

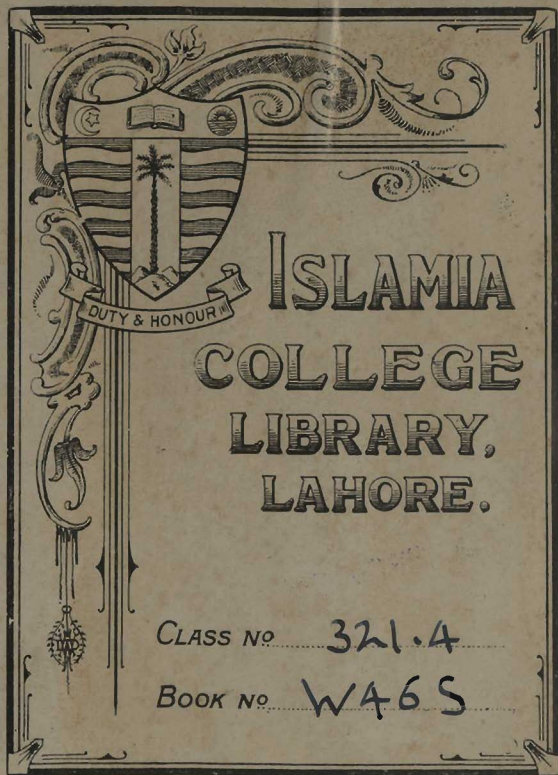


THE SPIRITUAL BASIS  
OF DEMOCRACY

WILFRED WELLOCK



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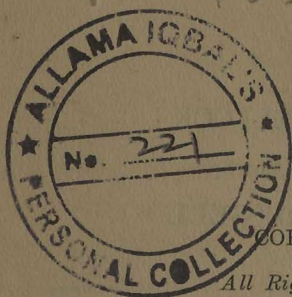
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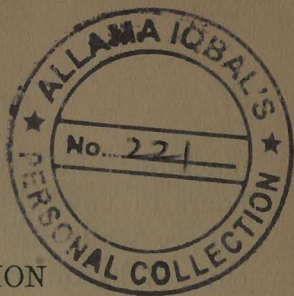
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## INTRODUCTION

THE problem with which Mr. Wellock is concerned in this book is one which civilisation must solve if it is not to commit suicide. Science has shown us how to achieve our immediate purposes far more successfully than former ages would have deemed possible. We can manufacture commodities with a hundredth of the labour required in pre-industrial times; we can move on the surface of the earth with ten times the velocity of a hundred years ago; we can fly better than birds, and move under water faster than fishes. Unfortunately the intellectual powers which have led to these achievements are not accompanied by corresponding moral powers. Our aims have not advanced *pari passu* with our capacity to realise them. The dominant nations of the world have used their scientific knowledge for two purposes: to increase the material comfort of the wealthy minority, and to perfect the means of slaughtering each other. For these two purposes the less warlike races of the world are being forced increasingly into the industrial



machine, which compels them to work for long hours in unwholesome conditions at starvation wages, while the wealth that they produce is enjoyed by others; and the more warlike races are being trained by education and the Press to hate each other, so as to be willing to engage in mutual bloodshed whenever it suits the manufacturers of opinion to cause them to do so. The war of 1914—1918 was the first-fruits of science without the morality that should accompany it. One might have supposed that men would have regarded it as a warning, and would have attempted, at its conclusion, to inaugurate a better way of life. There were those who wished to make such an attempt, but their efforts were defeated by the shallow philosophy which attributed all the horrors of the war to the wickedness of "the enemy". It is now coming to be recognised in France and England that wickedness is possible outside Germany, though this is unhappily the only point upon which the two nations are in agreement. The statesmen see a new war looming, far worse than the late war, because more scientific; yet they cannot turn their backs on the old methods, the absurd rivalries, the ridiculous imperial ambitions, the cruel oppressions of the weak, which are consecrated by

tradition as constituting national glory. And so the European world drifts towards destruction, seeing the abyss, but unable to interrupt its quarrels while the ship is steered into smoother waters.

There is no issue from this situation but in a new philosophy of life. Our power to injure each other has increased so much that malevolent passions have become infinitely more harmful than they were before the spread of industrialism. In order to survive, we must learn to tolerate each other, to give freedom to the oppressed and peace to the strong. If men were guided by reason, mere self-preservation might lead them to the new philosophy of life that is required. But in fact they are governed by their passions, and the problem is to substitute passions that make for life in the place of the present passions that make for universal death. This cannot be done by an appeal to self-interest, but only by widening and deepening those impulses and emotions which make co-operation possible.

Is there any hope that this will be successfully achieved in Europe? Probably, not until we have all tasted the extremity of despair, and learnt something of that humility in the face of nature which machines have destroyed. In



the East there is more hope. All the great religions of the world have come from the East; the West has ignored them in practice even while it paid homage to them in its professions. In industrialism the west has at last found something which it could worship without insincerity; through being worshipped as divine, industrialism has become a demonic power. The East will be compelled to *use* industrialism, but may avoid worshipping it. If so, it may give birth to the new outlook that the world requires.

There are grave dangers in the awakening of the East. Japan allowed herself to be conquered spiritually by western philosophy in order not to be conquered materially by western arms. If the rest of the East were to follow this example, the vices of Europe would become world-wide, and there would be no hope left for man until after a period of universal barbarism. But if the resistance offered is spiritual rather than military, there is a possibility that, when Europe is exhausted by internecine combats, Asia may inherit what is worth preserving in the European legacy, and may combine it with a more peaceable, less materialistic outlook than that of the men who dominate policy among the white races.

This will not be achieved, however, by mere conservatism. It is not enough to seek to preserve ancient traditions, however venerable. Science and machines have transformed the world, and the outlook which can make them beneficent must absorb and dominate them, but must not ignore them. Viewed in a sufficiently long perspective, they are forces for good rather than evil, since they are capable of liberating man from material cares. Democracy, for which Mr. Wellock seeks a spiritual basis, is a product of the West, very imperfect as yet, very limited in scope both within and without the nominally democratic nations. But no man with a sense of justice can doubt that it represents an advance upon previous modes of government, and that it ought not to be allowed to perish because of the vices of those who inadequately practise it. There is good and evil in the western outlook, as there is good and evil in the outlook of the East. If the West is too impatient, perhaps the East has hitherto been too patient. If western energy at times makes the world worse (as is happening in our day), eastern philosophy, unalloyed, will hardly bring about great improvements. It is the marriage of East and West that must bring forth the new ideals, not the solitary self-glorification of

either. What is needed is Western energy devoted to Eastern purposes, Eastern spirituality applied to life by means of Western scientific methods. Nothing old will save the world as it is to-day. The dangers are new, and the philosophy which is to avert them must also be new. In the creation of this new philosophy a potent factor is likely to be that fruitful intercourse between East and West of which Mr. Wellock is one of the promoters.

BERTRAND RUSSELL



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# THE SPIRITUAL BASIS OF DEMOCRACY

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## CHAPTER I

### THE WORLD'S AWAKENING

CIVILISATION is in a state of dissolution. In every part of the world men and women are revolting against the established forms of national, social and industrial life. Ideas are in the melting pot; nothing is secure. Industrialism, imperialism, capitalism have lost their glamour, and are being increasingly suspected and disavowed by the people. A new spirit is abroad which the existing social forms are unable to contain. It is as if the wine of a new life were being poured into old wine-skins, which turned it sour. No matter which way we turn, we are confronted with unrest and



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revolt, growing agitation for a new social order.

Not one nation alone but the whole world is awakening. Everywhere there are signs of a spiritual re-birth, the emergence of a new self-consciousness. Quite suddenly, one might say, the belief in a more significant existence has taken possession of mankind, almost as if a new heaven had encircled the earth. Thus, in the midst of exploded conventions, decaying institutions and a defunct morality, a great hope is being kindled.

Like every period of transition the present age exhibits the widest extremes of idealism and decay. From one point of view we might say that our age is the embodiment of materialism, of moral and spiritual decay, being comparable with the decadent civilisations of the past immediately preceding their fall. From another point of view we might say that it is the embodiment of idealism and youth, gives promise of a spiritual renaissance of unprecedented grandeur and significance.

So it ever was, and so, I suppose, it ever will be. New worlds can only come into being when the worlds that be prevent the natural functioning of humanity. That the existing social order cannot endure much longer is

obvious, as under it men must destroy one another at the bidding of greed ; go about the streets idle while millions suffer for want of their service ; accept the indignity of servitude because they are poor, of ignorance and social inferiority because others have cornered the world's wealth and set up a false standard of values. Consumption and production are being curtailed because wealth has been diverted from its natural channels, and because the centralisation of wealth has perverted culture. The soul of humanity is being destroyed because those in whom the acquisitive instincts are strongest and the social instincts weakest occupy the seats of power, whence they can control the thought, culture and morals of the entire community. Granted the continuance of this social order, with its false culture and its anti-social institutions, things are bound to go from bad to worse, until, eventually, society collapses from sheer moral rottenness. The only alternative is a social order founded on spiritual principles.

In the meantime, the struggle between materialism and reaction and a more or less conscious spiritual idealism will grow hotter and more deadly. As the idealists grow in number, courage and conviction, and thus in

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readiness to suffer, the reaction will become more rabid, and will do unheard-of things.

But what chiefly distinguishes the modern movement for spiritual liberation is its universality. In practically every country of the world an almost identical idealism is being developed. From lands whose history and customs are as divergent as those of India and America, Russia and Ireland, Japan and Germany, Scandinavia and France, China and Britain, the same cries of protest, and the same demands, are going forth. The nature of the immediate conflicts in the different countries varies considerably, but in every case the aim is to free the people from economic oppression and to create a spiritually based society. Such a situation is unique in the world's history. The day is almost within sight when humanity as a whole will speak with a single voice, suddenly burst forth with a mighty demand for a spiritually based world, start tendencies which will change the face of the earth inside a generation. There is thus more than a dim possibility that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Just a little clearer vision of the new heaven and the new earth, just a little stronger faith in humanity, and the courage will emerge which will lead mankind to freedom and brotherhood.



But, as yet, those who are agitating for a new world do not possess a sufficiently clear idea of the life and of the world they would win. They hold vague notions about economic equality, and are conscious of the spiritual oppression of the existing social system; but the vision of the Kingdom of God has not yet possessed them. While they feel that man is essentially a spiritual being, and that society is capable of becoming a brotherhood, they have not visualised society functioning as a brotherhood, nor do they quite see how life can be organised on the principle of service so as to guarantee the satisfaction of all legitimate desires.

Faced with the facts of selfishness and materialism, yet believing in the possibility of a brotherhood, the way to overcome the former and establish the latter is not at all clear to the majority of workers in the forward movement. The problem is that of human nature itself. Is man capable of living in accordance with exalted spiritual principles, or is he at best but a brute with a veneer of refinement? In other words, are the existing social iniquities due to a bad social system and a false culture, or to a hopelessly depraved human nature? Obviously, if a new social order is to be established, it will be by virtue of a finer idealism. On the basis of

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the "fallen Adam" conception of human nature taught by Western theologians during the last few centuries, there is no hope of salvation. It takes a new man to make a new world; and if a new man cannot be produced we had better give up talking about new worlds, and either fight each other right royally, like tigers and lions, or flee life altogether.

Happily, human nature, like the stars and the trees of the fields, changes from age to age. It changes in form and in constitution, develops new attributes and powers, new visions and new desires. It thus seeks to realise itself in new relationships, to employ new principles. Having recreated himself, revolutionised his thought, man must needs recreate the world in accordance with the demands of his mind. To discover one's soul is to desire a suitable abode for its manifestation. And man is always discovering his soul at new levels. Jungle morality is not suited to man after he has developed his social instincts; and to insist that he shall live by greed, with the alternative of starvation, when he is conscious of being a living soul which desires fellowship and a noble culture, is naturally to invite revolt.

Therein lies the explanation of the unrest that to-day haunts every civilised land. The

human soul, almost the world over, has attained a new consciousness in consequence of which it requires an environment wherein it may freely express itself and still further develop. The function of the present age is, first, to make more conscious the discovery that man is a spiritual being, and second, to reconstruct the social order so as to provide an environment and a culture suitable to such a being. Given these, man will respond to the demands of the spirit, to the law of love and service; whence his life and his nature will be completely transformed. The outcome will be a veritable democracy, a society from which greed and the desire for riches will have been banished for ever. Such a result would be the vindication of the teaching of Jesus, with its ideal of service embodied in the idea of the Kingdom of God. True democracy, like the Kingdom of God, has a spiritual basis. On the foundation of materialism there can be no adjustment of human rights, nothing but a jungle morality and a tiger world, where law is the servant of the mighty and order is the submission of the weak to the strong.

To expose and describe the underlying principles of true democracy, and to show the practicability of those principles, is the purpose of the following pages.



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The need for such an undertaking is profound and urgent. Mankind is standing on the brink of a new age, but is afraid to venture on the path to which aspiration and the deeper instincts point. These latter need the support of reason. Events are moving fast, and during the past seven or eight years have quite out-distanced the mind that ought to have controlled them. The result is uncertainty and chaos. A deeper thinking is demanded. Happily, there are not wanting signs of a nobler time, for everywhere men and women are thinking internationally, even anticipating the approach of universal brotherhood. A few were doing this before the war, but now their number is legion. By reason of its very destructiveness, the evil it called forth or strengthened, the war has awakened the conscience of mankind the world over, shocked it into thinking. It has thus stimulated and strengthened the movements which were seeking to free humanity from the oppression of materialism before the war came.

Hence the war has widened the gulf between the materialists and the idealists. The spirit of greed found in the war a congenial atmosphere and an unprecedented opportunity. To such lengths, indeed, did it go during the war, and to

such lengths has it gone since, that the conscience of the entire civilised world has been stirred as rarely before. Thus one extreme has led to another, the most sordid materialism calling forth the most exalted idealism; with the result that universally has arisen a daring and unflinching demand for a world founded on service; for economic security for all; for the right of self-determination for nations and of self-expression for individuals. By its very excesses the war has helped to forge a weapon which will accomplish its own destruction by eradicating the evil from which it springs. Minds which had been indolent before the war now realise that the world is not safe in the control of greed, and thus that a way of escape must be found from the abyss into which the nations, without exception, are being hurled.

Since the close of the war the process of awakening has proceeded faster than ever before. Which is destined to triumph, reaction or idealism, is not yet apparent. Events are pointing to a world conflict for spiritual liberation. Indeed, I think it can with safety be said that the greatest struggle of the ages is about to begin. And it cannot begin too soon. The old political plotters, with their jealousies and jingoism are as hard at it as ever,

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while the financiers, more powerful now than before the war, seem incapable of putting trust in anything save gold and gunpowder. To these latter, nations are but pawns and men but units of wealth-creating force. War follows their policies as surely as night follows day. Yet the next war, by virtue of its inconceivable destructiveness, will verily be the last war. For which reason "the next war" must not be permitted. Nevertheless, threats of war will continue so long as greed, with its satellite fear, is allowed to rule the earth.

During the next two or three decades materialism, in the shape of Industrialism and Imperialism, will come to death grips with a new and virile spiritual idealism. If victory goes to the former, we may look forward to a period of unexampled repression, terror and warfare, in which the nations will devour and destroy one another and bring civilisation to an end. If, on the other hand, victory goes to the latter, humanity will enter upon an era of unprecedented development, give rise to a new type of civilisation and, indeed, a new humanity.

At the moment materialism reigns supreme; in every country its triumph is unmistakable. But it is being answered by a rising tide of protest and a growing demand for a civilisation



founded on the inalienable right of the human soul to free self-expression. The operations of big finance, which are threatening the life of the common people universally, are creating an international resistance. Servitude threatens the common people of every land, but is calling forth and strengthening the forces of freedom. A world-wide struggle for the universal right of fellowship, responsible service, leisure and culture is upon us.

Startling as the thought may be, it is nevertheless the case that the modern world is only just beginning to realise that man is a spiritual being, and that fellowship is life. Even the ordinary man at last has begun to suspect that he is something more than a beast of burden, and that security, culture and fellowship are his rights. And the universality of this recognition is the surest guarantee that the movement for social emancipation will finally succeed. The enlightened conscience of to-day is revolting against the overlordship of riches, rank and position. In England, as, indeed, elsewhere, one may now witness a widespread demand for economic security for all; a growing horror of private profit as the controlling motive in industry, and of the consequent tyranny of riches and class distinctions; an increasing insistence

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upon the right of every people to self-determination; an intense hatred of war; a keen recognition of the unity of the human race and of the possibility of universal co-operation; a growing belief that the ultimate law of life is love. Man, it is now being recognised, is not the sin-laden being he was once thought to be, but a living soul capable of fellowship and unbounded spiritual attainment. The success of the conflict which this recognition foreshadows will depend primarily upon the degree of conviction and clearness of vision in those who stand for the triumph of light over the powers of darkness.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE NEED OF A SCIENCE OF RIGHT LIVING

WERE I asked what I believe to be the greatest need of the present age, I should certainly reply: a new culture. It might be argued, of course, that in order to have a new culture it would first be necessary to transform the economic system under which we live. But granting so much, it is nevertheless true that a new society and a new world cannot appear except as the result of a new culture. The existing economic system cannot be modified, even, to advantage, until the vision of a better world and a sweeter life has descended, if only vaguely, upon the people.

The struggle that is at present tearing the whole world in twain is, at root, a conflict between two cultures, one materialistic, the other spiritual. The former is based on the right of the individual to gain and possess unlimited wealth, and to do so by such methods as are



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recognised in the world of business to-day—such methods, that is to say, as are sanctioned by the law of “supply and demand”. This law supersedes every moral law, every religious injunction, every spiritual appeal and every human demand. Its application, moreover, leads to the division of society into two classes, rich and poor, the former living in senseless luxury and lording it over their poorer brethren, the latter existing in hopeless poverty ; foolish pride on the one hand and the fear of poverty on the other creating antagonisms, divisions, enmity, hatred and war throughout the whole of society, within each nation and between the nations. Life is thus converted into a battlefield, and man, in spite of himself, into a beast. Opposed to this culture is another, founded on the belief that man is essentially a spiritual being whose chief aspirations are for fellowship and self-expression. According to the latter, the fundamental purpose of life is self-realisation. But selfhood can only be realised and life won by means of self-expression and, in the last analysis, by means of service prompted by love. The final implication of this culture is the world organised as a family, in which every individual makes his contribution to the well-being of the whole, enjoying in return an unlimited fellowship and

the right to participate in the wealth, spiritual and material, produced by others. Obviously, such a culture carries with it the denial of the right of the individual to unlimited possessions, and an acknowledgment that in the interest of the larger life of the spirit, the squabble for riches, which to-day is bringing civilisation to ruin, can and must be brought to an end.

At present materialistic culture triumphs. Thus wherever we turn we observe social chaos and social war. The fear of poverty, which is creating endless enmity and hatred between classes and between nations, is consuming the mind of the people and robbing life of joyousness, satisfaction and delight, while everywhere we are confronted with waste of wealth, waste of time and energy, waste of life. The spirit of unrest has spread out her wings across the wide earth so that peace and contentment are scarcely to be found anywhere. Doubt and despair are of the atmosphere. Faith in the ideals of the past is fast passing away, whilst few are conscious of better ideals to take their place. More than ever in the past our age needs teachers; our civilisation is decaying for want of vision. The old thought-systems are tottering, yet the foundations of new and better systems have scarcely begun to be laid. Thought

is in a state of flux. On the whole, ignorance, failure to understand the times and the conditions of a more fruitful existence, characterise the mind of to-day.

As regards our educational systems, few facts are more ominous than that nowhere is a place found for teaching the art of living. We teach boys and girls the ordinary arts and sciences, but leave them in total ignorance regarding the supreme art and the supreme science, that of living well. This deficiency is one of the chief stumbling-blocks in the way of progress. In spite of the destructive tendency of modern civilisation, our children are being reared in the ideals and manner of life of their parents, while nothing that they are taught seems to give the least prospect of a revolution in thought or a change of spirit. It is appalling that modern education should be so little concerned with moral training.

I am not thinking of moral training in the narrow and trivial sense, but in the deeper sense of teaching the science and art of living. And the grievance to which I refer affects practically all our educational systems, and from top to bottom, being as pronounced in one country as in another, in the university as in the elementary school. Our young people are being trained



for the professions, but not for life; instructed in the wherewithal to get riches, but never, or rarely, how to use them, how to gain life. Indeed they are nowhere taught what life is. It is true that in many of our elementary schools simple moral lessons are given, but as for the deeper problems of conduct, the question of life itself, its goal and good, scarcely a word is spoken. Such morals as are taught affect manners rather than motives, touch the fringe of life, not its centre. Even if we consider the Ethics class in the University, we have to acknowledge that its object is less practical than theoretical, less to influence character and conduct than to stimulate an interest in the history of thought. And in any case the subject is rarely taken by more than from five to ten per cent of the total number of students.

Of course, our schools are satisfying a demand, but by reason of the moral decadence of the times, it is a corrupt demand. To what extent they are content to do that it is not possible to say. Money, it would appear, is the deciding factor in modern education. It sets the pace, so to speak, decides what education shall consist of. Thus it is the proper thing, these days, for people with the necessary means to send their children to the public schools, and, if possible,

to the "best" schools: meaning by "best" those which turn out what is believed to be a superior kind of gentleman—well-groomed, good-mannered and accomplished, full-bred top dogs destined to rule and dominate the great mass of mankind. As a fact, there is far more snobbery in modern education than is generally realised, and it will continue to grow until a finer culture, born of a nobler idealism, has ousted it. The spirit of materialism is more widespread than we dare to think. The earth is being possessed by people who have attained commercial success but are utterly devoid of spiritual outlook, and who have no other idea of the use of wealth than that of ministering to the demands of pride and the desire for domination. It is this class that is setting the pace in education, both privately, in regard to their own children, and publicly, through their social and official positions (most of which they owe to their riches), in regard to the children of the poor. The result is that we are producing two hybrid social types, neither of which is human or fitted for a decent civilisation. These, for want of better terms, we may describe as top dogs and bottom dogs. Our elementary schools are moulding excellent serfs, while our public schools are turning out model tyrants.

Boys are leaving the latter with the idea that they are superior people whose function in the world is to lead, control and employ the great body of the workers, and that for their very superior kind of labour they ought to receive the lion's share of all the fruits of toil. On the other hand, the elementary schoolboy is being trained to adapt himself to a social order which demands that he shall be an obedient producer, accepting quietly and without question such ills as poverty and unemployment, or else that he shall enter the mad struggle for wealth and power, concerning whose purpose he is left in total ignorance.

And yet it is not to evil motives that this state of affairs is due, but to ignorance, sheer inability to comprehend the more vital issues at stake, the immense spiritual possibilities which the pursuit of riches and power tends to obscure. What the public fails to realise is that the purpose of education should be to increase life, not riches. The prevailing idea seems to be that the first aim of education should be to enable one to get a good living. This assured, manners, in the narrower sense, are highly esteemed, and after manners a precarious store of information whereby to make life a little more interesting. That the aim of education



should be to develop the soul and to discover the avenues wherein that mysterious thing we call life may be breathed and enjoyed, would appear never to have occurred to them. Surely our boys and girls should be taught that life is quantitative, and that they may have as much life as they choose, according as they bring their lives into conformity with the spiritual laws of the universe, a knowledge of which is absolutely essential. Above all, they should be shown the iniquity of modern civilisation, the shallowness and destructivity of its materialism, and taught to see life truly and wholly. In other words, our youth ought to be trained to examine life's presuppositions, to ascertain the relative value of the various modes of life and types of experience which society exhibits, and to realise that all good labour is education, a means of developing and enlightening the soul and of establishing beautiful, life-yielding relationships with mankind.

At all costs we must lift the mind of our youth above the sultry confines of the narrow commercialised conceptions of life which dominate society to-day, open their eyes to the larger dimensions of life by teaching them to appreciate soul excellence, moral and spiritual values. It is almost incredible that, with all

the current bluster about education, we should neither teach nor see the need for teaching the art of living. The simple truth is that in nearly every country it is possible to travel from the first standard of an elementary school right through to the University, and to emerge therefrom with a degree or a multiple of degrees, without ever having received a single lesson in the art of living, or any instruction concerning the meaning and purpose of existence. That is why education has not accomplished what it was hoped it would accomplish, has failed, that is, to make better citizens, produce a finer civilisation, increase the general well-being, goodwill, or put an end to warfare. We have no education of the kind which enlightens the soul. What we are chiefly doing is to intensify the conflict into which modern life has degenerated, by multiplying the merely clever people who are taking part in it.

Where, for example, can we find youths who are able to enter intelligently into a conversation on, say, life's functions, to explain the function of work, play, art, religion, etc., in an ideal existence, or who have any conception of the spiritual value of creative labour and social service? Yet, how can a better age dawn if our young people are not trained to think on these

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things? Surely it is obvious that we cannot get behind the evils which are tearing down our civilisation other than by exposing them and revealing the superior value of finer principles. What man could possibly continue in a life of selfishness who was made to see the spiritual destructivity of his conduct, personally as well as socially?

And precisely the same chaos which we find in the schools is to be met with in the churches. Everywhere ministers are rendering lip service to the teaching of Jesus, yet all the while backing up the men whose chief aim is to amass riches, and by the only law they recognise, that of monopoly, or the pushing up of prices and the thrusting down of wages to the furthest limits, no matter who suffers or to what extent. It is one of the paradoxes of history that institutions which arise in the interest of enlightenment and spiritual development become in the course of time bulwarks of ignorance and materialism. The teaching of Jesus with respect to riches would appear to be almost entirely ignored by the churches to-day. For instance, it is generally thought that the fundamental Christian principle of social service refers to the odd moments between business hours—when one is off duty, so to speak—



wherein charity ought to be given a chance. That in denouncing the accumulation of riches and exhorting his followers not to be called masters, but to be servants one of another, Jesus was referring to life as a whole, including business life, is too revolutionary an idea for the average Christian of to-day.

The church is without a message for this age. Confronted with the great evils arising from Industrialism and Imperialism it is dumb. But the cause is not far to seek. A glance at the lists of shareholders of the big combines and monopolies, whether at home or abroad, would no doubt give some hint of it. The sequel, however, is the death of thought, and the lack of any serious attempt to bring conduct into conformity with some great spiritual principle. The "correct" thing, within the church as without, is to "get on," to accumulate as much wealth as one can for oneself and one's family. Of course, it is stipulated that none shall get his wealth unjustly. But what is meant by justice, in this connection, nobody knows; and if one tries to find out one soon discovers that everything is legitimate which comes within the scope of the spacious morality of the law of "supply and demand". The outcome is a body of very respectable people who are helping to

uphold a vicious social system which is destroying, at an astonishing rate, the soul of a people. We need not be surprised, therefore, that the church, in spite of pious platitudes about love, finds itself wedded to violence and war in all kinds of disputes, civil or international.

I admit that this attitude on the part of the church is not allowed to go unchallenged. Here and there one can hear of Christian ministers, and even Bishops decrying the prevailing materialism, denouncing as un-Christian an industrial system based on greed, and advocating a social system in which co-operation for the common good is the guiding principle. But these are the exceptions which prove the rule. As the enemies of materialism and the defenders of the nation's soul, the Socialists put the leaders of the church to shame. And it is interesting to observe that the church, which is supposed to stand for a spiritual interpretation of life will, in reply to the Socialists, go the length of denying that men will work except for self-interest, and even of denouncing as irreligious those who state the contrary.

Surely, then, it is legitimate to ask: how ought man to live? The various ways in which men and women do live cannot conceivably

have the same value, as obviously some of them must be more in conformity with the laws of life than others. It is thus necessary to investigate the various types of life which society exhibits, in order that the ideal life may be discovered. Also it is interesting to know that there are people in every part of the world who are feeling this need and are endeavouring to satisfy it. In India, *e.g.*, I think I sense a keener recognition of the spiritually destructive tendency of Western civilisation, and a stronger belief in the possibility of a civilisation which, while not discounting the material, has a spiritual basis, and while offering full scope to aspiration and initiative, has eliminated war and the struggle for existence, than is to be met with in Britain. India is leaving behind her the abstract religious idealism of the past as surely as Britain has cast off, or is casting off, Puritanism; and, fortunately, she has discovered the evil of Western Industrialism before the desire for riches has overwhelmed her, as it has well-nigh overwhelmed us.

One of the greatest needs of the present time is to show to the people that by the banishment of the selfish motive from industry, powers and energies will emerge which will exalt human nature and create a new civilisation.



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To those timid and earth-bound minds which contend that material self-interest is the only universal motive, without which life would be brought to a standstill, it must be demonstrated that the winning of economic security will release countless forces at present repressed, as a result of which new and unlimited opportunities of self-expression will be created. A finer type of personality and a higher order of civilisation will be the outcome. And because the soul, now freed from fear and worry by virtue of economic security, will be able to enter into responsible labour freely and joyously, the material well-being of the race will be guaranteed. Before the workers can give their best labour they must be granted economic security. Likewise, before the well-to-do classes can be expected to give up their privileges they must first be convinced that by doing so they will be the gainers, will secure a spiritual inheritance which will more than compensate for any material sacrifices which fellowship and social well-being may demand. Similarly, although we may have Disarmament Conferences without end, until it has been demonstrated that social service is a finer principle, capable of yielding more life than self-interest can possibly do, we shall never do away with war, either

socially or internationally. If ever we are to turn our swords into ploughshares and thus enter the era of which prophets have spoken and poets sung, where the nations of the earth come together as one people and the lion lies down with the lamb, it will be as the outcome of a finer life-producing principle than that of material self-seeking.

This question will be more fully gone into at a later stage; I mention it here merely to show the urgent need of a deeper moral thinking, of a serious attempt to discover a unity wherein the fatal contradictions of the present time will be reconciled.

This need, moreover, is all the more urgent by reason of the fact that in regard to most moral questions the people are at the mercy of convention—*i.e.*, of fashion, Society and, worst of all, the capitalist press. They have thrown over the church and, indeed, all external authority whatsoever. In the West, at any rate, it can now be said that there exists no recognised moral authority; and if the present process of "awakening" continues, as seems likely, it will not be long before the same will be true of the East also.

Until quite recent times the great body of the British people, like the proletariat of every

nation, accepted its morals and ideals ready-made at the hands of some external authority, in particular, the church, which, through its priesthood has used tradition, custom and religion to enforce its will. But to-day a quite different attitude and spirit prevail. A desire for moral freedom, for complete self-control, even the right to decide what is right and wrong, is spreading on every hand. Naturally, for are we not approaching the age of democracy? And what is democracy but a society of free individuals who have attained brotherhood through having learned to harmonise rights and duties? Besides, it was only to be expected that the movement towards freedom, which began in resistance to serfdom, and later secured religious, and later still political, freedom, would not stop until the individual was wholly freed from external authority. The result is that men and women are now as opposed to accepting ready-made morals and ideals at the hands of an external authority, as they are to accepting ready-made theologies and political theories at the hands of a priesthood or a church. They claim the right to create or choose their own. This latest development, which is the outstanding characteristic of the present age is, I believe, destined to achieve the profoundest social



revolution through which mankind has yet passed. And it will be world-wide, as emotions and ideas now travel fast, the aspirations and passions which move one people to-day being the common possession of the race to-morrow. In the last analysis, democracy may be said to stand for and to synchronise with the complete emancipation of the individual from external authority.

But, although the old authorities have been repudiated, no adequate guides have as yet taken their places, not even reason. Thought is bankrupt. In the realm of conduct confusion reigns supreme. The church is impotent, and, as already stated, instead of leading opinion, spends itself trying to bolster up the conventions and practices which the rich and those in privileged positions find necessary to the maintenance of their ascendancy. Morals are in a state of chaos, in consequence of which politics are in a similar plight. Traditions of every kind are being rapidly wiped out. Whereas a generation ago the British working man placed great faith in political leaders and political traditions, and showed profound reverence for (amongst other things) the British Constitution, now he is very critical of them all, having scant respect for any external authority whatsoever.

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The average man will now throw over his church or his political Party with an ease that would have shocked the public conscience half-a century ago. But, of course, this movement towards freedom has its dangers. Freedom demands thought, and if thought be not forthcoming a condition of affairs will arise which will be worse than the first. At the same time we must not expect to enter the Arcadia of which democracy is the promise, all at once. The people must needs be taught the importance of their new responsibility, trained in the art of thinking. That, as I have already pointed out, is one of the great tasks of our time. The mass of the people do not realise that life is full of spiritual possibility, and that by means of thought the harvest of life may be increased many-fold. A stable and happy society is only possible when the individuals who compose it live in harmony with the highest spiritual laws. As yet, only a few grasp the spiritual principles upon which a true democracy must be built; and until their number be increased, the special mission assigned to this age will remain unfulfilled. At the moment the outlook is none too rosy. It is an easy matter, in a time of transition, to throw over old ideals, but a most difficult matter to discover adequate new ones.

Not many possess worthy ideals to-day, or appear to be concerned about such. The old order is fast passing away, but few have a vision of a finer order to take its place. And if the old morals were narrow, they did preserve many things worth preserving, and afford some sort of security. But to-day the people do not know what they believe, what is valuable or worthless; while scarcely anything is sacred.

Nevertheless, it is a mistake to hark back to the past, as many are doing, and to try and re-establish ancient authorities, such as an aristocracy, or an all-powerful priesthood. Efforts are being put forward in both these directions at the present time, but they cannot possibly succeed. Because the church once controlled the mind and morals of Europe by means of rigid doctrines and creeds, and a highly developed symbolism, it is to misinterpret history and civilisation to imagine that the operation can be repeated. I can imagine an elaborate ritual, and an ancient authority like a Pope, supported by a well-organised priesthood, making a fairly strong appeal to despairing people of the type modern conditions are producing in larger and larger numbers. But to men and women who have known freedom, and have learned how to use it, the tendency



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to fall back upon external authority for guidance in the control of life will be met with an effective resistance. Life can never be as full, conduct as vital, character as noble, or personality as radiant, where the roots of conduct are in a priesthood, or any other external authority, rather than in insight. We are surrounded by moral confusion to-day because, living in an age of transition, the freedom that has been wrested from the church has not as yet been adequately used. To this end training is needed. The people have to be taught the nature of life, the necessity for adequate ideals and thus for a deeper moral thinking.

And of one thing we may rest assured : conduct will never be secure until it is rooted in intelligence. Nor can it be gainsaid that, in the highest type of character, conduct flows from the soul like water from the mountains, freely, naturally and inevitably, in the full knowledge that by it one is realising one's nature and rendering to humanity the highest possible service. To discover the source and laws of such conduct ought to be the aim of all those teachers whose concern is the spiritual advancement of the race.

It is not generally realised that liberty involves responsibility, and is necessary in order to

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make possible a finer development and a fuller existence. If a man claims the right to control his life, surely it is his duty to consider life's possibilities, and to master its laws. At every level of existence there is a culture and a training appropriate to that level. One kind of moral training is appropriate to a state of semi-barbarism, another kind to a people just beginning to discover their souls, and quite another to democracy. In the first instance morality is enforced by means of fear, in the second by the promise of fellowship with God and eternal welfare, but in the third, where conduct is the free expression of the soul, by conscious principles. At this last level morality is wholly dependent upon insight, a clear perception of the social and spiritual possibilities of conduct. Prior to the attainment of free moral self-consciousness morals are dogmas whose social and spiritual value is not recognised. Hence the necessity, up to this time, of authority, threats of punishment and promises of reward, in this life or the next. But on the attainment of moral freedom, conduct, for the first time, springs from a recognition of its life-creating power.

Now it is with the question of the moral training appropriate to democracy that we are here concerned. It is part of my purpose to try

and reveal the moral and spiritual implications of democracy, the immense possibilities—economic, social and spiritual—of free, self-determined conduct, and to discuss the laws whereby those possibilities may be realised. Further, I hope to indicate an ideal which will be the promise of the highest personal and social well-being in this our time. I hold that the evolution of free moral self-consciousness marks an epoch in human development of unparalleled significance, opens the way, given proper guidance and adequate training, to the creation of a finer human type and a more wonderful civilisation. But the training! Everything depends upon that. New freedom demands a deeper thinking. Our problem is the problem of life itself, its purpose, goal and good. The questions which every morally emancipated individual ought to ask himself are these: What is the good to which life points? By what manner of conduct can that good be realised? And certainly, seeing there are so many ways in which men and women do and may live, it is reasonable to assume that some of those ways will be better than others, that reason is capable of ascertaining their relative value, and thus that there must be such a thing as a science and art of right living.



