with whom they had no possible quarrel; men who did not know in the least what the war was about; men driven to the slaughter-heaps by their rulers. If there was no room in our hearts for a touch of pity for simple men caught in that horrible trap, then we must have become cruel-minded.

An eminent American lawyer, in a speech reported the other day in the New York *Herald-Tribune,* said: 'Any person to-day who can look at the horrors being inflicted upon innocent human beings in Europe or in the Far East without deeply feeling a sense of resentment is in spirit already a dead American.'

I suppose he was thinking of Poles and Czechs and Slovaks and Finns and Chinese; to-day he would have to add Danes and Norwegians. 'Resentment' is a weak word for the indignation we feel when we read of what has been done and what is being done to these helpless victims. But my point is that there are other helpless victims of German aggression; the Germans, for instance. It is plain—to anyone who thinks realistically—that Germany is in the grip of a gang of blackguards with a a hysterical psychopath at their head; that the German people has had its mind systematically poisoned till it

has come to regard this diseased creature as divine; that those whose minds have resisted the poison live in daily terror of the secret police. It is an unescapable fact that the defence of the fundamental decencies of civilization will involve the killing of great numbers of these victims of an iron tyranny over body and mind. 'Nay, that's certain; but yet the pity of it, Iago! O Iago, the pity of it, Iago!'

At this point the reader's impatience will find a voice. 'Why all this sob-stuff?' he will ask. 'Our enemies have appealed to the arbitrament of force; and in a world where force is the arbiter, there is no room for pity. Strength is what is needed; pity is for weaklings. A surgeon must not feel pity for his patient; it would make his hand shake. . . . And anyway, what difference will our pity make to the people we are fighting?'

None at all, perhaps; but it makes an immense difference to ourselves—to the soul of our nation. Don't you see that cruel-mindedness, a callous indifference to human suffering, is precisely the vice of which we accuse the German leaders? If we are not fighting to save ourselves and the world from the reign of cruelty, I do not know what we are fighting for. And if we allow the strain of the war to drive all compassion from our hearts—if we become completely callous to human suffering provided the sufferer is a German—then we too are cruel-minded, and there is no difference between us and our enemies, nothing to fight about. What Coventry Patmore satirized in that epigram was not the Emperor's gladness that a victory had crowned his arms, but his gloating over 'ten thousand Frenchmen sent below.' The point of this article is—From the sin of gloating, good Lord deliver us!

You will say that war brings us back to a state of nature,

and that in nature there is no compassion; nature is red in tooth and claw, and so forth. This idea has no foundation in biology; a famous biologist has pointed out that the species which have survived have been the species which have given free play to the instinct, not of mutual destructiveness, but of mutual helpfulness; and the human species is the crowning example of this. War may be a stern necessity; but we must not allow it to twist and distort our minds; to dehumanize us by suppressing that instinct which chiefly gives to the human race its dignity and its permanence. War compels us to use brute force; we must not let it make brutes of us.

STEADFASTNESS

READERS OF MACAULAY WILL REMEMBER HIS famous description of Chatham's tomb. After speaking of the other eminent statesmen buried in that same corner of the Abbey, he proceeds: 'High over those venerable graves towers the stately monument of Chatham, and from above, his effigy, graven by a cunning hand, seems still, with eager face and outstretched arm, to bid England be of good cheer, and to hurl defiance at her foes.' Those who have seen the monument in question may decide whether this is a true description of it or merely a bit of tawdry Macaulayan rhetoric. In any case, we feel that there is something about both the monument and this account of it which is not in the British tradition; something definitely un-English.

I remember wondering, as I looked at the busts of various great and famous leaders buried there, what was the right word for a certain quality I seemed to see in them all. Some of them were by no means 'graven by a cunning hand,' but even through the poorest sculpture there seemed to shine a characteristic common to all these men—something not to be found on the stone face of Chatham—a trait for which I was hard put to it to find a name. Whatever it was, it seemed to me to be definitely British.

There is nothing British about the eagle-faced, defiance-

hurling business. Our race fully appreciates the heroic, but it dislikes heroics. High-sounding rodomontade we refuse to take seriously. Theatrical gestures and eloquent oratory we always tend to regard as a bit of a joke. The serious-minded sections of society bewail our incorrigible sense of the ridiculous—

> But there comes a British rumour,
> And we think it whispers well:
> We would ventilate our humour
> In the very jaws of Hell.

Lamentable as it may be, this tendency to treat tragedy as if it were comedy, to be flippant in the presence of great issues, it is a national trait, and irrepressible; even Cromwell and his iron legions could not stamp it out. We hurl jokes at them, and ribald songs. I have read that the British army in France, when we had an army there, was in the habit of referring to Herr Hitler as 'Jim.' What gall and wormwood it would be to that august and mighty personage to learn that there were men in the world who dared to call him Jim!

But of course it was no frivolity or irrepressible gaiety that one read on the marble faces of those statesmen in the Abbey. I only mean that it was something quite different from the rather theatrical, rather hysterical quality that Macaulay found written on the countenance of Chatham. What shall we call it? There is something massive, something solid about these faces; unsympathetic foreigners might call it something stolid, or even something stupid. But it is not stupidity, and not stolidity. What I read, or fancied I read, in these faces of our nation's leaders was something I should like to see on the face of the captain if I were on a ship in a typhoon. They looked like men who could face a crisis calmly and imperturbably;

men who would not get rattled though the heavens fell; men who would bring to the conduct of national affairs, not bravado, but composure.

