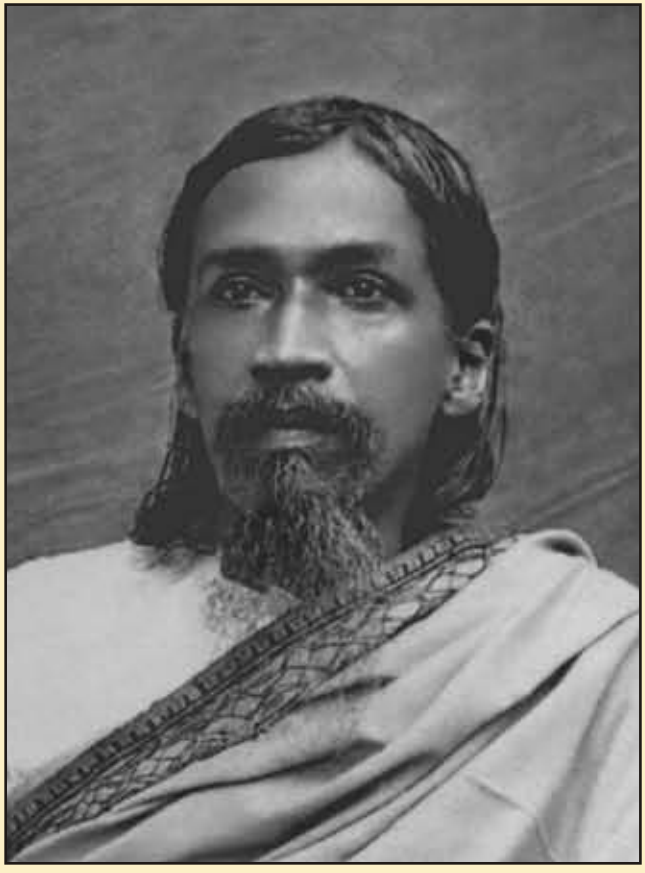
The Human Cycle
The Ideal of Human Unity
War and Self-Determination



Sri Aurobindo

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The Human Cycle

The Ideal of Human Unity

War and Self-Determination

Publisher's Note

The Human Cycle was first published in monthly instalments in the review *Arya* between August 1916 and July 1918 under the title *The Psychology of Social Development*. Each chapter was written immediately before its publication. The text was revised during the late 1930s and again, more lightly, in 1949. That year it was published as a book under the title *The Human Cycle*. The Publisher's Note to the first edition, which was dictated by Sri Aurobindo, is reproduced in the present edition.

The Ideal of Human Unity was written and published in monthly instalments in the *Arya* between September 1915 and July 1918. In 1919 it was brought out as a book. Sri Aurobindo wrote a Preface to that edition which is reproduced in the present volume. He revised the book during the late 1930s, before the outbreak of World War II. References to political developments of the period between the world wars were introduced at this time, often in footnotes. In 1949 Sri Aurobindo undertook a final revision of *The Ideal of Human Unity*. He commented on the changed international situation in footnotes and made alterations here and there throughout the book, but brought it up to date mainly by the addition of a Postscript Chapter. In 1950 the revised text was published in an Indian and an American edition.

Five of the essays making up *War and Self-Determination* were published in the *Arya* between 1916 and 1920. In 1920 three of them — "The Passing of War?", "The Unseen Power" and "Self-Determination" — along with a Foreword and a newly written essay, "The League of Nations", were published as a book. In later editions the other two *Arya* essays, "1919" and "After the War", were added by the editors.

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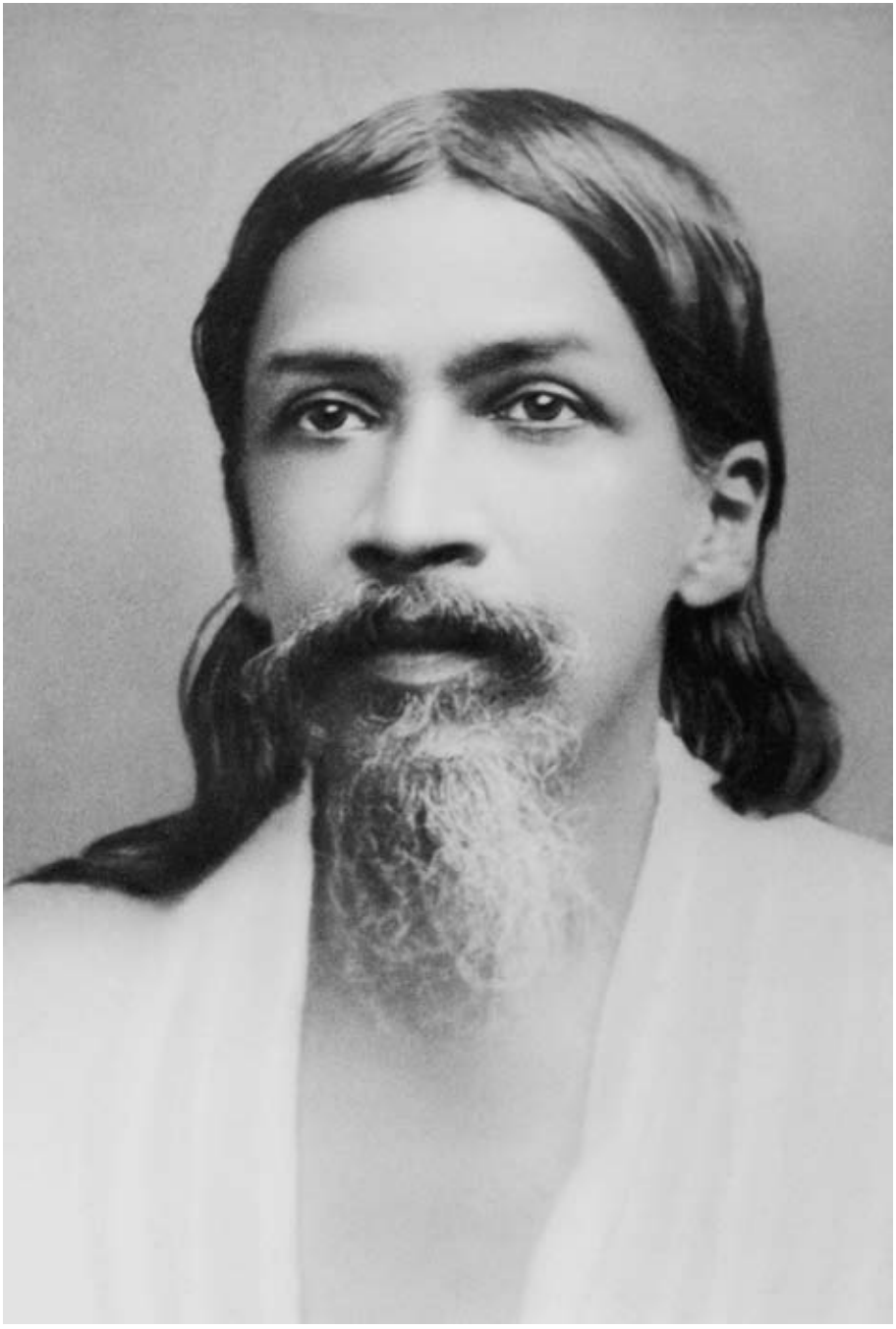

Sri Aurobindo in Pondicherry

tendency and culture, that is bound to have an enormous effect on the direction of the world's civilisation; we can measure its probable influence by the profound results of the first reflux of the ideas even of the unawakened East upon Europe. Whatever that effect may be, it will not be in favour of the re-ordering of society on the lines of tendency towards a mechanical economism which still dominate in Europe. Its influence is likely to be rather in the direction of subjectivism and practical spirituality.

But, most important of all, the individualistic age of Europe has in its discovery of the individual fixed among the forces of the future two of a master potency which cannot be entirely eliminated by any temporary reaction. The first of these, now universally accepted, is the democratic conception of the right of all individuals as members of the society to the full life and the full development of which they are individually capable. It is no longer possible that we should accept as an ideal any arrangement by which certain classes of society should arrogate development and full social fruition to themselves while assigning service alone to others. It is now fixed that social development and well-being mean the development and well-being of all the individuals in the society and not merely a flourishing of the community in the mass which resolves itself really into the splendour and power of one or two classes. This conception has been accepted in full by all progressive nations and is the basis of the present socialistic tendency of the world. But in addition there is this deeper truth which individualism has discovered, that the individual is not merely a social unit, not does his existence, right and claim to live and grow found itself on his social work and function—that he is not merely a member of a human pack, hive or ant-hill, but something in himself, a soul, a being, who has to fulfil his own individual truth and law as well as his natural or his assigned part in the truth and law of the collectivity. He demands freedom, space, initiative for his soul, for his nature, for that puissant and tremendous thing which society so much distrusts and has laboured in the past either to

A page of the *Arya* with changes made in the 1930s

The Human Cycle

Publisher's Note to the First Edition

The chapters constituting this book were written under the title "The Psychology of Social Development" from month to month in the philosophical monthly, "Arya", from August 15, 1916 to July 15, 1918 and used recent and contemporary events as well as illustrations from the history of the past in explanation of the theory of social evolution put forward in these pages. The reader has therefore to go back in his mind to the events of that period in order to follow the line of thought and the atmosphere in which it developed. At one time there suggested itself the necessity of bringing this part up to date, especially by some reference to later developments in Nazi Germany and the development of a totalitarian Communist regime in Russia. But afterwards it was felt that there was sufficient prevision and allusion to these events and more elaborate description or criticism of them was not essential; there was already without them an adequate working out and elucidation of this theory of the social cycle.

November, 1949

Chapter I

The Cycle of Society

MODERN Science, obsessed with the greatness of its physical discoveries and the idea of the sole existence of Matter, has long attempted to base upon physical data even its study of Soul and Mind and of those workings of Nature in man and animal in which a knowledge of psychology is as important as any of the physical sciences. Its very psychology founded itself upon physiology and the scrutiny of the brain and nervous system. It is not surprising therefore that in history and sociology attention should have been concentrated on the external data, laws, institutions, rites, customs, economic factors and developments, while the deeper psychological elements so important in the activities of a mental, emotional, ideative being like man have been very much neglected. This kind of science would explain history and social development as much as possible by economic necessity or motive, — by economy understood in its widest sense. There are even historians who deny or put aside as of a very subsidiary importance the working of the idea and the influence of the thinker in the development of human institutions. The French Revolution, it is thought, would have happened just as it did and when it did, by economic necessity, even if Rousseau and Voltaire had never written and the eighteenth-century philosophic movement in the world of thought had never worked out its bold and radical speculations.

Recently, however, the all-sufficiency of Matter to explain Mind and Soul has begun to be doubted and a movement of emancipation from the obsession of physical science has set in, although as yet it has not gone beyond a few awkward and rudimentary stumblings. Still there is the beginning of a perception that behind the economic motives and causes of social and historical development there are profound psychological, even perhaps soul factors; and in pre-war Germany, the metropolis of

rationalism and materialism but the home also, for a century and a half, of new thought and original tendencies good and bad, beneficent and disastrous, a first psychological theory of history was conceived and presented by an original intelligence. The earliest attempts in a new field are seldom entirely successful, and the German historian, originator of this theory, seized on a luminous idea, but was not able to carry it very far or probe very deep. He was still haunted by a sense of the greater importance of the economic factor, and like most European science his theory related, classified and organised phenomena much more successfully than it explained them. Nevertheless, its basic idea formulated a suggestive and illuminating truth, and it is worth while following up some of the suggestions it opens out in the light especially of Eastern thought and experience.

The theorist, Lamprecht, basing himself on European and particularly on German history, supposed that human society progresses through certain distinct psychological stages which he terms respectively symbolic, typal and conventional, individualist and subjective. This development forms, then, a sort of psychological cycle through which a nation or a civilisation is bound to proceed. Obviously, such classifications are likely to err by rigidity and to substitute a mental straight line for the coils and zigzags of Nature. The psychology of man and his societies is too complex, too synthetical of many-sided and intermixed tendencies to satisfy any such rigorous and formal analysis. Nor does this theory of a psychological cycle tell us what is the inner meaning of its successive phases or the necessity of their succession or the term and end towards which they are driving. But still to understand natural laws whether of Mind or Matter it is necessary to analyse their working into its discoverable elements, main constituents, dominant forces, though these may not actually be found anywhere in isolation. I will leave aside the Western thinker's own dealings with his idea. The suggestive names he has offered us, if we examine their intrinsic sense and value, may yet throw some light on the thickly veiled secret of our historic evolution, and this is the line on which it would be most useful to investigate.

Undoubtedly, wherever we can seize human society in what to us seems its primitive beginnings or early stages, — no matter whether the race is comparatively cultured or savage or economically advanced or backward, — we do find a strongly symbolic mentality that governs or at least pervades its thought, customs and institutions. Symbolic, but of what? We find that this social stage is always religious and actively imaginative in its religion; for symbolism and a widespread imaginative or intuitive religious feeling have a natural kinship and especially in earlier or primitive formations they have gone always together. When man begins to be predominantly intellectual, sceptical, ratiocinative he is already preparing for an individualist society and the age of symbols and the age of conventions have passed or are losing their virtue. The symbol then is of something which man feels to be present behind himself and his life and his activities, — the Divine, the Gods, the vast and deep unnameable, a hidden, living and mysterious nature of things. All his religious and social institutions, all the moments and phases of his life are to him symbols in which he seeks to express what he knows or guesses of the mystic influences that are behind his life and shape and govern or at the least intervene in its movements.

If we look at the beginnings of Indian society, the far-off Vedic age which we no longer understand, for we have lost that mentality, we see that everything is symbolic. The religious institution of sacrifice governs the whole society and all its hours and moments, and the ritual of the sacrifice is at every turn and in every detail, as even a cursory study of the Brahmanas and Upanishads ought to show us, mystically symbolic. The theory that there was nothing in the sacrifice except a propitiation of Nature-gods for the gaining of worldly prosperity and of Paradise, is a misunderstanding by a later humanity which had already become profoundly affected by an intellectual and practical bent of mind, practical even in its religion and even in its own mysticism and symbolism, and therefore could no longer enter into the ancient spirit. Not only the actual religious worship but also the social institutions of the time were penetrated through and through with the symbolic spirit. Take

the hymn of the Rig Veda which is supposed to be a marriage hymn for the union of a human couple and was certainly used as such in the later Vedic ages. Yet the whole sense of the hymn turns about the successive marriages of Suryā, daughter of the Sun, with different gods and the human marriage is quite a subordinate matter overshadowed and governed entirely by the divine and mystic figure and is spoken of in the terms of that figure. Mark, however, that the divine marriage here is not, as it would be in later ancient poetry, a decorative image or poetical ornamentation used to set off and embellish the human union; on the contrary, the human is an inferior figure and image of the divine. The distinction marks off the entire contrast between that more ancient mentality and our modern regard upon things. This symbolism influenced for a long time Indian ideas of marriage and is even now conventionally remembered though no longer understood or effective.

We may note also in passing that the Indian ideal of the relation between man and woman has always been governed by the symbolism of the relation between the Purusha and Prakriti (in the Veda Nri and Gna), the male and female divine Principles in the universe. Even, there is to some degree a practical correlation between the position of the female sex and this idea. In the earlier Vedic times when the female principle stood on a sort of equality with the male in the symbolic cult, though with a certain predominance for the latter, woman was as much the mate as the adjunct of man; in later times when the Prakriti has become subject in idea to the Purusha, the woman also depends entirely on the man, exists only for him and has hardly even a separate spiritual existence. In the Tantrik Shakta religion which puts the female principle highest, there is an attempt which could not get itself translated into social practice, — even as this Tantrik cult could never entirely shake off the subjugation of the Vedantic idea, — to elevate woman and make her an object of profound respect and even of worship.

Or let us take, for this example will serve us best, the Vedic institution of the fourfold order, *caturvarṇa*, miscalled the system of the four castes, — for caste is a conventional, *varṇa* a

symbolic and typal institution. We are told that the institution of the four orders of society was the result of an economic evolution complicated by political causes. Very possibly;[1] but the important point is that it was not so regarded and could not be so regarded by the men of that age. For while we are satisfied when we have found the practical and material causes of a social phenomenon and do not care to look farther, they cared little or only subordinately for its material factors and looked always first and foremost for its symbolic, religious or psychological significance. This appears in the Purushasukta of the Veda, where the four orders are described as having sprung from the body of the creative Deity, from his head, arms, thighs and feet. To us this is merely a poetical image and its sense is that the Brahmins were the men of knowledge, the Kshatriyas the men of power, the Vaishyas the producers and support of society, the Shudras its servants. As if that were all, as if the men of those days would have so profound a reverence for mere poetical figures like this of the body of Brahma or that other of the marriages of Suryā, would have built upon them elaborate systems of ritual and sacred ceremony, enduring institutions, great demarcations of social type and ethical discipline. We read always our own mentality into that of these ancient forefathers and it is therefore that we can find in them nothing but imaginative barbarians. To us poetry is a revel of intellect and fancy, imagination a plaything and caterer for our amusement, our entertainer, the nautch-girl of the mind. But to the men of old the poet was a seer, a revealer of hidden truths, imagination no dancing courtesan but a priestess in God's house commissioned not to spin fictions but to image difficult and hidden truths; even the metaphor or simile in the Vedic style is used with a serious purpose and expected to convey a reality, not to suggest a pleasing artifice of thought. The image was to these seers a revelative symbol of the unrevealed and it was used because it could hint luminously to the mind what the precise intellectual

[1] It is at least doubtful. The Brahmin class at first seem to have exercised all sorts of economic functions and not to have confined themselves to those of the priesthood.

word, apt only for logical or practical thought or to express the physical and the superficial, could not at all hope to manifest. To them this symbol of the Creator's body was more than an image, it expressed a divine reality. Human society was for them an attempt to express in life the cosmic Purusha who has expressed himself otherwise in the material and the supraphysical universe. Man and the cosmos are both of them symbols and expressions of the same hidden Reality.

From this symbolic attitude came the tendency to make everything in society a sacrament, religious and sacrosanct, but as yet with a large and vigorous freedom in all its forms, — a freedom which we do not find in the rigidity of "savage" communities because these have already passed out of the symbolic into the conventional stage though on a curve of degeneration instead of a curve of growth. The spiritual idea governs all; the symbolic religious forms which support it are fixed in principle; the social forms are lax, free and capable of infinite development. One thing, however, begins to progress towards a firm fixity and this is the psychological type. Thus we have first the symbolic idea of the four orders, expressing — to employ an abstractly figurative language which the Vedic thinkers would not have used nor perhaps understood, but which helps best our modern understanding — the Divine as knowledge in man, the Divine as power, the Divine as production, enjoyment and mutuality, the Divine as service, obedience and work. These divisions answer to four cosmic principles, the Wisdom that conceives the order and principle of things, the Power that sanctions, upholds and enforces it, the Harmony that creates the arrangement of its parts, the Work that carries out what the rest direct. Next, out of this idea there developed a firm but not yet rigid social order based primarily upon temperament and psychic type[2] with a corresponding ethical discipline and secondarily upon the social and economic function.[3] But the function was determined by its suitability to the type and its helpfulness to the discipline; it was not the

[2] *guṇa*.
[3] *karma*.

primary or sole factor. The first, the symbolic stage of this evolution is predominantly religious and spiritual; the other elements, psychological, ethical, economic, physical are there but subordinated to the spiritual and religious idea. The second stage, which we may call the typal, is predominantly psychological and ethical; all else, even the spiritual and religious, is subordinate to the psychological idea and to the ethical ideal which expresses it. Religion becomes then a mystic sanction for the ethical motive and discipline, Dharma; that becomes its chief social utility, and for the rest it takes a more and more other-worldly turn. The idea of the direct expression of the divine Being or cosmic Principle in man ceases to dominate or to be the leader and in the forefront; it recedes, stands in the background and finally disappears from the practice and in the end even from the theory of life.

This typal stage creates the great social ideals which remain impressed upon the human mind even when the stage itself is passed. The principal active contribution it leaves behind when it is dead is the idea of social honour; the honour of the Brahmin which resides in purity, in piety, in a high reverence for the things of the mind and spirit and a disinterested possession and exclusive pursuit of learning and knowledge; the honour of the Kshatriya which lives in courage, chivalry, strength, a certain proud self-restraint and self-mastery, nobility of character and the obligations of that nobility; the honour of the Vaishya which maintains itself by rectitude of dealing, mercantile fidelity, sound production, order, liberality and philanthropy; the honour of the Shudra which gives itself in obedience, subordination, faithful service, a disinterested attachment. But these more and more cease to have a living root in the clear psychological idea or to spring naturally out of the inner life of the man; they become a convention, though the most noble of conventions. In the end they remain more as a tradition in the thought and on the lips than a reality of the life.

For the typal passes naturally into the conventional stage. The conventional stage of human society is born when the external supports, the outward expressions of the spirit or the ideal become more important than the ideal, the body or even the

clothes more important than the person. Thus in the evolution of caste, the outward supports of the ethical fourfold order, — birth, economic function, religious ritual and sacrament, family custom, — each began to exaggerate enormously its proportions and its importance in the scheme. At first, birth does not seem to have been of the first importance in the social order, for faculty and capacity prevailed; but afterwards, as the type fixed itself, its maintenance by education and tradition became necessary and education and tradition naturally fixed themselves in a hereditary groove. Thus the son of a Brahmin came always to be looked upon conventionally as a Brahmin; birth and profession were together the double bond of the hereditary convention at the time when it was most firm and faithful to its own character. This rigidity once established, the maintenance of the ethical type passed from the first place to a secondary or even a quite tertiary importance. Once the very basis of the system, it came now to be a not indispensable crown or pendent tassel, insisted upon indeed by the thinker and the ideal code-maker but not by the actual rule of society or its practice. Once ceasing to be indispensable, it came inevitably to be dispensed with except as an ornamental fiction. Finally, even the economic basis began to disintegrate; birth, family custom and remnants, deformations, new accretions of meaningless or fanciful religious sign and ritual, the very scarecrow and caricature of the old profound symbolism, became the riveting links of the system of caste in the iron age of the old society. In the full economic period of caste the priest and the Pundit masquerade under the name of the Brahmin, the aristocrat and feudal baron under the name of the Kshatriya, the trader and money-getter under the name of the Vaishya, the half-fed labourer and economic serf under the name of the Shudra. When the economic basis also breaks down, then the unclean and diseased decrepitude of the old system has begun; it has become a name, a shell, a sham and must either be dissolved in the crucible of an individualist period of society or else fatally affect with weakness and falsehood the system of life that clings to it. That in visible fact is the last and present state of the caste system in India.

The tendency of the conventional age of society is to fix, to arrange firmly, to formalise, to erect a system of rigid grades and hierarchies, to stereotype religion, to bind education and training to a traditional and unchangeable form, to subject thought to infallible authorities, to cast a stamp of finality on what seems to it the finished life of man. The conventional period of society has its golden age when the spirit and thought that inspired its forms are confined but yet living, not yet altogether walled in, not yet stifled to death and petrified by the growing hardness of the structure in which they are cased. That golden age is often very beautiful and attractive to the distant view of posterity by its precise order, symmetry, fine social architecture, the admirable subordination of its parts to a general and noble plan. Thus at one time the modern litterateur, artist or thinker looked back often with admiration and with something like longing to the mediaeval age of Europe; he forgot in its distant appearance of poetry, nobility, spirituality the much folly, ignorance, iniquity, cruelty and oppression of those harsh ages, the suffering and revolt that simmered below these fine surfaces, the misery and squalor that was hidden behind that splendid façade. So too the Hindu orthodox idealist looks back to a perfectly regulated society devoutly obedient to the wise yoke of the Shastra, and that is his golden age, — a nobler one than the European in which the apparent gold was mostly hard burnished copper with a thin gold-leaf covering it, but still of an alloyed metal, not the true Satya Yuga. In these conventional periods of society there is much indeed that is really fine and sound and helpful to human progress, but still they are its copper age and not the true golden; they are the age when the Truth we strive to arrive at is not realised, not accomplished,[4] but the exiguity of it eked out or its full appearance imitated by an artistic form, and what we have of the reality has begun to fossilise and is doomed to be lost in a hard mass of rule and order and convention.

For always the form prevails and the spirit recedes and

[4] The Indian names of the golden age are Satya, the Age of the Truth, and Krita, the Age when the law of the Truth is accomplished.

diminishes. It attempts indeed to return, to revive the form, to modify it, anyhow to survive and even to make the form survive; but the time-tendency is too strong. This is visible in the history of religion; the efforts of the saints and religious reformers become progressively more scattered, brief and superficial in their actual effects, however strong and vital the impulse. We see this recession in the growing darkness and weakness of India in her last millennium; the constant effort of the most powerful spiritual personalities kept the soul of the people alive but failed to resuscitate the ancient free force and truth and vigour or permanently revivify a conventionalised and stagnating society; in a generation or two the iron grip of that conventionalism has always fallen on the new movement and annexed the names of its founders. We see it in Europe in the repeated moral tragedy of ecclesiasticism and Catholic monasticism. Then there arrives a period when the gulf between the convention and the truth becomes intolerable and the men of intellectual power arise, the great "swallowers of formulas", who, rejecting robustly or fiercely or with the calm light of reason symbol and type and convention, strike at the walls of the prison-house and seek by the individual reason, moral sense or emotional desire the Truth that society has lost or buried in its whited sepulchres. It is then that the individualistic age of religion and thought and society is created; the Age of Protestantism has begun, the Age of Reason, the Age of Revolt, Progress, Freedom. A partial and external freedom, still betrayed by the conventional age that preceded it into the idea that the Truth can be found in outsides, dreaming vainly that perfection can be determined by machinery, but still a necessary passage to the subjective period of humanity through which man has to circle back towards the recovery of his deeper self and a new upward line or a new revolving cycle of civilisation.

Chapter II

The Age of Individualism and Reason

AN INDIVIDUALISTIC age of human society comes as a result of the corruption and failure of the conventional, as a revolt against the reign of the petrified typal figure. Before it can be born it is necessary that the old truths shall have been lost in the soul and practice of the race and that even the conventions which ape and replace them shall have become devoid of real sense and intelligence; stripped of all practical justification, they exist only mechanically by fixed idea, by the force of custom, by attachment to the form. It is then that men in spite of the natural conservatism of the social mind are compelled at last to perceive that the Truth is dead in them and that they are living by a lie. The individualism of the new age is an attempt to get back from conventionalism of belief and practice to some solid bed-rock, no matter what, of real and tangible Truth. And it is necessarily individualistic, because all the old general standards have become bankrupt and can no longer give any inner help; it is therefore the individual who has to become a discoverer, a pioneer, and to search out by his individual reason, intuition, idealism, desire, claim upon life or whatever other light he finds in himself the true law of the world and of his own being. By that, when he has found or thinks he has found it, he will strive to rebase on a firm foundation and remould in a more vital even if a poorer form religion, society, ethics, political institutions, his relations with his fellows, his strivings for his own perfection and his labour for mankind.

It is in Europe that the age of individualism has taken birth and exercised its full sway; the East has entered into it only by contact and influence, not from an original impulse. And it is to its passion for the discovery of the actual truth of things and for

the governing of human life by whatever law of the truth it has found that the West owes its centuries of strength, vigour, light, progress, irresistible expansion. Equally, it is due not to any original falsehood in the ideals on which its life was founded, but to the loss of the living sense of the Truth it once held and its long contented slumber in the cramping bonds of a mechanical conventionalism that the East has found itself helpless in the hour of its awakening, a giant empty of strength, inert masses of men who had forgotten how to deal freely with facts and forces because they had learned only how to live in a world of stereotyped thought and customary action. Yet the truths which Europe has found by its individualistic age covered only the first more obvious, physical and outward facts of life and only such of their more hidden realities and powers as the habit of analytical reason and the pursuit of practical utility can give to man. If its rationalistic civilisation has swept so triumphantly over the world, it is because it found no deeper and more powerful truth to confront it; for all the rest of mankind was still in the inactivity of the last dark hours of the conventional age.

The individualistic age of Europe was in its beginning a revolt of reason, in its culmination a triumphal progress of physical Science. Such an evolution was historically inevitable. The dawn of individualism is always a questioning, a denial. The individual finds a religion imposed upon him which does not base its dogma and practice upon a living sense of ever verifiable spiritual Truth, but on the letter of an ancient book, the infallible dictum of a Pope, the tradition of a Church, the learned casuistry of schoolmen and Pundits, conclaves of ecclesiastics, heads of monastic orders, doctors of all sorts, all of them unquestionable tribunals whose sole function is to judge and pronounce, but none of whom seems to think it necessary or even allowable to search, test, prove, inquire, discover. He finds that, as is inevitable under such a regime, true science and knowledge are either banned, punished and persecuted or else rendered obsolete by the habit of blind reliance on fixed authorities; even what is true in old authorities is no longer of any value, because its words are learnedly or ignorantly repeated but its real

sense is no longer lived except at most by a few. In politics he finds everywhere divine rights, established privileges, sanctified tyrannies which are evidently armed with an oppressive power and justify themselves by long prescription, but seem to have no real claim or title to exist. In the social order he finds an equally stereotyped reign of convention, fixed disabilities, fixed privileges, the self-regarding arrogance of the high, the blind prostration of the low, while the old functions which might have justified at one time such a distribution of status are either not performed at all or badly performed without any sense of obligation and merely as a part of caste pride. He has to rise in revolt; on every claim of authority he has to turn the eye of a resolute inquisition; when he is told that this is the sacred truth of things or the command of God or the immemorial order of human life, he has to reply, "But is it really so? How shall I know that this is the truth of things and not superstition and falsehood? When did God command it, or how do I know that this was the sense of His command and not your error or invention, or that the book on which you found yourself is His word at all, or that He has ever spoken His will to mankind? This immemorial order of which you speak, is it really immemorial, really a law of Nature or an imperfect result of Time and at present a most false convention? And of all you say, still I must ask, does it agree with the facts of the world, with my sense of right, with my judgment of truth, with my experience of reality?" And if it does not, the revolting individual flings off the yoke, declares the truth as he sees it and in doing so strikes inevitably at the root of the religious, the social, the political, momentarily perhaps even the moral order of the community as it stands, because it stands upon the authority he discredits and the convention he destroys and not upon a living truth which can be successfully opposed to his own. The champions of the old order may be right when they seek to suppress him as a destructive agency perilous to social security, political order or religious tradition; but he stands there and can no other, because to destroy is his mission, to destroy falsehood and lay bare a new foundation of truth.

But by what individual faculty or standard shall the innovator find out his new foundation or establish his new measures? Evidently, it will depend upon the available enlightenment of the time and the possible forms of knowledge to which he has access. At first it was in religion a personal illumination supported in the West by a theological, in the East by a philosophical reasoning. In society and politics it started with a crude primitive perception of natural right and justice which took its origin from the exasperation of suffering or from an awakened sense of general oppression, wrong, injustice and the indefensibility of the existing order when brought to any other test than that of privilege and established convention. The religious motive led at first; the social and political, moderating itself after the swift suppression of its first crude and vehement movements, took advantage of the upheaval of religious reformation, followed behind it as a useful ally and waited its time to assume the lead when the spiritual momentum had been spent and, perhaps by the very force of the secular influences it called to its aid, had missed its way. The movement of religious freedom in Europe took its stand first on a limited, then on an absolute right of the individual experience and illumined reason to determine the true sense of inspired Scripture and the true Christian ritual and order of the Church. The vehemence of its claim was measured by the vehemence of its revolt from the usurpations, pretensions and brutalities of the ecclesiastical power which claimed to withhold the Scripture from general knowledge and impose by moral authority and physical violence its own arbitrary interpretation of Sacred Writ, if not indeed another and substituted doctrine, on the recalcitrant individual conscience. In its more tepid and moderate forms the revolt engendered such compromises as the Episcopalian Churches, at a higher degree of fervour Calvinistic Puritanism, at white heat a riot of individual religious judgment and imagination in such sects as the Anabaptist, Independent, Socinian and countless others. In the East such a movement divorced from all political or any strongly iconoclastic social significance would have produced simply a series of religious reformers, illumined saints,

new bodies of belief with their appropriate cultural and social practice; in the West atheism and secularism were its inevitable and predestined goal. At first questioning the conventional forms of religion, the mediation of the priesthood between God and the soul and the substitution of Papal authority for the authority of the Scripture, it could not fail to go forward and question the Scripture itself and then all supernaturalism, religious belief or suprarational truth no less than outward creed and institute.

For, eventually, the evolution of Europe was determined less by the Reformation than by the Renascence; it flowered by the vigorous return of the ancient Graeco-Roman mentality of the one rather than by the Hebraic and religio-ethical temperament of the other. The Renascence gave back to Europe on one hand the free curiosity of the Greek mind, its eager search for first principles and rational laws, its delighted intellectual scrutiny of the facts of life by the force of direct observation and individual reasoning, on the other the Roman's large practicality and his sense for the ordering of life in harmony with a robust utility and the just principles of things. But both these tendencies were pursued with a passion, a seriousness, a moral and almost religious ardour which, lacking in the ancient Graeco-Roman mentality, Europe owed to her long centuries of Judaeo-Christian discipline. It was from these sources that the individualistic age of Western society sought ultimately for that principle of order and control which all human society needs and which more ancient times attempted to realise first by the materialisation of fixed symbols of truth, then by ethical type and discipline, finally by infallible authority or stereotyped convention.

Manifestly, the unrestrained use of individual illumination or judgment without either any outer standard or any generally recognisable source of truth is a perilous experiment for our imperfect race. It is likely to lead rather to a continual fluctuation and disorder of opinion than to a progressive unfolding of the truth of things. No less, the pursuit of social justice through the stark assertion of individual rights or class interests and desires must be a source of continual struggle and revolution and may end in an exaggerated assertion of the will in each to

live his own life and to satisfy his own ideas and desires which will produce a serious malaise or a radical trouble in the social body. Therefore on every individualistic age of mankind there is imperative the search for two supreme desiderata. It must find a general standard of Truth to which the individual judgment of all will be inwardly compelled to subscribe without physical constraint or imposition of irrational authority. And it must reach too some principle of social order which shall be equally founded on a universally recognisable truth of things; an order is needed that will put a rein on desire and interest by providing at least some intellectual and moral test which these two powerful and dangerous forces must satisfy before they can feel justified in asserting their claims on life. Speculative and scientific reason for their means, the pursuit of a practicable social justice and sound utility for their spirit, the progressive nations of Europe set out on their search for this light and this law.

They found and held it with enthusiasm in the discoveries of physical Science. The triumphant domination, the all-shattering and irresistible victory of Science in nineteenth-century Europe is explained by the absolute perfection with which it at least seemed for a time to satisfy these great psychological wants of the Western mind. Science seemed to it to fulfil impeccably its search for the two supreme desiderata of an individualistic age. Here at last was a truth of things which depended on no doubtful Scripture or fallible human authority but which Mother Nature herself had written in her eternal book for all to read who had patience to observe and intellectual honesty to judge. Here were laws, principles, fundamental facts of the world and of our being which all could verify at once for themselves and which must therefore satisfy and guide the free individual judgment, delivering it equally from alien compulsion and from erratic self-will. Here were laws and truths which justified and yet controlled the claims and desires of the individual human being; here a science which provided a standard, a norm of knowledge, a rational basis for life, a clear outline and sovereign means for the progress and perfection of the individual and the race. The attempt to govern and organise human life by verifiable Science,

by a law, a truth of things, an order and principles which all can observe and verify in their ground and fact and to which therefore all may freely and must rationally subscribe, is the culminating movement of European civilisation. It has been the fulfilment and triumph of the individualistic age of human society; it has seemed likely also to be its end, the cause of the death of individualism and its putting away and burial among the monuments of the past.

For this discovery by individual free-thought of universal laws of which the individual is almost a by-product and by which he must necessarily be governed, this attempt actually to govern the social life of humanity in conscious accordance with the mechanism of these laws seems to lead logically to the suppression of that very individual freedom which made the discovery and the attempt at all possible. In seeking the truth and law of his own being the individual seems to have discovered a truth and law which is not of his own individual being at all, but of the collectivity, the pack, the hive, the mass. The result to which this points and to which it still seems irresistibly to be driving us is a new ordering of society by a rigid economic or governmental Socialism in which the individual, deprived again of his freedom in his own interest and that of humanity, must have his whole life and action determined for him at every step and in every point from birth to old age by the well-ordered mechanism of the State.[1] We might then have a curious new version, with very important differences, of the old Asiatic or even of the old Indian order of society. In place of the religio-ethical sanction there will be a scientific and rational or naturalistic motive and rule; instead of the Brahmin Shastrakara the scientific, administrative and economic expert. In the place of the King himself observing the law and compelling with the aid and consent of the society all to tread without deviation

[1] We already see a violent though incomplete beginning of this line of social evolution in Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, Communist Russia. The trend is for more and more nations to accept this beginning of a new order, and the resistance of the old order is more passive than active — it lacks the fire, enthusiasm and self-confidence which animates the innovating Idea.

the line marked out for them, the line of the Dharma, there will stand the collectivist State similarly guided and empowered. Instead of a hierarchical arrangement of classes each with its powers, privileges and duties there will be established an initial equality of education and opportunity, ultimately perhaps with a subsequent determination of function by experts who shall know us better than ourselves and choose for us our work and quality. Marriage, generation and the education of the child may be fixed by the scientific State as of old by the Shastra. For each man there will be a long stage of work for the State superintended by collectivist authorities and perhaps in the end a period of liberation, not for action but for enjoyment of leisure and personal self-improvement, answering to the Vanaprastha and Sannyasa Asramas of the old Aryan society. The rigidity of such a social state would greatly surpass that of its Asiatic forerunner; for there at least there were for the rebel, the innovator two important concessions. There was for the individual the freedom of an early Sannyasa, a renunciation of the social for the free spiritual life, and there was for the group the liberty to form a sub-society governed by new conceptions like the Sikh or the Vaishnava. But neither of these violent departures from the norm could be tolerated by a strictly economic and rigorously scientific and unitarian society. Obviously, too, there would grow up a fixed system of social morality and custom and a body of socialistic doctrine which one could not be allowed to question practically, and perhaps not even intellectually, since that would soon shatter or else undermine the system. Thus we should have a new typal order based upon purely economic capacity and function, *guṇakarma*, and rapidly petrifying by the inhibition of individual liberty into a system of rationalistic conventions. And quite certainly this static order would at long last be broken by a new individualist age of revolt, led probably by the principles of an extreme philosophical Anarchism.

On the other hand, there are in operation forces which seem likely to frustrate or modify this development before it can reach its menaced consummation. In the first place, rationalistic and physical Science has overpassed itself and must before long be

overtaken by a mounting flood of psychological and psychic knowledge which cannot fail to compel quite a new view of the human being and open a new vista before mankind. At the same time the Age of Reason is visibly drawing to an end; novel ideas are sweeping over the world and are being accepted with a significant rapidity, ideas inevitably subversive of any premature typal order of economic rationalism, dynamic ideas such as Nietzsche's Will-to-live, Bergson's exaltation of Intuition above intellect or the latest German philosophical tendency to acknowledge a suprarational faculty and a suprarational order of truths. Already another mental poise is beginning to settle and conceptions are on the way to apply themselves in the field of practice which promise to give the succession of the individualistic age of society not to a new typal order, but to a subjective age which may well be a great and momentous passage to a very different goal. It may be doubted whether we are not already in the morning twilight of a new period of the human cycle.

Secondly, the West in its triumphant conquest of the world has awakened the slumbering East and has produced in its midst an increasing struggle between an imported Western individualism and the old conventional principle of society. The latter is here rapidly, there slowly breaking down, but something quite different from Western individualism may very well take its place. Some opine, indeed, that Asia will reproduce Europe's Age of Reason with all its materialism and secularist individualism while Europe itself is pushing onward into new forms and ideas; but this is in the last degree improbable. On the contrary, the signs are that the individualistic period in the East will be neither of long duration nor predominantly rationalistic and secularist in its character. If then the East, as the result of its awakening, follows its own bent and evolves a novel social tendency and culture, that is bound to have an enormous effect on the direction of the world's civilisation; we can measure its probable influence by the profound results of the first reflux of the ideas even of the unawakened East upon Europe. Whatever that effect may be, it will not be in favour of any re-ordering of society on the lines of the still current tendency towards a

mechanical economism which has not ceased to dominate mind and life in the Occident. The influence of the East is likely to be rather in the direction of subjectivism and practical spirituality, a greater opening of our physical existence to the realisation of ideals other than the strong but limited aims suggested by the life and the body in their own gross nature.

But, most important of all, the individualistic age of Europe has in its discovery of the individual fixed among the idea-forces of the future two of a master potency which cannot be entirely eliminated by any temporary reaction. The first of these, now universally accepted, is the democratic conception of the right of all individuals as members of the society to the full life and the full development of which they are individually capable. It is no longer possible that we should accept as an ideal any arrangement by which certain classes of society should arrogate development and full social fruition to themselves while assigning a bare and barren function of service alone to others. It is now fixed that social development and well-being mean the development and well-being of all the individuals in the society and not merely a flourishing of the community in the mass which resolves itself really into the splendour and power of one or two classes. This conception has been accepted in full by all progressive nations and is the basis of the present socialistic tendency of the world. But in addition there is this deeper truth which individualism has discovered, that the individual is not merely a social unit; his existence, his right and claim to live and grow are not founded solely on his social work and function. He is not merely a member of a human pack, hive or ant-hill; he is something in himself, a soul, a being, who has to fulfil his own individual truth and law as well as his natural or his assigned part in the truth and law of the collective existence.[2] He demands freedom, space, initiative for his soul, for his nature, for that puissant and tremendous thing which society so much

[2] This is no longer recognised by the new order, Fascist or Communistic, — here the individual is reduced to a cell or atom of the social body. "We have destroyed" proclaims a German exponent "the false view that men are individual beings; there is no liberty of individuals, there is only liberty of nations or races."

distrusts and has laboured in the past either to suppress altogether or to relegate to the purely spiritual field, an individual thought, will and conscience. If he is to merge these eventually, it cannot be into the dominating thought, will and conscience of others, but into something beyond into which he and all must be both allowed and helped freely to grow. That is an idea, a truth which, intellectually recognised and given its full exterior and superficial significance by Europe, agrees at its root with the profoundest and highest spiritual conceptions of Asia and has a large part to play in the moulding of the future.

Chapter III

The Coming of the Subjective Age

THE INHERENT aim and effort and justification, the psychological seed-cause, the whole tendency of development of an individualistic age of mankind, all go back to the one dominant need of rediscovering the substantial truths of life, thought and action which have been overlaid by the falsehood of conventional standards no longer alive to the truth of the ideas from which their conventions started. It would seem at first that the shortest way would be to return to the original ideas themselves for light, to rescue the kernel of their truth from the shell of convention in which it has become incrusted. But to this course there is a great practical obstacle; and there is another which reaches beyond the surface of things, nearer to the deeper principles of the development of the soul in human society. The recovery of the old original ideas now travestied by convention is open to the practical disadvantage that it tends after a time to restore force to the conventions which the Time-Spirit is seeking to outgrow and, if or when the deeper truth-seeking tendency slackens in its impulse, the conventions re-establish their sway. They revive, modified, no doubt, but still powerful; a new incrustation sets in, the truth of things is overlaid by a more complex falsity. And even if it were otherwise, the need of a developing humanity is not to return always to its old ideas. Its need is to progress to a larger fulfilment in which, if the old is taken up, it must be transformed and exceeded. For the underlying truth of things is constant and eternal, but its mental figures, its life forms, its physical embodiments call constantly for growth and change.

It is this principle and necessity that justify an age of individualism and rationalism and make it, however short it may be, an inevitable period in the cycle. A temporary reign of the critical reason largely destructive in its action is an imperative need for

human progress. In India, since the great Buddhistic upheaval of the national thought and life, there has been a series of recurrent attempts to rediscover the truth of the soul and life and get behind the veil of stifling conventions; but these have been conducted by a wide and tolerant spiritual reason, a plastic soul-intuition and deep subjective seeking, insufficiently militant and destructive. Although productive of great internal and considerable external changes, they have never succeeded in getting rid of the predominant conventional order. The work of a dissolvent and destructive intellectual criticism, though not entirely absent from some of these movements, has never gone far enough; the constructive force, insufficiently aided by the destructive, has not been able to make a wide and free space for its new formation. It is only with the period of European influence and impact that circumstances and tendencies powerful enough to enforce the beginnings of a new age of radical and effective revaluation of ideas and things have come into existence. The characteristic power of these influences has been throughout — or at any rate till quite recently — rationalistic, utilitarian and individualistic. It has compelled the national mind to view everything from a new, searching and critical standpoint, and even those who seek to preserve the present or restore the past are obliged unconsciously or half-consciously to justify their endeavour from the novel point of view and by its appropriate standards of reasoning. Throughout the East, the subjective Asiatic mind is being driven to adapt itself to the need for changed values of life and thought. It has been forced to turn upon itself both by the pressure of Western knowledge and by the compulsion of a quite changed life-need and life-environment. What it did not do from within, has come on it as a necessity from without and this externality has carried with it an immense advantage as well as great dangers.

The individualistic age is, then, a radical attempt of mankind to discover the truth and law both of the individual being and of the world to which the individual belongs. It may begin, as it began in Europe, with the endeavour to get back, more especially in the sphere of religion, to the original truth which convention

has overlaid, defaced or distorted; but from that first step it must proceed to others and in the end to a general questioning of the foundations of thought and practice in all the spheres of human life and action. A revolutionary reconstruction of religion, philosophy, science, art and society is the last inevitable outcome. It proceeds at first by the light of the individual mind and reason, by its demand on life and its experience of life; but it must go from the individual to the universal. For the effort of the individual soon shows him that he cannot securely discover the truth and law of his own being without discovering some universal law and truth to which he can relate it. Of the universe he is a part; in all but his deepest spirit he is its subject, a small cell in that tremendous organic mass: his substance is drawn from its substance and by the law of its life the law of his life is determined and governed. From a new view and knowledge of the world must proceed his new view and knowledge of himself, of his power and capacity and limitations, of his claim on existence and the high road and the distant or immediate goal of his individual and social destiny.

In Europe and in modern times this has taken the form of a clear and potent physical Science: it has proceeded by the discovery of the laws of the physical universe and the economic and sociological conditions of human life as determined by the physical being of man, his environment, his evolutionary history, his physical and vital, his individual and collective need. But after a time it must become apparent that the knowledge of the physical world is not the whole of knowledge; it must appear that man is a mental as well as a physical and vital being and even much more essentially mental than physical or vital. Even though his psychology is strongly affected and limited by his physical being and environment, it is not at its roots determined by them, but constantly reacts, subtly determines their action, effects even their new-shaping by the force of his psychological demand on life. His economic state and social institutions are themselves governed by his psychological demand on the possibilities, circumstances, tendencies created by the relation between the mind and soul of humanity and its life and body. Therefore to find the

truth of things and the law of his being in relation to that truth he must go deeper and fathom the subjective secret of himself and things as well as their objective forms and surroundings.

This he may attempt to do for a time by the power of the critical and analytic reason which has already carried him so far; but not for very long. For in his study of himself and the world he cannot but come face to face with the soul in himself and the soul in the world and find it to be an entity so profound, so complex, so full of hidden secrets and powers that his intellectual reason betrays itself as an insufficient light and a fumbling seeker: it is successfully analytical only of superficialities and of what lies just behind the superficies. The need of a deeper knowledge must then turn him to the discovery of new powers and means within himself. He finds that he can only know himself entirely by becoming actively self-conscious and not merely self-critical, by more and more living in his soul and acting out of it rather than floundering on surfaces, by putting himself into conscious harmony with that which lies behind his superficial mentality and psychology and by enlightening his reason and making dynamic his action through this deeper light and power to which he thus opens. In this process the rationalistic ideal begins to subject itself to the ideal of intuitional knowledge and a deeper self-awareness; the utilitarian standard gives way to the aspiration towards self-consciousness and self-realisation; the rule of living according to the manifest laws of physical Nature is replaced by the effort towards living according to the veiled Law and Will and Power active in the life of the world and in the inner and outer life of humanity.

All these tendencies, though in a crude, initial and ill-developed form, are manifest now in the world and are growing from day to day with a significant rapidity. And their emergence and greater dominance means the transition from the rationalistic and utilitarian period of human development which individualism has created to a greater subjective age of society. The change began by a rapid turning of the current of thought into large and profound movements contradictory of the old intellectual standards, a swift breaking of the old tables. The

materialism of the nineteenth century gave place first to a novel and profound vitalism which has taken various forms from Nietzsche's theory of the Will to be and Will to Power as the root and law of life to the new pluralistic and pragmatic philosophy which is pluralistic because it has its eye fixed on life rather than on the soul and pragmatic because it seeks to interpret being in the terms of force and action rather than of light and knowledge. These tendencies of thought, which had until yesterday a profound influence on the life and thought of Europe prior to the outbreak of the great War, especially in France and Germany, were not a mere superficial recoil from intellectualism to life and action, — although in their application by lesser minds they often assumed that aspect; they were an attempt to read profoundly and live by the Life-Soul of the universe and tended to be deeply psychological and subjective in their method. From behind them, arising in the void created by the discrediting of the old rationalistic intellectualism, there had begun to arise a new Intuitionalism, not yet clearly aware of its own drive and nature, which seeks through the forms and powers of Life for that which is behind Life and sometimes even lays as yet uncertain hands on the sealed doors of the Spirit.

The art, music and literature of the world, always a sure index of the vital tendencies of the age, have also undergone a profound revolution in the direction of an ever-deepening subjectivism. The great objective art and literature of the past no longer commands the mind of the new age. The first tendency was, as in thought so in literature, an increasing psychological vitalism which sought to represent penetratingly the most subtle psychological impulses and tendencies of man as they started to the surface in his emotional, aesthetic and vitalistic cravings and activities. Composed with great skill and subtlety but without any real insight into the law of man's being, these creations seldom got behind the reverse side of our surface emotions, sensations and actions which they minutely analysed in their details but without any wide or profound light of knowledge; they were perhaps more immediately interesting but ordinarily inferior as art to the old literature which at least seized firmly and with a

large and powerful mastery on its province. Often they described the malady of Life rather than its health and power, or the riot and revolt of its cravings, vehement and therefore impotent and unsatisfied, rather than its dynamis of self-expression and self-possession. But to this movement which reached its highest creative power in Russia, there succeeded a turn towards a more truly psychological art, music and literature, mental, intuitional, psychic rather than vitalistic, departing in fact from a superficial vitalism as much as its predecessors departed from the objective mind of the past. This new movement aimed like the new philosophic Intuitionalism at a real rending of the veil, the seizure by the human mind of that which does not overtly express itself, the touch and penetration into the hidden soul of things. Much of it was still infirm, unsubstantial in its grasp on what it pursued, rudimentary in its forms, but it initiated a decisive departure of the human mind from its old moorings and pointed the direction in which it is being piloted on a momentous voyage of discovery, the discovery of a new world within which must eventually bring about the creation of a new world without in life and society. Art and literature seem definitely to have taken a turn towards a subjective search into what may be called the hidden inside of things and away from the rational and objective canon or motive.

Already in the practical dealing with life there are advanced progressive tendencies which take their inspiration from this profounder subjectivism. Nothing indeed has yet been firmly accomplished, all is as yet tentative initiation and the first feeling out towards a material shape for this new spirit. The dominant activities of the world, the great recent events such as the enormous clash of nations in Europe and the stirrings and changes within the nations which preceded and followed it, were rather the result of a confused half struggle half effort at accommodation between the old intellectual and materialistic and the new still superficial subjective and vitalistic impulses in the West. The latter unenlightened by a true inner growth of the soul were necessarily impelled to seize upon the former and utilise them for their unbridled demand upon life; the world was moving

towards a monstrously perfect organisation of the Will-to-live and the Will-to-power and it was this that threw itself out in the clash of War and has now found or is finding new forms of life for itself which show better its governing idea and motive. The Asuric or even Rakshasic character of the recent world-collision was due to this formidable combination of a falsely enlightened vitalistic motive-power with a great force of servile intelligence and reasoning contrivance subjected to it as instrument and the genius of an accomplished materialistic Science as its Djinn, its giant worker of huge, gross and soulless miracles. The War was the bursting of the explosive force so created and, even though it strewed the world with ruins, its after results may well have prepared the collapse, as they have certainly produced a disintegrating chaos or at least poignant disorder, of the monstrous combination which produced it, and by that salutary ruin are emptying the field of human life of the principal obstacles to a truer development towards a higher goal.

Behind it all the hope of the race lies in those infant and as yet subordinate tendencies which carry in them the seed of a new subjective and psychic dealing of man with his own being, with his fellow-men and with the ordering of his individual and social life. The characteristic note of these tendencies may be seen in the new ideas about the education and upbringing of the child that became strongly current in the pre-war era. Formerly, education was merely a mechanical forcing of the child's nature into arbitrary grooves of training and knowledge in which his individual subjectivity was the last thing considered, and his family upbringing was a constant repression and compulsory shaping of his habits, his thoughts, his character into the mould fixed for them by the conventional ideas or individual interests and ideals of the teachers and parents. The discovery that education must be a bringing out of the child's own intellectual and moral capacities to their highest possible value and must be based on the psychology of the child-nature was a step forward towards a more healthy because a more subjective system; but it still fell short because it still regarded him as an object to be handled and moulded by the teacher, to be educated. But at least

there was a glimmering of the realisation that each human being is a self-developing soul and that the business of both parent and teacher is to enable and to help the child to educate himself, to develop his own intellectual, moral, aesthetic and practical capacities and to grow freely as an organic being, not to be kneaded and pressured into form like an inert plastic material. It is not yet realised what this soul is or that the true secret, whether with child or man, is to help him to find his deeper self, the real psychic entity within. That, if we ever give it a chance to come forward, and still more if we call it into the foreground as "the leader of the march set in our front", will itself take up most of the business of education out of our hands and develop the capacity of the psychological being towards a realisation of its potentialities of which our present mechanical view of life and man and external routine methods of dealing with them prevent us from having any experience or forming any conception. These new educational methods are on the straight way to this truer dealing. The closer touch attempted with the psychical entity behind the vital and physical mentality and an increasing reliance on its possibilities must lead to the ultimate discovery that man is inwardly a soul and a conscious power of the Divine and that the evocation of this real man within is the right object of education and indeed of all human life if it would find and live according to the hidden Truth and deepest law of its own being. That was the knowledge which the ancients sought to express through religious and social symbolism, and subjectivism is a road of return to the lost knowledge. First deepening man's inner experience, restoring perhaps on an unprecedented scale insight and self-knowledge to the race, it must end by revolutionising his social and collective self-expression.

Meanwhile, the nascent subjectivism preparative of the new age has shown itself not so much in the relations of individuals or in the dominant ideas and tendencies of social development, which are still largely rationalistic and materialistic and only vaguely touched by the deeper subjective tendency, but in the new collective self-consciousness of man in that organic mass of his life which he has most firmly developed in the past, the

nation. It is here that it has already begun to produce powerful results whether as a vitalistic or as a psychical subjectivism, and it is here that we shall see most clearly what is its actual drift, its deficiencies, its dangers as well as the true purpose and conditions of a subjective age of humanity and the goal towards which the social cycle, entering this phase, is intended to arrive in its wide revolution.

Chapter IV

The Discovery of the Nation-Soul

THE PRIMAL law and purpose of the individual life is to seek its own self-development. Consciously or half-consciously or with an obscure unconscious groping it strives always and rightly strives at self-formulation, — to find itself, to discover within itself the law and power of its own being and to fulfil it. This aim in it is fundamental, right, inevitable because, even after all qualifications have been made and caveats entered, the individual is not merely the ephemeral physical creature, a form of mind and body that aggregates and dissolves, but a being, a living power of the eternal Truth, a self-manifesting spirit. In the same way the primal law and purpose of a society, community or nation is to seek its own self-fulfilment; it strives rightly to find itself, to become aware within itself of the law and power of its own being and to fulfil it as perfectly as possible, to realise all its potentialities, to live its own self-revealing life. The reason is the same; for this too is a being, a living power of the eternal Truth, a self-manifestation of the cosmic Spirit, and it is there to express and fulfil in its own way and to the degree of its capacities the special truth and power and meaning of the cosmic Spirit that is within it. The nation or society, like the individual, has a body, an organic life, a moral and aesthetic temperament, a developing mind and a soul behind all these signs and powers for the sake of which they exist. One may say even that, like the individual, it essentially is a soul rather than has one; it is a group-soul that, once having attained to a separate distinctness, must become more and more self-conscious and find itself more and more fully as it develops its corporate action and mentality and its organic self-expressive life.

The parallel is just at every turn because it is more than a parallel; it is a real identity of nature. There is only this difference that the group-soul is much more complex because it has

a great number of partly self-conscious mental individuals for the constituents of its physical being instead of an association of merely vital subconscious cells. At first, for this very reason, it seems more crude, primitive and artificial in the forms it takes; for it has a more difficult task before it, it needs a longer time to find itself, it is more fluid and less easily organic. When it does succeed in getting out of the stage of vaguely conscious self-formation, its first definite self-consciousness is objective much more than subjective. And so far as it is subjective, it is apt to be superficial or loose and vague. This objectiveness comes out very strongly in the ordinary emotional conception of the nation which centres round its geographical, its most outward and material aspect, the passion for the land in which we dwell, the land of our fathers, the land of our birth, *country*, *patria*, *vaterland*, *janma-bhūmi*. When we realise that the land is only the shell of the body, though a very living shell indeed and potent in its influences on the nation, when we begin to feel that its more real body is the men and women who compose the nation-unit, a body ever changing, yet always the same like that of the individual man, we are on the way to a truly subjective communal consciousness. For then we have some chance of realising that even the physical being of the society is a subjective power, not a mere objective existence. Much more is it in its inner self a great corporate soul with all the possibilities and dangers of the soul-life.

The objective view of society has reigned throughout the historical period of humanity in the West; it has been sufficiently strong though not absolutely engrossing in the East. Rulers, people and thinkers alike have understood by their national existence a political status, the extent of their borders, their economic well-being and expansion, their laws, institutions and the working of these things. For this reason political and economic motives have everywhere predominated on the surface and history has been a record of their operations and influence. The one subjective and psychological force consciously admitted and with difficulty deniable has been that of the individual. This predominance is so great that most modern historians and some

political thinkers have concluded that objective necessities are by law of Nature the only really determining forces, all else is result or superficial accidents of these forces. Scientific history has been conceived as if it must be a record and appreciation of the environmental motives of political action, of the play of economic forces and developments and the course of institutional evolution. The few who still valued the psychological element have kept their eye fixed on individuals and are not far from conceiving of history as a mass of biographies. The truer and more comprehensive science of the future will see that these conditions only apply to the imperfectly self-conscious period of national development. Even then there was always a greater subjective force working behind individuals, policies, economic movements and the change of institutions; but it worked for the most part subconsciously, more as a subliminal self than as a conscious mind. It is when this subconscious power of the group-soul comes to the surface that nations begin to enter into possession of their subjective selves; they set about getting, however vaguely or imperfectly, at their souls.

Certainly, there is always a vague sense of this subjective existence at work even on the surface of the communal mentality. But so far as this vague sense becomes at all definite, it concerns itself mostly with details and unessentials, national idiosyncrasies, habits, prejudices, marked mental tendencies. It is, so to speak, an objective sense of subjectivity. As man has been accustomed to look on himself as a body and a life, the physical animal with a certain moral or immoral temperament, and the things of the mind have been regarded as a fine flower and attainment of the physical life rather than themselves anything essential or the sign of something essential, so and much more has the community regarded that small part of its subjective self of which it becomes aware. It clings indeed always to its idiosyncrasies, habits, prejudices, but in a blind objective fashion, insisting on their most external aspect and not at all going behind them to that for which they stand, that which they try blindly to express.