The situation is not hopeless, by any means. For while it is true that the churches have lost control of public morals, and are among the chief exponents of a "morality" that is bringing Western civilisation to the dust, and while, also, vast numbers have shaken themselves free from all external authority and are controlling their lives unassisted by any fundamental thinking, it is nevertheless the case that groups of men and women in every part of the world are fully alive to the dangers and needs of the time. It is also well to remember that literature, science and politics are no longer the monopoly of the leisured classes. The poorest man to-day who makes a claim to self-respect is ashamed to confess himself unread, ignorant regarding the outstanding questions in religion, politics and morals. Publishers lists are now to be found in the humblest homes, while the latest books on social reconstruction, life and morals are often to be found within a month of publication in the hands of working-men. Moreover, in the various Socialist and working-class organisations of our time may be observed a strong belief in and a groping after a morality which guarantees the highest social and individual well-being, and at the same time unifies the claims of the individual and those of the state.

For two primary reasons, therefore, first, that the present tendency in all the great civilised countries, whether of the West or of the East, is towards the moral emancipation of the individual, the freeing of morals from external authority, and second, that the very existence of moral laws proves that there must be a best or ideal life, it follows that one of the profoundest needs of the present time is training in the art of moral thinking and the creation of a science of morals. The day for teaching morals dogmatically is past, the time having arrived when the nature and purpose of morality can be revealed. The truth must go forth that the purpose of morality is to increase life, and that the purpose of freedom is to insure the highest culture of the spirit. As soon as the people realise that thought is for life, that the purpose of moral freedom is the creation of a finer type of individual, and that the object of existence is not merely to obey the Powers that Be, to pray, toil and sweat at the dictate of priests, manufacturers and politicians, but to realise life, to create beauty, goodwill and fellowship, etc., we shall be able to take the direct road to the Kingdom of God, that universal republic of enlightened souls towards which the whole creation moves.

## CHAPTER III

### FREEDOM THE WAY OF DEVELOPMENT

WE shall the better grasp the significance and function of our age if we consider the nature of man and the cause and meaning of progress. Every philosophy carries with it a particular conception of man, which is either true or false. And it is of no use troubling about a new morality and the discovery of new ideals, if humanity cannot use them, if, that is, man does not develop spiritually, does not increase his power of enjoying life, and does not do so by means of conscious ideas. If man is a sheer materialist who cares for nothing so long as he is sure of his bread, it is a waste of time to talk about morality, ideals, progress, or spiritual motives.

As I have already said, the approach of democracy synchronises with the attainment of moral freedom. With the growth of intelligence the struggle for such freedom was bound to come sooner or later. Self-knowledge implies



and leads to self-control; and self-control implies freedom. It is inconceivable that men who have discovered the meaning and purpose of morality, and have learned to appreciate spiritual values, can tolerate being governed like children, or, if they happen to be poor, being treated as the social inferiors of a ruling class. To such people the very idea of a society founded on the morals, ideals and prejudices necessary to a plutocracy, is intolerable. Current happenings prove this. On every hand the people are repudiating established authority in the realm of religion, politics and morals and are developing an outlook, ideals and morals of their own. In this way a momentous revolution is being quietly carried out. Indeed it is because of the attainment of moral freedom that we know democracy stands for something real and vital, a new kind of civilisation, and has come to stay.

It would appear that development implies a constant outgrowing of the forms in which life is cast. Experience yields knowledge, and thought vision, both of which tend to create dissatisfaction with things as they are. Thus from time to time man rebels against his limitations and demands more freedom. We now know that the attainment of moral

freedom was as inevitable as the attainment, centuries ago, of religious freedom. In the same way we know that the attainment of moral freedom will be followed by further triumphs over external authority. Man's next conquest will be in the realm of economics, and after he has won economic security, freed himself from the tyranny of a rich class, he will probably seek freedom from state-made law. By that time, of course, human nature will have undergone remarkable development as a result of moral freedom and economic security, and will be ready for the dissolution of the State as we understand it to-day, with its centralised legislatures, its countless laws, its Law Courts, army, navy, police force, etc., etc. The significance of freedom is that it multiplies the opportunities of self-expression and thus makes possible a finer personality, a new humanity, a fuller and more conscious existence. This is development, and development, as I hope to make quite clear, necessitates periodic instalments of freedom.

Thus it is not the case that progress is mere organic change brought about by hunger or the "struggle for existence". Plausibility is lent to the latter view by the fact that in nearly every crisis the advancement of civilisation is

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prevented by economic limitations, against which a merciless war has to be waged. If mere existence were all that mattered we might with advantage go back to feudalism at once. Our economic demands are greater to-day than ever they were, but they are made less in the interest of the body than the soul. Development means the adding to life of colour, and when life is full of colour it is absurd to say that progress is the outcome of a struggle for mere, that is to say, colourless, existence. As everyone may know who will take the trouble to examine his own heart, the root cause of all human effort, even the effort to live, is a desire for a particular good or satisfaction, a longing not merely to exist, but to realise a life of a certain content. In the last analysis, development is the outcome of a desire to live more fully and consciously. Even the materialists of the imperialist school, who will stop at nothing in order to maintain their ascendancy—make wars, turn out Governments or found new regimes—are prompted by something more than fear or a desire for a colourless existence. Their aim is power, luxury and glory, which they love. Moreover, it must be remembered that the worst victims of social repression are usually the last to revolt, and probably never would



revolt were it not for the encouragement and leadership of enthusiastic idealists who, on the whole, are economically secure, and who seek to use a period of depression to increase liberty all round and establish a more humane and democratic social order. Thus every attempt to define progress as the outcome of conflict between external conditions and the mere desire to exist is bound to end in failure. It is possible, of course, to define progress in fifty different ways, and for each definition to contain a grain of truth, for the simple reason that progress involves so many things; but any definition which fails to take account of the fact that the underlying cause of "change," or the "struggle for existence," is a desire for a more significant existence, a life of a particular content, cannot be complete. Thus were I pressed to define development, or progress, I should say that it is soul-growth, self-realisation at higher and higher levels, added power to appreciate and experience life. According to this view, development involves the gradual expansion of consciousness, the culture of the spirit, the creation of a finer personality. It involves other things too, such as organic modification, a more complex social organisation, increased power over environment, etc. But its chief

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significance lies in the fact that it makes possible a more abundant life. Obviously the primary cause of human development must be in man and not in environment, for man is an aspiring soul who ever yearns for the more complete and perfect.

Not to speak of such disturbed times as the present, the commonest facts of every day prove that all men are idealists; that idealism is of the very essence of human nature, as essential to life as air and water. A human being can no more escape idealism than he can escape death. Every man desires some kind of well-being; if it were not so he would not be able to exist. Search where we will, among the most depraved specimens of humanity, and we shall find, if we look deep enough, the hall-mark of the ideal. It may exist in strange forms, but it will be there. Of course, not all men are conscious idealists; nevertheless there is some form of good which appeals to every man more than to others, and for which he will sacrifice much, a pearl of great price to possess which he will sell all that he has.

So surely as a man says—and who does not say?—"I have done it, but it does not wholly satisfy me," he proves himself to be an idealist, confesses that he possesses a concept of beauty

which he has not completely expressed. It also proves that the heart of man desires perfection and fulness of life. Nay, the very existence of art is an indication that man is an idealist, ceaselessly strives to express a hidden sense of beauty and harmony. Art is a confession that what is does not wholly satisfy man; that life consists not wholly in the things he possesses, but also in the beauty and the good which he believes to be possible. Like faith, art is the substance of things hoped for, the promise of the more abundant life which every man craves for and believes in.

And what, after all, is the most significant fact about man? It is certainly not what he possesses. Neither is it what he has achieved. It is rather what he is capable of, what he aspires after, hopes to be. Otherwise there could be neither heroism nor sacrifice. In art man portrays the existence he longs for: in conduct he tries to realise that existence, the good of which he has dreamed. A man is always more than his past, for which reason the past never wholly satisfies him. Were a man to be told that he had reached the climax of spiritual attainment, what a dungeon of time and place his future existence would be! Man is great by virtue of his conscious aspirations,



his passion for life, for spiritual conquest. What makes men and women so inexpressibly attractive is the feeling that they are nobler than their noblest achievements, more loveable than their noblest deeds; that they have more in their hearts than they are able to express.

And, of course, as in regard to the specific arts, the condition of good and beautiful work is an ideal of beauty, so in regard to the art of living, the possession of a conscious ideal is the condition of the highest well-being. It is just as impossible to live well without an ideal as it is to embroider well, to sing, paint or write well without an ideal. To rely on feeling and impulse is not enough, as that, in the last resort is to fall back on convention. It is necessary, therefore, to be a conscious idealist in order to secure the highest well-being.

This view of human nature and of the cause of development is, I maintain, supported by a study of history. I am aware that in considering bygone times, the complete facts of which we can never know, it is very easy to make false generalisations. And certainly, by concentrating on one set of facts, one side of the problem, it would be possible to write either a materialistic or an idealistic interpretation of history. The simple truth is that experience is

a jumble of idealistic and materialistic elements, all of which play some part in determining the changes, external and internal, which together constitute progress. It is certainly the case that the economic system of a society exercises an enormous influence upon ideas and morals. But, as we may witness in our own day, thousands who are submerged in comparative poverty as a result of the existing social system, together with thousands whom the present social system has treated more favourably, are working hand in hand for the overthrow of that system, and are using the present economic crisis to create unrest, spread abroad finer ideas, and through these to establish a better social order. The unfortunate no less than the fortunate are primarily moved by a vision of a fuller and more beautiful life, for themselves and for society as a whole.

But there is nothing unique, as regards the point we are discussing, in the present crisis. Indeed I find that a broad study of history, particularly of its epochs, substantiates this view. An epoch is a time of transition when a community, seizing upon the pretext of poverty, oppression, class conflict, or some such abnormal condition, becomes unusually self-conscious, changes its course, eschews the path of its past

and begins to travel in a quite new direction. At such times we see the soul of a people laid bare, raised to the altitude of heroism. The changes then wrought are primarily due to the idealism and courage of a few heroic souls, whose success, nevertheless, depends upon the fact that they are expressing and endeavouring to satisfy a widely felt need. During an epoch, therefore, the actual is thrown into sharp contrast with the ideal, an abnormal social condition offering some hope of securing sanction for the overthrow of an old order and the establishment of a new. And it is impossible for a spiritually healthy people to avoid epochs, as no social system or custom can live for ever. A social system is like a garment which shrinks and wears into holes, thus becoming useless and unseemly and necessitating a new one.

What we see on a surface view of the history of any country is a series of culminating points, each of which marks a change of direction in the course of events, and involves, to some extent, a reconstitution of values on the part of a considerable section of the community. At first sight it might seem that life flowed evenly for a certain period, and then quite suddenly came up against a mighty obstacle, which caused it to turn



in another direction. But such is not the case. Long before events have culminated in an epoch, there have been indications of an awakened consciousness and of a growing desire for a broader experience and a more vital existence. But before the desired freedom can be won, war has to be waged on public opinion, established customs and ideas, in order to awaken the slumbering instincts of the people who, for the most part, are being drugged by all the institutions over which those who imagine it is to their interest to perpetuate the existing state of things, have control. Naturally those responsible for this forward movement will appeal to a variety of motives in order to awaken the public to a consciousness of their rights and needs. In some cases economic, in others, spiritual, factors will be emphasised. For every kind of liberty has economic, political, social and moral implications. Thus no epoch is ever the outcome of a single motive. No matter whether the immediate objective be economic, political or moral freedom, various motives will operate in the effort to attain it. But among them, sustaining and guiding all the rest, and carrying the reform movement to a successful issue, will be the desire for a more abundant life, the life-force itself urging on the soul to a fuller self-realisation.

This view is supported by the fact that in the history of a progressive nation, almost every epoch is an occasion when power that is invested in a small minority is decentralised, distributed over a wider area. Development may thus be described as a process of soul-growth which requires from time to time new power, or liberty. Moreover, a careful study of history warrants the conclusion that after a certain level of civilisation has been reached, progress invariably involves devolution, the distribution of centralised power over an ever-widening area. History reveals the life-force gaining in significance from age to age, manifesting itself with every transition in more beautiful forms—a finer manhood, nobler institutions and a lovelier fellowship. Were rulers enlightened, cognisant of the teaching of history and of the meaning of life, they would assist the progress of the developing soul of humanity by granting it the liberty it needed. But it nearly always happens that they are not enlightened, that they fall victims to the temptation of power and privilege, and thus fail to see that they would be infinitely greater and happier men were they to labour for the distribution of the power which they so fondly cherish. The result is that the people have always to enter upon a life and death struggle

in order to secure an extension of liberty. Should a Government be strong enough repeatedly to defeat the people in their effort to secure the means of spiritual advancement, woe betide the nation of which it is the head ! Decay and ruin will be its fate. It is one of the ironies of history that the strongest and most despotic Governments are the least secure, and the civilisations they support the first to collapse. Decay and death are their sure harvest. That civilisation must ultimately predominate which is founded on freedom ; for out of freedom alone can come that nobleness of character and that strength of spirit which are the source of all true greatness.

A brief glance at history vindicates this view. Looked at from one side, history reveals a process of conflict between man and his environment—nature, adversity, various external authorities. Looked at from another side, it exhibits a process of unfolding, of self-realisation, in which the soul comes to self-consciousness at ever higher levels.

Taking the historical process as a whole, man develops from a body to a soul, creating as he proceeds a life appropriate to his spiritual attainment. And seeing that he evolves, it is reasonable to assume that in his upward march he perceives here and there some inkling of his



inborn power, his Ability to realise a larger selfhood and a more abundant life. Only by some such assumption can we explain such phenomena as the Labour movement in Britain and the Non-Co-operation movement in India, with all their magnificent idealism and spiritual fervour. Furthermore, if the true nature of the idealism behind such national movements as those I have just mentioned could be adequately expressed, it must surely, as the interpretation of human aspiration at its highest point of development in the various lands where they appear, appeal to the great mass of the people and command their support.

Investigation reveals that from the birth of Monarchy to the dawn of democracy, a series of conflicts takes place between the people and established authority, in which the former seek to increase their freedom, first in one direction, then in another. Up to the present the forms of liberty secured are physical, intellectual, religious, moral and political—speaking of Britain, that is. The struggle that is proceeding at present in this country has for its aim economic security for all. With each new instalment of freedom a new era is entered upon.

With these considerations in mind it may be worth while to glance at the historical process

in the interim between the institution of monarchy and the dawn of democracy.

Now kingship, or the centralisation of power in the hands of a single individual, would appear to be inevitable where kindred tribes are constantly fighting each other for the possession of certain lands. It is a waste of strength and life and a perennial cause of fear that kindred tribes living side by side should be perpetually at war with each other. But the situation is rendered even more precarious when conflict between kindred tribes is aggravated by contests with "foreign" tribes. When the latter situation arises there is a tendency towards fusion on the part of the friendly tribes, in order the better to protect their lands and dwellings. This leads to the formation of a nation-state.

Thus it is not the case, as is so often assumed, that kings establish themselves by means of force and cunning and in opposition to the wishes of the people. As a fact they are usually chosen, literally called for by the people. The struggle for economic security, for peace, home, and a fixed place of habitation, demands an army and a war-leader, while the continuity of war tends to convert the war-leader into a sort of ruler, and eventually into a king. A

nation-state may be said to come into being when one tribe predominates over surrounding, kindred tribes, and is able to maintain peace and to govern. Upon the formation of the nation-state the old form of government, with its various "moots," becomes obsolete, a moot, or "parliament", which includes all the freemen being now impracticable. Consequently this democratic form of government is abrogated, being superseded by a form of centralised government wherein the king possesses almost absolute authority.

Prior to the institution of kingship the tribe exercised, through its various "moots," coercive powers over the individual. This it did in accordance with customs of which every member of the tribe was a custodian. Indeed, within the tribe, every freeman was both a legislator and an administrator, possessed a voice in deciding what customs should be enforced, and what should be the penalty of disobedience. In such circumstances there was little likelihood of social disorder, as every man was his brother's keeper. Accordingly the creation of the nation-state gave rise to a new problem, *viz.*, how to maintain in a State composed of many tribes, the order which blood-relationships and self-established custom had



maintained within the tribe. Obviously the mere setting up of a king was not enough. To be an effective ruler at this early stage, a king must be supported by a powerful tribal or "national" sentiment, and a strong army. Thus unless the people had felt that a king was necessary, they would not have been inclined to support him. But, as a fact, where a king is found to be necessary, the people do support him. They provide him with men and money, and permit him to exercise the legislative and administrative functions which had once been their cherished heritage. Thus by means of counsellors, soldiers, Law-Courts, etc., order is eventually established throughout the realm, and the task of national unification and consolidation begun.

It would seem, on the surface, that the transition from tribal organisation to the nation-state involved the loss of freedom on the part of the tribesmen, without any kind of compensation. But such is not the case. True, the freeman is called upon to forfeit an appreciable amount of liberty. For previously, justice was the tribe's, whereas now it is the king's, every offence being committed against the king, and not, as heretofore, against the people. Nevertheless, such a transference of power was

inevitable, the sacrifice of political freedom being compensated for by a freedom that was, at the time, more valuable. In the first place, the setting up of a king produced peace, and thus permitted the cultivation of the arts of peace, thereby giving, for the first time, some sort of security to those who desired to cultivate the soil. But it served other ends as well. It helped to impress upon the mind of the uncultured tribesmen the idea that the rights of humanity extend beyond one's own tribe; that justice is a quality to which all men have a right, no matter to what family or clan they belong. The administration of justice by the tribe itself was only possible so long as the tribe remained intact. The creation of the nation-state destroyed the "political" rights possessed by the tribe, but made possible a larger political and social unity, although it would take some time for that unity to become real and manifest. Thus the skeleton of a large society at last existed; years of quiet development would enable a consciousness to emerge which would not be content with serfdom and political impotence.

And of what avail is political liberty if there be no security for one's labour, no guarantee that if one sows one will also reap? As the



result of maraudings and ceaseless tribal warfare it had become impossible, prior to the adoption of kingship, to cultivate the arts of peace. For by this time not only agriculture, but the domestic and industrial arts had begun to take root, for which reason a peaceful, domestic existence had become increasingly attractive to many. What more natural, therefore, than the acceptance of kingship? Indeed, so strong is the desire for a domestic life that, even at this early period, the king finds it increasingly difficult to procure soldiers for his army. Many fly to the woods and hills to escape the general turmoil, and live as hermits. A little later prophets and saints arise to whom the people turn with eagerness and enthusiasm, many devoting themselves wholly to a religious life.

Thus, strange as it may at first seem, the centralisation of power which takes place on the formation of the nation-state, is a means of increasing liberty, being the indispensable condition of spiritual and social development. For a right which has value, a right which is valueless is ceded. Moreover, the centralisation of political power is only temporary, a necessary expedient which will be abolished as soon as human nature has become sufficiently disciplined under the changed conditions to undertake



political control. Once the need for political control is felt, it will be fought for and secured. Hence, while the centralisation of political power is necessary to development at one stage in the progress of civilisation, the decentralisation of such power is equally necessary to development at a later stage. Whatever stands in the way of development, be it a king, a priesthood, a church, or an oligarchy, will sooner or later be overthrown.

In England the process of centralisation, of forming from the numerous tribes which had come to settle in the country during the fifth and sixth centuries, a nation-state, was in operation for several centuries, continuing right down to the Norman Conquest. With the triumph of William of Normandy, the process of national consolidation was completed. Peace within her borders England at last had, while it could be said with some truth that she was now a nation. But at what a price peace and nationhood had been secured! Not only had political liberty been sacrificed, but to a large extent physical liberty also. For various reasons the small landholders, or freemen, had found it impossible to maintain their independence. Raids, maraudings, army levies and army service had conspired to make their lives almost intolerable, with the

result that they gave up their freedom and became the vassals of a lord, the property of a king's man. As vassals they were not even masters of their own bodies; they could choose neither their employer, their employment, nor their place of abode. The bond or "copy" which defined their position, outlined their service and other obligations, had behind it all the forces of the State. But there was another side: the lord had obligations to his vassals. And it was for economic security, the guarantee of food and a moderately peaceful existence that a man allowed himself to be "tied" to a lord.

But there were other advantages in vassalage besides economic security, such, for example, as the common table, with its revelry, its scope for wit and humour. The poet, the singer, or whoso had talent to entertain, had in the common table an opportunity of revealing his powers. Hence each lord retained not only soldiers and herds-men, but jesters, poets, minstrels, and often "wise" men, or philosophers. As a fact, largely as a result of war and insecurity, vassalage, at the time of its inception was, although inevitable, not without its attractions.

But no sooner had the nation become consolidated than signs of restlessness began to appear. The protection afforded to the vassals

by the feudal system had permitted agriculture and the domestic arts to flourish. Nevertheless there was a limit to the possibilities of development under feudalism. Consequently as soon as the country had settled down the serfs began to show signs of unrest. If the barons were in revolt against the king, the serfs were in revolt against the barons. They, too, wanted freedom—physical freedom. They resented being the property of a lord. The universality of the revolt of the English peasantry against serfdom is evidenced by the fact that immediately after the devastating visitation of the Black Death in the middle of the fourteenth century, the serfs in every part of the realm forsook their lords, ignored the copyrights by which they were bound to the soil, and fled to the towns—this in spite of numerous threats, warnings and protests on the part of the landowners and the Government, and several special Acts of Parliament. Within a few years after 1348, by which time the plague had died down, vassalage practically disappeared in England. The depopulation of the country caused by the plague provided an exceptional opportunity for such a revolution; yet one cannot but be amazed at the thoroughness and determination with which it was carried through.



What is the explanation of this sudden and momentous transition? A simple answer is not possible. The vassals were moderately secure, their physical existence being assured. Moreover, so far as we can learn, there had not been any marked suffering, or cruelty. The feudal lords, we are informed, had on the whole kept their bonds. Undoubtedly there were exceptions. From the preaching of the Lollards, and from such writings as "Pier's Ploughman," we gather that life had become a burden to many, and that the peasants were often regarded with little more favour than the beasts they tended. But then, alas, neither are they to-day! It must not be forgotten, however, that in addition to grants of corn and other produce from his lord's demesne, the serf had an absolute right to a piece of land, which he was permitted to cultivate for his private use. All things considered, therefore, there is every reason to believe that the causes of the break-up of feudalism in England were not entirely economic, just as the causes of the threatened break-up of modern capitalism are not entirely economic, but included a desire for a freer, fuller and more significant existence. The fact of the matter is that under feudalism the soul of the serf had grown. Conditions, both material and spiritual, had

changed : hence the time of liberation had come. Once, servitude had been necessary and inevitable, but now, for spiritual as well as physical reasons, its abolition had become equally necessary and inevitable. A new self-consciousness had emerged which caused larger spiritual possibilities to loom upon the horizon. These latter, moreover, necessitated increased economic power. In the course of several centuries life had grown in significance, in consequence of which the old conditions and environment no longer satisfied the soul's demand. Besides, was not the land being filled with churches, monasteries and other monuments of the spirit's triumph, all of which made a powerful appeal to the imagination? Then again, many new industries, arts and crafts had made their appearance, which also appealed to the more creative minds. Naturally, in these circumstances, the peasants could not be expected to tolerate their servitude. Had they not aspirations too? Was it unthinkable that a serf should desire to see the big world, help build churches, make clocks, tan leather, carve wood, chase the precious metals, or even enter a monastery? The desire for new forms of self-expression was undoubtedly one of the primary motives for the overthrow of feudalism.



If the break-up of feudalism had many causes, it had also many effects. It was in part the effect, in part the cause of a great awakening. Certainly it released a vast amount of energy, spiritual as well as physical, and very soon transformed the life of the country. Feudalism had been thwarting the spiritual and throttling the economic life of the nation. On its abolition all classes burst the barriers of custom and breathed a freer air. Thus we find that ere long tradesmen and small landowners began to clamour for political power, scholars and the more enlightened clergy for religious liberty. Political devolution, which had commenced as early as the twelfth century, now proceeded apace. Of course it mattered little to the common people whether political power was vested in the king, in the barons or in the merchants; but the fact of devolution was in itself important, as it pointed to the time when political power would be the heritage of all. It should be remembered, however, that after the Wars of the Roses, and the Tudor consolidation which followed, the power of the Crown was considerably strengthened, so that many of the earlier battles for political freedom had to be fought over again. The Civil War of the seventeenth century was, in the main, an



attempt to break down the despotism which the Tudor dynasty had established. Since the Restoration the political history of England has been one long process of devolution, the right to participate in government having finally been extended to almost every adult.

To what was this process of political devolution due? Like the overthrow of feudalism, it was the outcome of many motives. Possibly some of the barons feared the loss of their heads, others the loss of their lands. To be at the mercy of the arbitrary power of a monarch was not too assuring. But there were others whose aim was to create a rich and prosperous country. Also there were prelates who were quite independent of the king, and whose one concern was to create a righteous and devout nation. And what has been the motive behind the workers' demand for the franchise? Has it been purely a desire for economic security? Decidedly not, although such desire has always been part of it. As is the case to-day so was it in the past, the people wanted more space for their lives, more power of self-control, increased opportunity of self-expression. Whether a man be poor or rich, so soon as he realises the power of laws to determine social relationships, the rights and limitations of

personality, the need of political power becomes fundamental.

And what applies in the case of physical and political freedom applies no less in that of religious freedom—its object is to enlarge experience and increase life. To a large extent the Roman Catholic Church was the intellectual counterpart of feudalism. The closed-in thought-system for which it stood rendered science and all progress in thought impossible. Hence the revolt of the Schoolmen and, later, of the Divines, Luther and his co-reformers. The former stood for the rights of reason as against the church, and boldly affirmed their faith in the power of the intellect to discover truth. A world in which it was impossible to discover anything new was to them intolerable. They believed in the possibility of new thought-worlds, which implied, of course, new actual worlds, new morals and methods of living. In another way, the leaders of the Reformation stood for almost exactly the same thing. The doctrine of Justification by Faith was a defence of reason, the vindication of the individual as against the church, in matters of belief, conduct, and church government. Up to this time only those who had forsaken the world, entered a monastery and devoted their whole



lives to religion, to prayer, fasting, penance, etc., could become saints or inherit the Kingdom of God. But in the meantime a new consciousness had been developed. A generation had arisen which believed that life in the world need not be sinful, that to live in the world, fulfil all natural functions, to enjoy oneself reasonably and even to marry and bring up a family, was not necessarily inconsistent with the demands of the Kingdom of God. Hence the collapse of Monasticism. Because the church held rigidly to its creeds and doctrines and to certain recognised forms of piety, it lost prestige, the support of its broader-minded adherents, most of whom probably stood to lose from the standpoint of economic security by any attacks which they might make upon it. The Lollards had challenged the ethics of the church in the interest of a communist society. In the following century the Scholastics, stimulated by the vigorous breath of Greek culture, rose in revolt against the intellectual limitations of the Roman Church. Then followed the Reformation, which was a protest, partly against an unbearable orthodoxy, but more against the ethics of the church, appalling license on the one hand and repulsive limitations on the other. Religious



freedom meant a victory for truth, purity and progress.

The struggle for freedom, for conquest over external authority, did not end with the attainment of religious freedom, however. Greater conquests had yet to be made. For some time past the greater part of the civilised world has been waging a merciless war upon custom, tradition—in a word, against the morals and ideals bequeathed to this generation by the church. Men and women everywhere are now claiming the right to govern their own lives completely, to determine their conduct, choose their morals and ideals. Hitherto, at any rate so far as the working classes are concerned, morals have been chiefly determined by the church; but to be living, throbbing with the vitality of personality, conduct must be free, self-chosen. This fact is now beginning to be generally recognised. And certainly there is cause for alarm at the break-up of civilisation that is resulting from the anti-social "morality" of the nineteenth century. The paramount need of the present time is a morality that springs from an idealism which involves a revolution in social relationships. Instead of a society of top dogs and bottom dogs, where the surpeme duty is to "get on," increasing numbers are

looking forward to a society of freemen and women bound together by a beautiful fellowship, spiritual laws which guarantee social as well as individual well-being.

As a result of this fact we have the modern demand for economic security. The vision of a universal brotherhood, of a society founded on spiritual principles in which the existing antagonisms are overcome, is beginning to possess this generation. A new consciousness is emerging, to which greed and unspeakable luxury are as abhorrent as servitude and poverty. Therein lies the explanation of the great struggle upon which mankind universally is just entering.

From the foregoing rough sketch I think it will be clear that development, at any rate as applied to human history, implies increased power of self-control, *i.e.*, increased power over environment. It thus implies an extension of the domain of conscious life. Mere functioning in accordance with custom or the dictates of an external authority is only possible so long as man is ignorant of the meaning and purpose of the things he does; for so soon as his mind grasps that meaning and purpose he will desire to act in accordance with his own intelligence, and will not be content until he is permitted to do so. What we see in history is the mind of

man slowly becoming conscious of itself, of its powers and possibilities, first at one level, then at another. At first man is conscious of little more than his physical appetites. But by and by new realities steal upon his vision, whence new desires and aspirations come into play. In order to satisfy such desires and aspirations, new rights, increased liberty and opportunity are required. But to win these a mighty struggle is entailed. Usually concerted effort, a powerful public opinion and an organised movement are found to be essential to success. Viewed from another standpoint, development implies an expanding world, an environment whose significance increases, a larger consciousness. To the growing soul, such existences as a feudal lord, with his little kingdom, his retinue and his court; a Government, with its pomp and seclusiveness, its officials and its armies; a church, with its ritual and its traditions; a priesthood, with its tone of authority and its threats; a plutocracy with its sacrosanct wealth, are no longer mysteries to be unquestioningly accepted, but facts to be examined.

At each stage in the life-process, therefore, man gains new rights and new power as a result of having reached a higher level of



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consciousness and of having prepared himself for a larger experience and a more significant world. Every conquest over external authority signifies the emergence of a finer personality. Moral freedom is humanity's latest acquisition, and already this is preparing the way for freedom from economic oppression, the overlordship of riches. Each kind of freedom comes in its due order. Religious freedom must precede moral freedom, just as the latter must precede economic security for all. Upon the attainment of moral freedom the whole of life is brought into the limelight of thought and under the control of reason. When, by virtue of due training, adequate ideals have been embodied in the nations' life, democracy will emerge. Hence the paramount need for a discussion of the meaning and purpose of life for men and women to-day.

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE ORIGIN AND PURPOSE OF MORALITY

BEFORE we proceed to discuss the question of an ideal for the twentieth century, it will be necessary to inquire into the origin and purpose of morality, as an ideal implies a better and a worse, and, ultimately, a science of morals; and the possibility of such a science is often disputed by people of such widely differing views as economic determinists and theocratic divines. Moreover, because morals change from time to time, and also because the attainment of moral freedom signifies that every man ought to be a law unto himself, it is often affirmed that morals are devoid of objectivity, are fictions, the instruments of tyranny, and thus obstacles in the path of progress. I hope to show that such is not the case, and, further, to demonstrate the validity of morality and the absolute necessity for ideals.

Now what, in the simplest terms, is morality? In a word, morality is man's guide to the good

to which life points, that whereby the soul grows, consciousness is extended and intensified and the well of man's being deepened. It may of course be objected that life does not point to a good; but of that anon. We must make that assumption for the timebeing. In the last chapter I tried to show that development involves on the one hand soul-growth, and on the other hand the gradual extension of the domain over which the individual exercises control. In the present chapter I desire to show that morals are the laws and rules which every human being instinctively or consciously but necessarily adopts as a means of gaining that which is conceived to be necessary to well-being.

The unanswerable argument for morality is that it is universal. If one thinks of morals as rules of conduct one sees at once how inevitable they are. Simply because one line of conduct means slow or sudden death, whilst another means increasing joy and happiness, people are bound to observe the difference and to act accordingly. And who does not profit by his experience, use the past to enlighten the future? Even the fool believes he is wise in this respect. No one cares to burn his fingers too often. But not only do we all use morals, either our own or



other people's, we are all more or less moralists, too. Naturally, for each one esteems his own intelligence, imagines he has found more profitable ways of living than have others, has discovered life's secret, its elixir. Morals are as inevitable in an ideal as in the crudest and most conventional existence. The only difference is that while in the latter case conduct is dull and dead, in the former case it is vital, being the conscious expression of a purposive soul. Under no circumstances can one afford to play with life, as to live anyhow is ere long to reap sorrow and misery, or to give up life altogether. The most precursory glance into human experience abundantly proves that certain modes of conduct are destructive of the finest values, the most precious relationships. Either to live without morals, or to accept them at second hand is to end in despair.

Further. Morals are necessary because conditions are always changing, but even more because the human soul, which is a living, developing mental entity, is always changing too. Every age effects considerable changes in the social organisation, each of which affects, and calls for some modification in, the life of nearly every individual within such organisations. If the changes are not, on the whole, conducive to

the general well-being they will be resisted. The point to observe is that within every society and in every age, there exists a fairly generally accepted standard of well-being by means of which all modifications of conduct are determined. Man chose to form a society because he saw that it was good so to do. But he had to pay the price by giving up many things he had been wont to do and by doing many things that were new. For such advantages as protection against his enemies, greater economic security, fellowship, etc., he agreed to respect his neighbour's goods, stick to his bargains, speak the truth, refrain from committing wanton injury, and if need be, risk his life on the tribe's behalf. For besides increasing economic security, the formation of a society made possible a new spiritual development, the creation of a social spirit, fellowship, language, literature and other means of self-expression and communication, which were surely worth some sacrifice.

Morality is called into being by the very nature of life, by the fact that the human soul grows, attains consciousness at higher and higher levels. No matter in what condition a man be, he is never wholly satisfied with his attainments, but yearns for a more ideal existence. Even where hard conditions have almost



destroyed all hope of attaining one's ideal, the mind will still hark back to its unfulfilled dreams. Indeed the glory of life is due to the fact that the soul grows. As a result of intelligent experience new vistas appear which widen the mind's horizon, open up new spiritual possibilities which time and thought transform into a vision, and later still into a definite ideal upon whose realisation the soul is set. In such wise does the soul grow and life expand. But in order to realise any particular ideal certain things must be done or not done, as the case may be. Every ideal imposes certain conditions which, strictly speaking, are morals.

Thus morality fulfils a vital function in the scheme of human development, and although it changes its content from age to age, it is as necessary to the highest as to the lowest order of civilisation. The object of existence is to taste life, to experience life more and more abundantly. But in order to do that the mind must grow in knowledge, the soul realise itself at higher and still higher levels by means of conduct directed by knowledge. Now knowledge applied to conduct yields morality ; from which it follows that morality is an indispensable condition of attaining the good. Further, purposive conduct creates new power, insight and



vision, more fruitful relationships with mankind. Those relationships, again, create a more significant consciousness, a richer experience, a wider and more harmonious outlook, intenser and more satisfying emotions. On the attainment of every new level of consciousness fresh laws of conduct, or "morals" are adopted and the old, worn-out ones discarded.

The truth of this view is confirmed by the idea of modification in the naturalist theory of the "modification of the species" resulting from the "struggle for existence,"—always allowing, of course, for the ideal element in the term "existence". The self that results after "modification" has taken place is not the self which existed previously. In the process of "modification" the entire constitution of the soul has been changed, the content of the mind enlarged, its outlook broadened. Selfhood in a civilised man is vastly different from what it is in a savage or, say, a beetle. Between these three orders of being there are immeasurable spiritual and mental, as well as organic, differences. Think, for instance, of the difference in their relative power to comprehend, think and act, to produce and experience pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow! A beetle lives, and seeks to perpetuate its existence. So

does a poet. Are we to conclude, therefore, that the content of consciousness is the same in each case, that the beetle lives as fully, consciously and intensely as the poet, and that the same modes or laws of conduct will operate in the two cases? Whatever be the nature of the well-being or the amount of life which the beetle experiences, they cannot be compared with those experienced by the poet. Nor can their conduct be compared. Yet each lives consistently, obeys the instinct for Life—not mere existence, be it remembered, for if the poet had been chiefly concerned about self-preservation, it is pretty safe to say he would never have chosen to be a poet.