If you leave the Abbey and stroll through the National Portrait Gallery, you catch the same unnameable look so often that you are almost tempted to describe it as the look of an Englishman; which, of course, it is not, for if you go to the Vatican you will see it again in the busts of some of the Roman Emperors. The faces of some of the greatest of men, as far as we can judge by portraits, lack this quality. In the lineaments of kings and captains of men, great saints and poets and thinkers and adventurers, you may look for it and not find it. You may read, or think you read, on some faces commanding genius, on others spiritual ecstasy, on others a power of profound thought, on others the eager and questing spirit of the man of science; you may read courage, brilliancy, benevolence, iron resolution—and miss just this one quality which you find so often in the faces of the leaders, even the less distinguished leaders, of our race—this look of imperturbability, equanimity, calmness, steadfastness. Steadfastness—there is the word I have been looking for. I think I shall put it at the top of this article. There is no quality more needed at the moment by all of us.

Of course I don't for a moment mean that it is a peculiarly English, or even British, habit of mind. I have mentioned the Roman Emperors; the faces of some of them remind us that equanimity was a virtue the Romans cultivated with assiduity. One of the few bits of Latin poetry remaining to me from my school days is the hackneyed phrase of Horace—

> Aequam memento rebus in arduis
> Servare mentem.

'Remember to preserve, in troublous circumstances, a steadfast mind.' It is the philosophy of Stoicism. I don't know whether the descendants of those unsubduable old Romans cultivate the ancestral virtue. There is great power in the face of Signor Mussolini; it is just the face of a man whom you would expect to hear hurling defiance at his foes; whether it is the face of a man who would preserve, in troublous circumstances, a steadfast mind I have my doubts. It is a truculent face; not, I think, a face that would remain calm in the teeth of adversity. The face of Herr Hitler is to me a complete enigma; but I do not read in it any hint of imperturbability.

No, it is not a virtue peculiar to the British race; but I do think it is our strong suit, and the presence of it in our moral make-up is a great asset. When the captain of the foundering *Titanic* called out to his passengers and crew left on board after all the boats were filled, 'Be British!' he was not indulging in a piece of preposterous racial arrogance; he was reminding them of a racial tradition and appealing to them to be true to that tradition; and they responded as men and women of our race will always respond so long as the race preserves its ancient character.

Other races equal us in courage, in intelligence, in patriotism; but we do like to think that in this one quality of steadfastness we are pre-eminent. How much of it each individual possesses is a question for each to decide for himself. I often wonder whether, if I found myself in the midst of a first-class earthquake or a bombed city, with tall buildings falling round me and ear-shattering noise everywhere, I should go about my allotted duty with serene diligence or run hither and thither like a demented rabbit. You never know till the hour of testing comes.

All I do know is that if I behaved in the rabbit's way I should be false to the traditions of my race. And this consciousness of an old and noble tradition is certainly one of the ingredients in the recipe for steadfastness. To remember of what seed we are sprung does help us to keep our balance in these slippery times.

What are the other ingredients? Well, besides inheriting the tradition I speak of, we have inherited a certain stubbornness of disposition, a certain toughness and tenacity in the clay of which we are fashioned. Anthony Trollope gave currency to a phrase which he put into the mouth of one of the most English of his characters: 'It's dogged as does it.' Sheer doggedness, the sort of dumb obstinacy which compels us to stick to a job till we have done what we undertook to do—this does, no doubt, help us to preserve the steadfast mind.

But that is only the animal basis of it. The real recipe for national steadfastness is faith—our faith in our cause, our clear-eyed vision of the things we are fighting for. It is only when this faith wavers and this vision dims that we grow rattled and jittery and hysterical and rush about hating the Germans and denouncing our neighbours as disloyal and whimpering whenever the skies grow darker. If we study to remember the rightness of our cause, there is no need for our leaders to stoke the fires of hatred in our hearts. It is what we love and value that matters, not what we hate and despise; what we are fighting for, not whom we are fighting against. We are fighting, as I have said many times, to save the Christian ethic from the forces that would destroy it; and that ethic does not allow hatred. We are fighting, not to destroy Germany and Italy, but to bring them back into the brotherhood of civilized nations, to whose life they have made great contributions in the

past and will make greater contributions in the future when they have learned their lesson and got rid of the poison which their present leaders have for years been pumping into their veins.

An unwavering faith in our cause—a faith which shows us things in their true perspective, which tells us that our individual fates are a small matter compared with the triumph of the cause—this is what makes national morale and gives to a people that serenity of mind in face of danger, that tranquillity, that steadfastness which is the greatest weapon in our armament. And remember that it depends on the will—the will to see clearly, the will to keep our vision of the goal undimmed. Remember, too, that steadfastness is a duty. Hysteria is infectious. If you let yourself be rattled, you tend to make everyone around you lose balance; whereas, if you remain steadfast you radiate sanity and strength, and are, to that extent, of use to your country.

GLORY

(Written immediately after the fall of France)

How many times must a statement be repeated before it begins to lose all meaning? For example, of the thousands of persons in Australia who, once or twice a week at least, utter aloud the statement that God's is 'the kingdom, the power and the glory,' how many ask themselves what, precisely, the formula means, and especially what the last word means? I remember that when I was a child and heard in church or read in the Bible something about 'the glory of God,' I used to wonder vaguely what it meant. Nobody told me then, and nobody has told me since, what this quality is that we attribute to the Deity.

The fact is that the word 'glory' has dropped out of our common English speech as the groat has dropped out of our currency. In our ordinary conversation we never use it, except facetiously. We associate it with church services, and with rhetorical poetry. Now when a word drops out of the language used in the street, it soon loses all precision of outline, and becomes just a vaguely emotional sound. (That is why Dr. Moffatt's translation of the Bible into modern language is so valuable, and why the young poets of to-day try so hard to banish from their verse all words and phrases not used in daily conversation.) When Shakespeare makes King Richard say,

A brittle glory shineth in this face:
As brittle as the glory is the face.

I defy anyone to tell us precisely what 'glory' means.