This has been the rule not only with the nation, but with

all communities. A Church is an organised religious community and religion, if anything in the world, ought to be subjective; for its very reason for existence — where it is not merely an ethical creed with a supernatural authority — is to find and realise the soul. Yet religious history has been almost entirely, except in the time of the founders and their immediate successors, an insistence on things objective, rites, ceremonies, authority, church governments, dogmas, forms of belief. Witness the whole external religious history of Europe, that strange sacrilegious tragi-comedy of discords, sanguinary disputations, "religious" wars, persecutions, State churches and all else that is the very negation of the spiritual life. It is only recently that men have begun seriously to consider what Christianity, Catholicism, Islam really mean and are in their soul, that is to say, in their very reality and essence.

But now we have, very remarkably, very swiftly coming to the surface this new psychological tendency of the communal consciousness. Now first we hear of the soul of a nation and, what is more to the purpose, actually see nations feeling for their souls, trying to find them, seriously endeavouring to act from the new sense and make it consciously operative in the common life and action. It is only natural that this tendency should have been, for the most part, most powerful in new nations or in those struggling to realise themselves in spite of political subjection or defeat. For these need more to feel the difference between themselves and others so that they may assert and justify their individuality as against the powerful superlife which tends to absorb or efface it. And precisely because their objective life is feeble and it is difficult to affirm it by its own strength in the adverse circumstances, there is more chance of their seeking for their individuality and its force of self-assertion in that which is subjective and psychological or at least in that which has a subjective or a psychological significance.

Therefore in nations so circumstanced this tendency of self-finding has been most powerful and has even created in some of them a new type of national movement, as in Ireland and India. This and no other was the root-meaning of Swadeshism

in Bengal and of the Irish movement in its earlier less purely political stages. The emergence of Bengal as a sub-nation in India was throughout a strongly subjective movement and in its later development it became very consciously that. The movement of 1905 in Bengal pursued a quite new conception of the nation not merely as a country, but a soul, a psychological, almost a spiritual being and, even when acting from economical and political motives, it sought to dynamise them by this subjective conception and to make them instruments of self-expression rather than objects in themselves. We must not forget, however, that in the first stages these movements followed in their superficial thought the old motives of an objective and mostly political self-consciousness. The East indeed is always more subjective than the West and we can see the subjective tinge even in its political movements whether in Persia, India or China, and even in the very imitative movement of the Japanese resurgence. But it is only recently that this subjectivism has become self-conscious. We may therefore conclude that the conscious and deliberate subjectivism of certain nations was only the sign and precursor of a general change in humanity and has been helped forward by local circumstances, but was not really dependent upon them or in any sense their product.

This general change is incontestable; it is one of the capital phenomena of the tendencies of national and communal life at the present hour. The conception to which Ireland and India have been the first to give a definite formula, "to be ourselves", — so different from the impulse and ambition of dependent or unfortunate nations in the past which was rather to become like others, — is now more and more a generally accepted motive of national life. It opens the way to great dangers and errors, but it is the essential condition for that which has now become the demand of the Time-Spirit on the human race, that it shall find subjectively, not only in the individual, but in the nation and in the unity of the human race itself, its deeper being, its inner law, its real self and live according to that and no longer by artificial standards. This tendency was preparing itself everywhere and partly coming to the surface before the War, but most

prominently, as we have said, in new nations like Germany or in dependent nations like Ireland and India. The shock of the war brought about from its earliest moments an immediate — and for the time being a militant — emergence of the same deeper self-consciousness everywhere. Crude enough were most of its first manifestations, often of a really barbarous and reactionary crudeness. Especially, it tended to repeat the Teutonic lapse, preparing not only "to be oneself", which is entirely right, but to live solely for and to oneself, which, if pushed beyond a certain point, becomes a disastrous error. For it is necessary, if the subjective age of humanity is to produce its best fruits, that the nations should become conscious not only of their own but of each other's souls and learn to respect, to help and to profit, not only economically and intellectually but subjectively and spiritually, by each other.

The great determining force has been the example and the aggression of Germany; the example, because no other nation has so self-consciously, so methodically, so intelligently, and from the external point of view so successfully sought to find, to dynamise, to live itself and make the most of its own power of being; its aggression, because the very nature and declared watchwords of the attack have tended to arouse a defensive self-consciousness in the assailed and forced them to perceive what was the source of this tremendous strength and to perceive too that they themselves must seek consciously an answering strength in the same deeper sources. Germany was for the time the most remarkable present instance of a nation preparing for the subjective stage because it had, in the first place, a certain kind of vision — unfortunately intellectual rather than illuminated — and the courage to follow it — unfortunately again a vital and intellectual rather than a spiritual hardihood, — and, secondly, being master of its destinies, was able to order its own life so as to express its self-vision. We must not be misled by appearances into thinking that the strength of Germany was created by Bismarck or directed by the Kaiser Wilhelm II. Rather the appearance of Bismarck was in many respects a misfortune for the growing nation because his rude and powerful hand

precipitated its subjectivity into form and action at too early a stage; a longer period of incubation might have produced results less disastrous to itself, if less violently stimulative to humanity. The real source of this great subjective force which has been so much disfigured in its objective action, was not in Germany's statesmen and soldiers — for the most part poor enough types of men — but came from her great philosophers, Kant, Hegel, Fichte, Nietzsche, from her great thinker and poet Goethe, from her great musicians, Beethoven and Wagner, and from all in the German soul and temperament which they represented. A nation whose master achievement has lain almost entirely in the two spheres of philosophy and music, is clearly predestined to lead in the turn to subjectivism and to produce a profound result for good or evil on the beginnings of a subjective age.

This was one side of the predestination of Germany; the other is to be found in her scholars, educationists, scientists, organisers. It was the industry, the conscientious diligence, the fidelity to ideas, the honest and painstaking spirit of work for which the nation has been long famous. A people may be highly gifted in the subjective capacities, and yet if it neglects to cultivate this lower side of our complex nature, it will fail to build that bridge between the idea and imagination and the world of facts, between the vision and the force, which makes realisation possible; its higher powers may become a joy and inspiration to the world, but it will never take possession of its own world until it has learned the humbler lesson. In Germany the bridge was there, though it ran mostly through a dark tunnel with a gulf underneath; for there was no pure transmission from the subjective mind of the thinkers and singers to the objective mind of the scholars and organisers. The misapplication by Treitschke of the teaching of Nietzsche to national and international uses which would have profoundly disgusted the philosopher himself, is an example of this obscure transmission. But still a transmission there was. For more than a half-century Germany turned a deep eye of subjective introspection on herself and things and ideas in search of the truth of her own being and of the world, and for another half-century a patient eye of scientific research on the

objective means for organising what she had or thought she had gained. And something was done, something indeed powerful and enormous, but also in certain directions, not in all, misshapen and disconcerting. Unfortunately, those directions were precisely the very central lines on which to go wrong is to miss the goal.

It may be said, indeed, that the last result of the something done — the war, the collapse, the fierce reaction towards the rigid, armoured, aggressive, formidable Nazi State, — is not only discouraging enough, but a clear warning to abandon that path and go back to older and safer ways. But the misuse of great powers is no argument against their right use. To go back is impossible; the attempt is always, indeed, an illusion; we have all to do the same thing which Germany has attempted, but to take care not to do it likewise. Therefore we must look beyond the red mist of blood of the War and the dark fuliginous confusion and chaos which now oppress the world to see why and where was the failure. For her failure which became evident by the turn her action took and was converted for the time being into total collapse, was clear even then to the dispassionate thinker who seeks only the truth. That befell her which sometimes befalls the seeker on the path of Yoga, the art of conscious self-finding, — a path exposed to far profounder perils than beset ordinarily the average man, — when he follows a false light to his spiritual ruin. She had mistaken her vital ego for herself; she had sought for her soul and found only her force. For she had said, like the Asura, "I am my body, my life, my mind, my temperament," and become attached with a Titanic force to these; especially she had said, "I am my life and body," and than that there can be no greater mistake for man or nation. The soul of man or nation is something more and diviner than that; it is greater than its instruments and cannot be shut up in a physical, a vital, a mental or a temperamental formula. So to confine it, even though the false formation be embodied in the armour-plated social body of a huge collective human dinosaurus, can only stifle the growth of the inner Reality and end in decay or the extinction that overtakes all that is unplastic and unadaptable.

It is evident that there is a false as well as a true subjectivism and the errors to which the subjective trend may be liable are as great as its possibilities and may well lead to capital disasters. This distinction must be clearly grasped if the road of this stage of social evolution is to be made safe for the human race.

Chapter V

True and False Subjectivism

THE SUBJECTIVE stage of human development is that critical juncture in which, having gone forward from symbols, types, conventions, having turned its gaze superficially on the individual being to discover his truth and right law of action and its relation to the superficial and external truth and law of the universe, our race begins to gaze deeper, to see and feel what is behind the outside and below the surface and therefore to live from within. It is a step towards self-knowledge and towards living in and from the self, away from knowledge of things as the not-self and from the living according to this objective idea of life and the universe. Everything depends on how that step is taken, to what kind of subjectivity we arrive and how far we go in self-knowledge; for here the dangers of error are as great and far-reaching as the results of right seeking. The symbolic, the typal, the conventional age avoid these dangers by building a wall of self-limitation against them; and it is because this wall becomes in the end a prison of self-ignorance that it has to be broken down and the perilous but fruitful adventure of subjectivism undertaken.

A psychic self-knowledge tells us that there are in our being many formal, frontal, apparent or representative selves and only one that is entirely secret and real; to rest in the apparent and to mistake it for the real is the one general error, root of all others and cause of all our stumbling and suffering, to which man is exposed by the nature of his mentality. We may apply this truth to the attempt of man to live by the law of his subjective being whether as an individual or as a social unit one in its corporate mind and body.

For this is the sense of the characteristic turn which modern civilisation is taking. Everywhere we are beginning, though still sparsely and in a groping tentative fashion, to approach things

from the subjective standpoint. In education our object is to know the psychology of the child as he grows into man and to found our systems of teaching and training upon that basis. The new aim is to help the child to develop his intellectual, aesthetic, emotional, moral, spiritual being and his communal life and impulses out of his own temperament and capacities, — a very different object from that of the old education which was simply to pack so much stereotyped knowledge into his resisting brain and impose a stereotyped rule of conduct on his struggling and dominated impulses.[1] In dealing with the criminal the most advanced societies are no longer altogether satisfied with regarding him as a law-breaker to be punished, imprisoned, terrified, hanged or else tortured physically and morally, whether as a revenge for his revolt or as an example to others; there is a growing attempt to understand him, to make allowance for his heredity, environment and inner deficiencies and to change him from within rather than crush him from without. In the general view of society itself, we begin to regard the community, the nation or any other fixed grouping of men as a living organism with a subjective being of its own and a corresponding growth and natural development which it is its business to bring to perfection and fruition. So far, good; the greater knowledge, the truer depth, the wiser humanity of this new view of things are obvious. But so also are the limitations of our knowledge and experience on this new path and the possibility of serious errors and stumblings.

If we look at the new attempt of nations, whether subject or imperial, to fulfil themselves consciously and especially at the momentous experiment of the subjective German nationality, we shall see the starting-point of these possible errors. The first danger arises from the historical fact of the evolution of the subjective age out of the individualistic; and the first enormous stumble has accordingly been to transform the error

[1] There has been a rude set-back to this development in totalitarian States whose theory is that the individual does not exist and only the life of the community matters, but this new larger view still holds its own in freer countries.

of individualistic egoism into the more momentous error of a great communal egoism. The individual seeking for the law of his being can only find it safely if he regards clearly two great psychological truths and lives in that clear vision. First, the ego is not the self; there is one self of all and the soul is a portion of that universal Divinity. The fulfilment of the individual is not the utmost development of his egoistic intellect, vital force, physical well-being and the utmost satisfaction of his mental, emotional, physical cravings, but the flowering of the divine in him to its utmost capacity of wisdom, power, love and universality and through this flowering his utmost realisation of all the possible beauty and delight of existence.

The will to be, the will to power, the will to know are perfectly legitimate, their satisfaction the true law of our existence and to discourage and repress them improperly is to mutilate our being and dry up or diminish the sources of life and growth. But their satisfaction must not be egoistic, — not for any other reason moral or religious, but simply because they cannot so be satisfied. The attempt always leads to an eternal struggle with other egoisms, a mutual wounding and hampering, even a mutual destruction in which if we are conquerors today, we are the conquered or the slain tomorrow; for we exhaust ourselves and corrupt ourselves in the dangerous attempt to live by the destruction and exploitation of others. Only that which lives in its own self-existence can endure. And generally, to devour others is to register oneself also as a subject and predestined victim of Death.

No doubt, so long as we live without self-knowledge, we can do no other; men and nations have to act and think egoistically, because in their self-ignorance that is the only life known to them, and to live is their God-given impulse; therefore they must live egoistically rather than not at all, with whatever curb of law, ethics and practical common sense of self-restraint nature and experience have taught them. But subjectivism is in its very nature an attempt at self-knowledge and at living by a true self-knowledge and by an inner strength, and there is no real gain in it if we only repeat the old error in new terms.

Therefore we must find out that the true individual is not the ego, but the divine individuality which is through our evolution preparing to emerge in us; its emergence and satisfaction and not the satisfaction of the mere egoistic will-to-live for the sake of one's lower members is the true object at which a humanity subjectively seeking to know and fulfil its own deepest law and truth should increasingly aim.

The second psychic truth the individual has to grasp is this, that he is not only himself, but is in solidarity with all of his kind, — let us leave aside for the moment that which seems to be not of his kind. That which we are has expressed itself through the individual, but also through the universality, and though each has to fulfil itself in its own way, neither can succeed independently of the other. The society has no right to crush or efface the individual for its own better development or self-satisfaction; the individual, so long at least as he chooses to live in the world, has no right to disregard for the sake of his own solitary satisfaction and development his fellow-beings and to live at war with them or seek a selfishly isolated good. And when we say, no right, it is from no social, moral or religious standpoint, but from the most positive and simply with a view to the law of existence itself. For neither the society nor the individual can so develop to their fulfilment. Every time the society crushes or effaces the individual, it is inflicting a wound on itself and depriving its own life of priceless sources of stimulation and growth. The individual too cannot flourish by himself; for the universal, the unity and collectivity of his fellow-beings, is his present source and stock; it is the thing whose possibilities he individually expresses, even when he transcends its immediate level, and of which in his phenomenal being he is one result. Its depression strikes eventually at his own sources of life, by its increasing he also increases. This is what a true subjectivism teaches us, — first, that we are a higher self than our ego or our members, secondly, that we are in our life and being not only ourselves but all others; for there is a secret solidarity which our egoism may kick at and strive against, but from which we cannot escape. It is the old Indian discovery that our real "I"

is a Supreme Being which is our true self and which it is our business to discover and consciously become and, secondly, that that Being is one in all, expressed in the individual and in the collectivity,[2] and only by admitting and realising our unity with others can we entirely fulfil our true self-being.[3]

Of these two truths mankind has had some vague vision in the principle with regard to the individual, though it has made only a very poor and fragmentary attempt to regard them in practice and in nine-tenths of its life has been busy departing from them — even where it outwardly professed something of the law. But they apply not only to the individual but to the nation. Here was the first error of the German subjectivism. Reasoning of the Absolute and the individual and the universal, it looked into itself and saw that in fact, as a matter of life, That seemed to express itself as the ego and, reasoning from the conclusions of modern Science, it saw the individual merely as a cell of the collective ego. This collective ego was, then, the greatest actual organised expression of life and to that all ought to be subservient, for so could Nature and its evolution best be assisted and affirmed. The greater human collectivity exists, but it is an inchoate and unorganised existence, and its growth can best be developed by the better development of the most efficient organised collective life already existing; practically, then, by the growth, perfection and domination of the most advanced nations, or possibly of the one most advanced nation, the collective ego which has best realised the purpose of Nature and whose victory and rule is therefore the will of God. For all organised lives, all self-conscious egos are in a state of war, sometimes overt, sometimes covert, sometimes complete, sometimes partial, and by the survival of the best is secured the highest advance of the race. And where was the best, which was the most advanced, self-realising, efficient, highest-cultured nation,

[2] *vyaṣṭi* and *samaṣṭi*.

[3] There is another side of the truth in which this interdependence is not so imperative, but that is a phenomenon of spiritual evolution which has nothing to do with the present subject.

if not, by common admission as well as in Germany's own self-vision, Germany itself? To fulfil then the collective German ego and secure its growth and domination was at once the right law of reason, the supreme good of humanity and the mission of the great and supreme Teutonic race.[4]

From this egoistic self-vision flowed a number of logical consequences, each in itself a separate subjective error. First, since the individual is only a cell of the collectivity, his life must be entirely subservient to the efficient life of the nation. He must be made efficient indeed, — the nation should see to his education, proper living, disciplined life, carefully trained and subordinated activity, — but as a part of the machine or a disciplined instrument of the national Life. Initiative must be the collectivity's, execution the individual's. But where was that vague thing, the collectivity, and how could it express itself not only as a self-conscious, but an organised and efficient collective will and self-directing energy? The State, there was the secret. Let the State be perfect, dominant, all-pervading, all-seeing, all-effecting; so only could the collective ego be concentrated, find itself, and its life be brought to the highest pitch of strength, organisation and efficiency. Thus Germany founded and established the growing modern error of the cult of the State and the growing subordination driving in the end towards the effacement of the individual. We can see what it gained, an immense collective power and a certain kind of perfection and scientific adjustment of means to end and a high general level of economic, intellectual and social efficiency, — apart from the tremendous momentary force which the luminous fulfilment of a great idea gives to man or nation. What it had begun to lose is as yet only slightly apparent, — all that deeper life, vision, intuitive power, force of personality, psychical sweetness and largeness which the free individual brings as his gift to the race.

Secondly, since the State is supreme, the representative of the

[4] The emphasis has somewhat shifted now and taken its stand more upon the crude vitalistic notions of blood, race, life-room, but the old idea is there giving more force to the later formulation.

Divine or the highest realised functioning of human existence, and has a divine right to the obedience, the unquestioning service and the whole activity of the individual, the service of State and community is the only absolute rule of morality. Within the State this may include and sanction all other moral rules because there no rebel egoism can be allowed, for the individual ego must be lost in that of the State or become part of it and all condition of covert or overt war must be abrogated in obedience to the collective good as determined by the collective will. But in relation to other States, to other collective egos the general condition, the effective law is still that of war, of strife between sharply divided egoisms each seeking to fulfil itself, each hampered and restricted in its field by the others. War then is the whole business of the State in its relation to other States, a war of arms, a war of commerce, a war of ideas and cultures, a war of collective personalities each seeking to possess the world or at least to dominate and be first in the world. Here there can enter no morality except that of success, though the pretence of morality may be a useful stratagem of war. To serve the State, the German collectivity which is his greater and real self is the business of the German individual whether at home or abroad, and to that end everything which succeeds is justifiable. Inefficiency, incompetence, failure are the only immorality. In war every method is justified which leads to the military success of the State, in peace every method which prepares it; for peace between nations is only a covert state of war. And as war is the means of physical survival and domination, so commerce is the means of economic survival and domination; it is in fact only another kind of war, another department of the struggle to live, one physical, the other vital. And the life and the body are, so Science has assured us, the whole of existence.

Thirdly, since the survival of the best is the highest good of mankind and the survival of the best is secured by the elimination of the unfit and the assimilation of the less fit, the conquest of the world by German culture is the straight path of human progress. But culture is not, in this view, merely a state of knowledge or a system or cast of ideas and moral and aesthetic tendencies;

culture is life governed by ideas, but by ideas based on the truths of life and so organised as to bring it to its highest efficiency. Therefore all life not capable of this culture and this efficiency must be eliminated or trodden down, all life capable of it but not actually reaching to it must be taken up and assimilated. But capacity is always a matter of genus and species and in humanity a matter of race. Logically, then, the Teutonic[5] race is alone entirely capable, and therefore all Teutonic races must be taken into Germany and become part of the German collectivity; races less capable but not wholly unfit must be Germanised; others, hopelessly decadent like the Latins of Europe and America or naturally inferior like the vast majority of the Africans and Asiatics, must be replaced where possible, like the Hereros, or, where not possible, dominated, exploited and treated according to their inferiority. So evolution would advance, so the human race grow towards its perfection.[6]

We need not suppose that all Germany thought in this strenuous fashion, as it was too long represented, or that the majority thought thus consciously; but it is sufficient that an energetic minority of thinkers and strong personalities should seize upon the national life and impress certain tendencies upon it for these to prevail practically or at the least to give a general trend subconsciously even where the thought itself is not actually proposed in the conscious mind. And the actual events of the present hour seem to show that it was this gospel that partly consciously, partly subconsciously or half articulately had taken possession of the collective German mind. It is easy to deride the rigidity of this terrible logic or riddle it with the ideas and truths it has ignored, and it is still easier to abhor, fear, hate and spew at it while practically following its principles in our own action with less openness, thoroughness and courage. But it is more profitable to begin by seeing that behind it there was and is a tremendous sincerity which is the secret of its force, and a

[5] "Nordic" is now the established term.

[6] This was written more than thirty years ago, but later developments have emphasised and brought out the truth of the description which was indeed much less apparent then.

sort of perverse honesty in its errors; the sincerity which tries to look straight at one's own conduct and the facts of life and the honesty to proclaim the real principles of that conduct and not — except as an occasional diplomacy — profess others with the lips while disregarding them in the practice. And if this ideal is to be defeated not merely for a time in the battle-field and in the collective person of the nation or nations professing it, as happened abortively in the War, but in the mind of man and in the life of the human race, an equal sincerity and a less perverse honesty has to be practised by those who have arrived at a better law.

The German gospel has evidently two sides, the internal and the external, the cult of the State, nation or community and the cult of international egoism. In the first, Germany, even if for a time entirely crushed in the battle-field, seems to have already secured the victory in the moral sense of the human race. The unsparing compulsion as against the assistance of the individual by the State[7] — for his and the common good, of course, but who professes to compel for harm? — is almost everywhere either dominant or else growing into a strong and prevailing current of opinion; the champions of individual freedom are now a morally defeated and dwindling army who can only fight on in the hope of a future reaction or of saving something of their principle from the wreck. On the external side, the international, the battle of ideas still goes on, but there were from the beginning ominous signs;[8] and now after the physical war with its first psychological results is well over, we are already able to see in which direction the tide is likely to flow. War is a dangerous teacher and physical victory leads often to a moral defeat. Germany, defeated in the war, has won in the after war; the German gospel rearisen in a sterner and fiercer avatar threatens to sweep over all Europe.

[7] Not always in the form of Socialism, Bolshevik Communism or Fascism. Other forms of government that are nominally based on the principles of individualistic democracy and freedom have begun to follow the same trend under the disguise or the mere profession of its opposite.

[8] The League of Nations was at no time a contrary sign. Whatever incidental or temporary good it might achieve, it could only be an instrument for the domination of the rest of the earth by Europe and of all by two or three major nations.

It is necessary, if we are not to deceive ourselves, to note that even in this field what Germany has done is to systematise certain strong actual tendencies and principles of international action to the exclusion of all that either professed to resist or did actually modify them. If a sacred egoism — and the expression did not come from Teutonic lips — is to govern international relations, then it is difficult to deny the force of the German position. The theory of inferior and decadent races was loudly proclaimed by other than German thinkers and has governed, with whatever assuaging scruples, the general practice of military domination and commercial exploitation of the weak by the strong; all that Germany has done is to attempt to give it a wider extension and more rigorous execution and apply it to European as well as to Asiatic and African peoples. Even the severity or brutality of her military methods or of her ways of colonial or internal political repression, taken at their worst, for much once stated against her has been proved and admitted to be deliberate lies manufactured by her enemies, was only a crystallising of certain recent tendencies towards the revival of ancient and mediaeval hardheartedness in the race. The use and even the justification of massacre and atrocious cruelty in war on the ground of military exigency and in the course of commercial exploitation or in the repression of revolt and disorder has been quite recently witnessed in the other continents, to say nothing of certain outskirts of Europe.[9] From one point of view, it is well that terrible examples of the utmost logic of these things should be prominently forced on the attention of mankind; for by showing the evil stripped of all veils the choice between good and evil instead of a halting between the two will be forced on the human conscience. Woe to the race if it blinds its conscience and buttresses up its animal egoism with the old justifications; for the gods have shown that Karma is not a jest.

But the whole root of the German error lies in its mistaking life and the body for the self. It has been said that this gospel

[9] Witness Egypt, Ireland, India, and afterwards Abyssinia, Spain, China — wherever still man tries to dominate by force over man or nation over nation.

is simply a reversion to the ancient barbarism of the religion of Odin; but this is not the truth. It is a new and a modern gospel born of the application of a metaphysical logic to the conclusions of materialistic Science, of a philosophic subjectivism to the objective pragmatic positivism of recent thought. Just as Germany applied the individualistic position to the realisation of her communal subjective existence, so she applied the materialistic and vitalistic thought of recent times and equipped it with a subjective philosophy. Thus she arrived at a bastard creed, an objective subjectivism which is miles apart from the true goal of a subjective age. To show the error it is necessary to see wherein lies the true individuality of man and of the nation. It lies not in its physical, economic, even its cultural life which are only means and adjuncts, but in something deeper whose roots are not in the ego, but in a Self one in difference which relates the good of each, on a footing of equality and not of strife and domination, to the good of the rest of the world.

Chapter VI

The Objective and Subjective Views of Life

THE PRINCIPLE of individualism is the liberty of the human being regarded as a separate existence to develop himself and fulfil his life, satisfy his mental tendencies, emotional and vital needs and physical being according to his own desire governed by his reason; it admits no other limit to this right and this liberty except the obligation to respect the same individual liberty and right in others. The balance of this liberty and this obligation is the principle which the individualistic age adopted in its remodelling of society; it adopted in effect a harmony of compromises between rights and duties, liberty and law, permissions and restraints as the scheme both of the personal life and the life of the society. Equally, in the life of nations the individualistic age made liberty the ideal and strove though with less success than in its own proper sphere to affirm a mutual respect for each other's freedom as the proper conduct of nations to one another. In this idea of life, as with the individual, so with the nation, each has the inherent right to manage its own affairs freely or, if it wills, to mismanage them freely and not to be interfered with in its rights and liberties so long as it does not interfere with the rights and liberties of other nations. As a matter of fact, the egoism of individual and nation does not wish to abide within these bounds; therefore the social law of the nation has been called in to enforce the violated principle as between man and man and it has been sought to develop international law in the same way and with the same object. The influence of these ideas is still powerful. In the recent European struggle the liberty of nations was set forth as the ideal for which the war was being waged, — in defiance of the patent fact that it had come about by nothing better than

a clash of interests. The development of international law into an effective force which will restrain the egoism of nations as the social law restrains the egoism of individuals, is the solution which still attracts and seems the most practicable to most when they seek to deal with the difficulties of the future.[1]

The growth of modern Science has meanwhile created new ideas and tendencies, on one side an exaggerated individualism or rather vitalistic egoism, on the other the quite opposite ideal of collectivism. Science investigating life discovered that the root nature of all living is a struggle to take the best advantage of the environment for self-preservation, self-fulfilment, self-aggrandisement. Human thought seizing in its usual arbitrary and trenchant fashion upon this aspect of modern knowledge has founded on it theories of a novel kind which erect into a gospel the right for each to live his own life not merely by utilising others, but even at the expense of others. The first object of life in this view is for the individual to survive as long as he may, to become strong, efficient, powerful, to dominate his environment and his fellows and to raise himself on this strenuous and egoistic line to his full stature of capacity and reap his full measure of enjoyment. Philosophies like Nietzsche's, certain forms of Anarchism, — not the idealistic Anarchism of the thinker which is rather the old individualism of the ideal reason carried to its logical conclusion, — certain forms too of Imperialism have been largely influenced and strengthened by this type of ideas, though not actually created by them.

On the other hand, Science investigating life has equally discovered that not only is the individual life best secured and made efficient by association with others and subjection to a law of communal self-development rather than by aggressive self-affirmation, but that actually what Nature seeks to preserve is not the individual but the type and that in her scale of values the pack, herd, hive or swarm takes precedence over the individual

[1] No longer perhaps now, except with a dwindling minority — now that the League of Nations, constantly misused or hampered from its true functioning by the egoism and insincerity of its greater members, has collapsed into impotence and failure.

animal or insect and the human group over the individual human being. Therefore in the true law and nature of things the individual should live for all and constantly subordinate and sacrifice himself to the growth, efficiency and progress of the race rather than live for his own self-fulfilment and subordinate the race-life to his own needs. Modern collectivism derives its victorious strength from the impression made upon human thought by this opposite aspect of modern knowledge. We have seen how the German mind took up both these ideas and combined them on the basis of the present facts of human life: it affirmed the entire subordination of the individual to the community, nation or State; it affirmed, on the other hand, with equal force the egoistic self-assertion of the individual nation as against others or against any group or all the groups of nations which constitute the totality of the human race.

But behind this conflict between the idea of a nationalistic and imperialistic egoism and the old individualistic doctrine of individual and national liberty and separateness, there is striving to arise a new idea of human universalism or collectivism for the race which, if it succeeds in becoming a power, is likely to overcome the ideal of national separatism and liberty as it has overcome within the society itself the ideal of individual freedom and separate self-fulfilment. This new idea demands of the nation that it shall subordinate, if not merge and sacrifice, its free separateness to the life of a larger collectivity, whether that of an imperialistic group or a continental or cultural unity, as in the idea of a united Europe, or the total united life of the human race.

The principle of subjectivism entering into human thought and action, while necessarily it must make a great difference in the view-point, the motive-power and the character of our living, does not at first appear to make any difference in its factors. Subjectivism and objectivism start from the same data, the individual and the collectivity, the complex nature of each with its various powers of the mind, life and body and the search for the law of their self-fulfilment and harmony. But objectivism proceeding by the analytical reason takes an external and mechanical view

of the whole problem. It looks at the world as a thing, an object, a process to be studied by an observing reason which places itself abstractly outside the elements and the sum of what it has to consider and observes it thus from outside as one would an intricate mechanism. The laws of this process are considered as so many mechanical rules or settled forces acting upon the individual or the group which, when they have been observed and distinguished by the reason, have by one's will or by some will to be organised and applied fully much as Science applies the laws it discovers. These laws or rules have to be imposed on the individual by his own abstract reason and will isolated as a ruling authority from his other parts or by the reason and will of other individuals or of the group, and they have to be imposed on the group itself either by its own collective reason and will embodied in some machinery of control which the mind considers as something apart from the life of the group or by the reason and will of some other group external to it or of which it is in some way a part. So the State is viewed in modern political thought as an entity in itself, as if it were something apart from the community and its individuals, something which has the right to impose itself on them and control them in the fulfilment of some idea of right, good or interest which is inflicted on them by a restraining and fashioning power rather than developed in them and by them as a thing towards which their self and nature are impelled to grow. Life is to be managed, harmonised, perfected by an adjustment, a manipulation, a machinery through which it is passed and by which it is shaped. A law outside oneself, — outside even when it is discovered or determined by the individual reason and accepted or enforced by the individual will, — this is the governing idea of objectivism; a mechanical process of management, ordering, perfection, this is its conception of practice.

Subjectivism proceeds from within and regards everything from the point of view of a containing and developing self-consciousness. The law here is within ourselves; life is a self-creating process, a growth and development at first subconscious, then half-conscious and at last more and more fully

conscious of that which we are potentially and hold within ourselves; the principle of its progress is an increasing self-recognition, self-realisation and a resultant self-shaping. Reason and will are only effective movements of the self, reason a process in self-recognition, will a force for self-affirmation and self-shaping. Moreover, reason and intellectual will are only a part of the means by which we recognise and realise ourselves. Subjectivism tends to take a large and complex view of our nature and being and to recognise many powers of knowledge, many forces of effectuation. Even, we see it in its first movement away from the external and objective method discount and belittle the importance of the work of the reason and assert the supremacy of the life-impulse or the essential Will-to-be in opposition to the claims of the intellect or else affirm some deeper power of knowledge, called nowadays the intuition, which sees things in the whole, in their truth, in their profundities and harmonies while intellectual reason breaks up, falsifies, affirms superficial appearances and harmonises only by a mechanical adjustment. But substantially we can see that what is meant by this intuition is the self-consciousness feeling, perceiving, grasping in its substance and aspects rather than analysing in its mechanism its own truth and nature and powers. The whole impulse of subjectivism is to get at the self, to live in the self, to see by the self, to live out the truth of the self internally and externally, but always from an internal initiation and centre.

But still there is the question of the truth of the self, what it is, where is its real abiding-place; and here subjectivism has to deal with the same factors as the objective view of life and existence. We may concentrate on the individual life and consciousness as the self and regard its power, freedom, increasing light and satisfaction and joy as the object of living and thus arrive at a subjective individualism. We may, on the other hand, lay stress on the group consciousness, the collective self; we may see man only as an expression of this group-self necessarily incomplete in his individual or separate being, complete only by that larger entity, and we may wish to subordinate the life of the individual man to the growing power, efficiency, knowledge, happiness,

self-fulfilment of the race or even sacrifice it and consider it as nothing except in so far as it lends itself to the life and growth of the community or the kind. We may claim to exercise a righteous oppression on the individual and teach him intellectually and practically that he has no claim to exist, no right to fulfil himself except in his relations to the collectivity. These alone then are to determine his thought, action and existence and the claim of the individual to have a law of his own being, a law of his own nature which he has a right to fulfil and his demand for freedom of thought involving necessarily the freedom to err and for freedom of action involving necessarily the freedom to stumble and sin may be regarded as an insolence and a chimera. The collective self-consciousness will then have the right to invade at every point the life of the individual, to refuse to it all privacy and apartness, all self-concentration and isolation, all independence and self-guidance and determine everything for it by what it conceives to be the best thought and highest will and rightly dominant feeling, tendency, sense of need, desire for self-satisfaction of the collectivity.

But also we may enlarge the idea of the self and, as objective Science sees a universal force of Nature which is the one reality and of which everything is the process, we may come subjectively to the realisation of a universal Being or Existence which fulfils itself in the world and the individual and the group with an impartial regard for all as equal powers of its self-manifestation. This is obviously the self-knowledge which is most likely to be right, since it most comprehensively embraces and accounts for the various aspects of the world-process and the eternal tendencies of humanity. In this view neither the separate growth of the individual nor the all-absorbing growth of the group can be the ideal, but an equal, simultaneous and, as far as may be, parallel development of both, in which each helps to fulfil the other. Each being has his own truth of independent self-realisation and his truth of self-realisation in the life of others and should feel, desire, help, participate more and more, as he grows in largeness and power, in the harmonious and natural growth of all the individual selves and all the collective selves of the

one universal Being. These two, when properly viewed, would not be separate, opposite or really conflicting lines of tendency, but the same impulse of the one common existence, companion movements separating only to return upon each other in a richer and larger unity and mutual consequence.

Similarly, the subjective search for the self may, like the objective, lean preponderantly to identification with the conscious physical life, because the body is or seems to be the frame and determinant here of the mental and vital movements and capacities. Or it may identify itself with the vital being, the life-soul in us and its emotions, desires, impulses, seekings for power and growth and egoistic fulfilment. Or it may rise to a conception of man as a mental and moral being, exalt to the first place his inner growth, power and perfection, individual and collective, and set it before us as the true aim of our existence. A sort of subjective materialism, pragmatic and outward-going, is a possible standpoint; but in this the subjective tendency cannot long linger. For its natural impulse is to go always inward and it only begins to feel itself and have satisfaction of itself when it gets to the full conscious life within and feels all its power, joy and forceful potentiality pressing for fulfilment. Man at this stage regards himself as a profound, vital Will-to-be which uses body as its instrument and to which the powers of mind are servants and ministers. This is the cast of that vitalism which in various striking forms has played recently so great a part and still exercises a considerable influence on human thought. Beyond it we get to a subjective idealism now beginning to emerge and become prominent, which seeks the fulfilment of man in the satisfaction of his inmost religious, aesthetic, intuitive, his highest intellectual and ethical, his deepest sympathetic and emotional nature and, regarding this as the fullness of our being and the whole object of our being, tries to subject to it the physical and vital existence. These come to be considered rather as a possible symbol and instrument of the subjective life flowing out into forms than as having any value in themselves. A certain tendency to mysticism, occultism and the search for a self independent of the life and the body accompanies this new

movement — new to modern life after the reign of individualism and objective intellectualism — and emphasises its real trend and character.

But here also it is possible for subjectivism to go beyond and to discover the true Self as something greater even than mind. Mind, life and body then become merely an instrumentation for the increasing expression of this Self in the world, — instruments not equal in their hierarchy, but equal in their necessity to the whole, so that their complete perfection and harmony and unity as elements of our self-expression become essential to the true aim of our living. And yet that aim would not be to perfect life, body and mind in themselves, but to develop them so as to make a fit basis and fit instruments for the revelation in our inner and outer life of the luminous Self, the secret Godhead who is one and yet various in all of us, in every being and existence, thing and creature. The ideal of human existence personal and social would be its progressive transformation into a conscious outflowering of the joy, power, love, light, beauty of the transcendent and universal Spirit.

Chapter VII

The Ideal Law of Social Development

THE TRUE law of our development and the entire object of our social existence can only become clear to us when we have discovered not only, like modern Science, what man has been in his past physical and vital evolution, but his future mental and spiritual destiny and his place in the cycles of Nature. This is the reason why the subjective periods of human development must always be immeasurably the most fruitful and creative. In the others he either seizes on some face, image, type of the inner reality Nature in him is labouring to manifest or else he follows a mechanical impulse or shapes himself in the mould of her external influences; but here in his subjective return inward he gets back to himself, back to the root of his living and infinite possibilities, and the potentiality of a new and perfect self-creation begins to widen before him. He discovers his real place in Nature and opens his eyes to the greatness of his destiny.

Existence is an infinite and therefore indefinable and illimitable Reality which figures itself out in multiple values of life. It begins, at least in our field of existence, with a material figure of itself, a mould of firm substance into which and upon which it can build, — worlds, the earth, the body. Here it stamps firmly and fixes the essential law of its movement. That law is that all things are one in their being and origin, one in their general law of existence, one in their interdependence and the universal pattern of their relations; but each realises this unity of purpose and being on its own lines and has its own law of variation by which it enriches the universal existence. In Matter variation is limited; there is variation of type, but, on the whole, uniformity

of the individuals of the type. These individuals have a separate movement, but yet the same movement; subject to some minute differences, they adhere to one particular pattern and have the same assemblage of properties. Variety within the type, apart from minor unicities of detail, is gained by variation of group sub-types belonging to one general kind, species and sub-species of the same genus. In the development of Life, before mind has become self-conscious, the same law predominates; but, in proportion as life grows and still more when mind emerges, the individual also arrives at a greater and more vital power of variation. He acquires the freedom to develop according, no doubt, to the general law of Nature and the general law of his type, but also according to the individual law of his being.

Man, the mental being in Nature, is especially distinguished from her less developed creatures by a greater power of individuality, by the liberation of the mental consciousness which enables him finally to understand more and more himself and his law of being and his development, by the liberation of the mental will which enables him under the secret control of the universal Will to manage more and more the materials and lines of his development and by the capacity in the end to go beyond himself, beyond his mentality and open his consciousness into that from which mind, life and body proceed. He can even, however imperfectly at present, get at his highest to some consciousness of the Reality which is his true being and possess consciously also, as nothing else in terrestrial Nature can possess, the Self, the Idea, the Will which have constituted him and can become by that the master of his own nature and increasingly, not as now he is, a wrestler with dominant circumstance but the master of Nature. To do this, to arrive through mind and beyond mind at the Self, the Spirit which expresses itself in all Nature and, becoming one with it in his being, his force, his consciousness, his will, his knowledge, to possess at once humanly and divinely — according to the law and nature of human existence, but of human existence fulfilled in God and fulfilling God in the world — both himself and the world is

the destiny of man and the object of his individual and social existence.[1]

This is done primarily through the individual man; for this end man has become an individual soul, that the One may find and manifest Himself in each human being. That end is not indeed achieved by the individual human being in his unaided mental force. He needs the help of the secret Divine above his mentality in his superconscient self; he needs the help also of the secret Divine around him in Nature and in his fellow-men. Everything in Nature is an occasion for him to develop his divine potentiality, an occasion which he has a certain relative freedom to use or to misuse, although in the end both his use and misuse of his materials are overruled in their results by the universal Will so as to assist eventually the development of his law of being and his destiny. All life around him is a help towards the divine purpose in him; every human being is his fellow-worker and assists him whether by association and union or by strife and opposition. Nor does he achieve his destiny as the individual Man for the sake of the individual soul alone, — a lonely salvation is not his complete ideal, — but for the world also or rather for God in the world, for God in all as well as above all and not for God solely and separately in one. And he achieves it by the stress, not really of his separate individual Will, but of the universal Will in its movement towards the goal of its cycles.

The object of all society should be, therefore, and must become, as man grows conscious of his real being, nature and destiny and not as now only of a part of it, first to provide the conditions of life and growth by which individual Man, — not isolated men or a class or a privileged race, but all individual men according to their capacity, — and the race through the growth

[1] It may be said that since man is a mental being limited by the mind, life and body, this development and organisation of a power beyond mind, a supramental power, would be the creation of a new superhuman race and that the use of the words human and humanly would no longer be in place. This is no doubt true, but the possibility for the race still remains, if not for all in the same degree or at the same time, yet in an eventual fulfilment.

of its individuals may travel towards this divine perfection. It must be, secondly, as mankind generally more and more grows near to some figure of the Divine in life and more and more men arrive at it, — for the cycles are many and each cycle has its own figure of the Divine in man, — to express in the general life of mankind, the light, the power, the beauty, the harmony, the joy of the Self that has been attained and that pours itself out in a freer and nobler humanity. Freedom and harmony express the two necessary principles of variation and oneness, — freedom of the individual, the group, the race, coordinated harmony of the individual's forces and of the efforts of all individuals in the group, of all groups in the race, of all races in the kind, — and these are the two conditions of healthy progression and successful arrival. To realise them and to combine them has been the obscure or half-enlightened effort of mankind throughout its history, — a task difficult indeed and too imperfectly seen and too clumsily and mechanically pursued by the reason and desires to be satisfactorily achieved until man grows by self-knowledge and self-mastery to the possession of a spiritual and psychical unity with his fellow-men. As we realise more and more the right conditions, we shall travel more luminously and spontaneously towards our goal and, as we draw nearer to a clear sight of our goal, we shall realise better and better the right conditions. The Self in man enlarging light and knowledge and harmonising will with light and knowledge so as to fulfil in life what he has seen in his increasing vision and idea of the Self, this is man's source and law of progress and the secret of his impulse towards perfection.

Mankind upon earth is one foremost self-expression of the universal Being in His cosmic self-unfolding; he expresses, under the conditions of the terrestrial world he inhabits, the mental power of the universal existence. All mankind is one in its nature, physical, vital, emotional, mental and ever has been in spite of all differences of intellectual development ranging from the poverty of the Bushman and negroid to the rich cultures of Asia and Europe, and the whole race has, as the human totality, one destiny which it seeks and increasingly approaches in the cycles of progression and retrogression it describes through the

countless millenniums of its history. Nothing which any individual race or nation can triumphantly realise, no victory of their self-aggrandisement, illumination, intellectual achievement or mastery over the environment, has any permanent meaning or value except in so far as it adds something or recovers something or preserves something for this human march. The purpose which the ancient Indian scripture offers to us as the true object of all human action, *lokasaṅgraha*, the holding together of the race in its cyclic evolution, is the constant sense, whether we know it or know it not, of the sum of our activities.

But within this general nature and general destiny of mankind each individual human being has to follow the common aim on the lines of his own nature and to arrive at his possible perfection by a growth from within. So only can the race itself attain to anything profound, living and deep-rooted. It cannot be done brutally, heavily, mechanically in the mass; the group self has no true right to regard the individual as if he were only a cell of its body, a stone of its edifice, a passive instrument of its collective life and growth. Humanity is not so constituted. We miss the divine reality in man and the secret of the human birth if we do not see that each individual man is that Self and sums up all human potentiality in his own being. That potentiality he has to find, develop, work out from within. No State or legislator or reformer can cut him rigorously into a perfect pattern; no Church or priest can give him a mechanical salvation; no order, no class life or ideal, no nation, no civilisation or creed or ethical, social or religious Shastra can be allowed to say to him permanently, "In this way of mine and thus far shalt thou act and grow and in no other way and no farther shall thy growth be permitted." These things may help him temporarily or they may curb and he grows in proportion as he can use them and then exceed them, train and teach his individuality by them, but assert it always in the end in its divine freedom. Always he is the traveller of the cycles and his road is forward.

True, his life and growth are for the sake of the world, but he can help the world by his life and growth only in proportion as he can be more and more freely and widely his own real self.

True, he has to use the ideals, disciplines, systems of cooperation which he finds upon his path; but he can only use them well, in their right way and to their right purpose if they are to his life means towards something beyond them and not burdens to be borne by him for their own sake or despotic controls to be obeyed by him as their slave or subject; for though laws and disciplines strive to be the tyrants of the human soul, their only purpose is to be its instruments and servants and when their use is over they have to be rejected and broken. True it is, too, that he has to gather in his material from the minds and lives of his fellow-men around him and to make the most of the experience of humanity's past ages and not confine himself in a narrow mentality; but this he can only do successfully by making all this his own through assimilation of it to the principle of his own nature and through its subservience to the forward call of his enlarging future. The liberty claimed by the struggling human mind for the individual is no mere egoistic challenge and revolt, however egoistically or with one-sided exaggeration and misapplication it may sometimes be advanced; it is the divine instinct within him, the law of the Self, its claim to have room and the one primary condition for its natural self-unfolding.

Individual man belongs not only to humanity in general, his nature is not only a variation of human nature in general, but he belongs also to his race-type, his class-type, his mental, vital, physical, spiritual type in which he resembles some, differs from others. According to these affinities he tends to group himself in Churches, sects, communities, classes, coteries, associations whose life he helps, and by them he enriches the life of the large economic, social and political group or society to which he belongs. In modern times this society is the nation. By his enrichment of the national life, though not in that way only, he helps the total life of humanity. But it must be noted that he is not limited and cannot be limited by any of these groupings; he is not merely the noble, merchant, warrior, priest, scholar, artist, cultivator or artisan, not merely the religionist or the worldling or the politician. Nor can he be limited by his nationality; he is not merely the Englishman or the Frenchman, the Japanese or

the Indian; if by a part of himself he belongs to the nation, by another he exceeds it and belongs to humanity. And even there is a part of him, the greatest, which is not limited by humanity; he belongs by it to God and to the world of all beings and to the godheads of the future. He has indeed the tendency of self-limitation and subjection to his environment and group, but he has also the equally necessary tendency of expansion and transcendence of environment and groupings. The individual animal is dominated entirely by his type, subordinated to his group when he does group himself; individual man has already begun to share something of the infinity, complexity, free variation of the Self we see manifested in the world. Or at least he has it in possibility even if there be as yet no sign of it in his organised surface nature. There is here no principle of a mere shapeless fluidity; it is the tendency to enrich himself with the largest possible material constantly brought in, constantly assimilated and changed by the law of his individual nature into stuff of his growth and divine expansion.

Thus the community stands as a mid-term and intermediary value between the individual and humanity and it exists not merely for itself, but for the one and the other and to help them to fulfil each other. The individual has to live in humanity as well as humanity in the individual; but mankind is or has been too large an aggregate to make this mutuality a thing intimate and powerfully felt in the ordinary mind of the race, and even if humanity becomes a manageable unit of life, intermediate groups and aggregates must still exist for the purpose of mass-differentiation and the concentration and combination of varying tendencies in the total human aggregate. Therefore the community has to stand for a time to the individual for humanity even at the cost of standing between him and it and limiting the reach of his universality and the wideness of his sympathies. Still the absolute claim of the community, the society or the nation to make its growth, perfection, greatness the sole object of human life or to exist for itself alone as against the individual and the rest of humanity, to take arbitrary possession of the one and make the hostile assertion of itself against the other, whether

defensive or offensive, the law of its action in the world — and not, as it unfortunately is, a temporary necessity, — this attitude of societies, races, religions, communities, nations, empires is evidently an aberration of the human reason, quite as much as the claim of the individual to live for himself egoistically is an aberration and the deformation of a truth.

The truth deformed into this error is the same with the community as with the individual. The nation or community is an aggregate life that expresses the Self according to the general law of human nature and aids and partially fulfils the development and the destiny of mankind by its own development and the pursuit of its own destiny according to the law of its being and the nature of its corporate individuality. It has like the individual the right to be itself, and its just claim, as against any attempt at domination by other nations or of attack upon its separate development by any excessive tendency of human uniformity and regimentation, is to defend its existence, to insist on being itself, to persist in developing according to the secret Idea within it or, as we say, according to the law of its own nature. This right it must assert not only or even principally for its own sake, but in the interests of humanity. For the only things that we can really call our rights are those conditions which are necessary to our free and sound development, and that again is our right because it is necessary to the development of the world and the fulfilment of the destiny of mankind.

Nor does this right to be oneself mean with the nation or community any more than with the individual that it should roll itself up like a hedgehog, shut itself up in its dogmas, prejudices, limitations, imperfections, in the form and mould of its past or its present achievement and refuse mental or physical commerce and interchange or spiritual or actual commingling with the rest of the world. For so it cannot grow or perfect itself. As the individual lives by the life of other individuals, so does the nation by the life of other nations, by accepting from them material for its own mental, economic and physical life; but it has to assimilate this material, subject it to the law of its own nature, change it into stuff of itself, work upon it by its own

free will and consciousness, if it would live securely and grow soundly. To have the principle or rule of another nature imposed upon it by force or a de-individualising pressure is a menace to its existence, a wound to its being, a fetter upon its march. As the free development of individuals from within is the best condition for the growth and perfection of the community, so the free development of the community or nation from within is the best condition for the growth and perfection of mankind.

Thus the law for the individual is to perfect his individuality by free development from within, but to respect and to aid and be aided by the same free development in others. His law is to harmonise his life with the life of the social aggregate and to pour himself out as a force for growth and perfection on humanity. The law for the community or nation is equally to perfect its corporate existence by a free development from within, aiding and taking full advantage of that of the individual, but to respect and to aid and be aided by the same free development of other communities and nations. Its law is to harmonise its life with that of the human aggregate and to pour itself out as a force for growth and perfection on humanity. The law for humanity is to pursue its upward evolution towards the finding and expression of the Divine in the type of mankind, taking full advantage of the free development and gains of all individuals and nations and groupings of men, to work towards the day when mankind may be really and not only ideally one divine family, but even then, when it has succeeded in unifying itself, to respect, aid and be aided by the free growth and activity of its individuals and constituent aggregates.

Naturally, this is an ideal law which the imperfect human race has never yet really attained and it may be very long before it can attain to it. Man, not possessing, but only seeking to find himself, not knowing consciously, obeying only in the rough subconsciously or half-consciously the urge of the law of his own nature with stumblings and hesitations and deviations and a series of violences done to himself and others, has had to advance by a tangle of truth and error, right and wrong, compulsion and revolt and clumsy adjustments, and he has as yet neither the

wideness of knowledge nor the flexibility of mind nor the purity of temperament which would enable him to follow the law of liberty and harmony rather than the law of discord and regimentation, compulsion and adjustment and strife. Still it is the very business of a subjective age when knowledge is increasing and diffusing itself with an unprecedented rapidity, when capacity is generalising itself, when men and nations are drawn close together and partially united though in an inextricable, confused entanglement of chaotic unity, when they are being compelled to know each other and impelled to know more profoundly themselves, mankind, God and the world and when the idea of self-realisation for men and nations is coming consciously to the surface, — it is the natural work and should be the conscious hope of man in such an age to know himself truly, to find the ideal law of his being and his development and, if he cannot even then follow it ideally owing to the difficulties of his egoistic nature, still to hold it before him and find out gradually the way by which it can become more and more the moulding principle of his individual and social existence.

Chapter VIII

Civilisation and Barbarism

ONCE WE have determined that this rule of perfect individuality and perfect reciprocity is the ideal law for the individual, the community and the race and that a perfect union and even oneness in a free diversity is its goal, we have to try to see more clearly what we mean when we say that self-realisation is the sense, secret or overt, of individual and of social development. As yet we have not to deal with the race, with mankind as a unity; the nation is still our largest compact and living unit. And it is best to begin with the individual, both because of his nature we have a completer and nearer knowledge and experience than of the aggregate soul and life and because the society or nation is, even in its greater complexity, a larger, a composite individual, the collective Man. What we find valid of the former is therefore likely to be valid in its general principle of the larger entity. Moreover, the development of the free individual is, we have said, the first condition for the development of the perfect society. From the individual, therefore, we have to start; he is our index and our foundation.

The Self of man is a thing hidden and occult; it is not his body, it is not his life, it is not — even though he is in the scale of evolution the mental being, the Manu, — his mind. Therefore neither the fullness of his physical, nor of his vital, nor of his mental nature can be either the last term or the true standard of his self-realisation; they are means of manifestation, subordinate indications, foundations of his self-finding, values, practical currency of his self, what you will, but not the thing itself which he secretly is and is obscurely groping or trying overtly and self-consciously to become. Man has not possessed as a race this truth about himself, does not now possess it except in the vision and self-experience of the few in whose footsteps the race is unable to follow, though it may adore them as Avatars,

seers, saints or prophets. For the Oversoul who is the master of our evolution, has his own large steps of Time, his own great eras, tracts of slow and courses of rapid expansion, which the strong, semi-divine individual may overleap, but not the still half-animal race. The course of evolution proceeding from the vegetable to the animal, from the animal to the man, starts in the latter from the subhuman; he has to take up into him the animal and even the mineral and vegetable: they constitute his physical nature, they dominate his vitality, they have their hold upon his mentality. His proneness to many kinds of inertia, his readiness to vegetate, his attachment to the soil and clinging to his roots, to safe anchorages of all kinds, and on the other hand his nomadic and predatory impulses, his blind servility to custom and the rule of the pack, his mob-movements and openness to subconscious suggestions from the group-soul, his subjection to the yoke of rage and fear, his need of punishment and reliance on punishment, his inability to think and act for himself, his incapacity for true freedom, his distrust of novelty, his slowness to seize intelligently and assimilate, his downward propensity and earthward gaze, his vital and physical subjection to his heredity, all these and more are his heritage from the subhuman origins of his life and body and physical mind. It is because of this heritage that he finds self-exceeding the most difficult of lessons and the most painful of endeavours. Yet it is by exceeding of the lower self that Nature accomplishes the great strides of her evolutionary process. To learn by what he has been, but also to know and increase to what he can be, is the task that is set for the mental being.

The time is passing away, permanently — let us hope — for this cycle of civilisation, when the entire identification of the self with the body and the physical life was possible for the general consciousness of the race. That is the primary characteristic of complete barbarism. To take the body and the physical life as the one thing important, to judge manhood by the physical strength, development and prowess, to be at the mercy of the instincts which rise out of the physical inconscient, to despise knowledge as a weakness and inferiority or look on it as a peculiarity and

no necessary part of the conception of manhood, this is the mentality of the barbarian. It tends to reappear in the human being in the atavistic period of boyhood, — when, be it noted, the development of the body is of the greatest importance, — but to the adult man in civilised humanity it is ceasing to be possible. For, in the first place, by the stress of modern life even the vital attitude of the race is changing. Man is ceasing to be so much of a physical and becoming much more of a vital and economic animal. Not that he excludes or is intended to exclude the body and its development or the right maintenance of and respect for the animal being and its excellences from his idea of life; the excellence of the body, its health, its soundness, its vigour and harmonious development are necessary to a perfect manhood and are occupying attention in a better and more intelligent way than before. But the first rank in importance can no longer be given to the body, much less that entire predominance assigned to it in the mentality of the barbarian.

Moreover, although man has not yet really heard and understood the message of the sages,"know thyself", he has accepted the message of the thinker, "educate thyself", and, what is more, he has understood that the possession of education imposes on him the duty of imparting his knowledge to others. The idea of the necessity of general education means the recognition by the race that the mind and not the life and the body are the man and that without the development of the mind he does not possess his true manhood. The idea of education is still primarily that of intelligence and mental capacity and knowledge of the world and things, but secondarily also of moral training and, though as yet very imperfectly, of the development of the aesthetic faculties. The intelligent thinking being, moralised, controlling his instincts and emotions by his will and his reason, acquainted with all that he should know of the world and his past, capable of organising intelligently by that knowledge his social and economic life, ordering rightly his bodily habits and physical being, this is the conception that now governs civilised humanity. It is, in essence, a return to and a larger development of the old Hellenic ideal, with a greater stress on capacity and

utility and a very diminished stress on beauty and refinement. We may suppose, however, that this is only a passing phase; the lost elements are bound to recover their importance as soon as the commercial period of modern progress has been overpassed, and with that recovery, not yet in sight but inevitable, we shall have all the proper elements for the development of man as a mental being.

The old Hellenic or Graeco-Roman civilisation perished, among other reasons, because it only imperfectly generalised culture in its own society and was surrounded by huge masses of humanity who were still possessed by the barbarian habit of mind. Civilisation can never be safe so long as, confining the cultured mentality to a small minority, it nourishes in its bosom a tremendous mass of ignorance, a multitude, a proletariate. Either knowledge must enlarge itself from above or be always in danger of submergence by the ignorant night from below. Still more must it be unsafe, if it allows enormous numbers of men to exist outside its pale uninformed by its light, full of the natural vigour of the barbarian, who may at any moment seize upon the physical weapons of the civilised without undergoing an intellectual transformation by their culture. The Graeco-Roman culture perished from within and from without, from without by the floods of Teutonic barbarism, from within by the loss of its vitality. It gave the proletariate some measure of comfort and amusement, but did not raise it into the light. When light came to the masses, it was from outside in the form of the Christian religion which arrived as an enemy of the old culture. Appealing to the poor, the oppressed and the ignorant, it sought to capture the soul and the ethical being, but cared little or not at all for the thinking mind, content that that should remain in darkness if the heart could be brought to feel religious truth. When the barbarians captured the Western world, it was in the same way content to Christianise them, but made it no part of its function to intellectualise. Distrustful even of the free play of intelligence, Christian ecclesiasticism and monasticism became anti-intellectual and it was left to the Arabs to reintroduce the beginnings of scientific and philosophical knowledge into a

semi-barbarous Christendom and to the half-pagan spirit of the Renaissance and a long struggle between religion and science to complete the return of a free intellectual culture in the re-emerging mind of Europe. Knowledge must be aggressive, if it wishes to survive and perpetuate itself; to leave an extensive ignorance either below or around it, is to expose humanity to the perpetual danger of a barbaric relapse.

The modern world does not leave room for a repetition of the danger in the old form or on the old scale. Science is there to prevent it. It has equipped culture with the means of self-perpetuation. It has armed the civilised races with weapons of organisation and aggression and self-defence which cannot be successfully utilised by any barbarous people, unless it ceases to be uncivilised and acquires the knowledge which Science alone can give. It has learned too that ignorance is an enemy it cannot afford to despise and has set out to remove it wherever it is found. The ideal of general education, at least to the extent of some information of the mind and the training of capacity, owes to it, if not its birth, at least much of its practical possibility. It has propagated itself everywhere with an irresistible force and driven the desire for increasing knowledge into the mentality of three continents. It has made general education the indispensable condition of national strength and efficiency and therefore imposed the desire of it not only on every free people, but on every nation that desires to be free and to survive, so that the universalisation of knowledge and intellectual activity in the human race is now only a question of Time; for it is only certain political and economic obstacles that stand in its way and these the thought and tendencies of the age are already labouring to overcome. And, in sum, Science has already enlarged for good the intellectual horizons of the race and raised, sharpened and intensified powerfully the general intellectual capacity of mankind.