Now seeing that the difference between a beetle and a poet is but an exaggeration of the difference which exists between one species and another, and one being and another, from end to end of creation, it follows that life is an endless process of self-realisation. And as to-day idealists are everywhere trying to establish the conditions which will make a new humanity—a more glorified human species—possible, it is reasonable to conclude that the primary cause of progress is aspiration, the urge of the life-force that is in every living thing. Moreover, as to try and attain an ideal

is to use knowledge and obey rules, it follows that morality is indispensable to the highest self-realisation. Of course if the life-force is misdirected it may produce a miser, a millionaire, or a wastrel, with disastrous social results. But then that only proves the rule.

At what stage in the process of development the moral consciousness first manifests itself, it is not easy to say. It is commonly assumed that morals are peculiar to society. But that is an error, as the question of right and wrong arises in purely personal affairs as well in social relations. Even animals know what foods are good for them, and in this respect are able to benefit from experience. Perhaps all that we are entitled to say on this point is that the moral consciousness begins to manifest itself upon the recognition that certain things are injurious or beneficial, as the case may be.

Morality exists wherever there is a consciousness, howsoever vague, of utility, or value, the power of an act to increase or diminish well-being. To discover the harmfulness of an act is to eschew it, unless habit and passion have enslaved the soul. For enslavement is the sign and death—the wages of immorality. But always the source of morality is a consciousness of value. Of course it sometimes occurs that



customs are founded on insufficient knowledge and observation. Some customs, again, are justified in certain circumstances, but cease to be so when those circumstances change. There can be no doubt that conditions have existed in which cannibalism was justified; but to perpetuate cannibalism when conditions have rendered it unnecessary is vicious and socially disastrous. The essential fact is, however, that custom, and thus the moral sense originate in the idea of value. It is the perception of value which gives to morality its categorical quality, although to accept a custom is not necessarily to perceive its utility. A child may imitate its mother, but because it lacks the mother's understanding and sympathy, its act will lack the efficacy, the "virtue" which characterises the act of its parent. Thus because one man's sympathy is greater than another's, one man's insight deeper than another's, one man's experience richer and broader than another's, one man's ideal nobler and more spacious than another's, so the virtue and life-producing power of one man's conduct will be greater than another's. To grow in mind and spirit, to see further and clearer, to feel more deeply, understand more fully, is to quicken the moral sense and increase the spiritual power of conduct.

Could we but see right into it, every mind is a consistent whole, the lives of the most ignorant and obscure being dominated by a certain idea of value or concept of good, notwithstanding that the individuals themselves are sublimely unconscious of the fact. When one realises the innumerable ways in which it is possible to live, one is struck by the narrowness of the grooves in which the lives of most people are cast. And is it not astonishing that men and women will endure great hardship rather than do what they believe to be wrong, opposed to human well-being? will even die of starvation amidst plenty rather than steal? While a few are wallowing in luxury, the starving multitude will commit suicide! Some people would steal rather than die; others would die rather than steal. The cause of this difference is a difference in conceptions of value. To be conscious of value, of the advantageousness of a certain line of conduct or a given order of relationships, is to be conscious of good and evil, better and worse, of a road which leads to life and of a road which leads to death. These various standards of right and wrong cannot all be of equal value, I grant; but all I am insisting on at the moment is that everyone possesses such a standard.

Although morality enters into purely personal conduct, it is as a social being, when external demands are made upon him, disregard of which involves punishment, that man first becomes conscious of morality. An authoritative demand, backed by a threat of punishment in case of disobedience, is a challenge which cannot be ignored. And every society makes such demands, no matter what be the level of its attainment. Those who see their purpose will naturally obey them, whereas those who do not will do everything in their power to evade them. And just as there are and must be rules in all games in which many take part, so must there be rules in the great game of life, and the more thoroughly one enters into the spirit of the game the more one realises the value of the rules.

It is probably the case that in regard to most laws and customs, at any rate in the earlier stages of civilisation, the great mass of the people are either quite ignorant or only vaguely conscious of their significance and purpose. It would also appear that even the seers themselves were not always cognisant of the deeper spiritual significance of the customs they tried to enforce. They certainly felt their necessity, but if they perceived their hidden purpose they made no attempt to reveal it. But then they did not realise



that civilisation is a process of development. Besides, lacking a knowledge of history and psychology, they could but trust their instincts and intuitions. Indeed it is only in these latter days that the fact of moral development, and the spiritual implications of custom have been recognised. And yet all along the line we are able to see the process of thought at work, to trace the efforts of seers, prophets and thinkers in their endeavours to discover life's meaning, purify and elevate the human soul and create a nobler civilisation. Ignorant of the real source of the truth they declared, as well as of the laws and processes of the human mind, the prophets and seers of the past believed that the truth they preached came direct from God. Hence they came forth as God's messengers sent to declare glad tidings or give warning of destruction, as the case might be. They were, however, keen observers, men of sensitive mind who felt more keenly than others the social need, the tendencies and dangers of the time. The truth came to them in the form of intuitions. And as truth always springs into the mind suddenly, like a flash, it is not to be wondered at that they believed their message had a divine origin. In this regard the language of the founders of the great religions, the Hebrew prophets, and the

Greek thinkers, even down to Socrates, who acknowledged his indebtedness to the Delphic Oracle, will occur to all.

We are thus able to understand why, prior to the birth of free moral self-consciousness, morals are dogmatically taught, have their origin in religion, and take the form of divine commands. So long as the mind can be captured by ceremonial it will submit to authority and accept such morals as the church insists on. Upon the birth of science, however, morals tend to become detached from religion, certainly from the control of an institution, such as a church, and to be subjected to reason and criticism. Naturally so, as the growing mind of man aspires after complete self-control; and only conduct which issues directly from the soul is vital or secure. The danger of conduct being in the control of an external authority, even when that authority is a church, may be seen in the moral wreckage of Europe during the decline of the Roman Catholic Church in the later Middle Ages, and again in the collapse of Western civilisation to-day. As a result of the church's submission to the most materialistic and destructive tendencies of the time, and of its total failure to apply Christ's social teaching to modern society, Western civilisation is crumbling.

The inadequacy of morals enforced by an external authority is due to the fact that for the most part their necessity is not recognised by those who adopt them, being imposed by threats of punishment and promises of reward. Whereas it must be obvious that morals can never be secure until the individual recognises their spiritual value, sees in them the condition of personal and social well-being. Nevertheless, until the human mind is sufficiently developed to do this, religion must compel obedience to the moral law. The deity with whom man is first made familiar by the church, is an awe-inspiring God who demands obedience to his dictates on the peril of impending calamities and suffering for his seed forever. By and by, when the physical passions have been subdued and the more dangerous forms of physical licence checked, a new deity is discovered, a God of loving-kindness. Thus in place of thunderous "thou shalt not," supported by threats of punishment, we now get the beseeching tones of a loving parent who promises as a reward for obedience to his commands abiding communion with himself. But even at this stage there is only the faintest recognition of spiritual necessity behind the appeals of "the man of God". The church is still the people's



conscience, and religion the force which keeps the people from falling into evil. Consequently the chief duty of all who are concerned with the welfare of civilisation prior to the age of free moral self-consciousness, is to intensify the religious consciousness, to make God a living and ever-present reality.

But it is not satisfactory for morals to be dependent upon faith and feeling. To be vital they must be the instruments of a purposive existence. This they will be as soon as the idea dawns that morality is the condition of soul-growth, and that the amount of life one may realise is illimitable. That idea is taking root to-day, in consequence of which a new era is foreshadowed. Investigation and criticism are playing havoc with convention and tradition, and are revealing to increasing numbers the vastness of the spiritual world, the immense possibilities of life. Having arrived there men naturally ask themselves this question: How ought I to live in order to realise the most abundant life? Thereupon they begin to explore. But the more they think the more possibilities they see. So they make experiments, try various paths until, eventually, they are able to draw out certain principles, upon which they finally establish their lives. These principles will be modified

from time to time. But one thing is sure: henceforward externally imposed morals will be eschewed, as conduct will be the free and natural expression of the soul. A life so built up will be shapely and graceful like a beautiful building, every deed creating harmony, beauty and joy. The purposive life has of necessity an architectonic form, yielding beauty, boldness of outline, strength of feature and variety of detail according to the breadth and nobleness of the principles upon which it rests. In comparison with the ordinary conventional existence, such a life must appear like an Olympian temple overlooking a hut.

In a true democracy every man will thus control his own life, be a law unto himself. But this does not imply endless social antagonism and moral chaos, as, notwithstanding that there are hundreds of ways in which a man may live, human nature is one; from which it follows that certain laws of conduct are bound to become universal—at a particular time and within a particular civilisation, that is to say. What actually happens when a man rationalises his conduct is that he immediately discovers that others have passed through a similar experience and have reached almost precisely the same conclusions.

Custom, law, religion, reason. These are the four modes of moral compulsion. Each mode at the right time and place exercises a necessary function. But with the advancement of civilisation the balance of power gradually passes from custom, law and religion, to reason. When the stage of democracy is reached, reason is the sole arbiter of conduct—reason supported by intuition, or, as I shall later try to explain, reason at the “feeling” stage.

At first man is little more than a physical being, a collection of animal appetites. Hunting, eating and drinking constitute his chief activities and pleasures. He is innocent of the arts, for the simple reason that as yet he has not developed the spiritual qualities upon which they depend. At this stage conduct is regulated by such crude customs as “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth”. As civilisation advances, however, customs become more refined. Thus every era accomplishes an appropriate transition from one spiritual level to another, involving the substitution of a higher for a lower moral code. Thus the taking of one life for another is superseded at a later period by a law of compensations, which in turn is abrogated in favour of a fine, and even, at times, of forgiveness. For a time arrives when the



vengeful law of the State is opposed by the church, which insists upon a higher law, that of forgiveness. Thus during the Middle Ages, in Europe, the church compelled the State to respect the right of Sanctuary, the protection which it offered to all who fled to it for succour, no matter what crime they had committed. But forgiveness is now taught as a general rule of life, particularly in domestic and business relations. Then the Fine Arts began to emerge, signifying that the spiritual qualities of human nature were beginning to manifest themselves. By means of the culture which followed the growth of art and religion, human nature realised itself at a new level, whence the old, barbaric law of "an eye for an eye" became obsolete. Respect for humanity increases with the raising of its spiritual value, and thus antiquates the old moral code. Hence the abolition, in the later Middle Ages, of all those brutal rights over the lives of others, exercised by fathers of families, feudal lords, and by the State, which had existed from earliest times.

Leaping up to the present time we may see another transition taking place. Morals that have scarcely been questioned during the past two or three centuries are now being challenged on every hand. Not only are such institutions

as the prison system being attacked, but even the right to amass a fortune by means of the labour of others, as also the right to control the life of another by virtue of one's hold upon his means of livelihood. Thus a new social law is being demanded, a new morality, and, in consequence, a revolutionised social order. What is the cause? At root it is the emergence of a new humanity, of man at a higher spiritual level. Religion, art, culture, travel, commerce and the thousand agencies of civilisation have accomplished this great feat, converted man into a spiritual being, a living soul, a being with whom, of whatever nation or race, a beautiful fellowship is possible. Hence the widespread revolt against the conventional morality which lies at the root of the existing vicious social system, and the demand for a morality consistent with a society founded on a finer culture, the principle of love and service. Only thus can we explain the growing disbelief in national antagonisms and fears, and in war, the rise of a world-wide Socialist movement, with its ideal of international brotherhood and the republic of humanity.

Roughly speaking, there may be said to be three orders of moral conduct, corresponding to three levels of moral consciousness. At the

first level the force which impels conduct is external; at the second it is internal, springing from insight; at the third, the whole of conduct is the conscious expression of a purposive soul.

At the first level the moral authority is wholly outside the individual, fear, threats of punishment and promises of reward being the means of enforcing obedience to the moral code. This we may call the religious stage.

The second level is characterised by the individual having begun to see the purpose of morals. Threats of punishment and promises of reward no longer affect him. He obeys the commands of the prophets because he feels they are just and righteous, personally and socially beneficial. This may be called the plural stage, as the individual, whilst perceiving that most "morals" serve a good purpose, has not yet realised that life is a unity and capable of being organised by means of a conscious ideal. To a large extent reason has taken the place of faith, thus vitalising conduct, but the truth has not yet been perceived that life as a whole may be governed by a conscious purpose. This is the phase of development that Western Europe has been passing through during the past three or four decades.

At the third level the whole of life is unified by a purpose and a principle, every act being a



conscious attempt to realise an ideal good. Reason having come to the aid of faith, feeling and intuition, the underlying purpose of morality is finally perceived, whence the discovery is made that life points to a good which man is capable of realising. When, at last, life has been unified by means of an ideal, "morals" vanish, conduct henceforward being the natural expression of the soul. This is the stage of free moral self-consciousness. The way is now open to a wonderful social development.

This is the stage that we are just arriving at to-day. LIFE stands before this generation with a bigger promise than ever has been given to the sons of men. We are at the portals of a more promising and romantic era than any that have been. Some presentiment of that era is being vaguely felt by many even now; which is why there is so much eager talk about a new world. As soon as a vision of the spiritual possibilities which confront this generation descends upon the people, the new world will come, and speedily.

But how are those possibilities to be realised apart from a knowledge of the art and science of living? Now that we have seen what morality implies, the way is open to a discussion of the possibility of a science of morals.

## CHAPTER V

### THE POSSIBILITY OF A SCIENCE OF MORALS

IF we assume that a man may live well or ill, we imply that some modes of conduct yield life and that others do not. That this assumption is justified is proved by the fact that life and death, happiness and despair are the fruit of conduct. It follows, therefore, that one of the primary duties of man is to try and find out what kind of conduct will issue in happiness and life, and what kind in despair and death. The knowledge thus gained, systematised, would constitute a science of morals.

In order clearly to understand the nature of a science of morals, it will be advisable to compare it with the natural sciences. A moral law is different in nature from a natural law. The latter states a fact, a simple relation between two or more things, or events, whereas the former expresses a judgment of value. Yet both are inevitable, as inevitable as civilisation

itself. Just as great works of skill—bridges, waterworks, etc.—and the multitudinous products of modern workshops and factories, owe their existence to the discovery of natural laws, so is the production of beautiful character and personality, noble institutions, and even society itself, due to the discovery of moral laws. And just as the discovery of natural laws tends to make man more conscious of Nature and of his power over her, so the discovery of moral laws tends to make man more conscious of his existence and of the possibilities which life presents to him.

What, then, is a moral law, and wherein does it differ from a natural law?

A natural law is a judgment of fact, an expression of simple relationship between two or more phenomena. All the stock of scientific knowledge is made up of these simple judgments or laws. Laws are the units out of which the mighty edifice of science has been constructed.

Science, as we know it to-day, is divided up into numerous departments, each of which is called a science, such as Geology, Botany, Mechanics, Physics, etc. But all such divisions and distinctions are quite arbitrary, as Nature is one and indivisible. The breaking up of



science into a multitude of "sciences" has taken place in order that the accumulation of knowledge may proceed at a quicker rate. For while all matter has certain qualities in common, and while every particle of matter in the vast universe is related in many ways to every other particle, there are, in the manifold manifestations of Nature, orders of being within which relations are much more numerous and close than is the case between one order and another. These orders of being are the spheres of investigation of the specific sciences.

Science as a whole represents the totality of our knowledge concerning the objective world systematised and unified. But science is in no sense a description or picture of that world, being essentially abstract, at best a record of only a few out of an infinite number of relations. Still, science is true so far as it goes, does to some extent explain Nature, natural forces and processes, and is of enormous practical value.

But if scientific knowledge is essentially abstract, and represents only a few of Nature's infinite relations, how do we know that science is true? If every law appertains to more or less isolated facts or events, expresses but one out of an infinite number of relations, what ground

have we for saying that it is true, that science correctly describes the processes of Nature? The importance of this question is not perceived until we realise how great are the possibilities of illusion and error in the observation of Nature. It is thus necessary to know upon what evidence the scientist is justified in claiming that he has discovered a law, *e.g.*, that A and B are two events, and that A is the cause or antecedent of B.

As a fact it is natural to declare or assume a law the moment it is observed that one event follows another, and to expect a like result from similar antecedents, providing, of course, that the same general conditions prevail. It is usually the case, however, that before this newly observed relation is expressed as a law, and accepted as such by scientists generally, many special and critical tests are made, and by various observers. Still it is often the case that many people are the victims of the same illusion, do not correctly observe what takes place, either believe they see what is actually not there, or fail to see something that is later discovered to be there. Thus, in regard to the most commonly accepted laws, it is always possible for the sceptic to step in and say that they may not be true after all, and to taunt the

scientist with the subjective character of his so-called knowledge.

In order to increase the certainty of scientific knowledge, therefore, we have, in what is known as the philosophy of science, an attempt to unify by means of correlation and synthesis, the knowledge gathered in the various departments of the specific sciences. If in this body of scientific knowledge there should be any contradiction between the several parts, or anything which should suggest error, an attempt is made to eradicate such by further experimentation, and thus to establish unity.

But if it is the case that the unity of all scientific knowledge is the final proof of the validity of such knowledge, it follows that truth, in the last analysis, rests on the belief that Nature is one, a unity, and will continue to act in the future as in the past. Except the scientist assume that Nature is a unity, and constant, he can never prove that he has made his observations correctly, nor that the laws he has discovered possess objectivity. Finally, therefore, all science rests on faith, on the belief that Nature is one, uniform and constant.

Ultimately, man believes in science, in the unity and continuity of Nature, for the same reason that many believe in God, in immortality,



or in the possibility of attaining an ideal life: that is, in order that he may realise himself, satisfy his desires and aspirations.

As in the natural realm, so in the moral, the unit of knowledge is the law, that which describes a simple relationship. But whereas a natural law describes the "what," or fact, of an event, a moral law indicates the "value" of an act or experience. Moral law is value-law, as since it relates to conduct, its function is to tell us not what happens, but the value of what happens. For this reason moral law is said to be "value" law. Natural science is concerned with what "is," moral science with what "ought" to be. The purpose of the latter is to ascertain the value of human acts, and thus to serve as a guide to the good. Thus whereas the former is confined to sense impressions, the latter has to do with emotions, instincts and intuitions, etc.

But in what sense can we say that moral laws are valid? Moral laws are as valid as natural laws, in that they are judgments of the same mind, and are used to advantage in the pursuit of well-being. And experiences are capable of being verified just as are scientific experiments. Of course they cannot be perfectly repeated; but then neither can experiments in

the realm of Nature. Neither in the natural nor in the moral sphere can absolute identity of circumstances be reproduced with those of a past act or event; but an act of the same type, and under similar circumstances, is possible in the same way that the repetition of a chemical experiment, say, is possible. Human nature, as a part of Being, must participate in the unity which characterises Nature, as both are component parts of a single whole. Precisely the same constancy and uniformity are to be met with in the spiritual world as in the natural. As surely as fire consumes the body, bad temper poisons the soul. But, say the sceptics, see how moral judgments differ! and observe how many moral codes there are in the world, and even in the same community! Morality, say they, is obviously a question of individual taste, that being called good which brings a coveted kind of pleasure, and that evil which issues in displeasure and pain! Furthermore, seeing that men's ideas of pleasure, and thus of good, differ so much one from another, that giving pain to one gives pleasure to another, how is it possible to systematise morals, at any rate to the extent of creating a science of morals? The progress of the moral scientist would thus appear to be checked by a condition of hopeless

subjectivity. Is that view supported by a deeper investigation?

I have said that a moral law is a judgment of value; and although it is more difficult to estimate the value of an act than to record what happens in a natural event, there is nothing to prevent as correct judgments being given in the one sphere as in the other. Now in order to estimate the respective value of the various acts and events in one's experience, it is necessary to possess a standard by which to judge. Such a standard we have, as presupposed in every life is an ideal or concept of good, notwithstanding that one may not be conscious of the fact. In the meanest and most sordid existence there can be found order and purpose. The guiding instinct may be a passion for strong drink, for gain, for some sort of power over men and women; but there will be one. Having ascertained the notion or conception of good which lies at the root of a given life, it would be possible to resolve that life to unity, to pass judgment upon, and ascribe value to, every act or experience. Indeed, from a knowledge of a man's ideal, the cosmos entire—the world, humanity, every form of human enterprise or activity—can be appraised. Assuming, for the moment, that a certain ideal did in fact guarantee



to humanity to-day the highest possible well-being, it would be possible by means of it to construct a science of morals adequate to the present age. But lacking such guarantee, all that we should be entitled to say would be that the system of ethics deducible from it had value and significance for one man alone; for another, whose ideal of life was quite different, it would be devoid of meaning. Clearly, then, if we are to make good our claim that a science of morals is possible, we must first show the sense in which morals possess objectivity. It should be easy, afterwards, to show that reason is capable of criticising and appraising the various ideals by which mankind regulate their lives, and thus of demonstrating which is capable of guaranteeing the highest well-being.

With reference to this point, the very term "morality" is itself a proof of objectivity, of the existence of a generally accepted standard of value. For what are morality, convention, custom but the verdict of the community with respect to the life-value of certain modes of conduct? True, the morals of one age differ from those of another, and of one people from those of another. But that is only to be expected, considering that man is a developmental being. With a stationary morality there could be no

development. Every society, no matter what be the level of its attainment, possesses a code of morals which are valid for it, are regarded by the majority of the community as the condition of well-being and social progress. This is both natural and inevitable, in that, as we have previously pointed out, the customs of a people are simply its advantageous or life-conserving practices hardened into conventions.

Precisely because life is essentially progressive must morals and social relationships undergo modification from time to time. At whatever point we contemplate human society it stands, like an alpine climber ascending the dizzy heights, between heaven and the abyss. Unless it keep strict watch upon its conduct it will fall back into barbarism ; and unless it keep its eyes turned upwards and take the right turnings, it will never reach the coveted heights. Morals are the footholds by which the slipping back into perdition is prevented ; they are also the means of ascending to a more beautiful existence.

At every level of development certain morals are imperative, the absolute condition of further progress. But on the attainment of progress, the morals which made it possible are abandoned for others more suited to the humanity they

have helped to create. For developmental is internal and spiritual as well as external and material, affects the soul no less than the social order in which it has its being. Man is a body before he is a soul, but when he becomes a soul he must live as befits a spiritual being. "An eye for an eye" may satisfy justice on the physical plane of existence, but it is an impossible law in a spiritual world. Yet when it was in vogue, not only did it satisfy justice, it helped to create and strengthen the idea of justice. Later, when man's spiritual nature had begun to evolve, such laws as that cited above were felt to be spiritually destructive, that is, immoral. Hence whilst one code of morals is essential to development at one period, its abandonment for a more spiritual code is equally necessary at a later period. And whilst at the first period the injunction: "Love your enemies" would have been meaningless and useless, at a later period it becomes an imperative condition of individual well-being and of social existence.

At the same time it happens in every society that whilst the majority of the people accept, more or less completely a given code of morals, a minority will not accept it, some because they are familiar with the outlook which it assumes,



others because they have had a vision of a life that it is incapable of furthering. And, of course, if progress is to be maintained, it is necessary that in every community there be those who by virtue of keen spiritual perception discover fresh fields for spiritual enterprise. By and by such moral codes as are thus brought into being will be accepted by the community at large, whilst the vision which prompted them will gradually take possession of the people's mind. To this small minority belong a nation's teachers and prophets, the people whose function it is to point the way to loftier heights of spiritual attainment and a fuller life.

Now the very fact that morals arise in order to enable mankind to realise a particular good, and also to progress from one spiritual plane to another, is a clear proof that morals possess objectivity and are teachable. Moreover, since, as we saw, history is a process of development which involves from time to time the increasing of liberty and the extension of the domain of conscious life, it is obvious that on the occasion of every accession to liberty, new social relationships will be called into being which will necessitate a new moral code. When Christ, *e.g.*, on being informed that his mother and brethren were come to see him replied:

"Who is my mother, or my brethren?" and on looking round on them which sat about him, continued, "Behold my mother and my brethren! For whoso shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister and mother," he indicated the transformation in outlook, in one's entire system of relationships, and the corresponding revolution in one's moral code, which the acceptance of his doctrine of the Kingdom of God involved. So to-day the abandonment of the narrow, greed-based world, with its antagonistic families, classes and nations, its blood and property distinctions, in favour of a universal brotherhood, involves nothing less than a moral revolution. The final implication of spiritual development is the substitution of love and service for greed and the right to accumulate riches. But because love is a practicable principle at one level of development, it does not follow that it must always have been. The right to accumulate property, notwithstanding all its attendant evils, is valid until the discovery is made that man is a spiritual being, when it is recognised, for the first time, that fellowship is of more value than the wealth that is produced at its cost. Following that discovery, the policy of self-aggrandisement is superseded by the law of love.

Hence, instead of the periodic emergence of a new religion, or of a prophet heralding a finer social order and a nobler morality, being a proof that morals are devoid of objectivity, it conclusively proves the opposite, and further proves that morality is an indispensable condition of development. One moral code makes possible a certain development which, in turn, enables a higher code to take its place.

Not until we recognise that every religious system carries with it an appropriate moral code, and that one religious system is more advanced than another according as it tends to produce a more spiritual order of social relationships, can we understand history or the meaning of development. Man modifies his religious conceptions and beliefs, and also his morals, because, being a developmental being he must needs cultivate new attributes and powers, and therefore more beautiful and fruitful relationships with the world of being—with God, Nature, man. Every level of civilisation carries with it a certain ideal, or concept of good, a corresponding cosmic or religious outlook, and an appropriate moral code. To modify one's religious outlook is to modify one's morals. In due course, one's morals, like one's gods are



shed, a Jove or a Jahveh becoming as dead as cannibalism or the duel.

But not only does spiritual development involve the adoption of a higher morality from time to time, it widens the field wherein a benevolent attitude towards one's fellows is shown. To develop is to grow more spiritual, which means that the boundaries within which love operates extend until they include all men and all creatures. Then, but not till then, is mankind ready for such ethics as those of Christianity. The world is no longer a menagerie of warring wills, but a kingdom of souls whose law is love. The war gods now depart for ever; the lurid shades of hate and greed begin to fade; the business and industrial world fevered with hatred and fear and selfish passion, collapses. Peace spreads out her wings and a new glory appears. Love, now supreme, proclaims: "If one ask thee to go with him a mile, go with him twain. If one ask for thy cloak, give him thy coat also." "If one smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you." "I came not to destroy but to fulfil." "Love is the fulfilling of the law." But, of course, love is much more, otherwise development would be devoid of meaning.

We are thus able to see that a given ideal and code of morals may have objectivity at one period, be the condition of a people's highest development, and yet be inadequate at a later period, when a fuller consciousness has been developed and a larger and finer world conceived. To discover new spiritual possibilities is to demand a moral code adequate to their realisation.

If this interpretation be correct, history ought to reveal to us a series of ideals, unities, or "worlds," each of which is larger, more complete and significant than the one which preceded it. And that is precisely what it does. With every fresh discovery of spiritual reality, the world undergoes a process of transformation, the old vision and outlook giving place to others more wonderful and significant. When justice is crude it is restricted in its application. When love appears as the sole law of life it is applied to all mankind. The jealous gods of the age of barbarism restricted their favours to a few select peoples. The God of love embraces the whole world as a single family.

Now when the spiritual world has reached its widest dimensions and includes the whole of mankind, man attains moral freedom and thence seeks to control his life by his own reason. He

thus begins to search for truth and light to guide him to the good. Naturally his first aim will be to investigate and criticise the ideals which he finds already in vogue—those very ideals we have been considering.

Is there anything irrational or impossible in this? Surely not, for when the time comes that man sees the necessity for making such an investigation, he has attained an intellectual and spiritual altitude sufficient for the task. He is in a position not only to understand the age in which he lives, but to appreciate and value the various ideals his countrymen have cherished from the commencement of their history, and in all probability those held by other peoples also. His knowledge and experience will enable him to ascertain the nature and value of the spiritual worlds which various people inhabit. The trained eye will know the relative place which each ideal occupies in the ladder of development, its power to produce well-being. As one goes farther back on the road of civilisation, narrower becomes the outlook, more prison-like the world—speaking, that is, on the whole. With the attainment of free moral self-consciousness, therefore, man becomes the philosopher who is able to recognise the limitations of the ideals and unities on which



mankind are dependent prior to the age of moral freedom.

And certainly increasing numbers in every land are to-day beginning to criticise life, to look abroad for paths to a fuller and more healthy spiritual existence than that which at present is possible to most people. Moreover they are looking far afield. Many in the West are turning to the East, and many in the East are turning to the West. The former are realising that they would be all the better for adopting something of the leisurely attitude towards life which is characteristic of the East, while the latter are realising that there is something in Western life which they would be all the better for incorporating. The Eastern has the happy art of taking life with ease, of looking at existence quietly and wholly—an art almost unknown in the West. To us, with our devouring ambition, life is apt to be a thing of to-morrow rather than of to-day, the bunch of grapes that for ever hangs just out of reach. By reason of our hot haste, the reckless manner in which we pursue our uncriticised purposes, the restfulness of the Eastern temperament is denied us. Our mad rush after things material is destroying our power to see the more precious things, which yet lie near, things beautiful and spiritual.

Accordingly we miss the hundred little pleasures which ought to come into every day, and neglect the host of minor duties, with their attendant joys which, after all, are perhaps the most real and substantial part of life, the fulness of it, so to speak. So, on the other hand, the East just lacks that vigour of purpose, and that enthusiasm for life and action, which characterise Western civilisation. Now that we have reached the age of moral freedom, the human mind the world over is beginning to scan the whole realm of being, past and present, in order to find that good and perfect life which man is called upon to win.

For three primary reasons, therefore, First, that a moral law operates in the world, which must be heeded if pain, disease and death are to be avoided and happiness, health and life—spiritual as well as physical—gained; Second, that at every stage in the history of a people's development an ideal has consciously or unconsciously existed, which has been the condition of development to the great body of that people; Third, that with the attainment of free moral self-consciousness, a spiritual altitude is reached and a content of experience gathered whereby the individual is able to make a survey of the entire range of human experience, to

understand, appreciate and estimate the value of every ideal or level of civilisation which history presents or art reveals—for these three reasons, I say, we know that morals possess objectivity ; that of the numerous ideals which history reveals, the one capable of guaranteeing the most abundant life can be discovered, and thus that a science of morals is possible.

But if the human mind is capable of ascertaining which of the many existing ideals is the best, is it also able to discover new ideals, capable of guiding humanity in the future, leading it to still grander heights of spiritual attainment? That question I will endeavour to answer in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER VI

### CAN FINITE MIND DISCOVER NEW IDEALS?

SO far our discussion of the possibility of a science of morals has been confined to past experience. We have shown, that is to say, that a science of experience is possible, that reason is capable of ascertaining which of the numerous ideals by which men and women live, or have lived, is the best, capable of yielding the most abundant life. But progress demands that new relationships be entered into from time to time, and thus that the bounds of past experience be transcended. The question arises, therefore, is the unaided human mind capable of guiding man to new experience, from the known to the unknown, with any degree of certainty that the new way will be the way of life? In other words, if man assumes the right to be his own moral guide, to take full charge of his life, what guarantee have we that he will be able to make progress, discover new life-truth,

new ways of living, new ideals whereby he may realise a more abundant life?

This is a vital question, for it is obvious that if life is to become richer, consciousness more intense and alive, it must be by virtue of better principles; but if the human mind is not capable of discovering such principles, then man must be at the mercy of conditions, in which case it were idle to talk about a science of morals. For a science of morals which cannot assist man to cross over from the realised to the realisable, is a prison-house.

It is a simple fact of experience that no established social forms or modes of conduct can, for more than a limited period, satisfy the deeper cravings of the soul, as there are times when the latter, thirsting for new life, wholly rebels against the confines of its existence; and although its way be dark, it is supported by a presentiment that a better way of life is possible. For every ideal is necessarily circumscribed, involves a specific view of humanity and the world, and a particular order of relationships; whereas the soul grows, becomes ever more sympathetic, cultured and refined, in consequence of which it must needs enter, on occasion, into new relationships with the world. To do this it must procure new ideals. If, therefore, human

reason cannot discover such ideals, something else must; in which case man must be in some sense the victim of fate.

The question that confronts us, therefore, is: whence arises new moral truth? by what means is it acquired? Is it discovered by man? Or is it revealed to him by some supernatural agency? Or, again, is it a deduction from new experience forced upon him by conditions? To know precisely its source, and thus by what means man makes the transition from the known to the unknown, from the experienced to what is as yet unfamiliar, is of profound importance, as it will reveal whether man is the master or the servant of his fate. If it be the case that the human mind is capable of discovering new moral truth, new reservoirs of spiritual power will emerge, whence conquests will be made which will so revolutionise conduct as to transform society inside a single generation.

Obviously, if the primary cause of progress does not reside within the soul, it must be either a supernatural or a natural force operating outside it. In other words, the driving force behind civilisation and, indeed, all life, must reside either in the developing organism itself, in a God which interferes with that organism from the outside, or in conditions.



Each view has its adherents: the rationalist, the theological, and that of the economic determinist.

To say the least, it is somewhat humiliating to have to believe that the primary cause of human progress lies outside the being that progresses, no matter whether it be a God which stimulates by vision, or conditions which quicken by suffering. It scarcely adds to the glory of God that he cannot trust his own creation; nor does it say much for the human soul, if all its advances are forced upon it by conditions. Whether man is led on from before, or kicked along from behind, does not much matter. What does matter is that he should be something more than an automaton, a mere plastic mass at the mercy of supernatural, blind or incalculable forces. Whether man is doomed to accept all his morals on trust, or as the result of external compulsion, conduct cannot possibly be the living force it ought to be.

According to the theological view, human reason is incapable of transcending experience and thus of guiding the soul into the unknown. According to economic determinism it would not matter if reason were capable of doing that, as man must needs go whither conditions compel him, not whither he would.

In regard to the first view, it can never be proved, of course, that God is not the source of all truth, and that the way of life is not revealed by God to man as the latter progresses. But why should we hold such a view when we find that the attainment of truth follows patient seeking and anxious thought as surely as effect follows cause in any natural happening? All the known facts of life support the view that truth is the reward of those who diligently seek it, no matter what be their religious persuasion. Moreover, is it not the case that spiritual truth is nearly always discovered by laymen, who for their pains are generally attacked by priests and theologians, and branded as the enemies of truth and religion? And it is a striking commentary on this view that most of those who at present are shouting loudest in its support are among the chief defenders of a "morality" which is an outrage to decency and commonsense. Besides, is it not a fact that every people, whether slightly or intensely religious, whether believers in idols, in one or many gods, has developed, attained truth, goodness and well-being? No one would deny that the Greeks made progress, for instance, or that they produced one of the noblest civilisations that have as yet appeared ;

yet the Greeks held no allegiance to the God of the Hebrews. It is obvious, therefore, that there must be a universal law governing the discovery of truth. But if truth be the reward of diligent searching, then is a science of morals possible.

Regarding the view that progress is primarily due to conditions, something has been said already. I would here add that in considering this question we are confronted with organised mind on the one hand, and dead, if stubborn circumstances on the other. Now whatever influence the latter may have, being blind and will-less they are bound to yield at last to mind, to the desire of a purposive soul. But it may reasonably be argued that conditions are not wholly will-less, being in some sense the outcome of someone else's will, from which it would follow that a man in conflict with conditions is really in conflict with other wills. In that case, as all history proves, victory would tend to go to the side which held the strongest convictions, *i.e.*, the finest ideals.