Of course I am speaking only of the English language. Other peoples may, for all I know, talk of glory as easily and familiarly as we talk of pigs or potatoes. There was a time, for instance, when 'la gloire' was a part of every Frenchman's vocabulary. It was never a part of ours. Perhaps we are a more stolid and stodgy people than the French; perhaps we are less easily swayed by fine words; perhaps we are more humorous. At any rate, if any British statesman had urged his people to go out in quest of glory, he would have been regarded as a bit of a joke. Flamboyant language has never, somehow, appealed to us. We have fought for freedom, and for other less worthy objects; we have never fought for glory. Perhaps we have a lurking feeling that glory does, as the prayer asserts, belong to God, and that to man belongs the humbler word 'duty.' Nelson's signal was not, you may remember, 'England expects that every man this day will seek for glory.'

Nevertheless, vague and uncertain as the word may be, there are times when we feel that it has a meaning even when applied to the actions of men and of nations; times when a shadow of the divine attribute seems to fall on human achievements. Perhaps the best way to define a word is to look at its opposite; perhaps we can best see what 'glory' means by looking at the word 'inglorious' and asking what we mean by that.

Signor Mussolini may be a patriot who has steadily and sagaciously worked for what seemed to him to be the best interests of his country; but even he could hardly deny, if he had a moment of clear vision, that his country has played a peculiarly inglorious part in history since he took the helm.

I maintained at the time, and still believe, that there was a case for Italy when she attacked Abyssinia; that is, if there is ever a case for seeking an Empire overseas, which we of British stock can hardly deny. (There was, of course, no case at all for the attack on Abyssinia while Italy remained a member of the League of Nations; she broke her plighted word, an action for which there is no excuse.) But when, the conquest completed, Mussolini congratulated his people on their 'glorious victory,' one can but wonder whether he was speaking with his tongue in his cheek or was deluded by his own rhetoric. What possible glory was there in overcoming, with aeroplanes and tanks and poison gas, a practically unarmed people?

That, however, belongs to the past; what has Italy done in this present war? Can anyone maintain that she has not played an utterly despicable and inglorious part? While the issue remained in doubt, she too remained in doubt; discreetly non-belligerent. Only when it seemed perfectly safe to do so did she venture into the arena. Only when Germany seemed to her a certain winner did she take arms in support of Germany. She attacked France only when she knew that France was helpless; and she now imposes terms on an enemy whom she herself could never have defeated. For Hitler we can feel a certain admiration—the sort of admiration we feel for Satan in *Paradise Lost*; but for Hitler's obsequious vassal what can we feel but a kind of sick disgust? Owing to the censorship of the Italian press, it is probable that the nation does not know that it is being called Germany's jackal; it is being told, instead, that it has won a glorious victory.

The tragedy of it is that, if we want to know what national glory can mean, we can find a signal example in the achievements of this same country. When, guided by

Cavour, inspired by Mazzini, and captained by Garibaldi, Italy flung off the Austrian yoke and made herself a free nation, she won for herself a crown of glory which was the genuine article, not the tinsel frippery in which her present leaders have tricked her out. From Garibaldi to Mussolini—what a fall! Some day she will learn that the leader she idolized has, for all his shrewdness, backed the wrong horse and failed to see where her true interests lay. She will live to curse her betrayer.

Having seen, by a conspicuous example, what 'inglorious' means, let us see if we are now in a better position to say what 'glory' means, and whether we can find an example of it in the world to-day. But first I am going to quote once more the sonnet written by Wordsworth in 1806, after the Battle of Jena and the entry of Napoleon's army into Berlin. Except for the fact that history moves much quicker to-day, so that for the word 'year' we might substitute 'month' or even 'week' in the first line, the whole poem is singularly applicable to present circumstances.

Another year!—another deadly blow!
Another mighty Empire overthrown!
And We are left, or shall be left, alone;
The last that dare to struggle with the Foe.
'Tis well! from this day forward we shall know
That in ourselves our safety must be sought;
That by our own right hands it must be wrought;
That we must stand unpropped, or be laid low,
O dastard whom such foretaste doth not cheer!
We shall exult, if they who rule the land
Be men who hold its many blessings dear,
Wise, upright, valiant; not a servile band,
Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
And honour which they do not understand.

I advise you to learn these lines by heart. Wordsworth, we know, was at first in full sympathy with the French

révolutionaries; but when France became a dictatorship, and when her dictator set himself to gain world-power and to subjugate all the free peoples of Europe, the poet understood what was at stake; he became the very voice of Britain; and in this sonnet he expressed the spirit in which Britain, left alone, strong in the knowledge that she was defending the freedom of the world, faced an apparently desperate situation. In the circumstances, he said, the right attitude was not of despair but of exultation. In the concluding lines of the poem he suggests that the weakness to be feared is not in the fibre of the nation but in the nation's leaders.

We have no reason, as far as I can see, to feel any such forebodings as the last two lines hint at; but it is impossible not to see with what a deadly exactness they fit the leaders who have betrayed France into servitude. Both Marshal Petain and M. Laval have announced to the world that the honour of France has not been besmirched. One wonders how they define 'honour'; and one fancies that Wordsworth must have had just such persons in his mind when he spoke of leaders who judge of 'honour, which they do not understand.'

You will notice that Wordsworth does not use the word 'glory' in this poem. As I have said, it is not a favourite word with Englishmen; let us avoid it, then, for this is no moment for high-flown words, but for looking realities in the face. And yet this seems to be the very moment when no other word will serve our turn—this moment when we of the British Commonwealth are left alone to save ourselves and to save the world from the tyranny of brute force. The Americans know that in fighting our own battle we are fighting theirs also; all the little nations now under the heel of the conqueror know well that when we

have saved ourselves we shall have saved them too. It is our high destiny to guard the pass with our lives.

'Then was seen with what a strength and majesty the British soldier fights,' says Napier in one of his rare moments of emotion, describing the battle of Albuera. Now will be seen with what a strength and majesty Britain and her Dominions fight; now when we are left alone, and when upon our united energy, courage, intelligence, industry, patience, doggedness, coolness and tenacity depends the saving of ourselves and of the civilization we stand for. I prefer always to use plain, prosaic, humdrum, matter-of-fact language; but it does seem to me that our race has entered on the most heroic period of all its storm-swept history, and that in simply doing the task that Fate has allotted us we are going to win, whether we want it or not, immortal glory.