It is true that the first tendencies of Science have been materialistic and its indubitable triumphs have been confined to the knowledge of the physical universe and the body and the physical life. But this materialism is a very different thing from

the old identification of the self with the body. Whatever its apparent tendencies, it has been really an assertion of man the mental being and of the supremacy of intelligence. Science in its very nature is knowledge, is intellectuality, and its whole work has been that of the Mind turning its gaze upon its vital and physical frame and environment to know and conquer and dominate Life and Matter. The scientist is Man the thinker mastering the forces of material Nature by knowing them. Life and Matter are after all our standing-ground, our lower basis and to know their processes and their own proper possibilities and the opportunities they give to the human being is part of the knowledge necessary for transcending them. Life and the body have to be exceeded, but they have also to be utilised and perfected. Neither the laws nor the possibilities of physical Nature can be entirely known unless we know also the laws and possibilities of supraphysical Nature; therefore the development of new and the recovery of old mental and psychic sciences have to follow upon the perfection of our physical knowledge, and that new era is already beginning to open upon us. But the perfection of the physical sciences was a prior necessity and had to be the first field for the training of the mind of man in his new endeavour to know Nature and possess his world.

Even in its negative work the materialism of Science had a task to perform which will be useful in the end to the human mind in its exceeding of materialism. But Science in its heyday of triumphant Materialism despised and cast aside Philosophy; its predominance discouraged by its positive and pragmatic turn the spirit of poetry and art and pushed them from their position of leadership in the front of culture; poetry entered into an era of decline and decadence, adopted the form and rhythm of a versified prose and lost its appeal and the support of all but a very limited audience, painting followed the curve of Cubist extravagance and espoused monstrosities of shape and suggestion; the ideal receded and visible matter of fact was enthroned in its place and encouraged an ugly realism and utilitarianism; in its war against religious obscurantism Science almost succeeded in slaying religion and the religious spirit. But philosophy had

become too much a thing of abstractions, a seeking for abstract truths in a world of ideas and words rather than what it should be, a discovery of the real reality of things by which human existence can learn its law and aim and the principle of its perfection. Poetry and art had become too much cultured pursuits to be ranked among the elegances and ornaments of life, concerned with beauty of words and forms and imaginations, rather than a concrete seeing and significant presentation of truth and beauty and of the living idea and the secret divinity in things concealed by the sensible appearances of the universe. Religion itself had become fixed in dogmas and ceremonies, sects and churches and had lost for the most part, except for a few individuals, direct contact with the living founts of spirituality. A period of negation was necessary. They had to be driven back and in upon themselves, nearer to their own eternal sources. Now that the stress of negation is past and they are raising their heads, we see them seeking for their own truth, reviving by virtue of a return upon themselves and a new self-discovery. They have learned or are learning from the example of Science that Truth is the secret of life and power and that by finding the truth proper to themselves they must become the ministers of human existence.

But if Science has thus prepared us for an age of wider and deeper culture and if in spite of and even partly by its materialism it has rendered impossible the return of the true materialism, that of the barbarian mentality, it has encouraged more or less indirectly both by its attitude to life and its discoveries another kind of barbarism, — for it can be called by no other name, — that of the industrial, the commercial, the economic age which is now progressing to its culmination and its close. This economic barbarism is essentially that of the vital man who mistakes the vital being for the self and accepts its satisfaction as the first aim of life. The characteristic of Life is desire and the instinct of possession. Just as the physical barbarian makes the excellence of the body and the development of physical force, health and prowess his standard and aim, so the vitalistic or economic barbarian makes the satisfaction of wants and desires and the accumulation of possessions his standard

and aim. His ideal man is not the cultured or noble or thoughtful or moral or religious, but the successful man. To arrive, to succeed, to produce, to accumulate, to possess is his existence. The accumulation of wealth and more wealth, the adding of possessions to possessions, opulence, show, pleasure, a cumbrous inartistic luxury, a plethora of conveniences, life devoid of beauty and nobility, religion vulgarised or coldly formalised, politics and government turned into a trade and profession, enjoyment itself made a business, this is commercialism. To the natural unredeemed economic man beauty is a thing otiose or a nuisance, art and poetry a frivolity or an ostentation and a means of advertisement. His idea of civilisation is comfort, his idea of morals social respectability, his idea of politics the encouragement of industry, the opening of markets, exploitation and trade following the flag, his idea of religion at best a pietistic formalism or the satisfaction of certain vitalistic emotions. He values education for its utility in fitting a man for success in a competitive or, it may be, a socialised industrial existence, science for the useful inventions and knowledge, the comforts, conveniences, machinery of production with which it arms him, its power for organisation, regulation, stimulus to production. The opulent plutocrat and the successful mammoth capitalist and organiser of industry are the supermen of the commercial age and the true, if often occult rulers of its society.

The essential barbarism of all this is its pursuit of vital success, satisfaction, productiveness, accumulation, possession, enjoyment, comfort, convenience for their own sake. The vital part of the being is an element in the integral human existence as much as the physical part; it has its place but must not exceed its place. A full and well-appointed life is desirable for man living in society, but on condition that it is also a true and beautiful life. Neither the life nor the body exist for their own sake, but as vehicle and instrument of a good higher than their own. They must be subordinated to the superior needs of the mental being, chastened and purified by a greater law of truth, good and beauty before they can take their proper place in the integrality of human perfection. Therefore in a commercial age with its

ideal, vulgar and barbarous, of success, vitalistic satisfaction, productiveness and possession the soul of man may linger a while for certain gains and experiences, but cannot permanently rest. If it persisted too long, Life would become clogged and perish of its own plethora or burst in its straining to a gross expansion. Like the too massive Titan it will collapse by its own mass, *mole ruet sua*.

Chapter IX

Civilisation and Culture

NATURE starts from Matter, develops out of it its hidden Life, releases out of involution in life all the crude material of Mind and, when she is ready, turns Mind upon itself and upon Life and Matter in a great mental effort to understand all three in their phenomena, their obvious action, their secret laws, their normal and abnormal possibilities and powers so that they may be turned to the richest account, used in the best and most harmonious way, elevated to their highest as well as extended to their widest potential aims by the action of that faculty which man alone of terrestrial creatures clearly possesses, the intelligent will. It is only in this fourth stage of her progress that she arrives at humanity. The atoms and the elements organise brute Matter, the plant develops the living being, the animal prepares and brings to a certain kind of mechanical organisation the crude material of Mind, but the last work of all, the knowledge and control of all these things and self-knowledge and self-control, — that has been reserved for Man, Nature's mental being. That he may better do the work she has given him, she compels him to repeat physically and to some extent mentally stages of her animal evolution and, even when he is in possession of his mental being, she induces him continually to dwell with an interest and even a kind of absorption upon Matter and Life and his own body and vital existence. This is necessary to the largeness of her purpose in him. His first natural absorption in the body and the life is narrow and unintelligent; as his intelligence and mental force increase, he disengages himself to some extent, is able to mount higher, but is still tied to his vital and material roots by need and desire and has to return upon them with a larger curiosity, a greater power of utilisation, a more and more highly mental and, in the end, a more and more spiritual aim in the return. For his cycles are circles of

a growing, but still imperfect harmony and synthesis, and she brings him back violently to her original principles, sometimes even to something like her earlier conditions so that he may start afresh on a larger curve of progress and self-fulfilment.

It would seem at first sight that since man is pre-eminently the mental being, the development of the mental faculties and the richness of the mental life should be his highest aim, — his preoccupying aim, even, as soon as he has got rid of the obsession of the life and body and provided for the indispensable satisfaction of the gross needs which our physical and animal nature imposes on us. Knowledge, science, art, thought, ethics, philosophy, religion, this is man's real business, these are his true affairs. To be is for him not merely to be born, grow up, marry, get his livelihood, support a family and then die, — the vital and physical life, a human edition of the animal round, a human enlargement of the little animal sector and arc of the divine circle; rather to become and grow mentally and live with knowledge and power within himself as well as from within outward is his manhood. But there is here a double motive of Nature, an insistent duality in her human purpose. Man is here to learn from her how to control and create; but she evidently means him not only to control, create and constantly re-create in new and better forms himself, his own inner existence, his mentality, but also to control and re-create correspondingly his environment. He has to turn Mind not only on itself, but on Life and Matter and the material existence; that is very clear not only from the law and nature of the terrestrial evolution, but from his own past and present history. And there comes from the observation of these conditions and of his highest aspirations and impulses the question whether he is not intended, not only to expand inwardly and outwardly, but to grow upward, wonderfully exceeding himself as he has wonderfully exceeded his animal beginnings, into something more than mental, more than human, into a being spiritual and divine. Even if he cannot do that, yet he may have to open his mind to what is beyond it and to govern his life more and more by the light and power that he receives from something greater than himself. Man's

consciousness of the divine within himself and the world is the supreme fact of his existence and to grow into that may very well be the intention of his nature. In any case the fullness of Life is his evident object, the widest life and the highest life possible to him, whether that be a complete humanity or a new and divine race. We must recognise both his need of integrality and his impulse of self-exceeding if we would fix rightly the meaning of his individual existence and the perfect aim and norm of his society.

The pursuit of the mental life for its own sake is what we ordinarily mean by culture; but the word is still a little equivocal and capable of a wider or a narrower sense according to our ideas and predilections. For our mental existence is a very complex matter and is made up of many elements. First, we have its lower and fundamental stratum, which is in the scale of evolution nearest to the vital. And we have in that stratum two sides, the mental life of the senses, sensations and emotions in which the subjective purpose of Nature predominates although with the objective as its occasion, and the active or dynamic life of the mental being concerned with the organs of action and the field of conduct in which her objective purpose predominates although with the subjective as its occasion. We have next in the scale, more sublimated, on one side the moral being and its ethical life, on the other the aesthetic; each of them attempts to possess and dominate the fundamental mind stratum and turn its experiences and activities to its own benefit, one for the culture and worship of Right, the other for the culture and worship of Beauty. And we have, above all these, taking advantage of them, helping, forming, trying often to govern them entirely, the intellectual being. Man's highest accomplished range is the life of the reason or ordered and harmonised intelligence with its dynamic power of intelligent will, the *buddhi*, which is or should be the driver of man's chariot.

But the intelligence of man is not composed entirely and exclusively of the rational intellect and the rational will; there enters into it a deeper, more intuitive, more splendid and powerful, but much less clear, much less developed and as yet hardly

at all self-possessing light and force for which we have not even a name. But, at any rate, its character is to drive at a kind of illumination, — not the dry light of the reason, nor the moist and suffused light of the heart, but a lightning and a solar splendour. It may indeed subordinate itself and merely help the reason and heart with its flashes; but there is another urge in it, its natural urge, which exceeds the reason. It tries to illuminate the intellectual being, to illuminate the ethical and aesthetic, to illuminate the emotional and the active, to illuminate even the senses and the sensations. It offers in words of revelation, it unveils as if by lightning flashes, it shows in a sort of mystic or psychic glamour or brings out into a settled but for mental man almost a supernatural light a Truth greater and truer than the knowledge given by Reason and Science, a Right larger and more divine than the moralist's scheme of virtues, a Beauty more profound, universal and entrancing than the sensuous or imaginative beauty worshipped by the artist, a joy and divine sensibility which leaves the ordinary emotions poor and pallid, a Sense beyond the senses and sensations, the possibility of a diviner Life and action which man's ordinary conduct of life hides away from his impulses and from his vision. Very various, very fragmentary, often very confused and misleading are its effects upon all the lower members from the reason downward, but this in the end is what it is driving at in the midst of a hundred deformations. It is caught and killed or at least diminished and stifled in formal creeds and pious observances; it is unmercifully traded in and turned into poor and base coin by the vulgarity of conventional religions; but it is still the light of which the religious spirit and the spirituality of man is in pursuit and some pale glow of it lingers even in their worst degradations.

This very complexity of his mental being, with the absence of any one principle which can safely dominate the others, the absence of any sure and certain light which can guide and fix in their vacillations the reason and the intelligent will, is man's great embarrassment and stumbling-block. All the hostile distinctions, oppositions, antagonisms, struggles, conversions, reversions, perversions of his mentality, all the chaotic war of

ideas and impulses and tendencies which perplex his efforts, have arisen from the natural misunderstandings and conflicting claims of his many members. His reason is a judge who gives conflicting verdicts and is bribed and influenced by the suitors; his intelligent will is an administrator harassed by the conflicts of the different estates of his realm and by the sense of his own partiality and final incompetence. Still in the midst of it all he has formed certain large ideas of culture and the mental life, and his conflicting notions about them follow certain definite lines determined by the divisions of his nature and shaped into a general system of curves by his many attempts to arrive either at an exclusive standard or an integral harmony.

We have first the distinction between civilisation and barbarism. In its ordinary, popular sense civilisation means the state of civil society, governed, policed, organised, educated, possessed of knowledge and appliances as opposed to that which has not or is not supposed to have these advantages. In a certain sense the Red Indian, the Basuto, the Fiji islander had their civilisation; they possessed a rigorously, if simply organised society, a social law, some ethical ideas, a religion, a kind of training, a good many virtues in some of which, it is said, civilisation is sadly lacking; but we are agreed to call them savages and barbarians, mainly it seems, because of their crude and limited knowledge, the primitive rudeness of their appliances and the bare simplicity of their social organisation. In the more developed states of society we have such epithets as semi-civilised and semi-barbarous which are applied by different types of civilisation to each other, — the one which is for a time dominant and physically successful has naturally the loudest and most self-confident say in the matter. Formerly men were more straightforward and simple-minded and frankly expressed their standpoint by stigmatising all peoples different in general culture from themselves as barbarians or Mlechchhas. The word civilisation so used comes to have a merely relative significance or hardly any fixed sense at all. We must therefore get rid in it of all that is temporary or accidental and fix it upon this distinction that barbarism is the state of society in which man is almost entirely preoccupied

with his life and body, his economic and physical existence, — at first with their sufficient maintenance, not as yet their greater or richer well-being, — and has few means and little inclination to develop his mentality, while civilisation is the more evolved state of society in which to a sufficient social and economic organisation is added the activity of the mental life in most if not all of its parts; for sometimes some of these parts are left aside or discouraged or temporarily atrophied by their inactivity, yet the society may be very obviously civilised and even highly civilised. This conception will bring in all the civilisations historic and prehistoric and put aside all the barbarism, whether of Africa or Europe or Asia, Hun or Goth or Vandal or Turcoman. It is obvious that in a state of barbarism the rude beginnings of civilisation may exist; it is obvious too that in a civilised society a great mass of barbarism or numerous relics of it may exist. In that sense all societies are semi-civilised. How much of our present-day civilisation will be looked back upon with wonder and disgust by a more developed humanity as the superstitions and atrocities of an imperfectly civilised era! But the main point is this that in any society which we can call civilised the mentality of man must be active, the mental pursuits developed and the regulation and improvement of his life by the mental being a clearly self-conscious concept in his better mind.

But in a civilised society there is still the distinction between the partially, crudely, conventionally civilised and the cultured. It would seem therefore that the mere participation in the ordinary benefits of civilisation is not enough to raise a man into the mental life proper; a farther development, a higher elevation is needed. The last generation drew emphatically the distinction between the cultured man and the Philistine and got a fairly clear idea of what was meant by it. Roughly, the Philistine was for them the man who lives outwardly the civilised life, possesses all its paraphernalia, has and mouths the current stock of opinions, prejudices, conventions, sentiments, but is impervious to ideas, exercises no free intelligence, is innocent of beauty and art, vulgarises everything that he touches, religion, ethics, literature,

life. The Philistine is in fact the modern civilised barbarian; he is often the half-civilised physical and vital barbarian by his unintelligent attachment to the life of the body, the life of the vital needs and impulses and the ideal of the merely domestic and economic human animal; but essentially and commonly he is the mental barbarian, the average sensational man. That is to say, his mental life is that of the lower substratum of the mind, the life of the senses, the life of the sensations, the life of the emotions, the life of practical conduct — the first status of the mental being. In all these he may be very active, very vigorous, but he does not govern them by a higher light or seek to uplift them to a freer and nobler eminence; rather he pulls the higher faculties down to the level of his senses, his sensations, his unenlightened and unchastened emotions, his gross utilitarian practicality. His aesthetic side is little developed; either he cares nothing for beauty or has the crudest aesthetic tastes which help to lower and vulgarise the general standard of aesthetic creation and the aesthetic sense. He is often strong about morals, far more particular usually about moral conduct than the man of culture, but his moral being is as crude and undeveloped as the rest of him; it is conventional, unchastened, unintelligent, a mass of likes and dislikes, prejudices and current opinions, attachment to social conventions and respectabilities and an obscure dislike — rooted in the mind of sensations and not in the intelligence — of any open defiance or departure from the generally accepted standard of conduct. His ethical bent is a habit of the sense-mind; it is the morality of the average sensational man. He has a reason and the appearance of an intelligent will, but they are not his own, they are part of the group-mind, received from his environment; or so far as they are his own, merely a practical, sensational, emotional reason and will, a mechanical repetition of habitual notions and rules of conduct, not a play of real thought and intelligent determination. His use of them no more makes him a developed mental being than the daily movement to and from his place of business makes the average Londoner a developed physical being or his quotidian contributions to the economic life of the country make the bank-clerk a developed

economic man. He is not mentally active, but mentally reactive, — a very different matter.

The Philistine is not dead, — quite the contrary, he abounds, — but he no longer reigns. The sons of Culture have not exactly conquered, but they have got rid of the old Goliath and replaced him by a new giant. This is the sensational man who has got awakened to the necessity at least of some intelligent use of the higher faculties and is trying to be mentally active. He has been whipped and censured and educated into that activity and he lives besides in a maelstrom of new information, new intellectual fashions, new ideas and new movements to which he can no longer be obstinately impervious. He is open to new ideas, he can catch at them and hurl them about in a rather confused fashion; he can understand or misunderstand ideals, organise to get them carried out and even, it would appear, fight and die for them. He knows he has to think about ethical problems, social problems, problems of science and religion, to welcome new political developments, to look with as understanding an eye as he can attain to at all the new movements of thought and inquiry and action that chase each other across the modern field or clash upon it. He is a reader of poetry as well as a devourer of fiction and periodical literature, — you will find in him perhaps a student of Tagore or an admirer of Whitman; he has perhaps no very clear ideas about beauty and aesthetics, but he has heard that Art is a not altogether unimportant part of life. The shadow of this new colossus is everywhere. He is the great reading public; the newspapers and weekly and monthly reviews are his; fiction and poetry and art are his mental caterers, the theatre and the cinema and the radio exist for him: Science hastens to bring her knowledge and discoveries to his doors and equip his life with endless machinery; politics are shaped in his image. It is he who opposed and then brought about the enfranchisement of women, who has been evolving syndicalism, anarchism, the war of classes, the uprising of labour, waging what we are told are wars of ideas or of cultures, — a ferocious type of conflict made in the very image of this new barbarism, — or bringing about in a few days Russian revolutions which the

century-long efforts and sufferings of the intelligentsia failed to achieve. It is his coming which has been the precipitative agent for the reshaping of the modern world. If a Lenin, a Mussolini, a Hitler have achieved their rapid and almost stupefying success, it was because this driving force, this responsive quick-acting mass was there to carry them to victory — a force lacking to their less fortunate predecessors.

The first results of this momentous change have been inspiriting to our desire of movement, but a little disconcerting to the thinker and to the lover of a high and fine culture; for if it has to some extent democratised culture or the semblance of culture, it does not seem at first sight to have elevated or strengthened it by this large accession of the half-redeemed from below. Nor does the world seem to be guided any more directly by the reason and intelligent will of her best minds than before. Commercialism is still the heart of modern civilisation; a sensational activism is still its driving force. Modern education has not in the mass redeemed the sensational man; it has only made necessary to him things to which he was not formerly accustomed, mental activity and occupations, intellectual and even aesthetic sensations, emotions of idealism. He still lives in the vital substratum, but he wants it stimulated from above. He requires an army of writers to keep him mentally occupied and provide some sort of intellectual pabulum for him; he has a thirst for general information of all kinds which he does not care or has not time to coordinate or assimilate, for popularised scientific knowledge, for such new ideas as he can catch, provided they are put before him with force or brilliance, for mental sensations and excitation of many kinds, for ideals which he likes to think of as actuating his conduct and which do give it sometimes a certain colour. It is still the activism and sensationalism of the crude mental being, but much more open and free. And the cultured, the intelligentsia find that they can get a hearing from him such as they never had from the pure Philistine, provided they can first stimulate or amuse him; their ideas have now a chance of getting executed such as they never had before. The result has been to cheapen thought and art and literature, to make talent and even

genius run in the grooves of popular success, to put the writer and thinker and scientist very much in a position like that of the cultured Greek slave in a Roman household where he has to work for, please, amuse and instruct his master while keeping a careful eye on his tastes and preferences and repeating trickily the manner and the points that have caught his fancy. The higher mental life, in a word, has been democratised, sensationalised, activised with both good and bad results. Through it all the eye of faith can see perhaps that a yet crude but an enormous change has begun. Thought and Knowledge, if not yet Beauty, can get a hearing and even produce rapidly some large, vague, yet in the end effective will for their results; the mass of culture and of men who think and strive seriously to appreciate and to know has enormously increased behind all this surface veil of sensationalism, and even the sensational man has begun to undergo a process of transformation. Especially, new methods of education, new principles of society are beginning to come into the range of practical possibility which will create perhaps one day that as yet unknown phenomenon, a race of men — not only a class — who have to some extent found and developed their mental selves, a cultured humanity.

Chapter X

Aesthetic and Ethical Culture

THE IDEA of culture begins to define itself for us a little more clearly, or at least it has put away from it in a clear contrast its natural opposites. The unmental, the purely physical life is very obviously its opposite, it is barbarism; the unintellectualised vital, the crude economic or the grossly domestic life which looks only to money-getting, the procreation of a family and its maintenance, are equally its opposites; they are another and even uglier barbarism. We agree to regard the individual who is dominated by them and has no thought of higher things as an uncultured and undeveloped human being, a prolongation of the savage, essentially a barbarian even if he lives in a civilised nation and in a society which has arrived at the general idea and at some ordered practice of culture and refinement. The societies or nations which bear this stamp we agree to call barbarous or semi-barbarous. Even when a nation or an age has developed within itself knowledge and science and arts, but still in its general outlook, its habits of life and thought is content to be governed not by knowledge and truth and beauty and high ideals of living, but by the gross vital, commercial, economic view of existence, we say that that nation or age may be civilised in a sense, but for all its abundant or even redundant appliances and apparatus of civilisation it is not the realisation or the promise of a cultured humanity. Therefore upon even the European civilisation of the nineteenth century with all its triumphant and teeming production, its great developments of science, its achievement in the works of the intellect we pass a certain condemnation, because it has turned all these things to commercialism and to gross uses of vitalistic success. We say of it that this was not the perfection to which humanity ought to aspire and that this trend travels away from and not

towards the higher curve of human evolution. It must be our definite verdict upon it that it was inferior as an age of culture to ancient Athens, to Italy of the Renascence, to ancient or classical India. For great as might be the deficiencies of social organisation in those eras and though their range of scientific knowledge and material achievement was immensely inferior, yet they were more advanced in the art of life, knew better its object and aimed more powerfully at some clear ideal of human perfection.

In the range of the mind's life itself, to live in its merely practical and dynamic activity or in the mentalised emotional or sensational current, a life of conventional conduct, average feelings, customary ideas, opinions and prejudices which are not one's own but those of the environment, to have no free and open play of mind, but to live grossly and unthinkingly by the unintelligent rule of the many, to live besides according to the senses and sensations controlled by certain conventions, but neither purified nor enlightened nor chastened by any law of beauty, — all this too is contrary to the ideal of culture. A man may so live with all the appearance or all the pretensions of a civilised existence, enjoy successfully all the plethora of its appurtenances, but he is not in the real sense a developed human being. A society following such a rule of life may be anything else you will, vigorous, decent, well-ordered, successful, religious, moral, but it is a Philistine society; it is a prison which the human soul has to break. For so long as it dwells there, it dwells in an inferior, uninspired and unexpanding mental status; it vegetates infructuously in the lower stratum and is governed not by the higher faculties of man, but by the crudities of the unuplifted sense-mind. Nor is it enough for it to open windows in this prison by which it may get draughts of agreeable fresh air, something of the free light of the intellect, something of the fragrance of art and beauty, something of the large breath of wider interests and higher ideals. It has yet to break out of its prison altogether and live in that free light, in that fragrance and large breath; only then does it breathe the natural atmosphere of the developed mental being. Not to live principally in the

activities of the sense-mind, but in the activities of knowledge and reason and a wide intellectual curiosity, the activities of the cultivated aesthetic being, the activities of the enlightened will which make for character and high ethical ideals and a large human action, not to be governed by our lower or our average mentality but by truth and beauty and the self-ruling will is the ideal of a true culture and the beginning of an accomplished humanity.

We get then by elimination to a positive idea and definition of culture. But still on this higher plane of the mental life we are apt to be pursued by old exclusivenesses and misunderstandings. We see that in the past there seems often to have been a quarrel between culture and conduct; yet according to our definition conduct also is a part of the cultured life and the ethical ideality one of the master impulses of the cultured being. The opposition which puts on one side the pursuit of ideas and knowledge and beauty and calls that culture and on the other the pursuit of character and conduct and exalts that as the moral life must start evidently from an imperfect view of human possibility and perfection. Yet that opposition has not only existed, but is a naturally strong tendency of the human mind and therefore must answer to some real and important divergence in the very composite elements of our being. It is the opposition which Arnold drew between Hebraism and Hellenism. The trend of the Jewish nation which gave us the severe ethical religion of the Old Testament, — crude, conventional and barbarous enough in the Mosaic law, but rising to undeniable heights of moral exaltation when to the Law were added the Prophets, and finally exceeding itself and blossoming into a fine flower of spirituality in Judaic Christianity,[1] — was dominated by the preoccupation of a terrestrial and ethical righteousness and the promised rewards of right worship and right doing, but innocent of science and philosophy, careless of knowledge,

[1] The epithet is needed, for European Christianity has been something different, even at its best of another temperament, Latinised, Graecised, Celticised or else only a rough Teutonic imitation of the old-world Hebraism.

indifferent to beauty. The Hellenic mind was less exclusively but still largely dominated by a love of the play of reason for its own sake, but even more powerfully by a high sense of beauty, a clear aesthetic sensibility and a worship of the beautiful in every activity, in every creation, in thought, in art, in life, in religion. So strong was this sense that not only manners, but ethics were seen by it to a very remarkable extent in the light of its master idea of beauty; the good was to its instinct largely the becoming and the beautiful. In philosophy itself it succeeded in arriving at the conception of the Divine as Beauty, a truth which the metaphysician very readily misses and impoverishes his thought by missing it. But still, striking as is this great historical contrast and powerful as were its results on European culture, we have to go beyond its outward manifestation if we would understand in its source this psychological opposition.

The conflict arises from that sort of triangular disposition of the higher or more subtle mentality which we have already had occasion to indicate. There is in our mentality a side of will, conduct, character which creates the ethical man; there is another side of sensibility to the beautiful, — understanding beauty in no narrow or hyper-artistic sense, — which creates the artistic and aesthetic man. Therefore there can be such a thing as a predominantly or even exclusively ethical culture; there can be too, evidently, a predominantly or even exclusively aesthetic culture. There are at once created two conflicting ideals which must naturally stand opposed and look askance at each other with a mutual distrust or even reprobation. The aesthetic man tends to be impatient of the ethical rule; he feels it to be a barrier to his aesthetic freedom and an oppression on the play of his artistic sense and his artistic faculty; he is naturally hedonistic, — for beauty and delight are inseparable powers, — and the ethical rule tramples on pleasure, even very often on quite innocent pleasures, and tries to put a strait waistcoat on the human impulse to delight. He may accept the ethical rule when it makes itself beautiful or even seize on it as one of his instruments for creating beauty, but only when he can subordinate it to the aesthetic principle of his nature, — just as

he is often drawn to religion by its side of beauty, pomp, magnificent ritual, emotional satisfaction, repose or poetic ideality and aspiration, — we might almost say, by the hedonistic aspects of religion. Even when fully accepted, it is not for their own sake that he accepts them. The ethical man repays this natural repulsion with interest. He tends to distrust art and the aesthetic sense as something lax and emollient, something in its nature undisciplined and by its attractive appeals to the passions and emotions destructive of a high and strict self-control. He sees that it is hedonistic and he finds that the hedonistic impulse is non-moral and often immoral. It is difficult for him to see how the indulgence of the aesthetic impulse beyond a very narrow and carefully guarded limit can be combined with a strict ethical life. He evolves the puritan who objects to pleasure on principle; not only in his extremes — and a predominant impulse tends to become absorbing and leads towards extremes — but in the core of his temperament he remains fundamentally the puritan. The misunderstanding between these two sides of our nature is an inevitable circumstance of our human growth which must try them to their fullest separate possibilities and experiment in extremes in order that it may understand the whole range of its capacities.

Society is only an enlargement of the individual; therefore this contrast and opposition between individual types reproduces itself in a like contrast and opposition between social and national types. We must not go for the best examples to social formulas which do not really illustrate these tendencies but are depravations, deformations or deceptive conformities. We must not take as an instance of the ethical turn the middle-class puritanism touched with a narrow, tepid and conventional religiosity which was so marked an element in nineteenth-century England; that was not an ethical culture, but simply a local variation of the general type of bourgeois respectability you will find everywhere at a certain stage of civilisation, — it was Philistinism pure and simple. Nor should we take as an instance of the aesthetic any merely Bohemian society or such examples as London of the Restoration or Paris in certain brief periods of its history; that,

whatever some of its pretensions, had for its principle, always, the indulgence of the average sensational and sensuous man freed from the conventions of morality by a superficial intellectualism and aestheticism. Nor even can we take Puritan England as the ethical type; for although there was there a strenuous, an exaggerated culture of character and the ethical being, the determining tendency was religious, and the religious impulse is a phenomenon quite apart from our other subjective tendencies, though it influences them all; it is *sui generis* and must be treated separately. To get at real, if not always quite pure examples of the type we must go back a little farther in time and contrast early republican Rome or, in Greece itself, Sparta with Periclean Athens. For as we come down the stream of Time in its present curve of evolution, humanity in the mass, carrying in it its past collective experience, becomes more and more complex and the old distinct types do not recur or recur precariously and with difficulty.

Republican Rome — before it was touched and finally taken captive by conquered Greece — stands out in relief as one of the most striking psychological phenomena of human history. From the point of view of human development it presents itself as an almost unique experiment in high and strong character-building divorced as far as may be from the sweetness which the sense of beauty and the light which the play of the reason brings into character and uninspired by the religious temperament; for the early Roman creed was a superstition, a superficial religiosity and had nothing in it of the true religious spirit. Rome was the human will oppressing and disciplining the emotional and sensational mind in order to arrive at the self-mastery of a definite ethical type; and it was this self-mastery which enabled the Roman republic to arrive also at the mastery of its environing world and impose on the nations its public order and law. All supremely successful imperial nations have had in their culture or in their nature, in their formative or expansive periods, this predominance of the will, the character, the impulse to self-discipline and self-mastery which constitutes the very basis of the ethical tendency. Rome and Sparta like other ethical civilisations

had their considerable moral deficiencies, tolerated or deliberately encouraged customs and practices which we should call immoral, failed to develop the gentler and more delicate side of moral character, but this is of no essential importance. The ethical idea in man changes and enlarges its scope, but the kernel of the true ethical being remains always the same, — will, character, self-discipline, self-mastery.

Its limitations at once appear, when we look back at its prominent examples. Early Rome and Sparta were barren of thought, art, poetry, literature, the larger mental life, all the amenity and pleasure of human existence; their art of life excluded or discouraged the delight of living. They were distrustful, as the exclusively ethical man is always distrustful, of free and flexible thought and the aesthetic impulse. The earlier spirit of republican Rome held at arm's length as long as possible the Greek influences that invaded her, closed the schools of the Greek teachers, banished the philosophers, and her most typical minds looked upon the Greek language as a peril and Greek culture as an abomination: she felt instinctively the arrival at her gates of an enemy, divined a hostile and destructive force fatal to her principle of living. Sparta, though a Hellenic city, admitted as almost the sole aesthetic element of her deliberate ethical training and education a martial music and poetry, and even then, when she wanted a poet of war, she had to import an Athenian. We have a curious example of the repercussion of this instinctive distrust even on a large and aesthetic Athenian mind in the utopian speculations of Plato who felt himself obliged in his Republic first to censure and then to banish the poets from his ideal polity. The end of these purely ethical cultures bears witness to their insufficiency. Either they pass away leaving nothing or little behind them by which the future can be attracted and satisfied, as Sparta passed, or they collapse in a revolt of the complex nature of man against an unnatural restriction and repression, as the early Roman type collapsed into the egoistic and often orgiastic licence of later republican and imperial Rome. The human mind needs to think, feel, enjoy, expand; expansion is its very nature and restriction is only useful to it in so far as it helps

to steady, guide and strengthen its expansion. It readily refuses the name of culture to those civilisations or periods, however noble their aim or even however beautiful in itself their order, which have not allowed an intelligent freedom of development.

On the other hand, we are tempted to give the name of a full culture to all those periods and civilisations, whatever their defects, which have encouraged a freely human development and like ancient Athens have concentrated on thought and beauty and the delight of living. But there were in the Athenian development two distinct periods, one of art and beauty, the Athens of Phidias and Sophocles, and one of thought, the Athens of the philosophers. In the first period the sense of beauty and the need of freedom of life and the enjoyment of life are the determining forces. This Athens thought, but it thought in the terms of art and poetry, in figures of music and drama and architecture and sculpture; it delighted in intellectual discussion, but not so much with any will to arrive at truth as for the pleasure of thinking and the beauty of ideas. It had its moral order, for without that no society can exist, but it had no true ethical impulse or ethical type, only a conventional and customary morality; and when it thought about ethics, it tended to express it in the terms of beauty, *to kalon*, *to epieikes*, the beautiful, the becoming. Its very religion was a religion of beauty and an occasion for pleasant ritual and festivals and for artistic creation, an aesthetic enjoyment touched with a superficial religious sense. But without character, without some kind of high or strong discipline there is no enduring power of life. Athens exhausted its vitality within one wonderful century which left it enervated, will-less, unable to succeed in the struggle of life, uncreative. It turned indeed for a time precisely to that which had been lacking to it, the serious pursuit of truth and the evolution of systems of ethical self-discipline; but it could only think, it could not successfully practise. The later Hellenic mind and Athenian centre of culture gave to Rome the great Stoic system of ethical discipline which saved her in the midst of the orgies of her first imperial century, but could not itself be stoical in its practice; for to Athens and to the characteristic temperament of Hellas, this thought was a

straining to something it had not and could not have; it was the opposite of its nature and not its fulfilment.

This insufficiency of the aesthetic view of life becomes yet more evident when we come down to its other great example, Italy of the Renascence. The Renascence was regarded at one time as pre-eminently a revival of learning, but in its Mediterranean birth-place it was rather the efflorescence of art and poetry and the beauty of life. Much more than was possible even in the laxest times of Hellas, aesthetic culture was divorced from the ethical impulse and at times was even anti-ethical and reminiscent of the licence of imperial Rome. It had learning and curiosity, but gave very little of itself to high thought and truth and the more finished achievements of the reason, although it helped to make free the way for philosophy and science. It so corrupted religion as to provoke in the ethically minded Teutonic nations the violent revolt of the Reformation, which, though it vindicated the freedom of the religious mind, was an insurgence not so much of the reason, — that was left to Science, — but of the moral instinct and its ethical need. The subsequent prostration and loose weakness of Italy was the inevitable result of the great defect of its period of fine culture, and it needed for its revival the new impulse of thought and will and character given to it by Mazzini. If the ethical impulse is not sufficient by itself for the development of the human being, yet are will, character, self-discipline, self-mastery indispensable to that development. They are the backbone of the mental body.

Neither the ethical being nor the aesthetic being is the whole man, nor can either be his sovereign principle; they are merely two powerful elements. Ethical conduct is not the whole of life; even to say that it is three-fourths of life is to indulge in a very doubtful mathematics. We cannot assign to it its position in any such definite language, but can at best say that its kernel of will, character and self-discipline are almost the first condition for human self-perfection. The aesthetic sense is equally indispensable, for without that the self-perfection of the mental being cannot arrive at its object, which is on the mental plane the right and harmonious possession and enjoyment of the truth, power,

beauty and delight of human existence. But neither can be the highest principle of the human order. We can combine them; we can enlarge the sense of ethics by the sense of beauty and delight and introduce into it to correct its tendency of hardness and austerity the element of gentleness, love, amenity, the hedonistic side of morals; we can steady, guide and strengthen the delight of life by the introduction of the necessary will and austerity and self-discipline which will give it endurance and purity. These two powers of our psychological being, which represent in us the essential principle of energy and the essential principle of delight, — the Indian terms are more profound and expressive, Tapas and Ananda,[2] — can be thus helped by each other, the one to a richer, the other to a greater self-expression. But that even this much reconciliation may come about they must be taken up and enlightened by a higher principle which must be capable of understanding and comprehending both equally and of disengaging and combining disinterestedly their purposes and potentialities. That higher principle seems to be provided for us by the human faculty of reason and intelligent will. Our crowning capacity, it would seem to be by right the crowned sovereign of our nature.

[2] Tapas is the energising conscious-power of cosmic being by which the world is created, maintained and governed; it includes all concepts of force, will, energy, power, everything dynamic and dynamising. Ananda is the essential nature of bliss of the cosmic consciousness and, in activity, its delight of self-creation and self-experience.

Chapter XI

The Reason as Governor of Life

REASON using the intelligent will for the ordering of the inner and the outer life is undoubtedly the highest developed faculty of man at his present point of evolution; it is the sovereign, because the governing and self-governing faculty in the complexities of our human existence. Man is distinguished from other terrestrial creatures by his capacity for seeking after a rule of life, a rule of his being and his works, a principle of order and self-development, which is not the first instinctive, original, mechanically self-operative rule of his natural existence. The principle he looks to is neither the unchanging, unprogressive order of the fixed natural type, nor in its process of change the mechanical evolution we see in the lower life, an evolution which operates in the mass rather than in the individual, imperceptibly to the knowledge of that which is being evolved and without its conscious cooperation. He seeks for an intelligent rule of which he himself shall be the governor and master or at least a partially free administrator. He can conceive a progressive order by which he shall be able to evolve and develop his capacities far beyond their original limits and workings; he can initiate an intelligent evolution which he himself shall determine or at least be in it a conscious instrument, more, a cooperating and constantly consulted party. The rest of terrestrial existence is helplessly enslaved and tyrannised over by its nature, but the instinct of man when he finds his manhood is to be master of his nature and free.

No doubt all is work of Nature and this too is Nature; it proceeds from the principle of being which constitutes his humanity and by the processes which that principle permits and which are natural to it. But still it is a second kind of Nature, a stage of being in which Nature becomes self-conscious in the individual, tries to know, modify, alter and develop, utilise, consciously

experiment with herself and her potentialities. In this change a momentous self-discovery intervenes; there appears something that is hidden in matter and in the first disposition of life and has not clearly emerged in the animal in spite of its possession of a mind; there appears the presence of the Soul in things which at first was concealed in its own natural and outward workings, absorbed and on the surface at least self-oblivious. Afterwards it becomes, as in the animal, conscious to a certain degree on the surface, but is still helplessly given up to the course of its natural workings and, not understanding, cannot govern itself and its movements. But finally, in man, it turns its consciousness upon itself, seeks to know, endeavours to govern in the individual the workings of his nature and through the individual and the combined reason and energy of many individuals to govern too as far as possible the workings of Nature in mankind and in things. This turning of the consciousness upon itself and on things, which man represents, has been the great crisis, a prolonged and developing crisis, in the terrestrial evolution of the soul in Nature. There have been others before it in the past of the earth, such as that which brought about the appearance of the conscious life of the animal; there must surely be another in its future in which a higher spiritual and supramental consciousness shall emerge and be turned upon the works of the mind. But at present it is this which is at work; a self-conscious soul in mind, mental being, *manomaya puruṣa*, struggles to arrive at some intelligent ordering of its self and life and some indefinite, perhaps infinite development of the powers and potentialities of the human instrument.

The intellectual reason is not man's only means of knowledge. All action, all perception, all aesthesis and sensation, all impulse and will, all imagination and creation imply a universal, many-sided force of knowledge at work and each form or power of this knowledge has its own distinct nature and law, its own principle of order and arrangement, its logic proper to itself, and need not follow, still less be identical with the law of nature, order and arrangement which the intellectual reason would assign to it or itself follow if it had control of all these

movements. But the intellect has this advantage over the others that it can disengage itself from the work, stand back from it to study and understand it disinterestedly, analyse its processes, disengage its principles. None of the other powers and faculties of the living being can do this: for each exists for its own action, is confined by the work it is doing, is unable to see beyond it, around it, into it as the reason can; the principle of knowledge inherent within each force is involved and carried along in the action of the force, helps to shape it, but is also itself limited by its own formulations. It exists for the fulfilment of the action, not for knowledge, or for knowledge only as part of the action. Moreover, it is concerned only with the particular action or working of the moment and does not look back reflectively or forward intelligently or at other actions and forces with a power of clear coordination. No doubt, the other evolved powers of the living being, as for instance the instinct whether animal or human, — the latter inferior precisely because it is disturbed by the questionings and seekings of reason, — carry in themselves their own force of past experience, of instinctive self-adaptation, all of which is really accumulated knowledge, and they hold sometimes this store so firmly that they are transmitted as a sure inheritance from generation to generation. But all this, just because it is instinctive, not turned upon itself reflectively, is of great use indeed to life for the conduct of its operations, but of none — so long as it is not taken up by the reason — for the particular purpose man has in view, a new order of the dealings of the soul in Nature, a free, rational, intelligently coordinating, intelligently self-observing, intelligently experimenting mastery of the workings of force by the conscious spirit.

Reason, on the other hand, exists for the sake of knowledge, can prevent itself from being carried away by the action, can stand back from it, intelligently study, accept, refuse, modify, alter, improve, combine and recombine the workings and capacities of the forces in operation, can repress here, indulge there, strive towards an intelligent, intelligible, willed and organised perfection. Reason is science, it is conscious art, it is invention. It is observation and can seize and arrange truth of facts; it is

speculation and can extricate and forecast truth of potentiality. It is the idea and its fulfilment, the ideal and its bringing to fruition. It can look through the immediate appearance and unveil the hidden truths behind it. It is the servant and yet the master of all utilities; and it can, putting away all utilities, seek disinterestedly Truth for its own sake and by finding it reveal a whole world of new possible utilities. Therefore it is the sovereign power by which man has become possessed of himself, student and master of his own forces, the godhead on which the other godheads in him have leaned for help in their ascent; it has been the Prometheus of the mythical parable, the helper, instructor, elevating friend, civiliser of mankind.

Recently, however, there has been a very noticeable revolt of the human mind against this sovereignty of the intellect, a dissatisfaction, as we might say, of the reason with itself and its own limitations and an inclination to give greater freedom and a larger importance to other powers of our nature. The sovereignty of the reason in man has been always indeed imperfect, in fact, a troubled, struggling, resisted and often defeated rule; but still it has been recognised by the best intelligence of the race as the authority and law-giver. Its only widely acknowledged rival has been faith. Religion alone has been strongly successful in its claim that reason must be silent before it or at least that there are fields to which it cannot extend itself and where faith alone ought to be heard; but for a time even Religion has had to forego or abate its absolute pretension and to submit to the sovereignty of the intellect. Life, imagination, emotion, the ethical and the aesthetic need have often claimed to exist for their own sake and to follow their own bent, practically they have often enforced their claim, but they have still been obliged in general to work under the inquisition and partial control of reason and to refer to it as arbiter and judge. Now, however, the thinking mind of the race has become more disposed to question itself and to ask whether existence is not too large, profound, complex and mysterious a thing to be entirely seized and governed by the powers of the intellect. Vaguely it is felt that there is some greater godhead than the reason.

To some this godhead is Life itself or a secret Will in life; they claim that this must rule and that the intelligence is only useful in so far as it serves that and that Life must not be repressed, minimised and mechanised by the arbitrary control of reason. Life has greater powers in it which must be given a freer play; for it is they alone that evolve and create. On the other hand, it is felt that reason is too analytical, too arbitrary, that it falsifies life by its distinctions and set classifications and the fixed rules based upon them and that there is some profounder and larger power of knowledge, intuition or another, which is more deeply in the secrets of existence. This larger intimate power is more one with the depths and sources of existence and more able to give us the indivisible truths of life, its root realities and to work them out, not in an artificial and mechanical spirit but with a divination of the secret Will in existence and in a free harmony with its large, subtle and infinite methods. In fact, what the growing subjectivism of the human mind is beginning obscurely to see is that the one sovereign godhead is the soul itself which may use reason for one of its ministers, but cannot subject itself to its own intellectuality without limiting its potentialities and artificialising its conduct of existence.

The highest power of reason, because its pure and characteristic power, is the disinterested seeking after true knowledge. When knowledge is pursued for its own sake, then alone are we likely to arrive at true knowledge. Afterwards we may utilise that knowledge for various ends; but if from the beginning we have only particular ends in view, then we limit our intellectual gain, limit our view of things, distort the truth because we cast it into the mould of some particular idea or utility and ignore or deny all that conflicts with that utility or that set idea. By so doing we may indeed make the reason act with great immediate power within the limits of the idea or the utility we have in view, just as instinct in the animal acts with great power within certain limits, for a certain end, yet finds itself helpless outside those limits. It is so indeed that the ordinary man uses his reason — as the animal uses his hereditary, transmitted instinct — with an absorbed devotion of it to the securing of some particular utility

or with a useful but hardly luminous application of a customary and transmitted reasoning to the necessary practical interests of his life. Even the thinking man ordinarily limits his reason to the working out of certain preferred ideas; he ignores or denies all that is not useful to these or does not assist or justify or actually contradicts or seriously modifies them, — except in so far as life itself compels or cautions him to accept modifications for the time being or ignore their necessity at his peril. It is in such limits that man's reason normally acts. He follows most commonly some interest or set of interests; he tramples down or through or ignores or pushes aside all truth of life and existence, truth of ethics, truth of beauty, truth of reason, truth of spirit which conflicts with his chosen opinions and interests; if he recognises these foreign elements, it is nominally, not in practice, or else with a distortion, a glossing which nullifies their consequences, perverts their spirit or whittles down their significance. It is this subjection to the interests, needs, instincts, passions, prejudices, traditional ideas and opinions of the ordinary mind[1] which constitutes the irrationality of human existence.

But even the man who is capable of governing his life by ideas, who recognises, that is to say, that it ought to express clearly conceived truths and principles of his being or of all being and tries to find out or to know from others what these are, is not often capable of the highest, the free and disinterested use of his rational mind. As others are subject to the tyranny of their interests, prejudices, instincts or passions, so he is subjected to the tyranny of ideas. Indeed, he turns these ideas into interests, obscures them with his prejudices and passions and is unable to think freely about them, unable to distinguish their limits or the relation to them of other, different and opposite ideas and the equal right of these also to existence. Thus, as we constantly see, individuals, masses of men, whole generations are carried away by certain ethical, religious, aesthetic, political ideas or a set of

[1] The ordinary mind in man is not truly the thinking mind proper, it is a life-mind, a vital mind as we may call it, which has learned to think and even to reason but for its own ends and on its own lines, not on those of a true mind of knowledge.

ideas, espouse them with passion, pursue them as interests, seek to make them a system and lasting rule of life and are swept away in the drive of their action and do not really use the free and disinterested reason for the right knowledge of existence and for its right and sane government. The ideas are to a certain extent fulfilled, they triumph for a time, but their very success brings disappointment and disillusionment. This happens, first, because they can only succeed by compromises and pacts with the inferior, irrational life of man which diminish their validity and tarnish their light and glory. Often indeed their triumph is convicted of unreality, and doubt and disillusionment fall on the faith and enthusiasm which brought victory to their side. But even were it not so, the ideas themselves are partial and insufficient; not only have they a very partial triumph, but if their success were complete, it would still disappoint, because they are not the whole truth of life and therefore cannot securely govern and perfect life. Life escapes from the formulas and systems which our reason labours to impose on it; it proclaims itself too complex, too full of infinite potentialities to be tyrannised over by the arbitrary intellect of man.

This is the cause why all human systems have failed in the end; for they have never been anything but a partial and confused application of reason to life. Moreover, even where they have been most clear and rational, these systems have pretended that their ideas were the whole truth of life and tried so to apply them. This they could not be, and life in the end has broken or undermined them and passed on to its own large incalculable movement. Mankind, thus using its reason as an aid and justification for its interests and passions, thus obeying the drive of a partial, a mixed and imperfect rationality towards action, thus striving to govern the complex totalities of life by partial truths, has stumbled on from experiment to experiment, always believing that it is about to grasp the crown, always finding that it has fulfilled as yet little or nothing of what it has to accomplish. Compelled by nature to apply reason to life, yet possessing only a partial rationality limited in itself and confused by the siege of the lower members, it could do nothing else. For the limited

imperfect human reason has no self-sufficient light of its own; it is obliged to proceed by observation, by experiment, by action, through errors and stumblings to a larger experience.

But behind all this continuity of failure there has persisted a faith that the reason of man would end in triumphing over its difficulties, that it would purify and enlarge itself, become sufficient to its work and at last subject rebellious life to its control. For, apart from the stumbling action of the world, there has been a labour of the individual thinker in man and this has achieved a higher quality and risen to a loftier and clearer atmosphere above the general human thought-levels. Here there has been the work of a reason that seeks always after knowledge and strives patiently to find out truth for itself, without bias, without the interference of distorting interests, to study everything, to analyse everything, to know the principle and process of everything. Philosophy, Science, learning, the reasoned arts, all the agelong labour of the critical reason in man have been the result of this effort. In the modern era under the impulsion of Science this effort assumed enormous proportions and claimed for a time to examine successfully and lay down finally the true principle and the sufficient rule of process not only for all the activities of Nature, but for all the activities of man. It has done great things, but it has not been in the end a success. The human mind is beginning to perceive that it has left the heart of almost every problem untouched and illumined only outsides and a certain range of processes. There has been a great and ordered classification and mechanisation, a great discovery and practical result of increasing knowledge, but only on the physical surface of things. Vast abysses of Truth lie below in which are concealed the real springs, the mysterious powers and secretly decisive influences of existence. It is a question whether the intellectual reason will ever be able to give us an adequate account of these deeper and greater things or subject them to the intelligent will as it has succeeded in explaining and canalising, though still imperfectly, yet with much show of triumphant result, the forces of physical Nature. But these other powers are much larger, subtler, deeper down,

more hidden, elusive and variable than those of physical Nature.

The whole difficulty of the reason in trying to govern our existence is that because of its own inherent limitations it is unable to deal with life in its complexity or in its integral movements; it is compelled to break it up into parts, to make more or less artificial classifications, to build systems with limited data which are contradicted, upset or have to be continually modified by other data, to work out a selection of regulated potentialities which is broken down by the bursting of a new wave of yet unregulated potentialities. It would almost appear even that there are two worlds, the world of ideas proper to the intellect and the world of life which escapes from the full control of the reason, and that to bridge adequately the gulf between these two domains is beyond the power and province of the reason and the intelligent will. It would seem that these can only create either a series of more or less empirical compromises or else a series of arbitrary and practically inapplicable or only partially applicable systems. The reason of man struggling with life becomes either an empiric or a doctrinaire.

Reason can indeed make itself a mere servant of life; it can limit itself to the work the average normal man demands from it, content to furnish means and justifications for the interests, passions, prejudices of man and clothe them with a misleading garb of rationality or at most supply them with their own secure and enlightened order or with rules of caution and self-restraint sufficient to prevent their more egregious stumbles and most unpleasant consequences. But this is obviously to abdicate its throne or its highest office and to betray the hope with which man set forth on his journey. It may again determine to found itself securely on the facts of life, disinterestedly indeed, that is to say, with a dispassionate critical observation of its principles and processes, but with a prudent resolve not to venture too much forward into the unknown or elevate itself far beyond the immediate realities of our apparent or phenomenal existence. But here again it abdicates; either it becomes a mere critic and observer or else, so far as it tries to lay down laws, it does so within very narrow limits of immediate potentiality and it

renounces man's drift towards higher possibilities, his saving gift of idealism. In this limited use of the reason subjected to the rule of an immediate, an apparent vital and physical practicality man cannot rest long satisfied. For his nature pushes him towards the heights; it demands a constant effort of self-transcendence and the impulsion towards things unachieved and even immediately impossible.

On the other hand, when it attempts a higher action reason separates itself from life. Its very attempt at a disinterested and dispassionate knowledge carries it to an elevation where it loses hold of that other knowledge which our instincts and impulses carry within themselves and which, however imperfect, obscure and limited, is still a hidden action of the universal Knowledge-Will inherent in existence that creates and directs all things according to their nature. True, even Science and Philosophy are never entirely dispassionate and disinterested. They fall into subjection to the tyranny of their own ideas, their partial systems, their hasty generalisations and by the innate drive of man towards practice they seek to impose these upon the life. But even so they enter into a world either of abstract ideas or of ideals or of rigid laws from which the complexity of life escapes. The idealist, the thinker, the philosopher, the poet and artist, even the moralist, all those who live much in ideas, when they come to grapple at close quarters with practical life, seem to find themselves something at a loss and are constantly defeated in their endeavour to govern life by their ideas. They exercise a powerful influence, but it is indirectly, more by throwing their ideas into Life which does with them what the secret Will in it chooses than by a direct and successfully ordered action. Not that the pure empiric, the practical man really succeeds any better by his direct action; for that too is taken by the secret Will in life and turned to quite other ends than the practical man had intended. On the contrary, ideals and idealists are necessary; ideals are the savour and sap of life, idealists the most powerful diviners and assistants of its purposes. But reduce your ideal to a system and it at once begins to fail; apply your general laws and fixed ideas systematically as the doctrinaire would do, and Life very

soon breaks through or writhes out of their hold or transforms your system, even while it nominally exists, into something the originator would not recognise and would repudiate perhaps as the very contradiction of the principles which he sought to eternise.

The root of the difficulty is this that at the very basis of all our life and existence, internal and external, there is something on which the intellect can never lay a controlling hold, the Absolute, the Infinite. Behind everything in life there is an Absolute, which that thing is seeking after in its own way; everything finite is striving to express an infinite which it feels to be its real truth. Moreover, it is not only each class, each type, each tendency in Nature that is thus impelled to strive after its own secret truth in its own way, but each individual brings in his own variations. Thus there is not only an Absolute, an Infinite in itself which governs its own expression in many forms and tendencies, but there is also a principle of infinite potentiality and variation quite baffling to the reasoning intelligence; for the reason deals successfully only with the settled and the finite. In man this difficulty reaches its acme. For not only is mankind unlimited in potentiality; not only is each of its powers and tendencies seeking after its own absolute in its own way and therefore naturally restless under any rigid control by the reason; but in each man their degrees, methods, combinations vary, each man belongs not only to the common humanity, but to the Infinite in himself and is therefore unique. It is because this is the reality of our existence that the intellectual reason and the intelligent will cannot deal with life as its sovereign, even though they may be at present our supreme instruments and may have been in our evolution supremely important and helpful. The reason can govern, but only as a minister, imperfectly, or as a general arbiter and giver of suggestions which are not really supreme commands, or as one channel of the sovereign authority, because that hidden Power acts at present not directly but through many agents and messengers. The real sovereign is another than the reasoning intelligence. Man's impulse to be free, master of Nature in himself and his environment cannot be

really fulfilled until his self-consciousness has grown beyond the rational mentality, become aware of the true sovereign and either identified itself with him or entered into constant communion with his supreme will and knowledge.

Chapter XII

The Office and Limitations of the Reason

IF THE reason is not the sovereign master of our being nor even intended to be more than an intermediary or minister, it cannot succeed in giving a perfect law to the other estates of the realm, although it may impose on them a temporary and imperfect order as a passage to a higher perfection. The rational or intellectual man is not the last and highest ideal of manhood, nor would a rational society be the last and highest expression of the possibilities of an aggregate human life,—unless indeed we give to this word, reason, a wider meaning than it now possesses and include in it the combined wisdom of all our powers of knowledge, those which stand below and above the understanding and logical mind as well as this strictly rational part of our nature. The Spirit that manifests itself in man and dominates secretly the phases of his development, is greater and profounder than his intellect and drives towards a perfection that cannot be shut in by the arbitrary constructions of the human reason.

Meanwhile, the intellect performs its function; it leads man to the gates of a greater self-consciousness and places him with unbandaged eyes on that wide threshold where a more luminous Angel has to take him by the hand. It takes first the lower powers of his existence, each absorbed in its own urge, each striving with a blind self-sufficiency towards the fulfilment of its own instincts and primary impulses; it teaches them to understand themselves and to look through the reflecting eyes of the intelligence on the laws of their own action. It enables them to discern intelligently the high in themselves from the low, the pure from the impure and out of a crude confusion to arrive at more and more luminous formulas of their possibilities. It gives

them self-knowledge and is a guide, teacher, purifier, liberator. For it enables them also to look beyond themselves and at each other and to draw upon each other for fresh motives and a richer working. It strengthens and purifies the hedonistic and the aesthetic activities and softens their quarrel with the ethical mind and instinct; it gives them solidity and seriousness, brings them to the support of the practical and dynamic powers and allies them more closely to the strong actualities of life. It sweetens the ethical will by infusing into it psychic, hedonistic and aesthetic elements and ennobles by all these separately or together the practical, dynamic and utilitarian temperament of the human being. At the same time it plays the part of a judge and legislator, seeks to fix rules, provide systems and regularised combinations which shall enable the powers of the human soul to walk by a settled path and act according to a sure law, an ascertained measure and in a balanced rhythm. Here it finds after a time that its legislative action becomes a force for limitation and turns into a bondage and that the regularised system which it has imposed in the interests of order and conservation becomes a cause of petrifaction and the sealing up of the fountains of life. It has to bring in its own saving faculty of doubt. Under the impulse of the intelligence warned by the obscure revolt of the oppressed springs of life, ethics, aesthetics, the social, political, economic rule begin to question themselves and, if this at first brings in again some confusion, disorder and uncertainty, yet it awakens new movements of imagination, insight, self-knowledge and self-realisation by which old systems and formulas are transformed or disappear, new experiments are made and in the end larger potentialities and combinations are brought into play. By this double action of the intelligence, affirming and imposing what it has seen and again in due season questioning what has been accomplished in order to make a new affirmation, fixing a rule and order and liberating from rule and order, the progress of the race is assured, however uncertain may seem its steps and stages.