There are two big struggles in progress at the present time. One is for the possession of material things between those who desire such possession. The other is between those who accept a materialistic interpretation of life and believe in the right to possess unlimited riches,



and those who accept a spiritual interpretation of life and believe in sharing material things. Whence has come this latter view? It cannot have been inspired by conditions, because it is high above them and in complete contradiction with them. It must have arisen within the soul as a result of culture in its various forms. But having emerged, it is an unflinching challenge to conditions and, far more, to the ideas from which those conditions spring. Because life has a physical and material as well as a spiritual side, every new ideal involves material and economic changes; but the important point is that economic changes are desired not for their own sake so much as for the sake of the vision or ideal which prompts them.

Now adverse conditions can only give rise to revolt against those conditions, and to attempts at a mechanical adjustment of them. But because they are mechanical they will be futile, as they will be countered by moves which will restore the old relations, as witness the so-called reforms of the Victorian era in England. There is only one way of permanently improving conditions, as we are fast finding out to-day, and that is by teaching better ideals. New ideals involve new valuations, and by demanding a more spiritual order of relationships, call

for a more exalted morality. And spiritual ideals issue from spiritual minds. Industrialism, as such, cannot create them, although the wealth and culture it affords may help to do so. Hence whilst conditions may cause endless upheavals, true progress depends upon better ideals which can only come from the aspiring soul.

Without thought it is not possible to change the constitution of the soul, one's ideals and social relationships, etc. Hence unless an attempt is made to discover and follow the deeper aspirations of the soul nothing will result but fruitless endeavours to establish "justice". During the past century, in the West, conditions have changed frequently and radically, yet because life has retained its materialistic character, conditions are as bad as ever, despite all our science and machinery, our power of mass production. It is thus obvious that on the basis of the old materialism, it is not possible to establish a more secure or happy society. Apart from a new spiritual idealism nothing can possibly check the present social decay, put an end to class warfare or economic servitude. On one condition only, *viz.*, that mankind has developed spiritually, has evolved a new soul and acquired a vision of a more spiritual type

of existence, is there any hope of salvation for our age.

The idealism that is taking root to-day, and that is behind all the chief efforts that are being made in the interest of a nobler civilisation, is the outcome of a vision, a demand for a more spiritual and wholesome existence. As a result of the development that has taken place during the era of capitalism, notwithstanding all its spiritual destructivity, humanity has acquired a new soul and thus a new vision. If this were not so the struggle for better conditions would be sordid and hopeless, an endless clash between red armies and white armies.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that conditions cannot be permanently changed except as the result of nobler ideals. Fancy trying to change the war-like character of modern industrial and commercial life by means of legislation alone, that is, without at the same time trying to implant in the mind of the people at large ideals founded upon spiritual values. Consequently it is absurd to say that development is determined by conditions when it is entirely dependent upon aspiration and conscious ideals. And ideals are the product of the eternal conflict between the soul's aspirations and conditions, between the demand for spiritual



expansion and the limitations of environment, at the root of which are narrow, selfish and materialistic ideas. There is no denying the limiting, stimulating, and suggestive power of environment, but the incontrovertible fact remains that there can be no real development, social or individual, apart from a transformed mind, a conception of life capable of revolutionising conduct and all one's relationships. Before a man can really and permanently improve his life, increase his well-being, he must undergo some sort of conversion, see the world with new eyes and adopt nobler motives. However much a materialist's outward life may change, if he remain a materialist he will continue to be a cause of enmity and disorder in the world. A man may have more comfort and less worry as a result of increased economic power, but these alone will not produce a finer personality, or happiness. Only changes in the inner constitution of the soul, in the structure of the self, can do that, give rise to progress or increase well-being.

Progress relates essentially to the soul, and implies a growth in the self, a fundamental modification of ideas. A vital modification of conduct must necessarily be preceded by a modification of the self, of one's ideals, one's

attitude towards one's fellows and towards life as a whole. Every man lives in a world of his own creation, and in accordance with an interpretation of life peculiar to that world; and until such world, along with the values which it presupposes, is modified, no radical change in conduct can take place or any real progress be made.

Seeing, then, that mind interprets life and the world by means of ideas and ideals, and that a reconstitution of the self, involving a reform of conduct, can only take place upon a modification of those ideas and ideals, it follows that the chief cause of development is inward and not outward, to wit, aspiration.

Such being the case, what are the instruments by which progress is attained? In other words, by what means does the mind discover new values, new truth, develop more adequate ideals and cultivate finer relationships?

Not infrequently we may observe a man pursuing a straight course, keeping strictly to a certain order of conduct, turning neither to right nor left, and then quite suddenly begin to falter, venture on new territory, so to speak, and finally veer off at a tangent and proceed in an entirely new direction. What is the explanation? It would appear that his life is not

satisfactory, that he has outgrown his environment, and needs a larger and more significant one. What does such an one do? Does he make blind sallies into the unknown, act as others do without thinking what he is about? Certainly not. Life is too precious to be thus trifled with. Besides, one does not give up old habits without a struggle. To adopt a new principle is to create and inhabit a new world. Thus whatever he does he will have some reason for doing, some guarantee that he will gain the opportunity he needs, the satisfaction he seeks. Hence he will look well about him, use his imagination, and carefully experiment. What a man in such a situation experiences is the disparity between the realised and the realisable self, between what he is and what he feels capable of becoming. Since the time that a former expansion of experience took place, the self has developed, attained a fuller consciousness, in consequence of which there is a demand for a wider experience, a profounder ideal and a more vital system of relationship. In other words, the consciousness of disparity between the realised and the realisable self marks the beginning of a transition to a higher level of being, which is no sooner manifest than the mind shows signs of restlessness and begins to look abroad for



suggestions for a new way of life, a richer experience. But how is a man to know whether the suggested modes of living will increase his well-being? He cannot prove that they will, for he is dealing with the as yet—so far as he is concerned—unrealised; and experience is the ultimate test of moral truth. It is evident, therefore, that reason alone cannot discover new moral truth. But reason aided by imagination and what we might call sensibility, is capable of discovering, if not proof, the maximum of probability. At any rate it can establish sufficient certainty with respect to the value of certain new modes of conduct to warrant their adoption.

Close observation shows that new modes of conduct are never very far removed from those in vogue. Before a man can let go that which he has, though it be but a poor foothold, he must have some assurance that he is going to light on solid ground. In making its ventures the soul keeps firmly moored to the past. All new or possible modes of conduct are projections of the imagination from the past, extensions which are suggested by experience. Whenever the suggestion of a new relationship is made to the mind, the imagination applies it, endeavours to picture it in actual experience, and thus to

estimate its life-producing value. If the result is satisfactory and promises to increase well-being, the suggested mode of conduct will probably be adopted; and if after experimentation it is found to be successful, it certainly will be adopted. Should the new mode exemplify a new principle it will cause a spiritual revolution, effect a re-valuation and re-interpretation of the whole of experience. In this way, then, through the instrumentality of reason, imagination and sensibility, is new moral truth discovered.

Let me illustrate the process by means of an example.

A and B, let us say, are two traders who transact business in accordance with the recognised customs and rules operating in the business world. They have accepted these customs as they have accepted their table manners, naturally and inevitably, from the first, believing them to be in harmony with the eternal laws of being. Now A and B have done business together for many years, and in consequence have become rather friendly, which fact has much to do with what follows. In the normal course of events an occasion arises where A, by reason of some secret knowledge which B does not possess, finds that he can make an abnormally large profit out of B, so much profit that

it might be the ruin of B. Then a strange thing happens. Although there is nothing in the anticipated transaction that is not right and just according to the moral code which both accept, A finds himself doubting the legitimacy of completing it, and thus of taking advantage of his friend. Now had the other party to the transaction been any other person in the business world than B, A would not have hesitated, but would have completed the deal. But seeing that it is B, and that B has become a friend, A begins to hesitate and ponder. Still there is no definite conviction in A's mind that he ought not to proceed with the transaction, no certainty that in doing so he would be committing a moral wrong. The business world is full of such deals. Yet the fact remains that A is uneasy, in grave doubt as to the legitimacy of what, at first, had appeared unquestionable.

Having been brought up in an ordinary Middle Class home, and taught from his youth that the object of business is to secure as much wealth as one can for oneself and one's family, no matter what effect such policy may have upon society at large, humanity in A's mind is sharply divided into two unequal groups. In the one group stands A with all his kith and kin, and a few family and special friends thrown



in. The rest of mankind are in the other group. Between the two groups, at any rate so far as material considerations are concerned, there exists inherent and apparently irreconcilable antagonism. Now the real cause of A's doubt is the fact that the crude world of his life-long habitation is beginning to give way, for here he finds himself questioning his right to treat B as an outcast, as he really ought to, seeing that B belongs to the outer circle. Growing friendliness and an increasing appreciation of the personality of B have caused the accepted business codes, at any rate in the present instance, to appear questionable. In A's mind B is tending to undergo transformation from a unit of opposing force into a veritable spiritual being, a being with a personality and a soul. Indeed A's problem is whether he shall treat B as an enemy or a friend, as a beast red in tooth and claw or as a living soul.

And the problem is no easy one, for not only does it involve A's material fortune and his spiritual relationship with B, it affects, A finds, on fuller reflection, his relationship with the entire business world, and thus his whole moral code. At the back of A's mind there is a dim consciousness that things are not quite what he has been taught to think them, and he has

presentiments of changes which will revolutionise his conduct, his conception of humanity and of life. For the issue is wider than it seems, as A cannot possibly modify his conduct towards B without in due course coming to feel that all men are something more than economic forces, and that society ought to be bound together by nobler ties and laws than those which prevail. Indeed A is on the point of making a great discovery, and of entering into a quite new order of social relationships. But how is he to make the transition from one moral plane to another, to know for certain that the suggested new relationship will be the means of increasing his well-being? If he decides one way he will probably ruin a life and create an inveterate enemy. If he decides another he will sacrifice a fortune and gain—what? What does it all mean?

A is compelled to think harder than he has done for years. He examines the pros and cons of the situation and projects in his imagination realms of life and thought hitherto unexplored by him. Finally he makes the startling discovery that there are more forms of wealth than those which he has been wont to recognise, and that possibly some of these are much more valuable than riches. By and by he comes to

see that although love, or the spiritual interpretation of life, may involve the sacrifice of riches, it is capable of yielding untold spiritual wealth—a beautiful personality, increased power of service, of appreciation, of creating and enjoying fellowship. What A has actually been doing, in fact, is to paint pictures in his imagination of the new life that the principles suggested by the changed relationship towards B would tend to establish, and to test the value of that life by an appeal to feeling and intuition, or what I might perhaps call the unity of sensibility. It is in accordance with that test that A's decision will ultimately be made. For, after all, what A is really concerned about is his well-being, and there is absolutely no reason why he should not accept any decision, abandon forever his old life with its countless barriers, once he sees the superior life-value of a new principle.

In the foregoing illustration we have a simple description of the process whereby new ideals and modes of conduct are discovered, and a transition from one level of existence to another is effected. The conditions, incentives and suggestions may vary, but the process is always essentially the same. We thus see that new modes of conduct are related to, whilst being an advance upon, existing modes: that they flow



out of the past, as it were, while yet going beyond it. But although there is only a step between the old and the new way of life, it involves a revolution, a complete reorganisation of one's conduct and relationships. A new ideal results, which ultimately leads to the creation of a new self.

If this description be true to life, it follows that finite mind can discover moral truth, and thus that it contains within itself the means of progress. For the discovery which A made in the above illustration, was for him an absolute discovery. Others may have made it before him, but A was not aware of the fact; he would probably become aware of it afterwards. By following the suggestions of experience, thinking over them, projecting them in the imagination, and testing their implications by means of intuition, or sensibility, a new ideal may be created by which one's whole life will be transformed—one's outlook, one's moral code, and one's system of relationships.

It may be interesting to note that the feeling of harmony, or unity of sensibility by which decisions regarding the value of a suggested new line of conduct are made, is the source of art, all our judgments of beauty. Beauty is a form of truth; it is truth expressed pictorially,

that is, in terms of feeling. In art truth appears as beauty; for in the last analysis the truly beautiful is the truly good. The purpose of art is to portray life in its true colours, to reveal values; and its success will depend upon the artist's power to perceive life's deeper harmonies, its underlying truth. Art interprets life in accordance with the artist's vision of it. The faculty by which judgments of beauty are made is the same as that by which new moral truth is discovered. Thus what we may call the art-faculty is a necessity of the soul in its eternal effort to realise itself and scale the illimitable heights of spiritual attainment.

It is well to observe, moreover, that this method of arriving at new moral truth has been in operation from the beginning of civilisation, and probably much longer. Indeed there is nothing to prove that animals do not possess the power to sense "truth" (more advantageous ways of living), by means of feeling; that changes in their habits and relationships are not the outcome of instinctive gropings after a more congenial existence. And certainly, as we have already pointed out, for centuries after the dawn of history man is not conscious of the process by which he arrives at new moral truth, and never dreams that the

new ideals which spring into his mind from time to time are the product of his own spiritual restlessness and his own thinking. And is it not significant that man becomes an artist long before he becomes a scientist or a philosopher, a proof that truth is felt, exists as beauty, as a feeling of harmony, long before it is capable of being demonstrated? Every great prophet is such by virtue of his being both thinker and artist. Possessing the true artist-soul he peers through the shadows of a waning life and catches a gleam of something brighter beyond, a ray which, magnified by contemplation becomes an effulgence, a vision of a new heaven and a new earth whose glory he feels it his duty to describe. Art, as the forerunner of science, pictures that which at a later stage science demonstrates. Truth must be felt, pictured and applied, woven into the texture of experience, before it can be demonstrated. Art reveals truth as beauty. At a later stage science expresses that truth in logical terms. There are thus three stages in the evolution of moral truth: the art or feeling stage, the experimental stage, and the scientific stage. At the first stage truth exists as a picture, and is an expression of the harmony of the feelings; at the second stage it is applied to experience,



and thus "proved"; at the third stage it is demonstrated.

We are able to say, therefore, that the attainment of moral truth is not the outcome of blind groping, but of purpose and reason. Every step forward that man has made has been the result of suggestion, deliberation and experiment. At every turn of the road aspiration has been guided by a sense of the fitness of things, by instinct and intuition. Not that the ultimate end of every step forward has been either seen or felt. It is impossible that it could be. On the contrary, when a man starts out on a new road he sees but a very little way in front of him. But because he feels that what he is about to do is in harmony with reason, he believes that it must lead in the direction of true self-realisation, ultimate as well as immediate good. So there is a very real sense in which we can say that the end was involved in the beginning. It is a far cry from absolute monarchy to economic democracy; yet one can say that economic democracy was foreshadowed on the day that an aristocracy wrested from a monarch a portion of his regal power.

Having thus shown that a science of morals is possible, and that finite mind can discover

moral truth, the way is open to a study of life with a view to the discovery of an ideal adequate to the twentieth century.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE NATURE OF THE GOOD

THE present chapter brings us to a new phase of our theme. The preceding chapters dealt largely with the presuppositions of what naturally constitutes the more fruitful part of our inquiry. Our task is now to try and discover an adequate ideal for the present day, the good which man ought to seek, and the condition of its realisation.

In starting out on any quest, no matter for what, it is necessary to have a clear idea of the nature of the thing desired. An inventor who put up a costly laboratory without having any idea of what he desired to discover or invent, would not accomplish much, despite all his preparations. Likewise an explorer who went out in search of the North Pole, but who had no idea what the North Pole was, whether it was a mighty pillar of ice stretching away into the clouds, or merely a certain position of latitude and longitude, would never find it,



for he would not know it when he got there. The ideal is not likely to be discovered by accident, nor to be realised without thought and effort. We thus ask: what is the good which mankind ought to seek to-day? What is its nature, and in what manner of conduct is it to be found?

Our aim is an eminently practical one, that, *viz.*, of discovering how man ought to live so as to develop his powers to the utmost and realise the most abundant life. Indeed, our inquiry largely consists of an analysis of human consciousness, of the mind and heart of man with a view to discovering the laws of their highest development and satisfaction.

I have already said that every life has some sort of regularity or consistency in it, that every mind interprets life and determines conduct by reference to some concept or notion of good. All conduct presupposes and tends to produce certain relationships with the world and with mankind. Thus the relationships created by one person will differ considerably from those created by another. They may be relationships of suspicion, fear, enmity, or love, etc. But whatever they be they will give rise to appropriate emotions, which will reveal their motive and at the same time their value, the

quality of the "good" they are capable of yielding. Hence the various "goods" which different people realise have not all the same value. The "good" realised by the miser will be different from that realised by the man of open heart. Surely, then, it is the duty of every man to discover and produce those relationships with mankind and with the world generally which are productive of the greatest well-being.

In the search for an answer to the question : what is the good ? it will be best, perhaps, first to study the answers with which history furnishes us. By so doing I believe we shall be helped to a true conception. At any rate we shall be saved from falling into certain grave errors. Greece, for example, gave rise to a number of Schools, each of which believed it had solved the problem of human life, discovered the good which man ought to seek, and the method of its realisation. Thus the Greeks had a Cynic School, from which sprang the Stoic School ; a Cyrenaic School, from which sprang the Epicurean School ; an Elite School, and what we may call a Religious School. The Cynics, obsessed with the thought of the large place which pain occupied in human existence, sought refuge in inaction. Even to love was sooner or

later to suffer; therefore, said they, it were better not to love. The Stoics, not quite so extreme, endeavoured to control passion by living in accordance with "Nature," or natural law. Whereas the Cynics had said that the good consisted in avoiding pain, the Stoics asserted that it consisted in moral perfection, in the peace of mind which attends the consciousness of living in harmony with natural law. The Cyrenaics held that the good consisted in pleasure, unrestrained enjoyment. The Epicureans, seeing the dangers of unrestrained enjoyment, took the long view and, while holding that pleasure was the good, advocated prudence. The ideal life, they argued, consists of an unbroken series of pleasures. The Elite School held that the good was to be found in knowledge and its pursuit: to be wise, to understand the world and its processes, and to contemplate those processes, the movement of the heavens, the strivings and evolutions of men—that was life. Finally, and when Greece had ceased to be an independent nation, there arose a School which held that the good consisted of a state of ecstasy, a condition of soul wherein finite mind was transcended, the individual having submerged his identity, as it were, in God.



These Schools had their representatives in Roman history, and they have had in them modern European history. Monasticism has at different times stood for certain types of ecstasy ; and so, in a less degree, has Puritanism. The belief that pleasure is the good has been more or less popular among the commercially successful classes of Europe and America during recent decades, despite their puritan professions ; it has also been upheld by several French and British Schools, having had its finest statement in Utilitarianism, the theory that the good consists in seeking the Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number. And as was the case in Greece, so in Europe, the belief that pleasure is the good called forth its antithesis, the belief that the good is to be found in moral perfection. Moreover, anyone acquainted with such centres of learning as Oxford and Cambridge, will know that there are never wanting those who hold that the good is to be found in knowledge, in philosophy and a life of contemplation.

Before we consider these various Schools in detail, it will be well to point out that none of them can supply the answer we are seeking, in that each rests on a more or less abstract view of human nature. According to one School the sentient nature must be denied ; according to

another the sentient nature is all that matters; a third School would rule out everything but intellect, while a fourth would extol the imagination, and by means of it fly away from every other part of the self. In each case, therefore, the attainment of the good entails the negation of some faculty of the soul.

But perhaps this tendency to over-estimate the importance of certain attributes of the soul is not difficult to understand when we remember that man only discovers himself little by little, first one faculty and then another, so that he is not able, until a comparatively late date, to unify his manifold being, organise his diverse powers so as to make them contribute to a good which necessitates an all-round development. As man in his historical development becomes conscious of his various powers, the tendency is to over-emphasise that part of his being of which he has last become conscious, and to identify the good with its sole development. Thus when man discovered his soul he tended to concentrate upon a religious life, and when he discovered his intellect, to give himself up to contemplation and philosophy. Not until man becomes conscious of his whole self, and is able to discover a good which unifies all his powers, can his life be really satisfactory.

Instead of an abstract existence which finds the good first in physical pleasure, then in religious ecstasy, next in philosophy, and afterwards in moral perfection, a life is required in which all necessary activities are unified. No theory of the good can be satisfactory which shuts out whole fields of experience, activities which are necessary to the continuation of life, as, for instance, eating and drinking, making things to use or wear, fellowship, religious communion, contemplation, the appreciation of art, etc. To cut out necessary activities by denying that they are capable of contributing to the good is to cramp personality and impoverish experience.

Having thus prepared the ground, let us consider more closely the four conceptions of the good already mentioned. We will take them in the following order: That the good is to be found (1) in knowledge or intellectual excellence; (2) in religious ecstasy; (3) in pleasure; (4) in moral perfection.

(1) On three grounds the theory that the good is to be found in the possession and pursuit of truth is to be condemned: (*a*) that it provides no place for the application of truth, without which truth cannot exist; (*b*) that it does not unify the whole of life and thus guarantee



complete self-realisation ; (c) that it does not permit of the good being realised by all.

(a) If knowledge were the good, and everybody pursued it, who would do the world's work? And if nobody worked, sowed, span or hewed, constructed engines or other mighty works, how could there be knowledge at all? Nay, how could anyone live? Knowledge, like faith and love increases by being used ; it cannot grow otherwise. Moreover, if we do not apply knowledge, how can we know that it is true? Apart from its application truth has no existence. Its value lies in the fact that it facilitates experience, increases comfort, gives to life beauty and fulness. Knowledge which does not enable a man to realise his being, enrich his life with more beautiful relationships, is valueless. "Truth for truth's sake" is a vain pretension ; for if truth be not used to increase and ennoble life it is nothing but a string of empty words.

Were it not for constructive labour, the making of things for man's use and enjoyment, truth could not exist, as there would be no data from which to derive it. The world would be a dead world, chaotic, fantastic, meaningless. In labour truth is applied to matter ; and in applying it new truth is discovered. Consequently

the thought-life must always be limited by the work-life. Just as we should never have had a science of architecture or shipbuilding if our forefathers had never constructed huts and rafts, so in every department of life the growth of knowledge depends upon the application of knowledge. Were every man to shut himself up in a study, the air would soon be thick with fictions and fancies; but there would be a famine of truth.

It is an old idea that truth can be discovered by thinking alone. In Greece it had a considerable vogue. Indeed Plato was largely responsible for its spread in that country by teaching that the external world is nothing more than an imitation of the real world, which exists in thought alone. In reading Plato one sometimes gets the impression that man exists for truth's sake, rather than truth for man's sake.

It is because man is a worker, a creator, an aspiring soul that truth is rendered possible and necessary. Man transforms the dead world of matter into the living world of beauty and spirit; and truth is valuable just in so far as it enables that to be done. Truth is life's guide and interpreter, the revealer of new possibility, of the goal towards which humanity ought to travel. Science, art, philosophy are the products

of an achieving, aspiring spirit, and exist to enable man to live more abundantly, realise himself at higher and higher levels.

(b) It follows from the above that this theory cannot unify all the activities which are necessary to the carrying on of human life, and those who uphold it must choose between the following alternatives: either they must die, bake their own bread and make their own clothes, etc., or else engage others to do such things for them. Yet to the extent that these practical activities be engaged in, no matter by whom, life is not being realised. The theory thus breaks down, for what we are seeking is a theory which explains how to realise the good in every necessary activity.

Only when philosophy is regarded as one of the functions of life, and is pursued by a few men as their special life-work, is it justified, for then the pursuit of truth constitutes only one element in a many-sided life. In such case one man contributes truth to humanity as another contributes cloth, bricks or cabbages, and in so doing fulfils a useful function; and when his work is finished he participates in other activities, enters into other relationships, and so lives a full and complete life. But in such case not the pursuit and possession of truth



is the good, but complete self-realisation, which is another matter.

(c) Finally, a life of pure contemplation, even if it were ideal, is at best only possible to a few, as artisans, etc., must be found to do the world's work. But what about these latter, have they not a right to live—to be philosophers? Why should one set of men be doomed to a barren life of toil and denied the opportunity of realising the good? In order that a few might live the true life both Plato and Aristotle, like most of the Greek philosophers, agreed that slavery was absolutely necessary. People in a similar position to-day believe exactly the same thing, but they use another terminology: the term slavery is in ill-favour. Plato and Aristotle believed that human nature was of more than one kind, being compounded in various ways, one compound being comparable to fine gold, another to silver, and a third to iron. These were represented by the aristocracy, the soldiers and professional classes, and the artisans, respectively.

But to those of us who do not believe in the inherent superiority of one class over another, the idea that there is one kind of good for the philosopher and another kind for the artisan is fantastic and impossible. What we are anxious

to find is not the good for a particular class, but for man as man, a good that is possible to all. We are no more concerned with aristocrats and philosophers than we are with tinkers and tailors. For philosophy, like tailoring, is just one of the various functions by which man develops his soul, derives satisfaction, and renders service to the community. To say, therefore, that the good is to be found in the pursuit of truth but not in the making of beautiful clothing is absurd. Every form of human service ought to be a means of life, and every man, whether he be a philosopher or a tailor ought, in addition to following his calling, to be able to fulfil many other obligations—social, political, domestic—have many interests and pursuits. Only thus is it possible for life to be satisfying and complete. The ideal life must guarantee the development of the whole man, and at the same time be realisable by all; if it fails to do this it cannot be valid.

(2) That the good is to be found in religious ecstasy. The argument against this theory is substantially the same as that against the theory just examined. A life devoted wholly to religion, to communion with God, prayer and religious exercises, is just as impossible, if applied universally, and just as negatory, vacant

and disappointing, as the philosophic life. In the first place, this ideal is antagonistic to and the complete negation of many of the deepest needs and longings of the mind and heart. Ultimately it is destined to reduce life to a mere point of consciousness. In the second place, as was the case with the philosophic life, it could not be lived by all, as someone would have to do the world's work, which, according to this theory also, is extraneous to the good, devoid of life-value. Thus by reason of its abstract character, of the fact that it does not unify all essential activities, and is not, therefore, possible to all, the theory that the good is to be found in religious ecstasy cannot be true.

As the object of the seeker after intellectual excellence is to attain truth, so the object of the seeker after religious excellence is to discover and live in perpetual communion with God. But just as the mere contemplation of truth leads to fanciful and worthless dreams, so the unrelieved effort to find and contemplate God leads to vacancy.

Only a vigorous, many-sided creative life can bring man into vital relationship with the great creative forces, with God. The religious devotee may be able to say that he has found God ; but he will have lost everything else in the process,



even himself; while his God will be a colourless, impersonal being of whom he will not be able to say anything except that he is "God". In that meaningless word will be expressed the sum and substance of his life. To destroy one's identity thus, reduce one's consciousness to a mere point, and become merged in an abstraction called God, is to deny life, to annihilate oneself. Because it leads to negation, therefore, the constant narrowing down of consciousness, the ideal of religious ecstasy cannot be accepted as man's guide to well-being and self-fulfilment. However we may define human life, two conditions it must always fulfil if it is to be satisfactory: it must find a place for creative effort, work, achievement; it must also insure the constant expansion of experience, the gradual extension of consciousness and the deepening of the well-spring of emotion.

(3) That the good is to be found in pleasure. According to the more extreme section of the Greek Pleasure Schools, the good is to be found in a never-ending succession of pleasures. The ideal is a life chock full of pleasures. Whatever gives pleasure is good; whatever gives pain is evil. We do not enjoy things, say the adherents of this School, because they are good, they are good because we enjoy them. Life knows no

moral obligation, no spiritual necessity; self-sacrifice is a principle of death. Nor is there any recognition of a nobler form of experience to which the soul aspires, such as Christ, and other great prophets, have foreshadowed. Indeed many of the Greek Hedonists did not even acknowledge a to-morrow; life was purely a thing of to-day! "Let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die," was the ruling principle of their life.

The recklessness to which this philosophy led, however, caused its supporters to modify their views. Self-abandonment led to pain, and pain was evil, hell. It thus became necessary to practise moderation. But do as they would the Hedonists could not wholly fill their lives with pleasure. Hence the weakness of their theory. They could not avoid the vacant places in experience, patches devoid of pleasure. Indeed, as time went on, these vacant patches tended to become more numerous. Then, as now, drunkenness produced headache, debauchery ennui. Yet moderation and abstinence meant vacancy, for pleasure being the good all activities which did not give pleasure, no matter that they were necessary, were hateful and evil. Thus the adherents of this School, like those of the philosophic School, despised productive

labour, and sought to belong to the idle, non-productive class. This meant, of course, that those who were destined to toil were shut off from the good, *i.e.*, as the adherents of this School conceived it. Now, do as one will, it is impossible to fill life with an unbroken series of pleasures. It is equally impossible for the pleasure seeker to avoid pain, or periods when satiation, lassitude, and the necessity for productive labour make pleasure impossible. Yet if pleasure be the good, all the moments in which one is not enjoying pleasure, one is not living. But an insatiable thirst ever haunts those who seek pleasure, which causes every moment that is not consumed by pleasure to be a moment of misery.

Thus the Pleasure theory breaks down where the other theories broke down. It is inadequate in that it fails to unify all the activities that man in the ordinary course of his life must needs engage in. Either all must do a few things which do not yield pleasure, or a number must spend nearly all their lives doing such things. And if pleasure be the good, what one does apart from pleasure-seeking must be a source of irritation and misery. No doubt to a leisured class, a life of pleasure may be theoretically possible; but only theoretically, as to



enjoy pleasure fully a man must work as well as play, produce as well as consume. In creative labour man develops insight, the power to appreciate the beautiful and the good, cultures his spirit and thus makes himself worthy and capable of fellowship. And what pleasure can compare with fellowship, especially fellowship with heroic spirits? But the price of fellowship is service.

All necessary activities ought to be, and rightly undertaken are, life-producing activities. Moreover the man who creates nothing useful or beautiful for the benefit of mankind cannot be fully developed, and thus able to enjoy any kind of pleasure as it should be enjoyed.

There is much more to be said, however, for the General Happiness theory of the Utilitarians, although its superiority over the Pleasure theory of the Hedonists is due to the admission of an element which no Pleasure theory can consistently admit. I refer to the moral factor, the consciousness of right arising from the fact of social necessity, which is made to constitute an essential element in Utilitarianism. The latter theory affirms that pleasure, or happiness, is the good, but adds that the maximum of happiness can only be attained as a result of sacrifice, that is, by each member of the

community being willing, on occasion, to forego personal advantage for the social good, in order to secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number. This brings in the moral factor, the effect of which is seen in the substitution of the word happiness for that of pleasure, implying, of course, that the emotional value of conduct which involves sacrifice is greater than that of conduct springing from selfish desire.

But can Utilitarians consistently hold that pleasure is the good, and at the same time that pleasure is qualitative? They very definitely say that pleasure is the good, and even affirm that choice ought always to be made with reference to the pleasure anticipated. But then they make an important proviso. When personal happiness is opposed to the happiness of the majority, they declare, the former ought to be sacrificed for the sake of the latter. Then comes the important admission that as a result of such sacrifice a new kind of pleasure will be experienced. With this statement I agree; but what right have Utilitarians, who believe that pleasure is the good, to promise a superior kind of pleasure as the reward of sacrifice? For to what is that superiority due? Quite obviously it is due to the moral quality of the act, that is, to the consciousness that one has

done a good thing. But by admitting the moral factor, Utilitarianism ceases to be a Pleasure theory. Not mere pleasure, but what is good for the community is now the criterion of conduct. Thus Utilitarianism is not able to avoid contradiction. For the sacrifice it demands is either real or unreal. If it is real, Utilitarianism, like Hedonism, must be condemned as inadequate, in that it admits the necessity for conduct which does not yield good to the individual performing it; whereas, if it is unreal, and what is called self-sacrifice is only a form of self-realisation, a means of winning a superior kind of pleasure, it follows that the good does not consist of pleasure pure and simple, but also of an underlying satisfaction which springs from the consciousness of having acted in accordance with a higher principle than that of pleasure, some deep spiritual purpose.

(4) That the good is to be found in moral excellence. Here again the tendency is towards abstraction and negation. By concentrating on character, and regarding emotion as beneath man's dignity, the seeker after moral perfection is inevitably driven to a condition of utter passivity. Just as the pleasure-seeker wears life to the bone, as it were, and finally collapses in despair, for the reason that he spurns creative



labour, and everything which does not offer an immediate return of pleasure, so the seeker after moral perfection, by despising emotion inadvertently robs life of motive, and before he knows it finds himself in a condition of inanity. Thus we find that both the Cynics and the Stoics, whilst starting out with a keen enthusiasm for the moral law, ended in absolute passivity, their one purpose being merely to maintain a state of mental tranquillity. Because they despised emotion by virtue of its being the cause of all the ills of life, they objected to doing anything for the pleasure it gave. The outcome was that they did nothing at all other than what was necessary to keep body and soul together. So while pleasure cannot be the good, it must be admitted that without emotion, some sort of satisfaction, life cannot be carried on. It may be very noble to try and attain a high level of moral perfection; but if pleasure be eliminated from experience, life will become increasingly barren and unattractive. Not mere moral attainment, but life—life with all its warmth, beauty and colour—is what man aspires after. Can we not find the secret to that end?

The error in each of the above theories arises from the fact that each rests on an abstract

view of life and of human nature. Consequently, instead of guaranteeing well-being and development, each leads, in its own way, to complete stagnation and, ultimately to self-annihilation. And yet, prior to the attainment of free moral self-consciousness, it were scarcely possible to arrive at a true view of life, as not until then is man able wholly to know himself, to be conscious of the many-sided nature of his soul, and of the means of satisfying and developing it. But once he has reached that level he cannot be satisfied with theories which appeal to and seek to satisfy one aspect of his nature only. The attainment of free moral self-consciousness calls for the fullest development of the entire soul, the heart no less than the intellect, the spirit no less than the conscience.

Human nature is a complex whole which requires many kinds of activity fully to satisfy and realise it. To be healthy, progressive, full, life must be rational as well as religious, emotional as well as moral. It must rest on faith, because reason cannot penetrate and solve all the problems and mysteries with which life abounds. It must be rational, in accord with such truth as reason has discovered, and be permeated with the spirit of inquiry. It must

be in harmony with truth, intuition and faith. Finally, it must be satisfying. Thought quickens life, makes it vital, purposive, progressive, while pleasure sweetens it, gives to it warmth, beauty and colour.

We must not conclude, however, that life ought to be a medley of various kinds of activities—intellectual, religious, moral, pleasure-seeking. On the contrary, it ought to be so unified by means of an ideal, that every act shall be at the same time rational, religious, moral, and satisfying, shall embody life's highest truth and purpose, realise the entire soul, and increase well-being. Having discovered the nature of the good, what a man requires is an ideal that will create the interests and call for the activities wherein the good will be derived. Every act in a properly constituted existence ought to be a self-realising, life-producing act, possess a moral, rational, emotional and religious quality. Work, like play and like faith, has its place in an ideal existence, and ought to be a part as well as a condition of well-being. Moreover, in an ideal life play is not mere play, as it is for the unrestrained pleasure-seeker, but possesses a moral quality also, being the expression of a purposive soul in a complete and unified



existence. Consequently, the conscious state produced by play in an ideal life will be of a very complex nature, for included in it will be a sense of completeness due to the consciousness of its fitness and necessity, which will greatly improve its emotional quality.