TOUGHNESS

BIT BY BIT, GERMANY HAS NOW PRETTY WELL gnawed away the continent of Europe. She has found parts of it crumble between her jaws, and parts melt in her mouth. But the ninth course in this Gargantuan repast has surprised and disappointed her; a little island in the north-western corner has somehow failed either to crumble or to melt. You know what it feels like when you put what looks like a tender and juicy morsel into your mouth and discover it to be all gristle and leather. The German rodent may not have hoped to find the little island exactly succulent, but she certainly did not expect to break her teeth on its tough and stringy quality.

Britain has proved herself a tough nation; and the fact that this has been, as I believe it has been, a surprise to Germany points to the fundamental blunder, the basic mistake in Germany's present philosophy of life. To put it as shortly as possible: Germany came to believe that only a nation of toughs could be a tough nation.

So she set herself to become a nation of toughs, submitting her youth to the discipline needed for that end; and she imagined that Britain, which had gone in for no such discipline, must be soft and decadent and anything but tough. The quality shown by Britain's navy and the air force, and the hardihood and stubbornness displayed by the population as a whole, have come as a dismal sur-

prise to all who counted on the decadence of this extraordinary people.

The Italians fell into the same abyss of misunderstanding. They too aspired to be a tough nation; they too thought it necessary to make themselves toughs. Mussolini had a much harder task than Hitler; for the Italians as a people are far less naturally brutal than the Germans. In the first years of Fascism, the bullying and torturing of persons suspected of holding liberal opinions was ruthless; but I find it difficult to believe that the unspeakable horrors of the German concentration camp could have been perpetrated in Italy; just as I find it difficult to imagine an Italian, even an Italian ruffian, of the gross, gorilla-like type represented by Marshal Goering.

But Mussolini did his best to root out what he would call softness, and what we call civilization, from Italian soil; and he too believed in the myth of Britain's decadence, and spoke brave words about 'the young nations, who will crack the whip of mastery over the necks of the outworn nations now ripe for enslavement.' He too must have been grievously disappointed to find the British Commonwealth not nearly so ripe for enslavement as she had looked.

'Old and outworn' is a phrase that slips easily off the tongues of the Dictators; they ought to remember, if they have ever eaten poultry in one of the less luxurious hotels, that there is also such a thing as being old and tough; and this may be the better phrase for such a country as Britain. But let us note, in passing, that the distinction, so often drawn in German and Italian propaganda, between the old and the young nations is a complete fallacy. It is true that Britain is the oldest country in the world, in the sense of having lived longest under one constitution; and, if you use the word 'old' in this sense, the next oldest

country in the world is the United States. Does anyone think of the United States as an old and decrepit nation? The Americans have lived under practically the same constitution since 1789; Italy changed her constitution in 1922; does anyone really imagine that that constitutional change put the fire of youth into the veins of Italy? Mussolini himself only believes it half the time. At one moment he tells his people they are a young nation whose duty is to crack the whip over the necks of the older peoples—that being, of course, the natural and proper behaviour of the young towards the old. In the next breath he reminds them of the unbroken tradition that binds them to the glorious days of the Roman Republic and the Empire. The Italians must, one would suppose, feel some bewilderment when they are told that they were a nation when England was a collection of savage tribes, and also that they are a bright young nation which came into existence in 1922, when England was already senile. But no one in Italy has the courage to point out to him that he can't have it both ways, and that he must really make up his mind whether he is going to claim the veneration due to immemorial age or the homage due to fiery youth.

The trouble is, as I say, that this division of the world into young nations and old nations is quite fallacious. A nation renews its youth with each succeeding generation. What sign of age or decrepitude is there in a country which can produce, at need, the airmen of England? The cartoonists' picture of John Bull, the stout, solid, sagacious old gentleman, represents a truth; but not the truth that stares us in the face when John Bull strips for the combat. Then, we can see that he is neither old nor obese, but an athlete ready to meet the enemy with the fire and impetuosity of youth.

To come back to our subject after this digression: the distinction between the tough nation and the nation of toughs. When I speak of a nation of toughs, you will not, I hope, accuse me of supposing that everyone in Germany is a tough—a brute, a bully, and a ruffian. To talk like that would be in the worst style of the propagandist. There are many men and women in Germany who have stood out heroically against the domination of the toughs; unfortunately their present address is one or other of the concentration camps. There are also millions of German men and women who have so little of the tough about them that they acquiesce like lambs, accepting whatever the toughs give them and pretending to like it; they might as well be in concentration camps, for all the power they have to shape their country's policy. I call Germany a nation of toughs for this reason: that all power, in that unhappy country, is in the hands of men for whom this American slang word provides the most succinct description; and not only are they toughs themselves, but they have set themselves, deliberately, patiently, relentlessly, so to educate the rising generation as to ensure that in a few years all the young people of Germany will be toughs like themselves.

They have not done this because they are mad. There may be a streak of insanity in Herr Hitler; but to dismiss the whole present ruling class of Germany as a collection of lunatics will not do; it is far too easy an explanation. Criminals, if you like; but not lunatics.

The real explanation of their conduct is to be found in their false philosophy of life. In the first place, they have accepted, as the key to life and the core of their ethic, the Nietzschean doctrine of the 'will to be powerful'; but their fatal error has been the belief that civilization is an obstacle on the path to power; that gentleness, pity, mercy,

justice, refinement, culture, humaneness, considerateness, are an old woman's virtues, signs of weakness; that strength belongs to the savage; that the trouble with the 'old' nations is that they are over-civilized and over-refined; in short, that if a nation really wills to be powerful, it must have no nonsense about culture—the kind of nonsense that Germany passionately believed in a century ago—and set itself, resolutely, to become a nation of toughs. The weakness of the old, outworn nations is that they have come to regard brutality as an evil. The battle of life cannot be won with kid gloves. Be brutes, and you will conquer the world. Poor Britain is so sunk in the lethargy of age that she doesn't even want to conquer the world.