But the action of the intelligence is not only turned downward and outward upon our subjective and external life to

understand it and determine the law and order of its present movement and its future potentialities. It has also an upward and inward eye and a more luminous functioning by which it accepts divinations from the hidden eternities. It is opened in this power of vision to a Truth above it from which it derives, however imperfectly and as from behind a veil, an indirect knowledge of the universal principles of our existence and its possibilities; it receives and turns what it can seize of them into intellectual forms and these provide us with large governing ideas by which our efforts can be shaped and around which they can be concentrated or massed; it defines the ideals which we seek to accomplish. It provides us with the great ideas that are forces (*idées forces*), ideas which in their own strength impose themselves upon our life and compel it into their moulds. Only the forms we give these ideas are intellectual; they themselves descend from a plane of truth of being where knowledge and force are one, the idea and the power of self-fulfilment in the idea are inseparable. Unfortunately, when translated into the forms of our intelligence which acts only by a separating and combining analysis and synthesis and into the effort of our life which advances by a sort of experimental and empirical seeking, these powers become disparate and conflicting ideals which we have all the difficulty in the world to bring into any kind of satisfactory harmony. Such are the primary principles of liberty and order, good, beauty and truth, the ideal of power and the ideal of love, individualism and collectivism, self-denial and self-fulfilment and a hundred others. In each sphere of human life, in each part of our being and our action the intellect presents us with the opposition of a number of such master ideas and such conflicting principles. It finds each to be a truth to which something essential in our being responds, — in our higher nature a law, in our lower nature an instinct. It seeks to fulfil each in turn, builds a system of action round it and goes from one to the other and back again to what it has left. Or it tries to combine them but is contented with none of the combinations it has made because none brings about their perfect reconciliation or their satisfied oneness. That indeed

belongs to a larger and higher consciousness, not yet attained by mankind, where these opposites are ever harmonised and even unified because in their origin they are eternally one. But still every enlarged attempt of the intelligence thus dealing with our inner and outer life increases the width and wealth of our nature, opens it to larger possibilities of self-knowledge and self-realisation and brings us nearer to our awakening into that greater consciousness.

The individual and social progress of man has been thus a double movement of self-illumination and self-harmonising with the intelligence and the intelligent will as the intermediaries between his soul and its works. He has had to bring out numberless possibilities of self-understanding, self-mastery, self-formation out of his first crude life of instincts and impulses; he has been constantly impelled to convert that lower animal or half-animal existence with its imperfect self-conscience into the stuff of intelligent being, instincts into ideas, impulses into ordered movements of an intelligent will. But as he has to proceed out of ignorance into knowledge by a slow labour of self-recognition and mastery of his surroundings and his material and as his intelligence is incapable of seizing comprehensively the whole of himself in knowledge, unable to work out comprehensively the mass of his possibilities in action, he has had to proceed piecemeal, by partial experiments, by creation of different types, by a constant swinging backward and forward between the various possibilities before him and the different elements he has to harmonise.

It is not only that he has to contrive continually some new harmony between the various elements of his being, physical, vitalistic, practical and dynamic, aesthetic, emotional and hedonistic, ethical, intellectual, but each of them again has to arrive at some order of its own disparate materials. In his ethics he is divided by different moral tendencies, justice and charity, self-help and altruism, self-increase and self-abnegation, the tendencies of strength and the tendencies of love, the moral rule of activism and the moral rule of quietism. His emotions are necessary to his development and their indulgence essential

to the outflowering of his rich humanity; yet is he constantly called upon to coerce and deny them, nor is there any sure rule to guide him in the perplexity of this twofold need. His hedonistic impulse is called many ways by different fields, objects, ideals of self-satisfaction. His aesthetic enjoyment, his aesthetic creation forms for itself under the stress of the intelligence different laws and forms; each seeks to impose itself as the best and the standard, yet each, if its claim were allowed, would by its unjust victory impoverish and imprison his faculty and his felicity in its exercise. His politics and society are a series of adventures and experiments among various possibilities of autocracy, monarchism, military aristocracy, mercantile oligarchy, open or veiled plutocracy, pseudo-democracy of various kinds, bourgeois or proletarian, individualistic or collectivist or bureaucratic, socialism awaiting him, anarchism looming beyond it; and all these correspond to some truth of his social being, some need of his complex social nature, some instinct or force in it which demands that form for its effectuation. Mankind works out these difficulties under the stress of the spirit within it by throwing out a constant variation of types, types of character and temperament, types of practical activity, aesthetic creation, polity, society, ethical order, intellectual system, which vary from the pure to the mixed, from the simple harmony to the complex; each and all of these are so many experiments of individual and collective self-formation in the light of a progressive and increasing knowledge. That knowledge is governed by a number of conflicting ideas and ideals around which these experiments group themselves: each of them is gradually pushed as far as possible in its purity and again mixed and combined as much as possible with others so that there may be a more complex form and an enriched action. Each type has to be broken in turn to yield place to new types and each combination has to give way to the possibility of a new combination. Through it all there is growing an accumulating stock of self-experience and self-actualisation of which the ordinary man accepts some current formulation conventionally as if it were an absolute law and truth, — often enough he even thinks it to be that, — but

which the more developed human being seeks always either to break or to enlarge and make more profound or subtle in order to increase or make room for an increase of human capacity, perfectibility, happiness.

This view of human life and of the process of our development, to which subjectivism readily leads us, gives us a truer vision of the place of the intellect in the human movement. We have seen that the intellect has a double working, dispassionate and interested, self-centred or subservient to movements not its own. The one is a disinterested pursuit of truth for the sake of Truth and of knowledge for the sake of Knowledge without any ulterior motive, with every consideration put away except the rule of keeping the eye on the object, on the fact under enquiry and finding out its truth, its process, its law. The other is coloured by the passion for practice, the desire to govern life by the truth discovered or the fascination of an idea which we labour to establish as the sovereign law of our life and action. We have seen indeed that this is the superiority of reason over the other faculties of man that it is not confined to a separate absorbed action of its own, but plays upon all the others, discovers their law and truth, makes its discoveries serviceable to them and even in pursuing its own bent and end serves also their ends and arrives at a catholic utility. Man in fact does not live for knowledge alone; life in its widest sense is his principal preoccupation and he seeks knowledge for its utility to life much more than for the pure pleasure of acquiring knowledge. But it is precisely in this putting of knowledge at the service of life that the human intellect falls into that confusion and imperfection which pursues all human action. So long as we pursue knowledge for its own sake, there is nothing to be said: the reason is performing its natural function; it is exercising securely its highest right. In the work of the philosopher, the scientist, the savant labouring to add something to the stock of our ascertainable knowledge, there is as perfect a purity and satisfaction as in that of the poet and artist creating forms of beauty for the aesthetic delight of the race. Whatever individual error and limitation there may be, does not matter; for the collective and progressive knowledge of

the race has gained the truth that has been discovered and may be trusted in time to get rid of the error. It is when it tries to apply ideas to life that the human intellect stumbles and finds itself at fault.

Ordinarily, this is because in concerning itself with action the intelligence of man becomes at once partial and passionate and makes itself the servant of something other than the pure truth. But even if the intellect keeps itself as impartial and disinterested as possible, — and altogether impartial, altogether disinterested the human intellect cannot be unless it is content to arrive at an entire divorce from practice or a sort of large but ineffective tolerantism, eclecticism or sceptical curiosity, — still the truths it discovers or the ideas it promulgates become, the moment they are applied to life, the plaything of forces over which the reason has little control. Science pursuing its cold and even way has made discoveries which have served on one side a practical humanitarianism, on the other supplied monstrous weapons to egoism and mutual destruction; it has made possible a gigantic efficiency of organisation which has been used on one side for the economic and social amelioration of the nations and on the other for turning each into a colossal battering-ram of aggression, ruin and slaughter. It has given rise on the one side to a large rationalistic and altruistic humanitarianism, on the other it has justified a godless egoism, vitalism, vulgar will to power and success. It has drawn mankind together and given it a new hope and at the same time crushed it with the burden of a monstrous commercialism. Nor is this due, as is so often asserted, to its divorce from religion or to any lack of idealism. Idealistic philosophy has been equally at the service of the powers of good and evil and provided an intellectual conviction both for reaction and for progress. Organised religion itself has often enough in the past hounded men to crime and massacre and justified obscurantism and oppression.

The truth is that upon which we are now insisting, that reason is in its nature an imperfect light with a large but still restricted mission and that once it applies itself to life and action it becomes subject to what it studies and the servant and

counsellor of the forces in whose obscure and ill-understood struggle it intervenes. It can in its nature be used and has always been used to justify any idea, theory of life, system of society or government, ideal of individual or collective action to which the will of man attaches itself for the moment or through the centuries. In philosophy it gives equally good reasons for monism and pluralism or for any halting-place between them, for the belief in Being or for the belief in Becoming, for optimism and pessimism, for activism and quietism. It can justify the most mystic religionism and the most positive atheism, get rid of God or see nothing else. In aesthetics it supplies the basis equally for classicism and romanticism, for an idealistic, religious or mystic theory of art or for the most earthy realism. It can with equal power base austerely a strict and narrow moralism or prove triumphantly the thesis of the antinomian. It has been the sufficient and convincing prophet of every kind of autocracy or oligarchy and of every species of democracy; it supplies excellent and satisfying reasons for competitive individualism and equally excellent and satisfying reasons for communism or against communism and for State socialism or for one variety of socialism against another. It can place itself with equal effectivity at the service of utilitarianism, economism, hedonism, aestheticism, sensualism, ethicism, idealism or any other essential need or activity of man and build around it a philosophy, a political and social system, a theory of conduct and life. Ask it not to lean to one idea alone, but to make an eclectic combination or a synthetic harmony and it will satisfy you; only, there being any number of possible combinations or harmonies, it will equally well justify the one or the other and set up or throw down any one of them according as the spirit in man is attracted to or withdraws from it. For it is really that which decides and the reason is only a brilliant servant and minister of this veiled and secret sovereign.

This truth is hidden from the rationalist because he is supported by two constant articles of faith, first that his own reason is right and the reason of others who differ from him is wrong, and secondly that whatever may be the present deficiencies of

the human intellect, the collective human reason will eventually arrive at purity and be able to found human thought and life securely on a clear rational basis entirely satisfying to the intelligence. His first article of faith is no doubt the common expression of our egoism and arrogant fallibility, but it is also something more; it expresses this truth that it is the legitimate function of the reason to justify to man his action and his hope and the faith that is in him and to give him that idea and knowledge, however restricted, and that dynamic conviction, however narrow and intolerant, which he needs in order that he may live, act and grow in the highest light available to him. The reason cannot grasp all truth in its embrace because truth is too infinite for it; but still it does grasp the something of it which we immediately need, and its insufficiency does not detract from the value of its work, but is rather the measure of its value. For man is not intended to grasp the whole truth of his being at once, but to move towards it through a succession of experiences and a constant, though not by any means a perfectly continuous self-enlargement. The first business of reason then is to justify and enlighten to him his various experiences and to give him faith and conviction in holding on to his self-enlargings. It justifies to him now this, now that, the experience of the moment, the receding light of the past, the half-seen vision of the future. Its inconstancy, its divisibility against itself, its power of sustaining opposite views are the whole secret of its value. It would not do indeed for it to support too conflicting views in the same individual, except at moments of awakening and transition, but in the collective body of men and in the successions of Time that is its whole business. For so man moves towards the infinity of the Truth by the experience of its variety; so his reason helps him to build, change, destroy what he has built and prepare a new construction, in a word, to progress, grow, enlarge himself in his self-knowledge and world-knowledge and their works.

The second article of faith of the believer in reason is also an error and yet contains a truth. The reason cannot arrive at any final truth because it can neither get to the root of things nor embrace the totality of their secrets; it deals with the finite,

the separate, the limited aggregate, and has no measure for the all and the infinite. Nor can reason found a perfect life for man or a perfect society. A purely rational human life would be a life baulked and deprived of its most powerful dynamic sources; it would be a substitution of the minister for the sovereign. A purely rational society could not come into being and, if it could be born, either could not live or would sterilise and petrify human existence. The root powers of human life, its intimate causes are below, irrational, and they are above, suprarational. But this is true that by constant enlargement, purification, openness the reason of man is bound to arrive at an intelligent sense even of that which is hidden from it, a power of passive, yet sympathetic reflection of the Light that surpasses it. Its limit is reached, its function is finished when it can say to man, "There is a Soul, a Self, a God in the world and in man who works concealed and all is his self-concealing and gradual self-unfolding. His minister I have been, slowly to unseal your eyes, remove the thick integuments of your vision until there is only my own luminous veil between you and him. Remove that and make the soul of man one in fact and nature with this Divine; then you will know yourself, discover the highest and widest law of your being, become the possessors or at least the receivers and instruments of a higher will and knowledge than mine and lay hold at last on the true secret and the whole sense of a human and yet divine living."

Chapter XIII

Reason and Religion

IT WOULD seem then that reason is an insufficient, often an inefficient, even a stumbling and at its best a very partially enlightened guide for humanity in that great endeavour which is the real heart of human progress and the inner justification of our existence as souls, minds and bodies upon the earth. For that endeavour is not only the effort to survive and make a place for ourselves on the earth as the animals do, not only having made to keep it and develop its best vital and egoistic or communal use for the efficiency and enjoyment of the individual, the family or the collective ego, substantially as is done by the animal families and colonies, in bee-hive or ant-hill for example, though in the larger, many-sided way of reasoning animals; it is also, and much more characteristically of our human as distinguished from our animal element, the endeavour to arrive at a harmonised inner and outer perfection, and, as we find in the end, at its highest height, to culminate in the discovery of the divine Reality behind our existence and the complete and ideal Person within us and the shaping of human life in that image. But if that is the truth, then neither the Hellenic ideal of an all-round philosophic, aesthetic, moral and physical culture governed by the enlightened reason of man and led by the wisest minds of a free society, nor the modern ideal of an efficient culture and successful economic civilisation governed by the collective reason and organised knowledge of mankind can be either the highest or the widest goal of social development.

The Hellenic ideal was roughly expressed in the old Latin maxim, a sound mind in a sound body. And by a sound body the ancients meant a healthy and beautiful body well-fitted for the rational use and enjoyment of life. And by a sound mind they meant a clear and balanced reason and an enlightened and well-trained mentality, — trained in the sense of ancient, not of

modern education. It was not to be packed with all available information and ideas, cast in the mould of science and a rational utility and so prepared for the efficient performance of social and civic needs and duties, for a professional avocation or for an intellectual pursuit; rather it was to be cultured in all its human capacities intellectual, moral, aesthetic, trained to use them rightly and to range freely, intelligently and flexibly in all questions and in all practical matters of philosophy, science, art, politics and social living. The ancient Greek mind was philosophic, aesthetic and political; the modern mind has been scientific, economic and utilitarian. The ancient ideal laid stress on soundness and beauty and sought to build up a fine and rational human life; the modern lays very little or no stress on beauty, prefers rational and practical soundness, useful adaptation, just mechanism and seeks to build up a well-ordered, well-informed and efficient human life. Both take it that man is partly a mental, partly a physical being with the mentalised physical life for his field and reason for his highest attribute and his highest possibility. But if we follow to the end the new vistas opened by the most advanced tendencies of a subjective age, we shall be led back to a still more ancient truth and ideal that overtops both the Hellenic and the modern levels. For we shall then seize the truth that man is a developing spirit trying here to find and fulfil itself in the forms of mind, life and body; and we shall perceive luminously growing before us the greater ideal of a deeply conscious self-illumined, self-possessing, self-mastering soul in a pure and perfect mind and body. The wider field it seeks will be, not the mentalised physical life with which man has started, but a new spiritualised life inward and outward, by which the perfected internal figures itself in a perfected external living. Beyond man's long intelligent effort towards a perfected culture and a rational society there opens the old religious and spiritual ideal, the hope of the kingdom of heaven within us and the city of God upon earth.

But if the soul is the true sovereign and if its spiritual self-finding, its progressive largest widest integral fulfilment by the power of the spirit are to be accepted as the ultimate secret of our

evolution, then since certainly the instinctive being of man below reason is not the means of attaining that high end and since we find that reason also is an insufficient light and power, there must be a superior range of being with its own proper powers, — liberated soul-faculties, a spiritual will and knowledge higher than the reason and intelligent will, — by which alone an entire conscious self-fulfilment can become possible to the human being. We must remember that our aim of self-fulfilment is an integral unfolding of the Divine within us, a complete evolution of the hidden divinity in the individual soul and the collective life. Otherwise we may simply come back to an old idea of individual and social living which had its greatness, but did not provide all the conditions of our perfection. That was the idea of a spiritualised typal society. It proceeded upon the supposition that each man has his own peculiar nature which is born from and reflects one element of the divine nature. The character of each individual, his ethical type, his training, his social occupation, his spiritual possibility must be formed or developed within the conditions of that peculiar element; the perfection he seeks in this life must be according to its law. The theory of ancient Indian culture — its practice, as is the way of human practice, did not always correspond to the theory — worked upon this supposition. It divided man in society into the fourfold order — an at once spiritual, psychic, ethical and economic order — of the Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra, — practically, the spiritual and intellectual man, the dynamic man of will, the vital, hedonistic and economic man, the material man; the whole society organised in these four constituent classes represented the complete image of the creative and active Godhead.

A different division of the typal society is quite possible. But whatever the arrangement or division, the typal principle cannot be the foundation of an ideal human society. Even according to the Indian theory it does not belong either to the periods of man's highest attainment or to the eras of his lowest possibility; it is neither the principle of his ideal age, his age of the perfected Truth, Satyayuga, Kritayuga, in which he lives according to some high and profound realisation of his divine possibility, nor of his

iron age, the Kaliyuga, in which he collapses towards the life of the instincts, impulses and desires with the reason degraded into a servant of this nether life of man. This too precise order is rather the appropriate principle of the intermediate ages of his cycle in which he attempts to maintain some imperfect form of his true law, his *dharma*, by will-power and force of character in the Treta, by law, arrangement and fixed convention in the Dwapara.[1] The type is not the integral man, it is the fixing and emphasising of the generally prominent part of his active nature. But each man contains in himself the whole divine potentiality and therefore the Shudra cannot be rigidly confined within his Shudrahood, nor the Brahmin in his Brahminhood, but each contains within himself the potentialities and the need of perfection of his other elements of a divine manhood. In the Kali age these potentialities may act in a state of crude disorder, the anarchy of our being which covers our confused attempt at a new order. In the intermediate ages the principle of order may take refuge in a limited perfection, suppressing some elements to perfect others. But the law of the Satya age is the large development of the whole truth of our being in the realisation of a spontaneous and self-supported spiritual harmony. That can only be realised by the evolution, in the measure of which our human capacity in its enlarging cycles becomes capable of it, of the spiritual ranges of our being and the unmasking of their inherent light and power, their knowledge and their divine capacities.

We shall better understand what may be this higher being and those higher faculties, if we look again at the dealings of the reason with the trend towards the absolute in our other faculties, in the divergent principles of our complex existence. Let us study especially its dealings with the suprarational in them and the infrarational, the two extremes between which our intelligence is some sort of mediator. The spiritual or suprarational is always turned at its heights towards the Absolute; in its extension, living

[1] Therefore it is said that Vishnu is the King in the Treta, but in the Dwapara the arranger and codifier of the knowledge and the law.

in the luminous infinite, its special power is to realise the infinite in the finite, the eternal unity in all divisions and differences. Our spiritual evolution ascends therefore through the relative to the absolute, through the finite to the infinite, through all divisions to oneness. Man in his spiritual realisation begins to find and seize hold on the satisfying intensities of the absolute in the relative, feels the large and serene presence of the infinite in the finite, discovers the reconciling law of a perfect unity in all divisions and differences. The spiritual will in his outer as in his inner life and formulation must be to effect a great reconciliation between the secret and eternal reality and the finite appearances of a world which seeks to express and in expressing seems to deny it. Our highest faculties then will be those which make this possible because they have in them the intimate light and power and joy by which these things can be grasped in direct knowledge and experience, realised and made normally and permanently effective in will, communicated to our whole nature. The infrarational, on the other hand, has its origin and basis in the obscure infinite of the Inconscient; it wells up in instincts and impulses, which are really the crude and more or less haphazard intuitions of a subconscient physical, vital, emotional and sensational mind and will in us. Its struggle is towards definition, towards self-creation, towards finding some finite order of its obscure knowledge and tendencies. But it has also the instinct and force of the infinite from which it proceeds; it contains obscure, limited and violent velleities that move it to grasp at the intensities of the absolute and pull them down or some touch of them into its finite action: but because it proceeds by ignorance and not by knowledge, it cannot truly succeed in this more vehement endeavour. The life of the reason and intelligent will stands between that upper and this nether power. On one side it takes up and enlightens the life of the instincts and impulses and helps it to find on a higher plane the finite order for which it gropes. On the other side it looks up towards the absolute, looks out towards the infinite, looks in towards the One, but without being able to grasp and hold their realities; for it is able only to consider them with a sort of derivative and

remote understanding, because it moves in the relative and, itself limited and definite, it can act only by definition, division and limitation. These three powers of being, the suprarational, rational and infrarational are present, but with an infinitely varying prominence in all our activities.

The limitations of the reason become very strikingly, very characteristically, very nakedly apparent when it is confronted with that great order of psychological truths and experiences which we have hitherto kept in the background — the religious being of man and his religious life. Here is a realm at which the intellectual reason gazes with the bewildered mind of a foreigner who hears a language of which the words and the spirit are unintelligible to him and sees everywhere forms of life and principles of thought and action which are absolutely strange to his experience. He may try to learn this speech and understand this strange and alien life; but it is with pain and difficulty, and he cannot succeed unless he has, so to speak, unlearned himself and become one in spirit and nature with the natives of this celestial empire. Till then his efforts to understand and interpret them in his own language and according to his own notions end at the worst in a gross misunderstanding and deformation. The attempts of the positive critical reason to dissect the phenomena of the religious life sound to men of spiritual experience like the prattle of a child who is trying to shape into the mould of his own habitual notions the life of adults or the blunders of an ignorant mind which thinks fit to criticise patronisingly or adversely the labours of a profound thinker or a great scientist. At the best even this futile labour can extract, can account for only the externals of the things it attempts to explain; the spirit is missed, the inner matter is left out, and as a result of that capital omission even the account of the externals is left without real truth and has only an apparent correctness.

The unaided intellectual reason faced with the phenomena of the religious life is naturally apt to adopt one of two attitudes, both of them shallow in the extreme, hastily presumptuous and erroneous. Either it views the whole thing as a mass of superstition, a mystical nonsense, a farrago of ignorant barbaric

survivals, — that was the extreme spirit of the rationalist now happily, though not dead, yet much weakened and almost moribund, — or it patronises religion, tries to explain its origins, to get rid of it by the process of explaining it away; or it labours gently or forcefully to reject or correct its superstitions, crudities, absurdities, to purify it into an abstract nothingness or persuade it to purify itself in the light of the reasoning intelligence; or it allows it a role, leaves it perhaps for the edification of the ignorant, admits its value as a moralising influence or its utility to the State for keeping the lower classes in order, even perhaps tries to invent that strange chimera, a rational religion.

The former attitude has on its positive side played a powerful part in the history of human thought, has even been of a considerable utility in its own way — we shall have to note briefly hereafter how and why — to human progress and in the end even to religion; but its intolerant negations are an arrogant falsity, as the human mind has now sufficiently begun to perceive. Its mistake is like that of a foreigner who thinks everything in an alien country absurd and inferior because these things are not his own ways of acting and thinking and cannot be cut out by his own measures or suited to his own standards. So the thoroughgoing rationalist asks the religious spirit, if it is to stand, to satisfy the material reason and even to give physical proof of its truths, while the very essence of religion is the discovery of the immaterial Spirit and the play of a supraphysical consciousness. So too he tries to judge religion by his idea of its externalities, just as an ignorant and obstreperous foreigner might try to judge a civilisation by the dress, outward colour of life and some of the most external peculiarities in the social manners of the inhabitants. That in this he errs in company with certain of the so-called religious themselves, may be his excuse, but cannot be the justification of his ignorance. The more moderate attitude of the rational mind has also played its part in the history of human thought. Its attempts to explain religion have resulted in the compilation of an immense mass of amazingly ingenious perversions, such as certain pseudo-scientific attempts to form a comparative Science of Religion. It has built up in the approved

modern style immense façades of theory with stray bricks of misunderstood facts for their material. Its mild condonations of religion have led to superficial phases of thought which have passed quickly away and left no trace behind them. Its efforts at the creation of a rational religion, perfectly well-intentioned, but helpless and unconvincing, have had no appreciable effect and have failed like a dispersing cloud, *chinnābhram iva naśyati*.

The deepest heart, the inmost essence of religion, apart from its outward machinery of creed, cult, ceremony and symbol, is the search for God and the finding of God. Its aspiration is to discover the Infinite, the Absolute, the One, the Divine, who is all these things and yet no abstraction but a Being. Its work is a sincere living out of the true and intimate relations between man and God, relations of unity, relations of difference, relations of an illuminated knowledge, an ecstatic love and delight, an absolute surrender and service, a casting of every part of our existence out of its normal status into an uprush of man towards the Divine and a descent of the Divine into man. All this has nothing to do with the realm of reason or its normal activities; its aim, its sphere, its process is suprarational. The knowledge of God is not to be gained by weighing the feeble arguments of reason for or against his existence: it is to be gained only by a self-transcending and absolute consecration, aspiration and experience. Nor does that experience proceed by anything like rational scientific experiment or rational philosophic thinking. Even in those parts of religious discipline which seem most to resemble scientific experiment, the method is a verification of things which exceed the reason and its timid scope. Even in those parts of religious knowledge which seem most to resemble intellectual operations, the illuminating faculties are not imagination, logic and rational judgment, but revelations, inspirations, intuitions, intuitive discernments that leap down to us from a plane of suprarational light. The love of God is an infinite and absolute feeling which does not admit of any rational limitation and does not use a language of rational worship and adoration; the delight in God is that peace and bliss which passes all understanding. The surrender to God is the surrender of the whole being to a

suprarational light, will, power and love and his service takes no account of the compromises with life which the practical reason of man uses as the best part of its method in the ordinary conduct of mundane existence. Wherever religion really finds itself, wherever it opens itself to its own spirit, — there is plenty of that sort of religious practice which is halting, imperfect, half-sincere, only half-sure of itself and in which reason can get in a word, — its way is absolute and its fruits are ineffable.

Reason has indeed a part to play in relation to this highest field of our religious being and experience, but that part is quite secondary and subordinate. It cannot lay down the law for the religious life, it cannot determine in its own right the system of divine knowledge; it cannot school and lesson the divine love and delight; it cannot set bounds to spiritual experience or lay its yoke upon the action of the spiritual man. Its sole legitimate sphere is to explain as best it can, in its own language and to the rational and intellectual parts of man, the truths, the experiences, the laws of our suprarational and spiritual existence. That has been the work of spiritual philosophy in the East and — much more crudely and imperfectly done — of theology in the West, a work of great importance at moments like the present when the intellect of mankind after a long wandering is again turning towards the search for the Divine. Here there must inevitably enter a part of those operations proper to the intellect, logical reasoning, inferences from the data given by rational experience, analogies drawn from our knowledge of the apparent facts of existence, appeals even to the physical truths of science, all the apparatus of the intelligent mind in its ordinary workings. But this is the weakest part of spiritual philosophy. It convinces the rational mind only where the intellect is already predisposed to belief, and even if it convinces, it cannot give the true knowledge. Reason is safest when it is content to take the profound truths and experiences of the spiritual being and the spiritual life, just as they are given to it, and throw them into such form, order and language as will make them the most intelligible or the least unintelligible to the reasoning mind. Even then it is not quite safe, for it is apt to harden the order into an intellectual system

and to present the form as if it were the essence. And, at best, it has to use a language which is not the very tongue of the suprarational truth but its inadequate translation and, since it is not the ordinary tongue either of the rational intelligence, it is open to non-understanding or misunderstanding by the ordinary reason of mankind. It is well-known to the experience of the spiritual seeker that even the highest philosophising cannot give a true inner knowledge, is not the spiritual light, does not open the gates of experience. All it can do is to address the consciousness of man through his intellect and, when it has done, to say, "I have tried to give you the truth in a form and system which will make it intelligible and possible to you; if you are intellectually convinced or attracted, you can now seek the real knowledge, but you must seek it by other means which are beyond my province."

But there is another level of the religious life in which reason might seem justified in interfering more independently and entitled to assume a superior role. For as there is the suprarational life in which religious aspiration finds entirely what it seeks, so too there is also the infrarational life of the instincts, impulses, sensations, crude emotions, vital activities from which all human aspiration takes its beginning. These too feel the touch of the religious sense in man, share its needs and experience, desire its satisfactions. Religion includes this satisfaction also in its scope, and in what is usually called religion it seems even to be the greater part, sometimes to an external view almost the whole; for the supreme purity of spiritual experience does not appear or is glimpsed only through this mixed and turbid current. Much impurity, ignorance, superstition, many doubtful elements must form as the result of this contact and union of our highest tendencies with our lower ignorant nature. Here it would seem that reason has its legitimate part; here surely it can intervene to enlighten, purify, rationalise the play of the instincts and impulses. It would seem that a religious reformation, a movement to substitute a "pure" and rational religion for one that is largely infrarational and impure, would be a distinct advance in the religious development of humanity. To

a certain extent this may be, but, owing to the peculiar nature of the religious being, its entire urge towards the suprarational, not without serious qualifications, nor can the rational mind do anything here that is of a high positive value.

Religious forms and systems become effete and corrupt and have to be destroyed, or they lose much of their inner sense and become clouded in knowledge and injurious in practice, and in destroying what is effete or in negating aberrations reason has played an important part in religious history. But in its endeavour to get rid of the superstition and ignorance which have attached themselves to religious forms and symbols, intellectual reason unenlightened by spiritual knowledge tends to deny and, so far as it can, to destroy the truth and the experience which was contained in them. Reformations which give too much to reason and are too negative and protestant, usually create religions which lack in wealth of spirituality and fullness of religious emotion; they are not opulent in their contents; their form and too often their spirit is impoverished, bare and cold. Nor are they really rational; for they live not by their reasoning and dogma, which to the rational mind is as irrational as that of the creeds they replace, still less by their negations, but by their positive quantum of faith and fervour which is suprarational in its whole aim and has too its infrarational elements. If these seem less gross to the ordinary mind than those of less self-questioning creeds, it is often because they are more timid in venturing into the realm of suprarational experience. The life of the instincts and impulses on its religious side cannot be satisfyingly purified by reason, but rather by being sublimated, by being lifted up into the illuminations of the spirit. The natural line of religious development proceeds always by illumination; and religious reformation acts best when either it reilluminates rather than destroys old forms or, where destruction is necessary, replaces them by richer and not by poorer forms, and in any case when it purifies by suprarational illumination, not by rational enlightenment. A purely rational religion could only be a cold and bare Deism, and such attempts have always failed to achieve vitality and permanence; for they act contrary to

the *dharma*, the natural law and spirit of religion. If reason is to play any decisive part, it must be an intuitive rather than an intellectual reason, touched always by spiritual intensity and insight. For it must be remembered that the infrarational also has behind it a secret Truth which does not fall within the domain of the Reason and is not wholly amenable to its judgments. The heart has its knowledge, the life has its intuitive spirit within it, its intimations, divinations, outbreaks and upflamings of a Secret Energy, a divine or at least semi-divine aspiration and outreaching which the eye of intuition alone can fathom and only intuitive speech or symbol can shape or utter. To root out these things from religion or to purge religion of any elements necessary for its completeness because the forms are defective or obscure, without having the power to illuminate them from within or the patience to wait for their illumination from above or without replacing them by more luminous symbols, is not to purify but to pauperise.

But the relations of the spirit and the reason need not be, as they too often are in our practice, hostile or without any point of contact. Religion itself need not adopt for its principle the formula "I believe because it is impossible" or Pascal's "I believe because it is absurd." What is impossible or absurd to the unaided reason, becomes real and right to the reason lifted beyond itself by the power of the spirit and irradiated by its light. For then it is dominated by the intuitive mind which is our means of passage to a yet higher principle of knowledge. The widest spirituality does not exclude or discourage any essential human activity or faculty, but works rather to lift all of them up out of their imperfection and groping ignorance, transforms them by its touch and makes them the instruments of the light, power and joy of the divine being and the divine nature.

Chapter XIV

The Suprarational Beauty

RELIGION is the seeking after the spiritual, the suprarational and therefore in this sphere the intellectual reason may well be an insufficient help and find itself, not only at the end but from the beginning, out of its province and condemned to tread either diffidently or else with a stumbling presumptuousness in the realm of a power and a light higher than its own. But in the other spheres of human consciousness and human activity it may be thought that it has the right to the sovereign place, since these move on the lower plane of the rational and the finite or belong to that border-land where the rational and the infrarational meet and the impulses and the instincts of man stand in need above all of the light and the control of the reason. In its own sphere of finite knowledge, science, philosophy, the useful arts, its right, one would think, must be indisputable. But this does not turn out in the end to be true. Its province may be larger, its powers more ample, its action more justly self-confident, but in the end everywhere it finds itself standing between the two other powers of our being and fulfilling in greater or less degree the same function of an intermediary. On one side it is an enlightener — not always the chief enlightener — and the corrector of our life-impulses and first mental seekings, on the other it is only one minister of the veiled Spirit and a preparer of the paths for the coming of its rule.

This is especially evident in the two realms which in the ordinary scale of our powers stand nearest to the reason and on either side of it, the aesthetic and the ethical being, the search for Beauty and the search for Good. Man's seeking after beauty reaches its most intense and satisfying expression in the great creative arts, poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, but in its full extension there is no activity of his nature or his life from which it

need or ought to be excluded, — provided we understand beauty both in its widest and its truest sense. A complete and universal appreciation of beauty and the making entirely beautiful our whole life and being must surely be a necessary character of the perfect individual and the perfect society. But in its origin this seeking for beauty is not rational; it springs from the roots of our life, it is an instinct and an impulse, an instinct of aesthetic satisfaction and an impulse of aesthetic creation and enjoyment. Starting from the infrarational parts of our being, this instinct and impulse begin with much imperfection and impurity and with great crudities both in creation and in appreciation. It is here that the reason comes in to distinguish, to enlighten, to correct, to point out the deficiencies and the crudities, to lay down laws of aesthetics and to purify our appreciation and our creation by improved taste and right knowledge. While we are thus striving to learn and correct ourselves, it may seem to be the true law-giver both for the artist and the admirer and, though not the creator of our aesthetic instinct and impulse, yet the creator in us of an aesthetic conscience and its vigilant judge and guide. That which was an obscure and erratic activity, it makes self-conscious and rationally discriminative in its work and enjoyment.

But again this is true only in restricted bounds or, if anywhere entirely true, then only on a middle plane of our aesthetic seeking and activity. Where the greatest and most powerful creation of beauty is accomplished and its appreciation and enjoyment rise to the highest pitch, the rational is always surpassed and left behind. The creation of beauty in poetry and art does not fall within the sovereignty or even within the sphere of the reason. The intellect is not the poet, the artist, the creator within us; creation comes by a suprarational influx of light and power which must work always, if it is to do its best, by vision and inspiration. It may use the intellect for certain of its operations, but in proportion as it subjects itself to the intellect, it loses in power and force of vision and diminishes the splendour and truth of the beauty it creates. The intellect may take hold of the influx, moderate and repress the divine enthusiasm of creation

and force it to obey the prudence of its dictates, but in doing so it brings down the work to its own inferior level, and the lowering is in proportion to the intellectual interference. For by itself the intelligence can only achieve talent, though it may be a high and even, if sufficiently helped from above, a surpassing talent. Genius, the true creator, is always suprarational in its nature and its instrumentation even when it seems to be doing the work of the reason; it is most itself, most exalted in its work, most sustained in the power, depth, height and beauty of its achievement when it is least touched by, least mixed with any control of the mere intellectuality and least often drops from its heights of vision and inspiration into reliance upon the always mechanical process of intellectual construction. Art-creation which accepts the canons of the reason and works within the limits laid down by it, may be great, beautiful and powerful; for genius can preserve its power even when it labours in shackles and refuses to put forth all its resources: but when it proceeds by means of the intellect, it constructs, but does not create. It may construct well and with a good and faultless workmanship, but its success is formal and not of the spirit, a success of technique and not the embodiment of the imperishable truth of beauty seized in its inner reality, its divine delight, its appeal to a supreme source of ecstasy, Ananda.

There have been periods of artistic creation, ages of reason, in which the rational and intellectual tendency has prevailed in poetry and art; there have even been nations which in their great formative periods of art and literature have set up reason and a meticulous taste as the sovereign powers of their aesthetic activity. At their best these periods have achieved work of a certain greatness, but predominantly of an intellectual greatness and perfection of technique rather than achievements of a supreme inspired and revealing beauty; indeed their very aim has been not the discovery of the deeper truth of beauty, but truth of ideas and truth of reason, a critical rather than a true creative aim. Their leading object has been an intellectual criticism of life and nature elevated by a consummate poetical rhythm and diction rather than a revelation of God and man and life and

nature in inspired forms of artistic beauty. But great art is not satisfied with representing the intellectual truth of things, which is always their superficial or exterior truth; it seeks for a deeper and original truth which escapes the eye of the mere sense or the mere reason, the soul in them, the unseen reality which is not that of their form and process but of their spirit. This it seizes and expresses by form and idea, but a significant form, which is not merely a faithful and just or a harmonious reproduction of outward Nature, and a revelatory idea, not the idea which is merely correct, elegantly right or fully satisfying to the reason and taste. Always the truth it seeks is first and foremost the truth of beauty, — not, again, the formal beauty alone or the beauty of proportion and right process which is what the sense and the reason seek, but the soul of beauty which is hidden from the ordinary eye and the ordinary mind and revealed in its fullness only to the unsealed vision of the poet and artist in man who can seize the secret significances of the universal poet and artist, the divine creator who dwells as their soul and spirit in the forms he has created.

The art-creation which lays a supreme stress on reason and taste and on perfection and purity of a technique constructed in obedience to the canons of reason and taste, claimed for itself the name of classical art; but the claim, like the too trenchant distinction on which it rests, is of doubtful validity. The spirit of the real, the great classical art and poetry is to bring out what is universal and subordinate individual expression to universal truth and beauty, just as the spirit of romantic art and poetry is to bring out what is striking and individual and this it often does so powerfully or with so vivid an emphasis as to throw into the background of its creation the universal, on which yet all true art romantic or classical builds and fills in its forms. In truth, all great art has carried in it both a classical and a romantic as well as a realistic element, — understanding realism in the sense of the prominent bringing out of the external truth of things, not the perverse inverted romanticism of the "real" which brings into exaggerated prominence the ugly, common or morbid and puts that forward as the whole truth of life. The

type of art to which a great creative work belongs is determined by the prominence it gives to one element and the subdual of the others into subordination to its reigning spirit. But classical art also works by a large vision and inspiration, not by the process of the intellect. The lower kind of classical art and literature, — if classical it be and not rather, as it often is, pseudo-classical, intellectually imitative of the external form and process of the classical, — may achieve work of considerable, though a much lesser power, but of an essentially inferior scope and nature; for to that inferiority it is self-condemned by its principle of intellectual construction. Almost always it speedily degenerates into the formal or academic, empty of real beauty, void of life and power, imprisoned in its slavery to form and imagining that when a certain form has been followed, certain canons of construction satisfied, certain rhetorical rules or technical principles obeyed, all has been achieved. It ceases to be art and becomes a cold and mechanical workmanship.

This predominance given to reason and taste first and foremost, sometimes even almost alone, in the creation and appreciation of beauty arises from a temper of mind which is critical rather than creative; and in regard to creation its theory falls into a capital error. All artistic work in order to be perfect must indeed have in the very act of creation the guidance of an inner power of discrimination constantly selecting and rejecting in accordance with a principle of truth and beauty which remains always faithful to a harmony, a proportion, an intimate relation of the form to the idea; there is at the same time an exact fidelity of the idea to the spirit, nature and inner body of the thing of beauty which has been revealed to the soul and the mind, its *svarūpa* and *svabhāva*. Therefore this discriminating inner sense rejects all that is foreign, superfluous, otiose, all that is a mere diversion distractive and deformative, excessive or defective, while it selects and finds sovereignly all that can bring out the full truth, the utter beauty, the inmost power. But this discrimination is not that of the critical intellect, nor is the harmony, proportion, relation it observes that which can be fixed by any set law of the critical reason; it exists in the

very nature and truth of the thing itself, the creation itself, in its secret inner law of beauty and harmony which can be seized by vision, not by intellectual analysis. The discrimination which works in the creator is therefore not an intellectual self-criticism or an obedience to rules imposed on him from outside by any intellectual canons, but itself creative, intuitive, a part of the vision, involved in and inseparable from the act of creation. It comes as part of that influx of power and light from above which by its divine enthusiasm lifts the faculties into their intense suprarational working. When it fails, when it is betrayed by the lower executive instruments rational or infrarational, — and this happens when these cease to be passive and insist on obtruding their own demands or vagaries, — the work is flawed and a subsequent act of self-criticism becomes necessary. But in correcting his work the artist who attempts to do it by rule and intellectual process, uses a false or at any rate an inferior method and cannot do his best. He ought rather to call to his aid the intuitive critical vision and embody it in a fresh act of inspired creation or re-creation after bringing himself back by its means into harmony with the light and law of his original creative initiation. The critical intellect has no direct or independent part in the means of the inspired creator of beauty.

In the appreciation of beauty it has a part, but it is not even there the supreme judge or law-giver. The business of the intellect is to analyse the elements, parts, external processes, apparent principles of that which it studies and explain their relations and workings; in doing this it instructs and enlightens the lower mentality which has, if left to itself, the habit of doing things or seeing what is done and taking all for granted without proper observation and fruitful understanding. But as with truth of religion, so with the highest and deepest truth of beauty, the intellectual reason cannot seize its inner sense and reality, not even the inner truth of its apparent principles and processes, unless it is aided by a higher insight not its own. As it cannot give a method, process or rule by which beauty can or ought to be created, so also it cannot give to the appreciation of beauty that deeper insight which it needs; it can only help to remove

the dullness and vagueness of the habitual perceptions and conceptions of the lower mind which prevent it from seeing beauty or which give it false and crude aesthetic habits: it does this by giving to the mind an external idea and rule of the elements of the thing it has to perceive and appreciate. What is farther needed is the awakening of a certain vision, an insight and an intuitive response in the soul. Reason which studies always from outside, cannot give this inner and more intimate contact; it has to aid itself by a more direct insight springing from the soul itself and to call at every step on the intuitive mind to fill up the gap of its own deficiencies.

We see this in the history of the development of literary and artistic criticism. In its earliest stages the appreciation of beauty is instinctive, natural, inborn, a response of the aesthetic sensitiveness of the soul which does not attempt to give any account of itself to the thinking intelligence. When the rational intelligence applies itself to this task, it is not satisfied with recording faithfully the nature of the response and the thing it has felt, but it attempts to analyse, to lay down what is necessary in order to create a just aesthetic gratification, it prepares a grammar of technique, an artistic law and canon of construction, a sort of mechanical rule of process for the creation of beauty, a fixed code or Shastra. This brings in the long reign of academic criticism superficial, technical, artificial, governed by the false idea that technique, of which alone critical reason can give an entirely adequate account, is the most important part of creation and that to every art there can correspond an exhaustive science which will tell us how the thing is done and give us the whole secret and process of its doing. A time comes when the creator of beauty revolts and declares the charter of his own freedom, generally in the shape of a new law or principle of creation, and this freedom once vindicated begins to widen itself and to carry with it the critical reason out of all its familiar bounds. A more developed appreciation emerges which begins to seek for new principles of criticism, to search for the soul of the work itself and explain the form in relation to the soul or to study the creator himself or the spirit, nature and ideas of the

age he lived in and so to arrive at a right understanding of his work. The intellect has begun to see that its highest business is not to lay down laws for the creator of beauty, but to help us to understand himself and his work, not only its form and elements but the mind from which it sprang and the impressions its effects create in the mind that receives. Here criticism is on its right road, but on a road to a consummation in which the rational understanding is overpassed and a higher faculty opens, suprarational in its origin and nature.

For the conscious appreciation of beauty reaches its height of enlightenment and enjoyment not by analysis of the beauty enjoyed or even by a right and intelligent understanding of it, — these things are only a preliminary clarifying of our first unenlightened sense of the beautiful, — but by an exaltation of the soul in which it opens itself entirely to the light and power and joy of the creation. The soul of beauty in us identifies itself with the soul of beauty in the thing created and feels in appreciation the same divine intoxication and uplifting which the artist felt in creation. Criticism reaches its highest point when it becomes the record, account, right description of this response; it must become itself inspired, intuitive, revealing. In other words, the action of the intuitive mind must complete the action of the rational intelligence and it may even wholly replace it and do more powerfully the peculiar and proper work of the intellect itself; it may explain more intimately to us the secret of the form, the strands of the process, the inner cause, essence, mechanism of the defects and limitations of the work as well as of its qualities. For the intuitive intelligence when it has been sufficiently trained and developed, can take up always the work of the intellect and do it with a power and light and insight greater and surer than the power and light of the intellectual judgment in its widest scope. There is an intuitive discrimination which is more keen and precise in its sight than the reasoning intelligence.

What has been said of great creative art, that being the form in which normally our highest and intensest aesthetic satisfaction is achieved, applies to all beauty, beauty in Nature, beauty in life as well as beauty in art. We find that in the end the place

of reason and the limits of its achievement are precisely of the same kind in regard to beauty as in regard to religion. It helps to enlighten and purify the aesthetic instincts and impulses, but it cannot give them their highest satisfaction or guide them to a complete insight. It shapes and fulfils to a certain extent the aesthetic intelligence, but it cannot justly pretend to give the definitive law for the creation of beauty or for the appreciation and enjoyment of beauty. It can only lead the aesthetic instinct, impulse, intelligence towards a greatest possible conscious satisfaction, but not to it; it has in the end to hand them over to a higher faculty which is in direct touch with the suprarational and in its nature and workings exceeds the intellect.

And for the same reason, because that which we are seeking through beauty is in the end that which we are seeking through religion, the Absolute, the Divine. The search for beauty is only in its beginning a satisfaction in the beauty of form, the beauty which appeals to the physical senses and the vital impressions, impulsions, desires. It is only in the middle a satisfaction in the beauty of the ideas seized, the emotions aroused, the perception of perfect process and harmonious combination. Behind them the soul of beauty in us desires the contact, the revelation, the uplifting delight of an absolute beauty in all things which it feels to be present, but which neither the senses and instincts by themselves can give, though they may be its channels, — for it is suprasensuous, — nor the reason and intelligence, though they too are a channel, — for it is suprarational, supra-intellectual, — but to which through all these veils the soul itself seeks to arrive. When it can get the touch of this universal, absolute beauty, this soul of beauty, this sense of its revelation in any slightest or greatest thing, the beauty of a flower, a form, the beauty and power of a character, an action, an event, a human life, an idea, a stroke of the brush or the chisel or a scintillation of the mind, the colours of a sunset or the grandeur of the tempest, it is then that the sense of beauty in us is really, powerfully, entirely satisfied. It is in truth seeking, as in religion, for the Divine, the All-Beautiful in man, in nature, in life, in thought, in art; for God is Beauty and Delight hidden in the variation of his masks and

forms. When, fulfilled in our growing sense and knowledge of beauty and delight in beauty and our power for beauty, we are able to identify ourselves in soul with this Absolute and Divine in all the forms and activities of the world and shape an image of our inner and our outer life in the highest image we can perceive and embody of the All-Beautiful, then the aesthetic being in us who was born for this end, has fulfilled himself and risen to his divine consummation. To find highest beauty is to find God; to reveal, to embody, to create, as we say, highest beauty is to bring out of our souls the living image and power of God.

Chapter XV

The Suprarational Good

WE BEGIN to see, through the principle and law of our religious being, through the principle and law of our aesthetic being, the universality of a principle and law which is that of all being and which we must therefore hold steadily in view in regard to all human activities. It rests on a truth on which the sages have always agreed, though by the intellectual thinker it may be constantly disputed. It is the truth that all active being is a seeking for God, a seeking for some highest self and deepest Reality secret within, behind and above ourselves and things, a seeking for the hidden Divinity: the truth which we glimpse through religion, lies concealed behind all life; it is the great secret of life, that which it is in labour to discover and to make real to its self-knowledge.

The seeking for God is also, subjectively, the seeking for our highest, truest, fullest, largest self. It is the seeking for a Reality which the appearances of life conceal because they only partially express it or because they express it from behind veils and figures, by oppositions and contraries, often by what seem to be perversions and opposites of the Real. It is the seeking for something whose completeness comes only by a concrete and all-occupying sense of the Infinite and Absolute; it can be established in its integrality only by finding a value of the infinite in all finite things and by the attempt — necessary, inevitable, however impossible or paradoxical it may seem to the normal reason — to raise all relativities to their absolutes and to reconcile their differences, oppositions and contraries by elevation and sublimation to some highest term in which all these are unified. Some perfect highest term there is by which all our imperfect lower terms can be justified and their discords harmonised if once we can induce them to be its conscious expressions, to exist not for themselves but for That, as contributory values of that highest

Truth, fractional measures of that highest and largest common measure. A One there is in which all the entangled discords of this multiplicity of separated, conflicting, intertwining, colliding ideas, forces, tendencies, instincts, impulses, aspects, appearances which we call life, can find the unity of their diversity, the harmony of their divergences, the justification of their claims, the correction of their perversions and aberrations, the solution of their problems and disputes. Knowledge seeks for that in order that Life may know its own true meaning and transform itself into the highest and most harmonious possible expression of a divine Reality. All seeks for that, each power feels out for it in its own way: the infrarational gropes for it blindly along the line of its instincts, needs, impulses; the rational lays for it its trap of logic and order, follows out and gathers together its diversities, analyses them in order to synthetise; the suprarational gets behind and above things and into their inmost parts, there to touch and lay hands on the Reality itself in its core and essence and enlighten all its infinite detail from that secret centre.

This truth comes most easily home to us in Religion and in Art, in the cult of the spiritual and in the cult of the beautiful, because there we get away most thoroughly from the unrestful pressure of the outward appearances of life, the urgent siege of its necessities, the deafening clamour of its utilities. There we are not compelled at every turn to make terms with some gross material claim, some vulgar but inevitable necessity of the hour and the moment. We have leisure and breathing-time to seek the Real behind the apparent: we are allowed to turn our eyes either away from the temporary and transient or through the temporal itself to the eternal; we can draw back from the limitations of the immediately practical and re-create our souls by the touch of the ideal and the universal. We begin to shake off our chains, we get rid of life in its aspect of a prison-house with Necessity for our jailer and utility for our constant taskmaster; we are admitted to the liberties of the soul; we enter God's infinite kingdom of beauty and delight or we lay hands on the keys of our absolute self-finding and open ourselves to the possession or the adoration of the Eternal. There lies the immense value of Religion, the

immense value of Art and Poetry to the human spirit; it lies in their immediate power for inner truth, for self-enlargement, for liberation.

But in other spheres of life, in the spheres of what by an irony of our ignorance we call especially practical life, — although, if the Divine be our true object of search and realisation, our normal conduct in them and our current idea of them is the very opposite of practical, — we are less ready to recognise the universal truth. We take a long time to admit it even partially in theory, we are seldom ready at all to follow it in practice. And we find this difficulty because there especially, in all our practical life, we are content to be the slaves of an outward Necessity and think ourselves always excused when we admit as the law of our thought, will and action the yoke of immediate and temporary utilities. Yet even there we must arrive eventually at the highest truth. We shall find out in the end that our daily life and our social existence are not things apart, are not another field of existence with another law than the inner and ideal. On the contrary, we shall never find out their true meaning or resolve their harsh and often agonising problems until we learn to see in them a means towards the discovery and the individual and collective expression of our highest and, because our highest, therefore our truest and fullest self, our largest most imperative principle and power of existence. All life is only a lavish and manifold opportunity given us to discover, realise, express the Divine.

It is in our ethical being that this truest truth of practical life, its real and highest practicality becomes most readily apparent. It is true that the rational man has tried to reduce the ethical life like all the rest to a matter of reason, to determine its nature, its law, its practical action by some principle of reason, by some law of reason. He has never really succeeded and he never can really succeed; his appearances of success are mere pretences of the intellect building elegant and empty constructions with words and ideas, mere conventions of logic and vamped-up syntheses, in sum, pretentious failures which break down at the first strenuous touch of reality. Such was that extraordinary system

of utilitarian ethics discovered in the nineteenth century — the great century of science and reason and utility — by one of its most positive and systematic minds and now deservedly discredited. Happily, we need now only smile at its shallow pretentious errors, its substitution of a practical, outward and occasional test for the inner, subjective and absolute motive of ethics, its reduction of ethical action to an impossibly scientific and quite impracticable jugglery of moral mathematics, attractive enough to the reasoning and logical mind, quite false and alien to the whole instinct and intuition of the ethical being. Equally false and impracticable are other attempts of the reason to account for and regulate its principle and phenomena, — the hedonistic theory which refers all virtue to the pleasure and satisfaction of the mind in good or the sociological which supposes ethics to be no more than a system of formulas of conduct generated from the social sense and a ruled direction of the social impulses and would regulate its action by that insufficient standard. The ethical being escapes from all these formulas: it is a law to itself and finds its principle in its own eternal nature which is not in its essential character a growth of evolving mind, even though it may seem to be that in its earthly history, but a light from the ideal, a reflection in man of the Divine.

Not that all these errors have not each of them a truth behind their false constructions; for all errors of the human reason are false representations, a wrong building, effective misconstructions of the truth or of a side or a part of the truth. Utility is a fundamental principle of existence and all fundamental principles of existence are in the end one; therefore it is true that the highest good is also the highest utility. It is true also that, not any balance of the greatest good of the greatest number, but simply the good of others and most widely the good of all is one ideal aim of our outgoing ethical practice; it is that which the ethical man would like to effect, if he could only find the way and be always sure what is the real good of all. But this does not help to regulate our ethical practice, nor does it supply us with its inner principle whether of being or of action, but only produces one of the many considerations by which we can feel our way along

the road which is so difficult to travel. Good, not utility, must be the principle and standard of good; otherwise we fall into the hands of that dangerous pretender expediency, whose whole method is alien to the ethical. Moreover, the standard of utility, the judgment of utility, its spirit, its form, its application must vary with the individual nature, the habit of mind, the outlook on the world. Here there can be no reliable general law to which all can subscribe, no set of large governing principles such as it is sought to supply to our conduct by a true ethics. Nor can ethics at all or ever be a matter of calculation. There is only one safe rule for the ethical man, to stick to his principle of good, his instinct for good, his vision of good, his intuition of good and to govern by that his conduct. He may err, but he will be on his right road in spite of all stumblings, because he will be faithful to the law of his nature. The saying of the Gita is always true; better is the law of one's own nature though ill-performed, dangerous is an alien law however speciously superior it may seem to our reason. But the law of nature of the ethical being is the pursuit of good; it can never be the pursuit of utility.

Neither is its law the pursuit of pleasure high or base, nor self-satisfaction of any kind, however subtle or even spiritual. It is true, here too, that the highest good is both in its nature and inner effect the highest bliss. Ananda, delight of being, is the spring of all existence and that to which it tends and for which it seeks openly or covertly in all its activities. It is true too that in virtue growing, in good accomplished there is great pleasure and that the seeking for it may well be always there as a subconscient motive to the pursuit of virtue. But for practical purposes this is a side aspect of the matter; it does not constitute pleasure into a test or standard of virtue. On the contrary, virtue comes to the natural man by a struggle with his pleasure-seeking nature and is often a deliberate embracing of pain, an edification of strength by suffering. We do not embrace that pain and struggle for the pleasure of the pain and the pleasure of the struggle; for that higher strenuous delight, though it is felt by the secret spirit in us, is not usually or not at first conscious in the conscient normal part of our being which is the field of the struggle. The action

of the ethical man is not motived by even an inner pleasure, but by a call of his being, the necessity of an ideal, the figure of an absolute standard, a law of the Divine.

In the outward history of our ascent this does not at first appear clearly, does not appear perhaps at all: there the evolution of man in society may seem to be the determining cause of his ethical evolution. For ethics only begins by the demand upon him of something other than his personal preference, vital pleasure or material self-interest; and this demand seems at first to work on him through the necessity of his relations with others, by the exigencies of his social existence. But that this is not the core of the matter, is shown by the fact that the ethical demand does not always square with the social demand, nor the ethical standard always coincide with the social standard. On the contrary, the ethical man is often called upon to reject and do battle with the social demand, to break, to move away from, to reverse the social standard. His relations with others and his relations with himself are both of them the occasions of his ethical growth; but that which determines his ethical being is his relations with God, the urge of the Divine upon him whether concealed in his nature or conscious in his higher self or inner genius. He obeys an inner ideal, not an outer standard; he answers to a divine law in his being, not to a social claim or a collective necessity. The ethical imperative comes not from around, but from within him and above him.

It has been felt and said from of old that the laws of right, the laws of perfect conduct are the laws of the gods, eternal beyond, laws that man is conscious of and summoned to obey. The age of reason has scouted this summary account of the matter as a superstition or a poetical imagination which the nature and history of the world contradict. But still there is a truth in this ancient superstition or imagination which the rational denial of it misses and the rational confirmations of it, whether Kant's categorical imperative or another, do not altogether restore. If man's conscience is a creation of his evolving nature, if his conceptions of ethical law are mutable and depend on his stage of evolution, yet at the root of them there is something constant in

all their mutations which lies at the very roots of his own nature and of world-nature. And if Nature in man and the world is in its beginnings infra-ethical as well as infrarational, as it is at its summit supra-ethical as well as suprarational, yet in that infra-ethical there is something which becomes in the human plane of being the ethical, and that supra-ethical is itself a consummation of the ethical and cannot be reached by any who have not trod the long ethical road. Below hides that secret of good in all things which the human being approaches and tries to deliver partially through ethical instinct and ethical idea; above is hidden the eternal Good which exceeds our partial and fragmentary ethical conceptions.

Our ethical impulses and activities begin like all the rest in the infrarational and take their rise from the subconscient. They arise as an instinct of right, an instinct of obedience to an ununderstood law, an instinct of self-giving in labour, an instinct of sacrifice and self-sacrifice, an instinct of love, of self-subordination and of solidarity with others. Man obeys the law at first without any inquiry into the why and the wherefore; he does not seek for it a sanction in the reason. His first thought is that it is a law created by higher powers than himself and his race and he says with the ancient poet that he knows not whence these laws sprang, but only that they are and endure and cannot with impunity be violated. What the instincts and impulses seek after, the reason labours to make us understand, so that the will may come to use the ethical impulses intelligently and turn the instincts into ethical ideas. It corrects man's crude and often erring misprisions of the ethical instinct, separates and purifies his confused associations, shows as best it can the relations of his often clashing moral ideals, tries to arbitrate and compromise between their conflicting claims, arranges a system and many-sided rule of ethical action. And all this is well, a necessary stage of our advance; but in the end these ethical ideas and this intelligent ethical will which it has tried to train to its control, escape from its hold and soar up beyond its province. Always, even when enduring its rein and curb, they have that inborn tendency.

For the ethical being like the rest is a growth and a seeking towards the absolute, the divine, which can only be attained securely in the suprarational. It seeks after an absolute purity, an absolute right, an absolute truth, an absolute strength, an absolute love and self-giving, and it is most satisfied when it can get them in absolute measure, without limit, curb or compromise, divinely, infinitely, in a sort of godhead and transfiguration of the ethical being. The reason is chiefly concerned with what it best understands, the apparent process, the machinery, the outward act, its result and effect, its circumstance, occasion and motive; by these it judges the morality of the action and the morality of the doer. But the developed ethical being knows instinctively that it is an inner something which it seeks and the outward act is only a means of bringing out and manifesting within ourselves by its psychological effects that inner absolute and eternal entity. The value of our actions lies not so much in their apparent nature and outward result as in their help towards the growth of the Divine within us. It is difficult, even impossible to justify upon outward grounds the absolute justice, absolute right, absolute purity, love or selflessness of an action or course of action; for action is always relative, it is mixed and uncertain in its results, perplexed in its occasions. But it is possible to relate the inner being to the eternal and absolute good, to make our sense and will full of it so as to act out of its impulsion or its intuitions and inspirations. That is what the ethical being labours towards and the higher ethical man increasingly attains to in his inner efforts.