In a rightly ordered life conduct is determined by reference to an ideal which aims at the realisation of the whole, as distinct from a mere part of the self. Human life is like a garden, and to confine attention to one kind of growth only, is to rob it of all attractiveness, of that rich variety wherein is beauty and loveliness. A fully developed soul, with its numerous capabilities, characteristics, interests and sympathies, is as beautiful and entrancing as a garden filled with attractive flowers and fruits. And although by endeavouring to realise his soul a man may often feel called upon to sacrifice a temporary pleasure, he knows that he will be the gainer in the end, in that he will be acting in harmony with the great creative forces. For to act in the interest of the highest spiritual laws is to be brought into touch with all the best movements, influences and people of one's time; it is to feel the waters of the great life-stream surging around one's soul. Deep down in the human consciousness is a conviction

that ultimately goodness and usefulness are the conditions of the highest well-being. And facts justify that conviction. There is no record of a man who, having done an heroic thing has lived to regret it. What is commonly called sacrifice is very often nothing more than the soul bursting the bonds of materialism and entering the realm of the spiritual, where unsuspected realities and values spring into view. It is by means of what is generally called heroism that a man wins the right to enter the kingdom of spirit wherein dwell all the truly free, those who have emancipated themselves from the bondage of materialism. And the joy of such freedom! Mere selfish pleasure pales besides it. Conduct inspired by great spiritual principles, though it involve material sacrifice, yields the most perfect satisfaction and accomplishes the highest self-realisation. It also makes possible relationships and pleasures which on the lower, selfish plane one could not even dream of. At the same time pleasure is not eschewed in the ideal life; it is simply brought under the control of the ideal. One must have pleasure in order to keep the heart buoyant and the mind healthy; but to enjoy pleasure to the full, to experience the emotional satisfaction which the heart seeks, one must work and serve, aspire

and achieve as well as play. One must also possess a wide mental horizon and an unflagging purpose; for it is the consciousness of the complete harmony of one's existence with the deepest laws of life which is the secret of the deepest satisfaction.

In making life purposive as we do when we possess an adequate ideal, we give to it an architectonic form, cause every act to have a definite place in the scheme of being and to contribute to life's ultimate good. In an ideal existence every act is at once a means of realising the self and of increasing life. And unless the whole self be realised no aspect of the self can possibly be realised. Develop the whole self and you intensify every conscious state; but concentrate on any aspect of the self, and you will starve even that. It is psychologically impossible to dissever, or at any rate for more than a very short time, the consciousness of pleasure from the consciousness of what we ourselves are morally and spiritually. The happiness which results from any line of conduct in a properly ordered life is not colourless and unqualitative, but dependent upon character, the quality of the mind and spirit of the person experiencing it. What a man is, what he is conscious of being, is the solid



substance, as it were, of consciousness in which his emotional experience rests, out of which it largely springs, and to which it belongs as a necessary part. A fully developed soul is the absolute condition of the highest well-being, that alone which can turn pleasure into a rich stream of sparkling joy. To create such a soul, and to enjoy all the activities involved in the process, that is the good, the highest form of well-being possible to man.

In what manner of conduct the good can be realised, we will now proceed to consider.

## CHAPTER VIII

### HOW TO REALISE THE GOOD

HAVING considered the nature of the good, we naturally desire to know how to attain it. If there is such a thing as an ideal life, there must be a law or principle whereby to realise it. Our next aim must be to try and discover that law or principle.

It will be obvious that the principle we are seeking must have a positive character. It is necessary to emphasise this fact, as the idea is abroad that the highest principle of life is self-sacrifice. Now if, as I have tried to show, the aim of conduct is to increase well-being, realise a more abundant life, conduct which does not increase life to the person acting, that is, as well as to society at large—cannot conceivably be persisted in. Of course, a man may wrongly estimate the value of his conduct; but the fact remains that he invariably hopes to reap life by means of it, and will change his course if the result anticipated be not realised.

Something is wrong, therefore, with the Christian doctrine of self-sacrifice as that is generally understood and preached. It is simply impossible to live for a negation. If everybody was bent upon self-sacrifice, what an impossible situation would arise! There would be no one left to receive the benefits! It is unthinkable that life's highest principle can be that of self-sacrifice when we think that life is a positive thing, is sweet, enjoyable and beautiful! Were self-abnegation the highest ideal for man, why was he created, and why does he permit the world to continue? Surely it were better to hasten the process of annihilation by helping the physicists to discover that force whose liberation would free mankind from the burden of living! Happily no one really believes in absolute self-sacrifice. Those who preach it do not understand their own hearts, for they themselves live in accordance with a superior philosophy. And do they not invariably vindicate their assertions by reference to Christianity? Unfortunately they do not grasp that the self-sacrifice which Christ advocated was in no sense negatory, having for its aim the highest self-fulfilment. In every instance that Christ called for sacrifice, it was the sacrifice of the lower for the higher, of the physical and



material for the spiritual: "I came not only that ye might have life, but that ye might have it more abundantly." "Whoso would save his life shall lose it, but whoso would lose his life for my sake shall find it." Christianity is a doctrine of spiritual affirmation, while the life of Christ was a practical demonstration of that doctrine. Nowhere does Christ advocate self-sacrifice without making it quite clear that he is enunciating a life-creating principle, laying down the conditions of entering and possessing the Kingdom of God. And that teaching is in harmony with the whole life-process. It is simply incredible that the most exalted conduct should be devoid of life-producing power so far as its authors are concerned, that is to say. What a man does in his loftiest moments must at least refine and spiritualise his nature and increase the force of attraction between himself and the rest of mankind. Besides elevating and ennobling the soul, such conduct possesses tremendous social utility, as it creates all manner of beautiful relationships with mankind.

But if the principle for realising the good is a positive one, may it not reasonably be argued that its application will produce strife between individuals and between communities, divide mankind into hostile classes and nations, cause

endless and unavoidable warfare? In other words, does not self-affirmation involve the sacrifice of others, the acceptance of the right of brute force? And if self-affirmation involves the sacrifice of the physically weak or of the economically impotent, what about these latter, have they not a right to existences. In this situation may it not be argued that self-renunciation is a humaner principle than self-affirmation, on the ground that it is better voluntarily to give up one's own life than to be the means of sacrificing or causing to be sacrificed the lives of others?

But does the principle of self-affirmation necessarily involve enmity and war between individuals and communities? I do not think so. It is certainly the case that the kind of self-affirmation one meets with to-day, especially in the commercial West, produces endless enmity, want and suffering, and a hundred social evils. But are such effects due to self-affirmation pure and simple? May they not be due to a false kind of affirmation? No one could say that the life of Christ threatened the well-being or the existence of a single individual; yet it was founded from first to last on the principle of self-affirmation. Ultimately we shall be driven to recognise the necessity of self-affirmation if

we are to build up a race of strong and healthy men and women, physically and spiritually. But whether peace, freedom and goodwill, or enmity, hatred and war shall result will depend upon whether the self that "affirms" has a materialistic or a spiritual outlook and aim.

Looking around on life to-day, one need not be surprised that people are afraid of the very word self-affirmation. Wherever we turn, in the West, *e.g.*, we see policies being pursued which entail repression, poverty and economic insecurity for the great majority, and which so poison the minds of men as to make a rational existence well-nigh impossible to all but a few. In each country the pace has been set by the more aggressive spirits, with the result that a life of materialistic self-aggrandisement has become the fashion, involving perennial social and international warfare, bitter conflict between top dogs and bottom dogs, rich and poor, rival financial groups, national and international. Naturally this condition creates revolt on the part of all who possess the slightest spiritual vision. But as yet these seem impotent. The dominant class, by reason of their enormous wealth, are able to control the situation, in as much as they are in possession



of the chief agencies of education—the press, the pulpits and the schools. It is thus comparatively easy for them to dominate the nations' political machines, governments, etc., to persecute the teachers of a finer idealism, and to subdue, devitalise and demoralise the people. In addition to the press, war, starvation, and unemployment are their unfailing weapons. Then poverty and the fear of poverty are driving the masses also into selfishness and materialism, so that all but the spiritually strongest are being swept off their feet. And the churches, alas! are among the defenders of this materialism, being ready supporters of Governments who carry out policies of revenge, exploitation and repression, no matter at what cost in bloodshed. Thus, by reason of their spiritual blindness, the dominant classes in England are at this moment literally destroying England, breaking to pieces the British Empire, for which they profess to have so great love. In the name of patriotism they are thrusting their own kith and kin deeper and deeper into slavery, robbing them bit by bit of the little freedom they had, persistently impoverishing their bodies and poisoning their souls, whilst beyond England, in the wide expanses of the Empire, they are trying to stamp down every attempt at spiritual

regeneration, thwarting spiritual aspiration, imprisoning and otherwise persecuting the honoured and reputed builders of a new world.

Now all this wanton cruelty, this refined barbarism is due, not to self-affirmation, but to materialism, to a startling lack of spiritual insight, knowledge of the meaning of life. But what are we to expect when we think of the training we give to our youth, the ideals we implant in their minds? The man who starts out on life to-day with the aim of acquiring wealth and power does so with a premium on his head, for he will be supported by all the forces of church and State, a press-made public opinion, etc. Whereas the man whose aim is to win life, to express his soul in beautiful service, and to secure that right for others, will find himself deserted by the Powers that Be, and that from first to last poverty, illwill, hatred, slander, enmity, persecution dog his steps. The crude materialism of the nineteenth century, with its utilitarian science and its colossal armies and navies, has perverted the imagination of the modern world, deprived men of the power to see life in its simple spiritual relations, and thus to live naturally. For that materialism has converted life into a battle-field, man into a mere unit of economic force, a machine for

making riches, and God into a dull partisan whose chief function is to create and protect millionaires.

Materialism is destroying spiritual life in the West at an unbelievable rate. It has triumphed in the realm of industry; it has triumphed in the realm of politics; it has triumphed in the realm of religion. It is now trying in various ways to triumph over Labour, which offers the only serious threat to its existence. If it succeeds here also, Western civilisation is doomed, for having transformed society into a den of lions, it will itself perish, as the lions, having devoured everything else will end by devouring themselves.

Thus I repeat, the existing social war is the outcome of materialism, not of self-affirmation. Society is being disintegrated and the nations converted into warring hosts, because men and women are pursuing riches instead of life. For there is only one earth: hence the supply of wealth is limited; and seeing that what one has another cannot have, if a few live in unwonted luxury, many must starve, while all but a few must set their lives within narrow bounds.

The only condition upon which society can remain intact is that it be organised so as to



give the fullest opportunity of self-development to all. But this necessitates the substitution of a spiritual for a materialistic interpretation of life. If life is to lose its war-like character, it can only be by recognising that the good lies elsewhere than in the possession and pursuit of riches.

Now it is precisely because the modern world is just beginning to discover that man is a spiritual being, who craves for love and fellowship, and whose strongest instinct, when his nature is not perverted by a false culture, is to live in peace and express his soul in beautiful labour, that we are beginning to get a glimpse of a new kind of wealth, and thus of a new motive of conduct. To substitute a spiritual for a materialistic interpretation of life is to substitute service for greed as the motive of conduct. When the vision of a life of service and fellowship descends upon the people, culture will extol and economic conditions prepare the way for such a life; it will then be as easy to live spiritually as it is hard to-day to live other than materialistically.

Deeper thinking conclusively proves that only upon the basis of a spiritual view of man and a spiritual interpretation of life, is complete self-realisation possible. The inhuman things that

are being done to-day in the name of "national" prosperity, are antagonistic to art, culture, and spiritual development. If it be more important to steal a man's purse than to win his love, to control his body than to have access to his spirit, the sooner we abandon restraint, fling morals to the wind, and go in for a merry life, if a short one, the better. But in our heart of hearts we know that materialism is not the last word, that there are spiritual realities of which we have only just begun to dream.

What, then, is the law of spiritual self-realisation? The answer is clear and simple. It is the very opposite of the law of self-aggrandisement. In order to possess an abundance of things it is necessary to sacrifice the bodies and souls of one's fellows and, finally, oneself. But in order to acquire spiritual possessions, including the love and goodwill of one's fellows, it is imperative that nothing be done which injures the minds, hearts and souls either of oneself or one's neighbours. On the contrary, it will be necessary to do things which will hearten, gladden and inspire all with whom one comes into contact, to increase and intensify spiritual relationships with one's fellows everywhere. Now the only way to do this is by means of service. Thus the law of progress in a spiritual

world is the exact opposite of the law of material prosperity. Getting is superseded by giving, selfishness by love. Material possessions are sacrificed for the sake of spiritual possessions, which are of infinitely greater value. Were we to look deep enough we should find that it is the man who sets his heart on riches who really sacrifices himself; for such an one sells his soul for a stone. To give one's life for the possession of things is to try to gratify the physical self at the expense of the spiritual self, which is suicidal. Besides, if material prosperity is the good, it means, as we see to-day, that only a very limited number can attain it; whereas, if life be not a mockery, the good must be realisable by all. There is no way out, therefore, on the basis of materialism. Civilisation's only hope is in a spiritual interpretation of life.

And there is hope in that, for, even now, in spite of our wasteful and unscientific production, there is nearly enough wealth in the world to satisfy all the needs of mankind, while with the substitution of a spiritual for a materialistic outlook, it would be possible to cut out foolish luxury, and to give economic security to the workers, as a result of which we should enlist their brains and enthusiasm on behalf



of production, which would thereby be enormously increased. Besides, in spite of all our endeavours to possess the world physically, the latter can only really be possessed spiritually, that is, in thought and feeling. To possess the world is to grasp it in thought, to appreciate, comprehend and feel it. And if the world be not possessed thus it were folly to try and possess it physically. A man mis-reads his heart who tries to do the latter as, after all, given economic security, it is little that a man needs in the way of possessions. If he has many possessions he will only gloat over them, and probably, as a result, make life harder for someone else as well as for himself. The only sane way to possess the earth is to be able to appreciate its beauty, grasp its message, listen to its myriad voices—that is, have spiritual relationship with it. To own the earth is usually to be disowned by it, as the pride of possession, together with the greed which prompts it, poisons the spirit and thus destroys the power of appreciation. And I am quite sure that the men who are to-day trying to buy up England are not the men who most love England, either the land or its people; they love power, that is all. The men who are most anxious to purchase God's acres are the first to

feel the necessity for erecting prisons upon them as a means of insuring their own safety ! For having put their own souls in a prison they can think of nothing better than to convert the whole world into a prison. A slave-owner must be more deeply enslaved than his worst victims ; otherwise he could not enslave them. A slave may possess a soul, his master never. A man is what he does. Greed deprives the proud possessor of broad lands of the pure joy which the little children know when they play in fields that are " Gods ". The world does not belong to the man who possesses the largest number of title-deeds, or the kingdom of humanity to the man who possesses the most " hands," or slaves, any more than the kingdom of truth and beauty is the heritage of the man who owns the largest library or the costliest collection of pictures. I once visited the house of a man who boasted in the possession of a beautiful, ivory-inlaid piano. When I asked him to play me something upon it, he sent for his gardener. And still he imagined he belonged to that piano ! That he belonged to the ivory, the wood and the brass, I could not deny. But it was equally obvious that the soul of the piano belonged to the gardener. And so is it ever : the world and all it contains belongs to the

people of spiritual perception. At the last we shall find that the finest wealth is spiritual, and is to be enjoyed in some form of spiritual relationship. The wealthiest man is he who by virtue of a cultured and refined spirit, a perceiving mind and a sympathetic heart, has established the largest number of beautiful, life-yielding relationships with Nature, God and man. A beautiful spiritual relationship is a line of life; and he controls most of such lines who loves most, who serves and asks for nothing in return.

What a man needs, therefore, in order to live ideally, to drink deepest of the wine of life, is a principle whose application will cause to be cultivated those relationships with being wherein the purest joys and the richest harmonies may be experienced. Obviously, as we have seen, that principle must be love, or service. The secret of life is to know how to increase spiritual relationships, a man's life being just so perfect and complete as it is spiritually related with the wide universe. How foolish, therefore, to try and possess an abundance of things, and thus to create enmity, strife and hatred, let loose a horde of wild-beast passions, and so render impossible fellowship and those beautiful manifestations of the spirit which



elevate alike those who make and those who appreciate them.

We thus see that in a spiritual world appreciation is possession, and that what one chiefly needs is not riches, as such, but the means of appreciation and expression.

Now it so happens that human personality is the most beautiful and spiritually powerful order of created being with which we are familiar: hence the necessity of living in spiritual relationship with it. The condition of such relationship is service prompted by love. But service is self-expression; and self-expression is self-realisation. Thus service accomplishes two important things: it brings into our possession the spirits of our fellow men, and at the same time develops our own souls. Spiritual possession and self-realisation are complementary facts in an ideal life. To serve Nature is to possess it; and service creates selfhood, a mind and heart capable of comprehending and appreciating all that is beautiful and worthy in Nature or man. Moreover, to increase one's wealth is to grow in spirit, to increase one's power of self-expression. Consequently life ought to be so organised that everyone has the fullest opportunity of self-expression, and is given a culture which will

encourage and lead to self-expression. Our youth should be taught that all true labour adds to the beauty of the earth and the happiness of men, and increases the power of him who labours both to appreciate that beauty and to share in the general happiness. In work a man creates things for the use and enjoyment of others; but in the process he develops, literally creates his soul. In play he appreciates the beautiful things that others have created, and thus enters into beautiful fellowship with mankind. By means of art a man tries to grasp something more of the meaning and purpose of life, seeks to bring the world more completely into his heart. In work, again, he endeavours to transmit that meaning to matter. Thus in the dual process of work and play man realises himself, develops his personality, increases his power of expression and appreciation. Moreover, by rendering service to mankind he wins the love and goodwill of his fellows, the right to enjoy fellowship with them, the fruits, material and spiritual, of their labour.

When we see things truly, therefore—see them, that is, as we ought to do in the age of democracy—realise that man is a spiritual being, the way is opened up to a new way of life, a new society and a new world. It is

because of a false theory of values that men destroy one another in order to possess things and power over others' labour. Thus I affirm that with a spiritual interpretation of life, self-affirmation is not incompatible with the complete self-realisation of every member of the race.

So much by way of a general statement. But in order to show the practicability of the ideas above ventilated, it will be necessary to go into greater detail regarding certain points.

Our object, be it remembered, is to discover the principle whereby to realise the good, develop one's selfhood to the utmost and realise the maximum of well-being.

Briefly stated my argument is as follows. Materialism is suicidal. Spiritual values are superior to material values; while on the spiritual plane the contradiction between the claims of the individual and those of society is overcome. It is overcome by virtue of the fact that in order to gain spiritual wealth one must render service, create something worthy of oneself for the benefit of humanity. And service, which is labour with a powerful spiritual motive behind it, is the guarantee of maximum production. Hence in a spiritual world there ought to be no lack of goods. But the point is worthy of further consideration.



It is useless to adopt exalted language about an ideal existence if we cannot produce a world in which everybody has a roof to their heads, clothing for their bodies, and bread. Can these things be guaranteed if life be placed on a spiritual foundation? Most assuredly they can, as it is chiefly in the production of things—things to eat, things to wear, things beautiful to look upon—that man must express his soul; and in a spiritual world it is by means of self-expression that man develops the power to appreciate and enjoy all that is most precious fellowship and art in all their manifold forms. Given a true culture everybody will inevitably desire to express themselves. But, we are asked, will they not all aspire to create beautiful things, works of art, and not merely things to eat and to wear? I do not think so. At any rate, not wholly, and certainly I do not think they will when the world has been organised on a spiritual basis. On the basis of the existing materialism, one's answer would be different, of course. To-day, *e.g.*, personality, beauty, soul, are the last things to be considered in industry. The object of business is to derive profit, mere profit! Consequently almost everyone, be he master or workman, is doomed to spend his time and strength in the production of shoddy things

that are neither beautiful nor serviceable. But once let true values, and the laws of spiritual life, be taught, and let society be ordered economically in accordance with those laws, and the imagination cannot compass the transformation that would be effected. Think what it would mean to have a world without speculators, exploiters and profiteers, without shams, lies, and wars, without poverty, unemployment and such appalling ignorance of life—in high circles as well as in low—as we meet with everywhere to-day! A world in which men are truly free, are taught to express themselves in beautiful ways, and to reverence all things. In such a world the soul would have some chance, no matter where its duty lay, although there can be no denying that in certain mechanical processes there is little scope for art. With a true economy and a short working day, however, no one need lack opportunity for self-expression. But to-day art can scarcely get a look in anywhere; for materialism is the death of art. The overthrow of materialism and the acceptance of a spiritual idealism would elevate, clothe with a new power and significance everything in creation, from the most exalted to the most humble. Nothing would be “mere” matter henceforth, but would have a spiritual significance,

everything useful receiving the attention that was due to it as a means of ministering to the physical and spiritual needs of humanity. Art would begin to appear where it was formerly thought to have no place. Colour and beauty would not be for pictures only, or rhythm for poems, but would appear everywhere, in accordance, that is, with the demands of art. In fact we should get away from shoddy production altogether, and should endeavour to make every common article on the principle that a thing of beauty is a joy for ever. Even the baking of wholesome bread would become an art, while disease would be considered a crime. It would be taken for granted that a robust, beautiful body was the natural complement of a beautiful soul. Indeed, in a spiritual world beauty would be so universal that the ordinary terminology of higher and lower would be out of place.

Assuming, then, that we had got our spiritual world, or that the conditions existed wherein such a world might arise, and that a suitable culture was being imparted to our youth, a culture which revealed the personal and social necessity for self-expression, it is obvious that there need be no fear of the world running short of goods, of things to eat, wear and use.



An abundance of goods would be forthcoming because production would be prompted by spiritual necessity—the supreme necessity of realising the good—and not merely by physical necessity as at present. When men realise that life is fundamentally incomplete without service, they must needs serve of their own free will. And because everyone would be free to express oneself as one desired, and to enjoy and appreciate the expressions of others, and, in addition, fellowship, the aim would be not who could render the least, but who could render the greatest, service, produce the most beautiful thing. For there would now be no economic differences to divide men. Each soul would rest on its own foundation, so to speak, and men would be loved according to the beauty of their minds and personalities, what they had created, etc., and not according to their riches.

Moreover, in a spiritually organised world, owing to the abolition of idleness, unemployment, warfare, senseless luxury, etc., the more mechanical parts of life would be reduced to a minimum, and if all shared in them they would only occupy two or three hours per day, so that all would have an opportunity of engaging in creative labour, each after his or her own heart. But a life founded on soul excellence, which

made possible a beautiful life of self-expression and fellowship, is scarcely imaginable in an age of materialism like the present; and yet it lies right at our doors. We may claim it to-morrow if we will.

I know it will be said that such an ideal, whilst being very beautiful, is impracticable, incapable of attainment, "human nature being what it is". I imagine things like that have been said in every epoch since the dawn of history. And yet, see what time has wrought! History makes such criticisms futile, absurd. Man has evolved from barbarism, and yet men say: "he cannot reach this new height 'seeing that human nature is what it is'!" Not many centuries ago our Teutonic forefathers were essentially physical beings, devoid of spiritual outlook, of art, science and religion. Who then dare say what human nature is or is capable of? If history demonstrates one fact more than another it is that human nature is responsive to the ideal, that man is capable of attaining the good he sees. No man can persistently act in a manner contrary to what he believes to be for his good, but "must needs love the highest when he sees it". No sooner does a man see a better way of life than he begins to make towards it. In the very nature

of things he cannot do otherwise. Human nature is capable of infinite development as well as of unspeakable degeneration; whether it rise or fall depends upon the ideas which permeate it, the training to which it is subjected. Instructed in lofty ideals it will act with trojan-like determination and accomplish things unspeakable. To the aspiring soul revolutions are normal events, mere clearings away of obstacles in order that a sweeter and nobler life may take root. The gulf which separates the actual from the ideal, though apparently unbridgeable, is nothing but an idea; and ideas are fairly easily disseminated. The world is in bondage to-day not because human nature is evil and incapable of rising out of its wretched condition, but because of a false culture, a culture which the privileged classes are doing everything in their power to uphold. One can scarcely imagine the magnitude of the conspiracy that exists to prevent a finer idealism reaching the people. The efforts of the press, and too often, alas, of the pulpit, aided by sport, gambling, beer and doubtful entertainment, are succeeding not a little in protecting the people from any kind of thinking which threatens the existing order of society. Yet a finer idealism is taking root in spite of all!



Taking the long view, civilisation is a process of spiritualisation in which spirit and faith, guided by appropriate ideas, are perpetually triumphing over materialism, disbelief and despair. Yet whenever a people have taken or attempted to take a step forward there have always appeared those who have said that human nature could not stand it. When cannibalism was abandoned; when, as in England the duel, and later, hanging for stealing anything to the value of five shillings, was abolished; or when the aged were granted a small pension; or, again, every time the franchise has extended, the cry was raised that disaster would follow, "human nature being what it is". But always the way of faith, when tried, succeeded, which shows that human nature does develop, does rise to the level of the ideal and become increasingly spiritual. Thus by virtue of the spiritual development of the past few centuries, the demand is now being made for a spiritual social order in which the aspirations of the growing soul of humanity may have free play. How deplorable, therefore, to speak deprecatingly of human nature, and all the while to be doing everything possible to prevent it from following its better instincts!

When one thinks of the press campaigns of our time, and of the life to which the workers are condemned, need one be surprised that selfishness is on the increase? The present age is developing the acquisitive instinct at a more rapid rate than any previous age. So far from thinking human nature inherently selfish and materialistic, the fact that daily astonishes me is that, under the conditions in which most men and women are compelled to live to-day, there are as many really good people, as many kind hearts, brave minds, sacrificing spirits in the world as there are.

The reason we know that spiritual idealism must triumph if it be given a reasonable chance is that it opens up unexpected and unexampled sources of wealth. Once that wealth is recognised even those who occupy privileged positions in present society will not be opposed to the creation of a spiritually founded State. It is true that they would in all probability have to sacrifice some of their riches, in consequence, but they would be left with as much as they needed. And it is really astonishing how little material wealth a man does need once pride and vanity are cast away. People dress in costly raiment and go about in luxurious motor cars not so much because such things are

in themselves desirable, as because they are signs of power. But the pride thus fostered poisons the spirit and renders fellowship and all the best things impossible. How much better, therefore, to be able to live naturally, to get just what one needed and to have no fear for one's life, no fear of poverty, of being robbed, swindled, or rendered bankrupt, and to have withal contentment and fellowship! People who go about the world imagining that they are very superior beings simply because they are rich, and who spend huge sums of money in order to impress the public with a sense of their importance, must surely be the most miserable souls on earth. They cannot be loveable, while their minds must be too full of conceit to enable them to enjoy anything simple and really beautiful, or to enter into fellowship with humble souls. As for their luxury they would be infinitely better off without it.

But the great gain which would more than compensate for any material loss they might sustain by the acceptance of a spiritual social order, would be that of spiritual relationship with mankind. Not until we realise the manifold nature and the life-yielding power of fellowship, are we able to appreciate the superiority of a spiritual over a materialistic



existence. It is because the spirit of man is the most beautiful and wonderful form of reality with which we are acquainted, that fellowship with it, including the right to enjoy and appreciate all its expressions, is one of the richest sources of life, and why we know that spiritual idealism must triumph in the end.

The human spirit is the most beautiful of all created things. But in order fully to appreciate it, one's mind must be spiritual. Selfish habits, vulgar training and a materialistic atmosphere cause men to suspect and think the worst of their fellows, and to be blind to their spiritual qualities. When pursuing profit a man looks for weaknesses and vices in his fellows, not for nobleness and virtue. And it is well to remember that the human spirit, like roses, cannot remain fresh and fragrant in a stifling atmosphere.

Yet, properly trained and treated, the human spirit is the most sensitive, powerful and beautiful existence under heaven. It can gladden and inspire as no other form of reality. By means of a word, a look or a gesture it can inspire gladness or terror, bring forth tears of joy or sorrow, kill or establish a cause. In the midst of sorrow it can be a tower of strength, and out of disaster and desolation it can bring victory and salvation. No movements can

compare for grace, beauty and charm with those of a human being inspired by sympathy and love. Thus inspired the human spirit is unconquerable, indefatigable. And yet it is the fairy which comes and goes like a summer breeze—frail as the frailest leaf, trembling piteously under the rebuff of negligence, bursting into rapturous delight at a cheerful greeting or a waft of song. Moreover it is the beauty and heroism of the human spirit that all the finest art has attempted to express. Literature, painting, music have always been pre-eminently concerned with human deeds and emotions, the noble achievements of the human spirit.

And what physical enjoyment can compare with the delight of fellowship? Physical objects may be beautiful, but compared with the human spirit they are impotent, dead. The former possess form and colour, but no soul, except such as man has imparted to them; certainly no passion, no power of loving. They have no eyes that dance and laugh, no feet that trip for very joy, no hands that minister to our needs, no lips that whisper words of peace and consolation. While as to the baser things—power, pomp, position—what value have they? Such things may fire the soul with selfish passion, inspire pride, envy and a sense of false dignity,

but they cannot yield one moment's pure joy. They cannot gladden the heart or inspire the soul as can one look of an honest face. Where power, pomp and position are the aim of life, the human soul degenerates. Then, in regard to Nature. While Nature is beautiful she possesses no virtue, no personality; so that while she can delight and teach, she cannot inspire as man inspires. There is one beauty of the flower, another beauty of man. In Nature there is simply action and reaction; but man chooses. Thus while the one produces form, or external beauty only, the other produces character, or beauty of spirit. Nature becomes; man achieves. Nature smiles; man loves. A flower may gladden, a sweet, reposeful valley may soothe; but only man, who possesses virtue, the power to love, bless and serve, can inspire. When a man finds inspiration in Nature it is because he sees it as the expression of God, or as part of a great spiritual purpose.

The human spirit, although evolved from lower forms of life, is a creation apart. To utter the very name man is to call up visions of a mind that can scan and interpret the entire universe of being, of a faith that can transform mountains into plains, of a hope that can turn the gloom of night into



the gladness of morning, of a love that, even though wounded, can conquer all the powers of earth and hell. The spirit of man is fairer than the fairest flower, stronger than the strongest earthly force, gentler than the gentlest zephyr, more radiant than the joyfullest morn of Spring. And what majesty is like unto that of the human brow shaped by resolve? What lines can compare for beauty with those of the human form bent to deeds of love? What light is so radiant as that of the human face lit up by the spirit of devotion? What movement is so deft and so delicate as that of inspired human fingers? Or what scene in the whole world reveals such tender grace, such delicate charm, such pure devotion as that of the refined human mother tending her babe? Truly man is worthy to be loved and served.

Now it is with this spirit that the right of fellowship is won by means of service. And not only fellowship. Service develops spirit, both subjectively and objectively, creates the power to see, appreciate and enjoy all that is beautiful, good and true, and through that, new power of self-expression, increased ability to bless mankind. What makes man a worthy object of service is the fact that he is a living spirit which blossoms and fructifies, increases

daily in beauty and in the magnetic power of personality. And only as one grows in spirit can one continue to inspire others or enjoy fellowship with them. By producing useful and beautiful things for the edification and enjoyment of others, a man helps to create a finer spirit in himself, and thus strengthens the bonds of union between himself and his fellows.

In an ideal life the joy and satisfaction which spring from the service of spirit constitute the emotional foundation on which the pleasure of the play-life rests. It is service that makes pleasure for the spiritual idealist deep and full, as it causes the pleasure of the moment to be supplemented by the satisfaction arising from the consciousness that one's life is in harmony with the laws of being. The servant of spirit reaps joy and satisfaction all along the line, for with him life is a process of self-realisation from first to last, in work as well as in play. When one has laid the foundation of one's life in beautiful service, and thereby created one's soul, enlarged one's mind, etc., the pleasure of play attains a degree of intensity otherwise impossible. Thus only the spiritually enlightened who create useful and beautiful things for the benefit of mankind, are able to enjoy to the full the simplest forms of play.

From the fact that service is the condition of the highest well-being, it follows that one's first concern ought to be to render good service. But good service demands the fullest development of the soul, which is accomplished through culture and purposive effort.

Having rendered true service, expressed his soul, man is ready for fellowship. Moreover he has won his right to it. Love frees the spirit and fires it with zeal for beautiful self-expression. To love is to throw one's soul into one's labour and to make everything one does a work of art. And the reward of such service is fellowship; for love begets love. The man who pursues riches inhabits a dead world, and discovers, at last, that the living world, the world of human spirits disowns him. Love is the key of the spiritual world.

On the ground, therefore, that service prompted by love is a means of personal spiritual development, of winning the right of fellowship and participation in the fruits of others' labour, it is clear that on a spiritual basis self-affirmation is in harmony with complete self-realisation of the whole of society.

It has always been a vexed problem to the moral philosopher how to unify life so that every necessary activity may be made to



contribute to its ultimate good. And the chief difficulty has always been with the work-life. On what basis can work, the production of things to eat, wear, etc., be made a condition of well-being? For work is hard, exhausting. Only upon a spiritual interpretation of life such as we have developed in these pages, is it possible for work to become a pleasure and a means of self-realisation. Were a spiritual motive to be brought into modern industry, that industry would immediately be revolutionised. As already pointed out, labour is distasteful to-day because of the spirit of greed which directs and controls it. When we consider the nature of most modern factory labour, we ought to regard the revolt of the workers as a good omen, a proof that they have not yet lost their souls. Under proper conditions, with the right motive behind it, work is a pleasure, as great a pleasure in its way, as play, and such that everyone must desire it as one desires food or sleep. Once it is realised that man is a spiritual being, and that well-being consists in complete self-realisation and in spiritual relationship with mankind, life will take new shape, become a unity wherein work and play, expression and appreciation find their true place.

In a spiritual world, where service is the principle of life, all mankind are engaged in two forms of activity, work and play, each of which, in its own way, is a source of satisfaction, the soul being expressed and created in work, fed with beauty and delight in play. Work inspires and satisfies because it is the means of creating beauty, developing the soul, giving pleasure to others, and establishing spiritual relationship with one's fellows. Play is the appreciation of all the beautiful things which mankind, in return for our service, lays at our feet. Thus by means of service prompted by love life is unified and the self realised.

I think it will now be fairly clear what is meant by self-realisation, what is the nature and content of the ideal life, and by what principle the good may be attained and life unified. The first need is a spiritual outlook, a recognition that the wealthiest man is he who is most richly related with being in all its forms. The second need, which follows from this, is the recognition that the law of spiritual development, the condition of increasing and intensifying one's social relationships is service guided by love. Love, with its handmaiden service, is thus the fundamental principle of human

existence. Service is love in action. But in order to serve well, as one who loves naturally desires to do, training is necessary. In the effort to express one's soul one enlarges and ennobles it, refines the spirit, beautifies personality. One wins, moreover, the love and esteem of one's fellows; and love calls forth the best in one. Service thus binds mankind together in a wonderful fellowship, begets that attitude of mind which makes the whole world kin. Because service makes such great demands, it is the means of developing unusual power of perception and appreciation, and thus of bringing the entire world of spiritual being into the mind and heart. In service is expressed such meaning as one sees, and in doing this one relates oneself to the objective world, literally creates the world of one's daily habitation. By adopting a spiritual outlook, therefore, and forfeiting the right to possess riches, a man gains the right to possess all things spiritually.

We thus see how, by means of work and play, expression and appreciation, life may be unified so as to secure the maximum of good, cause every act to be a means of increasing well-being. Work creates a desire for play, for art and fellowship, while play, in its turn, creates a desire for expression. To dig, sow and till, to



hew, weave and build, to create all the wonderful things of science and art: that is work, service, expression; to enjoy the fruits of others' labour, the fruits of the earth—houses, clothes and a thousand other comforts, beautiful works of art, etc.: that is play, appreciation. Together they make up the sum of life.

To the question, therefore: how are we to reconcile the claims of self with those of society? we must answer: Given a spiritual interpretation of life there is no antagonism between self and society, as that which is really and ultimately good for society is also good for the individual, and *vice versa*. There is war and antagonism between the individual and society only under a materialistic regime, where it is the primary object of men to try and possess as much material wealth as they can. But once the deeper truth is grasped that the highest good is spiritual, it will be recognised that the law of self-development is also the law of social development, that social well-being is not incompatible with the self-realisation of every member of the community. In a spiritual world the time-old contradiction between "mine" and "thine" is at last overcome, the desire and the spiritual necessity for service being the guarantee of sufficient production to

satisfy all the needs of mankind. Thus as soon as we look at life with spiritual eyes, pride and lust vanish, and with them greed, strife, poverty and war, for love fulfils all things. True, man cannot live without bread; but how easily after all are all man's temporal needs satisfied when pride and the lust for power have been overcome!

At any rate one thing is certain: the acceptance of this principle is the only hope of the further advancement of the race. Civilisation is being tested as never before, and if it is to stand, much that is in it will have to be discarded, and quickly. Which will come first, the collapse of civilisation or a great spiritual awakening, it is impossible to say. But the one or the other must come soon.