What is it that gives to Britain the real toughness which has given these worshippers of savagery such an unpleasant surprise? It is an interesting question, but I am not going to attempt to answer it to-day. All I want to point out is that the Germans seem to have made a mistake. It turns out that humaneness, kindliness, pity for the weak, a desire for social justice, do not, after all, weaken the fibre of a nation or destroy its resistant strength, its toughness. It was really an extraordinary mistake to make; because these things are what we mean by civilization, and in the long run the civilized man has always got the better of the savage. If brute strength were the key to victory, man would never have conquered the ichthyosaurus.

That civilized man can be tougher than the tough is the truth which Britain has magnificently demonstrated and will continue to demonstrate till all the world, including Germany, has seen the falsehood of the philosophy which teaches that the virtues which make up what we call civilization spell weakness and decay.

A FRENCH MEMORY

ONE OF MY EARLIEST RECOLLECTIONS IS OF an undignified and disastrous donkey-ride in France. It was in a little town not far from Bordeaux (the city where M. Petain met his friends the other day to arrange for the betrayal of their country). The town lived on oysters and visitors. The oyster-beds were the main preoccupation of the summer town, as it was called; the winter town, on higher ground, consisted mainly of villas let to people from Britain who for health reasons needed a mild climate. We were bounded on the west by the Bay of Biscay, and on all the other sides by a vast pine forest, where the trees met overhead and shut out the sun, so that you walked for miles through a pillared cathedral twilight, treading in perfect silence a deep carpet of pine needles, and meeting only an occasional uncommunicative solitary—a resin-gatherer or a charcoal-burner. How well I remember the silence and the scent of that forest!

But, to our donkey. I was eight years old; the other donkey was, I fancy, a good deal younger, and certainly friskier. But it was an accomplished hypocrite. As a general rule, it paced along demurely and meekly, looking as if butter would not melt in its mouth; and its owner guaranteed it as the ideal mount for a small boy; and so it was, so long as its better nature prevailed. On the day

in question, some devil suddenly entered into its heels; without a whinny of warning, it bolted.

I don't suppose a donkey could win the Melbourne Cup; but to me it seemed to go down the hill like a thunderbolt, and to race along the main street of the lower town with incredible speed. Excited spectators shouted loudly. I had lost all my French for the moment, but I think they were advising me to pull the beast in—the sort of futile advice one does receive from well-meaning people on such occasions. It was a glorious gallop, for the donkey, which had probably never had such fun before in all its little life; for me it was less glorious, and the end was humiliating. The lamp-posts in that town had projecting bars about five feet from the ground, for the use of the lamplighters; the donkey galloped under one of these bars —which got me on the bridge of my nose. The donkey raced away, without me, heeding nothing; I heeded nothing myself. Why I was not killed I have never rightly understood; perhaps we were galloping at a pace less furious than I imagined; perhaps my skull is abnormally thick; some recent correspondents will adopt the latter hypothesis. Anyhow, the next thing I knew, I was lying on the floor of a little shop, with people fussing round me, and a woman giving me teaspoonfuls of sugared water. This is not, I understand, what modern doctors prescribe for a broken nose; but to a youngster in pain and alone among foreigners the solicitude on those friendly faces was extraordinarily comforting.

It is queer what little things will make an indelible mark on a child's mind. I think it was this insignificant incident that made me a lover of France for life. Am I now, after a life-time of affection, to turn round and hate her for betraying her ally and the cause of liberty? I will not do

it. France has not betrayed anybody or anything. France has been betrayed.

The most tragic fact of the war so far is that the Entente Cordiale has been shivered to bits; it will take a century of patient endeavour on both sides of the Channel to pick up the pieces and put them together again. But we who loved France with a love that was not born of her pride and glory are not going to turn from her in the hour of her agony and her shame.

What do you mean when you say that you love a certain country? Not, certainly, that you love every individual living in that country. When I profess affection for France, I by no means pretend to find something attractive in every millionaire and every apache in Paris, in every stodgy French bourgeois and every scheming French politician. When people say, quite sincerely, that they love England, they can hardly mean that they love, with an all-embracing passion, every type of Englishman—Bill Sykes and Cardinal Newman and Horatio Nelson and Horatio Bottomley. It takes all sorts to make a nation, and some of the sorts are detestable. And yet it isn't a mere shadowy abstraction that one is attached to; it is a reality—the soul of England—the spirit that peers at you from the pages of Shakespeare and Cobbett and Dickens, from the lives of Johnson and Nelson and Charles Fox, from the common talk of common people you have met in town and country.

Even so, when I say I love France, it is the soul of France I mean—the incalculable, many-faceted soul, brilliant, wayward, gallant, ironical, sceptical, impulsive, mocking, passionate, logical—the spirit that you recognize in the work of all the most truly French writers from Rabelais to Renan, from Pascal to André Gide, in the Gothic

cathedrals and the Comedie-Française. You are a lover of France if you are a lover of what is most truly and characteristically French in the talk and behaviour of French people and in the things they have made.

It takes, I repeat, all sorts to make a nation. Carlyle tells us of some unnamed person who, during a stormy scene in the National Convention 'for the space of an hour at all intervals,' kept bawling, 'je demande l'arrestation des coquins et des laches!' The arrest of the scoundrels and the cowards; it was a tall order; it would keep the gendarmerie of France fairly busy to-day. But don't let us be sentimental or self-righteous—there is no country in the world where it would not be a tall order. Not one.

I have sojourned in France several times since those early 'travels with a donkey.' Last time I was there the whole country was excited by the revelation of widespread and hideous corruption following the death of the shabby rogue Stavisky. The Parisians, in their wonted way, made a joke of it, greeting one another with the question, 'Comment Stavisky-vous ce matin?'—but under the mockery was bitterness and disillusionment. The documents which Stavisky left behind him incriminated many names hitherto highly respected. Plainly, there was a rottenness in the body of the nation, calling for a surgical operation.