In fact ethics is not in its essence a calculation of good and evil in the action or a laboured effort to be blameless according to the standards of the world, — those are only crude appearances, — it is an attempt to grow into the divine nature. Its parts of purity are an aspiration towards the inalienable purity of God's being; its parts of truth and right are a seeking after conscious unity with the law of the divine knowledge and will; its parts of sympathy and charity are a movement towards the infinity and universality of the divine love; its parts of strength and manhood are an edification of the divine strength and power. That is the

heart of its meaning. Its high fulfilment comes when the being of the man undergoes this transfiguration; then it is not his actions that standardise his nature but his nature that gives value to his actions; then he is no longer laboriously virtuous, artificially moral, but naturally divine. Actively, too, he is fulfilled and consummated when he is not led or moved either by the infrarational impulses or the rational intelligence and will, but inspired and piloted by the divine knowledge and will made conscious in his nature. And that can only be done, first by communication of the truth of these things through the intuitive mind as it purifies itself progressively from the invasion of egoism, self-interest, desire, passion and all kinds of self-will, finally through the suprarational light and power, no longer communicated but present and in possession of his being. Such was the supreme aim of the ancient sages who had the wisdom which rational man and rational society have rejected because it was too high a truth for the comprehension of the reason and for the powers of the normal limited human will too bold and immense, too infinite an effort.

Therefore it is with the cult of Good, as with the cult of Beauty and the cult of the spiritual. Even in its first instincts it is already an obscure seeking after the divine and absolute; it aims at an absolute satisfaction, it finds its highest light and means in something beyond the reason, it is fulfilled only when it finds God, when it creates in man some image of the divine Reality. Rising from its infrarational beginnings through its intermediate dependence on the reason to a suprarational consummation, the ethical is like the aesthetic and the religious being of man a seeking after the Eternal.

Chapter XVI

The Suprarational Ultimate of Life

IN ALL the higher powers of his life man may be said to be seeking, blindly enough, for God. To get at the Divine and Eternal in himself and the world and to harmonise them, to put his being and his life in tune with the Infinite reveals itself in these parts of his nature as his concealed aim and his destiny. He sets out to arrive at his highest and largest and most perfect self, and the moment he at all touches upon it, this self in him appears to be one with some great Soul and Self of Truth and Good and Beauty in the world to which we give the name of God. To get at this as a spiritual presence is the aim of religion, to grow into harmony with its eternal nature of right, love, strength and purity is the aim of ethics, to enjoy and mould ourselves into the harmony of its eternal beauty and delight is the aim and consummation of our aesthetic need and nature, to know and to be according to its eternal principles of truth is the end of science and philosophy and of all our insistent drive towards knowledge.

But all this seems to be something above our normal and usual being; it is something into which we strive to grow, but it does not seem to be the normal stuff, the natural being or atmosphere of the individual and the society in their ordinary consciousness and their daily life. That life is practical and not idealistic; it is concerned not with good, beauty, spiritual experience, the higher truth, but with interests, physical needs, desires, vital necessities. This is real to it, all the rest is a little shadowy; this belongs to its ordinary labour, all the rest to its leisure; this to the stuff of which it is made, all the rest to its parts of ornament and dispensable improvement. To all that rest society gives a place, but its heart is not there. It accepts ethics as a bond and an influence, but it does not live for ethical good; its real gods are vital need and utility and the desires of the body. If

it governs its life partly by ethical laws because otherwise vital need, desire, utility in seeking their own satisfaction through many egoistic individuals would clash among themselves and destroy their own aims, it does not feel called upon to make its life entirely ethical. It concerns itself still less with beauty; even if it admits things beautiful as an embellishment and an amusement, a satisfaction and pastime of the eye and ear and mind, nothing moves it imperatively to make its life a thing of beauty. It allows religion a fixed place and portion, on holy days, in the church or temple, at the end of life when age and the approach of death call the attention forcibly away from this life to other life, at fixed times in the week or the day when it thinks it right for a moment to pause in the affairs of the world and remember God: but to make the whole of life a religion, a remembering of God and a seeking after him, is a thing that is not really done even in societies which like the Indian erect spirituality as their aim and principle. It admits philosophy in a still more remote fashion; and if nowadays it eagerly seeks after science, that is because science helps prodigiously the satisfaction of its vital desires, needs and interests: but it does not turn to seek after an entirely scientific life any more than after an entirely ethical life. A more complete effort in any one of these directions it leaves to the individual, to the few, and to individuals of a special type, the saint, the ethical man, the artist, the thinker, the man of religion; it gives them a place, does some homage to them, assigns some room to the things they represent, but for itself it is content to follow mainly after its own inherent principle of vital satisfaction, vital necessity and utility, vital efficiency.

The reason is that here we get to another power of our being which is different from the ethical, aesthetic, rational and religious, — one which, even if we recognise it as lower in the scale, still insists on its own reality and has not only the right to exist but the right to satisfy itself and be fulfilled. It is indeed the primary power, it is the base of our existence upon earth, it is that which the others take as their starting-point and their foundation. This is the life-power in us, the vitalistic, the dynamic nature. Its whole principle and aim is to be, to assert

its existence, to increase, to expand, to possess and to enjoy: its native terms are growth of being, pleasure and power. Life itself here is Being at labour in Matter to express itself in terms of conscious force; human life is the human being at labour to impress himself on the material world with the greatest possible force and intensity and extension. His primary insistent aim must be to live and make for himself a place in the world, for himself and his species, secondly, having made it to possess, produce and enjoy with an ever-widening scope, and finally to spread himself over all the earth-life and dominate it; this is and must be his first practical business. That is what the Darwinians have tried to express by their notion of the struggle for life. But the struggle is not merely to last and live, but to increase, enjoy and possess: its method includes and uses not only a principle and instinct of egoism, but a concomitant principle and instinct of association. Human life is moved by two equally powerful impulses, one of individualistic self-assertion, the other of collective self-assertion; it works by strife, but also by mutual assistance and united effort: it uses two diverse convergent forms of action, two motives which seem to be contradictory but are in fact always coexistent, competitive endeavour and cooperative endeavour. It is from this character of the dynamism of life that the whole structure of human society has come into being, and it is upon the sustained and vigorous action of this dynamism that the continuance, energy and growth of all human societies depends. If this life-force in them fails and these motive-powers lose in vigour, then all begins to languish, stagnate and finally move towards disintegration.

The modern European idea of society is founded upon the primary and predominant part played by this vital dynamism in the formation and maintenance of society; for the European, ever since the Teutonic mind and temperament took possession of western Europe, has been fundamentally the practical, dynamic and kinetic man, vitalistic in the very marrow of his thought and being. All else has been the fine flower of his life and culture, this has been its root and stalk, and in modern times this truth of his temperament, always there, has come aggressively to the

surface and triumphed over the traditions of Christian piety and Latinistic culture. This triumphant emergence and lead of the vital man and his motives has been the whole significance of the great economic and political civilisation of the nineteenth century. Life in society consists, for the practical human instincts, in three activities, the domestic and social life of man, — social in the sense of his customary relations with others in the community both as an individual and as a member of one family among many, — his economic activities as a producer, wealth-getter and consumer and his political status and action. Society is the organisation of these three things and, fundamentally, it is for the practical human being nothing more. Learning and science, culture, ethics, aesthetics, religion are assigned their place as aids to life, for its guidance and betterment, for its embellishment, for the consolation of its labours, difficulties and sorrows, but they are no part of its very substance, do not figure among its essential objects. Life itself is the only object of living.

The ancients held a different, indeed a diametrically opposite view. Although they recognised the immense importance of the primary activities, in Asia the social most, in Europe the political, — as every society must which at all means to live and flourish, — yet these were not to them primary in the higher sense of the word; they were man's first business, but not his chief business. The ancients regarded this life as an occasion for the development of the rational, the ethical, the aesthetic, the spiritual being. Greece and Rome laid stress on the three first alone, Asia went farther, made these also subordinate and looked upon them as stepping-stones to a spiritual consummation. Greece and Rome were proudest of their art, poetry and philosophy and cherished these things as much as or even more than their political liberty or greatness. Asia too exalted these three powers and valued inordinately her social organisation, but valued much more highly, exalted with a much greater intensity of worship her saints, her religious founders and thinkers, her spiritual heroes. The modern world has been proudest of its economic organisation, its political liberty, order and progress, the mechanism, comfort and ease of its social and domestic life,

its science, but science most in its application to practical life, most for its instruments and conveniences, its railways, telegraphs, steamships and its other thousand and one discoveries, countless inventions and engines which help man to master the physical world. That marks the whole difference in the attitude.

On this a great deal hangs; for if the practical and vitalistic view of life and society is the right one, if society merely or principally exists for the maintenance, comfort, vital happiness and political and economic efficiency of the species, then our idea that life is a seeking for God and for the highest self and that society too must one day make that its principle cannot stand. Modern society, at any rate in its self-conscious aim, is far enough from any such endeavour; whatever may be the splendour of its achievement, it acknowledges only two gods, life and practical reason organised under the name of science. Therefore on this great primary thing, this life-power and its manifestations, we must look with especial care to see what it is in its reality as well as what it is in its appearance. Its appearance is familiar enough; for of that is made the very stuff and present form of our everyday life. Its main ideals are the physical good and vitalistic well-being of the individual and the community, the entire satisfaction of the desire for bodily health, long life, comfort, luxury, wealth, amusement, recreation, a constant and tireless expenditure of the mind and the dynamic life-force in remunerative work and production and, as the higher flame-spires of this restless and devouring energy, creations and conquests of various kinds, wars, invasions, colonisation, discovery, commercial victory, travel, adventure, the full possession and utilisation of the earth. All this life still takes as its cadre the old existing forms, the family, the society, the nation and it has two impulses, individualistic and collective.

The primary impulse of life is individualistic and makes family, social and national life a means for the greater satisfaction of the vital individual. In the family the individual seeks for the satisfaction of his vital instinct of possession, as well as for the joy of companionship, and for the fulfilment of his other vital instinct of self-reproduction. His gains are the

possession of wife, servants, house, wealth, estates, the reproduction of much of himself in the body and mind of his progeny and the prolongation of his activities, gains and possessions in the life of his children; incidentally he enjoys the vital and physical pleasures and the more mental pleasures of emotion and affection to which the domestic life gives scope. In society he finds a less intimate but a larger expansion of himself and his instincts. A wider field of companionship, interchange, associated effort and production, errant or gregarious pleasure, satisfied emotion, stirred sensation and regular amusement are the advantages which attach him to social existence. In the nation and its constituent parts he finds a means for the play of a remoter but still larger sense of power and expansion. If he has the force, he finds there fame, pre-eminence, leadership or at a lower pitch the sense of an effective action on a small or a large scale, in a reduced or a magnified field of public action; if he cannot have this, still he can feel a share of some kind, a true portion or fictitious image of participation, in the pride, power and splendour of a great collective activity and vital expansion. In all this there is primarily at work the individualist principle of the vital instinct in which the competitive side of that movement of our nature associates with the cooperative but predominates over it. Carried to an excess this predominance creates the ideal of the arriviste, to whom family, society and nation are not so much a sympathetic field as a ladder to be climbed, a prey to be devoured, a thing to be conquered and dominated. In extreme cases the individualist turn isolates itself from the companion motive, reverts to a primitive anti-social feeling and creates the nomad, the adventurer, the ranger of wilds, or the pure solitary, — solitary not from any intellectual or spiritual impulse, but because society, once an instrument, has become a prison and a burden, an oppressive cramping of his expansion, a denial of breathing-space and elbow-room. But these cases grow rarer, now that the ubiquitous tentacles of modern society take hold everywhere; soon there will be no place of refuge left for either the nomad or the solitary, not even perhaps Saharan deserts or the secure remotenesses of the Himalayas. Even, it may be, the

refuge of an inner seclusion may be taken from us by a collectivist society intent to make its pragmatic, economic, dynamic most of every individual "cell" of the organism.

For this growing collectivist or cooperative tendency embodies the second instinct of the vital or practical being in man. It shows itself first in the family ideal by which the individual subordinates himself and finds his vital satisfaction and practical account, not in his own predominant individuality, but in the life of a larger vital ego. This ideal played a great part in the old aristocratic views of life; it was there in the ancient Indian idea of the *kula* and the *kuladharma*, and in later India it was at the root of the joint-family system which made the strong economic base of mediaeval Hinduism. It has taken its grossest Vaishya form in the ideal of the British domestic Philistine, the idea of the human individual born here to follow a trade or profession, to marry and procreate a family, to earn his living, to succeed reasonably if not to amass an efficient or ostentatious wealth, to enjoy for a space and then die, thus having done the whole business for which he came into the body and performed all his essential duty in life, — for this apparently was the end unto which man with all his divine possibilities was born! But whatever form it may take, however this grossness may be refined or toned down, whatever ethical or religious conceptions may be superadded, always the family is an essentially practical, vitalistic and economic creation. It is simply a larger vital ego, a more complex vital organism that takes up the individual and englobes him in a more effective competitive and cooperative life unit. The family like the individual accepts and uses society for its field and means of continuance, of vital satisfaction and well-being, of aggrandisement and enjoyment. But this life unit also, this multiple ego can be induced by the cooperative instinct in life to subordinate its egoism to the claims of the society and trained even to sacrifice itself at need on the communal altar. For the society is only a still larger vital competitive and cooperative ego that takes up both the individual and the family into a more complex organism and uses them for the collective satisfaction of its vital needs, claims, interests, aggrandisement,

well-being, enjoyment. The individual and family consent to this exploitation for the same reason that induced the individual to take on himself the yoke of the family, because they find their account in this wider vital life and have the instinct in it of their own larger growth, security and satisfaction. The society, still more than the family, is essentially economic in its aims and in its very nature. That accounts for the predominantly economic and materialistic character of modern ideas of Socialism; for these ideas are the full rationalistic flowering of this instinct of collective life. But since the society is one competitive unit among many of its kind, and since its first relations with the others are always potentially hostile, even at the best competitive and not cooperative, and have to be organised in that view, a political character is necessarily added to the social life, even predominates for a time over the economic and we have the nation or State. If we give their due value to these fundamental characteristics and motives of collective existence, it will seem natural enough that the development of the collective and cooperative idea of society should have culminated in a huge, often a monstrous overgrowth of the vitalistic, economic and political ideal of life, society and civilisation.

What account are the higher parts of man's being, those finer powers in him that more openly tend to the growth of his divine nature, to make with this vital instinct or with its gigantic modern developments? Obviously, their first impulse must be to take hold of them and dominate and transform all this crude life into their own image; but when they discover that here is a power apart, as persistent as themselves, that it seeks a satisfaction *per se* and accepts their impress to a certain extent, but not altogether and, as it were, unwillingly, partially, unsatisfactorily, — what then? We often find that ethics and religion especially, when they find themselves in a constant conflict with the vital instincts, the dynamic life-power in man, proceed to an attitude of almost complete hostility and seek to damn them in idea and repress them in fact. To the vital instinct for wealth and well-being they oppose the ideal of a chill and austere poverty; to the vital instinct for pleasure the ideal not only of self-denial, but of

absolute mortification; to the vital instinct for health and ease the ascetic's contempt, disgust and neglect of the body; to the vital instinct for incessant action and creation the ideal of calm and inaction, passivity, contemplation; to the vital instinct for power, expansion, domination, rule, conquest the ideal of humility, self-abasement, submission, meek harmlessness, docility in suffering; to the vital instinct of sex on which depends the continuance of the species, the ideal of an unreproductive chastity and celibacy; to the social and family instinct the anti-social ideal of the ascetic, the monk, the solitary, the world-shunning saint. Commencing with discipline and subordination they proceed to complete mortification, which means when translated the putting to death of the vital instincts, and declare that life itself is an illusion to be shed from the soul or a kingdom of the flesh, the world and the devil, — accepting thus the claim of the unenlightened and undisciplined life itself that it is not, was never meant to be, can never become the kingdom of God, a high manifestation of the Spirit.

Up to a certain point this recoil has its uses and may easily even, by *tapasyā*, by the law of energy increasing through compression, develop for a time a new vigour in the life of the society, as happened in India in the early Buddhist centuries. But beyond a certain point it tends, not really to kill, for that is impossible, but to discourage along with the vital instincts the indispensable life-energy of which they are the play and renders them in the end inert, feeble, narrow, unelastic, incapable of energetic reaction to force and circumstance. That was the final result in India of the agelong pressure of Buddhism and its supplanter and successor, Illusionism. No society wholly or too persistently and pervadingly dominated by this denial of the life dynamism can flourish and put forth its possibilities of growth and perfection. For from dynamic it becomes static and from the static position it proceeds to stagnation and degeneration. Even the higher being of man, which finds its account in a vigorous life dynamism, both as a fund of force to be transmuted into its own loftier energies and as a potent channel of connection with the outer life, suffers in the end by this failure and contraction. The ancient Indian

ideal recognised this truth and divided life into four essential and indispensable divisions, *artha*, *kāma*, *dharma*, *mokṣa*, vital interests, satisfaction of desires of all kinds, ethics and religion, and liberation or spirituality, and it insisted on the practice and development of all. Still it tended not only to put the last forward as the goal of all the rest, which it is, but to put it at the end of life and its habitat in another world of our being, rather than here in life as a supreme status and formative power on the physical plane. But this rules out the idea of the kingdom of God on earth, the perfectibility of society and of man in society, the evolution of a new and diviner race, and without one or other of these no universal ideal can be complete. It provides a temporary and occasional, but not an inherent justification for life; it holds out no illumining fulfilment either for its individual or its collective impulse.

Let us then look at this vital instinct and life dynamism in its own being and not merely as an occasion for ethical or religious development and see whether it is really rebellious in its very nature to the Divine. We can see at once that what we have described is the first stage of the vital being, the infrarational, the instinctive; this is the crude character of its first native development and persists even when it is trained by the growing application to it of the enlightening reason. Evidently it is in this natural form a thing of the earth, gross, earthy, full even of hideous uglinesses and brute blunders and jarring discords; but so also is the infrarational stage in ethics, in aesthetics, in religion. It is true too that it presents a much more enormous difficulty than these others, more fundamentally and obstinately resists elevation, because it is the very province of the infrarational, a first formulation of consciousness out of the Inconscient, nearest to it in the scale of being. But still it has too, properly looked at, its rich elements of power, beauty, nobility, good, sacrifice, worship, divinity; here too are high-reaching gods, masked but still resplendent. Until recently, and even now, reason, in the garb no longer of philosophy, but of science, has increasingly proposed to take up all this physical and vital life and perfect it by the sole power of rationalism, by

a knowledge of the laws of Nature, of sociology and physiology and biology and health, by collectivism, by State education, by a new psychological education and a number of other kindred means. All this is well in its own way and in its limits, but it is not enough and can never come to a truly satisfying success. The ancient attempt of reason in the form of a high idealistic, rational, aesthetic, ethical and religious culture achieved only an imperfect discipline of the vital man and his instincts, sometimes only a polishing, a gloss, a clothing and mannerising of the original uncouth savage. The modern attempt of reason in the form of a broad and thorough rational, utilitarian and efficient instruction and organisation of man and his life is not succeeding any better for all its insistent but always illusory promise of more perfect results in the future. These endeavours cannot indeed be truly successful if our theory of life is right and if this great mass of vital energism contains in itself the imprisoned suprarational, if it has, as it then must have, the instinctive reaching out for something divine, absolute and infinite which is concealed in its blind strivings. Here too reason must be overpassed or surpass itself and become a passage to the Divine.

The first mark of the suprarational, when it intervenes to take up any portion of our being, is the growth of absolute ideals; and since life is Being and Force and the divine state of being is unity and the Divine in force is God as Power taking possession, the absolute vital ideals must be of that nature. Nowhere are they wanting. If we take the domestic and social life of man, we find hints of them there in several forms; but we need only note, however imperfect and dim the present shapes, the strivings of love at its own self-finding, its reachings towards its absolute — the absolute love of man and woman, the absolute maternal or paternal, filial or fraternal love, the love of friends, the love of comrades, love of country, love of humanity. These ideals of which the poets have sung so persistently, are not a mere glamour and illusion, however the egoisms and discords of our instinctive, infrarational way of living may seem to contradict them. Always crossed by imperfection or opposite vital movements, they are still divine possibilities and can be made

a first means of our growth into a spiritual unity of being with being. Certain religious disciplines have understood this truth, have taken up these relations boldly and applied them to our soul's communion with God; and by a converse process they can, lifted out of their present social and physical formulas, become for us, not the poor earthly things they are now, but deep and beautiful and wonderful movements of God in man fulfilling himself in life. All the economic development of life itself takes on at its end the appearance of an attempt to get rid of the animal squalor and bareness which is what obligatory poverty really means, and to give to man the divine ease and leisure of the gods. It is pursued in a wrong way, no doubt, and with many ugly circumstances, but still the ideal is darkly there. Politics itself, that apparent game of strife and deceit and charlatanism, can be a large field of absolute idealisms. What of patriotism, — never mind the often ugly instincts from which it starts and which it still obstinately preserves, — but in its aspects of worship, self-giving, discipline, self-sacrifice? The great political ideals of man, monarchy, aristocracy, democracy, apart from the selfishnesses they serve and the rational and practical justifications with which they arm themselves, have had for their soul an ideal, some half-seen truth of the absolute and have carried with them a worship, a loyalty, a loss of self in the idea which have made men ready to suffer and die for them. War and strife themselves have been schools of heroism; they have preserved the heroic in man, they have created the *kṣatriyās tyaktajīvitāḥ* of the Sanskrit epic phrase, the men of power and courage who have abandoned their bodily life for a cause; for without heroism man cannot grow into the Godhead; courage, energy and strength are among the very first principles of the divine nature in action. All this great vital, political, economic life of man with its two powers of competition and cooperation is stumbling blindly forward towards some realisation of power and unity, — in two divine directions, therefore. For the Divine in life is Power possessed of self-mastery, but also of mastery of His world, and man and mankind too move towards conquest of their world, their environment. And again the Divine in

fulfilment here is and must be oneness, and the ideal of human unity however dim and far off is coming slowly into sight. The competitive nation-units are feeling, at times, however feebly as yet, the call to cast themselves into a greater unified cooperative life of the human race.

No doubt all is still moving, however touched by dim lights from above, on a lower half rational half infrarational level, clumsily, coarsely, in ignorance of itself and as yet with little nobility of motive. All is being worked out very crudely by the confused clash of life-forces and the guidance of ideas that are half-lights of the intellect, and the means proposed are too mechanical and the aims too material; they miss the truth that the outer life-result can only endure if it is founded on inner realities. But so life in the past has moved always and must at first move. For life organises itself at first round the ego-motive and the instinct of ego-expansion is the earliest means by which men have come into contact with each other; the struggle for possession has been the first crude means towards union, the aggressive assertion of the smaller self the first step towards a growth into the larger self. All has been therefore a half-ordered confusion of the struggle for life corrected by the need and instinct of association, a struggle of individuals, clans, tribes, parties, nations, ideas, civilisations, cultures, ideals, religions, each affirming itself, each compelled into contact, association, strife with the others. For while Nature imposes the ego as a veil behind which she labours out the individual manifestation of the spirit, she also puts a compulsion on it to grow in being until it can at last expand or merge into a larger self in which it meets, harmonises with itself, comprehends in its own consciousness, becomes one with the rest of existence. To assist in this growth Life-Nature throws up in itself ego-enlarging, ego-exceeding, even ego-destroying instincts and movements which combat and correct the smaller self-affirming instincts and movements, — she enforces on her human instrument impulses of love, sympathy, self-denial, self-effacement, self-sacrifice, altruism, the drive towards universality in mind and heart and life, glimmerings of an obscure unanimism that has not yet found thoroughly its

own true light and motive-power. Because of this obscurity these powers, unable to affirm their own absolute, to take the lead or dominate, obliged to compromise with the demands of the ego, even to become themselves a form of egoism, are impotent also to bring harmony and transformation to life. Instead of peace they seem to bring rather a sword; for they increase the number and tension of conflict of the unreconciled forces, ideas, impulses of which the individual human consciousness and the life of the collectivity are the arena. The ideal and practical reason of man labours to find amidst all this the right law of life and action; it strives by a rule of moderation and accommodation, by selection and rejection or by the dominance of some chosen ideas or powers to reduce things to harmony, to do consciously what Nature through natural selection and instinct has achieved in her animal kinds, an automatically ordered and settled form and norm of their existence. But the order, the structure arrived at by the reason is always partial, precarious and temporary. It is disturbed by a pull from below and a pull from above. For these powers that life throws up to help towards the growth into a larger self, a wider being, are already reflections of something that is beyond reason, seeds of the spiritual, the absolute. There is the pressure on human life of an Infinite which will not allow it to rest too long in any formulation, — not at least until it has delivered out of itself that which shall be its own self-exceeding and self-fulfilment.

This process of life through a first obscure and confused effort of self-finding is the inevitable result of its beginnings; for life has begun from an involution of the spiritual truth of things in what seems to be its opposite. Spiritual experience tells us that there is a Reality which supports and pervades all things as the Cosmic Self and Spirit, can be discovered by the individual even here in the terrestrial embodiment as his own self and spirit, and is, at its summits and in its essence, an infinite and eternal self-existent Being, Consciousness and Bliss of existence. But what we seem to see as the source and beginning of the material universe is just the contrary — it wears to us the aspect of a Void, an infinite of Non-Existence, an indeterminate Inconscient, an

insensitive blissless Zero out of which everything has yet to come. When it begins to move, evolve, create, it puts on the appearance of an inconscient Energy which delivers existence out of the Void in the form of an infinitesimal fragmentation, the electron — or perhaps some still more impalpable minute unit, a not yet discovered, hardly discoverable infinitesimal, — then the atom, the molecule, and out of this fragmentation builds up a formed and concrete universe in the void of its Infinite. Yet we see that this unconscious Energy does at every step the works of a vast and minute Intelligence fixing and combining every possible device to prepare, manage and work out the paradox and miracle of Matter and the awakening of a life and a spirit in Matter; existence grows out of the Void, consciousness emerges and increases out of the Inconscient, an ascending urge towards pleasure, happiness, delight, divine bliss and ecstasy is inexplicably born out of an insensitive Nihil. These phenomena already betray the truth, which we discover when we grow aware in our depths, that the Inconscient is only a mask and within it is the Upanishad's "Conscient in unconscious things". In the beginning, says the Veda, was the ocean of inconscience and out of it That One arose into birth by his greatness, — by the might of his self-manifesting Energy.

But the Inconscient, if a mask, is an effective mask of the Spirit; it imposes on the evolving life and soul the law of a difficult emergence. Life and consciousness, no less than Matter, obey in their first appearance the law of fragmentation. Life organises itself physically round the plasm, the cell, psychologically round the small separative fragmentary ego. Consciousness itself has to concentrate its small beginnings in a poor surface formation and hide behind the veil of this limited surface existence the depths and infinities of its own being. It has to grow slowly in an external formulation till it is ready to break the crust between this petty outer figure of ourselves, which we think to be the whole, and the concealed self within us. Even the spiritual being seems to obey this law of fragmentation and manifest as a unit in the whole a spark of itself that evolves into an individual psyche. It is this little ego, this fragmented consciousness, this concealed

soul-spark on which is imposed the task of meeting and striving with the forces of the universe, entering into contact with all that seems to it not itself, increasing under the pressure of inner and outer Nature till it can become one with all existence. It has to grow into self-knowledge and world-knowledge, to get within itself and discover that it is a spiritual being, to get outside of itself and discover its larger truth as the cosmic Individual, to get beyond itself and know and live in some supreme Being, Consciousness and Bliss of existence. For this immense task it is equipped only with the instruments of its original Ignorance. Its limited being is the cause of all the difficulty, discord, struggle, division that mars life. The limitation of its consciousness, unable to dominate or assimilate the contacts of the universal Energy, is the cause of all its suffering, pain and sorrow. Its limited power of consciousness formulated in an ignorant will unable to grasp or follow the right law of its life and action is the cause of all its error, wrongdoing and evil. There is no other true cause; for all apparent causes are themselves circumstance and result of this original sin of the being. Only when it rises and widens out of this limited separative consciousness into the oneness of the liberated Spirit, can it escape from these results of its growth out of the Inconscience.

If we see this as the truth behind Life, we can understand at once why it has had to follow its present curve of ignorant self-formulation. But also we see what through it all it is obscurely seeking, trying to grasp and form, feeling out for in its own higher impulses and deepest motives, and why these are in it — useless, perturbing and chimerical if it were only an animal product of inconscient Nature, — these urgings towards self-discovery, mastery, unity, freedom from its lower self, spiritual release. Evolving out of its first involved condition in Matter and in plant life, effecting a first imperfect organised consciousness in the animal it arrives in man, the mental being, at the possibility of a new, a conscious evolution which will bring it to its goal and at a certain stage of his development it wakes in him the overmastering impulse to pass on from mental to spiritual being. Life cannot arrive at its secret ultimates by following its

first infrarational motive forces of instinct and desire; for all here is a groping and seeking without finding, a field of brief satisfactions stamped with the Inconscient's seal of insufficiency and impermanence. But neither can human reason give it what it searches after; for reason can only establish half-lights and a provisional order. Therefore with man as he is the upward urge in life cannot rest satisfied always; its evolutionary impulse cannot stop short at this transitional term, this half-achievement. It has to aim at a higher scale of consciousness, deliver out of life and mind something that is still latent and inchoate.

The ultimates of life are spiritual and only in the full light of the liberated self and spirit can it achieve them. That full light is not intellect or reason, but a knowledge by inner unity and identity which is the native self-light of the fully developed spiritual consciousness and, preparing that, on the way to it, a knowledge by intimate inner contact with the truth of things and beings which is intuitive and born of a secret oneness. Life seeks for self-knowledge; it is only by the light of the spirit that it can find it. It seeks for a luminous guidance and mastery of its own movements; it is only when it finds within itself this inner self and spirit and by it or in obedience to it governs its own steps that it can have the illumined will it needs and the unerring leadership. For it is so only that the blind certitudes of the instincts and the speculative hypotheses and theories and the experimental and inferential certitudes of reason can be replaced by the seeing spiritual certitudes. Life seeks the fulfilment of its instincts of love and sympathy, its yearnings after accord and union; but these are crossed by opposing instincts and it is only the spiritual consciousness with its realised abiding oneness that can abolish these oppositions. Life seeks for full growth of being, but it can attain to it only when the limited being has found in itself its own inmost soul of existence and around it its own widest self of cosmic consciousness by which it can feel the world and all being in itself and as itself. Life seeks for power; it is only the power of the spirit and the power of this conscious oneness that can give it mastery of its self and its world. It seeks for pleasure, happiness, bliss; but the infrarational forms

of these things are stricken with imperfection, fragmentariness, impermanence and the impact of their opposites. Moreover infrarational life still bears some stamp of the Inconscient in an underlying insensitiveness, a dullness of fibre, a weakness of vibratory response, — it cannot attain to true happiness or bliss and what it can obtain of pleasure it cannot support for long or bear or keep any extreme intensity of these things. Only the spirit has the secret of an unmixed and abiding happiness or ecstasy, is capable of a firm tenseness of vibrant response to it, can achieve and justify a spiritual pleasure or joy of life as one form of the infinite and universal delight of being. Life seeks a harmonious fulfilment of all its powers, now divided and in conflict, all its possibilities, parts, members; it is only in the consciousness of the one self and spirit that that is found, for there they arrive at their full truth and their perfect agreement in the light of the integral Self-existence.

There is then a suprarational ultimate of Life no less than a suprarational Truth, Good and Beauty. The endeavour to reach it is the spiritual meaning of this seeking and striving Life-nature.

Chapter XVII

Religion as the Law of Life

SINCE the infinite, the absolute and transcendent, the universal, the One is the secret summit of existence and to reach the spiritual consciousness and the Divine the ultimate goal and aim of our being and therefore of the whole development of the individual and the collectivity in all its parts and all its activities, reason cannot be the last and highest guide; culture, as it is understood ordinarily, cannot be the directing light or find out the regulating and harmonising principle of all our life and action. For reason stops short of the Divine and only compromises with the problems of life, and culture in order to attain the Transcendent and Infinite must become spiritual culture, something much more than an intellectual, aesthetic, ethical and practical training. Where then are we to find the directing light and the regulating and harmonising principle? The first answer which will suggest itself, the answer constantly given by the Asiatic mind, is that we shall find it directly and immediately in religion. And this seems a reasonable and at first sight a satisfying solution; for religion is that instinct, idea, activity, discipline in man which aims directly at the Divine, while all the rest seem to aim at it only indirectly and reach it with difficulty after much wandering and stumbling in the pursuit of the outward and imperfect appearances of things. To make all life religion and to govern all activities by the religious idea would seem to be the right way to the development of the ideal individual and ideal society and the lifting of the whole life of man into the Divine.

A certain pre-eminence of religion, the overshadowing or at least the colouring of life, an overtopping of all the other instincts and fundamental ideas by the religious instinct and the religious idea is, we may note, not peculiar to Asiatic civilisations, but has always been more or less the normal state of the human mind

and of human societies, or if not quite that, yet a notable and prominent part of their complex tendencies, except in certain comparatively brief periods of their history, in one of which we find ourselves today and are half turning indeed to emerge from it but have not yet emerged. We must suppose then that in this leading, this predominant part assigned to religion by the normal human collectivity there is some great need and truth of our natural being to which we must always after however long an infidelity return. On the other hand, we must recognise the fact that in a time of great activity, of high aspiration, of deep sowing, of rich fruit-bearing, such as the modern age with all its faults and errors has been, a time especially when humanity got rid of much that was cruel, evil, ignorant, dark, odious, not by the power of religion, but by the power of the awakened intelligence and of human idealism and sympathy, this predominance of religion has been violently attacked and rejected by that portion of humanity which was for that time the standard-bearer of thought and progress, Europe after the Renascence, modern Europe.

This revolt in its extreme form tried to destroy religion altogether, boasted indeed of having killed the religious instinct in man, — a vain and ignorant boast, as we now see, for the religious instinct in man is most of all the one instinct in him that cannot be killed, it only changes its form. In its more moderate movements the revolt put religion aside into a corner of the soul by itself and banished its intermiscence in the intellectual, aesthetic, practical life and even in the ethical; and it did this on the ground that the intermiscence of religion in science, thought, politics, society, life in general had been and must be a force for retardation, superstition, oppressive ignorance. The religionist may say that this accusation was an error and an atheistic perversity, or he may say that a religious retardation, a pious ignorance, a contented static condition or even an orderly stagnation full of holy thoughts of the Beyond is much better than a continuous endeavour after greater knowledge, greater mastery, more happiness, joy, light upon this transient earth. But the catholic thinker cannot accept such a plea; he is obliged to

see that so long as man has not realised the divine and the ideal in his life, — and it may well be even when he has realised it, since the divine is the infinite, — progress and not unmoving status is the necessary and desirable law of his life, — not indeed any breathless rush after novelties, but a constant motion towards a greater and greater truth of the spirit, the thought and the life not only in the individual, but in the collectivity, in the communal endeavour, in the turn, ideals, temperament, make of the society, in its strivings towards perfection. And he is obliged too to see that the indictment against religion, not in its conclusion, but in its premiss had something, had even much to justify it, — not that religion in itself must be, but that historically and as a matter of fact the accredited religions and their hierarchs and exponents have too often been a force for retardation, have too often thrown their weight on the side of darkness, oppression and ignorance, and that it has needed a denial, a revolt of the oppressed human mind and heart to correct these errors and set religion right. And why should this have been if religion is the true and sufficient guide and regulator of all human activities and the whole of human life?

We need not follow the rationalistic or atheistic mind through all its aggressive indictment of religion. We need not for instance lay a too excessive stress on the superstitions, aberrations, violences, crimes even, which Churches and cults and creeds have favoured, admitted, sanctioned, supported or exploited for their own benefit, the mere hostile enumeration of which might lead one to echo the cry of the atheistic Roman poet, "To such a mass of ills could religion persuade mankind." As well might one cite the crimes and errors which have been committed in the name of liberty or of order as a sufficient condemnation of the ideal of liberty or the ideal of social order. But we have to note the fact that such a thing was possible and to find its explanation. We cannot ignore for instance the blood-stained and fiery track which formal external Christianity has left furrowed across the mediaeval history of Europe almost from the days of Constantine, its first hour of secular triumph, down to very recent times, or the sanguinary comment which

such an institution as the Inquisition affords on the claim of religion to be the directing light and regulating power in ethics and society, or religious wars and wide-spread State persecutions on its claim to guide the political life of mankind. But we must observe the root of this evil, which is not in true religion itself, but in its infrarational parts, not in spiritual faith and aspiration, but in our ignorant human confusion of religion with a particular creed, sect, cult, religious society or Church. So strong is the human tendency to this error that even the old tolerant Paganism slew Socrates in the name of religion and morality, feebly persecuted non-national faiths like the cult of Isis or the cult of Mithra and more vigorously what it conceived to be the subversive and anti-social religion of the early Christians; and even in still more fundamentally tolerant Hinduism with all its spiritual broadness and enlightenment it led at one time to the milder mutual hatred and occasional though brief-lived persecution of Buddhist, Jain, Shaiva, Vaishnava.

The whole root of the historic insufficiency of religion as a guide and control of human society lies there. Churches and creeds have, for example, stood violently in the way of philosophy and science, burned a Giordano Bruno, imprisoned a Galileo, and so generally misconducted themselves in this matter that philosophy and science had in self-defence to turn upon Religion and rend her to pieces in order to get a free field for their legitimate development; and this because men in the passion and darkness of their vital nature had chosen to think that religion was bound up with certain fixed intellectual conceptions about God and the world which could not stand scrutiny, and therefore scrutiny had to be put down by fire and sword; scientific and philosophical truth had to be denied in order that religious error might survive. We see too that a narrow religious spirit often oppresses and impoverishes the joy and beauty of life, either from an intolerant asceticism or, as the Puritans attempted it, because they could not see that religious austerity is not the whole of religion, though it may be an important side of it, is not the sole ethico-religious approach to God, since love, charity, gentleness, tolerance, kindliness are also and even more divine,

and they forgot or never knew that God is love and beauty as well as purity. In politics religion has often thrown itself on the side of power and resisted the coming of larger political ideals, because it was itself, in the form of a Church, supported by power and because it confused religion with the Church, or because it stood for a false theocracy, forgetting that true theocracy is the kingdom of God in man and not the kingdom of a Pope, a priesthood or a sacerdotal class. So too it has often supported a rigid and outworn social system, because it thought its own life bound up with social forms with which it happened to have been associated during a long portion of its own history and erroneously concluded that even a necessary change there would be a violation of religion and a danger to its existence. As if so mighty and inward a power as the religious spirit in man could be destroyed by anything so small as the change of a social form or so outward as a social readjustment! This error in its many shapes has been the great weakness of religion as practised in the past and the opportunity and justification for the revolt of the intelligence, the aesthetic sense, the social and political idealism, even the ethical spirit of the human being against what should have been its own highest tendency and law.

Here then lies one secret of the divergence between the ancient and the modern, the Eastern and Western ideal, and here also one clue to their reconciliation. Both rest upon a certain strong justification and their quarrel is due to a misunderstanding. It is true in a sense that religion should be the dominant thing in life, its light and law, but religion as it should be and is in its inner nature, its fundamental law of being, a seeking after God, the cult of spirituality, the opening of the deepest life of the soul to the indwelling Godhead, the eternal Omnipresence. On the other hand, it is true that religion when it identifies itself only with a creed, a cult, a Church, a system of ceremonial forms, may well become a retarding force and there may therefore arise a necessity for the human spirit to reject its control over the varied activities of life. There are two aspects of religion, true religion and religionism. True religion is spiritual religion, that which seeks to live in the spirit, in what is beyond the

intellect, beyond the aesthetic and ethical and practical being of man, and to inform and govern these members of our being by the higher light and law of the spirit. Religionism, on the contrary, entrenches itself in some narrow pietistic exaltation of the lower members or lays exclusive stress on intellectual dogmas, forms and ceremonies, on some fixed and rigid moral code, on some religio-political or religio-social system. Not that these things are altogether negligible or that they must be unworthy or unnecessary or that a spiritual religion need disdain the aid of forms, ceremonies, creeds or systems. On the contrary, they are needed by man because the lower members have to be exalted and raised before they can be fully spiritualised, before they can directly feel the spirit and obey its law. An intellectual formula is often needed by the thinking and reasoning mind, a form or ceremony by the aesthetic temperament or other parts of the infrarational being, a set moral code by man's vital nature in their turn towards the inner life. But these things are aids and supports, not the essence; precisely because they belong to the rational and infrarational parts, they can be nothing more and, if too blindly insisted on, may even hamper the suprarational light. Such as they are, they have to be offered to man and used by him, but not to be imposed on him as his sole law by a forced and inflexible domination. In the use of them toleration and free permission of variation is the first rule which should be observed. The spiritual essence of religion is alone the one thing supremely needful, the thing to which we have always to hold and subordinate to it every other element or motive.

But here comes in an ambiguity which brings in a deeper source of divergence. For by spirituality religion seems often to mean something remote from earthly life, different from it, hostile to it. It seems to condemn the pursuit of earthly aims as a trend opposed to the turn to a spiritual life and the hopes of man on earth as an illusion or a vanity incompatible with the hope of man in heaven. The spirit then becomes something aloof which man can only reach by throwing away the life of his lower members. Either he must abandon this nether life after a certain point, when it has served its purpose, or must persistently

discourage, mortify and kill it. If that be the true sense of religion, then obviously religion has no positive message for human society in the proper field of social effort, hope and aspiration or for the individual in any of the lower members of his being. For each principle of our nature seeks naturally for perfection in its own sphere and, if it is to obey a higher power, it must be because that power gives it a greater perfection and a fuller satisfaction even in its own field. But if perfectibility is denied to it and therefore the aspiration to perfection taken away by the spiritual urge, then it must either lose faith in itself and the power to pursue the natural expansion of its energies and activities or it must reject the call of the spirit in order to follow its own bend and law, *dharma*. This quarrel between earth and heaven, between the spirit and its members becomes still more sterilising if spirituality takes the form of a religion of sorrow and suffering and austere mortification and the gospel of the vanity of things; in its exaggeration it leads to such nightmares of the soul as that terrible gloom and hopelessness of the Middle Ages in their worst moment when the one hope of mankind seemed to be in the approaching and expected end of the world, an inevitable and desirable Pralaya. But even in less pronounced and intolerant forms of this pessimistic attitude with regard to the world, it becomes a force for the discouragement of life and cannot, therefore, be a true law and guide for life. All pessimism is to that extent a denial of the Spirit, of its fullness and power, an impatience with the ways of God in the world, an insufficient faith in the divine Wisdom and Will that created the world and for ever guide it. It admits a wrong notion about that supreme Wisdom and Power and therefore cannot itself be the supreme wisdom and power of the spirit to which the world can look for guidance and for the uplifting of its whole life towards the Divine.

The Western recoil from religion, that minimising of its claim and insistence by which Europe progressed from the mediaeval religious attitude through the Renascence and the Reformation to the modern rationalistic attitude, that making of the ordinary earthly life our one preoccupation, that labour

to fulfil ourselves by the law of the lower members, divorced from all spiritual seeking, was an opposite error, the contrary ignorant extreme, the blind swing of the pendulum from a wrong affirmation to a wrong negation. It is an error because perfection cannot be found in such a limitation and restriction; for it denies the complete law of human existence, its deepest urge, its most secret impulse. Only by the light and power of the highest can the lower be perfectly guided, uplifted and accomplished. The lower life of man is in form undivine, though in it there is the secret of the divine, and it can only be divinised by finding the higher law and the spiritual illumination. On the other hand, the impatience which condemns or despairs of life or discourages its growth because it is at present undivine and is not in harmony with the spiritual life, is an equal ignorance, *andhaṁ tamaḥ*. The world-shunning monk, the mere ascetic may indeed well find by this turn his own individual and peculiar salvation, the spiritual recompense of his renunciation and Tapasya, as the materialist may find by his own exclusive method the appropriate rewards of his energy and concentrated seeking; but neither can be the true guide of mankind and its law-giver. The monastic attitude implies a fear, an aversion, a distrust of life and its aspirations, and one cannot wisely guide that with which one is entirely out of sympathy, that which one wishes to minimise and discourage. The sheer ascetic spirit, if it directed life and human society, could only prepare it to be a means for denying itself and getting away from its own motives. An ascetic guidance might tolerate the lower activities, but only with a view to persuade them in the end to minimise and finally cease from their own action. But a spirituality which draws back from life to envelop it without being dominated by it does not labour under this disability. The spiritual man who can guide human life towards its perfection is typified in the ancient Indian idea of the Rishi, one who has lived fully the life of man and found the word of the supra-intellectual, supramental, spiritual truth. He has risen above these lower limitations and can view all things from above, but also he is in sympathy with their effort and can view them from within; he has the complete inner

knowledge and the higher surpassing knowledge. Therefore he can guide the world humanly as God guides it divinely, because like the Divine he is in the life of the world and yet above it.

In spirituality, then, understood in this sense, we must seek for the directing light and the harmonising law, and in religion only in proportion as it identifies itself with this spirituality. So long as it falls short of this, it is one human activity and power among others, and, even if it be considered the most important and the most powerful, it cannot wholly guide the others. If it seeks always to fix them into the limits of a creed, an unchangeable law, a particular system, it must be prepared to see them revolting from its control; for although they may accept this impress for a time and greatly profit by it, in the end they must move by the law of their being towards a freer activity and an untrammelled movement. Spirituality respects the freedom of the human soul, because it is itself fulfilled by freedom; and the deepest meaning of freedom is the power to expand and grow towards perfection by the law of one's own nature, *dharma*. This liberty it will give to all the fundamental parts of our being. It will give that freedom to philosophy and science which ancient Indian religion gave, — freedom even to deny the spirit, if they will, — as a result of which philosophy and science never felt in ancient India any necessity of divorcing themselves from religion, but grew rather into it and under its light. It will give the same freedom to man's seeking for political and social perfection and to all his other powers and aspirations. Only it will be vigilant to illuminate them so that they may grow into the light and law of the spirit, not by suppression and restriction, but by a self-searching, self-controlled expansion and a many-sided finding of their greatest, highest and deepest potentialities. For all these are potentialities of the spirit.

Chapter XVIII

The Infrarational Age of the Cycle

IN SPIRITUALITY then would lie our ultimate, our only hope for the perfection whether of the individual or of the communal man; not the spirit which for its separate satisfaction turns away from the earth and her works, but that greater spirit which surpasses and yet accepts and fulfils them. A spirituality that would take up into itself man's rationalism, aestheticism, ethicism, vitalism, corporeality, his aspiration towards knowledge, his attraction towards beauty, his need of love, his urge towards perfection, his demand for power and fullness of life and being, a spirituality that would reveal to these ill-accorded forces their divine sense and the conditions of their godhead, reconcile them all to each other, illumine to the vision of each the way which they now tread in half-lights and shadows, in blindness or with a deflected sight, is a power which even man's too self-sufficient reason can accept or may at least be brought one day to accept as sovereign and to see in it its own supreme light, its own infinite source. For that reveals itself surely in the end as the logical ultimate process, the inevitable development and consummation of all for which man is individually and socially striving. A satisfying evolution of the nascent spirituality still raw and inchoate in the race is the possibility to which an age of subjectivism is a first glimmer of awakening or towards which it shows a first profound potentiality of return. A deeper, wider, greater, more spiritualised subjective understanding of the individual and communal self and its life and a growing reliance on the spiritual light and the spiritual means for the final solution of its problems are the only way to a true social perfection. The free rule, that is to say, the predominant lead, control and influence of the developed spiritual man — not the half-spiritualised priest, saint or prophet or the raw religionist — is our hope for a divine guidance of the race. A spiritualised

society can alone bring about a reign of individual harmony and communal happiness; or, in words which, though liable to abuse by the reason and the passions, are still the most expressive we can find, a new kind of theocracy, the kingdom of God upon earth, a theocracy which shall be the government of mankind by the Divine in the hearts and minds of men.

Certainly, this will not come about easily, or, as men have always vainly hoped from each great new turn and revolution of politics and society, by a sudden and at once entirely satisfying change and magical transformation. The advance, however it comes about, will be indeed of the nature of a miracle, as are all such profound changes and immense developments; for they have the appearance of a kind of realised impossibility. But God works all his miracles by an evolution of secret possibilities which have been long prepared, at least in their elements, and in the end by a rapid bringing of all to a head, a throwing together of the elements so that in their fusion they produce a new form and name of things and reveal a new spirit. Often the decisive turn is preceded by an apparent emphasising and raising to their extreme of things which seem the very denial, the most uncompromising opposite of the new principle and the new creation. Such an evolution of the elements of a spiritualised society is that which a subjective age makes at least possible, and if at the same time it raises to the last height of active power things which seem the very denial of such a potentiality, that need be no index of a practical impossibility of the new birth, but on the contrary may be the sign of its approach or at the lowest a strong attempt at achievement. Certainly, the whole effort of a subjective age may go wrong; but this happens oftenest when by the insufficiency of its materials, a great crudeness of its starting-point and a hasty shallowness or narrow intensity of its inlook into itself and things it is foredoomed to a fundamental error of self-knowledge. It becomes less likely when the spirit of the age is full of freedom, variety and a many-sided seeking, a persistent effort after knowledge and perfection in all the domains of human activity; that can well convert itself into an intense and yet flexible straining after the infinite and the divine on many

sides and in many aspects. In such circumstances, though a full advance may possibly not be made, a great step forward can be predicted.

We have seen that there are necessarily three stages of the social evolution or, generally, of the human evolution in both individual and society. Our evolution starts with an infrarational stage in which men have not yet learned to refer their life and action in its principles and its forms to the judgment of the clarified intelligence; for they still act principally out of their instincts, impulses, spontaneous ideas, vital intuitions or obey a customary response to desire, need and circumstance, — it is these things that are canalised or crystallised in their social institutions. Man proceeds by various stages out of these beginnings towards a rational age in which his intelligent will more or less developed becomes the judge, arbiter and presiding motive of his thought, feeling and action, the moulder, destroyer and recreator of his leading ideas, aims and intuitions. Finally, if our analysis and forecast are correct, the human evolution must move through a subjective towards a suprarational or spiritual age in which he will develop progressively a greater spiritual, supra-intellectual and intuitive, perhaps in the end a more than intuitive, a gnostic consciousness. He will be able to perceive a higher divine end, a divine sanction, a divine light of guidance for all he seeks to be, think, feel and do, and able, too, more and more to obey and live in this larger light and power. That will not be done by any rule of infrarational religious impulse and ecstasy, such as characterised or rather darkly illumined the obscure confusion and brute violence of the Middle Ages, but by a higher spiritual living for which the clarities of the reason are a necessary preparation and into which they too will be taken up, transformed, brought to their invisible source.

These stages or periods are much more inevitable in the psychological evolution of mankind than the Stone and other Ages marked out by Science in his instrumental culture, for they depend not on outward means or accidents, but on the very nature of his being. But we must not suppose that they are naturally exclusive and absolute in their nature, or complete in

their tendency or fulfilment when they come, or rigidly marked off from each other in their action or their time. For they not only arise out of each other, but may be partially developed in each other and they may come to coexist in different parts of the earth at the same time. But, especially, since man as a whole is always a complex being, even man savage or degenerate, he cannot be any of these things exclusively or absolutely, — so long as he has not exceeded himself, has not developed into the superman, has not, that is to say, spiritualised and divinised his whole being. At his animal worst he is still some kind of thinking or reflecting animal: even the infrarational man cannot be utterly infrarational, but must have or tend to have some kind of play more or less evolved or involved of the reason and a more or less crude suprarational element, a more or less disguised working of the spirit. At his lucid mental best, he is still not a pure mental being, a pure intelligence; even the most perfect intellectual is not and cannot be wholly or merely rational, — there are vital urgings that he cannot exclude, visits or touches of a light from above that are not less suprarational because he does not recognise their source. No god, but at his highest a human being touched with a ray of the divine influence, man's very spirituality, however dominant, must have, while he is still this imperfectly evolved human, its rational and infrarational tendencies and elements. And as with the psychological life of individuals, so must it be with the ages of his communal existence; these may be marked off from each other by the predominant play of one element, its force may overpower the others or take them into itself or make some compromise, but an exclusive play seems to be neither intended nor possible.

Thus an infrarational period of human and social development need not be without its elements, its strong elements of reason and of spirituality. Even the savage, whether he be primitive or degenerate man, has some coherent idea of this world and the beyond, a theory of life and a religion. To us with our more advanced rationality his theory of life may seem incoherent, because we have lost its point of view and its principle of mental associations. But it is still an act of reason, and

within its limits he is capable of a sufficient play of thought both ideative and practical, as well as a clear ethical idea and motive, some aesthetic notions and an understood order of society poor and barbarous to our view, but well enough contrived and put together to serve the simplicity of its objects. Or again we may not realise the element of reason in a primitive theory of life or of spirituality in a barbaric religion, because it appears to us to be made up of symbols and forms to which a superstitious value is attached by these undeveloped minds. But this is because the reason at this stage has an imperfect and limited action and the element of spirituality is crude or undeveloped and not yet self-conscious; in order to hold firmly their workings and make them real and concrete to his mind and spirit primitive man has to give them shape in symbols and forms to which he clings with a barbaric awe and reverence, because they alone can embody for him his method of self-guidance in life. For the dominant thing in him is his infrarational life of instinct, vital intuition and impulse, mechanical custom and tradition, and it is that to which the rest of him has to give some kind of primary order and first glimmerings of light. The unrefined reason and unenlightened spirit in him cannot work for their own ends; they are bond-slaves of his infrarational nature.

At a higher stage of development or of a return towards a fuller evolution, — for the actual savage in humanity is perhaps not the original primitive man, but a relapse and reversion towards primitiveness, — the infrarational stage of society may arrive at a very lofty order of civilisation. It may have great intuitions of the meaning or general intention of life, admirable ideas of the arrangement of life, a harmonious, well-adapted, durable and serviceable social system, an imposing religion which will not be without its profundities, but in which symbol and ceremonial will form the largest portion and for the mass of man will be almost the whole of religion. In this stage pure reason and pure spirituality will not govern the society or move large bodies of men, but will be represented, if at all, by individuals at first few, but growing in number as these two powers increase in their purity and vigour and attract more and more votaries.

This may well lead to an age, if the development of reason is strongest, of great individual thinkers who seize on some idea of life and its origins and laws and erect that into a philosophy, of critical minds standing isolated above the mass who judge life, not yet with a luminous largeness, a minute flexibility of understanding or a clear and comprehensive profundity, but still with power of intelligence, insight, acuteness, perhaps even a pre-eminent social thinker here and there who, taking advantage of some crisis or disturbance, is able to get the society to modify or reconstruct itself on the basis of some clearly rational and intelligent principle. Such an age seems to be represented by the traditions of the beginnings of Greek civilisation, or rather the beginnings of its mobile and progressive period. Or if spirituality predominates, there will be great mystics capable of delving into the profound and still occult psychological possibilities of our nature who will divine and realise the truth of the self and spirit in man and, even though they keep these things secret and imparted only to a small number of initiates, may yet succeed in deepening with them the crude forms of the popular life. Even such a development is obscurely indicated in the old traditions of the mysteries. In prehistoric India we see it take a peculiar and unique turn which determined the whole future trend of the society and made Indian civilisation a thing apart and of its own kind in the history of the human race. But these things are only a first beginning of light in the midst of a humanity which is still infrarational as well as infra-spiritual and, even when it undergoes the influence of these precursors, responds only obscurely to their inspirations and without any clearly intelligent or awakened spiritual reception of what they impart or impose. It still turns everything into infrarational form and disfiguring tradition and lives spiritually by ill-understood ceremonial and disguising symbol. It feels obscurely the higher things, tries to live them in its own stumbling way, but it does not yet understand; it cannot lay hold either on the intellectual form or the spiritual heart of their significance.

As reason and spirituality develop, they begin to become a larger and more diffused force, less intense perhaps, but wider

and more effective on the mass. The mystics become the sowers of the seed of an immense spiritual development in which whole classes of society and even men from all classes seek the light, as happened in India in the age of the Upanishads. The solitary individual thinkers are replaced by a great number of writers, poets, thinkers, rhetoricians, sophists, scientific inquirers, who pour out a profuse flood of acute speculation and inquiry stimulating the thought-habit and creating even in the mass a generalised activity of the intelligence, — as happened in Greece in the age of the sophists. The spiritual development, arising uncurbed by reason in an infrarational society, has often a tendency to outrun at first the rational and intellectual movement. For the greatest illuminating force of the infrarational man, as he develops, is an inferior intuition, an instinctively intuitional sight arising out of the force of life in him, and the transition from this to an intensity of inner life and the growth of a deeper spiritual intuition which outleaps the intellect and seems to dispense with it, is an easy passage in the individual man. But for humanity at large this movement cannot last; the mind and intellect must develop to their fullness so that the spirituality of the race may rise securely upward upon a broad basis of the developed lower nature in man, the intelligent mental being. Therefore we see that the reason in its growth either does away with the distinct spiritual tendency for a time, as in ancient Greece, or accepts it but spins out around its first data and activities a vast web of the workings of the intelligence, so that, as in India, the early mystic seer is replaced by the philosopher-mystic, the religious thinker and even the philosopher pure and simple.

For a time the new growth and impulse may seem to take possession of a whole community as in Athens or in old Aryan India. But these early dawns cannot endure in their purity, so long as the race is not ready. There is a crystallisation, a lessening of the first impetus, a new growth of infrarational forms in which the thought or the spirituality is overgrown with inferior accretions or it is imbedded in the form and may even die in it, while the tradition of the living knowledge, the loftier life and activity remains the property of the higher classes or a highest

class. The multitude remains infrarational in its habit of mind, though perhaps it may still keep in capacity an enlivened intelligence or a profound or subtle spiritual receptiveness as its gain from the past. So long as the hour of the rational age has not arrived, the irrational period of society cannot be left behind; and that arrival can only be when not a class or a few but the multitude has learned to think, to exercise its intelligence actively — it matters not at first however imperfectly — upon their life, their needs, their rights, their duties, their aspirations as human beings. Until then we have as the highest possible development a mixed society, infrarational in the mass, but saved for civilisation by a higher class whose business it is to seek after the reason and the spirit, to keep the gains of mankind in these fields, to add to them, to enlighten and raise with them as much as possible the life of the whole.

At this point we see that Nature in her human mass tends to move forward slowly on her various lines of active mind and life towards a greater application of reason and spirituality which shall at last bring near the possibility of a rational and, eventually, a spiritual age of mankind. Her difficulties proceed from two sides. First, while she originally developed thought and reason and spirituality by exceptional individuals, now she develops them in the mass by exceptional communities or nations, — at least in the relative sense of a nation governed, led and progressively formed and educated by its intellectually or spiritually cultured class or classes. But the exceptional nation touched on its higher levels by a developed reason or spirituality or both, as were Greece and later Rome in ancient Europe, India, China and Persia in ancient Asia, is surrounded or neighboured by enormous masses of the old infrarational humanity and endangered by this menacing proximity; for until a developed science comes in to redress the balance, the barbarian has always a greater physical force and unexhausted native power of aggression than the cultured peoples. At this stage the light and power of civilisation always collapses in the end before the attack of the outer darkness. Then ascending Nature has to train the conquerors more or less slowly, with long difficulty

and much loss and delay to develop among themselves what their incursion has temporarily destroyed or impaired. In the end humanity gains by the process; a greater mass of the nations is brought in, a larger and more living force of progress is applied, a starting-point is reached from which it can move to richer and more varied gains. But a certain loss is always the price of this advance.