Both in the East and the West there are abundant signs of revolt, but before salvation can come and the new age dawn, a clearer vision of the life we desire must possess the mind of our time. In the far-distant past man had to conquer Nature in order to live; at a later stage he had to combat his aggressive fellow-men. The time is over-due to end this ancient conflict. Science and spiritual development have rendered out of date the outlook which involves such barbarities as that which

overtook civilisation from 1914 to 1918, and as are embodied in present-day Industrialism, Imperialism and militarism.

Western materialism has had a long reign, but its days are numbered. The lie upon which it rests has at last been recognised, and is being mercilessly exposed. The conversion of the life of the toiling millions into a sheer struggle for existence is an outrage upon reason, and a complete condemnation of modern civilisation. Life must be converted from the hell the materialists have made of it into a heaven of joy. The very thought of the war of modern life is weighing heavily upon the spirit of the age, and everywhere men are crying out for the breath of life. The waste of spirit caused by the materialism of this over-civilised age is too appalling to contemplate. What boundless power of life and beauty, what noble aspiration is thwarted and repressed by this that we call civilisation! Yet, if we only knew, the gates of a new world are waiting to receive us. The inheritance of a new heaven and a new earth awaits our claiming.

Because the spiritual interpretation of life developed in these pages gives promise of a fuller life for all, a nobler humanity and a more beautiful world, we know that it is in the true



line of advance. From whatever standpoint we look, the service of spirit is more fruitful, productive of more life than the service of self and the pursuit of riches. Moreover, the service of spirit involves the sacrifice of nothing that yields life, being always the condition of the highest well-being. The spiritual idealist does not deny the body, but makes it the servant of the spirit, which is what it ought to be, seeing that spiritual values are higher than material values. Spirit makes use of everything that is the promise of life, of abiding and satisfying pleasure. Instead of laying up for himself treasures upon the earth, the spiritual idealist endeavours to create for himself a beautiful world of spiritual reality whose power of yielding life is inexhaustible. In service man objectifies himself, sends forth his soul, as it were, in all manner of beautiful ways, and in so doing wins love and fellowship. Thus does the soul of the spiritual idealist grow. Spirit knows not age, has no body of death ; it is as free and joyous at the last as at the first. In spirit is fulness of life and eternity of existence. Matter perishes ; but spirit abides for ever.

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## CHAPTER IX

### THE EVOLUTION OF LOVE

THE central significance of development is not generally recognised. Most people accept the fact of development, but do not grasp its inner meaning. They have a hazy notion that human nature and civilisation are pretty much to-day what they have always been; that although history is characterised by ceaseless changes, the spirit and nature of man remain fairly constant. It is necessary to break down that notion, otherwise the materialism that is daily tightening its hold upon the nations and threatening their existence, will carry all before it. The present age needs the quickening influence of a new spiritual outlook, and a recognition that the spiritual possibilities of human nature are infinite.

Modern materialism is overpowering the people's imagination. The down-trodden masses are losing hope; they see no way of escape from poverty and servitude. They turn to the

past and say: "See, we have had so many thousand years of this religion, so many centuries of that—two thousand years of Christianity, for example—and still we are no nearer the Kingdom of God. Why, then, do you still talk of a new humanity, a new heaven and a new earth?"

What such people do not recognise is that the human race is composed of peoples who have entered upon the era of civilisation at various times. One nation had embarked upon civilisation, won a certain glory, and fallen into ruin long before another nation had made its first venture upon that tortuous track. Thus it was—to some extent at any rate—upon the ruins of the Roman civilisation that Teutonic civilisation took its rise. But at that time the Teutons were in a state of semi-barbarism. They accepted Christianity, it is true, but Christianity as presented by the Apostles and the early Fathers, not as taught by its Founder. Christianity was the crowning point of a long line of moral and spiritual development, on which account it was impossible that the Teutons, in the earlier stages of their development, could comprehend it. As a fact the Teutonic peoples, as peoples, never have understood Christianity, and with the exception of a very small minority of scattered



individuals, do not understand it to-day. The truth is that they are only just now reaching the level of spiritual attainment at which Christianity can be understood.

For thirteen centuries the Teutonic peoples have professed Christianity, and yet only latterly have they begun to catch so much as a glimmering of its inner meaning. Consequently Christianity has meant many things to Europe at different times. Throughout the Middle Ages it symbolised the idea of renunciation. The Puritans, it must be confessed, were puzzled with it altogether, and fought shy of it, being much more at home in the Old Testament than in the New. And, most surprising of all, the last few generations of Puritans have been able to construe Christianity into a Gospel of "getting on"! Latterly, however, the spirit of man having become sufficiently developed, the simple spiritual truths which Christ taught, and exemplified in his life, have been perceived. Even the common people are beginning to acclaim them, and in their name to demand a revolutionised social order.

In these considerations there is great hope. It is not the case, *e.g.*, that Christianity has failed. The truth is that Western civilisation is only just reaching the spiritual altitude at

which Christianity can be understood. Hence a great spiritual and social upheaval lies before us. The battle which Christ fought and lost is going to be fought over again in the near future; materialism and a noble spiritual idealism are destined to come to grips in a fiercer struggle than any the world has known. On every occasion that this particular struggle has taken place in the past, victory has gone to materialism. Hence the collapse of the ancient civilisations, first one, then another. In each case, of course, there were leaders and prophets, like Christ, or Socrates, etc., who believed in the possibility of the triumph of the spiritual over the material, and in the immediate approach of a new world. Will history repeat itself in the present instance, or will the ideal that is taking root in every corner of the earth prove strong enough to establish a civilisation on a spiritual foundation and start a new era in the development of mankind?

It is profoundly important that the present generation realise the significance of our time, the crisis that is developing, the issue it is destined to settle one way or the other. With it rests the decision as to whether modern civilisation shall collapse or the Kingdom of God shall appear.

My immediate purpose is to make it quite clear that the ideal that has been outlined in these pages is peculiarly fitted to the twentieth century, and would not have been possible in any previous age—that is so far as Western civilisation is concerned. Like everything else that lives the human soul develops, and it must needs have reached a high level of attainment, completely emancipated itself from the domination of external authority, before it is fitted for such an existence as was outlined in the last chapter. But having reached that level it cannot rest content until it has gained the opportunity it needs, the right to enter the virgin regions of experience which are already looming into view.

I am well aware that as early as the Middle Ages there were those who advocated Christian communism and attacked the institution of private property. Men like Sir Thomas Moore, Wyclif, and the Lollards, to mention only a few, were very keen on such propaganda. But their advocacy was hopeless in their day. The Teutonic race had far to travel before such an ideal could be realised. As the history of Europe shows, nothing could have prevented the amassing of riches by individuals, and such concentrations of economic power as the modern



world exhibits, considering the possibilities of mass production, and that at the time of its introduction poverty, and the fear of poverty, still exercised an enormous influence. Before man can rise superior to luxury and economic power he must have experienced them, tested their power to produce well-being; he must also have developed sufficiently to enable enough material goods to be produced to satisfy humanity's needs, from spiritual motives. Having acquired the experience and the culture they formerly lacked, the Teutonic nations are now able to abandon materialism in the interest of a spiritual civilisation.

This view is in keeping with the nature of things, for growth is the essence of life. In the last analysis growth is spiritual becoming, life being a process of spiritualisation. Moreover the evolution of spirit is the evolution of love; for the life of the spirit is love. From the dawn of civilisation, it might be said, life is a conflict between the flesh and the spirit, mind and matter. After each victory over the limiting forces of the external world man extends the boundaries of his spiritual kingdom and multiplies his spiritual relationships.

Although the statement may seem startling, it is nevertheless the case that hitherto no

people, as a people has adopted love as the fundamental principle of life, realised that man is a spiritual being whose true life is in love and service. Isolated individuals may have done so, or even small groups of people, closed-in communities like the Monasteries, but that is all. Many great teachers have stood for an ideal of spiritual life, but spiritual towards God only, not towards man. Most of these, it is true, have advocated altruistic conduct, but not because they believed in the spiritual productivity of love so much as because they realised that the world could not otherwise be carried on. Moreover, the reward promised for such conduct was not fellowship with man, but the peace of God "which passeth understanding". Such ancient commands as "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you," are merely prudential precepts which were enforced by means of religion upon a spiritually unawakened people, and do not imply, as it first might seem, a spiritual interpretation of life.

All through the ages, with rare exceptions, spiritual life has been limited to the religious experience, has meant, on the whole, fellowship with God, not fellowship with man. Very often, indeed, it has involved or implied the negation of human fellowship, the stifling of

the social instincts, as, *e.g.*, under Puritanism. Nevertheless, religious idealism has, up to a certain point, made for spiritual development, having helped to subdue the physical passions by its appeal to the imagination, and thus enabled the human soul to be born. In due course it had to give way to a broader conception of spiritual life, to a demand for the inclusion of social activities in the ideal life.

So far as England is concerned, even as late as the eighteenth century, Puritanism, which was the form Christianity took in that century, while affirming that man possesses a spirit which can commune with God, and which is eternal, yet believed that human nature was too vile and sinful to be worthy or capable of human fellowship. No wonder that to-day the direct descendants of the Puritans are carrying out an inhuman industrial policy, are able to regard men and women as so much flesh and blood to be used without mercy in the production of private profit, and to believe that God is on the side of the millionaires.

As a fact a form of religious idealism has held sway in this country right down to the present time, and is only now being superseded by an idealism which finds a large place for the social instincts.



It was much the same in Jewish history. A species of religious idealism held the field right down to the time of Christ. Against that idealism Christ waged a bitter conflict to the end of his life. Indeed it was primarily on account of his social teaching that Christ was condemned to death. The Nazarine carpenter was the first Jewish teacher to include human fellowship in the concept of spiritual life. He founded life on love, and he laid as much emphasis on social relationships and the service of man as upon divine relationships and the service of God.

But the case does not end there. No teacher other than Christ, of any country or time has taught that man is essentially a spiritual being and that human fellowship is a veritable part of life, and upon that truth has founded a philosophy.

Neither the Greeks nor the Romans ever discovered the spirit of man with sufficient clearness to make fellowship the end and love the motive of conduct. True, the Greeks created little communistic circles, Gardens where a few select, kindred spirits lived in common. But they never got beyond that. Position, noble birth and material power weighed more with them than fellowship. Both the Greeks

and the Romans upheld slavery, and founded their social systems upon it; they even developed a theory of human nature to justify their conduct.

It is sometimes said that Socrates discovered man, and that by means of his discussions upon conduct and morals he brought philosophy out of the clouds down to the solid earth. There is some truth in this contention. But it was man as a rational rather than as a spiritual being that Socrates discovered. His struggle was against the theologians, the people who believed that morals were the gift of the gods, and were therefore beyond criticism. To the last the Greeks were an æsthetic people, sensuous rather than spiritual, being attracted more by the form of an expression than the soul which was expressed. The ethics of Plato and Aristotle, although more scientifically expressed, are not to be compared for spiritual grandeur with the ethics of Christ. The cause of this disparity is a fundamental difference in the conception of man. To Christ, man under all conditions ought to be loved and served, lived towards spirituality, whereas to Plato and Aristotle human nature was not one but many. In the higher social scales he could be magnificent, and worthy of unbounded admiration.

But the artisans and the slaves! That was another question. The broad democratic spirit of Christ and his universal sympathy stand in sharp contrast to the exclusive, aristocratic spirit of the Greeks.

Both Plato and Aristotle formulated two ideals, one for the Aristocracy, who were alone fitted for the higher culture, for philosophy and art, and another for the artisans, whose nature they believed to be of coarser grain and who must needs do the world's work. A hard life and a rigorous discipline were necessary for these latter, lest they should attempt to skip the traces. Precisely the same view is held to-day almost throughout the civilised world; but because slavery is nominally prohibited, more guarded language is used. Neither of these eminent Greeks believed in democracy in the true sense, just as none of the eminent politicians of the great modern capitalist states believe in democracy, despite all their grandiose professions. Plato and Aristotle estimated the value of a Government, as do most politicians to-day, by its power to maintain order, keep the workers busy and well in hand so that the rich might carry on their life of spacious splendour without molestation. Thus, notwithstanding that Plato and Aristotle stood at the zenith of



Greek civilisation and culture, they never came within measurable distance of Christ's conception of the Kingdom of God. They do not appear ever to have conceived the idea of a world without classes and privileges, where all are bound together by the simple law of love and service.

Confronted with these broad facts it will be worth while, I think, to try and reveal the process of the evolution of character and spirit, on the one hand, and of the morals and ideals corresponding thereto, on the other. I will first give a rough sketch of moral and spiritual development in the West, and afterwards compare it with the process of development in the Jewish civilisation, as depicted in the Bible. The latter task will constitute a description of the evolution of Christianity. This, I claim, will be most valuable, as it will enable us to grasp the deeper significance of development, and also to realise more clearly the nature and essence of Christianity, its place in history, and its significance for the future development of society.

I undertake this task with reluctance, for the reason that it is not possible to do more than touch the fringe of the subject in the course of a single chapter.

At the commencement of civilisation Nature appears to man as a mystical realm of being amidst which he wanders as an inseparable part, wholly at the mercy of mighty unintelligible forces. He is himself a super-animal: an animal endowed with imagination. In due course he begins to be conscious of himself as a separate identity, a being distinct from Nature. Unable to understand the latter he deifies her. Natural forces become gods, of whom some are kindly, others terrible and dangerous. With the former he allies himself as a protection against the latter, and so develops a crude sort of religion. But he is still essentially a physical being.

For a long time yet he remains a nomad. He wanders about alone at first, then with his clan. Later he begins to settle down, migrating only at rare intervals. Meanwhile his mind develops, its mastery over conditions, the secrets of the soil, etc., becoming increasingly apparent. With this growth there gradually arise demands for new rights, such as the right to possess a wife, to found a family, to possess private property, etc. These demands herald a new era, and lead, eventually, at any rate in most cases, to the formation of a nation-state. By this time there are signs of spiritual awakening.

Crude attempts at art may be observed, and the appeal of religion grows more intense. But in spite of all these developments man is still essentially a physical being.

The idea of settling down on a definite piece of land is still unfamiliar. It is easier to roam and maraud than to become a dutiful producer. The crudest huts serve as homes; life is a matter of hunting, eating and drinking. To men accustomed to a free life, to hunting, etc., and only tilling the land by starts, the idea of respecting the "rights of property," is unthinkable. They are still "natural" men who instinctively regard Nature and all her fruits as their inalienable right. But respect for property was necessary if the land was to be cultivated and social progress to be made. For "property" in this case meant produce created by labour, which the leisure-loving members of the community were unwilling to give. No doubt all enjoyed hunting and eating good things, carousing and singing. For by this time minstrelsy was beginning to make its appearance. The time had arrived, therefore, when, in order that the cultivation of the land might proceed, and that those who toiled might enjoy their produce in peace, respect for property, for law, etc., should be instilled in the



minds of the people. How was this to be done? The best way was obviously to appeal to the imagination. And what better way of doing that than through religion?

Now when this period was reached in England, Christianity was flourishing in Europe, but in a crude form, very unlike that in which its founder had presented it. The exalted spiritual ethics of Christianity presupposed a level of civilisation a thousand years ahead of that attained by the Teutonic peoples at this time. Thus among the semi-barbaric peoples of Europe Christianity took a highly symbolic and mystical form. It appealed less to the intelligence than to the imagination. The physical, lawless nature of the Teuton had to be tamed, and Christianity in the form of Monasticism was one of the chief means by which this was done. Monasteries began to spring up everywhere. The very presence of these majestic buildings, with their strange inmates who had abandoned the world, together with the churches, where people gathered together to worship an unseen God by means of an elaborate ceremonial, was a challenge to the conscience and the imagination alike. Eventually, by means of this striking imaginative appeal, assisted by a system of rewards and punishments,

the promise of heaven and the threat of hell, the church was able to enforce a rigorous moral code and thus to control the lives of the people, and so make possible a remarkable social development.

But it did much more. By making possible a peaceful productive life, Christianity brought new faculties and powers into play, and enabled the spiritual nature of the Teuton definitely to assert itself. Indeed it was about this time that the soul of the Teuton had its birth. With the latter event a new mode of existence took its rise, that of the religious life pure and simple. Having at last become conscious of his soul, the tendency was, as it always is at this period of development, to identify existence with the life of the soul. Hence the establishment of many religious orders whose vows included the renunciation of the world and complete devotion to a life of religious contemplation, fasting and prayer. Such an ideal held sway in Europe from the rise of Monasticism to the Reformation. The belief in a spiritual as apart from a merely physical existence is now definitely established.

But apart from the founding of religious orders, this development has a profound influence upon public morality. The mere recognition of spiritual values has the effect of raising the

value of human life, as is seen by the fact that the old crude law of an eye for an eye, and the customs which that law symbolised, are allowed to pass into oblivion. Man has realised himself at a higher level. Plundering and marauding gradually disappear. The good is no longer the satisfaction of the physical appetites merely, but includes religion, spiritual communion with God and, to some extent, the consciousness of moral perfection.

But development does not stop there. The establishment of a permanent home leads to agricultural improvement and progress in the domestic arts, both of which have a refining effect upon the spirit, and help to develop the social instincts. In the meantime the fine arts have begun to take root, and now come into increasing prominence. Literature, minstrelsy, painting and architecture flourish at a surprising rate, and these, even more than the domestic arts, tend to develop and ennoble the spirit. Not many could read, it is true, but the literary masterpieces of that time were stories which were capable of being told or recited; and storytelling, an art now almost extinct, flourished in those days. Then think of the tremendous influence that the wonderful architecture of those religiously inspired times must have



had upon the untutored yet inquiring mind of that time of spiritual awakening !

The accumulative effect of these various forms of spiritual development was so to stimulate thought that a new and unforeseen tendency took its rise. Art led to inquiry ; and inquiry led to science, the discovery of fact and truth. Thus by and by we may observe the setting in of a reaction against ritual and symbolism in religious worship. And yet, interesting to relate, morality is not threatened thereby. The reason for this is that spiritual culture has created an instinctive recognition of the necessity for most of the morals upon which the church has insisted. Man has developed new power ; he is now becoming conscious of his reason, of his power to observe law and order in Nature, and even in human society ; and the consciousness of this power tends to make him restless, dissatisfied with a religious system which stifles reason by its over-bearing authority and its unbending orthodoxy.

The outcome was the revolt of the Schoolmen, which was assisted and to some extent inspired by the Renaissance. In this revolt the Schoolmen came into sharp conflict with the church, whose interpretation of Nature, natural processes, etc., were supposed to be infallible, being

a direct revelation from God. The effect of this struggle, which resulted in a triumph for the intellect, the vindication of human reason, was to weaken the authority of the church. That struggle, moreover, prepared the way for an even greater weakening of the church, by stimulating an attack upon its one-sided idealism.

The Reformation was much more than a movement for the purification of the practices of the church. At root it was a revolt against the narrow conception of spiritual life embodied in Monasticism. Since the dawn of Monasticism, the Teutonic peoples had undergone a remarkable moral and social development, in consequence of which social relationships had gained enormously in significance. The idea that man was born in sin and abounded in iniquity, and was, on that account, unworthy of fellowship, had already visibly weakened, with the result that the idealism which accompanied it, *viz.*, that the good is to be found solely in communion with God, in prayer, fasting and contemplation, began to be questioned. The feeling was now growing that there was at least some good in social relationships, in fellowship, art, and social activity generally. Hence the Reformation, with its doctrine of Justification by Faith,

whereby the individual was saved from the moral over-lordship of the church. The Reformation rescued man from the pit of incurable sin, and endowed him, as it were, with grace and virtue, the power to make himself beloved and capable of loving. Thus social values, which had been shut out from the good by Monasticism, were brought back again by the Reformation, as a result of the spiritual development that had taken place in the interim. Christianity, in the form of Monasticism had directed the barbaric mind of the Teuton to spiritual reality. It had helped to humanise conduct, restrain carnal passion and prepare the way for a beautiful social life. But in due course, having accomplished its work, Monasticism was abandoned in the interest of a larger truth, a broader conception of spiritual life.

After the Reformation the movement towards complete moral emancipation, foreshadowed in the Renaissance and the Reformation, proceeded apace. Schools of moral philosophy arose in quick succession, the intellectuals, in defiance of the church, freely discussing morals and even the problem of life itself, its goal and good. In the period from Locke to Mill, various schools of thought appeared which forcibly remind one



of the Hedonist and Stoic schools of Greece, after Plato. Indeed they appeared at a similar period in the national development.

But it was much later that the process of moral emancipation started among the rank and file. By reason of the Civil war and the religious persecution which followed it, as well as of pronounced economic repression, the workers of England have been kept in a state of appalling ignorance up to within the last half-century or so. But the light of knowledge and the call of freedom reached them at last. A few of the bolder and more enlightened spirits, becoming acquainted with the thought of their time, had their eyes opened, whence they started movements which have continued to grow right down to the present time. These movements have for their end the moral, political and economic emancipation of the masses. The narrow idealism and the stupid theology of the churches, together with the inhuman conduct of the captains of industry, most of whom professed Christianity and were the bulwarks of the church, have been the means of opening the eyes of the people to the absurdity of modern life, and of stimulating inquiry into the whole question of morality and life. The immediate effect was a revolt against the ethics and ideals

of the church. Cheap reprints of literary masterpieces, the sudden development of the novel and the rise and spread of socialism, have completed the process of awakening. The outcome is the attainment of moral freedom, and a movement for the economic emancipation of the workers, which gains in strength daily, and whose ultimate triumph is as certain as the triumph, centuries ago, of the movement for religious freedom—if, that is, civilisation is to survive. Puritanism, which has carried with it to the last the narrowest form of religious idealism in conjunction with the most inhuman and unabashed form of materialism the world has yet witnessed, stands discredited in the eyes of all thinking people. Faith in it, as well as in Liberalism, its political creed, has passed away for ever.

The outstanding characteristic of the present age is the wide-spread belief in universal brotherhood, and the equally wide-spread revolt against modern materialism with its defence of the individual as a wealth-appropriating agent. At last the idea is beginning to permeate society that human life ought to be conducted on the basis of a family, with love, or service as its fundamental law. The glory of riches is passing away; belief in fellowship is

taking its place. The nineteenth century witnessed the creation of the millionaire; the twentieth century is witnessing his descent in the public esteem. The man who desires to win the love and respect of society to-day must do something more than show it how to make money. Mankind is sick of materialism and is looking for leaders to guide it to a spiritual existence. The vision of a new spiritual era has already dawned upon a few; soon it will have descended upon society as a whole. In other words, the present age is comparable to that in which Christ startled the world with his revolutionary doctrine of the Kingdom of God, the ideal of a world of spiritual beings living in fellowship and bound together by love and service.

Thus, at intervals in the history of every civilisation we may see evidences of a dim realisation of the spiritual nature of man and thus of social life. As a people develops, these moments of spiritual illumination increase in number and power until they give rise to a feeling, which ultimately tends to harden into a conviction, that man is a spiritual being, the natural law of whose life is love. But only once or twice in the world's history has this altitude been reached with sufficient definiteness to make possible the clear expression of all that



it implied. Of course, in the tales and romances of olden time one may find isolated instances of men and women rising to the altitude of magnificent self-sacrifice for the sake of love. But it is one thing to love a friend, or a "lover," or even one's kith and kin, and quite another to love man as man, all men; one thing to feel that fellowship in a particular instance is good, and another to feel that fellowship with all men is good. It is obvious, therefore, that the emergence of love as the fundamental principle of life, operating under all conditions and with respect to all men, takes place at a very late period, and marks the dawn of an era upon which no nation, as a nation, has yet been able to enter. But there are not lacking indications that mankind universally is about to make a serious attempt to found its life on a spiritual basis. The evolution of love to the point when it can take complete control of life is a long process, and so far as most of the existing civilisations are concerned, that point is only just being reached. Most of our older civilisations, which ought to have reached this altitude much sooner, are nevertheless ready to enter upon the era it forecasts. Thus we find that the idea of founding life upon the principle of love—domestically, nationally and internationally—has begun to

take root in every part of the world. The process of spiritualisation which all history reveals, is one that very few have studied, or understood. It is so easy to idealise the past, to read into it what is not there.

A similar conclusion is reached when one studies the history of the family. Love, which on a surface view would appear to exist in all family life, emerges—in its highest form, that is—at a very late stage in the process of human development. It is commonly thought, for instance, that because the animal mother feeds her young and protects them from harm, often at the risk of her own life, that she loves her offspring with the same love which causes a man to lay down his life for a cause, or an idea, as did Socrates, or Christ. Similarly, because the human family keeps intact through long years, and children born into it receive care and training at the hands of their parents, it is generally assumed that the family must be founded on love. Again, because human beings live together in large communities in comparative peace, observe the same laws and respect life and property, it is concluded that love is the basis of society. It is to be feared, however, that none of these assumptions are warranted. Society makes love possible, but it is not

necessarily founded upon it. In the interest of self-preservation society was necessary. At the same time, man being made for love, as we now know, there can be no doubt that the desire for association was a powerful factor, if not the strongest factor, which led to the creation of society. But at first that desire was scarcely conscious; it was rather an intuition which gave strong support to physical necessity.

One need only study the customs of primitive society with respect to marriage and family relationships, to appreciate the physical and selfish nature of the motives which underlay them. In the most primitive forms of tribal life, marriage is unknown. In some cases a man and woman will live together for a short period for the purpose of race propagation, and will dis sever their co-habitation, as a matter of course, as soon as their child has grown up and has ceased to be helpless. Children are the property of the tribe, to which they are handed over as soon as the mother's special attention can be dispensed with. The institution of marriage, like that of private property, has its origin mainly in self-love, the desire for security or for the gratification of the appetites. In most cases the tribe, to whom the women belong, will not permit a woman to become the property



of one man, that being a greater luxury than it can afford; with the result that if a man desires a wife to himself, he must steal one, capture her from a neighbouring tribe. And that is what he does. Moreover, when he has secured his prize, he is free to do what he likes with it, possessing absolute right over his wife's life. There is no pretence of affection. Even later than this, when marriage is sanctioned by the tribe, it is the practice, in some cases, for the bride's father to hand over to the bridegroom, at the time of marriage, the whip of chastisement, symbolic of the place occupied by the wife. Until comparatively recently woman was a chattel in European civilisation. Indeed, as we all ought to know in this generation, it is only in the very highest civilisation that a wife is regarded as a spiritual being, a free person with full rights of mind and body. Nor is there, at this early stage, any indication that a man chooses wife for her beauty. His chief motive is neither love nor sex, but domestic, the desire for comfort, to have someone to cook his food and perform his menial duties. As yet man is almost wholly a physical being, a collection of appetites. When personality begins to develop and spiritual factors come into play, there will be evidence of the fact in some form of art, for,

*e.g.*, in songs which proclaim the heroism of valiant men and the beauty of virtuous women. When poets begin to sing the praises of woman, to describe her beauty and loveliness, it is a sign that the soul of woman has begun to manifest itself and to be observed.

This view of the origin of marriage is supported by the fact that throughout the Middle Ages, in Europe, *e.g.*, it was lawful for the husband to chastise his wife. According to Gratian, whose "Decretum" was the leading text-book on Canon Law in the Middle Ages, the husband's right to chastise his wife is vindicated, as the wife is declared to be part of the husband's household. "So likewise," runs the instruction in one place, "the husband is bound to chastise his wife in moderation . . . unless he be a clerk, in which case he may chastise her more severely."

As with marriage so with the family. Whilst there were many factors which led to its creation, its chief cause was the desire of the father to strengthen his economic position. Certainly the spiritual love of children was not its cause. In most cases marriage continued for some time before the tribe permitted a father to possess his own children. The institution of the family gave a father more liberty and more

security, enhanced his power, comfort and well-being. By founding a family and controlling a household, a man had more play for the exercise of initiative and individuality. With the family came new obligations, it is true, but the compensations more than outweighed them. The man who possessed a large family was in a strong economic position; he was, moreover, a petty ruler. Yet, without doubt, prompting the family impulse was the attachment of the slowly awakening spirit of the parent for its offspring. And once the family was instituted, the greatest conceivable opportunity was given for the development of the social instincts. It is natural that affection should first spring up where the ties of blood are strongest.

Thus the coming of the family marks an advance in the history of civilisation. It gave new liberty to the father and provided an opportunity for the development of the social instincts and the finer feelings. But if the institution of the family meant increased liberty for the father, it meant complete subjection for his wife and children. Whereas these latter had previously been subject to the generally accepted customs of the tribe, they were now at the mercy of the arbitrary will of a single individual.



Until the abuses of paternal power caused the State to interfere, the father possessed absolute right over his wife and children. Nevertheless, as a means of spiritual culture, the family was necessary, the family circle being a suitable arena for the generation of love and the finer feelings. Still, even then, it took spiritual love a long time to evolve.

Naturally, in looking for love in the family, we should expect to find it first of all in the mother, as the very act of giving birth brings the mother into closer touch with nature than the father can ever come. Then the suckling, nursing and caring for her children, develop a tenderness in the mother which a father can rarely know. But then the mother is a chattel and has many duties, and the struggle for existence being keen, both she and her husband are anxious for their child to grow strong and healthy so as to be able as soon as possible to augment the family income. Children are not indulged. The outstanding aim at this stage of development is to possess physical abundance, rich, fertile lands, and many sons and daughters to cultivate them. In support of this view I need only mention the fact that not very long ago one could have found in the mining and factory districts of Britain numbers of people

whose one thought in bringing up their children was to get them to the age when they might be sent down the pit or into the factory, in order to lighten the burden of the parents. And one need not be surprised at this when we remember how cheap life was even as late as 150 years ago. At the opening of the nineteenth century it was still possible to hang a man in England for stealing anything to the value of five shillings.

Although to-day we are on the borderland of a spiritual era, it is astonishing how numerous are the cases where, among the rich as well as among the poor, where the attachment between mother and child is almost purely physical, the mother regarding her child as a beautiful little animal merely, seeing only its physical characteristics. The mother who loves her offspring spiritually, as a potential personality whose blossoming she anxiously awaits, is still most rare. The test of a mother's love for her child, whether it be physical or spiritual, is her attitude towards it as it reaches maturity. If her love weakens as the child grows older, it is obviously physical, but if it grows stronger it is spiritual. Take the case of the animal mother in the highest orders of mammals. For a time after birth the relation between mother and

young is of the closest. The mother will protect her offspring at the risk of her own life. But as the baby animal grows there can be noticed a distinct falling off of attention and regard until, finally the mother, develops a total indifference towards it. By the time maturity is reached, the young are treated by the mother as aliens, with whom she will not hesitate to quarrel in the struggle for food. Whereas, the human mother of the highest type loves her child spiritually from the first, and loves it increasingly as its spiritual nature develops. When years of patient training and watching are rewarded with the birth of a beautiful personality, the mother's love reaches its highest power.

Roughly speaking, there are three orders of love: physical, æsthetic and spiritual. The first is self-love, pure and simple; the second is the love of physical beauty; the third is the love of personality.

The animal mother, whose love is physical, is bound to her offspring chiefly by the elemental tie of blood. Her young are one with herself, flesh of her flesh, bone of her bone. As she looks upon them she sees herself in some new and mysterious form—extended, so to speak. Accordingly when the animal mother risks her



life in defence of her young, she acts from blood instinct, the instinct of self-preservation. As soon as her young have established their independence, the mother seems perplexed, and when the reality of the situation dawns upon her she would appear to lose all interest in them.

Æsthetic love continues after the independence of the infant has been established, but tends to weaken with the growth of character and individuality, the cultivation of individual tastes, desires and aims.

Only spiritual love is free and abiding, independent of external changes, and grows with the march of time.

The tendency of the foregoing considerations is to put forward the time when spiritual love makes its appearance. Moreover, as I have said, if spiritual love had been common in the early history of the family, it would have been expressed in some form of art; and art which portrays the felicity of family life is of late origin. Take English art as an example. The novel may be said to be the art-form *par excellence* for describing home life. But the novel only took its rise in the eighteenth century. The reason is obvious. Prior to that time the home was under the iron rule of the father, and was in no sense regarded

as the arena for the expression and culture of the feelings, the free development of the family. Its atmosphere was cold, its spirit severe, its discipline stern and rigid. Wives must obey their husbands, while children must be "seen and not heard". Human nature was still held to be sinful, and fathers of families even in the best regulated homes, ruled their little kingdoms in accordance with the merciless justice dispensed by the ancient Hebrew God whom they worshipped.

If we are to be guided by art, I think we shall be led to the conclusion that the human spirit was first discovered on the battlefield, that is, as a result of deeds of heroism. The earliest art describes the animals which man hunted and ate. Later, when the people had settled down to a life of agriculture, poets and bards appeared who described great battles and the glorious deeds of popular heroes. This art is the sign of a transition from a purely physical to a semi-physical existence. Man is no longer a mere food hunter and a feaster, but a hero, a being possessed of god-like attributes. Thus the poems of this period are full of descriptions of heroic deeds. Moreover, feasts are given to celebrate the deeds of the valiant, while women dance in their honour and

make crowns to adorn their brows. Thus heroism in man tends to produce grace and charm in woman. As a fact, the valour of man and the beauty of woman become the objects of admiration and praise at about the same time. Indeed beauty is the reward of strength, the most beautiful woman being given to the most valorous man. The annals of Knight-Errantry in Europe, like the earlier Greek, Jewish and Indian literature, furnish adequate proof of this contention. The age of prowess is also the age of gallantry. In the heroism of man and the beauty of woman poetry finds its first great themes. This is the age of romance, and its appearance marks the transition from physical to æsthetic love.

Man is now something more than a physical being whose chief delights are hunting, eating and drinking. To the pleasures of the board minstrelsy is added, the people gathering around the fire after the evening meal and listening to accounts of heroism, and songs in praise of beautiful women and brave men. The world is now a great theatre for the play of heroic forces, a prowess ground for the brave and mighty, where gods and men engage in deadly conflict with devils, monsters, etc. Strength goes forth in defence of Beauty. Life is a wonderful romance.



Consider, in this connection the stories in such writings as the Jewish Hexateuch, the Epics of Homer, the legends and romances of the Anglo-Saxons, from Beowolf onwards. Man is not as yet regarded as a spiritual being, but as a physical being endowed with spiritual powers, god-like qualities. He is not a soul which possesses a body, but a body which possesses a soul. Woman is a beautiful creature "fair, comely, and goodly to look upon". The attraction in woman is not the spirit so much as the form. Indeed one gets the impression that the poets regarded their ideal women as spiritualised bodies, beings suffused with a divine essence and clothed in a heavenly garment, but not as persons to be loved purely for the beauty of their spiritual nature.

This order of love is characterised in English literature from the age of Chaucer to that of Shakespeare, and in Greek literature down to the Golden Age. And I think I should be justified in saying that the Greeks never got beyond the æsthetic conception of love. From the æsthetic standpoint, no race has felt the charm of woman more perfectly than the Greeks; yet they never seemed able to regard woman as a personality, and the occasions are rare which show that woman was held by them to be other

than the servant of man, a means of ministering to his pleasure and delight. Woman existed for the sake of man, never for herself; she was a servant, not a person: the beautiful woman was the gift of society to the successful soldier, etc. Pretty much the same idea of woman existed among the Jews, down to and even beyond, the time of the later prophets; and it is common to-day among the most advanced nations of the West, notwithstanding that woman has received the franchise, and that a more democratic spirit is taking root. Indeed the social revolt of the present time is a sign of the awakening of mankind to the spiritual nature of man and woman alike, and to the great social and spiritual possibilities which that awakening opens up. At root the Feminist movement is a demand for the recognition of woman as a person, a free, spiritual being.

But in regard to man also, the transition had to be made from æsthetic to spiritual love. As I have said, it is probably in war that the spirit of man is first revealed and venerated. The primitive battlefield was an incomparable field for the display and generation of courage and skill, as it proved who had the bravest heart, the staunchest spirit, the strongest arm,

the truest eye, the keenest perception, the swiftest foot. But the development of a more spiritual type of humanity has created a demand for a new kind of battlefield, one that demands greater courage than the old. The warrior-hero, like the beautiful woman, was not regarded as a spiritual being, but as a physical being possessing divine attributes. And we need only observe how men are treated in the world of commerce to-day to realise how extensively man is still, to all intents and purposes, regarded as a physical being, a body which only theoretically possesses a soul.