One morning I went out and found the walls of public buildings plastered overnight with manifestos, emanating from the Croix de Feu, the famous Fascist organization. The gist of what these posters said was—'So this is your democracy—this is what hundreds of thousands of our bravest died to save—this pretty arrangement by which despicable swindlers grab everything while honest men starve! Down with a Government that allows such things to happen, winks at them because it is feathering its own

nest by means of them! Let us have a Dictatorship, lest the gangrene spread.' Dictatorship was not openly mentioned, but it was plainly implied.

A little later (October 11, 1935) came the sensation made by M. Henri Beraud's articles in the columns of *Gringoire,* a Fascist weekly. The first of them was entitled, 'Must England be Reduced to Slavery?' It was a violent and vitriolic attack on Britain as she had been in the past, as she was now, and as she would continue to be till an exasperated world suppressed her. It went back as far as Joan of Arc for specimens of England's wickedness. The sum of the whole matter was: 'I am among those who think that the friendship of England is the most cruel present the gods can make to a people. . . . I write here on my own responsibility; that puts me at my ease. Since I speak in my own name alone, I say that I hate this people, that I hate it in my own name and in the name of my ancestors, by instinct as well as by tradition. I say and I repeat that it is necessary to reduce England to slavery, because in truth the greatness of the British Empire rests on the oppression and abasement of other peoples.' And so on.

The British Ambassador called on the Premier—I think it was M. Laval that week—and suggested that this kind if thing was dangerous. The Government disavowed M. Beraud's sentiments; the rest of the French Press rebuked him; and it was understood that the issue of *Gringoire* containing the offending article was withdrawn from circulation, but I fancy the withdrawal was half-hearted; a copy of the issue lies before me as I write. The following week Beraud returned to the attack, and averred that he had received thousands of letters in support of his previous article. Both these diatribes were reprinted in full by

the Italian Press. (You may remember that it was the moment when Britain was fighting Italy with sanctions.)

This incident, following the Stavisky revelations, made three things plain to the least observant traveller. First, that France was terribly torn by internal dissensions; she was a deeply disunited nation. Second, that in spite of the Entente, the dislike of Britain, born of centuries of warfare, was by no means dead. Third, that the Fascist doctrine, hateful as it must be to any Englishman who is true to the French tradition, was alive and active. It was held by a small section of the people, but a section possessing wealth and influence out of all proportion to its numbers.

We know now the tragic blunder made by those who were at the helm when the war came. They saw the danger of Communism, and shut their eyes to the danger of Fascism. They arrested Communist deputies and mayors by the hundred, and allowed Fascist plotters to go free; hence the great betrayal, the betrayal of the soul of France, of the France we love. I for one do not believe for a moment that in Fascism the true soul of France can find an abiding home. I know this as surely as I know that the soul of France is immortal, and will rise again.

THE DECENT BLOKE

A FRIENDLY CORRESPONDENT WARNS ME that I am becoming a menace to the community, and ought to be suppressed. Of course it is very flattering to be taken so seriously; but unfortunately the reasons on which my correspondent bases his flattery are not such as I can swallow. 'Week in, week out,' he writes, 'you preach that this war is being fought in defence of Christianity; and this is a very dangerous doctrine. What about all the people in our midst who do not believe in Christianity? What about rationalists, agnostics, atheists—are they to come out and fight for a religion in which they do not believe? The great majority of Australians, and especially of young Australians, are not churchgoers, and the doctrines preached in our churches leave them cold. They will certainly not enlist in the fighting forces if they suspect that they are being asked to risk their lives in defence of what they consider obsolete dogmas and outworn creeds. We are not fighting for Christianity at all, and you are only perturbing people's minds when you suggest that we are.' There is more to the same effect, but this is the gist of my correspondent's accusation.

I have not had the kind of training that would fit me to discuss the question whether Christianity is or is not an obsolete dogma and an outworn creed. Nor am I a statistical expert, able to say off-hand whether 'rationalists,

agnostics and atheists' are in an overwhelming majority in Australia, or in Britain. Happily for me, there is no need for me to embark on an argument in which I should very quickly betray my incompetence; all I need reply is that my correspondent seems to have addressed his letter to the wrong person; or else he had read my articles with an inattention which is the reverse of flattering. I have never maintained that we are fighting for Christianity; never once. What I have maintained, with a persistency which you may well have found wearisome, is that we are fighting for the Christian ethic; which is a very different proposition. We are fighting, not for a certain doctrine or a certain set of doctrines, but for a certain way of life.

It doesn't very much matter, perhaps, what label you attach to this way of life, this tradition of decent human behaviour towards one another. If you say that this tradition dates from long before the beginnings of the Christian religion, you are saying what everyone knows who has thought about the matter at all. 'A man should love his fellow man as he loves himself. When he sees his fellow hungry, he feeds him; when he sees him cold, he clothes him; ill, he nurses him; dead, he buries him.' This is not a quotation from the New Testament; it is an utterance of the Chinese sage, Meh-ti, who lived and taught in the fifth century before Christ. Thousands of such pre-Christian statements of what we nowadays call the Christian ethic could be collected, from various countries and various ages, if it were desirable to prove the obvious.

An ethic means the way you live; a religion means your attitude towards the universe. How far your ethic depends on your religion let philosophers tell us—it is beyond me. Whether the Christian ethic grew up in Europe in exact proportion as the Christian religion spread is a question

for historians; I am no historian. Whether the Christian ethic would collapse if the Christian religion were discarded is also a question I am quite unfit to discuss. Let it be enough for our present purpose that a certain tradition has grown up in that part of the world which used to be called Christendom, a tradition of the sort of behaviour to be cultivated if people are to live together with some chance of happiness on this planet. This tradition, which we have inherited, is what for convenience we call the Christian ethic.