But even within the communities themselves reason and spirituality at this stage are always hampered and endangered by existing in a milieu and atmosphere not their own. The élite, the classes in charge of these powers, are obliged to throw them into forms which the mass of human ignorance they lead and rule will accept, and both reason and spirituality tend to be stifled by these forms, to get stereotyped, fossilised, void of life, bound up from their natural play. Secondly, since they are after all part of the mass, these higher enlightened elements are themselves much under the influence of their infrarational parts and do not, except in individuals, arrive at the entirely free play of the reason or the free light of the spirit. Thirdly, there is always the danger of these elements gravitating downward to the ignorance below or even collapsing into it. Nature guards herself by various devices for maintaining the tradition of intellectual and spiritual activity in the favoured classes; here she makes it a point of honour for them to preserve and promote the national culture, there she establishes a preservative system of education and discipline. And in order that these things may not degenerate into mere traditionalism, she brings in a series of intellectual or spiritual movements which by their shock revivify the failing life and help to bring about a broadening and an enlarging and to drive the dominant reason or spirituality deeper down into the infrarational mass. Each movement indeed tends to petrify after a shorter or longer activity, but a fresh shock, a new wave arrives in time to save and regenerate. Finally, she reaches the point when, all immediate danger of relapse overcome, she can proceed to her next decisive advance in the cycle of social evolution. This must take the form of an attempt to universalise first of all the habit of reason and the application of the intelligence

and intelligent will to life. Thus is instituted the rational age of human society, the great endeavour to bring the power of the reason and intelligence to bear on all that we are and do and to organise in their light and by their guiding force the entire existence of the race.

Chapter XIX

The Curve of the Rational Age

THE PRESENT age of mankind may be characterised from this point of view of a graded psychological evolution of the race as a more and more rapidly accelerated attempt to discover and work out the right principle and secure foundations of a rational system of society. It has been an age of progress; but progress is of two kinds, adaptive, with a secure basis in an unalterable social principle and constant change only in the circumstances and machinery of its application to suit fresh ideas and fresh needs, or else radical, with no long-secure basis, but instead a constant root questioning of the practical foundations and even the central principle of the established society. The modern age has resolved itself into a constant series of radical progressions.

This series seems to follow always a typical course, first a luminous seed-time and a period of enthusiastic effort and battle, next a partial victory and achievement and a brief era of possession, then disillusionment and the birth of a new idea and endeavour. A principle of society is put forward by the thinker, seizes on the general mind and becomes a social gospel; brought immediately or by rapid stages into practice, it dethrones the preceding principle and takes its place as the foundation of the community's social or political life. This victory won, men live for a time in the enthusiasm or, when the enthusiasm sinks, in the habit of their great achievement. After a little they begin to feel less at ease with the first results and are moved to adapt, to alter constantly, to develop more or less restlessly the new system, — for it is the very nature of the reason to observe, to be open to novel ideas, to respond quickly to new needs and possibilities and not to repose always in the unquestioning acceptance of every habit and old association. Still men do not yet think of questioning their social principle or imagine that

it will ever need alteration, but are intent only to perfect its forms and make its application more thorough, its execution more sincere and effective. A time, however, arrives when the reason becomes dissatisfied and sees that it is only erecting a mass of new conventions and that there has been no satisfying change; there has been a shifting of stresses, but the society is not appreciably nearer to perfection. The opposition of the few thinkers who have already, perhaps almost from the first, started to question the sufficiency of the social principle, makes itself felt and is accepted by increasing numbers; there is a movement of revolt and the society starts on the familiar round to a new radical progression, a new revolution, the reign of a more advanced social principle.

This process has to continue until the reason can find a principle of society or else a combination and adjustment of several principles which will satisfy it. The question is whether it will ever be satisfied or can ever rest from questioning the foundation of established things, — unless indeed it sinks back into a sleep of tradition and convention or else goes forward by a great awakening to the reign of a higher spirit than its own and opens into a suprarational or spiritual age of mankind. If we may judge from the modern movement, the progress of the reason as a social renovator and creator, if not interrupted in its course, would be destined to pass through three successive stages which are the very logic of its growth, the first individualistic and increasingly democratic with liberty for its principle, the second socialistic, in the end perhaps a governmental communism with equality and the State for its principle, the third — if that ever gets beyond the stage of theory — anarchistic in the higher sense of that much-abused word, either a loose voluntary cooperation or a free communalism with brotherhood or comradeship and not government for its principle. It is in the transition to its third and consummating stage, if or whenever that comes, that the power and sufficiency of the reason will be tested; it will then be seen whether the reason can really be the master of our nature, solve the problems of our interrelated and conflicting egoisms and bring about within itself a perfect principle of society or

must give way to a higher guide. For till this third stage has its trial, it is Force that in the last resort really governs. Reason only gives to Force the plan of its action and a system to administer.

We have already seen that it is individualism which opens the way to the age of reason and that individualism gets its impulse and its chance of development because it follows upon an age of dominant conventionalism. It is not that in the pre-individualistic, pre-rational ages there were no thinkers upon society and the communal life of man; but they did not think in the characteristic method of the logical reason, critical, all-observing, all-questioning, and did not proceed on the constructive side by the carefully mechanising methods of the highly rationalised intelligence when it passes from the reasoned perception of a truth to the endeavour after its pure, perfect and universal orderly application. Their thought and their building of life were much less logical than spontaneously intelligent, organic and intuitive. Always they looked upon life as it was and sought to know its secret by keen discernment, intuition and insight; symbols embodying the actual and ideal truth of life and being, types setting them in an arrangement and psychological order, institutions giving them a material fixity in their effectuation by life, this was the form in which they shaped their attempt to understand and mentalise life, to govern life by mind, but mind in its spontaneously intuitive or its reflectively seeing movements before they have been fixed into the geometrical patterns of the logical intelligence.

But reason seeks to understand and interpret life by one kind of symbol only, the idea; it generalises the facts of life according to its own strongly cut ideative conceptions so that it may be able to master and arrange them, and having hold of an idea it looks for its largest general application. And in order that these ideas may not be a mere abstraction divorced from the realised or realisable truth of things, it has to be constantly comparing them with facts. It has to be always questioning facts so that it may find the ideas by which they can be more and more adequately explained, ordered and managed, and it has always to be questioning ideas in order, first, to see whether

they square with actual facts and, secondly, whether there are not new facts to suit which they must be modified or enlarged or which can be evolved out of them. For reason lives not only in actual facts, but in possibilities, not only in realised truths, but in ideal truths; and the ideal truth once seen, the impulse of the idealising intelligence is to see too whether it cannot be turned into a fact, cannot be immediately or rapidly realised in life. It is by this inherent characteristic that the age of reason must always be an age of progress.

So long as the old method of mentalising life served its purpose, there was no necessity for men in the mass to think out their way of life by the aid of the reason. But the old method ceased to serve its purpose as soon as the symbols, types, institutions it created became conventions so imprisoning truth that there was no longer a force of insight sufficient to deliver the hidden reality from its artificial coatings. Man may for a time, for a long time even, live by the mere tradition of things whose reality he has lost, but not permanently; the necessity of questioning all his conventions and traditions arises, and by that necessity reason gets her first real chance of an entire self-development. Reason can accept no tradition merely for the sake of its antiquity or its past greatness: it has to ask, first, whether the tradition contains at all any still living truth and, secondly, whether it contains the best truth available to man for the government of his life. Reason can accept no convention merely because men are agreed upon it: it has to ask whether they are right in their agreement, whether it is not an inert and false acquiescence. Reason cannot accept any institution merely because it serves some purpose of life: it has to ask whether there are not greater and better purposes which can be best served by new institutions. There arises the necessity of a universal questioning, and from that necessity arises the idea that society can only be perfected by the universal application of the rational intelligence to the whole of life, to its principle as to its details, to its machinery and to the powers that drive the machine.

This reason which is to be universally applied, cannot be the reason of a ruling class; for in the present imperfection of

the human race that always means in practice the fettering and misapplication of reason degraded into a servant of power to maintain the privileges of the ruling class and justify the existing order. It cannot be the reason of a few pre-eminent thinkers; for, if the mass is infrarational, the application of their ideas becomes in practice disfigured, ineffective, incomplete, speedily altered into mere form and convention. It must be the reason of each and all seeking for a basis of agreement. Hence arises the principle of individualistic democracy, that the reason and will of every individual in the society must be allowed to count equally with the reason and will of every other in determining its government, in selecting the essential basis and in arranging the detailed ordering of the common life. This must be, not because the reason of one man is as good as the reason of any other, but because otherwise we get back inevitably to the rule of a predominant class which, however modified by being obliged to consider to some extent the opinion of the ruled, must exhibit always the irrational vice of reason subordinated to the purposes of power and not flexibly used for its own proper and ideal ends. Secondly, each individual must be allowed to govern his life according to the dictates of his own reason and will so far as that can be done without impinging on the same right in others. This is a necessary corollary of the primary principle on which the age of reason founds its initial movement. It is sufficient for the first purposes of the rational age that each man should be supposed to have sufficient intelligence to understand views which are presented and explained to him, to consider the opinions of his fellows and to form in consultation with them his own judgment. His individual judgment so formed and by one device or another made effective is the share he contributes to the building of the total common judgment by which society must be ruled, his little brick in appearance insignificant and yet indispensable to the imposing whole. And it is sufficient also for the first ideal of the rational age that this common judgment should be effectively organised only for the indispensable common ends of the society, while in all else men must be left free to govern their own life according to their own reason and will

and find freely its best possible natural adjustment with the lives of others. In this way by the practice of the free use of reason men can grow into rational beings and learn to live by common agreement a liberal, a vigorous, a natural and yet rationalised existence.

In practice it is found that these ideas will not hold for a long time. For the ordinary man is not yet a rational being; emerging from a long infrarational past, he is not naturally able to form a reasonable judgment, but thinks either according to his own interests, impulses and prejudices or else according to the ideas of others more active in intelligence or swift in action who are able by some means to establish an influence over his mind. Secondly, he does not yet use his reason in order to come to an agreement with his fellows, but rather to enforce his own opinions by struggle and conflict with the opinions of others. Exceptionally he may utilise his reason for the pursuit of truth, but normally it serves for the justification of his impulses, prejudices and interests, and it is these that determine or at least quite discolour and disfigure his ideals, even when he has learned at all to have ideals. Finally, he does not use his freedom to arrive at a rational adjustment of his life with the life of others; his natural tendency is to enforce the aims of his life even at the expense of or, as it is euphemistically put, in competition with the life of others. There comes thus to be a wide gulf between the ideal and the first results of its practice. There is here a disparity between fact and idea that must lead to inevitable disillusionment and failure.

The individualistic democratic ideal brings us at first in actual practice to the more and more precarious rule of a dominant class in the name of democracy over the ignorant, numerous and less fortunate mass. Secondly, since the ideal of freedom and equality is abroad and cannot any longer be stifled, it must lead to the increasing effort of the exploited masses to assert their down-trodden right and to turn, if they can, this pseudo-democratic falsehood into the real democratic truth; therefore, to a war of classes. Thirdly, it develops inevitably as part of its process a perpetual strife of parties, at first few and simple in

composition, but afterwards as at the present time an impotent and sterilising chaos of names, labels, programmes, war-cries. All lift the banner of conflicting ideas or ideals, but all are really fighting out under that flag a battle of conflicting interests. Finally, individualistic democratic freedom results fatally in an increasing stress of competition which replaces the ordered tyrannies of the infrarational periods of humanity by a sort of ordered conflict. And this conflict ends in the survival not of the spiritually, rationally or physically fittest, but of the most fortunate and vitally successful. It is evident enough that, whatever else it may be, this is not a rational order of society; it is not at all the perfection which the individualistic reason of man had contemplated as its ideal or set out to accomplish.

The natural remedy for the first defects of the individualistic theory in practice would seem to be education; for if man is not by nature, we may hope at least that he can be made by education and training something like a rational being. Universal education, therefore, is the inevitable second step of the democratic movement in its attempt to rationalise human society. But a rational education means necessarily three things, first, to teach men how to observe and know rightly the facts on which they have to form a judgment; secondly, to train them to think fruitfully and soundly; thirdly, to fit them to use their knowledge and their thought effectively for their own and the common good. Capacity of observation and knowledge, capacity of intelligence and judgment, capacity of action and high character are required for the citizenship of a rational order of society; a general deficiency in any of these difficult requisites is a sure source of failure. Unfortunately, — even if we suppose that any training made available to the millions can ever be of this rare character, — the actual education given in the most advanced countries has not had the least relation to these necessities. And just as the first defects and failures of democracy have given occasion to the enemy to blaspheme and to vaunt the superiority or even the quite imaginary perfection of the ideal past, so also the first defects of its great remedy, education, have led many superior minds to deny the efficacy of education and its power

to transform the human mind and driven them to condemn the democratic ideal as an exploded fiction.

Democracy and its panacea of education and freedom have certainly done something for the race. To begin with, the people are, for the first time in the historical period of history, erect, active and alive, and where there is life, there is always a hope of better things. Again, some kind of knowledge and with it some kind of active intelligence based on knowledge and strengthened by the habit of being called on to judge and decide between conflicting issues and opinions in all sorts of matters have been much more generalised than was formerly possible. Men are being progressively trained to use their minds, to apply intelligence to life, and that is a great gain. If they have not yet learned to think for themselves or to think soundly, clearly and rightly, they are at least more able now to choose with some kind of initial intelligence, however imperfect as yet it may be, the thought they shall accept and the rule they shall follow. Equal educational equipment and equal opportunity of life have by no means been acquired; but there is a much greater equalisation than was at all possible in former states of society. But here a new and enormous defect has revealed itself which is proving fatal to the social idea which engendered it. For given even perfect equality of educational and other opportunity, — and that does not yet really exist and cannot in the individualistic state of society, — to what purpose or in what manner is the opportunity likely to be used? Man, the half infrarational being, demands three things for his satisfaction, power, if he can have it, but at any rate the use and reward of his faculties and the enjoyment of his desires. In the old societies the possibility of these could be secured by him to a certain extent according to his birth, his fixed status and the use of his capacity within the limits of his hereditary status. That basis once removed and no proper substitute provided, the same ends can only be secured by success in a scramble for the one power left, the power of wealth. Accordingly, instead of a harmoniously ordered society there has been developed a huge organised competitive system, a frantically rapid and one-sided development of industrialism and, under the garb of democracy,

an increasing plutocratic tendency that shocks by its ostentatious grossness and the magnitudes of its gulfs and distances. These have been the last results of the individualistic ideal and its democratic machinery, the initial bankruptcies of the rational age.

The first natural result has been the transition of the rational mind from democratic individualism to democratic socialism. Socialism, labouring under the disadvantageous accident of its birth in a revolt against capitalism, an uprising against the rule of the successful bourgeois and the plutocrat, has been compelled to work itself out by a war of classes. And, worse still, it has started from an industrialised social system and itself taken on at the beginning a purely industrial and economic appearance. These are accidents that disfigure its true nature. Its true nature, its real justification is the attempt of the human reason to carry on the rational ordering of society to its fulfilment, its will to get rid of this great parasitical excrescence of unbridled competition, this giant obstacle to any decent ideal or practice of human living. Socialism sets out to replace a system of organised economic battle by an organised order and peace. This can no longer be done on the old lines, an artificial or inherited inequality brought about by the denial of equal opportunity and justified by the affirmation of that injustice and its result as an eternal law of society and of Nature. That is a falsehood which the reason of man will no longer permit. Neither can it be done, it seems, on the basis of individual liberty; for that has broken down in the practice. Socialism therefore must do away with the democratic basis of individual liberty, even if it professes to respect it or to be marching towards a more rational freedom. It shifts at first the fundamental emphasis to other ideas and fruits of the democratic ideal, and it leads by this transference of stress to a radical change in the basic principle of a rational society. Equality, not a political only, but a perfect social equality, is to be the basis. There is to be equality of opportunity for all, but also equality of status for all, for without the last the first cannot be secured; even if it were established, it could not endure. This equality again is impossible if personal, or at least inherited

right in property is to exist, and therefore socialism abolishes — except at best on a small scale — the right of personal property as it is now understood and makes war on the hereditary principle. Who then is to possess the property? It can only be the community as a whole. And who is to administer it? Again, the community as a whole. In order to justify this idea, the socialistic principle has practically to deny the existence of the individual or his right to exist except as a member of the society and for its sake. He belongs entirely to the society, not only his property, but himself, his labour, his capacities, the education it gives him and its results, his mind, his knowledge, his individual life, his family life, the life of his children. Moreover, since his individual reason cannot be trusted to work out naturally a right and rational adjustment of his life with the life of others, it is for the reason of the whole community to arrange that too for him. Not the reasoning minds and wills of the individuals, but the collective reasoning mind and will of the community has to govern. It is this which will determine not only the principles and all the details of the economic and political order, but the whole life of the community and of the individual as a working, thinking, feeling cell of this life, the development of his capacities, his actions, the use of the knowledge he has acquired, the whole ordering of his vital, his ethical, his intelligent being. For so only can the collective reason and intelligent will of the race overcome the egoism of individualistic life and bring about a perfect principle and rational order of society in a harmonious world.

It is true that this inevitable character of socialism is denied or minimised by the more democratic socialists; for the socialistic mind still bears the impress of the old democratic ideas and cherishes hopes that betray it often into strange illogicalities. It assures us that it will combine some kind of individual freedom, a limited but all the more true and rational freedom, with the rigours of the collectivist idea. But it is evidently these rigours to which things must tend if the collectivist idea is to prevail and not to stop short and falter in the middle of its course. If it proves itself thus wanting in logic and courage, it may very

well be that it will speedily or in the end be destroyed by the foreign element it tolerates and perish without having sounded its own possibilities. It will pass perhaps, unless guided by a rational wisdom which the human mind in government has not yet shown, after exceeding even the competitive individualistic society in its cumbrous incompetence.[1] But even at its best the collectivist idea contains several fallacies inconsistent with the real facts of human life and nature. And just as the idea of individualistic democracy found itself before long in difficulties on that account because of the disparity between life's facts and the mind's idea, difficulties that have led up to its discredit and approaching overthrow, the idea of collectivist democracy too may well find itself before long in difficulties that must lead to its discredit and eventual replacement by a third stage of the inevitable progression. Liberty protected by a State in which all are politically equal, was the idea that individualistic democracy attempted to elaborate. Equality, social and political equality enforced through a perfect and careful order by a State which is the organised will of the whole community, is the idea on which socialistic democracy stakes its future. If that too fails to make good, the rational and democratic Idea may fall back upon a third form of society founding an essential rather than formal liberty and equality upon fraternal comradeship in a free community, the ideal of intellectual as of spiritual Anarchism.[2]

In fact the claim to equality like the thirst for liberty is

[1] These hesitations of social democracy, its uneasy mental poise between two opposing principles, socialistic regimentation and democratic liberty, may be the root cause of the failure of socialism to make good in so many countries even when it had every chance on its side and its replacement by the more vigorous and ruthlessly logical forces of Communism and Fascism. On the other hand, in the northernmost countries of Europe a temporising, reformist, practical Socialism compromising between the right regulation of the communal life and the freedom of the individual has to some extent made good; but it is still doubtful whether it will be allowed to go to the end of its road. If it has that chance, it is still to be seen whether the drive of the idea and the force it carries in it for complete self-effectuation will not prevail in the end over the spirit of compromise.

[2] In the theory of communism State socialism is only a passage; a free classless Stateless communal life is the eventual ideal. But it is not likely that the living State machine once in power with all that are interested in its maintenance would let go its prey or allow itself to be abolished without a struggle.

individualistic in its origin, — it is not native or indispensable to the essence of the collectivist ideal. It is the individual who demands liberty for himself, a free movement for his mind, life, will, action; the collectivist trend and the State idea have rather the opposite tendency, they are self-compelled to take up more and more the compulsory management and control of the mind, life, will, action of the community — and the individual's as part of it — until personal liberty is pressed out of existence. But similarly it is the individual who demands for himself equality with all others; when a class demands, it is still the individual multiplied claiming for himself and all who are of his own grade, political or economic status an equal place, privilege or opportunity with those who have acquired or inherited a superiority of status. The social Reason conceded first the claim to liberty, but in practice (whatever might have been the theory) it admitted only so much equality — equality before the law, a helpful but not too effective political equality of the vote — as was necessary to ensure a reasonable freedom for all. Afterwards when the injustices and irrationalities of an unequalised competitive freedom, the enormity of the gulfs it created, became apparent, the social Reason shifted its ground and tried to arrive at a more complete communal justice on the basis of a political, economic, educational and social equality as complete as might be; it has laboured to make a plain level on which all can stand together. Liberty in this change has had to undergo the former fate of equality; for only so much liberty — perhaps or for a time — could survive as can be safely allowed without the competitive individual getting enough room for his self-assertive growth to upset or endanger the equalitarian basis. But in the end the discovery cannot fail to be made that an artificial equality has also its irrationalities, its contradictions of the collective good, its injustices even and its costly violations of the truth of Nature. Equality like individualistic liberty may turn out to be not a panacea but an obstacle in the way of the best management and control of life by the collective reason and will of the community.

But if both equality and liberty disappear from the human scene, there is left only one member of the democratic trinity,

brotherhood or, as it is now called, comradeship, that has some chance of survival as part of the social basis. This is because it seems to square better with the spirit of collectivism; we see accordingly the idea of it if not the fact still insisted on in the new social systems, even those in which both liberty and equality are discarded as noxious democratic chimeras. But comradeship without liberty and equality can be nothing more than the like association of all — individuals, functional classes, guilds, syndicates, soviets or any other units — in common service to the life of the nation under the absolute control of the collectivist State. The only liberty left at the end would be the "freedom" to serve the community under the rigorous direction of the State authority; the only equality would be an association of all alike in a Spartan or Roman spirit of civic service with perhaps a like status, theoretically equal at least for all functions; the only brotherhood would be the sense of comradeship in devoted dedication to the organised social Self, the State. In fact the democratic trinity, stripped of its godhead, would fade out of existence; the collectivist ideal can very well do without them, for none of them belong to its grain and very substance.

This is indeed already the spirit, the social reason — or rather the social gospel — of the totalitarianism whose swelling tide threatens to engulf all Europe and more than Europe. Totalitarianism of some kind seems indeed to be the natural, almost inevitable destiny, at any rate the extreme and fullest outcome of Socialism or, more generally, of the collectivist idea and impulse. For the essence of Socialism, its justifying ideal, is the governance and strict organisation of the total life of the society as a whole and in detail by its own conscious reason and will for the best good and common interest of all, eliminating exploitation by individual or class, removing internal competition, haphazard confusion and waste, enforcing and perfecting coordination, assuring the best functioning and a sufficient life for all. If a democratic polity and machinery best assure such a working, as was thought at first, it is this that will be chosen and the result will be Social Democracy. That ideal still holds sway in northern Europe and it may there yet have a chance of proving that a

successful collectivist rationalisation of society is quite possible. But if a non-democratic polity and machinery are found to serve the purpose better, then there is nothing inherently sacrosanct for the collectivist mind in the democratic ideal; it can be thrown on the rubbish-heap where so many other exploded sanctities have gone. Russian communism so discarded with contempt democratic liberty and attempted for a time to substitute for the democratic machine a new sovietic structure, but it has preserved the ideal of a proletarian equality for all in a classless society. Still its spirit is a rigorous totalitarianism on the basis of the "dictatorship of the proletariate", which amounts in fact to the dictatorship of the Communist party in the name or on behalf of the proletariate. Non-proletarian totalitarianism goes farther and discards democratic equality no less than democratic liberty; it preserves classes — for a time only, it may be, — but as a means of social functioning, not as a scale of superiority or a hierarchic order. Rationalisation is no longer the turn; its place is taken by a revolutionary mysticism which seems to be the present drive of the Time Spirit.

This is a symptom that can have a considerable significance. In Russia the Marxist system of Socialism has been turned almost into a gospel. Originally a rationalistic system worked out by a logical thinker and discoverer and systematiser of ideas, it has been transformed by the peculiar turn of the Russian mind into something like a social religion, a collectivist *mystique*, an inviolable body of doctrines with all denial or departure treated as a punishable heresy, a social cult enforced by the intolerant piety and enthusiasm of a converted people. In Fascist countries the swing away from Rationalism is marked and open; a surface vital subjectivism has taken its place and it is in the name of the national soul and its self-expression and manifestation that the leaders and prophets teach and violently enforce their totalitarian *mystique*. The essential features are the same in Russia and in Fascist countries, so that to the eye of the outsider their deadly quarrel seems to be a blood-feud of kinsmen fighting for the inheritance of their slaughtered parents — Democracy and the Age of Reason. There is the seizure of the life of the community

by a dominant individual leader, Führer, Dux, dictator, head of a small active minority, the Nazi, Fascist or Communist party, and supported by a militarised partisan force; there is a rapid crystallisation of the social, economic, political life of the people into a new rigid organisation effectively controlled at every point; there is the compulsory casting of thought, education, expression, action, into a set iron mould, a fixed system of ideas and life-motives, with a fierce and ruthless, often a sanguinary repression of all that denies and differs; there is a total unprecedented compression of the whole communal existence so as to compel a maximum efficiency and a complete unanimity of mind, speech, feeling, life.

If this trend becomes universal, it is the end of the Age of Reason, the suicide or the execution — by decapitation or lethal pressure, *peine forte et dure*, — of the rational and intellectual expansion of the human mental being. Reason cannot do its work, act or rule if the mind of man is denied freedom to think or freedom to realise its thought by action in life. But neither can a subjective age be the outcome; for the growth of subjectivism also cannot proceed without plasticity, without movement of self-search, without room to move, expand, develop, change. The result is likely to be rather the creation of a tenebrous No Man's Land where obscure mysticisms, materialistic, vitalistic or mixed, clash and battle for the mastery of human life. But this consummation is not certain; chaos and confusion still reign and all hangs in the balance. Totalitarian mysticism may not be able to carry out its menace of occupying the globe, may not even endure. Spaces of the earth may be left where a rational idealism can still survive. The terrible compression now exercised on the national mind and life may lead to an explosion from within or, on the other hand, having fulfilled its immediate aim may relax and give way in calmer times to a greater plasticity which will restore to the human mind or soul a more natural line of progress, a freer field for their self-expanding impulse.

In that case the curve of the Age of Reason, now threatened with an abrupt cessation, may prolong and complete itself; the subjective turn of the human mind and life, avoiding a premature

plunge into any general external action before it has found itself, may have time and freedom to evolve, to seek out its own truth, its own lines and so become ready to take up the spiral of the human social evolution where the curve of the Age of Reason naturally ends by its own normal evolution and make ready the ways of a deeper spirit.

Chapter XX

The End of the Curve of Reason

THE RATIONAL collectivist idea of society has at first sight a powerful attraction. There is behind it a great truth, that every society represents a collective being and in it and by it the individual lives and he owes to it all that he can give it. More, it is only by a certain relation to the society, a certain harmony with this greater collective self that he can find the complete use for his many developed or developing powers and activities. Since it is a collective being, it must, one would naturally suppose, have a discoverable collective reason and will which should find more and more its right expression and right working if it is given a conscious and effective means of organised self-expression and execution. And this collective will and intelligence, since it is according to the original idea that of all in a perfect equality, might naturally be trusted to seek out and work out its own good where the ruling individual and class would always be liable to misuse their power for quite other ends. The right organisation of social life on a basis of equality and comradeship ought to give each man his proper place in society, his full training and development for the common ends, his due share of work, leisure and reward, the right value of his life in relation to the collective being, society. Moreover it would be a place, share, value regulated by the individual and collective good and not an exaggerated or a depressed value brought to him fortuitously by birth or fortune, purchased by wealth or won by a painful and wasteful struggle. And certainly the external efficiency of the community, the measured, ordered and economical working of its life, its power for production and general well-being must enormously increase, as even the quite imperfect development of collective action in the recent past has shown, in a well-organised and concentrated State.

If it be objected that to bring about this result in its completeness the liberty of the individual will have to be destroyed or reduced to an almost vanishing quantity, it might be answered that the right of the individual to any kind of egoistic freedom as against the State which represents the mind, the will, the good and interest of the whole community, *sarvaṁ brahma*, is a dangerous fiction, a baneful myth. Individual liberty of life and action — even if liberty of thought and speech is for a time conceded, though this too can hardly remain unimpaired when once the socialistic State has laid its grip firmly on the individual, — may well mean in practice an undue freedom given to his infrarational parts of nature, and is not that precisely the thing in him that has to be thoroughly controlled, if not entirely suppressed, if he is to become a reasonable being leading a reasonable life? This control can be most wisely and effectively carried out by the collective reason and will of the State which is larger, better, more enlightened than the individual's; for it profits, as the average individual cannot do, by all the available wisdom and aspiration in the society. Indeed, the enlightened individual may well come to regard this collective reason and will as his own larger mind, will and conscience and find in a happy obedience to it a strong delivery from his own smaller and less rational self and therefore a more real freedom than any now claimed by his little separate ego. It used already to be argued that the disciplined German obeying the least gesture of the policeman, the State official, the military officer was really the freest, happiest and most moral individual in all Europe and therefore in the whole world. The same reasoning in a heightened form might perhaps be applied to the drilled felicities of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. The State, educating and governing the individual, undertakes to intellectualise, ethicise, practicalise and generally perfect him and to see to it that he remains, whether he will or no, always and in all things — strictly on the lines approved by the State — intellectual, ethical, practical and thoroughly perfect.

The pity of it is that this excellent theory, quite as much as the individualist theory that ran before it, is sure to stumble over a discrepancy between its set ideas and the actual facts

of human nature; for it ignores the complexity of man's being and all that that complexity means. And especially it ignores the soul of man and its supreme need of freedom, of the control also of his lower members, no doubt, — for that is part of the total freedom towards which he is struggling, — but of a growing self-control, not a mechanical regulation by the mind and will of others. Obedience too is a part of its perfection, — but a free and natural obedience to a true guiding power and not to a mechanised government and rule. The collective being is a fact; all mankind may be regarded as a collective being: but this being is a soul and life, not merely a mind or a body. Each society develops into a sort of sub-soul or group-soul of this humanity and develops also a general temperament, character, type of mind, evolves governing ideas and tendencies that shape its life and its institutions. But the society has no discoverable common reason and will belonging alike to all its members; for the group-soul rather works out its tendencies by a diversity of opinions, a diversity of wills, a diversity of life, and the vitality of the group-life depends largely upon the working of this diversity, its continuity, its richness. Since that is so, government by the organised State must mean always government by a number of individuals, — whether that number be in theory the minority or the majority makes in the end little fundamental difference. For even when it is the majority that nominally governs, in fact it is always the reason and will of a comparatively few effective men — and not really any common reason and will of all — that rules and regulates things with the consent of the half-hypnotised mass.[1] There is no reason to suppose that the immediate socialisation of the State would at all alter, the mass of men not being yet thoroughly rationalised and developed minds, this practical necessity of State government.

[1] This truth has come out with a startling force of self-demonstration in Communist Russia and National Socialist Germany, — not to speak of other countries. The vehement reassertion of humanity's need of a King crowned or uncrowned — Dictator, Leader, Duce or Führer — and a ruling and administering oligarchy has been the last outcome of a century and a half of democracy as it has been too the first astonishing result of the supposed rise of the proletariate to power.

In the old infrarational societies, at least in their inception, what governed was not the State, but the group-soul itself evolving its life organised into customary institutions and self-regulations to which all had to conform; for the rulers were only its executors and instruments. This entailed indeed a great subjection of the individual to the society, but it was not felt, because the individualistic idea was yet unborn and such diversities as arose were naturally provided for in one way or another, — in some cases by a remarkable latitude of social variation which government by the State tends more and more to suppress. As State government develops, we have a real suppression or oppression of the minority by the majority or the majority by the minority, of the individual by the collectivity, finally, of all by the relentless mechanism of the State. Democratic liberty tried to minimise this suppression; it left a free play for the individual and restricted as much as might be the role of the State. Collectivism goes exactly to the opposite extreme; it will leave no sufficient elbow-room to the individual free-will, and the more it rationalises the individual by universal education of a highly developed kind, the more this suppression will be felt, — unless indeed all freedom of thought is negated and the minds of all are forced into a single standardised way of thinking.

Man needs freedom of thought and life and action in order that he may grow, otherwise he will remain fixed where he was, a stunted and static being. If his individual mind and reason are ill-developed, he may consent to grow, as does the infrarational mind, in the group-soul, in the herd, in the mass, with that subtle half-conscient general evolution common to all in the lower process of Nature. As he develops individual reason and will, he needs and society must give him room for an increasing play of individual freedom and variation, at least so far as that does not develop itself to the avoidable harm of others and of society as a whole. Given a full development and free play of the individual mind, the need of freedom will grow with the immense variation which this development must bring with it, and if only a free play in thought and reason is allowed, but the free play of the intelligent will in life and action is inhibited by the excessive regulation

of the life, then an intolerable contradiction and falsity will be created. Men may bear it for a time in consideration of the great and visible new benefits of order, economic development, means of efficiency and the scientific satisfaction of the reason which the collectivist arrangement of society will bring; but when its benefits become a matter of course and its defects become more and more realised and prominent, dissatisfaction and revolt are sure to set in in the clearest and most vigorous minds of the society and propagate themselves throughout the mass. This intellectual and vital dissatisfaction may very well take under such circumstances the form of anarchistic thought, because that thought appeals precisely to this need of free variation in the internal life and its outward expression which will be the source of revolt, and anarchistic thought must be necessarily subversive of the socialistic order. The State can only combat it by an education adapted to its fixed forms of life, an education that will seek to drill the citizen in a fixed set of ideas, aptitudes, propensities as was done in the old infrarational order of things and by the suppression of freedom of speech and thinking so as to train and compel all to be of one mind, one sentiment, one opinion, one feeling; but this remedy will be in a rational society self-contradictory, ineffective, or if effective, then worse than the evil it seeks to combat. On the other hand, if from the first freedom of thought is denied, that means the end of the Age of Reason and of the ideal of a rational society. Man the mental being disallowed the use — except in a narrow fixed groove — of his mind and mental will, will stop short in his growth and be even as the animal and as the insect a stationary species.

This is the central defect through which a socialistic State is bound to be convicted of insufficiency and condemned to pass away before the growth of a new ideal. Already the pressure of the State organisation on the life of the individual has reached a point at which it is ceasing to be tolerable. If it continues to be what it is now, a government of the life of the individual by the comparatively few and not, as it pretends, by a common will and reason, if, that is to say, it becomes patently undemocratic or remains pseudo-democratic, then it will be this falsity

through which anarchistic thought will attack its existence. But the innermost difficulty would not disappear even if the socialistic State became really democratic, really the expression of the free reasoned will of the majority in agreement. Any true development of that kind would be difficult indeed and has the appearance of a chimera: for collectivism pretends to regulate life not only in its few fundamental principles and its main lines, as every organised society must tend to do, but in its details, it aims at a thoroughgoing scientific regulation, and an agreement of the free reasoned will of millions in all the lines and most of the details of life is a contradiction in terms. Whatever the perfection of the organised State, the suppression or oppression of individual freedom by the will of the majority or of a minority would still be there as a cardinal defect vitiating its very principle. And there would be something infinitely worse. For a thoroughgoing scientific regulation of life can only be brought about by a thoroughgoing mechanisation of life. This tendency to mechanisation is the inherent defect of the State idea and its practice. Already that is the defect upon which both intellectual anarchistic thought and the insight of the spiritual thinker have begun to lay stress, and it must immensely increase as the State idea rounds itself into a greater completeness in practice. It is indeed the inherent defect of reason when it turns to govern life and labours by quelling its natural tendencies to put it into some kind of rational order.

Life differs from the mechanical order of the physical universe with which the reason has been able to deal victoriously just because it is mechanical and runs immutably in the groove of fixed cosmic habits. Life, on the contrary, is a mobile, progressive and evolving force, — a force that is the increasing expression of an infinite soul in creatures and, as it progresses, becomes more and more aware of its own subtle variations, needs, diversities. The progress of Life involves the development and interlocking of an immense number of things that are in conflict with each other and seem often to be absolute oppositions and contraries. To find amid these oppositions some principle or standing-ground of unity, some workable lever of reconciliation

which will make possible a larger and better development on a basis of harmony and not of conflict and struggle, must be increasingly the common aim of humanity in its active life-evolution, if it at all means to rise out of life's more confused, painful and obscure movement, out of the compromises made by Nature with the ignorance of the Life-mind and the nescience of Matter. This can only be truly and satisfactorily done when the soul discovers itself in its highest and completest spiritual reality and effects a progressive upward transformation of its life-values into those of the spirit; for there they will all find their spiritual truth and in that truth their standing-ground of mutual recognition and reconciliation. The spiritual is the one truth of which all others are the veiled aspects, the brilliant disguises or the dark disfigurements, and in which they can find their own right form and true relation to each other. This is a work the reason cannot do. The business of the reason is intermediate: it is to observe and understand this life by the intelligence and discover for it the direction in which it is going and the laws of its self-development on the way. In order that it may do its office, it is obliged to adopt temporarily fixed view-points none of which is more than partially true and to create systems none of which can really stand as the final expression of the integral truth of things. The integral truth of things is truth not of the reason but of the spirit.

In the realm of thought that does not matter; for as there the reason does not drive at practice, it is able with impunity to allow the most opposite view-points and systems to exist side by side, to compare them, seek for reconciliations, synthetise in the most various ways, change constantly, enlarge, elevate; it is free to act without thinking at every point of immediate practical consequences. But when the reason seeks to govern life, it is obliged to fix its view-point, to crystallise its system; every change becomes or at least seems a thing doubtful, difficult and perilous, all the consequences of which cannot be foreseen, while the conflict of view-points, principles, systems leads to strife and revolution and not to a basis of harmonious development. The reason mechanises in order to arrive at fixity of conduct and

practice amid the fluidity of things; but while mechanism is a sufficient principle in dealing with physical forces, because it is in harmony with the law or dharma of physical Nature, it can never truly succeed in dealing with conscious life, because there it is contrary to the law of life, its highest dharma. While, then, the attempt at a rational ordering of society is an advance upon the comparative immobility and slow subconscient or half-conscient evolution of infrarational societies and the confusedly mixed movement of semi-rational societies, it can never arrive at perfection by its own methods, because reason is neither the first principle of life, nor can be its last, supreme and sufficient principle.

The question remains whether anarchistic thought supervening upon the collectivistic can any more successfully find a satisfying social principle. For if it gets rid of mechanism, the one practical means of a rationalising organisation of life, on what will it build and with what can it create? It may be contended as against the anarchistic objection that the collectivist period is, if not the last and best, at least a necessary stage in social progress. For the vice of individualism is that in insisting upon the free development and self-expression of the life and the mind or the life-soul in the individual, it tends to exaggerate the egoism of the mental and vital being and prevent the recognition of unity with others on which alone a complete self-development and a harmless freedom can be founded. Collectivism at least insists upon that unity by entirely subordinating the life of the isolated ego to the life of the greater group-ego, and its office may be thus to stamp upon the mentality and life-habits of the individual the necessity of unifying his life with the life of others. Afterwards, when again the individual asserts his freedom, as some day he must, he may have learned to do it on the basis of this unity and not on the basis of his separate egoistic life. This may well be the intention of Nature in human society in its movement towards a collectivist principle of social living. Collectivism may itself in the end realise this aim if it can modify its own dominant principle far enough to allow for a free individual development on the basis of unity and a closely harmonised common existence.

But to do that it must first spiritualise itself and transform the very soul of its inspiring principle: it cannot do it on the basis of the logical reason and a mechanically scientific ordering of life.

Anarchistic thought, although it has not yet found any sure form, cannot but develop in proportion as the pressure of society on the individual increases, since there is something in that pressure which unduly oppresses a necessary element of human perfection. We need not attach much importance to the grosser vitalistic or violent anarchism which seeks forcibly to react against the social principle or claims the right of man to "live his own life" in the egoistic or crudely vitalistic sense. But there is a higher, an intellectual anarchistic thought which in its aim and formula recovers and carries to its furthest logical conclusions a very real truth of nature and of the divine in man. In its revolt against the opposite exaggeration of the social principle, we find it declaring that all government of man by man by the power of compulsion is an evil, a violation, a suppression or deformation of a natural principle of good which would otherwise grow and prevail for the perfection of the human race. Even the social principle in itself is questioned and held liable for a sort of fall in man from a natural to an unnatural and artificial principle of living.

The exaggeration and inherent weakness of this exclusive idea are sufficiently evident. Man does not actually live as an isolated being, nor can he grow by an isolated freedom. He grows by his relations with others and his freedom must exercise itself in a progressive self-harmonising with the freedom of his fellow-beings. The social principle therefore, apart from the forms it has taken, would be perfectly justified, if by nothing else, then by the need of society as a field of relations which afford to the individual his occasion for growing towards a greater perfection. We have indeed the old dogma that man was originally innocent and perfect; the conception of the first ideal state of mankind as a harmonious felicity of free and natural living in which no social law or compulsion existed because none was needed, is as old as the Mahabharata. But even this theory has to recognise a downward lapse of man from his natural perfection. The fall

was not brought about by the introduction of the social principle in the arrangement of his life, but rather the social principle and the governmental method of compulsion had to be introduced as a result of the fall. If, on the contrary, we regard the evolution of man not as a fall from perfection but a gradual ascent, a growth out of the infrarational status of his being, it is clear that only by a social compulsion on the vital and physical instincts of his infrarational egoism, a subjection to the needs and laws of the social life, could this growth have been brought about on a large scale. For in their first crudeness the infrarational instincts do not correct themselves quite voluntarily without the pressure of need and compulsion, but only by the erection of a law other than their own which teaches them finally to erect a yet greater law within for their own correction and purification. The principle of social compulsion may not have been always or perhaps ever used quite wisely, — it is a law of man's imperfection, imperfect in itself, and must always be imperfect in its method and result: but in the earlier stages of his evolution it was clearly inevitable, and until man has grown out of the causes of its necessity, he cannot be really ready for the anarchistic principle of living.

But it is at the same time clear that the more the outer law is replaced by an inner law, the nearer man will draw to his true and natural perfection. And the perfect social state must be one in which governmental compulsion is abolished and man is able to live with his fellow-man by free agreement and cooperation. But by what means is he to be made ready for this great and difficult consummation? Intellectual anarchism relies on two powers in the human being of which the first is the enlightenment of his reason; the mind of man, enlightened, will claim freedom for itself, but will equally recognise the same right in others. A just equation will of itself emerge on the ground of a true, self-found and unperverted human nature. This might conceivably be sufficient, although hardly without a considerable change and progress in man's mental powers, if the life of the individual could be lived in a predominant isolation with only a small number of points of necessary contact with the lives of others. Actually, our existence is closely knit with the existences around

us and there is a common life, a common work, a common effort and aspiration without which humanity cannot grow to its full height and wideness. To ensure coordination and prevent clash and conflict in this constant contact another power is needed than the enlightened intellect. Anarchistic thought finds this power in a natural human sympathy which, if it is given free play under the right conditions, can be relied upon to ensure natural cooperation: the appeal is to what the American poet calls the love of comrades, to the principle of fraternity, the third and most neglected term of the famous revolutionary formula. A free equality founded upon spontaneous cooperation, not on governmental force and social compulsion, is the highest anarchistic ideal.

This would seem to lead us either towards a free cooperative communism, a unified life where the labour and property of all is there for the benefit of all, or else to what may better be called communalism, the free consent of the individual to live in a society where the just freedom of his individuality will be recognised, but the surplus of his labour and acquisitions will be used or given by him without demur for the common good under a natural cooperative impulse. The severest school of anarchism rejects all compromise with communism. It is difficult to see how a Stateless Communism which is supposed to be the final goal of the Russian ideal, can operate on the large and complex scale necessitated by modern life. And indeed it is not clear how even a free communalism could be established or maintained without some kind of governmental force and social compulsion or how it could fail to fall away in the end either on one side into a rigorous collectivism or on the other to struggle, anarchy and disruption. For the logical mind in building its social idea takes no sufficient account of the infrarational element in man, the vital egoism to which the most active and effective part of his nature is bound: that is his most constant motive and it defeats in the end all the calculations of the idealising reason, undoes its elaborate systems or accepts only the little that it can assimilate to its own need and purpose. If that strong element, that ego-force in him is too much overshadowed, cowed and depressed,

too much rationalised, too much denied an outlet, then the life of man becomes artificial, top-heavy, poor in the sap of vitality, mechanical, uncreative. And on the other hand, if it is not suppressed, it tends in the end to assert itself and derange the plans of the rational side of man, because it contains in itself powers whose right satisfaction or whose final way of transformation reason cannot discover.

If Reason were the secret highest law of the universe or if man the mental being were limited by mentality, it might be possible for him by the power of the reason to evolve out of the dominance of infrarational Nature which he inherits from the animal. He could then live securely in his best human self as a perfected rational and sympathetic being, balanced and well-ordered in all parts, the sattwic man of Indian philosophy; that would be his summit of possibility, his consummation. But his nature is rather transitional; the rational being is only a middle term of Nature's evolution. A rational satisfaction cannot give him safety from the pull from below nor deliver him from the attraction from above. If it were not so, the ideal of intellectual Anarchism might be more feasible as well as acceptable as a theory of what human life might be in its reasonable perfection; but, man being what he is, we are compelled in the end to aim higher and go farther.

A spiritual or spiritualised anarchism might appear to come nearer to the real solution or at least touch something of it from afar. As it expresses itself at the present day, there is much in it that is exaggerated and imperfect. Its seers seem often to preach an impossible self-abnegation of the vital life and an asceticism which instead of purifying and transforming the vital being, seeks to suppress and even kill it; life itself is impoverished or dried up by this severe austerity in its very springs. Carried away by a high-reaching spirit of revolt, these prophets denounce civilisation as a failure because of its vitalistic exaggerations, but set up an opposite exaggeration which might well cure civilisation of some of its crying faults and uglinesses, but would deprive us also of many real and valuable gains. But apart from these excesses of a too logical thought and a one-sided impulsion,

apart from the inability of any "ism" to express the truth of the spirit which exceeds all such compartments, we seem here to be near to the real way out, to the discovery of the saving motive-force. The solution lies not in the reason, but in the soul of man, in its spiritual tendencies. It is a spiritual, an inner freedom that can alone create a perfect human order. It is a spiritual, a greater than the rational enlightenment that can alone illumine the vital nature of man and impose harmony on its self-seekings, antagonisms and discords. A deeper brotherhood, a yet unfound law of love is the only sure foundation possible for a perfect social evolution, no other can replace it. But this brotherhood and love will not proceed by the vital instincts or the reason where they can be met, baffled or deflected by opposite reasonings and other discordant instincts. Nor will it found itself in the natural heart of man where there are plenty of other passions to combat it. It is in the soul that it must find its roots; the love which is founded upon a deeper truth of our being, the brotherhood or, let us say, — for this is another feeling than any vital or mental sense of brotherhood, a calmer more durable motive-force, — the spiritual comradeship which is the expression of an inner realisation of oneness. For so only can egoism disappear and the true individualism of the unique godhead in each man found itself on the true communism of the equal godhead in the race; for the Spirit, the inmost self, the universal Godhead in every being is that whose very nature of diverse oneness it is to realise the perfection of its individual life and nature in the existence of all, in the universal life and nature.

This is a solution to which it may be objected that it puts off the consummation of a better human society to a far-off date in the future evolution of the race. For it means that no machinery invented by the reason can perfect either the individual or the collective man; an inner change is needed in human nature, a change too difficult to be ever effected except by the few. This is not certain; but in any case, if this is not the solution, then there is no solution, if this is not the way, then there is no way for the human kind. Then the terrestrial evolution must pass beyond man as it has passed beyond the animal and a greater race must

come that will be capable of the spiritual change, a form of life must be born that is nearer to the divine. After all there is no logical necessity for the conclusion that the change cannot begin at all because its perfection is not immediately possible. A decisive turn of mankind to the spiritual ideal, the beginning of a constant ascent and guidance towards the heights may not be altogether impossible, even if the summits are attainable at first only by the pioneer few and far-off to the tread of the race. And that beginning may mean the descent of an influence that will alter at once the whole life of mankind in its orientation and enlarge for ever, as did the development of his reason and more than any development of the reason, its potentialities and all its structure.

Chapter XXI

The Spiritual Aim and Life

A SOCIETY founded upon spirituality will differ in two essential points from the normal human society which begins from and ends with the lower nature. The normal human society starts from the gregarious instinct modified by a diversity and possible antagonism of interests, from an association and clash of egos, from a meeting, combination, conflict of ideas, tendencies and principles; it tries first to patch up an accommodation of converging interests and a treaty of peace between discords, founded on a series of implied contracts, natural or necessary adjustments which become customs of the aggregate life, and to these contracts as they develop it gives the name of social law. By establishing, as against the interests which lead to conflict, the interests which call for association and mutual assistance, it creates or stimulates sympathies and habits of helpfulness that give a psychological support and sanction to its mechanism of law, custom and contract. It justifies the mass of social institutions and habitual ways of being which it thus creates by the greater satisfaction and efficiency of the physical, the vital and the mental life of man, in a word, by the growth and advantages of civilisation. A good many losses have indeed to be written off as against these gains, but those are to be accepted as the price we must pay for civilisation.

The normal society treats man essentially as a physical, vital and mental being. For the life, the mind, the body are the three terms of existence with which it has some competence to deal. It develops a system of mental growth and efficiency, an intellectual, aesthetic and moral culture. It evolves the vital side of human life and creates an ever-growing system of economic efficiency and vital enjoyment, and this system becomes more and more rich, cumbrous and complex as civilisation develops. Depressing by its mental and vital overgrowth the natural vigour

of the physical and animal man, it tries to set the balance right by systems of physical culture, a cumbrous science of habits and remedies intended to cure the ills it has created and as much amelioration as it can manage of the artificial forms of living that are necessary to its social system. In the end, however, experience shows that society tends to die by its own development, a sure sign that there is some radical defect in its system, a certain proof that its idea of man and its method of development do not correspond to all the reality of the human being and to the aim of life which that reality imposes.

There is then a radical defect somewhere in the process of human civilisation; but where is its seat and by what issue shall we come out of the perpetual cycle of failure? Our civilised development of life ends in an exhaustion of vitality and a refusal of Nature to lend her support any further to a continued advance upon these lines; our civilised mentality, after disturbing the balance of the human system to its own greater profit, finally discovers that it has exhausted and destroyed that which fed it and loses its power of healthy action and productiveness. It is found that civilisation has created many more problems than it can solve, has multiplied excessive needs and desires the satisfaction of which it has not sufficient vital force to sustain, has developed a jungle of claims and artificial instincts in the midst of which life loses its way and has no longer any sight of its aim. The more advanced minds begin to declare civilisation a failure and society begins to feel that they are right. But the remedy proposed is either a halt or even a retrogression, which means in the end more confusion, stagnation and decay, or a reversion to "Nature" which is impossible or can only come about by a cataclysm and disintegration of society; or even a cure is aimed at by carrying artificial remedies to their acme, by more and more Science, more and more mechanical devices, a more scientific organisation of life, which means that the engine shall replace life, the arbitrary logical reason substitute itself for complex Nature and man be saved by machinery. As well say that to carry a disease to its height is the best way to its cure.

It may be suggested on the contrary and with some chance

of knocking at the right door that the radical defect of all our systems is their deficient development of just that which society has most neglected, the spiritual element, the soul in man which is his true being. Even to have a healthy body, a strong vitality and an active and clarified mind and a field for their action and enjoyment, carries man no more than a certain distance; afterwards he flags and tires for want of a real self-finding, a satisfying aim for his action and progress. These three things do not make the sum of a complete manhood; they are means to an ulterior end and cannot be made for ever an aim in themselves. Add a rich emotional life governed by a well-ordered ethical standard, and still there is the savour of something left out, some supreme good which these things mean, but do not in themselves arrive at, do not discover till they go beyond themselves. Add a religious system and a widespread spirit of belief and piety, and still you have not found the means of social salvation. All these things human society has developed, but none of them has saved it from disillusionment, weariness and decay. The ancient intellectual cultures of Europe ended in disruptive doubt and sceptical impotence, the pieties of Asia in stagnation and decline. Modern society has discovered a new principle of survival, progress, but the aim of that progress it has never discovered, — unless the aim is always more knowledge, more equipment, convenience and comfort, more enjoyment, a greater and still greater complexity of the social economy, a more and more cumbrously opulent life. But these things must lead in the end where the old led, for they are only the same thing on a larger scale; they lead in a circle, that is to say, nowhere: they do not escape from the cycle of birth, growth, decay and death, they do not really find the secret of self-prolongation by constant self-renewal which is the principle of immortality, but only seem for a moment to find it by the illusion of a series of experiments each of which ends in disappointment. That so far has been the nature of modern progress. Only in its new turn inwards, towards a greater subjectivity now only beginning, is there a better hope; for by that turning it may discover that the real truth of man is to be found in his soul. It is not indeed certain that a subjective

age will lead us there, but it gives us the possibility, can turn in that direction, if used rightly, the more inward movement.

It will be said that this is an old discovery and that it governed the old societies under the name of religion. But that was only an appearance. The discovery was there, but it was made for the life of the individual only, and even for him it looked beyond the earth for its fulfilment and at earth only as the place of his preparation for a solitary salvation or release from the burden of life. Human society itself never seized on the discovery of the soul as a means for the discovery of the law of its own being or on a knowledge of the soul's true nature and need and its fulfilment as the right way of terrestrial perfection. If we look at the old religions in their social as apart from their individual aspect, we see that the use society made of them was only of their most unspiritual or at any rate of their less spiritual parts. It made use of them to give an august, awful and would-be eternal sanction to its mass of customs and institutions; it made of them a veil of mystery against human questioning and a shield of darkness against the innovator. So far as it saw in religion a means of human salvation and perfection, it laid hands upon it at once to mechanise it, to catch the human soul and bind it on the wheels of a socio-religious machinery, to impose on it in the place of spiritual freedom an imperious yoke and an iron prison. It saddled upon the religious life of man a Church, a priesthood and a mass of ceremonies and set over it a pack of watchdogs under the name of creeds and dogmas, dogmas which one had to accept and obey under pain of condemnation to eternal hell by an eternal judge beyond, just as one had to accept and to obey the laws of society on pain of condemnation to temporal imprisonment or death by a mortal judge below. This false socialisation of religion has been always the chief cause of its failure to regenerate mankind.

For nothing can be more fatal to religion than for its spiritual element to be crushed or formalised out of existence by its outward aids and forms and machinery. The falsehood of the old social use of religion is shown by its effects. History has exhibited more than once the coincidence of the greatest religious fervour

and piety with darkest ignorance, with an obscure squalor and long vegetative stagnancy of the mass of human life, with the unquestioned reign of cruelty, injustice and oppression, or with an organisation of the most ordinary, unaspiring and unraised existence hardly relieved by some touches of intellectual or half-spiritual light on the surface, — the end of all this a widespread revolt that turned first of all against the established religion as the key-stone of a regnant falsehood, evil and ignorance. It is another sign when the too scrupulously exact observation of a socio-religious system and its rites and forms, which by the very fact of this misplaced importance begin to lose their sense and true religious value, becomes the law and most prominent aim of religion rather than any spiritual growth of the individual and the race. And a great sign too of this failure is when the individual is obliged to flee from society in order to find room for his spiritual growth; when, finding human life given over to the unregenerated mind, life and body and the place of spiritual freedom occupied by the bonds of form, by Church and Shastra, by some law of the Ignorance, he is obliged to break away from all these to seek for growth into the spirit in the monastery, on the mountain-top, in the cavern, in the desert and the forest. When there is that division between life and the spirit, sentence of condemnation is passed upon human life. Either it is left to circle in its routine or it is decried as worthless and unreal, a vanity of vanities, and loses that confidence in itself and inner faith in the value of its terrestrial aims, *śraddhā*, without which it cannot come to anything. For the spirit of man must strain towards the heights; when it loses its tension of endeavour, the race must become immobile and stagnant or even sink towards darkness and the dust. Even where life rejects the spirit or the spirit rejects life, there may be a self-affirmation of the inner being; there may even be a glorious crop of saints and hermits in a forcing-soil of spirituality, but unless the race, the society, the nation is moved towards the spiritualisation of life or moves forward led by the light of an ideal, the end must be littleness, weakness and stagnation. Or the race has to turn to the intellect for rescue, for some hope or new ideal, and arrive by a circle

through an age of rationalism at a fresh effort towards the restatement of spiritual truth and a new attempt to spiritualise human life.

The true and full spiritual aim in society will regard man not as a mind, a life and a body, but as a soul incarnated for a divine fulfilment upon earth, not only in heavens beyond, which after all it need not have left if it had no divine business here in the world of physical, vital and mental nature. It will therefore regard the life, mind and body neither as ends in themselves, sufficient for their own satisfaction, nor as mortal members full of disease which have only to be dropped off for the rescued spirit to flee away into its own pure regions, but as first instruments of the soul, the yet imperfect instruments of an unseized diviner purpose. It will believe in their destiny and help them to believe in themselves, but for that very reason in their highest and not only in their lowest or lower possibilities. Their destiny will be, in its view, to spiritualise themselves so as to grow into visible members of the spirit, lucid means of its manifestation, themselves spiritual, illumined, more and more conscious and perfect. For, accepting the truth of man's soul as a thing entirely divine in its essence, it will accept also the possibility of his whole being becoming divine in spite of Nature's first patent contradictions of this possibility, her darkened denials of this ultimate certitude, and even with these as a necessary earthly starting-point. And as it will regard man the individual, it will regard too man the collectivity as a soul-form of the Infinite, a collective soul myriadly embodied upon earth for a divine fulfilment in its manifold relations and its multitudinous activities. Therefore it will hold sacred all the different parts of man's life which correspond to the parts of his being, all his physical, vital, dynamic, emotional, aesthetic, ethical, intellectual, psychic evolution, and see in them instruments for a growth towards a diviner living. It will regard every human society, nation, people or other organic aggregate from the same standpoint, sub-souls, as it were, means of a complex manifestation and self-fulfilment of the Spirit, the divine Reality, the conscious Infinite in man upon earth. The possible godhead of man because he is inwardly

of one being with God will be its one solitary creed and dogma.

But it will not seek to enforce even this one uplifting dogma by any external compulsion upon the lower members of man's natural being; for that is *nigraha*, a repressive contraction of the nature which may lead to an apparent suppression of the evil, but not to a real and healthy growth of the good; it will rather hold up this creed and ideal as a light and inspiration to all his members to grow into the godhead from within themselves, to become freely divine. Neither in the individual nor in the society will it seek to imprison, wall in, repress, impoverish, but to let in the widest air and the highest light. A large liberty will be the law of a spiritual society and the increase of freedom a sign of the growth of human society towards the possibility of true spiritualisation. To spiritualise in this sense a society of slaves, slaves of power, slaves of authority, slaves of custom, slaves of dogma, slaves of all sorts of imposed laws which they live under rather than live by them, slaves internally of their own weakness, ignorance and passions from whose worst effect they seek or need to be protected by another and external slavery, can never be a successful endeavour. They must shake off their fetters first in order to be fit for a higher freedom. Not that man has not to wear many a yoke in his progress upward; but only the yoke which he accepts because it represents, the more perfectly the better, the highest inner law of his nature and its aspiration, will be entirely helpful to him. The rest buy their good results at a heavy cost and may retard as much as or even more than they accelerate his progress.