Yet the perception of physical beauty is the necessary precursor of the perception of spiritual beauty, or personality. The mind that has been led to appreciate form will, in time, be led to appreciate character and spirit, to conceive of a personality with which one may enjoy fellowship. *Æsthetic* love is thus a sort of half-way stage between physical and spiritual love. At the *æsthetic* stage woman, for instance, is something more than a body but something less than a free personality. And the transition from *æsthetic* to spiritual love is the work of centuries.

These considerations go to show that spiritual love, at any rate, on a large scale, must



necessarily be a late evolution. The search for well-being through love is an indication of an exceedingly high level of civilisation. Only a few individuals here and there have reached that level even to-day. But many are groping towards it. Belief in a spiritual existence to be realised in social relationships, is the living force in all the great modern movements making for the emancipation of the peoples. Self-love, manifested as materialism, has finished its task; it can only work ruin henceforth. The time has come for spiritual love to take the field. For centuries man is little more than a body. Then he becomes adjectival body, that is, body adorned with beauty and endowed with divine essences. Finally the spirit is developed and discovered whence issue love and a life of service and fellowship.

By way of confirming the above conclusions let us make a brief survey of the process of moral and spiritual development in the Jewish nation, which reached its culminating point in Christianity. To turn from the Hexateuch to the Sermon on the Mount is to pass out of one world into another. Upwards of a thousand years of development are necessary to account for the difference between the people who worshipped the warlike Jahveh, and their

descendants who worshipped a God of love delighting not in war and condemning those who spend their lives accumulating riches. And yet, when it appeared, Christianity was the "next step" in the progress of Jewish civilisation. In the nature of things it could not have originated much sooner than it did. It embodies a principle which could only be appreciated at a high level of spiritual development. Hence it is true, as has often been said, that Christianity came in the fulness of time to accomplish an appointed task. It heralded a new order of existence and was the only hope of salvation from a materialism that was becoming increasingly menacing. It represented a conception of life which involved a distinct breach with the past. And yet the past had led up to it, made it possible. The Gospels are the fruit of a spirit of which in the earliest biblical writings there are but the faintest indications. We will briefly examine the conquests which led up to them and made them possible.

As the most casual reader cannot but be aware, the Hexateuch, or first six books of the Bible, is not the product of a single age. Whether as regards style, spirit, or matter, differences are manifest which prove it to be the product of at

least three distinct periods. These three periods cover a wide stretch of time, probably four or five centuries, and give evidence of considerable spiritual development. The first period is represented by the stories that are scattered about these six books, particularly Genesis, Exodus and Joshua. These stories, when strung together, give a connected account of the doings and wanderings of the Israelitish people from earliest times, and constitute what is known as the Primitive document. They were probably written about the ninth century B.C. The second, or Deuteronomic document, which was probably written about the seventh century B.C., is an attempt to re-interpret the history recorded in the Primitive document; to point its moral, so to speak, and thus to lead the people to a higher moral altitude. Nevertheless its tone is intensely materialistic, material prosperity being the reward of moral uprightness. The third, or Priestly document, is thought to have been written about the fifth century B.C., and reveals an attempt to wean the people from a purely materialistic existence to one in which the religious element, or the worship of God, occupies an important place. Thus in this document a tendency towards ritualism and symbolism is to be observed, whilst it also bears



witness to the establishment of a regular priesthood.

The stories which constitute the Primitive document describe the doings of the Israelitish Patriarchs, the wanderings of the Children of Israel during their nomadic period prior to their settlement in Israel, when they became a separate people, a nation in a land of their own. As to their morals, their conception of God and of life, at this period, these were very crude indeed. Like the Teutonic tribes which settled down in England in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D., they had no idea of spiritual reality, either of a spiritual God, or of righteousness for its own sake. The human soul had not yet been born. Their idea of God was markedly anthropomorphic. Their heroes were men of great physical strength, well versed in the arts of cunning. Well-being consisted of possessing and enjoying the fruits of the earth, many cattle and rich pastures. God was not an invisible, spiritual being who was confined neither to time nor space, but an all-powerful deity possessing the form, faculties and habits of man. As such he appeared to the Patriarchs, walked and talked with them (*Gen.*, 3. 8 ; 8. 21 ; 11. 5 ; 18. 21-23, 33 ; *Ex.*, 4. 24). The God of the Israelites was a God of power, mighty in battle,

who delighted in warfare and in bringing his Chosen People to victory. And it was chiefly for his aid in war that the people called upon him, feared him and offered sacrifices to him. The idea of a spiritual God who delivered the soul, had not yet dawned, nor had the people begun to experience the "peace which passeth understanding," of which the psalmists speak.

If we examine the petitions that are made to God in these stories, we shall find that the aim is to secure physical well-being and material prosperity. The blessing and favour of God take the form of full storehouses and barns, many strong sons and beautiful daughters, and the promise of "prosperity to their seed for ever". In several of the stories, *e.g.*, the Fall, the Flood, Jacob wrestling with God, there are indications of an awakening moral consciousness; but as yet there is only the crudest social morality, conduct rarely rising above the level of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (*Ex.*, 21; *Lev.*, 24. 20-21). Even as late as the Judges we are able to find no evidence of the recognition of spiritual reality. That God was not conceived of as a spiritual being is proved by the fact that the people were prone to idolatry; obviously he had not yet begun to dwell in the heart. God was accepted on

suffrance, his value and popularity depending almost entirely upon his readiness or ability to help in battle, scatter and destroy the enemies of his followers.

The best idea of the moral conceptions which prevailed at this time is to be got, I think, from a study of the national heroes. Almost without exception these were men of might and cunning. The parts of the story of Joseph, *e.g.*, that are made most attractive are those which exhibit his cleverness and device. Samson was obviously a great hero, but many of his triumphs were the outcome of revolting deceit. Ehud, another hero, used the name of God to secure an opportunity of assassinating an enemy. Jael treacherously murdered Sisera, yet Deborah and Barak chanted before God the praises of Jael for her deed! And it is significant that such acts as Rebekah's and Jacob's deception of Isaac, Jacob's dishonest dealing with Laban, the expulsion of Hagar, etc., should have been passed over without condemnation or censure.

It is quite true that many beautiful and noble deeds are recorded in these stories, but that does not weaken my contention that at the period we are considering morals were of a very primitive order, and that the prevailing conception of life was physical and materialistic.



As yet man is essentially a physical being. Homage is paid to God, but chiefly for his protecting power. A species of hero-worship has sprung into existence, which is one of the few signs that life has begun to be raised above the merely physical plane.

In the interim (about two centuries) between the writing of the Primitive and Deuteronomic documents, several of the minor prophets had appeared, typical of which is Amos. These attack idolatry, and also social oppression, which had already become acute. The Israelites had now become a moderately prosperous people, having developed trade relations with surrounding peoples, with whom, it would appear, they had begun freely to mingle. It was thus that they had begun to worship foreign gods. If they heard of the wonderful doings of other gods, they were attracted, and were not unwilling to worship them.

The chief aim of Amos and his successors was to arrest the people in their wild career of self-indulgence. Hence they preached an impending doom, the wrath of God and the coming of judgment. It was the purpose of this pre-Deuteronomic school of writers to lay hold of the people's imagination by preaching a God of wrath and vengeance and threatening them

with calamity and destruction. And it would seem that their preaching was not without effect, for not long afterwards a new set of writers, the Deuteronomic, appears, whose tone is more moderate, as if the danger that had threatened had somewhat passed away. The object of this school, it would appear, was to bring the people to a consciousness of the moral law, to establish belief in a just and righteous God, and by that means in the love of righteousness for its own sake. There is still a marked tendency to concentrate on material well-being, although godliness and righteousness tend to be regarded as beautiful in themselves. Social life is now increasing in complexity, in consequence of which issues arise which make a higher social morality imperative.

But although it is the deliberate aim of the Deuteronomic writers to create a love of righteousness for its own sake, it is quite evident, as is proved by such statements as that contained in *Deut.* 28, which is typical of this period, that the Children of Israel are still governed by a physical conception of well-being. Noble as the Deuteronomic exhortation often is, it always harks back to the promise of material prosperity as the reward of obedience to the moral law. An advance has been made upon

the old anthropomorphic conception of God, but not as yet upon the notion of well-being which attended it. God is now one and absolute (*Deut.*, 6, 4). Also the Deuteronomic writers address themselves to the heart, insist that the law of God must be written in the heart (*Deut.*, 6, 6.), and by a patient and persistent appeal endeavour to turn the attention of the individual inward, to the heart and mind (*Deut.*, 6, 5 ; 10, 12 ; 30, 6). Still, it is abundantly evident that the discovery of the soul and of the possibility of spiritual life in communion with God has not yet been made. As yet we hear nothing about the soul thirsting for God, or taking delight in the worship and contemplation of God.

Nor can it be said that the writers of the Priestly document discovered the human soul, although that discovery would appear to be at hand. The creation of a regular priesthood and of an elaborate ritual might seem to presuppose a belief in spiritual life, but really they do not. They lead to it, and are signs of its approach. The Levitical priesthood was called into being to accomplish what the Deuteronomic writers had evidently failed to accomplish, *viz.*, wrest the people from lawlessness and awaken their moral consciousness. It was imperative that the moral code which



the Deuteronomic writers had drawn up be obeyed if man was to develop and society to advance. The sacrificial system, with its elaborate ritual, sought to accomplish this end. In doing so it brought to birth the soul of the Hebrew.

The sacrificial system fulfilled among the Hebrews the same function that the symbolism and ritual of Monasticism fulfilled among the Teutons of Western Europe in the Middle Ages. Both originated at about the same period in social development, and under similar conditions. In both cases the object desired was gained, and in both cases an important but unforeseen result occurred. Sheer lawlessness, aided by a complete disregard for life and property was checked, while the process of doing this led to the discovery of the soul and a spiritual existence. The Levitical priesthood, like the Roman, served to create a sense of the sacredness of life, and also the idea that God is an all-powerful, all-pervading Spirit with which man may have communion. It was this idea, along with the development it made possible, which led to the discovery of the soul and a life of fellowship with God. Not long afterwards the seers appear who extol the beauty of spiritual relationship with God.

Up to this time religion had been a secondary concern, a means to worldly prosperity. But now a great change takes place. Dissatisfaction with a merely physical existence, on the one hand, and a growing consciousness of some new element within one's being which aspired for a new kind of existence, on the other, leads the way to the development of a religious idealism. The rapture of this idealism finds its most beautiful expression in the Psalms, *e.g.*, the 51st. Evidence of this transition, of the insufficiency of a merely physical existence and the satisfaction to be derived from religion, is to be found in such Psalms as the 23rd, 25th, 34th, 40th, and 42nd, in the 55th chapter of Isaiah, and, indeed, in the book of Isaiah generally after the 40th chapter. The outstanding ideas of this time are that the chief condition of well-being is a clean heart and a contrite spirit, and that the peace and satisfaction of the indwelling spirit of God is life's supreme blessing and good. In this new consciousness morality finds the security it lacked so long as man remained a physical being. The love of God constrains man to carry out the Divine will to the utmost. Consequently there is less need for the old ritual and even, it would appear, for the priesthood

God does not require the sacrifice of beasts, etc., as heretofore, but a broken heart and a contrite spirit. The belief in ritual and the priesthood thus begins to wane. With the discovery of the soul, the culture of the heart becomes man's primary duty, the possession of the peace of God his chief aim. Not possessions, neither the pleasures of the flesh and the world now constitute the good, but the sweet consciousness of the indwelling spirit of God. In such conceptions morality finds real security.

This idealism persisted more or less completely right down to the time of Christ. Advances were made upon it, and new elements were introduced, but not until Christ preached his Gospel of love was a new unity discovered. But much spiritual development had to take place before such a Gospel could appear.

The new life of which the psalmists sang was proclaimed and popularised by the later prophets. It gripped the Hebrew nation in a remarkable way, and on more than one occasion accomplished its rejuvenation. In due course, so wonderful was the spiritual transformation which it wrought, it completely broke down the old theocratic conception of life and Government, and gave rise to the idea of a vast spiritual kingdom of humanity, whose



law is freedom. Such passages as Isaiah 19, 16-25, which has a post-exilic origin, and Malachi 1, 2, show quite clearly that a great spiritual advance has been made, that the idea of a spiritual God and the consequent development of spiritual life has so cultured the human spirit as to foreshadow a universal society bound together by spiritual relationships. In other words, it started a development which by and by made Christianity not only possible, but necessary.

But the transition from the discovery of one's own soul and the cultivation of a life of fellowship with God, to the discovery of the souls of one's fellows and the cultivation of fellowship with mankind, occupied several centuries, during which many crises were passed through and much knowledge was gained. As was the case in England after the collapse of Monasticism, so here, religious idealism broke down in due course, gave way to the growing belief that life among men is not wholly evil. It was good and not evil to enjoy material things in moderation. As for fellowship—was not man a spiritual being like in nature to God? Why, then, should man not have fellowship with his kind as well as with God? Such was the spiritual transformation that had been wrought since the birth of the religious idealism

proclaimed by the later prophets and exalted by the psalmists! Still, the discovery, implicit at first, of the spirit of man and the admission of human fellowship into the good, and also of "worldly" enjoyment, gave rise to considerable uncertainty and oscillation, and led to all manner of extremes—as was the case in England after the break-up of Monasticism, where the excesses of the Stuart period were attacked by the Puritans. Some tried to keep the balance between religious idealism and worldly enjoyment; others flew into various excesses; a few refused to leave the beaten track of their fathers; while many, after paying lip service to the generally accepted religious ideas of the time, plunged into a life of money-making and materialism, just as have done the descendants of the Puritans in England. This swinging back of the pendulum from religious idealism to scarcely modified worldliness, created for the thoughtful a new problem, *viz.*, how to reconcile two apparently opposed claims, that of the spirit and that of the body. That problem, in one form or another, is treated of in what are known as the Wisdom Books, *viz.*, *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, and *Job*.

In *Proverbs* the idea still persists that life is essentially spiritual, but it is tacitly admitted

that many things which might not be regarded as spiritual in the narrow sense of the term, are yet good. For the first time in Jewish history the problem of life is treated objectively, reason being chartered to discover the good. Whereas the prophets and Psalmists had spoken from intuition, the writers of the Wisdom Books endeavour to teach by means of reason and argument. Some attempt is made at discussion. The book of *Proverbs* abounds in instructive comparisons. It teaches the necessity for wisdom: "Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." In *Proverbs* the world, which had to some extent been shut out by the religious idealists, the Psalmists and the major prophets, tends to come back, so to speak, into favour. But as was the case in post-Reformation Europe, the problem of reconciling the worship of God with life in the world, is not solved. The necessity of communion with God is emphasised, but life in the world, within reason, is also justified. Indulged in to a reasonable extent, the pleasures of the world are pronounced good; but one ought always to keep the body in restraint. It would thus appear that according to *Proverbs* life is a judicious mixture of two kinds of good, one spiritual, the



other physical ; that while man ought first and foremost to seek to become rich towards God, it is nevertheless permissible to enjoy pleasure in moderation. Hence the great need is wisdom and understanding.

In *Ecclesiastes* a position is reached that is both more logical and more of a unity than that reached in *Proverbs*. It is often said that the writer of *Ecclesiastes* denounces wealth and worldly pleasure uncompromisingly. But a close study shows that such is not the case. What he denounces is the pleasure-life, not pleasure. One notices here a keener recognition of the horrors of self-indulgence than is to be met with in *Proverbs* ; and even *Proverbs*, one must admit, was written to combat a tendency towards unrestrained self-indulgence. Just as after the collapse of Roman Catholicism in Europe, in the sixteenth century, as also after the collapse of established religion in Greece about the time of Socrates, licence and self-indulgence, which were among the first-fruits of the transition from a narrow religious idealism to a broader conception of spiritual life, were met by an attack of reason, and various schools of moral thought, so the tendency towards worldliness on the collapse of the sacrificial system in the Jewish development was met by

such rationalist writings as the Wisdom Books. And as in Greece each succeeding School tended to be more severe than the one which preceded it, so *Ecclesiastes* is more condemnatory of pleasure than is *Proverbs*. The writer of *Ecclesiastes* describes with the cynicism and pungency of a disillusioned mind the vacancy and folly of unrestrained self-indulgence. He has much in common with the Stoics, and also with the Puritans. The search for pleasure, however, is not a cardinal sin, as held the Puritans, but folly, as held the Stoics; its end being not eternal damnation but "vanity and vexation of spirit". Wealth may be enjoyed and pleasure indulged in, but only when they are the counterpart of a life of labour and service. Listen to his summing up: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." "Better is an handful with quietness, than both hands full with travail and vexation of spirit." "There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw that it was from the hand of God."

These quotations are also important as showing the growth of the idea of social duty and

the awakening of the social consciousness. At the same time there is no indication throughout *Ecclesiastes* of its author having perceived the spiritual value of fellowship, or the power of service to promote fellowship. It was left for a greater thinker than he to make that discovery. He had discovered the value of work to the individual, even stating as a first principle that productive labour is a necessary condition of well-being. But beyond this he was not able to go.

In one particular the book of *Job* shows a further advance: it emphasises social duty. Hitherto social morality had been of a negative character, its aim having been to restrain the individual and to induce in him a respect for life and property. But in *Job* a new note is struck, the rich being enjoined to look after the poor as a social duty. For the first time the poor man is justified, his rights affirmed and defended. In this book we have something more than a denunciation of oppression, such as we get in the older prophecies (see Amos 5), and something more than a mere recognition of the rights of the poor man; to help the poor is counted a delight, a condition of well-being.

From the philosophy of the Wisdom Books to the spiritual idealism of Christ is but a step;



an important step, certainly, but still only a step. Christ was the first Jew to discover the spirit of man as an objective reality, and thus to teach love or social service as the root principle of life. But not only was he the first Jew to do this, he was, as I have previously said, the first teacher of any nationality to attempt to rationalise life by means of the principle of love. But the Gospel of Christ was now a necessity; humanity had developed and was ready for it. The choice was between love and social disintegration.

First and foremost Christ was a teacher. He came to implant in the mind of humanity an all-important truth. "I must preach the Kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent." "And when the Sabbath was come he began to teach . . . and many were astonished." And it was to his teaching rather than to himself that he tried to draw attention, although to Western minds this is not always obvious. "Why callest thou me good?" But this is also the case in such passages as: "I am the light of the world"; "I am the way, the truth and the life"; "he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness"; "I am the bread of life," etc. It was in keeping with the Jewish temperament to say or infer, as Christ so often

did, that he was sent of God, and that he, as the embodiment of a new idealism, was the way, and the bread, of life.

From first to last Christ's appeal was to reason, nobody knowing better than he, confronted as he was with the outwardness of the Scribes and Pharisees, whose Faith was burdened with a tradition which harked back to barbarism, the necessity for an appeal to the intelligence if his ideal of the Kingdom of God was to become a living, regenerating force. Hence his persistent attack upon tradition and his exaltation of commonsense. Christ knew full well that to fall back on faith and feeling would be to succumb to convention. So blunt was he at times that his object must have been to shock people into thinking. And certainly no teacher ever sought to produce vital and original conduct more deliberately than he. Consider, in this connection, his words concerning the woman who annointed him with spikenard! his admonition to the rich young ruler! his remarks concerning the Sabbath! his advice to the rich man as to whom he should invite to his feast! etc., etc. Few teachers can have shocked the mind of their time more than did Christ. To call people vipers, hypocrites, and devourers of widows' houses to their faces

is to go a considerable length. But invariably he used graphic language, while his use of the parable was also intended to excite thought. Moreover, did he not say to his disciples: "Blessed are your eyes for they see?" and to the people: "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me?" And was not his great complaint against the Scribes and Pharisees just this, that they obeyed the letter and not the spirit of the law, believed without understanding? To accept Christ's teaching as dogmas was to miss its spirit and meaning. The way to the more abundant life was through enlightenment. Christ had a truth to unfold, and he knew that his ultimate success would depend upon his power to awaken thought. And certainly, if one is to possess the spirit of Christ it can only be by possessing the mind and outlook of Christ, seeing the world, and man, as he saw them, and thus realising the regenerating, life-producing power of love.

With respect to the content of Christ's teaching, I think it may be summed up in two truths: (1) that man is a spiritual being who ought to be lived towards spiritually; (2) that love ought to be the fundamental principle of life. Christ was confronted with a devastating, life-destroying materialism. This materialism



was manifesting itself as imperialism, as militarism, and in various forms of social oppression, and would, he clearly saw, bring down civilisation if it were not overcome. His remedy was a changed social and spiritual outlook and the substitution of love for greed as the primary motive of conduct in all relationships whatsoever.

It was Christ's supreme purpose to lay the foundations of the Kingdom of God. To this end he taught the life-creating power of love. The culture upon which the Kingdom of God depends includes the idea that service prompted by love is an indispensable condition of personal development and social well-being alike, in that it creates spiritual power, fosters fellowship, and guarantees a sufficient production of goods for the use of mankind. It is by virtue of love that the social condition is reached wherein it is possible to live without having to take thought for the morrow what one shall eat and drink and what one shall put on.

Christ believed that love was sufficient to the satisfaction of all human needs, both individual and social. He did not stand for the renunciation of the body, as did the Stoics, etc., but for its subjection to the spirit. When Christ said :

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and its righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" he expressed his faith in the sufficiency of love to realise the whole man and satisfy the social need. He did not mean by these words what a large number of his professed followers even to-day seem to think that he meant, *viz.*, that after one has been formally converted to Christianity one may give oneself up to a life of money-making, etc., but that one must give up self-seeking altogether, trust love completely, as out of love all good must ultimately come. The Kingdom of God is the spirit of love made manifest, and exists wherever love is, whether in one heart or in many. Hence, according to Christ, to live is to love: to love and worship God, to love and serve man. To live ideally is to cultivate and enjoy spiritual relationship with being, finite and infinite.

Whether we consider his life or his teaching, Christ always exemplified and emphasised the need and value of love as a complete life principle. He even insisted upon social duty, love to man, more than he did upon the worship of God. And what, let me ask, are the passages in the Gospels which distinguish the teaching of the New Testament from that of the Old? Surely they are such as these: "Thou

shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"; "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another," while the Sermon on the Mount embodies a philosophy of which love is not only the key-note but the key. No one who has not realised the spiritual power of love, can conceivably understand the Sermon on the Mount; to such it will be either an impenetrable mystery or so much twaddle. The great achievement of Christ is not his having died on the Cross, for the world has known many martyrs, but his having lived in accordance with the complete demands of love, and afterwards having died for love. His victory was over selfishness rather than over death. Christ launched the bark of his life on the vast and almost uncharted sea of love, and trusted it fully, carrying his life to a successful issue. He was surer of his position at the end than he had been at the beginning. His last words were: "It is finished." Having lived for love, he was able to die for it. Thus we ought not to glory in the Cross of Christ because Christ died as a sacrifice for mankind, as that phrase is usually understood, but because he dies for a principle, in order that love might triumph as the controlling principle of life. It is because Christ's death meant the victory of love that it (together with



the life out of which it sprang) marks the highest attainment of the human spirit the world has yet witnessed. But how few Christians even yet see the significance of the life and death of Christ!

Like John the Baptist before him, Christ took up the work of human emancipation from materialism with great zest, believing that in a very short time the truth about love would spread and that the Kingdom of God would appear. But he was mistaken; the forces of materialism were too powerful for him. Will they prove to be too powerful for the spiritual idealists of to-day also? Whether these latter succeed or fail, of this we can be certain: Christ's conception of the Kingdom of God, his belief in the power of love to bring together as into one family all the peoples of the earth, thus constituting a vast spiritual kingdom, represents the highest pinnacle of idealism humanity has yet reached.

In no sense is Christianity a negative principle. Christ acknowledged the body and accepted the world. But he rejected materialism and the practice of accumulating property. And the gateway to the world that the purest and noblest spirits of our time are looking for, is love. For love implies service; and service

means plenty, and plenty means freedom from fear. Hence in the Kingdom of God he is greatest who is the servant of all. Accordingly Christ left all and gave himself—his heart, his thought, his spirit—to mankind, receiving in return hospitality and the love of thousands of gladdened hearts. In that philosophy lies the hope of the world's salvation; outside it there is nothing but chaos and endless war.

Thus I hold that in Christianity we have the culmination of a long process of spiritual development, and the vindication of a principle which is the only hope of social salvation after civilisation has reached the stage of industrialism and imperialism. From a brief survey of the process of spiritual development, we have been able to see that man has to discover his soul and develop his spiritual nature before it is possible for him to adopt love as the controlling principle of his life. In having discovered the secret of social development in the age of democracy, Christ stands out as the greatest teacher of all time. The way to the republic of humanity, or what Christ called the Kingdom of God lies through love; and Western civilisation is doomed if it cannot learn that truth very soon.

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## CHAPTER X

### THE ART OF LIVING

IF it be true as I have maintained, that life points to a good, and also that development signifies, among other things, growth of power to experience life, it follows that in order to realise the good, one must needs govern one's life by means of an ideal and a principle which are in harmony with life's purpose. Because there is a moral law, there must be an art of living. As the shallowest observation reveals, it is possible to live in a hundred different ways; but the life-value of one way is higher or lower than that of another. Every act of one's life either creates or destroys life. How important, therefore, to see life wholly and to live in harmony with the creative purpose!

The very meaning of progress is that life is capable of being increased and deepened to an unlimited extent. Even morality, as we saw, is based on a recognition of this fact, those modes of conduct being sanctioned by society and



called moral which make possible a more abundant life. The final test of every religion, of every ethical system, is its power to increase life. As I have pointed out, the real difference between one man and another is in the amount of life they are capable of experiencing. Differences in mental power and in outlook are but indications of this deeper difference. To relax thought and purposive effort is to realise a thinner experience; it is, in fact, to degenerate.

Behind all the efforts which a people puts forth from age to age to attain its various ends, there is an unchanging purpose—to drink deeper and deeper of the wine of life. However mistaken many of those efforts may be, the motive prompting them is constant. The desire for well-being is the fundamental cause of progress, the force which drives man forth to struggle, destroy, conquer, construct and achieve. Life is the one thing of which we can never have too much.

But the impulse for life, divine though it be, is blind, impotent as any babe, and requires an interpreter. For human life rests upon experience and ideas, and being essentially developmental is capable of degeneration. Hence the need for vigilance, the adoption of adequate ideals whereby to attain the good. Very often

the impulse for life manifests itself as a restless longing which has to be interpreted and directed by a mind wholly unfitted for the task, being itself the victim of false notions and unworthy ideals. The disparity between the conscious and the hidden or real self is often very great. That is why in every age there are numerous social evils, trends of thought and conduct which lead to spiritual degeneration and social disintegration.

Thus there are two things which every age ought to possess: adequate ideals, a knowledge of the conditions of its highest development and, what follows from this, a clear consciousness of its weaknesses and evil tendencies.

Unfortunately the present age possesses neither of these. In every country a few people can be found who have seen that truth alone can save the modern world. But among the most advanced peoples there are large tracts of existence that are wholly in the grip of jungle morality which alas, is being deliberately maintained by an unscrupulous press, and to some extent by a decadent church. The dominant passion of our time is the pursuit of riches, a life of luxury and power. Spiritual ideals excite laughter and ridicule. Things are being done, socially and commercially, which

confound the intelligence of thinking men and women. Everything is being pulled down to the level of the non-moral. Modern society has no sins because it has no ideals. Politics have been completely divorced from ethics. In the countries which profess Christianity, the fundamental principles of that religion are being violated in its name.

Only knowledge can save us—knowledge of the sources of life, the art of living. We are selfish and materialistic because we are ignorant, do not realise that self-seeking poisons and closes the heart, shuts off the mind from all the richest sources of life. We do not realise that selfishness robs the soul that practises it of far more than it robs society, cuts the bond of union between spirit and spirit, represses the finer instincts and drives man forth from the paradise intended for him and makes of him an outcast; that giving and serving magnify the soul; that the man who gives not himself to the world cannot receive the world, cannot enter the Kingdom of Spirit. Neither, on the other hand, do we realise that love sets in motion all the most powerful life-yielding forces man possesses; that spiritual forces, like persons, tend to produce their like; that to help to create the best is ultimately to become the best, and that to



worship a brazen image is finally to become one. Conduct is the food of the soul, and either nourishes or poisons it.

It has been said that three-fourths of life is conduct; but, rightly regarded, the whole of life is conduct. For life is a unity, and everything we do either builds up or undermines character, either enhances or destroys well-being. Because life is pregnant with spiritual possibility, nothing that a man does ought to be taken for granted. Thus work, *e.g.*, ought not to be something to which one is driven merely in order to earn a living, but a mode of self-expression, a means of spiritual culture and self-realisation which ought to be seriously thought about.

Work and play are complementary facts. Each is necessary to the other, neither being sufficient of itself. Work exhausts body and mind, and calls for play, rest, and the inspiration of art; while play revitalises the body and inspires the mind with desires for creative labour. Were life all work it would lose tone, colour, meaning, and would thus degenerate into drudgery. Were it all play it would become insipid. In play a man throws off the restraints imposed by work and gives himself up to enjoyment, whence he replenishes his energies,

rejuvenates his spirit, and equips his mind with new ideas. In play one feels the glory and boundlessness of life, in consequence of which one is inspired to nobler effort. Art is the white light of the ideal which points the way to more heroic achievement.

Broadly speaking, life is made up of work and play. Hence the necessity for an inquiry into the nature and function of these modes of activity. This we will now undertake, considering first work, then play.

### WORK

It is not uncommon to hear work spoken of as a necessary evil. By some it is regarded as a sort of dragon which swallows up a man's time and energies, and to that extent robs him of the power to enjoy life. According to others the case is even worse, work being regarded as a direct cause of human degradation.

Such ideas are always prevalent where there exists an idle class, to maintain which the workers must need be herded together in factories and workshops and compelled to work under wretched conditions. In such circumstances work is undoubtedly belittling and degrading.

But our purpose is not to describe what work is, but what it might and ought to be. Whether we like it or not, work is a social necessity. But it does not require much thought to show that it is also a personal and spiritual necessity. Every man who knows himself at all is aware that without labour there can be no development, no soul-growth, no deepening of the well of life.

Now the first thing I want to say about work is that it is a veritable part of life, a mode of life, a form of activity in as well as through which life is experienced. If it were not such life would be a huge mockery. For work takes up something like one-quarter of the life of most people. And it is revolting to think that in so large a portion of one's existence life cannot be realised. Every healthy-minded person knows that work is a joy when it is free and creative. The desire for self-chosen, creative labour is probably the strongest impulse to which human nature is heir. The production of useful and beautiful things is a transcendent delight, a means of refinement and a source of unbounded pleasure. Few experiences are more inspiring than to see things take form and shape, especially to see them take the form of an idea which one has originated. And all work is in



some sense the transference of ideas and feelings to crude, unshapen matter, the establishment of order amidst chaos, of truth and beauty amidst error and ugliness. To create is a god-like function; and the man who has not felt the rapture of creation has not begun to live.

Then, as I have already pointed out, by means of work the spiritual idealist not only creates things, but spirit, both subjectively and objectively. One of the aims of the spiritual idealist is to increase and ennoble fellowship. To do this it is necessary to express one's soul in beautiful and useful labour, thus to beautify the world and gladden the hearts of men. Such conduct, moreover, calls forth similar efforts in others, so that what others produce he is free to enjoy. Thus creative work quickens the mind, refines the spirit and softens the heart of him who expresses and him who appreciates. In a spiritual world, therefore, expression and appreciation are modes of life, and at the same time the means of increasing life.

In work a man expresses such truth and beauty as is in him, what he really feels, thinks and believes, and by means of it lays the foundation of a life of incomparable beauty and boundless spiritual possibility. To express one's whole mind is to enlarge it, to increase one's

power of expression and appreciation. In addition, by establishing spiritual relationships with one's fellows, work creates a beautiful spiritual world for the soul's habitation. In regard to all things spiritual giving is the law of possession. There is no royal road to fellowship, the Kingdom of Spirit; by means of love-inspired labour, whole-hearted service alone can we enter it. To love is to give, and to give oneself to the world is to possess the world. A man may have sufficient wealth to enable him to hire servants to build him a house for his body to dwell in; but no man can hire labourers to build him a house for his soul to dwell in. This latter he must either build for himself or remain homeless; for there are no paupers in the spiritual world.

It has always been love, some big self-less idea that has given rise to great art and to beautiful and inspiring lives. The noblest architectural monuments of the ages are temples, churches and tombs. The music and the poems that have been pronounced immortal are those which express a passionate love of God, Nature, man, liberty, etc. How is it that there is so little art in business houses as compared with religious houses? Is it not just the fact that the motive behind commerce is selfish and

antisocial, whereas the motive behind religion is spiritual and social? If society were based on service instead of greed, places where men and women transacted business would be as beautiful and holy as churches and temples once were. There is more beauty and inspiration in some of the ruins of the old English monasteries than in all the business houses through the length and breadth of the land. The love of riches is the death of art.

Work brings a man face to face with reality, with the crude, stubborn stuff of which this world is composed; and in trying to give to it form and beauty he learns many things, all life's deep and abiding truths. One may pick up impressions in passing idly about the world, but it is in the serious effort to produce a beautiful thing that truth is found and that character is made. If a man never expresses himself he can never know himself, never fathom his mind, never be certain of the value of his intuitions. Thus the student who is nothing but a student, will not be a good student, for he will not be able to distinguish between the true and the false in all the things that matter. By means of work a man constructs his mind, builds up the fabric of his thought, and emancipates himself from the tyranny of



the commonplace, of convention and external authority. Thought that is not the outcome of service will be puerile and uncertain. Only the true servant, the co-worker with God in the creation of the world and of the human soul, is capable of seeing life truly and wholly. And the better a man serves the clearer will be his vision.

The desire for self-expression is universal, as the study of children proves. Only those whose minds and lives have been spoiled by a false training or wretched conditions, desire to live in idleness and luxury. A time comes in the life of every youth who has been naturally trained, when a passive and receptive existence ceases to satisfy, and an insuppressible longing for self-expression asserts itself. For lack of creative labour, the mind of any young man is bound to become idea-locked, dull, confused. Every healthy young mind has visions; and to have visions is to desire to realise them. Hence a true education would aim at engendering an attitude towards life and towards society which would naturally and inevitably lead to some form of noble service. For the desire to express and serve is the highest form of the instinct for life. To give one's life in service is to win it; to express one's soul is to find it. What a man

shall do, to what art or craft he shall devote himself does not much matter so long as he works well and with his whole soul. For all work is sacred if the motive be pure and the effort sincere.

If a man would feel the pulse of life he must take some part in the world's work, in the task of emancipating and perfecting the human soul. To overcome evil with good, falsehood with truth, ugliness with beauty, foulness with purity: that is to work; and whoso does any of these things plays the part of a man. To banish hatred, break down prejudice, sow love and bind men together in a lovelier fellowship, is to be carried into the full stream of life, brought into touch with the finest people, all that is noble and heroic.

Finally, work establishes a man's freedom, his spiritual independence. To conceive and express truth is to free the soul, make one conscious of one's inner strength. The man who by patient thinking has resolved life to meaning; in whose heart is love and in whose soul is vision, and who seeks to embody that meaning in noble form, is, as the dispeller of darkness and error and the creator of light and truth, the only free man. He is free because he is a conqueror, a true lord of life in whose

heart the world has been set, and in whose eye is the light of knowledge and salvation.

### PLAY

In work the primary object is to give—to express. In play the primary object is to receive—to appreciate and enjoy. To some extent work is determined by social need; play, on the other hand, is determined by personal need. Play is work's antidote, a means of recuperating the spirit, the energies which work has expended. In play the mind regains its self-mastery, recovers its lost possessions—enthusiasm, inspiration, idealism, faith—and so prepares itself for fresh conquest.