But if you object to that name, let us find another; there is no point in quarrelling about labels. Let us say, if you prefer it, that we are fighting for the fundamental decencies of life. We all know, roughly but sufficiently, what a man means when he tells us that another man is a decent sort of bloke—and also when he tells us that another man is a crook. Well, if you think 'Christian ethic' too vague or too high-sounding or too academic or something, let us say (what means exactly the same thing) the way a decent bloke lives, or at any rate knows that he ought to live. We are fighting for the right to live in a country ruled by decent blokes, not by crooks; for the right to choose decent blokes to carry on the government for us. We are fighting for all decent blokes everywhere who are assailed by crooks. We know that if the standards of the crook prevail the world will not be, by a decent bloke's standards, a place fit to live in; we believe that to save our children from having to grow up in such a world would be something worth dying for. This is all that the forbidding term 'Christian ethic' really means.

How many angels can dance at the same moment on the point of a needle? That is a question on which the medieval philosophers are said to have whetted their wits.

You and I can quite cheerfully put it by for a more convenient season; it does not seem urgent. But the question I am propounding to you—What is a decent bloke?—is, if what I have been saying is true, an urgent question; not a question for the moralist or the logician, but a matter of life and death for us all. The answer contains the reason why we are at war.

If a man whose judgment you could rely on absolutely were to tell you that I was a decent bloke—I am not suggesting that anybody would—what would you know about me? There are many things you would not know; as, whether I believed in the Athanasian creed, whether I ate peas with a knife, whether I admired surrealist pictures, whether I was a good poker-player, and how I was going to vote at the election; the things you would not know would be numberless; but the things you would know would be the things that matter most. You would know, for instance, that I was not the sort of person to steal your spoons, or to bully a child, or to break a promise if I could possibly keep it, or to take bribes, or to inflict pain on anybody for the mere fun of inflicting it. You would know that I would sooner do you a good turn than a bad one, and that if you were in a tight corner I would help you if I could.

If, on the other hand, your trustworthy informant tells you to beware of me, because I am a crook, again you will be ignorant of many things about me, but what you will know will be the essential thing. You will know that I am ready to betray everybody except myself; that I have no respect for the law, but only the fear of being found out; that any promise I may make will be broken whenever it suits me to break it; that I am capable of robbing a child's money-box, and of kicking the child.

Those despised medieval philosophers painted an elaborate portrait of the crook by drawing up a list of his ways, to which they gave the name of the Seven Deadly Sins. I used to think it strange that they left out one sin which strikes us as the deadliest of all—cruelty; but I have come to see that they were wise, because cruelty is not a sin; it is a sum of all the sins, the origin of them all. If we try to put the Christian ethic into a single phrase, we must say that it means war against cruelty. Civilization may be defined as the gradual process of eliminating cruelty from human relations and putting mutual helpfulness in its place. Civilization is the house that decent blokes have been trying to build for several thousand years; and the crooks have always managed to pull down in the night some part of what the decent blokes have built in the daytime.

The more civilized you are, the more you try to look truth in the face, and to see facts undistorted by passion. You and I have been trying hard to look at Germany dispassionately, to see the war from her point of view, and not to exaggerate her crimes. But gradually it has become plain to us that her crimes cannot be exaggerated. It is not a piece of war-time rhetoric, but a bald statement of what the Germans have made manifest to the world, to say that Germany is a country in which crooks have it all their own way and in which the decent blokes are in concentration camps suffering the tortures of the damned. It is also plain that the crooks have used their power to turn the whole of the rising generation into crooks like themselves.

This is a terrible conclusion to be forced on anyone who really knows how great have been Germany's contributions to civilization in the days of her greatness. There is a

passage in the Apocalypse which seems a literally exact description of Germany to-day. 'Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.'

A century ago some of these unclean and hateful birds set themselves the task of Prussianizing Germany; their success was a tragedy for Germany and for the world. Germany has now set herself the task of barbarizing the world. If she succeeds, the whole world will become a habitation of devils; a place where all human rights will give place to the right of the man who is quickest on the draw.

And so, to make an end, the issues of this war are clear, by whatever formula you may choose to describe them. You may call it a war to save civilization from collapse. You may call it a war to rescue the Christian ethic from its age-old enemy, the law of the jungle. In my heart of hearts I believe that you can state the case more simply without sacrificing truth; it is a duel between the decent bloke and the crook.

The crook must go. No matter through what burning fiery furnace we may have to pass to beat him, beaten he must be; there can be no compromise with him; he means the destruction of all we love and the frustration of all we hope for. To Hitler and to his gang we must say, and mean what we say:

> If any law be imperative on us all,
> Of all are you the enemy: out with you
> From the common light and air and life of man!

A PLEDGE

Come, I will make the continent indissoluble,
I will make the most splendid race the sun ever shone upon;
I will make divine magnetic lands,
With the love of comrades,
With the life-long love of comrades.

—*Walt Whitman.*

How can one who is growing old—old and stiff-jointed in body and mind—pretend to know what ideas and ideals, what fears, what faiths, what despairs and what resolves, are fermenting in the troubled and passionate hearts of the young in these wild hours? Perhaps the most painful thing about growing old is that it brings a sense of estrangement from the young; you feel that a veil is drawn between you and the rising generation, and that behind that veil thoughts and feelings are taking shape of which you can guess nothing, thoughts and feelings which will mould the future of your country and of the world. The veteran who essays to be the spokesman of youth lays himself open to derision.

The compensation is that as one grows old one learns not to care very much whether one is derided or not. Why should we deny to the young the fun which we ourselves enjoyed so much when we were young, the fun of laughing at their elders? Moreover, I find that as one comes nearer to the term of one's individual existence

one grows less and less concerned about one's personal fate and more and more concerned about the fate of the world, and especially the fate of one's country. One thinks little of the fact that one is going to leave the world, and one thinks more than ever about the kind of world one is going to leave. What is going to happen, you persistently ask yourself, to the Australia you are soon to say good-bye to?—and what would happen to her if you yourself had the power to shape her destiny? A vain question, since you are powerless to change your country's course by a hair-breadth: yet a question worth asking, because the very asking of it may stimulate the young to think a little about it—the young, who have the power, if they like to use it.