The spiritual aim will recognise that man as he grows in his being must have as much free space as possible for all its members to grow in their own strength, to find out themselves and their potentialities. In their freedom they will err, because experience comes through many errors, but each has in itself a divine principle and they will find it out, disengage its presence, significance and law as their experience of themselves deepens and increases. Thus true spirituality will not lay a yoke upon science and philosophy or compel them to square their conclusions with any statement of dogmatic religious or even of assured

spiritual truth, as some of the old religions attempted, vainly, ignorantly, with an unspiritual obstinacy and arrogance. Each part of man's being has its own dharma which it must follow and will follow in the end, put on it what fetters you please. The dharma of science, thought and philosophy is to seek for truth by the intellect dispassionately, without prepossession and prejudgment, with no other first propositions than the law of thought and observation itself imposes. Science and philosophy are not bound to square their observations and conclusions with any current ideas of religious dogma or ethical rule or aesthetic prejudice. In the end, if left free in their action, they will find the unity of Truth with Good and Beauty and God and give these a greater meaning than any dogmatic religion or any formal ethics or any narrower aesthetic idea can give us. But meanwhile they must be left free even to deny God and good and beauty if they will, if their sincere observation of things so points them. For all these rejections must come round in the end of their circling and return to a larger truth of the things they refuse. Often we find atheism both in individual and society a necessary passage to deeper religious and spiritual truth: one has sometimes to deny God in order to find him; the finding is inevitable at the end of all earnest scepticism and denial.

The same law holds good in Art; the aesthetic being of man rises similarly on its own curve towards its diviner possibilities. The highest aim of the aesthetic being is to find the Divine through beauty; the highest Art is that which by an inspired use of significant and interpretative form unseals the doors of the spirit. But in order that it may come to do this greatest thing largely and sincerely, it must first endeavour to see and depict man and Nature and life for their own sake, in their own characteristic truth and beauty; for behind these first characters lies always the beauty of the Divine in life and man and Nature and it is through their just transformation that what was at first veiled by them has to be revealed. The dogma that Art must be religious or not be at all, is a false dogma, just as is the claim that it must be subservient to ethics or utility or scientific truth or philosophic ideas. Art may make use of these things as elements,

but it has its own *svadharma*, essential law, and it will rise to the widest spirituality by following out its own natural lines with no other yoke than the intimate law of its own being.

Even with the lower nature of man, though here we are naturally led to suppose that compulsion is the only remedy, the spiritual aim will seek for a free self-rule and development from within rather than a repression of his dynamic and vital being from without. All experience shows that man must be given a certain freedom to stumble in action as well as to err in knowledge so long as he does not get from within himself his freedom from wrong movement and error; otherwise he cannot grow. Society for its own sake has to coerce the dynamic and vital man, but coercion only chains up the devil and alters at best his form of action into more mitigated and civilised movements; it does not and cannot eliminate him. The real virtue of the dynamic and vital being, the Life Purusha, can only come by his finding a higher law and spirit for his activity within himself; to give him that, to illuminate and transform and not to destroy his impulse is the true spiritual means of regeneration.

Thus spirituality will respect the freedom of the lower members, but it will not leave them to themselves; it will present to them the truth of the spirit in themselves, translated into their own fields of action, presented in a light which illumines all their activities and shows them the highest law of their own freedom. It will not, for instance, escape from scientific materialism by a barren contempt for physical life or a denial of Matter, but pursue rather the sceptical mind into its own affirmations and denials and show it there the Divine. If it cannot do that, it is proved that it is itself unenlightened or deficient, because one-sided, in its light. It will not try to slay the vitality in man by denying life, but will rather reveal to life the divine in itself as the principle of its own transformation. If it cannot do that, it is because it has itself not yet wholly fathomed the meaning of the creation and the secret of the Avatar.

The spiritual aim will seek to fulfil itself therefore in a fullness of life and man's being in the individual and the race which will be the base for the heights of the spirit, — the base becoming

in the end of one substance with the peaks. It will not proceed by a scornful neglect of the body, nor by an ascetic starving of the vital being and an utmost bareness or even squalor as the rule of spiritual living, nor by a puritanic denial of art and beauty and the aesthetic joy of life, nor by a neglect of science and philosophy as poor, negligible or misleading intellectual pursuits, — though the temporary utility even of these exaggerations as against the opposite excesses need not be denied; it will be all things to all, but in all it will be at once their highest aim and meaning and the most all-embracing expression of themselves in which all they are and seek for will be fulfilled. It will aim at establishing in society the true inner theocracy, not the false theocracy of a dominant Church or priesthood, but that of the inner Priest, Prophet and King. It will reveal to man the divinity in himself as the Light, Strength, Beauty, Good, Delight, Immortality that dwells within and build up in his outer life also the kingdom of God which is first discovered within us. It will show man the way to seek for the Divine in every way of his being, *sarvabhāvena*,[1] and so find it and live in it, that however — even in all kinds of ways — he lives and acts, he shall live and act in that,[2] in the Divine, in the Spirit, in the eternal Reality of his being.

[1] Gita.
[2] Gita. *Sarvathā vartamāno'pi sa yogī mayi vartate.*

Chapter XXII

The Necessity of the Spiritual Transformation

OUR NORMAL conduct of life, whether the individual or the social, is actually governed by the balance between two complementary powers, — first, an implicit will central to the life and inherent in the main power of its action and, secondly, whatever modifying will can come in from the Idea in mind — for man is a mental being — and operate through our as yet imperfect mental instruments to give this life force a conscious orientation and a conscious method. Life normally finds its own centre in our vital and physical being, in its cravings and its needs, in its demand for persistence, growth, expansion, enjoyment, in its reachings after all kinds of power and possession and activity and splendour and largeness. The first self-direction of this Life-Force, its first orderings of method are instinctive and either entirely or very largely subconscient and magnificently automatic: the ease, spontaneity, fine normality, beauty, self-satisfaction, abundant vital energy and power of the subhuman life of Nature up to the animal is due to its entire obedience to this instinctive and automatic urge. It is a vague sense of this truth and of the very different and in this respect inferior character of human life that makes the thinker, when dissatisfied with our present conditions, speak of a life according to Nature as the remedy for all our ills. An attempt to find such a rule in the essential nature of man has inspired many revolutionary conceptions of ethics and society and individual self-development down to the latest of the kind, the strangely inspired vitalistic philosophy of Nietzsche. The common defect of these conceptions is to miss the true character of man and the true law of his being, his Dharma.

Nietzsche's idea that to develop the superman out of our

present very unsatisfactory manhood is our real business, is in itself an absolutely sound teaching. His formulation of our aim, "to become ourselves", "to exceed ourselves", implying, as it does, that man has not yet found all his true self, his true nature by which he can successfully and spontaneously live, could not be bettered. But then the question of questions is there, what is our self, and what is our real nature? What is that which is growing in us, but into which we have not yet grown? It is something divine, is the answer, a divinity Olympian, Apollonian, Dionysiac, which the reasoning and consciously willing animal, man, is labouring more or less obscurely to become. Certainly, it is all that; but in what shall we find the seed of that divinity and what is the poise in which the superman, once self-found, can abide and be secure from lapse into this lower and imperfect manhood? Is it the intellect and will, the double-aspected *buddhi* of the Indian psychological system? But this is at present a thing so perplexed, so divided against itself, so uncertain of everything it gains, up to a certain point indeed magically creative and efficient but, when all has been said and done, in the end so splendidly futile, so at war with and yet so dependent upon and subservient to our lower nature, that even if in it there lies concealed some seed of the entire divinity, it can hardly itself be the seed and at any rate gives us no such secure and divine poise as we are seeking. Therefore we say, not the intellect and will, but that supreme thing in us yet higher than the Reason, the spirit, here concealed behind the coatings of our lower nature, is the secret seed of the divinity and will be, when discovered and delivered, luminous above the mind, the wide ground upon which a divine life of the human being can be with security founded.

When we speak of the superman, we speak evidently of something abnormal or supernormal to our present nature, so much so that the very idea of it becomes easily alarming and repugnant to our normal humanity. The normal human does not desire to be called out from its constant mechanical round to scale what may seem to it impossible heights and it loves still less the prospect of being exceeded, left behind and dominated,

— although the object of a true supermanhood is not exceeding and domination for its own sake but precisely the opening of our normal humanity to something now beyond itself that is yet its own destined perfection. But mark that this thing which we have called normal humanity, is itself something abnormal in Nature, something the like and parity of which we look around in vain to discover; it is a rapid freak, a sudden miracle. Abnormality in Nature is no objection, no necessary sign of imperfection, but may well be an effort at a much greater perfection. But this perfection is not found until the abnormal can find its own secure normality, the right organisation of its life in its own kind and power and on its own level. Man is an abnormal who has not found his own normality, — he may imagine he has, he may appear to be normal in his own kind, but that normality is only a sort of provisional order; therefore, though man is infinitely greater than the plant or the animal, he is not perfect in his own nature like the plant and the animal. This imperfection is not a thing to be at all deplored, but rather a privilege and a promise, for it opens out to us an immense vista of self-development and self-exceeding. Man at his highest is a half-god who has risen up out of the animal Nature and is splendidly abnormal in it, but the thing which he has started out to be, the whole god, is something so much greater than what he is that it seems to him as abnormal to himself as he is to the animal. This means a great and arduous labour of growth before him, but also a splendid crown of his race and his victory. A kingdom is offered to him beside which his present triumphs in the realms of mind or over external Nature will appear only as a rough hint and a poor beginning.

What precisely is the defect from which all his imperfection springs? We have already indicated it, — that has indeed been the general aim of the preceding chapters, — but it is necessary to state it now more succinctly and precisely. We see that at first sight man seems to be a double nature, an animal nature of the vital and physical being which lives according to its instincts, impulses, desires, its automatic orientation and method, and with that a half-divine nature of the self-conscious intellectual, ethical, aesthetic, intelligently emotional, intelligently dynamic

being who is capable of finding and understanding the law of his own action and consciously using and bettering it, a reflecting mind that understands Nature, a will that uses, elevates, perfects Nature, a sense that intelligently enjoys Nature. The aim of the animal part of us is to increase vital possession and enjoyment; the aim of the semi-divine part of us is also to grow, possess and enjoy, but first to possess and enjoy intelligently, aesthetically, ethically, by the powers of the mind much more than by the powers of the life and body, and, secondly, to possess and enjoy, not so much the vital and physical except in so far as that is necessary as a foundation and starting-point, a preliminary necessity or condition, a standing-ground and basis, but things intellectual, ethical and aesthetic, and to grow not so much in the outward life, except in so far as that is necessary to the security, ease and dignity of our human existence, but in the true, the good and the beautiful. This is the manhood of man, his unique distinction and abnormality in the norm of this inconscient material Nature.

This means that man has developed a new power of being, — let us call it a new soul-power, with the premiss that we regard the life and the body also as a soul-power, — and the being who has done that is under an inherent obligation not only to look at the world and revalue all in it from this new elevation, but to compel his whole nature to obey this power and in a way reshape itself in its mould, and even to reshape, so far as he can, his environmental life into some image of this greater truth and law. In doing this lies his *svadharma*, his true rule and way of being, the way of his perfection and his real happiness. Failing in this, he fails in the aim of his nature and his being, and has to begin again until he finds the right path and arrives at a successful turning-point, a decisive crisis of transformation. Now this is precisely what man has failed to do. He has effected something, he has passed a certain stage of his journey. He has laid some yoke of the intellectual, ethical, aesthetic rule on his vital and physical parts and made it impossible for himself to be content with or really to be the mere human animal. But more he has not been able to do successfully. The transformation of his life into the image of the true, the good and the beautiful seems

as far off as ever; if ever he comes near to some imperfect form of it, — and even then it is only done by a class or by a number of individuals with some reflex action on the life of the mass, — he slides back from it in a general decay of his life, or else stumbles on from it into some bewildering upheaval out of which he comes with new gains indeed but also with serious losses. He has never arrived at any great turning-point, any decisive crisis of transformation.

The main failure, the root of the whole failure indeed, is that he has not been able to shift upward what we have called the implicit will central to his life, the force and assured faith inherent in its main power of action. His central will of life is still situated in his vital and physical being, its drift is towards vital and physical enjoyment, enlightened indeed and checked to a certain extent in its impulses by the higher powers, but enlightened only and very partially, not transformed, — checked, not dominated and uplifted to a higher plane. The higher life is still only a thing superimposed on the lower, a permanent intruder upon our normal existence. The intruder interferes constantly with the normal life, scolds, encourages, discourages, lectures, manipulates, readjusts, lifts up only to let fall, but has no power to transform, alchemise, re-create. Indeed it does not seem itself quite to know where all this effort and uneasy struggle is meant to lead us, — sometimes it thinks, to a quite tolerable human life on earth, the norm of which it can never successfully fix, and sometimes it imagines our journey is to another world whither by a religious life or else an edifying death it will escape out of all this pother and trouble of mortal being. Therefore these two elements live together in a continual, a mutual perplexity, made perpetually uneasy, uncomfortable and ineffectual by each other, somewhat like an ill-assorted wife and husband, always at odds and yet half in love with or at least necessary to each other, unable to beat out a harmony, yet condemned to be joined in an unhappy leash until death separates them. All the uneasiness, dissatisfaction, disillusionment, weariness, melancholy, pessimism of the human mind comes from man's practical failure to solve the riddle and the difficulty of his double nature.

We have said that this failure is due to the fact that this higher power is only a mediator, and that thoroughly to transform the vital and physical life in its image is perhaps not possible, but at any rate not the intention of Nature in us. It may be urged perhaps that after all individuals have succeeded in effecting some figure of transformation, have led entirely ethical or artistic or intellectual lives, even shaped their life by some ideal of the true, the good and the beautiful, and whatever the individual has done, the race too may and should eventually succeed in doing; for the exceptional individual is the future type, the forerunner. But to how much did their success really amount? Either they impoverished the vital and physical life in them in order to give play to one element of their being, lived a one-sided and limited existence, or else they arrived at a compromise by which, while the higher life was given great prominence, the lower was still allowed to graze in its own field under the eye more or less strict or the curb more or less indulgent of the higher power or powers: in itself, in its own instincts and demands it remained unchanged. There was a dominance, but not a transformation.

Life cannot be entirely rational, cannot conform entirely to the ethical or the aesthetic or the scientific and philosophic mentality; mind is not the destined archangel of the transformation. All appearances to the contrary are always a *trompe l'oeil*, an intellectual, aesthetic or ethical illusion. Dominated, repressed life may be, but it reserves its right; and though individuals or a class may establish this domination for a time and impose some simulacrum of it upon the society, Life in the end circumvents the intelligence; it gets strong elements in it — for always there are traitor elements at work — to come over to its side and re-establishes its instincts, recovers its field; or if it fails in this, it has its revenge in its own decay which brings about the decay of the society, the disappointment of the perennial hope. So much so, that there are times when mankind perceives this fact and, renouncing the attempt to dominate the life-instinct, determines to use the intelligence for its service and to give it light in its own field instead of enslaving it to a higher but chimerical ideal.

Such a period was the recent materialistic age, when the intellect of man seemed decided to study thoroughly Life and Matter, to admit only that, to recognise mind only as an instrument of Life and Matter, and to devote all its knowledge to a tremendous expansion of the vital and physical life, its practicality, its efficiency, its comfort and the splendid ordering of its instincts of production, possession and enjoyment. That was the character of the materialistic, commercial, economic age of mankind, a period in which the ethical mind persisted painfully, but with decreasing self-confidence, an increasing self-questioning and a tendency to yield up the fortress of the moral law to the life-instinct, the aesthetic instinct and intelligence flourished as a rather glaring exotic ornament, a sort of rare orchid in the button-hole of the vital man, and reason became the magnificent servant of Life and Matter. The titanic development of the vital Life which followed, is ending as the Titans always end; it lit its own funeral pyre in the conflagration of a world-war, its natural upshot, a struggle between the most "efficient" and "civilised" nations for the possession and enjoyment of the world, of its wealth, its markets, its available spaces, an inflated and plethoric commercial expansion, largeness of imperial size and rule. For that is what the great war signified and was in its real origin, because that was the secret or the open intention of all pre-war diplomacy and international politics; and if a nobler idea was awakened at least for a time, it was only under the scourge of Death and before the terrifying spectre of a gigantic mutual destruction. Even so the awakening was by no means complete, nor everywhere quite sincere, but it was there and it was struggling towards birth even in Germany, once the great protagonist of the vitalistic philosophy of life. In that awakening lay some hope of better things. But for the moment at least the vitalistic aim has once more raised its head in a new form and the hope has dimmed in a darkness and welter in which only the eye of faith can see chaos preparing a new cosmos.

The first result of this imperfect awakening seemed likely to be a return to an older ideal, with a will to use the reason and the ethical mind better and more largely in the ordering

of individual, of national and of international life. But such an attempt, though well enough as a first step, cannot be the real and final solution; if our effort ends there, we shall not arrive. The solution lies, we have said, in an awakening to our real, because our highest self and nature, — that hidden self which we are not yet, but have to become and which is not the strong and enlightened vital Will hymned by Nietzsche, but a spiritual self and spiritual nature that will use the mental being which we already are, but the mental being spiritualised, and transform by a spiritual ideality the aim and action of our vital and physical nature. For this is the formula of man in his highest potentiality, and safety lies in tending towards our highest and not in resting content with an inferior potentiality. To follow after the highest in us may seem to be to live dangerously, to use again one of Nietzsche's inspired expressions, but by that danger comes victory and security. To rest in or follow after an inferior potentiality may seem safe, rational, comfortable, easy, but it ends badly, in some futility or in a mere circling, down the abyss or in a stagnant morass. Our right and natural road is towards the summits.

We have then to return to the pursuit of an ancient secret which man, as a race, has seen only obscurely and followed after lamely, has indeed understood only with his surface mind and not in its heart of meaning, — and yet in following it lies his social no less than his individual salvation, — the ideal of the kingdom of God, the secret of the reign of the Spirit over mind and life and body. It is because they have never quite lost hold of this secret, never disowned it in impatience for a lesser victory, that the older Asiatic nations have survived so persistently and can now, as if immortal, raise their faces towards a new dawn; for they have fallen asleep, but they have not perished. It is true that they have for a time failed in life, where the European nations who trusted to the flesh and the intellect have succeeded; but that success, speciously complete but only for a time, has always turned into a catastrophe. Still Asia had failed in life, she had fallen in the dust, and even if the dust in which she was lying was sacred, as the modern poet of Asia has declared, —

though the sacredness may be doubted, — still the dust is not the proper place for man, nor is to lie prostrate in it his right human attitude. Asia temporarily failed not because she followed after things spiritual, as some console themselves by saying, — as if the spirit could be at all a thing of weakness or a cause of weakness, — but because she did not follow after the spirit sufficiently, did not learn how entirely to make it the master of life. Her mind either made a gulf and a division between life and the Spirit or else rested in a compromise between them and accepted as final socio-religious systems founded upon that compromise. So to rest is perilous; for the call of the Spirit more than any other demands that we shall follow it always to the end, and the end is neither a divorce and departure nor a compromise, but a conquest of all by the spirit and that reign of the seekers after perfection which, in the Hindu religious symbol, the last Avatar comes to accomplish.

This truth it is important to note, for mistakes made on the path are often even more instructive than the mistakes made by a turning aside from the path. As it is possible to superimpose the intellectual, ethical or aesthetic life or the sum of their motives upon the vital and physical nature, to be satisfied with a partial domination or a compromise, so it is possible to superimpose the spiritual life or some figure of strength or ascendency of spiritual ideas and motives on the mental, vital and physical nature and either to impoverish the latter, to impoverish the vital and physical existence and even to depress the mental as well in order to give the spiritual an easier domination, or else to make a compromise and leave the lower being to its pasture on condition of its doing frequent homage to the spiritual existence, admitting to a certain extent, greater or less, its influence and formally acknowledging it as the last state and the finality of the human being. This is the most that human society has ever done in the past, and though necessarily that must be a stage of the journey, to rest there is to miss the heart of the matter, the one thing needful. Not a humanity leading its ordinary life, what is now its normal round, touched by spiritual influences, but a humanity aspiring whole-heartedly to a law that is now abnormal

to it until its whole life has been elevated into spirituality, is the steep way that lies before man towards his perfection and the transformation that it has to achieve.

The secret of the transformation lies in the transference of our centre of living to a higher consciousness and in a change of our main power of living. This will be a leap or an ascent even more momentous than that which Nature must at one time have made from the vital mind of the animal to the thinking mind still imperfect in our human intelligence. The central will implicit in life must be no longer the vital will in the life and the body, but the spiritual will of which we have now only rare and dim intimations and glimpses. For now it comes to us hardly disclosed, weakened, disguised in the mental Idea; but it is in its own nature supramental and it is its supramental power and truth that we have somehow to discover. The main power of our living must be no longer the inferior vital urge of Nature which is already accomplished in us and can only whirl upon its rounds about the ego-centre, but that spiritual force of which we sometimes hear and speak but have not yet its inmost secret. For that is still retired in our depths and waits for our transcendence of the ego and the discovery of the true individual in whose universality we shall be united with all others. To transfer from the vital being, the instrumental reality in us, to the spirit, the central reality, to elevate to that height our will to be and our power of living is the secret which our nature is seeking to discover. All that we have done hitherto is some half-successful effort to transfer this will and power to the mental plane; our highest endeavour and labour has been to become the mental being and to live in the strength of the idea. But the mental idea in us is always intermediary and instrumental; always it depends on something other than it for its ground of action and therefore although it can follow for a time after its own separate satisfaction, it cannot rest for ever satisfied with that alone. It must either gravitate downwards and outwards towards the vital and physical life or it must elevate itself inwards and upwards towards the spirit.

And that must be why in thought, in art, in conduct, in life

we are always divided between two tendencies, one idealistic, the other realistic. The latter very easily seems to us more real, more solidly founded, more in touch with actualities because it relies upon a reality which is patent, sensible and already accomplished; the idealistic easily seems to us something unreal, fantastic, unsubstantial, nebulous, a thing more of thoughts and words than of live actualities, because it is trying to embody a reality not yet accomplished. To a certain extent we are perhaps right; for the ideal, a stranger among the actualities of our physical existence, is in fact a thing unreal until it has either in some way reconciled itself to the imperfections of our outer life or else has found the greater and purer reality for which it is seeking and imposed it on our outer activities; till then it hangs between two worlds and has conquered neither the upper light nor the nether darkness. Submission to the actual by a compromise is easy; discovery of the spiritual truth and the transformation of our actual way of living is difficult: but it is precisely this difficult thing that has to be done, if man is to find and fulfil his true nature. Our idealism is always the most rightly human thing in us, but as a mental idealism it is a thing ineffective. To be effective it has to convert itself into a spiritual realism which shall lay its hands on the higher reality of the spirit and take up for it this lower reality of our sensational, vital and physical nature.

This upward transference of our will to be and our power of life we have, then, to make the very principle of our perfection. That will, that power must choose between the domination of the vital part in us and the domination of the spirit. Nature can rest in the round of vital being, can produce there a sort of perfection, but that is the perfection of an arrested development satisfied with its own limits. This she can manage in the plant and the animal, because the life and the body are there at once the instrument and the aim; they do not look beyond themselves. She cannot do it in man because here she has shot up beyond her physical and vital basis; she has developed in him the mind which is an outflowering of the life towards the light of the Spirit, and the life and the body are now instrumental and no longer

their own aim. Therefore the perfection of man cannot consist in pursuing the unillumined round of the physical life. Neither can it be found in the wider rounds of the mental being; for that also is instrumental and tends towards something else beyond it, something whose power indeed works in it, but whose larger truth is superconscient to its present intelligence, supramental. The perfection of man lies in the unfolding of the ever-perfect Spirit.

The lower perfection of Nature in the plant and the animal comes from an instinctive, an automatic, a subconscient obedience in each to the vital truth of its own being. The higher perfection of the spiritual life will come by a spontaneous obedience of spiritualised man to the truth of his own realised being, when he has become himself, when he has found his own real nature. For this spontaneity will not be instinctive and subconscient, it will be intuitive and fully, integrally conscious. It will be a glad obedience to a spontaneous principle of spiritual light, to the force of a unified and integralised highest truth, largest beauty, good, power, joy, love, oneness. The object of this force acting in life will and must be as in all life growth, possession, enjoyment, but a growth which is a divine manifestation, a possession and enjoyment spiritual and of the spirit in things, — an enjoyment that will use, but will not depend on the mental, vital and physical symbols of our living. Therefore this will not be a limited perfection of arrested development dependent on the repetition of the same forms and the same round of actions, any departure from which becomes a peril and a disturbance. It will be an illimitable perfection capable of endless variation in its forms, — for the ways of the Spirit are countless and endless, — but securely the same in all variations, one but multitudinously infinite.

Therefore, too, this perfection cannot come by the mental idea dealing with the Spirit as it deals with life. The idea in mind seizing upon the central will in Spirit and trying to give this higher force a conscious orientation and method in accordance with the ideas of the intellect is too limited, too darkened, too poor a force to work this miracle. Still less can it come if we chain

the spirit to some fixed mental idea or system of religious cult, intellectual truth, aesthetic norm, ethical rule, practical action, way of vital and physical life, to a particular arrangement of forms and actions and declare all departure from that a peril and a disturbance or a deviation from spiritual living. That was the mistake made in Asia and the cause of its arrested development and decline; for this is to subject the higher to the lower principle and to bind down the self-disclosing Spirit to a provisional and imperfect compromise with mind and the vital nature. Man's true freedom and perfection will come when the spirit within bursts through the forms of mind and life and, winging above to its own gnostic fiery height of ether, turns upon them from that light and flame to seize them and transform into its own image.

In fact, as we have seen, the mind and the intellect are not the key-power of our existence. For they can only trace out a round of half-truths and uncertainties and revolve in that unsatisfying circle. But concealed in the mind and life, in all the action of the intellectual, the aesthetic, the ethical, the dynamic and practical, the emotional, sensational, vital and physical being, there is a power that sees by identity and intuition and gives to all these things such truth and such certainty and stability as they are able to compass. Obscurely we are now beginning to see something of this behind all our science and philosophy and all our other activities. But so long as this power has to work for the mind and life and not for itself, to work in their forms and not by its own spontaneous light, we cannot make any great use of this discovery, cannot get the native benefit of this inner Daemon. Man's road to spiritual supermanhood will be open when he declares boldly that all he has yet developed, including the intellect of which he is so rightly and yet so vainly proud, are now no longer sufficient for him, and that to uncase, discover, set free this greater Light within shall be henceforward his pervading preoccupation. Then will his philosophy, art, science, ethics, social existence, vital pursuits be no longer an exercise of mind and life, done for themselves, carried in a circle, but a means for the discovery of a greater Truth behind mind and life and for

the bringing of its power into our human existence. We shall be on the right road to become ourselves, to find our true law of perfection, to live our true satisfied existence in our real being and divine nature.

Chapter XXIII

Conditions for the Coming of a Spiritual Age

A CHANGE of this kind, the change from the mental and vital to the spiritual order of life, must necessarily be accomplished in the individual and in a great number of individuals before it can lay any effective hold upon the community. The Spirit in humanity discovers, develops, builds its formations first in the individual man: it is through the progressive and formative individual that it offers the discovery and the chance of a new self-creation to the mind of the race. For the communal mind holds things subconsciently at first or, if consciously, then in a confused chaotic manner: it is only through the individual mind that the mass can arrive at a clear knowledge and creation of the thing it held in its subconscient self. Thinkers, historians, sociologists who belittle the individual and would like to lose him in the mass or think of him chiefly as a cell, an atom, have got hold only of the obscurer side of the truth of Nature's workings in humanity. It is because man is not like the material formations of Nature or like the animal, because she intends in him a more and more conscious evolution, that individuality is so much developed in him and so absolutely important and indispensable. No doubt what comes out in the individual and afterwards moves the mass, must have been there already in the universal Mind and the individual is only an instrument for its manifestation, discovery, development: but he is an indispensable instrument and an instrument not merely of subconscient Nature, not merely of an instinctive urge that moves the mass, but more directly of the Spirit of whom that Nature is itself the instrument and the matrix of his creations. All great changes therefore find their first clear and effective power and their direct shaping force in the mind and spirit of an

individual or of a limited number of individuals. The mass follows, but unfortunately in a very imperfect and confused fashion which often or even usually ends in the failure or distortion of the thing created. If it were not so, mankind could have advanced on its way with a victorious rapidity instead of with the lumbering hesitations and soon exhausted rushes that seem to be all of which it has yet been capable.

Therefore if the spiritual change of which we have been speaking is to be effected, it must unite two conditions which have to be simultaneously satisfied but are most difficult to bring together. There must be the individual and the individuals who are able to see, to develop, to re-create themselves in the image of the Spirit and to communicate both their idea and its power to the mass. And there must be at the same time a mass, a society, a communal mind or at the least the constituents of a group-body, the possibility of a group-soul which is capable of receiving and effectively assimilating, ready to follow and effectively arrive, not compelled by its own inherent deficiencies, its defect of preparation to stop on the way or fall back before the decisive change is made. Such a simultaneity has never yet happened, although the appearance of it has sometimes been created by the ardour of a moment. That the combination must happen some day is a certainty, but none can tell how many attempts will have to be made and how many sediments of spiritual experience will have to be accumulated in the subconscient mentality of the communal human being before the soil is ready. For the chances of success are always less powerful in a difficult upward effort affecting the very roots of our nature than the numerous possibilities of failure. The initiator himself may be imperfect, may not have waited to become entirely the thing that he has seen. Even the few who have the apostolate in their charge may not have perfectly assimilated and shaped it in themselves and may hand on the power of the Spirit still farther diminished to the many who will come after them. The society may be intellectually, vitally, ethically, temperamentally unready, with the result that the final acceptance of the spiritual idea by the society may be also the beginning of its debasement

and distortion and of the consequent departure or diminution of the Spirit. Any or all of these things may happen, and the result will be, as has so often happened in the past, that even though some progress is made and an important change effected, it will not be the decisive change which can alone re-create humanity in a diviner image.

What then will be that state of society, what that readiness of the common mind of man which will be most favourable to this change, so that even if it cannot at once effectuate itself, it may at least make for its ways a more decisive preparation than has been hitherto possible? For that seems the most important element, since it is that, it is the unpreparedness, the unfitness of the society or of the common mind of man which is always the chief stumbling-block. It is the readiness of this common mind which is of the first importance; for even if the condition of society and the principle and rule that govern society are opposed to the spiritual change, even if these belong almost wholly to the vital, to the external, the economic, the mechanical order, as is certainly the way at present with human masses, yet if the common human mind has begun to admit the ideas proper to the higher order that is in the end to be, and the heart of man has begun to be stirred by aspirations born of these ideas, then there is a hope of some advance in the not distant future. And here the first essential sign must be the growth of the subjective idea of life, — the idea of the soul, the inner being, its powers, its possibilities, its growth, its expression and the creation of a true, beautiful and helpful environment for it as the one thing of first and last importance. The signals must be there that are precursors of a subjective age in humanity's thought and social endeavour.

These ideas are likely first to declare their trend in philosophy, in psychological thinking, in the arts, poetry, painting, sculpture, music, in the main idea of ethics, in the application of subjective principles by thinkers to social questions, even perhaps, though this is a perilous effort, to politics and economics, that hard refractory earthy matter which most resists all but a gross utilitarian treatment. There will be new unexpected

departures of science or at least of research, — since to such a turn in its most fruitful seekings the orthodox still deny the name of science. Discoveries will be made that thin the walls between soul and matter; attempts there will be to extend exact knowledge into the psychological and psychic realms with a realisation of the truth that these have laws of their own which are other than the physical, but not the less laws because they escape the external senses and are infinitely plastic and subtle. There will be a labour of religion to reject its past heavy weight of dead matter and revivify its strength in the fountains of the spirit. These are sure signs, if not of the thing to be, at least of a great possibility of it, of an effort that will surely be made, another endeavour perhaps with a larger sweep and a better equipped intelligence capable not only of feeling but of understanding the Truth that is demanding to be heard. Some such signs we can see at the present time although they are only incipient and sporadic and have not yet gone far enough to warrant a confident certitude. It is only when these groping beginnings have found that for which they are seeking, that it can be successfully applied to the remoulding of the life of man. Till then nothing better is likely to be achieved than an inner preparation and, for the rest, radical or revolutionary experiments of a doubtful kind with the details of the vast and cumbrous machinery under which life now groans and labours.

A subjective age may stop very far short of spirituality; for the subjective turn is only a first condition, not the thing itself, not the end of the matter. The search for the Reality, the true self of man, may very easily follow out the natural order described by the Upanishad in the profound apologue of the seekings of Bhrigu, son of Varuna. For first the seeker found the ultimate reality to be Matter and the physical, the material being, the external man our only self and spirit. Next he fixed on life as the Reality and the vital being as the self and spirit; in the third essay he penetrated to Mind and the mental being; only afterwards could he get beyond the superficial subjective through the supramental Truth-Consciousness to the eternal, the blissful, the ever creative Reality of which these are the sheaths.

But humanity may not be as persistent or as plastic as the son of Varuna, the search may stop short anywhere. Only if it is intended that he shall now at last arrive and discover, will the Spirit break each insufficient formula as soon as it has shaped itself and compel the thought of man to press forward to a larger discovery and in the end to the largest and most luminous of all. Something of the kind has been happening, but only in a very external way and on the surface. After the material formula which governed the greater part of the nineteenth century had burdened man with the heaviest servitude to the machinery of the outer material life that he has ever yet been called upon to bear, the first attempt to break through, to get to the living reality in things and away from the mechanical idea of life and living and society, landed us in that surface vitalism which had already begun to govern thought before the two formulas inextricably locked together lit up and flung themselves on the lurid pyre of the world-war. The vital *élan* has brought us no deliverance, but only used the machinery already created with a more feverish insistence, a vehement attempt to live more rapidly, more intensely, an inordinate will to act and to succeed, to enlarge the mere force of living or to pile up a gigantic efficiency of the collective life. It could not have been otherwise even if this vitalism had been less superficial and external, more truly subjective. To live, to act, to grow, to increase the vital force, to understand, utilise and fulfil the intuitive impulse of life are not things evil in themselves: rather they are excellent things, if rightly followed and rightly used, that is to say, if they are directed to something beyond the mere vitalistic impulse and are governed by that within which is higher than Life. The Life-power is an instrument, not an aim; it is in the upward scale the first great subjective supraphysical instrument of the Spirit and the base of all action and endeavour. But a Life-power that sees nothing beyond itself, nothing to be served except its own organised demands and impulses, will be very soon like the force of steam driving an engine without the driver or an engine in which the locomotive force has made the driver its servant and not its controller. It can only add the uncontrollable impetus

of a high-crested or broad-based Titanism, or it may be even a nether flaming demonism, to the Nature forces of the material world with the intellect as its servant, an impetus of measureless unresting creation, appropriation, expansion which will end in something violent, huge and "colossal", foredoomed in its very nature to excess and ruin, because light is not in it nor the soul's truth nor the sanction of the gods and their calm eternal will and knowledge.

But beyond the subjectivism of the vital self there is the possibility of a mental subjectivism which would at first perhaps, emerging out of the predominant vitalism and leaning upon the already realised idea of the soul as a soul of Life in action but correcting it, appear as a highly mentalised pragmatism. This first stage is foreshadowed in an increasing tendency to rationalise entirely man and his life, to govern individual and social existence by an ordered scientific plan based upon his discovery of his own and of life's realities. This attempt is bound to fail because reason and rationality are not the whole of man or of life, because reason is only an intermediate interpreter, not the original knower, creator and master of our being or of cosmic existence. It can besides only mechanise life in a more intelligent way than in the past; to do that seems to be all that the modern intellectual leaders of the race can discover as the solution of the heavy problem with which we are impaled. But it is conceivable that this tendency may hereafter rise to the higher idea of man as a mental being, a soul in mind that must develop itself individually and collectively in the life and body through the play of an ever-expanding mental existence. This greater idea would realise that the elevation of the human existence will come not through material efficiency alone or the complex play of his vital and dynamic powers, not solely by mastering through the aid of the intellect the energies of physical Nature for the satisfaction of the life-instincts, which can only be an intensification of his present mode of existence, but through the greatening of his mental and psychic being and a discovery, bringing forward and organisation of his subliminal nature and its forces, the utilisation of a larger mind and a larger life waiting

for discovery within us. It would see in life an opportunity for the joy and power of knowledge, for the joy and power of beauty, for the joy and power of the human will mastering not only physical Nature, but vital and mental Nature. It might discover her secret yet undreamed-of mind-powers and life-powers and use them for a freer liberation of man from the limitations of his shackled bodily life. It might arrive at new psychic relations, a more sovereign power of the idea to realise itself in the act, inner means of overcoming the obstacles of distance and division which would cast into insignificance even the last miraculous achievements of material Science. A development of this kind is far enough away from the dreams of the mass of men, but there are certain pale hints and presages of such a possibility and ideas which lead to it are already held by a great number who are perhaps in this respect the yet unrecognised vanguard of humanity. It is not impossible that behind the confused morning voices of the hour a light of this kind, still below the horizon, may be waiting to ascend with its splendours.

Such a turn of human thought, effort, ideas of life, if it took hold of the communal mind, would evidently lead to a profound revolution throughout the whole range of human existence. It would give it from the first a new tone and atmosphere, a loftier spirit, wider horizons, a greater aim. It might easily develop a science which would bring the powers of the physical world into a real and not only a contingent and mechanical subjection and open perhaps the doors of other worlds. It might develop an achievement of Art and Beauty which would make the greatness of the past a comparatively little thing and would save the world from the astonishingly callous reign of utilitarian ugliness that even now afflicts it. It would open up a closer and freer interchange between human minds and, it may well be hoped, a kindlier interchange between human hearts and lives. Nor need its achievements stop here, but might proceed to greater things of which these would be only the beginnings. This mental and psychic subjectivism would have its dangers, greater dangers even than those that attend a vitalistic subjectivism, because its powers of action also would be greater, but it would have what

vitalistic subjectivism has not and cannot easily have, the chance of a detecting discernment, strong safeguards and a powerful liberating light.

Moving with difficulty upward from Matter to spirit, this is perhaps a necessary stage of man's development. This was one principal reason of the failure of past attempts to spiritualise mankind, that they endeavoured to spiritualise at once the material man by a sort of rapid miracle, and though that can be done, the miracle is not likely to be of an enduring character if it overleaps the stages of his ascent and leaves the intervening levels untrodden and therefore unmastered. The endeavour may succeed with individuals, — Indian thought would say with those who have made themselves ready in a past existence, — but it must fail with the mass. When it passes beyond the few, the forceful miracle of the spirit flags; unable to transform by inner force, the new religion — for that is what it becomes — tries to save by machinery, is entangled in the mechanical turning of its own instruments, loses the spirit and perishes quickly or decays slowly. That is the fate which overtakes all attempts of the vitalistic, the intellectual and mental, the spiritual endeavour to deal with material man through his physical mind chiefly or alone; the endeavour is overpowered by the machinery it creates and becomes the slave and victim of the machine. That is the revenge which our material Nature, herself mechanical, takes upon all such violent endeavours; she waits to master them by their concessions to her own law. If mankind is to be spiritualised, it must first in the mass cease to be the material or the vital man and become the psychic and the true mental being. It may be questioned whether such a mass progress or conversion is possible; but if it is not, then the spiritualisation of mankind as a whole is a chimera.

From this point of view it is an excellent thing, a sign of great promise, that the wheel of civilisation has been following its past and present curve upward from a solid physical knowledge through a successive sounding of higher and higher powers that mediate between Matter and Spirit. The human intellect in modern times has been first drawn to exhaust the possibilities

of materialism by an immense dealing with life and the world upon the basis of Matter as the sole reality, Matter as the Eternal, Matter as the Brahman, *annaṁ brahma*. Afterwards it had begun to turn towards the conception of existence as the large pulsation of a great evolving Life, the creator of Matter, which would have enabled it to deal with our existence on the basis of Life as the original reality, Life as the great Eternal, *prāṇo brahma*. And already it has in germ, in preparation a third conception, the discovery of a great self-expressing and self-finding inner Mind other than our surface mentality as a master-power of existence, and that should lead towards a rich attempt to deal with our possibilities and our ways of living on the basis of Mind as the original reality, the great Eternal, *mano brahma*. It would also be a sign of promise if these conceptions succeeded each other with rapidity, with a large but swift evocation of the possibilities of each level; for that would show that there is a readiness in our subconscient Nature and that we need not linger in each stage for centuries.

But still a subjective age of mankind must be an adventure full of perils and uncertainties as are all great adventures of the race. It may wander long before it finds itself or may not find itself at all and may swing back to a new repetition of the cycle. The true secret can only be discovered if in the third stage, in an age of mental subjectivism, the idea becomes strong of the mind itself as no more than a secondary power of the Spirit's working and of the Spirit as the great Eternal, the original and, in spite of the many terms in which it is both expressed and hidden, the sole reality, *ayam ātmā brahma*. Then only will the real, the decisive endeavour begin and life and the world be studied, known, dealt with in all directions as the self-finding and self-expression of the Spirit. Then only will a spiritual age of mankind be possible.

To attempt any adequate discussion of what that would mean, and in an inadequate discussion there is no fruit, is beyond our present scope; for we should have to examine a knowledge which is rare and nowhere more than initial. It is enough to say that a spiritual human society would start from and try to realise three essential truths of existence which all Nature seems to be

an attempt to hide by their opposites and which therefore are as yet for the mass of mankind only words and dreams, God, freedom, unity. Three things which are one, for you cannot realise freedom and unity unless you realise God, you cannot possess freedom and unity unless you possess God, possess at once your highest Self and the Self of all creatures. The freedom and unity which otherwise go by that name, are simply attempts of our subjection and our division to get away from themselves by shutting their eyes while they turn somersaults around their own centre. When man is able to see God and to possess him, then he will know real freedom and arrive at real unity, never otherwise. And God is only waiting to be known, while man seeks for him everywhere and creates images of the Divine, but all the while truly finds, effectively erects and worships images only of his own mind-ego and life-ego. When this ego pivot is abandoned and this ego-hunt ceases, then man gets his first real chance of achieving spirituality in his inner and outer life. It will not be enough, but it will be a commencement, a true gate and not a blind entrance.

A spiritualised society would live like its spiritual individuals, not in the ego, but in the spirit, not as the collective ego, but as the collective soul. This freedom from the egoistic standpoint would be its first and most prominent characteristic. But the elimination of egoism would not be brought about, as it is now proposed to bring it about, by persuading or forcing the individual to immolate his personal will and aspirations and his precious and hard-won individuality to the collective will, aims and egoism of the society, driving him like a victim of ancient sacrifice to slay his soul on the altar of that huge and shapeless idol. For that would be only the sacrifice of the smaller to the larger egoism, larger only in bulk, not necessarily greater in quality or wider or nobler, since a collective egoism, result of the united egoisms of all, is as little a god to be worshipped, as flawed and often an uglier and more barbarous fetish than the egoism of the individual. What the spiritual man seeks is to find by the loss of the ego the self which is one in all and perfect and complete in each and by living in that to grow into the

image of its perfection, — individually, be it noted, though with an all-embracing universality of his nature and its conscious circumference. It is said in the old Indian writings that while in the second age, the age of Power, Vishnu descends as the King, and in the third, the age of compromise and balance, as the legislator or codifier, in the age of the Truth he descends as Yajna, that is to say, as the Master of works and sacrifice manifest in the heart of his creatures. It is this kingdom of God within, the result of the finding of God not in a distant heaven but within ourselves, of which the state of society in an age of the Truth, a spiritual age, would be the result and the external figure.

Therefore a society which was even initially spiritualised would make the revealing and finding of the divine Self in man the supreme, even the guiding aim of all its activities, its education, its knowledge, its science, its ethics, its art, its economical and political structure. As it was to some imperfect extent in the ancient Vedic times with the cultural education of the higher classes, so it would be then with all education. It would embrace all knowledge in its scope, but would make the whole trend and aim and the permeating spirit not mere worldly efficiency, though that efficiency would not be neglected, but this self-developing and self-finding and all else as its powers. It would pursue the physical and psychic sciences not in order merely to know the world and Nature in her processes and to use them for material human ends, but still more to know through and in and under and over all things the Divine in the world and the ways of the Spirit in its masks and behind them. It would make it the aim of ethics not to establish a rule of action whether supplementary to the social law or partially corrective of it, the social law that is after all only the rule, often clumsy and ignorant, of the biped pack, the human herd, but to develop the divine nature in the human being. It would make it the aim of Art not merely to present images of the subjective and objective world, but to see them with the significant and creative vision that goes behind their appearances and to reveal the Truth and Beauty of which things visible to us and invisible are the forms, the masks or the symbols and significant figures.

A spiritualised society would treat in its sociology the individual, from the saint to the criminal, not as units of a social problem to be passed through some skilfully devised machinery and either flattened into the social mould or crushed out of it, but as souls suffering and entangled in a net and to be rescued, souls growing and to be encouraged to grow, souls grown and from whom help and power can be drawn by the lesser spirits who are not yet adult. The aim of its economics would be not to create a huge engine of production, whether of the competitive or the cooperative kind, but to give to men — not only to some but to all men each in his highest possible measure — the joy of work according to their own nature and free leisure to grow inwardly, as well as a simply rich and beautiful life for all. In its politics it would not regard the nations within the scope of their own internal life as enormous State machines regulated and armoured with man living for the sake of the machine and worshipping it as his God and his larger self, content at the first call to kill others upon its altar and to bleed there himself so that the machine may remain intact and powerful and be made ever larger, more complex, more cumbrous, more mechanically efficient and entire. Neither would it be content to maintain these nations or States in their mutual relations as noxious engines meant to discharge poisonous gas upon each other in peace and to rush in times of clash upon each other's armed hosts and unarmed millions, full of belching shot and men missioned to murder like war-planes or hostile tanks in a modern battlefield. It would regard the peoples as group-souls, the Divinity concealed and to be self-discovered in its human collectivities, group-souls meant like the individual to grow according to their own nature and by that growth to help each other, to help the whole race in the one common work of humanity. And that work would be to find the divine Self in the individual and the collectivity and to realise spiritually, mentally, vitally, materially its greatest, largest, richest and deepest possibilities in the inner life of all and their outer action and nature.

For it is into the Divine within them that men and mankind have to grow; it is not an external idea or rule that has to be

imposed on them from without. Therefore the law of a growing inner freedom is that which will be most honoured in the spiritual age of mankind. True it is that so long as man has not come within measurable distance of self-knowledge and has not set his face towards it, he cannot escape from the law of external compulsion and all his efforts to do so must be vain. He is and always must be, so long as that lasts, the slave of others, the slave of his family, his caste, his clan, his Church, his society, his nation; and he cannot but be that and they too cannot help throwing their crude and mechanical compulsion on him, because he and they are the slaves of their own ego, of their own lower nature. We must feel and obey the compulsion of the Spirit if we would establish our inner right to escape other compulsion: we must make our lower nature the willing slave, the conscious and illumined instrument or the ennobled but still self-subjected portion, consort or partner of the divine Being within us, for it is that subjection which is the condition of our freedom, since spiritual freedom is not the egoistic assertion of our separate mind and life but obedience to the Divine Truth in ourself and our members and in all around us. But we have, even so, to remark that God respects the freedom of the natural members of our being and that he gives them room to grow in their own nature so that by natural growth and not by self-extinction they may find the Divine in themselves. The subjection which they finally accept, complete and absolute, must be a willing subjection of recognition and aspiration to their own source of light and power and their highest being. Therefore even in the unregenerated state we find that the healthiest, the truest, the most living growth and action is that which arises in the largest possible freedom and that all excess of compulsion is either the law of a gradual atrophy or a tyranny varied or cured by outbreaks of rabid disorder. And as soon as man comes to know his spiritual self, he does by that discovery, often even by the very seeking for it, as ancient thought and religion saw, escape from the outer law and enter into the law of freedom.

A spiritual age of mankind will perceive this truth. It will not try to make man perfect by machinery or keep him straight

by tying up all his limbs. It will not present to the member of the society his higher self in the person of the policeman, the official and the corporal, nor, let us say, in the form of a socialistic bureaucracy or a Labour Soviet. Its aim will be to diminish as soon and as far as possible the need of the element of external compulsion in human life by awakening the inner divine compulsion of the spirit within and all the preliminary means it will use will have that for its aim. In the end it will employ chiefly if not solely the spiritual compulsion which even the spiritual individual can exercise on those around him, — and how much more should a spiritual society be able to do it, — that which awakens within us in spite of all inner resistance and outer denial the compulsion of the Light, the desire and the power to grow through one's own nature into the Divine. For the perfectly spiritualised society will be one in which, as is dreamed by the spiritual anarchist, all men will be deeply free, and it will be so because the preliminary condition will have been satisfied. In that state each man will be not a law to himself, but *the* law, the divine Law, because he will be a soul living in the Divine Reality and not an ego living mainly if not entirely for its own interest and purpose. His life will be led by the law of his own divine nature liberated from the ego.

Nor will that mean a breaking up of all human society into the isolated action of individuals; for the third word of the Spirit is unity. The spiritual life is the flower not of a featureless but a conscious and diversified oneness. Each man has to grow into the Divine Reality within himself through his own individual being, therefore is a certain growing measure of freedom a necessity of the being as it develops and perfect freedom the sign and the condition of the perfect life. But also, the Divine whom he thus sees in himself, he sees equally in all others and as the same Spirit in all. Therefore too is a growing inner unity with others a necessity of his being and perfect unity the sign and condition of the perfect life. Not only to see and find the Divine in oneself, but to see and find the Divine in all, not only to seek one's own individual liberation or perfection, but to seek the liberation and perfection of others is the complete law of the spiritual being. If

the divinity sought were a separate godhead within oneself and not the one Divine, or if one sought God for oneself alone, then indeed the result might be a grandiose egoism, the Olympian egoism of a Goethe or the Titanic egoism imagined by Nietzsche, or it might be the isolated self-knowledge or asceticism of the ivory tower or the Stylites pillar. But he who sees God in all, will serve freely God in all with the service of love. He will, that is to say, seek not only his own freedom, but the freedom of all, not only his own perfection, but the perfection of all. He will not feel his individuality perfect except in the largest universality, nor his own life to be full life except as it is one with the universal life. He will not live either for himself or for the State and society, for the individual ego or the collective ego, but for something much greater, for God in himself and for the Divine in the universe.

The spiritual age will be ready to set in when the common mind of man begins to be alive to these truths and to be moved or desire to be moved by this triple or triune Spirit. That will mean the turning of the cycle of social development which we have been considering out of its incomplete repetitions on a new upward line towards its goal. For having set out, according to our supposition, with a symbolic age, an age in which man felt a great Reality behind all life which he sought through symbols, it will reach an age in which it will begin to live in that Reality, not through the symbol, not by the power of the type or of the convention or of the individual reason and intellectual will, but in our own highest nature which will be the nature of that Reality fulfilled in the conditions — not necessarily the same as now — of terrestrial existence. This is what the religions have seen with a more or less adequate intuition, but most often as in a glass darkly, that which they called the kingdom of God on earth, — his kingdom within in man's spirit and therefore, for the one is the material result of the effectivity of the other, his kingdom without in the life of the peoples.

Chapter XXIV

The Advent and Progress of the Spiritual Age

IF A subjective age, the last sector of a social cycle, is to find its outlet and fruition in a spiritualised society and the emergence of mankind on a higher evolutionary level, it is not enough that certain ideas favourable to that turn of human life should take hold of the general mind of the race, permeate the ordinary motives of its thought, art, ethics, political ideals, social effort, or even get well into its inner way of thinking and feeling. It is not enough even that the idea of the kingdom of God on earth, a reign of spirituality, freedom and unity, a real and inner equality and harmony — and not merely an outward and mechanical equalisation and association — should become definitely an ideal of life; it is not enough that this ideal should be actively held as possible, desirable, to be sought and striven after, it is not enough even that it should come forward as a governing preoccupation of the human mind. That would evidently be a very great step forward, — considering what the ideals of mankind now are, an enormous step. It would be the necessary beginning, the indispensable mental environment for a living renovation of human society in a higher type. But by itself it might only bring about a half-hearted or else a strong but only partially and temporarily successful attempt to bring something of the manifest spirit into human life and its institutions. That is all that mankind has ever attempted on this line in the past. It has never attempted to work out thoroughly even that little, except in the limits of a religious order or a peculiar community, and even there with such serious defects and under such drastic limitations as to make the experiment nugatory and without any bearing on human life. If we do not get beyond the mere holding of the ideal and its general influence in human life, this little is

all that mankind will attempt in the future. More is needed; a general spiritual awakening and aspiration in mankind is indeed the large necessary motive-power, but the effective power must be something greater. There must be a dynamic re-creating of individual manhood in the spiritual type.

For the way that humanity deals with an ideal is to be satisfied with it as an aspiration which is for the most part left only as an aspiration, accepted only as a partial influence. The ideal is not allowed to mould the whole life, but only more or less to colour it; it is often used even as a cover and a plea for things that are diametrically opposed to its real spirit. Institutions are created which are supposed, but too lightly supposed to embody that spirit and the fact that the ideal is held, the fact that men live under its institutions is treated as sufficient. The holding of an ideal becomes almost an excuse for not living according to the ideal; the existence of its institutions is sufficient to abrogate the need of insisting on the spirit that made the institutions. But spirituality is in its very nature a thing subjective and not mechanical; it is nothing if it is not lived inwardly and if the outward life does not flow out of this inward living. Symbols, types, conventions, ideas are not sufficient. A spiritual symbol is only a meaningless ticket, unless the thing symbolised is realised in the spirit. A spiritual convention may lose or expel its spirit and become a falsehood. A spiritual type may be a temporary mould into which spiritual living may flow, but it is also a limitation and may become a prison in which it fossilises and perishes. A spiritual idea is a power, but only when it is both inwardly and outwardly creative. Here we have to enlarge and to deepen the pragmatic principle that truth is what we create, and in this sense first, that it is what we create within us, in other words, what we become. Undoubtedly, spiritual truth exists eternally beyond independent of us in the heavens of the spirit; but it is of no avail for humanity here, it does not become truth of earth, truth of life until it is lived. The divine perfection is always there above us; but for man to become divine in consciousness and act and to live inwardly and outwardly the divine life is what is meant by spirituality; all

lesser meanings given to the word are inadequate fumblings or impostures.

This, as the subjective religions recognise, can only be brought about by an individual change in each human life. The collective soul is there only as a great half-subconscient source of the individual existence; if it is to take on a definite psychological form or a new kind of collective life, that can only come by the shaping growth of its individuals. As will be the spirit and life of the individuals constituting it, so will be the realised spirit of the collectivity and the true power of its life. A society that lives not by its men but by its institutions, is not a collective soul, but a machine; its life becomes a mechanical product and ceases to be a living growth. Therefore the coming of a spiritual age must be preceded by the appearance of an increasing number of individuals who are no longer satisfied with the normal intellectual, vital and physical existence of man, but perceive that a greater evolution is the real goal of humanity and attempt to effect it in themselves, to lead others to it and to make it the recognised goal of the race. In proportion as they succeed and to the degree to which they carry this evolution, the yet unrealised potentiality which they represent will become an actual possibility of the future.

A great access of spirituality in the past has ordinarily had for its result the coming of a new religion of a special type and its endeavour to impose itself upon mankind as a new universal order. This, however, was always not only a premature but a wrong crystallisation which prevented rather than helped any deep and serious achievement. The aim of a spiritual age of mankind must indeed be one with the essential aim of subjective religions, a new birth, a new consciousness, an upward evolution of the human being, a descent of the spirit into our members, a spiritual reorganisation of our life; but if it limits itself by the old familiar apparatus and the imperfect means of a religious movement, it is likely to register another failure. A religious movement brings usually a wave of spiritual excitement and aspiration that communicates itself to a large number of individuals and there is as a result a temporary uplifting

and an effective formation, partly spiritual, partly ethical, partly dogmatic in its nature. But the wave after a generation or two or at most a few generations begins to subside; the formation remains. If there has been a very powerful movement with a great spiritual personality as its source, it may leave behind a central influence and an inner discipline which may well be the starting-point of fresh waves; but these will be constantly less powerful and enduring in proportion as the movement gets farther and farther away from its source. For meanwhile in order to bind together the faithful and at the same time to mark them off from the unregenerated outer world, there will have grown up a religious order, a Church, a hierarchy, a fixed and unprogressive type of ethical living, a set of crystallised dogmas, ostentatious ceremonials, sanctified superstitions, an elaborate machinery for the salvation of mankind. As a result spirituality is increasingly subordinated to intellectual belief, to outward forms of conduct and to external ritual, the higher to the lower motives, the one thing essential to aids and instruments and accidents. The first spontaneous and potent attempt to convert the whole life into spiritual living yields up its place to a set system of belief and ethics touched by spiritual emotion; but finally even that saving element is dominated by the outward machinery, the sheltering structure becomes a tomb. The Church takes the place of the spirit and a formal subscription to its creed, rituals and order is the thing universally demanded; spiritual living is only practised by the few within the limits prescribed by their fixed creed and order. The majority neglect even that narrow effort and are contented to replace by a careful or negligent piety the call to a deeper life. In the end it is found that the spirit in the religion has become a thin stream choked by sands; at the most brief occasional floodings of its dry bed of conventions still prevent it from becoming a memory in the dead chapters of Time.

The ambition of a particular religious belief and form to universalise and impose itself is contrary to the variety of human nature and to at least one essential character of the Spirit. For the nature of the Spirit is a spacious inner freedom and a large unity into which each man must be allowed to grow according

to his own nature. Again — and this is yet another source of inevitable failure — the usual tendency of these credal religions is to turn towards an afterworld and to make the regeneration of the earthly life a secondary motive; this tendency grows in proportion as the original hope of a present universal regeneration of mankind becomes more and more feeble. Therefore while many new spiritual waves with their strong special motives and disciplines must necessarily be the forerunners of a spiritual age, yet their claims must be subordinated in the general mind of the race and of its spiritual leaders to the recognition that all motives and disciplines are valid and yet none entirely valid since they are means and not the one thing to be done. The one thing essential must take precedence, the conversion of the whole life of the human being to the lead of the spirit. The ascent of man into heaven is not the key, but rather his ascent here into the spirit and the descent also of the spirit into his normal humanity and the transformation of this earthly nature. For that and not some post mortem salvation is the real new birth for which humanity waits as the crowning movement of its long obscure and painful course.

Therefore the individuals who will most help the future of humanity in the new age will be those who will recognise a spiritual evolution as the destiny and therefore the great need of the human being. Even as the animal man has been largely converted into a mentalised and at the top a highly mentalised humanity, so too now or in the future an evolution or conversion — it does not greatly matter which figure we use or what theory we adopt to support it — of the present type of humanity into a spiritualised humanity is the need of the race and surely the intention of Nature; that evolution or conversion will be their ideal and endeavour. They will be comparatively indifferent to particular belief and form and leave men to resort to the beliefs and forms to which they are naturally drawn. They will only hold as essential the faith in this spiritual conversion, the attempt to live it out and whatever knowledge — the form of opinion into which it is thrown does not so much matter — can be converted into this living. They will especially not make the mistake of thinking that this change can be effected by

machinery and outward institutions; they will know and never forget that it has to be lived out by each man inwardly or it can never be made a reality for the kind. They will adopt in its heart of meaning the inward view of the East which bids man seek the secret of his destiny and salvation within; but also they will accept, though with a different turn given to it, the importance which the West rightly attaches to life and to the making the best we know and can attain the general rule of all life. They will not make society a shadowy background to a few luminous spiritual figures or a rigidly fenced and earth-bound root for the growth of a comparatively rare and sterile flower of ascetic spirituality. They will not accept the theory that the many must necessarily remain for ever on the lower ranges of life and only a few climb into the free air and the light, but will start from the standpoint of the great spirits who have striven to regenerate the life of the earth and held that faith in spite of all previous failure. Failures must be originally numerous in everything great and difficult, but the time comes when the experience of past failures can be profitably used and the gate that so long resisted opens. In this as in all great human aspirations and endeavours, an *a priori* declaration of impossibility is a sign of ignorance and weakness, and the motto of the aspirant's endeavour must be the *solvitur ambulando* of the discoverer. For by the doing the difficulty will be solved. A true beginning has to be made; the rest is a work for Time in its sudden achievements or its long patient labour.