And because play is self-chosen, and has for its object the individual's own good, it always yields pleasure. It is thus a form of the good, a mode of life. But, as I have already suggested, play has other functions besides that of giving pleasure. It provides the body with new energy, the mind with new ideas, new truth and inspiration. It thus increases a man's worth. The higher a man rises in the scale of development the more numerous will be his interests and needs; from which it follows that he will require a more varied play-life.



Therefore play ought to be guided by thought, regulated so as to satisfy all the needs of body and soul.

The chief functions of play are these : (1) To give rest to body and mind ; (2) To recuperate the animal spirits ; (3) to refine ; (4) to inspire. Each mode of play yields pleasure after its fashion.

(1) Rest is man's first requisite after hard work. Concentrated effort drains both mind and body, transforming the indomitable hero of the morning into the spent toiler of the evening. In complete rest after heavy toil there is indescribable sweetness. Indeed it is in rest that one most often feels the grandeur and glory of toil, as it is then that a man comes nearest to himself. And unless a man looks, on occasion, into his own soul, how can the deeper truths of life come to him ? Deep down in the subconscious self is a voice that would ever utter a clear and true judgment on the value of one's life, did one but appeal to it. Thus rest has a spiritual as well as a physical function. Few things are more sublime than to sit in one's home at eventide among the people and the things one most loves, and to listen, after a hard day's work, to the verdict of the heart upon one's existence, and to feel that life is good.

(2) After rest one must needs revive the animal spirits. To do this usually requires some kind of physical exercise. Outdoor sports demand considerable energy, it is true, but because they are modes of play they revive and invigorate both mind and body. For the reason that sport is of short duration, and is undertaken for pleasure, it relaxes the nervous system, whence the blood flows freely through the system, producing a sensation of mental and physical exhilaration. Also, in play, parts of the physical machinery are brought into action that are not used in work, and to stimulate these parts gives one a sense of new power. A quickened blood action, moreover, tends to raise the spirits and to produce an optimistic temperament. Mental depression and reduced vitality generally go together. Lastly, sport develops the social instincts. Most games are played by groups of individuals, for which reason they develop a spirit of comradeship.

(3) In considering the third function of play, which is to refine, a distinction must be drawn between two kinds of art: physical or æsthetic, and spiritual. Æsthetic art is concerned with form; spiritual art with content, the motive and spirit behind all human action. The former, having reference to line and colour,

appertains to things static, physical objects, etc.; whereas spiritual art appertains to the character and conduct of human beings. In a sense all art is spiritual, in that its object is the culture of the spirit; but there is a difference between the beauty of static objects and that of the creative and heroic deeds of man. Physical art depicts form and colour merely, and teaches man what to admire. Spiritual art depicts heroism and the beauty of the human soul, and teaches man virtue. Thus the former delights and refines, while the latter inspires and ennobles.

All the arts are used to portray physical beauty, although architecture, sculpture and painting are particularly fitted to that purpose, static objects requiring line, form and colour. Literature, music and the drama, on the other hand, admitting of a time-series, are peculiarly fitted to deal with action, conduct. At the same time, literature is often used to describe inanimate objects, while the stage depends to a large extent upon painting and statuary for its effects.

Man loves beauty and demands it. Even the savage possesses an instinct for beauty, and adopts some form of personal decoration. But as we ascend the ladder of civilisation we may observe a remarkable growth of the art-instinct,



a tendency to extend its application and to introduce beauty into every department of life. The poorest peasant will decorate his home with curious ornaments and beautiful specimens of his own handiwork. Increased earnings are mostly spent on beautiful things for the enjoyment of leisure hours ; and in order to have such things men and women will work much harder than otherwise they would have need to. Beauty is a food of the spirit ; it refreshes the mind, opens the heart and vitalises conduct. When the true workman goes forth to his labour he does so with an image of beauty upon his soul—how otherwise could he work well, put beauty into things ? Contact with the formless and ugly tends to efface that image and thus to call for renewed acquaintanceship with beautiful works of art. Of its very nature beauty stimulates a desire to reproduce it, and thus to make the world a pleasanter habitation.

To the man who lives truly, therefore, art is a daily necessity, as necessary as air and sleep. In a reasonable world to work is not simply to make things, but to impart to them such beauty as they are capable of receiving ; it is to add to the joy and pleasure of life.

But it must never be forgotten that to appreciate the best art, one must work as well as

play, as apart from work one's ideas become unbalanced and corrupt. Purposive labour is necessary in order to keep one's mind healthy. The idle man will have an abnormal appreciation for art, just as he usually has an abnormal appetite for food. That is why, during periods of material prosperity, when there is a large idle class, art degenerates. Nothing is so fatal to art as riches and idleness. Creation is the secret of appreciation.

Æsthetic art reached its highest point of development in Greece. To the Greeks, beauty was an atmosphere to be breathed perpetually, as one breathes air. But their art was expressly the art of form, even in the domain of conduct. As is more or less the case with all aristocracies, so to the Greeks physical and external characteristics were of more importance than spiritual qualities. As I have said, the Greek conception of man, and of virtue, was far removed from the Christian. To the Greeks, order and form were the principal things, decorum being the chief virtue. And what applied to individual conduct applied no less to collective. In the sphere of government, form, order, the smooth working of the State machinery, lack of disturbance, etc., were the things that mattered. Beautiful form was not simply a virtue, it was

*the* virtue. To act undecorously was to act wickedly, a graceful act standing in greater esteem than a kind one. To lose one's temper was a crime against art, not against society. The man of proud spirit and noble bearing, in whose step was majesty and on whose brow reposed dignity, was the Greek ideal.

With the Greeks we can go so far as to say that beauty ought to be the native atmosphere of every human being. The more beauty predominates, the more will its spirit permeate the soul and be manifested in conduct. Indeed, through the development of the æsthetic sense, it ought to be possible to go far towards curing men of such vices as drunkenness, bad temper, inconsiderateness, etc. Beauty, rightly conceived, is the sign of, and points to, virtue. To do things because they are beautiful will ultimately lead one to do them because they are good. Art is thus a beautiful teacher which lures the soul to virtue by means of beauty. Beauty yields delight, and delight leads to contemplation and imitation. Right feeling is the precursor of right conduct. And what is skill but inspiration, the touch that is born of a strong, harmonious feeling? The burden of all good work is a feeling of harmony; and art, as Tolstoy said, is the expression and transmission of feeling.



(4) Spiritual art is the highest order of art. Its function is to portray the heroic and thus to reveal to man the relationships he ought to develop.

Literature is the paramount spiritual art, because, unlike sculpture and painting it admits of a time-series, and, unlike music it deals definitely with ideas. Sculpture and painting, except by implication and suggestion, are confined to a single moment of time, on which account they are not suited to deal with action, *i.e.*, with conduct. Still, by seizing upon the right moment a painter may sometimes suggest action. Because of its greater vivifying power, painting is admirably suited to illustrate and supplement literary description. Music expresses the feelings more intensely than all the other arts, but is powerless to express ideas with any degree of definiteness.

Life is a conquest, a process of spiritual expansion; but in order that expansion may take place past experience must at times be transcended. Art is one of the principal means by which this is done. Imagination, prompted by the suggestions of experience, works out new social and spiritual possibilities, which art embodies. And mankind, in so far as it feels that these are good, clothes them with the

garment of life. The highest function of art is thus to depict the unattained, to make life entrancing by revealing its boundlessness, its vast spiritual possibilities. Thus, to-day, the outstanding purpose of art should be to convince the world of the transcendent beauty of life founded on love.

Thus while physical art delights, spiritual art inspires. Physical objects are beautiful only; but man is capable of virtue and heroism. Spiritual art is concerned with the heroic. Consequently spiritual art is life's interpreter, man's guide to the good. Labour tends to imprison man in a world of matter and sense. Art delivers man from that prison-house and confronts him with the infinite, the spacious world of thought, the unattained. In work a man is necessarily confined to a small portion of being; but in art he faces the eternal. And unless the soul be refreshed from time to time with the larger vision of art it will shrivel up and die, while work will degenerate into a mere means of getting bread. To labour without the inspiration of an ideal is to live in a dungeon; it is to be like the zoologist who, after spending the greater part of his life putting things into bottles, ended by putting himself into one. By means of visions of the beautiful

and the good, art keeps the spirit fresh and young.

This, by the way, is also the function of religion. In religious contemplation the mind is carried away from narrow, personal pursuits, sordid selfishness, etc., and enlivened by an outlook which embraces the vast universe of being.

Life is a process of spiritual expansion, an endless series of progressions wherein the life-stream ever increases in volume. In that process work and play are complementary and indispensable factors. The ideals which work is the effort to realise have their origin in play, in art and religion. Play takes man back to the ideal, to the point of view of the whole, and inspires him with a desire to attain the highest. In this way the self is realised at higher and still higher levels, in grander and still grander unities. In art and religion the soul is born anew, and as a result of such re-birth nobler attempts are made to establish the Kingdom of God within the individual soul and in the world of men. Thus the human soul passes from unity to grander unity, from harmony to deeper harmony, from truth to fuller truth, from life to more abundant life, at every stage broadening and enriching experience, deepening the well of its being.



## THE ETHICAL FOUNDATION OF ART

According to the view I have developed in these pages, life is moral through and through, even art and beauty being part of the moral scheme of things, a means of creating and perfecting man and increasing human well-being. But as the imputation of moral significance to beauty is a much-disputed question, I feel called upon to justify my contention.

Upon few subjects has so much verbiage been written as upon that of the meaning and purpose of beauty. To some, beauty is a divine essence which cannot be analysed. To others it is an illusion. To a large number it is a purely subjective judgment and, therefore, devoid of ethical significance. To others, again, it possesses objectivity, being a means of moral elevation.

One thing we must all admit, however, *viz.*, that beauty is one of the strongest forces in existence, and profoundly influences the conduct of most people. Beauty is the promise of pleasure and happiness, and by pursuing it men and women believe they will reap good. Now Nature does not work at random, as the fact of natural law proves. If, therefore, beauty does not fulfil its promise, and leads to evil instead

of good, it contradicts nature and the moral law, and is both a snare and a lie.

What, then, is beauty? What is its essence, the secret of its power? Why call we things beautiful?

A short inquiry is sufficient to show that beauty has its roots in utility; that it is a fingerpost to life, the handmaid of truth, man's fair guide to the good. This view is capable of being proved by means of an *a priori* and also an *a posteriori* argument.

The *a priori* argument may be stated thus: Beauty being a force which stirs the emotions and creates desire, it modifies conduct and thus one's relationships. It thus possesses moral significance. To affirm, therefore, as some do, that beauty is a purely subjective judgment, whose object is to give pleasure, the power to do which is its sole criterion, is erroneous, and extremely dangerous.

For the very reason that it influences conduct, beauty must be in harmony with the moral law of the universe; in other words, the instinct for beauty must be one with the instinct for life. Otherwise we should have Nature working at cross purposes, beauty pulling in one direction and morality in another. And this is absurd, as a thing cannot be beautiful and immoral at the

same time. A man may believe a certain experience, which has an attraction for him, to be moral; but once let him see that its consequences are physically or spiritually disastrous, and immediately what he previously thought beautiful will appear to him ugly and distasteful.

The *a posteriori* argument is derived from an examination of our common judgments of beauty, the result of which is the discovery that all such judgments possess a common factor, *viz.*, the moral factor. In other words, investigation proves that beauty is rooted in utility.

If, for example, we consider beauty in relation to the human form, we see at once that its standard is, and must be, health, strength, fitness. Greek statuary, for instance, which is universally acknowledged to be the most beautiful in the world, consists of models of their great athletes and heroes and their well-developed women. To the Greeks, health and beauty were aspects of the same thing, and the mere suggestion that a weak and unhealthy body might yet be beautiful would have struck them as comic.

And the Greek conception is implicit in all art, for who dare say that a human form unfitted



for the normal functions of life is beautiful? No one would dream of saying that a hunched back, or a short leg, or a green complexion were beautiful. Moreover, it is the simple-living, hard-working maiden who sets the fashion in complexions, and the idle, luxury-loving society dame who has resort to the rouge pot. To praise a yellow complexion would be to recommend jaundice.

Now let us consider architecture. At once we are confronted with the laws of mechanical construction, to which all our conceptions of beauty must conform. Were an architect to sketch a temple according to the whims of a roving fancy, with arches, buttresses and colonnades stuck in anywhere, who would have the impertinence to call it beautiful? That colonnades and arches are beautiful few will deny, but who would call them beautiful if they served no useful purpose? Pillars which blocked the view and supported nothing would be monsters of ugliness. Roofs, galleries and arcades have to be supported somehow, and the pillar is one of the best means of doing this; on which account pillars and arches are the objects of profound admiration. The beautiful curves to be met with in Gothic cathedrals and Roman temples are not the fabrications of wayward

imaginations, but lines of strength which have taken centuries to evolve.

In regard to sound also, beauty has its origin in utility. Among human voices we call those beautiful which express joy and gladness, give evidence of sympathy, an optimistic temperament and a cheerful disposition, and those not beautiful which lack ring and resonance, are harsh and rasping. For these latter qualities indicate a cramped, suspicious mind, a mean spirit and a jealous temperament, etc. And it is significant that most teachers of singing insist on the cultivation of a cheerful disposition as a primary condition of expressing joyous and inspiring music. The narrow-minded, ill-tempered, cantankerous person simply cannot produce the round, open tones that are needed to express the best music. A surly temperament is as a vice about the throat, which hardens and deadens the tone.

And the same law applies to colour. It has long been observed that a very close connection obtains between temperament and colour; that colour acts on the mind in much the same way as sound. Certain colours, such as red and violet have, if used too freely, a depressing effect upon the mind; which explains why we call things ugly wherein these colours are too

prominent. Dress and decoration are beautiful when the colour effect is pleasing and stimulates happy and joyous feelings.

And so it is all the way round. The final and unfailing test of beauty is utility. A person's ideas of beauty may change considerably from time to time; but that will be because of enlightenment, new knowledge regarding effects and values. The scenes of revelry and dissipation which sometimes attract the young and inexperienced, are regarded with horror when the years of discretion, which bring disillusion, have arrived. It is thus a contradiction in terms to say that a thing can be both evil and beautiful at the same time.

Beauty is a judgment of the same mind which works towards ends, seeks a particular good, and endeavours to realise satisfaction in a thousand activities; it must, therefore, if the mind itself be a unity, be a means of helping to realise that good. Thus, while beauty is not a quality which exists in things apart from a perceiving mind, it is yet something more than an arbitrary judgment, and must in some way be in harmony with the ultimate purpose of things, the law of human development.

The reason beauty is so often thought to be a purely subjective judgment, wholly devoid of



moral significance, is that it originates in sensibility and is an expression of the intuitive self. But what is the harmony of the feelings or intuitions but a sign of truth, a recognition that a certain experience is at one with all one's aspirations and ideals? As a fact, a judgment of the feelings with respect to beauty is as trustworthy as a judgment of reason with respect to truth, since both are expressions of the harmony of the soul. Indeed, the domain of sensibility is wider than that of reason, the subconscious self extending infinitely beyond the conscious. The intuitive self, deliberately appealed to, ought to give as true and trustworthy judgments on life as reason. It is possible for a judgment of reason to be perfectly logical and yet, on account of false first principles, to be untrue. Intuition is as integral as reason, and, if honestly questioned, ought to be capable of guiding man to the good. For the good is the object of the whole self, intuitive as well as rational. Reason attains truth via logic, the harmony of ideas. The intuitive self attains truth via beauty, the harmony of the feelings. In the former case truth is seen, in the latter case it is felt. Strictly speaking, therefore, *Æsthetics* are a part of *Ethics*, beauty being the truth of life at a stage further back

than the rational, at the feeling stage rather than at the logic stage.

Life is moral through and through, and nothing that a man does can, in the last analysis, be called non-moral. Every act of a man's life increases or diminishes his well-being, and also his power to enhance well-being. Thus every work of art is a judgment upon life, and is either true or false, in accordance with or opposed to the law of human development. Hence, in spite of all that the Realists say, art is not, and never can be, a mere reflection of external events; it is and must always be an interpretation of experience in terms of value. No matter how simple be the object or experience which art portrays, it will reveal the artist's estimate of its value, what it means to him—nay, his entire philosophy of life.

Quite recently I had a clear proof of this. Two artist friends decided each to make a copy of a certain picture. When completed, and the two copies were placed one after the other beside the original, they were both pronounced to be good representations. But when, later, the two copies were brought together, and apart from the original, all were amazed at the contrast. The one was bright and cheerful, the other dull and gloomy. After a while, the

painter of the dull picture remarked: "Well, I have known for some time that I was a pessimist, but I never realised until to-day to what extent my pessimism is reflected in my work. Now I know why my pictures don't sell; they don't sell because I see 'grey'."

Yet many talk about Realistic art as though it were possible to depict the cold, bare facts of life without imparting to them any personal elements—without, that is, interpreting them. But if that were possible, what would be the use of such art—art without soul? The man who paints even fields and buildings without soul—his soul, that is to say—has no right to call himself an artist, for he has no message. First and foremost the purpose of the artist is to convey meaning, a sense of the value he feels that certain things and experiences possess. The very fact of describing at all proves that one has been attracted by something; and it is that something which the artist ought to try to express, and which every unspoiled artist naturally does try to express.

To describe by means of art is to give meaning to things, and thus to illuminate experience; it is to paint life in the hearts own colours, and thus to reveal one's estimate of it. To represent an experience in attractive colours



is to say that it is good, life-giving ; but to represent thus a harmful experience is to lie, and to corrupt men.

Art reflects life, it is true, but not as water reflects the sky ; for it interprets, throws out from the gallery of the imagination pictures of life pregnant with meaning, a meaning that the ordinary observer would not have seen. Thus art is a beautiful teacher, the revealer of the souls of things. Such being the case art ought always to be the product of thought. The true artist is the man who feels the deep harmonies of life surging within his soul, and is anxious that the world shall feel them too, shall grasp the truth he has seen. Artists are the vanguard of the race in the search after the infinite, in the conquest of the spiritual world and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. They catch the first glimmerings of every new dawn, every larger truth—the truth which is destined to raise mankind above the enmities and antagonisms which divide it asunder in the prison-world of spent laws, and to unite it in a more beautiful and harmonious life.

Thus art is a wonderful instrument of salvation. By the path Beautiful it leads to the fuller truth wherein the contradictions, animosities, cross-purposes of the narrow life of blind,

care-worn men are overcome, and thus rolled away.

Consequently the message and vision of art are humanity's perennial need, and the reformer who does not experience the harmonies which appertain to the ideal world he professes to believe in, can accomplish no lasting good. All true reformers are essentially poets; and it is poet-reformers we need to-day—neither mere dreamers nor mere destroyers, but men of vision in whose lives and in whose thought the discords and enmities which divide men are harmonised and reconciled.

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## CHAPTER XI

### CONCLUSION

IN the foregoing pages I have endeavoured to state the basis of a true democracy. Such a democracy approaches. When it begins to appear it will quickly spread across the world. Faster than we realise, humanity everywhere is becoming imbued with the idea that mankind is one and ought to constitute a brotherhood. To say that the attainment of democracy will involve the abolition of war, is only to state the negative side of the case; the conviction that is taking root universally is that mankind is making for a new era, an era of co-operation and unparalleled spiritual development.

Hitherto civilised society has been permeated with the idea that human nature is not one but many, and thus that classes represent natural divisions between men. All the existing civilisations, whether old or new, are founded on a system of castes or classes. So were the ancient civilisations that have long since perished. Indeed one of the chief reasons why they perished is that they persisted in maintaining a



class basis for their society, thereby hindering that fuller spiritual development which democracy demands and makes possible.

But to-day the world is impregnated with what is known as "class consciousness," the aim of which is to put an end to classes. The reason for this is the dawn of a new idealism which conflicts with the whole idea of classes. Men and women are class conscious to-day because they realise the flagrant injustice and the spiritual destructivity of a class-based society. It is now apparent to most thinking people that the spiritual advancement of the race cannot proceed unless society be so organised as to allow a spiritual motive to supersede that of crude selfishness, which to-day is rampant, and at a premium. Classes rest on privilege, and privilege involves the economic and spiritual enslavement of all those who through poverty are unable, or as a result of ideals are unwilling, to become top dogs and, incidentally, sycophants and tyrants.

Kings, barons, lords, industrial magnates and millionaires, with their accompaniments: armies, navies, police, and an ignorant mass of slaves, are inevitable until the spiritual development has taken place which makes democracy, or a spiritually-based society, possible. It is by

reason of such development that we are to-day witnessing a universal revolt against the existing social order. Every day the ranks of those who realise the impossibility of society continuing on its present basis increases, as it is bound to increase. So quickly is the democratic outlook and spirit spreading that one can scarcely believe that only a few years ago the great bulk of the British people implicitly accepted the teaching of such lines as the following:

The rich man in his castle,  
The poor man at his gate;  
God made them high and lowly  
And ordered their estate.

There is some ground for believing that democracy, in the sense we are speaking of it, will quickly spread once it begins to manifest itself, in the fact that political democracy—which, be it remembered, is a modern institution—is being established in every part of the world. Very soon the adult population of the entire world will be in possession of the suffrage. This fact is significant, and points to the time, for which it is essentially a preparation, when society as a whole will have a spiritual basis, and the world will constitute a huge democracy. Furthermore, is there not much significance in

the fact that the Labour movement is developing in every part of the world? Labour has taken the initiative in proclaiming the unity of human nature and the essentially spiritual nature of human existence; in developing an international outlook and spirit, and in laying the foundations of the Republic of Humanity.

First political control, then economic control. Afterwards the way will be opened up to the most wonderful spiritual development mankind has yet witnessed. And it will be world-wide. New types of experience, new modes of living, entirely new relationships between individuals, between societies, and between the individual and the community, etc., will come into being, which together will reveal infinite possibilities of self-expression, of self-development and thus of social development.

Even now the spiritual principles inherent in a true democracy are beginning to be advocated and applied. Thus we have the growing movement against war, and for total disarmament. The spiritual idealists of to-day, the leaders of the new democracy that is on the verge of appearing, are almost universally opposed to violence; they believe in the necessity of winning the new world by spiritual means. If democracy, or society functioning as a brotherhood,



is to be established, it must be by the principles of brotherhood, that is, the spirit of goodwill. It is not possible to build a spiritual edifice by means of principles which are incompatible with spiritual reality. To erect a tabernacle of love, love must be both architect and builder.

### NON-VIOLENCE

Thus non-violence is a cardinal principle of true democracy. If a man believes in love he will not be able to use violence. It is not possible to kill a man out of love. One may lay down one's life for love; but to take the life of another is to deny love. And how can the Kingdom of God arrive if we try to establish it by means of principles which are its negation? If we use violence in what shall we be better than those we condemn, and from whose oppression we desire to be freed? The only hope of a better world is conduct in accordance with the spirit of that world. We know what the patriots of all the belligerent countries said in 1914, how they defended violence in the name of national well-being, civilisation, Christianity, honour, valour and all the virtues. Now we see how foolish all this talk was, and that war, simply because it is a method of violence, poisons

all who enter into it, with a poison that long years cannot neutralise, making a reasonable peace impossible even after years of needless agony and suffering. Never, according to the official accounts of the various Governments, was war so righteous as the recent war; yet never was there a war which wrought so much spiritual, not to speak of material, ruin! Violence destroys whatever is good in the cause which uses it. Consequently the spiritual idealist of to-day has no use for violence, and will not be able to support either armies or navies; neither, trusting as he does in spiritual force, will he fear them. Peace is a personal duty, and must be pursued by those who believe in it no matter what rulers and Governments say or do.

War in a civilised age is the brutal past crawling back, so to speak; a lapse into madness; the denial of every spiritual achievement which humanity has made. That others should resort to madness, succumb to bad passion, is no reason why we should do so. An exhibition of unreason does not prove that reason is inadequate, but that passion has rendered it inoperative. It is the easiest thing in the world to yield to passion—every child can do that—but most difficult to restrain passion. Ought it not to be an occasion for mourning, therefore,

that in trying to settle their disputes men should abandon civilisation and adopt the methods of savages?

There is only one way of avoiding descents into barbarism, and that is by keeping alive love, faith in human nature. Besides, if a war be won, the Treaties which follow it are as ruinous as war itself, by virtue of the fear, the hatred and the arrogance which creep into being. No better proof of this could be found than in the Treaties which have followed the Great War: for out of them are coming universal ruin—poverty, enmity, new threats of war, hatred and servitude. Violence gives rise to hatred, and hatred is the negation of the things it is most desirable to preserve.

But a stronger argument against the use of violence is that spiritual force is more powerful than brute force. To meet brute force with love is the greater heroism. And all men instinctively recognise and honour the truly heroic when they see it. To show love and to refuse to injure another is to conquer the world.

#### NON-CO-OPERATION

At the same time there are always to be found, in any society, a few reckless spirits who



will neither reason nor listen to reason, but will heedlessly pursue their aims to the bitter end. In the effort to establish a spiritual democracy there will be sure to emerge a minority of "die-hards," economically powerful individuals who will do everything in their power to maintain the existing order of society. How shall we who eschew violence deal with such? There is only one way, it seems to me, and that is to refuse to co-operate with them. India, *e.g.*, is being dominated by a minority of British people who are established in the seats of power, and who have behind them all the military and economic resources of the British Empire. In the circumstances, India finds herself compelled to choose between helpless submission to British authority, and refusal to co-operate with that authority. Having decided, finally, that the time has come to bring an end to meek submission, and also to submission under protest, non-co-operation is the only alternative to violent rebellion.

Now the great merit of non-co-operation is that it is a spiritual method of overcoming social evil. It is not a means one would use for any purpose other than that of freeing mankind from tyranny, and of establishing a spiritual social order. Behind it is the spirit of

goodwill even towards those with whom co-operation is refused.

Non-co-operation is opposed to the infliction of injury upon another, but permits personal suffering as a means of awakening the public mind to the existence of certain social injustices, and to the necessity of living according to finer social principles. Only spiritual idealists could conceivably use it, therefore, materialistically-minded people bent on maintaining their privileges being unable to believe in anything save gold and the sword. We may say, therefore, that non-co-operation is peculiarly fitted to the age of democracy. Indeed it could not have been adopted prior to the age of democracy, as it owes its origin to the spiritual development which marks the approach of such an age. Its acceptance is bound to entail far more suffering for its adherents than for those against whose tyranny it is a protest. At the worst, the oppressors of mankind are threatened with isolation in case they continue their oppression and refuse to recognise the spiritual claims of their fellows. Whereas the non-co-operator is liable to every form of torture and persecution at the hands of those whose ascendancy his advocacy threatens.

But just because it is an heroic method, non-co-operation will bring fresh recruits daily to the cause of spiritual emancipation and advancement. For nothing attracts men and draws out heroism like heroism. Valour, fearlessness, disregard of punishment, readiness to face death while yet refusing to injure others, are invincible qualities, and must ultimately bring success to the cause which inspires them. Only a lofty idealism could inspire such attributes. Consequently non-co-operation is in harmony with the laws of life at the highest level of attainment.

There is much instruction in this thought. By virtue of its spiritual and sacrificial character, I believe that non-co-operation is destined to play an important rôle in the freeing of society from the tyranny of materialism. As a fact, the modern world has not yet forged the instrument whereby freedom from the bondage of materialism is to be won. We know that the sword is useless for that purpose, as is every means which generates hatred and ill-will. But in itself non-co-operation is a negative principle, and can only be successfully applied when it is an adjunct to a positive policy. India has a positive policy, I agree, but as yet it is only crudely developed. In the West, the policy of



non-co-operation will play (if adopted at all) an altogether different rôle from that which it is playing in India. This is natural, as the conditions in the two countries are widely different.

The non-co-operation movement in India is little understood in Britain, its underlying idealism being hidden from all but a few, by virtue of a conspiracy on the part of the press and the Government. The British public does not realise that 120 years of industrialism and imperialism have demoralised Britain, poisoned her mind, impaired her power of seeing life in its natural proportions, and in its homely simplicity. Thus, it is not improbable that such countries as India, which have not been spoiled by materialism in its worst forms, are destined to lead the nations out of darkness and bondage into light and liberty.

And, most certainly, India will win Home Rule; nothing can prevent her from doing so provided she keeps possession of her soul and holds rigorously to the policy of non-violence, aided by non-co-operation. But having won Swaraj, will India go forward and seek to establish a true democracy, win industrial freedom and economic security for all her people? When that struggle commences in India, the whole

world will look on with intense eagerness. And, perchance, India will succeed where Russia, and the great commercial nations of the West, have, at any rate, so far, failed. There is not lacking hope that she will succeed, and that, once again, the way of salvation from the enslavement of materialism will be opened up in the East.

This hope is strengthened by the fact that the East still preserves a spiritual outlook. Moreover, encouraged and inspired by the attainment of political freedom, it is more than probable that the movement towards emancipation will not be allowed to rest, but will be carried into the realm of economics; for, only on the basis of economic security for all can spiritual democracy, or the Kingdom of God, appear.

Even in the West, non-co-operation will probably have to be adopted in the end, and by a Labour Government too! Not that I think it will succeed unaided by other methods. Moreover, I agree that it is not a policy to be developed now. Time will prove whether or not it is necessary. If an impasse arises, as has been the case in India, a policy of non-co-operation will be inevitable. Supposing a Labour Government is held up by a body of reactionaries who endeavour to use the military, or to hold up industry! The aims of these latter

would have to be frustrated by means of a complete stoppage of the public services—Railways, telegraphs, telephones, of industry, etc., etc. The Government, as I have said, would assist in carrying out such a policy. It was practised to some extent in Berlin during the Kapp Putsch, in March, 1920. In this connection it might be said that the leaders of the non-cooperation movement in India are the people who would constitute the Government, were India politically free. Certainly, the winning of freedom from the thralldom of modern materialism is going to be no light matter in the West or in the East, and will involve far more suffering and sacrifice than most of those who are working for it dream of.

One word more needs to be said. Events are moving fast, and on a gigantic scale. Big finance is busy, its operations are encircling the world. It is an ironical fact that by means of a diabolical policy of exploitation and enslavement humanity is being compelled to acknowledge its unity. British Finance is knocking the paint off its own idols: the fetish of class and race; the dictum that "East is East and West is West and ne'er the twain shall meet". In ways that it little thinks of, it is bringing the East and the West closer together, compelling



them to recognise their spiritual unity. Bent on plunder and the ascendancy of their class, the capitalists of the world are uniting all their victims, and thus hastening their own downfall. India's resistance to British imperialism and industrialism signifies that India has not lost her soul, and that the body of the people in India and in Britain are one in heart and spirit. The more the facts relating to India's struggle for freedom are made known in Britain, the more will the people of both countries be brought together. Moreover, what applies to India applies in a less degree to China, and to some extent to Japan. As to Europe, in spite of the existing depression, there are not lacking signs of a rejuvenation on the part of the movements aiming at social emancipation. Indeed the stage is being set for a gigantic struggle between those who would organise the world for the exploitation of the many in the interest of the few, and those who would establish a social order on the foundation of service.

At last, the spiritual forces which have been behind the civilising process from the beginning of human society are rising into consciousness, and, as they do so, the demand goes forth for a social order wherein those forces may have free play.

The discovery of the spiritually creative power of love and service, and of the supreme value of fellowship, is destined to rid society of its disruptive social evils, and to recreate the world. It is also destined to redeem the men who have been overwhelmed by the lust for power; to create the atmosphere wherein great awakening movements will be born, and to bring the reign of peace and goodwill to our sore-stricken earth. Life is irresistible; and to discover the road to a more beautiful and bountiful existence, is to walk in it.

Materialism has had its day; its limitations and its evil have at last been discovered. It cannot be tolerated much longer. For upwards of a century we of the West have been developing our minds and quickening our wits; but lacking vision and the gift of love we have created a wilderness, laid waste our God-given life. Happily, there are signs of a spiritual awakening. Above the roar and rattle of the street and the market-place, one can hear the call of the enlightened; beneath the surface of our clamorous life, one can feel a new pulse beating; beyond the glare and glamour of our over-coloured life, one can see a new white light breaking. The dawn of a new day is at hand, the day of our salvation. Love triumphant,

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approaches love, that opens the door to the greatest thing in the world—LIFE; love, that is of God, and that, like God, is infinite and eternal.





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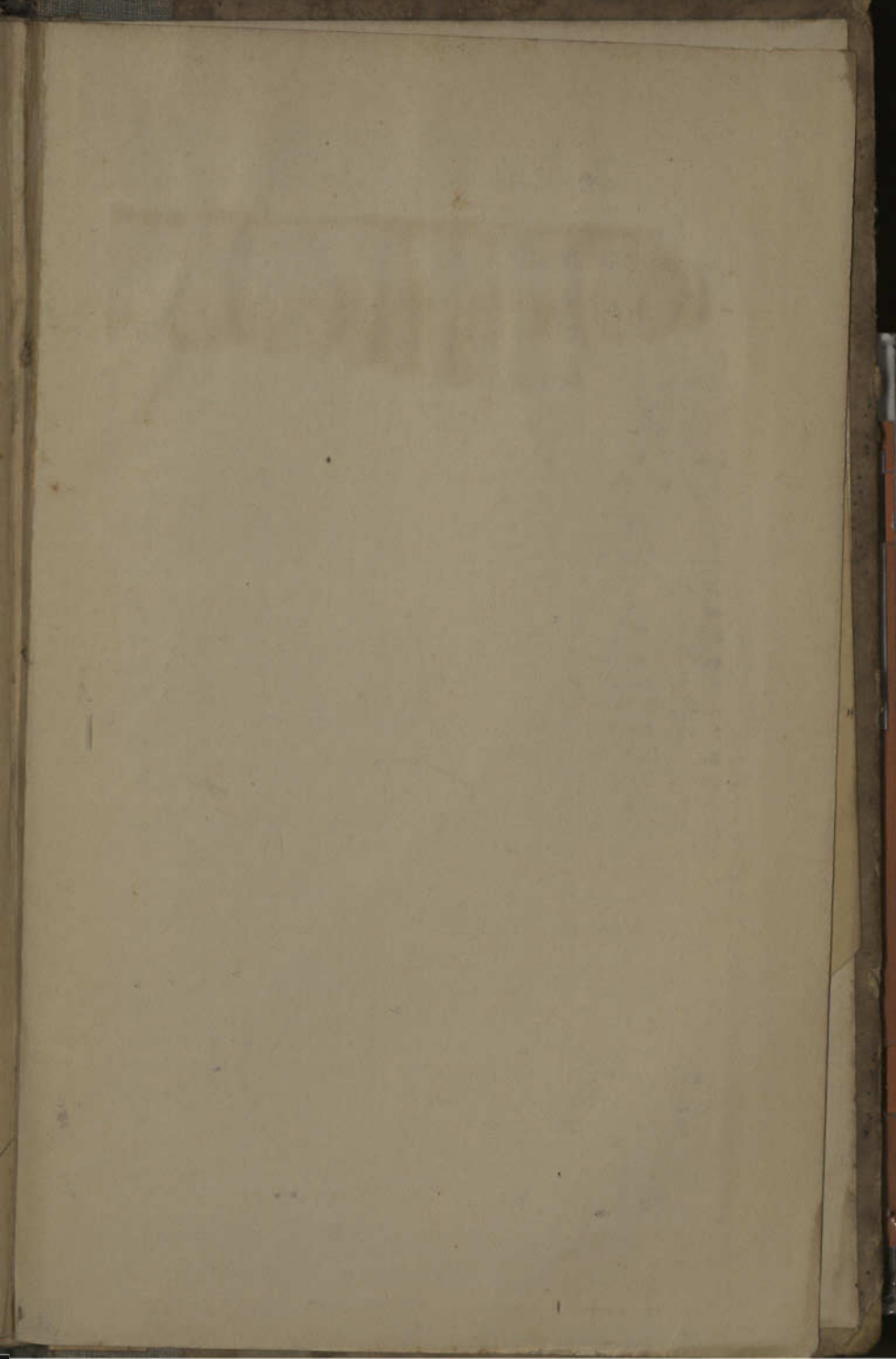
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