And so, greatly daring, I am going to try to set down, however haltingly, the pledge I should like to see taken by the young—and indeed by persons of all ages—in this country at this hour of her fate. And when my statement is made, you may do what you will with it and welcome. The old may shake their heads at it, and the young may shake their sides. No matter. Here is the pledge.

. . . . . .

We promise one another, by all we hold sacred, that out of this world agony there shall emerge a new Australia, better than the old, with a fierier faith, with a stricter justice, with a larger charity, with stronger bonds of brotherhood; an Australia which shall be an example to the rest of the world in all that concerns men's dealings with their fellow-men. And to the keeping of this promise we dedicate all our strength of body and intelligence and will, binding ourselves to let no ancient tradition and no vested interest stand in the way of our purpose.

We promise that in this new Australia no child shall be allowed to go hungry in body or in mind; that to every child shall be given the chance of a healthy life of happy work and happy play, and the education best suited to his capacity; and that with this end in view, all parents shall be helped to understand the art of bringing up children, and shall be given the chance of providing their children with homes fit for the young of a country such as we mean Australia to be.

And that this may be brought about, we promise so to plan our national economy that everyone who is willing to work shall be given work to do, with choice of the kind of work best suited to his individual abilities, and shall receive the just reward of his labour; that everyone willing to do his fair share of the country's work shall receive his fair share of the country's wealth, reckoning wealth not as money but as the sum of things needful for a happy and healthy life; and that when the country's work is provided for, the resultant leisure shall be fairly distributed.

We promise that in the distribution of work and wealth and leisure an injustice done to any person or to any class shall be felt as a stain upon us all, and the degradation of one as the degradation of us all; that a wrong done to anyone in the land shall be resented as a wrong done to ourselves, and that we shall not rest until that wrong is righted.

We promise that the British tradition of liberty shall be upheld, and that to everyone in Australia, no matter what his religious creed or his political opinions may be, shall be given the fullest freedom compatible with social life. We promise that our government shall be democratic, government by public opinion formed through free and

full and open discussion; that every minority shall have the right to try by argument to convince the majority; and that we shall never allow a majority to tyrannize by means of its numbers nor a minority to tyrannize by means of its wealth. We shall regard as tyranny any interference with freedom of public discussion.

We promise that to the utmost of our powers we shall make Australia a home for the homeless, a refuge for the innocent victims of cruelty and injustice elsewhere. We promise that Australia shall win a fair fame in the world for hospitality to exiles from foreign lands who are willing to obey our laws and to live and work honestly in our midst. To such exiles we shall extend the same justice, the same generosity and the same friendly treatment as to men and women of our own race.

We promise to regard as external enemies only those who attempt to interfere with our effort to build the Australia we desire; we promise to resist to the death any such attempt from whatsoever quarter it may come, and to make and keep Australia strong enough to make such attempts improbable. Believing that the real strength of a country resides in the character of her people, we promise to work for the expulsion from Australia of all those elements in our social life which tend to demoralize and degrade character. Believing that the best defensive measure for any country is to make her so dear to all her sons and daughters that they will be ready to give their lives for her service, we promise to make Australia such a home of freedom and justice and mutual helpfulness that all her citizens will know her for a land worth defending, with their lives if need be.

We promise to work for the removal of the causes of war, and, when the present war is over, to offer friendship

to all nations willing to be our friends, no matter what our past relations with them may have been.

We promise to regard as internal enemies only those who, openly or secretly, try to destroy the unity of our country, to sow the seeds of hatred between class and class, and thus to make it impossible to realize our ideal of comradeship; and those who seek, openly or secretly, to appropriate to themselves an undue share of the country's wealth, and thus to make it impossible to realize our ideal of justice. With both of these classes of internal enemy we promise to deal faithfully, making the communal good our supreme law.

We promise to remember always that money is not wealth, but an instrument for the exchange of goods and services, and that the proper use of this instrument is a matter of common concern, a function of government, no longer to be left under the control of private individuals or groups of private individuals. We promise to create an Australia in which, so long as inequalities of wealth exist, the rich shall regard their riches as held in trust for the common good, and the poor shall not lack the means of a decent and dignified and self-respecting life, and shall not live in the shadow of economic fear.

We promise to work for the creation of an Australia in which a man shall be honoured not for what he has but for what he is; in which success in life shall be measured not by what a man has done for himself but by what he has done for the public weal; in which undeserved wealth shall be regarded as shameful to the possessor, and undeserved poverty as shameful to the community.

We promise one another that we shall work together for the coming of the time when all Australia shall be

united in days of peace by the same spirit of brotherhood which has animated our armies in days of war, so that, comrades-in-arms like them, and aflame with faith in the high destiny of our country, we may go forward to victory over all that debases a nation.

We promise not to be deterred or turned from our purpose by the defeatists who will tell us that we are powerless to bring a new Australia into being; by the wise in their own conceit who will tell us that we are dreamers and idealists, and that all these fine words will avail us nothing; or by the cynics who will tell us that greed is the universal motive of human actions and that it is vain to kick against the pricks of human nature. We promise to persist in our belief that the old order of society has proved unworkable, that a new world must be created, and that we can show the way by creating a new Australia.

And, finally, we promise to examine each his own mind, to see what lurks there of the old greeds and spites, the old selfishness that has deformed society and frustrated the hopes of the world. And, knowing well that the Australia of our dreams can be made into a reality only if a sufficient number of men and women purge their minds of the dross of egotism and resolutely set the common weal above their private interests, we promise to begin with ourselves, here and now.

And hereto we set our hands.

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