The thing to be done is as large as human life, and therefore the individuals who lead the way will take all human life for their province. These pioneers will consider nothing as alien to them, nothing as outside their scope. For every part of human life has to be taken up by the spiritual, — not only the intellectual, the aesthetic, the ethical, but the dynamic, the vital, the physical; therefore for none of these things or the activities that spring from them will they have contempt or aversion, however they may insist on a change of the spirit and a transmutation of the form. In each power of our nature they will seek for its own proper means of conversion; knowing that the Divine is concealed in all, they will hold that all can be made the

spirit's means of self-finding and all can be converted into its instruments of divine living. And they will see that the great necessity is the conversion of the normal into the spiritual mind and the opening of that mind again into its own higher reaches and more and more integral movement. For before the decisive change can be made, the stumbling intellectual reason has to be converted into the precise and luminous intuitive, until that again can rise into higher ranges to overmind and supermind or gnosis. The uncertain and stumbling mental will has to rise towards the sure intuitive and into a higher divine and gnostic will, the psychic sweetness, fire and light of the soul behind the heart, *hṛdaye guhāyām*, has to alchemise our crude emotions and the hard egoisms and clamant desires of our vital nature. All our other members have to pass through a similar conversion under the compelling force and light from above. The leaders of the spiritual march will start from and use the knowledge and the means that past effort has developed in this direction, but they will not take them as they are without any deep necessary change or limit themselves by what is now known or cleave only to fixed and stereotyped systems or given groupings of results, but will follow the method of the Spirit in Nature. A constant rediscovery and new formulation and larger synthesis in the mind, a mighty remoulding in its deeper parts because of a greater enlarging Truth not discovered or not well fixed before, is that Spirit's way with our past achievement when he moves to the greatnesses of the future.

This endeavour will be a supreme and difficult labour even for the individual, but much more for the race. It may well be that, once started, it may not advance rapidly even to its first decisive stage; it may be that it will take long centuries of effort to come into some kind of permanent birth. But that is not altogether inevitable, for the principle of such changes in Nature seems to be a long obscure preparation followed by a swift gathering up and precipitation of the elements into the new birth, a rapid conversion, a transformation that in its luminous moment figures like a miracle. Even when the first decisive change is reached, it is certain that all humanity will not be

able to rise to that level. There cannot fail to be a division into those who are able to live on the spiritual level and those who are only able to live in the light that descends from it into the mental level. And below these too there might still be a great mass influenced from above but not yet ready for the light. But even that would be a transformation and a beginning far beyond anything yet attained. This hierarchy would not mean as in our present vital living an egoistic domination of the undeveloped by the more developed, but a guidance of the younger by the elder brothers of the race and a constant working to lift them up to a greater spiritual level and wider horizons. And for the leaders too this ascent to the first spiritual levels would not be the end of the divine march, a culmination that left nothing more to be achieved on earth. For there would be still yet higher levels within the supramental realm, as the old Vedic poets knew when they spoke of the spiritual life as a constant ascent, —

brahmāṇas tvā śatakrato
ud vaṁśam iva yemire;
yat sānoḥ sānum āruhat,
bhūri aspaṣṭa kartvam, —

The priests of the word climb thee like a ladder, O hundred-powered. As one ascends from peak to peak, there is made clear the much that has still to be done.

But once the foundation has been secured, the rest develops by a progressive self-unfolding and the soul is sure of its way. As again it is phrased by the ancient Vedic singers, —

abhyavasthāḥ pra jāyante,
pra vavrer vavriś ciketa;
upasthe mātur vi caṣṭe, —

State is born upon state; covering after covering becomes conscious of knowledge; in the lap of the Mother the soul sees.

This at least is the highest hope, the possible destiny that opens out before the human view, and it is a possibility which

the progress of the human mind seems on the way to redevelop. If the light that is being born increases, if the number of individuals who seek to realise the possibility in themselves and in the world grows large and they get nearer the right way, then the Spirit who is here in man, now a concealed divinity, a developing light and power, will descend more fully as the Avatar of a yet unseen and unguessed Godhead from above into the soul of mankind and into the great individualities in whom the light and power are the strongest. There will then be fulfilled the change that will prepare the transition of human life from its present limits into those larger and purer horizons; the earthly evolution will have taken its grand impetus upward and accomplished the revealing step in a divine progression of which the birth of thinking and aspiring man from the animal nature was only an obscure preparation and a far-off promise.

The Ideal of Human Unity

Preface to the First Edition

The chapters of this book were written in a serial form in the pages of the monthly review, *Arya*, and from the necessity of speedy publication have been reprinted as they stood without the alterations which would have been necessary to give them a greater unity of treatment. They reflect the rapidly changing phases of ideas, facts and possibilities which emerged in the course of the European conflict. The earlier chapters were written when Russia was still an Empire and an autocracy, the later parts after the Russian revolution and when the war had come nearer to its end, but the dramatic circumstances of the issue, in itself inevitable, could not be foreseen. The reader may guide himself in regard to the references to contemporary conditions by observing that the first four chapters cover the close of the year 1915, the next twelve 1916, the seventeenth to the twenty-eighth 1917, while the remaining seven extend to July 1918. The rapid change of circumstances reflected will serve to bring home the swiftness of the evolution by which what was a hesitating idea and a doubtful possibility at the commencement has become a settled necessity awaiting speedy formulation.

Subsequent events have rendered certain speculations and balancings out of date, for they have been solved by the logic of events. Austria is a name of the past, the Empire of the Hohenzollerns has disappeared like a dream of the night, all Europe between the Rhine and the Volga is republican. Finally, most important of all, the League of Nations has now been decided upon, the American idea having triumphed at least in principle, and is in travail of formation. But the main suggestions put forward in the book remain unaffected, or rather acquire a more pressing actuality. The two great difficulties which attend the incipience of this first stage of loose world-union will still be, first, the difficulty of bringing into one system the few great

Empires remaining, few but immensely increased in power, influence and the extent of their responsibilities, and the greatly increased swarm of free nations which the force of events or the Power guiding them rather than the will of nations and Governments has brought into being, and the approaching struggle between Labour and Capitalism. The former is only a difficulty and embarrassment, though it may become serious if it turns into a conflict between the imperialistic and the nationalistic ideas or reproduces in the international scheme the strife of the old oligarchic and democratic tendencies in a new form, a question between control of the world-system by the will and influence of a few powerful imperial States and the free and equal control by all, small nations and great, European and American and Asiatic peoples. The second is a danger which may even lead to disintegration of this first attempt at unification, especially if, as seems to be the tendency, the League undertakes the policing of the world against the forces of extreme revolutionary socialism. On the other hand, the conflict may accelerate, whatever its result, the necessity and actuality of a more close and rigorous system, the incipience at least of the second stage of unification.

The main contentions advanced in these pages also remain unaffected by the course of events, — the inevitability of the unification of the life of humanity as a result of those imperative natural forces which lead always to the creation of larger and larger human aggregates, the choice of the principles which may be followed in the process, the need for preserving and bringing to fullness the principle of individual and group freedom within the human unity, and the insufficiency of formal unity without a growth of the religion of humanity which can alone make it a great psychological advance in the spiritual evolution of the race.

1919

Publisher's Note to the Second Edition

The Ideal of Human Unity first appeared in the "Arya" Vol. II, No. 2 – Vol. IV, No. 12) complete in 35 Chapters, serially from September, 1915 to July, 1918.

It was reproduced in book-form in 1919 by The Sons of India Ltd., Madras (with three Appendices, a Preface and a detailed synopsis of the Chapters. The Appendices contained articles from the "Arya" setting forth the ideals of the Review).

The present edition is a revised version; but the revision was done before the last World War. It is, however, printed almost in that form brought up-to-date by the addition of a Postscript Chapter dealing with the world conditions today.

April, 1950

The Ideal of Human Unity

Part I

Chapter I

The Turn towards Unity: Its Necessity and Dangers

THE SURFACES of life are easy to understand; their laws, characteristic movements, practical utilities are ready to our hand and we can seize on them and turn them to account with a sufficient facility and rapidity. But they do not carry us very far. They suffice for an active superficial life from day to day, but they do not solve the great problems of existence. On the other hand, the knowledge of life's profundities, its potent secrets, its great, hidden, all-determining laws is exceedingly difficult to us. We have found no plummet that can fathom these depths; they seem to us a vague, indeterminate movement, a profound obscurity from which the mind recoils willingly to play with the fret and foam and facile radiances of the surface. Yet it is these depths and their unseen forces that we ought to know if we would understand existence; on the surface we get only Nature's secondary rules and practical bye-laws which help us to tide over the difficulties of the moment and to organise empirically without understanding them her continual transitions.

Nothing is more obscure to humanity or less seized by its understanding, whether in the power that moves it or the sense of the aim towards which it moves, than its own communal and collective life. Sociology does not help us, for it only gives us the general story of the past and the external conditions under which communities have survived. History teaches us nothing; it is a confused torrent of events and personalities or a kaleidoscope of changing institutions. We do not seize the real sense of all this change and this continual streaming forward of human life in the channels of Time. What we do seize are current or recurrent phenomena, facile generalisations, partial ideas. We talk of democracy, aristocracy and autocracy,

collectivism and individualism, imperialism and nationalism, the State and the commune, capitalism and labour; we advance hasty generalisations and make absolute systems which are positively announced today only to be abandoned perforce tomorrow; we espouse causes and ardent enthusiasms whose triumph turns to an early disillusionment and then forsake them for others, perhaps for those that we have taken so much trouble to destroy. For a whole century mankind thirsts and battles after liberty and earns it with a bitter expense of toil, tears and blood; the century that enjoys without having fought for it turns away as from a puerile illusion and is ready to renounce the depreciated gain as the price of some new good. And all this happens because our whole thought and action with regard to our collective life is shallow and empirical; it does not seek for, it does not base itself on a firm, profound and complete knowledge. The moral is not the vanity of human life, of its ardours and enthusiasms and of the ideals it pursues, but the necessity of a wiser, larger, more patient search after its true law and aim.

Today the ideal of human unity is more or less vaguely making its way to the front of our consciousness. The emergence of an ideal in human thought is always the sign of an intention in Nature, but not always of an intention to accomplish; sometimes it indicates only an attempt which is predestined to temporary failure. For Nature is slow and patient in her methods. She takes up ideas and half carries them out, then drops them by the wayside to resume them in some future era with a better combination. She tempts humanity, her thinking instrument, and tests how far it is ready for the harmony she has imagined; she allows and incites man to attempt and fail, so that he may learn and succeed better another time. Still the ideal, having once made its way to the front of thought, must certainly be attempted, and this ideal of human unity is likely to figure largely among the determining forces of the future; for the intellectual and material circumstances of the age have prepared and almost impose it, especially the scientific discoveries which have made our earth so small that its vastest kingdoms seem now no more than the provinces of a single country.

But this very commodity of the material circumstances may bring about the failure of the ideal; for when material circumstances favour a great change, but the heart and mind of the race are not really ready — especially the heart — failure may be predicted, unless indeed men are wise in time and accept the inner change along with the external readjustment. But at present the human intellect has been so much mechanised by physical Science that it is likely to attempt the revolution it is beginning to envisage principally or solely through mechanical means, through social and political adjustments. Now it is not by social and political devices, or at any rate not by these chiefly or only, that the unity of the human race can be enduringly or fruitfully accomplished.

It must be remembered that a greater social or political unity is not necessarily a boon in itself; it is only worth pursuing in so far as it provides a means and a framework for a better, richer, more happy and puissant individual and collective life. But hitherto the experience of mankind has not favoured the view that huge aggregations, closely united and strictly organised, are favourable to a rich and puissant human life. It would seem rather that collective life is more at ease with itself, more genial, varied, fruitful when it can concentrate itself in small spaces and simpler organisms.

If we consider the past of humanity so far as it is known to us, we find that the interesting periods of human life, the scenes in which it has been most richly lived and has left behind it the most precious fruits, were precisely those ages and countries in which humanity was able to organise itself in little independent centres acting intimately upon each other but not fused into a single unity. Modern Europe owes two-thirds of its civilisation to three such supreme moments of human history, the religious life of the congeries of tribes which called itself Israel and, subsequently, of the little nation of the Jews, the many-sided life of the small Greek city states, the similar, though more restricted artistic and intellectual life of mediaeval Italy. Nor was any age in Asia so rich in energy, so well worth living in, so productive of the best and most enduring fruits as that heroic period of

India when she was divided into small kingdoms, many of them no larger than a modern district. Her most wonderful activities, her most vigorous and enduring work, that which, if we had to make a choice, we should keep at the sacrifice of all else, belonged to that period; the second best came afterwards in larger, but still comparatively small nations and kingdoms like those of the Pallavas, Chalukyas, Pandyas, Cholas and Cheras. In comparison she received little from the greater empires that rose and fell within her borders, the Moghul, the Gupta or the Maurya — little indeed except political and administrative organisation, some fine art and literature and a certain amount of lasting work in other kinds, not always of the best quality. Their impulse was rather towards elaborate organisation than original, stimulating and creative.

Nevertheless, in this regime of the small city state or of regional cultures there was always a defect which compelled a tendency towards large organisations. The defect was a characteristic of impermanence, often of disorder, especially of defencelessness against the onslaught of larger organisations, even of an insufficient capacity for widespread material well-being. Therefore this earlier form of collective life tended to disappear and give place to the organisation of nations, kingdoms and empires.

And here we notice, first, that it is the groupments of smaller nations which have had the most intense life and not the huge States and colossal empires. Collective life diffusing itself in too vast spaces seems to lose intensity and productiveness. Europe has lived in England, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, the small States of Germany — all her later civilisation and progress evolved itself there, not in the huge mass of the Holy Roman or the Russian Empire. We see a similar phenomenon in the social and political field when we compare the intense life and activity of Europe in its many nations acting richly upon each other, rapidly progressing by quick creative steps and sometimes by bounds, with the great masses of Asia, her long periods of immobility in which wars and revolutions seem to be small, temporary and usually unproductive episodes, her centuries of

religious, philosophic and artistic reveries, her tendency towards an increasing isolation and a final stagnancy of the outward life.

Secondly, we note that in this organisation of nations and kingdoms those which have had the most vigorous life have gained it by a sort of artificial concentration of the vitality into some head, centre or capital, London, Paris, Rome. By this device Nature, while acquiring the benefits of a larger organisation and more perfect unity, preserves to some extent that equally precious power of fruitful concentration in a small space and into a closely packed activity which she had possessed in her more primitive system of the city state or petty kingdom. But this advantage was purchased by the condemnation of the rest of the organisation, the district, the provincial town, the village to a dull, petty and somnolent life in strange contrast with the vital intensity of the *urbs* or metropolis.

The Roman Empire is the historic example of an organisation of unity which transcended the limits of the nation, and its advantages and disadvantages are there perfectly typified. The advantages are admirable organisation, peace, widespread security, order and material well-being; the disadvantage is that the individual, the city, the region sacrifice their independent life and become mechanical parts of a machine; life loses its colour, richness, variety, freedom and victorious impulse towards creation. The organisation is great and admirable, but the individual dwindles and is overpowered and overshadowed; and eventually by the smallness and feebleness of the individual the huge organism inevitably and slowly loses even its great conservative vitality and dies of an increasing stagnation. Even while outwardly whole and untouched, the structure has become rotten and begins to crack and dissolve at the first shock from outside. Such organisations, such periods are immensely useful for conservation, even as the Roman Empire served to consolidate the gains of the rich centuries that preceded it. But they arrest life and growth.

We see, then, what is likely to happen if there were a social, administrative and political unification of mankind, such as some have begun to dream of nowadays. A tremendous

organisation would be needed under which both individual and regional life would be crushed, dwarfed, deprived of their necessary freedom like a plant without rain and wind and sunlight, and this would mean for humanity, after perhaps one first outburst of satisfied and joyous activity, a long period of mere conservation, increasing stagnancy and ultimately decay.

Yet the unity of mankind is evidently a part of Nature's eventual scheme and must come about. Only it must be under other conditions and with safeguards which will keep the race intact in the roots of its vitality, richly diverse in its oneness.

Chapter II

The Imperfection of Past Aggregates

THE WHOLE process of Nature depends on a balancing and a constant tendency to harmony between two poles of life, the individual whom the whole or aggregate nourishes and the whole or aggregate which the individual helps to constitute. Human life forms no exception to the rule. Therefore the perfection of human life must involve the elaboration of an as yet unaccomplished harmony between these two poles of our existence, the individual and the social aggregate. The perfect society will be that which most entirely favours the perfection of the individual; the perfection of the individual will be incomplete if it does not help towards the perfect state of the social aggregate to which he belongs and eventually to that of the largest possible human aggregate, the whole of a united humanity.

For the gradual process of Nature introduces a complication which prevents the individual from standing in a pure and direct relation to the totality of mankind. Between himself and this too immense whole there erect themselves partly as aids, partly as barriers to the final unity the lesser aggregates which it has been necessary to form in the progressive stages of human culture. For the obstacles of space, the difficulties of organisation and the limitations of the human heart and brain have necessitated the formation first of small, then of larger and yet larger aggregates so that he may be gradually trained by a progressive approach till he is ready for the final universality. The family, the commune, the clan or tribe, the class, the city state or congeries of tribes, the nation, the empire are so many stages in this progress and constant enlargement. If the smaller aggregates were destroyed as soon as the larger are successfully formed, this graduation would result in no complexity; but Nature does not follow this course. She seldom destroys entirely the types she has once made or only destroys that for which there is no longer any utility;

the rest she keeps in order to serve her need or her passion for variety, richness, multiformity and only effaces the dividing lines or modifies the characteristics and relations sufficiently to allow of the larger unity she is creating. Therefore at every step humanity is confronted with various problems which arise not only from the difficulty of accord between the interests of the individual and those of the immediate aggregate, the community, but between the need and interests of the smaller integralities and the growth of that larger whole which is to ensphere them all.

History has preserved for us scattered instances of this travail, instances of failure and success which are full of instruction. We see the struggle towards the aggregation of tribes among the Semitic nations, Jew and Arab, surmounted in the one after a scission into two kingdoms which remained a permanent source of weakness to the Jewish nation, overcome only temporarily in the other by the sudden unifying force of Islam. We see the failure of clan life to combine into an organised national existence in the Celtic races, a failure entire in Ireland and Scotland and only surmounted through the crushing out of clan life by a foreign rule and culture, overcome only at the last moment in Wales. We see the failure of the city states and small regional peoples to fuse themselves in the history of Greece, the signal success of a similar struggle of Nature in the development of Roman Italy. The whole past of India for the last two thousand years and more has been the attempt, unavailing in spite of many approximations to success, to overcome the centrifugal tendency of an extraordinary number and variety of disparate elements, the family, the commune, the clan, the caste, the small regional state or people, the large linguistic unit, the religious community, the nation within the nation. We may perhaps say that here Nature tried an experiment of unparalleled complexity and potential richness, accumulating all possible difficulties in order to arrive at the most opulent result. But in the end the problem proved insoluble or, at least, was not solved and Nature had to resort to her usual *deus ex machina* denouement, the instrumentality of a foreign rule.

But even when the nation is sufficiently organised, — the

largest unit yet successfully developed by Nature, — entire unity is not always achieved. If no other elements of discord remain, yet the conflict of classes is always possible. And the phenomenon leads us to another rule of this gradual development of Nature in human life which we shall find of very considerable importance when we come to the question of a realisable human unity. The perfection of the individual in a perfected society or eventually in a perfected humanity — understanding perfection always in a relative and progressive sense — is the inevitable aim of Nature. But the progress of all the individuals in a society does not proceed *pari passu*, with an equal and equable march. Some advance, others remain stationary — absolutely or relatively, — others fall back. Consequently the emergence of a dominant class is inevitable within the aggregate itself, just as in the constant clash between the aggregates the emergence of dominant nations is inevitable. That class will predominate which develops most perfectly the type Nature needs at the time for her progress or, it may be, for her retrogression. If she demands power and strength of character, a dominant aristocracy emerges; if knowledge and science, a dominant literary or savant class; if practical ability, ingenuity, economy and efficient organisation, a dominant bourgeoisie or Vaishya class, usually with the lawyer at the head; if diffusion rather than concentration of general well-being and a close organisation of toil, then even the domination of an artisan class is not impossible.

But this phenomenon, whether of dominant classes or dominant nations, can never be more than a temporary necessity; for the final aim of Nature in human life cannot be the exploitation of the many by the few or even of the few by the many, can never be the perfection of some at the cost of the abject submergence and ignorant subjection of the bulk of humanity; these can only be transient devices. Therefore we see that such dominations bear always in them the seed of their own destruction. They must pass either by the ejection or destruction of the exploiting element or else by a fusion and equalisation. We see in Europe and America that the dominant Brahmin and the dominant Kshatriya have been either abolished or are on the point of subsidence into

equality with the general mass. Two rigidly separate classes alone remain, the dominant propertied class and the labourer, and all the most significant movements of the day have for their purpose the abolition of this last superiority. In this persistent tendency, Europe has obeyed one great law of Nature's progressive march, her trend towards a final equality. Absolute equality is surely neither intended nor possible, just as absolute uniformity is both impossible and utterly undesirable; but a fundamental equality which will render the play of true superiority and difference inoffensive, is essential to any conceivable perfectibility of the human race.

Therefore, the perfect counsel for a dominant minority is always to recognise in good time the right hour for its abdication and for the imparting of its ideals, qualities, culture, experience to the rest of the aggregate or to as much of it as is prepared for that progress. Where this is done, the social aggregate advances normally and without disruption or serious wound or malady; otherwise a disordered progress is imposed upon it, for Nature will not suffer human egoism to baffle for ever her fixed intention and necessity. Where the dominant classes successfully avoid her demand upon them, the worst of destinies is likely to overtake the social aggregate, — as in India where the final refusal of the Brahmin and other privileged classes to call up the bulk of the nation as far as possible to their level, their fixing of an unbridgeable gulf of superiority between themselves and the rest of society, has been a main cause of eventual decline and degeneracy. For where her aims are frustrated, Nature inevitably withdraws her force from the offending unit till she has brought in and used other and external means to reduce the obstacle to a nullity.

But even if the unity within is made as perfect as social, administrative and cultural machinery can make it, the question of the individual still remains. For these social units or aggregates are not like the human body in which the component cells are capable of no separate life apart from the aggregate. The human individual tends to exist in himself and to exceed the limits of the family, the clan, the class, the nation; and even,

that self-sufficiency on one side, that universality on the other are the essential elements of his perfection. Therefore, just as the systems of social aggregation which depend on the domination of a class or classes over others must change or dissolve, so the social aggregates which stand in the way of this perfection of the individual and seek to coerce him within their limited mould and into the rigidity of a narrow culture or petty class or national interest, must find their term and their day of change or destruction under the irresistible impulsion of progressing Nature.

Chapter III

The Group and the Individual

IT IS a constant method of Nature, when she has two elements of a harmony to reconcile, to proceed at first by a long continued balancing in which she sometimes seems to lean entirely on one side, sometimes entirely to the other, at others to correct both excesses by a more or less successful temporary adjustment and moderating compromise. The two elements appear then as opponents necessary to each other who therefore labour to arrive at some conclusion of their strife. But as each has its egoism and that innate tendency of all things which drives them not only towards self-preservation but towards self-assertion in proportion to their available force, they seek each to arrive at a conclusion in which itself shall have the maximum part and dominate utterly if possible or even swallow up entirely the egoism of the other in its own egoism. Thus the progress towards harmony accomplishes itself by a strife of forces and seems often to be no effort towards concord or mutual adjustment at all, but rather towards a mutual devouring. In effect, the swallowing up, not of one by the other, but of each by the other, so that both shall live entirely in the other and as the other, is our highest ideal of oneness. It is the last ideal of love at which strife tries ignorantly to arrive; for by strife one can only arrive at an adjustment of the two opposite demands, not at a stable harmony, a compromise between two conflicting egoisms and not the fusing of them into each other. Still, strife does lead to an increasing mutual comprehension which eventually makes the attempt at real oneness possible.

In the relations between the individual and the group, this constant tendency of Nature appears as the strife between two equally deep-rooted human tendencies, individualism and collectivism. On one side is the engrossing authority, perfection and development of the State, on the other the distinctive freedom,

perfection and development of the individual man. The State idea, the small or the vast living machine, and the human idea, the more and more distinct and luminous Person, the increasing God, stand in perpetual opposition. The size of the State makes no difference to the essence of the struggle and need make none to its characteristic circumstances. It was the family, the tribe or the city, the *polis*; it became the clan, the caste and the class, the *kula*, the *gens*. It is now the nation. Tomorrow or the day after it may be all mankind. But even then the question will remain poised between man and humanity, between the self-liberating Person and the engrossing collectivity.

If we consult only the available facts of history and sociology, we must suppose that our race began with the all-engrossing group to which the individual was entirely subservient and that increasing individuality is a circumstance of human growth, a fruit of increasing conscious Mind. Originally, we may suppose, man was altogether gregarious, association his first necessity for survival; since survival is the first necessity of all being, the individual could be nothing but an instrument for the strength and safety of the group, and if we add to strength and safety growth, efficiency, self-assertion as well as self-preservation, this is still the dominant idea of all collectivism. This turn is a necessity born of circumstance and environment. Looking more into fundamental things we perceive that in Matter uniformity is the sign of the group; free variation and individual development progress with the growth of Life and Mind. If then we suppose man to be an evolution of mental being in Matter and out of Matter, we must assume that he begins with uniformity and subservience of the individual and proceeds towards variety and freedom of the individual. The necessity of circumstance and environment and the inevitable law of his fundamental principles of being would then point to the same conclusion, the same process of his historic and prehistoric evolution.

But there is also the ancient tradition of humanity, which it is never safe to ignore or treat as mere fiction, that the social state was preceded by another, free and unsocial. According to modern scientific ideas, if such a state ever existed, and that

is far from certain, it must have been not merely unsocial but anti-social; it must have been the condition of man as an isolated animal, living as the beast of prey, before he became in the process of his development an animal of the pack. But the tradition is rather that of a golden age in which he was freely social without society. Not bound by laws or institutions but living by natural instinct or free knowledge, he held the right law of his living in himself and needed neither to prey on his fellows nor to be restrained by the iron yoke of the collectivity. We may say, if we will, that here poetic or idealistic imagination played upon a deep-seated race-memory; early civilised man read his growing ideal of a free, unorganised, happy association into his race-memory of an unorganised, savage and anti-social existence. But it is also possible that our progress has not been a development in a straight line, but in cycles, and that in those cycles there have been periods of at least partial realisation in which men did become able to live according to the high dream of philosophic Anarchism, associated by the inner law of love and light and right being, right thinking, right action and not coerced to unity by kings and parliaments, laws and policings and punishments with all that tyrant unease, petty or great oppression and repression and ugly train of selfishness and corruption which attend the forced government of man by man. It is even possible that our original state was an instinctive animal spontaneity of free and fluid association and that our final ideal state will be an enlightened, intuitive spontaneity of free and fluid association. Our destiny may be the conversion of an original animal association into a community of the gods. Our progress may be a devious round leading from the easy and spontaneous uniformity and harmony which reflects Nature to the self-possessed unity which reflects the Divine.

However that may be, history and sociology tell us only — outside the attempts of religious or other idealisms to arrive either at a free solitude or a free association — of man as an individual in the more or less organised group. And in the group there are always two types. One asserts the State idea at the expense of the individual, — ancient Sparta, modern Germany;

another asserts the supremacy of the State, but seeks at the same time to give as much freedom, power and dignity as is consistent with its control to the individuals who constitute it, — ancient Athens, modern France. But to these two has been added a third type in which the State abdicates as much as possible to the individual, boldly asserts that it exists for his growth and to assure his freedom, dignity, successful manhood, experiments with a courageous faith whether after all it is not the utmost possible liberty, dignity and manhood of the individual which will best assure the well-being, strength and expansion of the State. Of this type England has been until recently the great exemplar, — England rendered free, prosperous, energetic, invincible by nothing else but the strength of this idea within her, blessed by the Gods with unexampled expansion, empire and good fortune because she has not feared at any time to obey this great tendency and take the risks of this great endeavour and even often to employ it beyond the limits of her own insular egoism. Unfortunately, that egoism, the defects of the race and the exaggerated assertion of a limited idea, which is the mark of our human ignorance, have prevented her from giving it the noblest and richest possible expression or to realise by it other results which the more strictly organised States have attained or are attaining. And in consequence we find the collective or State idea breaking down the old English tradition and it is possible that before long the great experiment will have come to an end in a lamentable admission of failure by the adoption of that Germanic "discipline" and "efficient" organisation towards which all civilised humanity seems now to be tending. One may well ask oneself whether it was really necessary, whether, by a more courageous faith enlightened by a more flexible and vigilant intelligence, all the desirable results might not have been attained by a new and freer method that would yet keep intact the *dharma* of the race.

We must, again, note one other fact in connection with the claim of the State to suppress the individual in its own interest, that it is quite immaterial to the principle what form the State may assume. The tyranny of the absolute king over all and

the tyranny of the majority over the individual — which really converts itself by the paradox of human nature into a hypnotised oppression and repression of the majority by itself — are forms of one and the same tendency. Each, when it declares itself to be the State with its absolute *"L'état, c'est moi"*, is speaking a profound truth even while it bases that truth upon a falsehood. The truth is that each really is the self-expression of the State in its characteristic attempt to subordinate to itself the free will, the free action, the power, dignity and self-assertion of the individuals constituting it. The falsehood lies in the underlying idea that the State is something greater than the individuals constituting it and can with impunity to itself and to the highest hope of humanity arrogate this oppressive supremacy.

In modern times the State idea has after a long interval fully reasserted itself and is dominating the thought and action of the world. It supports itself on two motives; one appeals to the external interest of the race, the other to its highest moral tendencies. It demands that individual egoism shall immolate itself to a collective interest; it claims that man shall live not for himself but for the whole, the group, the community. It asserts that the hope of the good and progress of humanity lies in the efficiency and organisation of the State. Its way to perfection lies through the ordering by the State of all the economic and vital arrangements of the individual and the group, the "mobilisation", to use a specious expression the war has set in vogue, of the intellect, capacity, thought, emotion, life of the individual, of all that he is and has, by the State in the interest of all. Pushed to its ultimate conclusion, this means the socialistic ideal in full force and towards that conclusion humanity seems to be heading with a remarkable rapidity. The State idea is rushing towards possession with a great motor force and is prepared to crush under its wheels everything that conflicts with its force or asserts the right of other human tendencies. And yet the two ideas on which it bases itself are full of that fatal mixture of truth and falsehood which pursues all our human claims and assertions. It is necessary to apply to them the solvent of a searching and unbiassed thought which refuses to be cheated by words, if we

are not to describe helplessly another circle of illusion before we return to the deep and complex truth of Nature which should rather be our light and guide.

Chapter IV

The Inadequacy of the State Idea

WHAT, after all, is this State idea, this idea of the organised community to which the individual has to be immolated? Theoretically, it is the subordination of the individual to the good of all that is demanded; practically, it is his subordination to a collective egoism, political, military, economic, which seeks to satisfy certain collective aims and ambitions shaped and imposed on the great mass of the individuals by a smaller or larger number of ruling persons who are supposed in some way to represent the community. It is immaterial whether these belong to a governing class or emerge as in modern States from the mass partly by force of character, but much more by force of circumstances; nor does it make any essential difference that their aims and ideals are imposed nowadays more by the hypnotism of verbal persuasion than by overt and actual force. In either case, there is no guarantee that this ruling class or ruling body represents the best mind of the nation or its noblest aims or its highest instincts.

Nothing of the kind can be asserted of the modern politician in any part of the world; he does not represent the soul of a people or its aspirations. What he does usually represent is all the average pettiness, selfishness, egoism, self-deception that is about him and these he represents well enough as well as a great deal of mental incompetence and moral conventionality, timidity and pretence. Great issues often come to him for decision, but he does not deal with them greatly; high words and noble ideas are on his lips, but they become rapidly the claptrap of a party. The disease and falsehood of modern political life is patent in every country of the world and only the hypnotised acquiescence of all, even of the intellectual classes, in the great organised sham, cloaks and prolongs the malady, the acquiescence that men yield to everything that is habitual and makes the present atmosphere

of their lives. Yet it is by such minds that the good of all has to be decided, to such hands that it has to be entrusted, to such an agency calling itself the State that the individual is being more and more called upon to give up the government of his activities. As a matter of fact, it is in no way the largest good of all that is thus secured, but a great deal of organised blundering and evil with a certain amount of good which makes for real progress, because Nature moves forward always in the midst of all stumblings and secures her aims in the end more often in spite of man's imperfect mentality than by its means.

But even if the governing instrument were better constituted and of a higher mental and moral character, even if some way could be found to do what ancient civilisations by their enforcement of certain high ideals and disciplines tried to do with their ruling classes, still the State would not be what the State idea pretends that it is. Theoretically, it is the collective wisdom and force of the community made available and organised for the general good. Practically, what controls the engine and drives the train is so much of the intellect and power available in the community as the particular machinery of State organisation will allow to come to the surface; but it is also caught in the machinery and hampered by it and hampered as well by the large amount of folly and selfish weakness that comes up in the emergence. Doubtless, this is the best that can be done under the circumstances, and Nature, as always, utilises it for the best. But things would be much worse if there were not a field left for a less trammelled individual effort doing what the State cannot do, deploying and using the sincerity, energy, idealism of the best individuals to attempt that which the State has not the wisdom or courage to attempt, getting that done which a collective conservatism and imbecility would either leave undone or actively suppress and oppose. It is this energy of the individual which is the really effective agent of collective progress. The State sometimes comes in to aid it and then, if its aid does not mean undue control, it serves a positively useful end. As often it stands in the way and then serves either as a brake upon progress or supplies the necessary amount of organised opposition and friction

always needed to give greater energy and a more complete shape to the new thing which is in process of formation. But what we are now tending towards is such an increase of organised State power and such a huge, irresistible and complex State activity as will either eliminate free individual effort altogether or leave it dwarfed and cowed into helplessness. The necessary corrective to the defects, limitations and inefficiency of the State machine will disappear.

The organised State is neither the best mind of the nation nor is it even the sum of the communal energies. It leaves out of its organised action and suppresses or unduly depresses the working force and thinking mind of important minorities, often of those which represent that which is best in the present and that which is developing for the future. It is a collective egoism much inferior to the best of which the community is capable. What that egoism is in its relation to other collective egoisms we know, and its ugliness has recently been forced upon the vision and the conscience of mankind. The individual has usually something at least like a soul, and at any rate he makes up for the deficiencies of the soul by a system of morality and an ethical sense, and for the deficiencies of these again by the fear of social opinion or, failing that, a fear of the communal law which he has ordinarily either to obey or at least to circumvent; and even the difficulty of circumventing is a check on all except the most violent or the most skilful. But the State is an entity which, with the greatest amount of power, is the least hampered by internal scruples or external checks. It has no soul or only a rudimentary one. It is a military, political and economic force; but it is only in a slight and undeveloped degree, if at all, an intellectual and ethical being. And unfortunately the chief use it makes of its undeveloped intellect is to blunt by fictions, catchwords and recently by State philosophies, its ill-developed ethical conscience. Man within the community is now at least a half-civilised creature, but his international existence is still primitive. Until recently the organised nation in its relations with other nations was only a huge beast of prey with appetites which sometimes slept when gorged or discouraged by events,

but were always its chief reason for existence. Self-protection and self-expansion by the devouring of others were its *dharma*. At the present day there is no essential improvement; there is only a greater difficulty in devouring. A "sacred egoism" is still the ideal of nations, and therefore there is neither any true and enlightened consciousness of human opinion to restrain the predatory State nor any effective international law. There is only the fear of defeat and the fear, recently, of a disastrous economic disorganisation; but experience after experience has shown that these checks are ineffective.

In its inner life this huge State egoism was once little better than in its outer relations.[1] Brutal, rapacious, cunning, oppressive, intolerant of free action, free speech and opinion, even of freedom of conscience in religion, it preyed upon individuals and classes within as upon weaker nations outside. Only the necessity of keeping alive and rich and strong in a rough sort of way the community on which it lived made its action partially and crudely beneficent. In modern times there has been much improvement in spite of deterioration in certain directions. The State now feels the necessity of justifying its existence by organising the general economic and animal well-being of the community and even of all individuals. It is beginning to see the necessity of assuring the intellectual and, indirectly, the moral development of the whole community. This attempt of the State to grow into an intellectual and moral being is one of the most interesting phenomena of modern civilisation. Even the necessity of intellectualising and moralising it in its external relations has been enforced upon the conscience of mankind by the European catastrophe. But the claim of the State to absorb all free individual activities, a claim which it increasingly makes as it grows more clearly conscious of its new ideals and its possibilities, is, to say the least of it, premature and, if satisfied, will surely end in a check to human progress, a comfortably

[1] I am speaking of the intermediate age between ancient and modern times. In ancient times the State had, in some countries at least, ideals and a conscience with regard to the community, but very little in its dealings with other States.

organised stagnancy such as overtook the Graeco-Roman world after the establishment of the Roman Empire.

The call of the State to the individual to immolate himself on its altar and to give up his free activities into an organised collective activity is therefore something quite different from the demand of our highest ideals. It amounts to the giving up of the present form of individual egoism into another, a collective form, larger but not superior, rather in many ways inferior to the best individual egoism. The altruistic ideal, the discipline of self-sacrifice, the need of a growing solidarity with our fellows and a growing collective soul in humanity are not in dispute. But the loss of self in the State is not the thing that these high ideals mean, nor is it the way to their fulfilment. Man must learn not to suppress and mutilate but to fulfil himself in the fulfilment of mankind, even as he must learn not to mutilate or destroy but to complete his ego by expanding it out of its limitations and losing it in something greater which it now tries to represent. But the deglutition of the free individual by a huge State machine is quite another consummation. The State is a convenience, and a rather clumsy convenience, for our common development; it ought never to be made an end in itself.

The second claim of the State idea that this supremacy and universal activity of the organised State machine is the best means of human progress, is also an exaggeration and a fiction. Man lives by the community; he needs it to develop himself individually as well as collectively. But is it true that a State-governed action is the most capable of developing the individual perfectly as well as of serving the common ends of the community? It is not true. What is true is that it is capable of providing the cooperative action of the individuals in the community with all necessary conveniences and of removing from it disabilities and obstacles which would otherwise interfere with its working. Here the real utility of the State ceases. The non-recognition of the possibilities of human cooperation was the weakness of English individualism; the turning of a utility for cooperative action into an excuse for rigid control by the State is the weakness of the Teutonic idea of collectivism. When the State attempts to

take up the control of the cooperative action of the community, it condemns itself to create a monstrous machinery which will end by crushing out the freedom, initiative and various growth of the human being.

The State is bound to act crudely and in the mass; it is incapable of that free, harmonious and intelligently or instinctively varied action which is proper to organic growth. For the State is not an organism; it is a machinery, and it works like a machine, without tact, taste, delicacy or intuition. It tries to manufacture, but what humanity is here to do is to grow and create. We see this flaw in State-governed education. It is right and necessary that education should be provided for all and in providing for it the State is eminently useful; but when it controls the education, it turns it into a routine, a mechanical system in which individual initiative, individual growth and true development as opposed to a routine instruction become impossible. The State tends always to uniformity, because uniformity is easy to it and natural variation is impossible to its essentially mechanical nature; but uniformity is death, not life. A national culture, a national religion, a national education may still be useful things provided they do not interfere with the growth of human solidarity on the one side and individual freedom of thought and conscience and development on the other; for they give form to the communal soul and help it to add its quota to the sum of human advancement; but a State education, a State religion, a State culture are unnatural violences. And the same rule holds good in different ways and to a different extent in other directions of our communal life and its activities.

The business of the State, so long as it continues to be a necessary element in human life and growth, is to provide all possible facilities for cooperative action, to remove obstacles, to prevent all really harmful waste and friction, — a certain amount of waste and friction is necessary and useful to all natural action, — and, removing avoidable injustice, to secure for every individual a just and equal chance of self-development and satisfaction to the extent of his powers and in the line of his nature. So far the aim in modern socialism is right and good. But

all unnecessary interference with the freedom of man's growth is or can be harmful. Even cooperative action is injurious if, instead of seeking the good of all compatibly with the necessities of individual growth, — and without individual growth there can be no real and permanent good of all, — it immolates the individual to a communal egoism and prevents so much free room and initiative as is necessary for the flowering of a more perfectly developed humanity. So long as humanity is not full-grown, so long as it needs to grow and is capable of a greater perfectibility, there can be no static good of all; nor can there be any progressive good of all independent of the growth of the individuals composing the all. All collectivist ideals which seek unduly to subordinate the individual, really envisage a static condition, whether it be a present status or one it soon hopes to establish, after which all attempt at serious change would be regarded as an offence of impatient individualism against the peace, just routine and security of the happily established communal order. Always it is the individual who progresses and compels the rest to progress; the instinct of the collectivity is to stand still in its established order. Progress, growth, realisation of wider being give his greatest sense of happiness to the individual; status, secure ease to the collectivity. And so it must be as long as the latter is more a physical and economic entity than a self-conscious collective soul.

It is therefore quite improbable that in the present conditions of the race a healthy unity of mankind can be brought about by State machinery, whether it be by a grouping of powerful and organised States enjoying carefully regulated and legalised relations with each other or by the substitution of a single World-State for the present half chaotic half ordered comity of nations, — be the form of that World-State a single empire like the Roman or a federated unity. Such an external or administrative unity may be intended in the near future of mankind in order to accustom the race to the idea of a common life, to its habit, to its possibility, but it cannot be really healthy, durable or beneficial over all the true line of human destiny unless something be developed more profound, internal and real. Otherwise the

experience of the ancient world will be repeated on a larger scale and in other circumstances. The experiment will break down and give place to a new reconstructive age of confusion and anarchy. Perhaps this experience also is necessary for mankind; yet it ought to be possible for us now to avoid it by subordinating mechanical means to our true development through a moralised and even a spiritualised humanity united in its inner soul and not only in its outward life and body.

Chapter V

Nation and Empire: Real and Political Unities

THE PROBLEM of the unification of mankind resolves itself into two distinct difficulties. There is the doubt whether the collective egoisms already created in the natural evolution of humanity can at this time be sufficiently modified or abolished and whether even an external unity in some effective form can be securely established. And there is the doubt whether, even if any such external unity can be established, it will not be at the price of crushing both the free life of the individual and the free play of the various collective units already created in which there is a real and active life and substituting a State organisation which will mechanise human existence. Apart from these two uncertainties there is a third doubt whether a really living unity can be achieved by a mere economic, political and administrative unification and whether it ought not to be preceded by at least the strong beginnings of a moral and spiritual oneness. It is the first question that must be taken first in the logical order.

At the present stage of human progress the nation is the living collective unit of humanity. Empires exist, but they are as yet only political and not real units; they have no life from within and owe their continuance to a force imposed on their constituent elements or else to a political convenience felt or acquiesced in by the constituents and favoured by the world outside. Austria was long the standing example of such an empire; it was a political convenience favoured by the world outside, acquiesced in until recently by its constituent elements and maintained by the force of the central Germanic element incarnated in the Hapsburg dynasty, — of late with the active aid of its Magyar partner. If the political convenience of an empire of

this kind ceases, if the constituent elements no longer acquiesce and are drawn more powerfully by a centrifugal force, if at the same time the world outside no longer favours the combination, then force alone remains as the one agent of an artificial unity. There arose indeed a new political convenience which the existence of Austria served even after it suffered from this tendency of dissolution, but that was the convenience of the Germanic idea which made it an inconvenience to the rest of Europe and deprived it of the acquiescence of important constituent elements which were drawn towards other combinations outside the Austrian formula. From that moment the existence of the Austrian Empire was in jeopardy and depended, not on any inner necessity, but first on the power of the Austro-Magyar partnership to crush down the Slav nations within it and, secondly, on the continued power and dominance of Germany and the Germanic idea in Europe, that is to say, on force alone. And although in Austria the weakness of the imperial form of unity was singularly conspicuous and its conditions exaggerated, still those conditions are the same for all empires which are not at the same time national units. It was not so long ago that most political thinkers perceived at least the strong possibility of an automatic dissolution of the British Empire by the self-detachment of the colonies, in spite of the close links of race, language and origin that should have bound them to the mother country. This was because the political convenience of imperial unity, though enjoyed by the colonies, was not sufficiently appreciated by them and, on the other hand, there was no living principle of national oneness. The Australians and Canadians were beginning to regard themselves as new separate nations rather than as limbs of an extended British nationality. Things are now changed in both respects, a wider formula has been discovered, and the British Empire is for the moment proportionately stronger.

Nevertheless, it may be asked, why should this distinction be made of the political and the real unit when name, kind and form are the same? It must be made because it is of the greatest utility to a true and profound political science and involves the most important consequences. When an empire like

Austria, a non-national empire, is broken to pieces, it perishes for good; there is no innate tendency to recover the outward unity, because there is no real inner oneness; there is only a politically manufactured aggregate. On the other hand, a real national unity broken up by circumstances will always preserve a tendency to recover and reassert its oneness. The Greek Empire has gone the way of all empires, but the Greek nation, after many centuries of political non-existence, again possesses its separate body, because it has preserved its separate ego and therefore really existed under the covering rule of the Turk. So has it been with all the races under the Turkish yoke, because that powerful suzerainty, stern as it was in many respects, never attempted to obliterate their national characteristics or substitute an Ottoman nationality. These nations have revived and have reconstituted or are attempting to reconstitute themselves in the measure in which they have preserved their real national sense. The Serbian national idea attempted to recover and has recovered all territory in which the Serb exists or predominates. Greece attempted to reconstitute herself in her mainland, islands and Asiatic colonies, but could not reconstitute the old Greece because many parts had become Bulgarian, Albanian and Turk and no longer Hellenic. Italy became an external unity again after so many centuries because, though no longer a State, she never ceased to be a single people.

This truth of a real unity is so strong that even nations which never in the past realised an outward unification, to which Fate and circumstance and their own selves have been adverse, nations which have been full of centrifugal forces and easily overpowered by foreign intrusions, have yet always developed a centripetal force as well and arrived inevitably at organised oneness. Ancient Greece clung to her separatist tendencies, her self-sufficient city or regional states, her little mutually repellent autonomies; but the centripetal force was always there manifested in leagues, associations of States, suzerainties like the Spartan and Athenian. It realised itself in the end, first, imperfectly and temporarily by the Macedonian overrule, then, by a strange enough development, through the evolution of the

Eastern Roman world into a Greek and Byzantine Empire, and it has again revived in modern Greece. And we have seen in our own day Germany, constantly disunited since ancient times, develop at last to portentous issues its innate sense of oneness formidably embodied in the Empire of the Hohenzollerns and persistent after its fall in a federal Republic. Nor would it at all be surprising to those who study the working of forces and not merely the trend of outward circumstances, if one yet far-off result of the war were to be the fusion of the one Germanic element still left outside, the Austro-German, into the Germanic whole, although possibly in some other embodiment than Prussian hegemony or Hohenzollern Empire.[1] In both these historic instances, as in so many others, the unification of Saxon England, mediaeval France, the formation of the United States of America, it was a real unity, a psychologically distinct unit which tended at first ignorantly by the subconscious necessity of its being and afterwards with a sudden or gradual awakening to the sense of political oneness, towards an inevitable external unification. It is a distinct group-soul which is driven by inward necessity and uses outward circumstances to constitute for itself an organised body.

But the most striking example in history is the evolution of India. Nowhere else have the centrifugal forces been so strong, numerous, complex, obstinate. The mere time taken by the evolution has been prodigious; the disastrous vicissitudes through which it has had to work itself out have been appalling. And yet through it all the inevitable tendency has worked constantly, pertinaciously, with the dull, obscure, indomitable, relentless obstinacy of Nature when she is opposed in her instinctive purposes by man, and finally, after a struggle enduring through millenniums, has triumphed. And, as usually happens when she is thus opposed by her own mental and human material, it is the most adverse circumstances that the subconscious worker has

[1] This possibility realised itself for a time, but by means and under circumstances which made the revival of Austrian national sentiment and a separate national existence inevitable.

turned into her most successful instruments. The beginnings of the centripetal tendency in India go back to the earliest times of which we have record and are typified in the ideal of the Samrat or Chakravarti Raja and the military and political use of the Aswamedha and Rajasuya sacrifices. The two great national epics might almost have been written to illustrate this theme; for the one recounts the establishment of a unifying *dharmarājya* or imperial reign of justice, the other starts with an idealised description of such a rule pictured as once existing in the ancient and sacred past of the country. The political history of India is the story of a succession of empires, indigenous and foreign, each of them destroyed by centrifugal forces, but each bringing the centripetal tendency nearer to its triumphant emergence. And it is a significant circumstance that the more foreign the rule, the greater has been its force for the unification of the subject people. This is always a sure sign that the essential nation-unit is already there and that there is an indissoluble national vitality necessitating the inevitable emergence of the organised nation. In this instance, we see that the conversion of the psychological unity on which nationhood is based into the external organised unity by which it is perfectly realised, has taken a period of more than two thousand years and is not yet complete.[2] And yet, since the essentiality of the thing was there, not even the most formidable difficulties and delays, not even the most persistent incapacity for union in the people, not even the most disintegrating shocks from outside have prevailed against the obstinate subconscious necessity. And this is only the extreme illustration of a general law.

It will be useful to dwell a little upon this aid lent by foreign rule to the process of nation-making and see how it works. History abounds with illustrations. But in some cases the phenomenon of foreign domination is momentary and imperfect, in others long-enduring and complete, in others often repeated in various forms. In some instances the foreign element is rejected,

[2] But it must be remembered that France, Germany, modern Italy took each a thousand or two thousand years and more to form and set into a firm oneness.

its use once over, in others it is absorbed, in others accepted with more or less assimilation for a longer or briefer period as a ruling caste. The principle is the same, but it is worked variously by Nature according to the needs of the particular case. There is none of the modern nations in Europe which has not had to pass through a phase more or less prolonged, more or less complete, of foreign domination in order to realise its nationality. In Russia and England it was the domination of a foreign conquering race which rapidly became a ruling caste and was in the end assimilated and absorbed, in Spain the succession of the Roman, Goth and Moor, in Italy the overlordship of the Austrian, in the Balkans[3] the long suzerainty of the Turk, in Germany the transient yoke of Napoleon. But in all cases the essential has been a shock or a pressure which would either waken a loose psychological unity to the necessity of organising itself from within or would crush out, dispirit or deprive of power, vitality and reality the more obstinate factors of disunion. In some cases even an entire change of name, culture and civilisation has been necessary, as well as a more or less profound modification of the race. Notably has this happened in the formation of French nationality. The ancient Gallic people, in spite of or perhaps because of its Druidic civilisation and early greatness, was more incapable of organising a firm political unity than even the ancient Greeks or the old Indian kingdoms and republics. It needed the Roman rule and Latin culture, the superimposition of a Teutonic ruling caste and finally the shock of the temporary and partial English conquest to found the unequalled unity of modern France. Yet though name, civilisation and all else seem to have changed, the French nation of today is still and has always remained the old Gallic nation with its Basque, Gaelic, Armorican and other ancient elements modified by the Frank and Latin admixture.

Thus the nation is a persistent psychological unit which

[3] Here there was no single people to be united but many separate peoples which had each to recover their separate independence or, in some cases, a coalition of kindred peoples.

Nature has been busy developing throughout the world in the most various forms and educating into physical and political unity. Political unity is not the essential factor; it may not yet be realised and yet the nation persists and moves inevitably towards its realisation; it may be destroyed and yet the nation persists and travails and suffers but refuses to be annihilated. In former times the nation was not always a real and vital unit; the tribe, the clan, the commune, the regional people were the living groups. Those unities which in the attempt at national evolution destroyed these older living groups without arriving at a vital nationhood disappeared once the artificial or political unit was broken. But now the nation stands as the one living group-unit of humanity into which all others must merge or to which they must become subservient. Even old persistent race unities and cultural unities are powerless against it. The Catalonian in Spain, the Breton and Provençal and Alsatian in France, the Welsh in England may cherish the signs of their separate existence; but the attraction of the greater living unity of the Spanish, the French, the British nation has been too powerful to be injured by these persistences. The nation in modern times is practically indestructible, unless it dies from within. Poland, torn asunder and crushed under the heel of three powerful empires, ceased to exist; the Polish nation survived and is once more reconstituted. Alsace after forty years of the German yoke remained faithful to her French nationhood in spite of her affinities of race and language with the conqueror. All modern attempts to destroy by force or break up a nation are foolish and futile, because they ignore this law of the natural evolution. Empires are still perishable political units; the nation is immortal. And so it will remain until a greater living unit can be found into which the nation idea can merge in obedience to a superior attraction.

And then the question arises whether the empire is not precisely that destined unit in course of evolution. The mere fact that at present not the empire, but the nation is the vital unity can be no bar to a future reversal of the relations. Obviously, in order that they may be reversed the empire must cease to be a mere political and become rather a psychological entity.

But there have been instances in the evolution of the nation in which the political unity preceded and became a basis for the psychological as in the union of Scotch, English and Welsh to form the British nation. There is no insurmountable reason why a similar evolution should not take place on a larger scale and an imperial unity be substituted for a national unity. Nature has long been in travail of the imperial grouping, long casting about to give it a greater force of permanence, and the emergence of the conscious imperial ideal all over the earth and its attempts, though still crude, violent and blundering, to substitute itself for the national, may not irrationally be taken as the precursory sign of one of those rapid leaps and transitions by which she so often accomplishes what she has long been gradually and tentatively preparing. This then is the possibility we have next to consider before we examine the established phenomenon of nationhood in relation to the ideal of human unity. Two different ideals and therefore two different possibilities were precipitated much nearer to realisation by the European conflict, — a federation of free nations and, on the other hand, the distribution of the earth into a few great empires or imperial hegemonies. A practical combination of the two ideas became the most tangible possibility of the not distant future. It is necessary to pause and consider whether, one element of this possible combination being already a living unit, the other also could not under certain circumstances be converted into a living unit and the combination, if realised, made the foundation of an enduring new order of things. Otherwise it could be no more than a transient device without any possibility of a stable permanence.

Chapter VI

Ancient and Modern Methods of Empire

A CLEAR distinction must be made between two political aggregates which go equally in current language by the name of empire. For there is the homogeneous national and there is the heterogeneous composite empire. In a sense, all empires are composites, at any rate if we go back to their origins; but in practice there is a difference between the imperial aggregate in which the component elements are not divided from each other by a strong sense of their separate existence in the whole and the imperial aggregate in which this psychological basis of separation is still in vigour. Japan before the absorption of Formosa and Korea was a national whole and an empire only in the honorific sense of the word; after that absorption it became a real and a composite empire. Germany again would have been a purely national empire if it had not burdened itself with three minor acquisitions, Alsace, Poland and Schleswig-Holstein which were not united to it by the sense of German nationality but only by military force. Let us suppose this Teutonic aggregate to have lost its foreign elements and at most have acquired instead the Teutonic provinces of Austria. Then we should have had an example of a homogeneous aggregate which would yet be an empire in the true and not merely in the honorific sense of the word; for that would be a composite of homogeneous Teutonic nations or, as we may conveniently call them, sub-nations, which would not naturally harbour any sentiment of separatism, but rather, drawn always to a natural unity, would form easily and inevitably a psychological and not merely a political unit.

But this form in its purity is now difficult to find. The United States are the example of such an aggregate, although from the

accident of their rule by a periodically elected President and not a hereditary monarch we do not associate the type with the idea of an empire at all. Still if the imperial aggregate is to be changed from a political to a psychological unit, it would seem that it must be done by reproducing *mutatis mutandis* something of the system of the United States, a system in which each element could preserve a sufficient local State independence and separate power of legislative and executive action and yet be part of an inseparable greater aggregate. This could be effected most easily where the elements are fairly homogeneous as it would be in a federation of Great Britain and her colonies.

A tendency to large homogeneous aggregations has shown itself recently in political thought, as in the dream of a Pan-Germanic empire, a great Russian and Pan-Slavic empire or the Pan-Islamic idea of a united Mahomedan world.[1] But these tendencies are usually associated with the control by this homogeneous aggregate over other elements heterogeneous to it under the old principle of military and political compulsion, the retention by Russia of Asiatic nations under her sway,[2] the seizure by Germany of wholly or partially non-Germanic countries and provinces, the control by the Caliphate of non-Moslem subjects.[3] Even if these anomalies were absent, the actual arrangement of the world would lend itself with difficulty to a remodelling of empire on a racial or cultural basis. Vast aggregates of this kind would find enclaves in their dominion inhabited by elements wholly heterogeneous to them or mixed. Quite apart therefore from the resistance and refusal of kindred nations to renounce their cherished nationality and fuse themselves in combinations of this kind, there would be this incompatibility of mixed or heterogeneous factors, recalcitrant to the idea and the culture

[1] All three have been broken by the effects of revolution and war, but, if the nation idea dwindled, the last might still at some future date revive: the second, if Communism destroyed the national idea, may still be a possibility.

[2] This has been modified by the substitution of a Soviet Union claiming to unite these Asiatic peoples voluntarily with Russia: but one is not quite sure whether this is a permanent reality or only a temporary apparent phenomenon.

[3] These two empires have now disappeared and there seems to be no possibility of their revival.

that sought to absorb them. Thus a Pan-Slavonic empire would necessitate the control of the Balkan Peninsula by Russia as the premier Slav State; but such a scheme would have to meet not only the independent Serbian nationality and the imperfect Slavism of the Bulgar but the quite incompatible Rumanian, Greek and Albanian elements. Thus it does not appear that this tendency towards vast homogeneous aggregates, although it has for some time played an important part in the world's history and is not exhausted or finally baffled, is ever likely to be the eventual solution; for even if it triumphed, it would have to meet in a greater or less degree the difficulties of the heterogeneous type. The true problem of empire therefore still remains, how to transform the artificial political unity of a heterogeneous empire, heterogeneous in racial composition, language and culture, into a real and psychological unity.

History gives us only one great and definite example of an attempt to solve this problem on this large scale and with antecedent conditions which could at all afford any guidance for the vast heterogeneous modern empires, those of Russia, England,[4] France to which the problem is now offered. The old Chinese empire of the five nations, admirably organised, was not a case in point; for all its constituent parts were Mongolian in race and presented no formidable cultural difficulties. But the imperial Roman had to face essentially the same problems as the moderns minus one or two very important complications and he solved them up to a certain point with a masterly success. His empire endured through several centuries and, though often threatened with disruption, yet by its inner principle of unity and by its overpowering centripetal attraction triumphed over all disruptive tendencies. Its one failure was the bisection into the Eastern and Western Empires which hastened its final ending. Still when that end came it was not by a disruption from within but simply by the decaying of its centre of life. And it was not till

[4] This empire has so altered its form into that of a free Commonwealth that the objection is no longer relevant; there is no longer an old-world empire but a free Commonwealth and a number of subject peoples moving rapidly towards self-government.

this central life faded that the pressure of the barbarian world without, to which its ruin is wrongly attributed, could prevail over its magnificent solidarity.

The Roman effected his sway by military conquest and military colonisation; but once that conquest was assured, he was not content with holding it together as an artificial political unity, nor did he trust solely to that political convenience of a good, efficient and well-organised government economically and administratively beneficent which made it at first acceptable to the conquered peoples. He had too sure a political instinct to be so easily satisfied; for it is certain that if he had stopped short there, the empire would have broken up at a much earlier date. The peoples under his sway would have preserved their sense of separate nationality and, once accustomed to Roman efficiency and administrative organisation, would inevitably have tended to the separate enjoyment of these advantages as independent organised nations. It was this sense of separate nationality which the Roman rule succeeded in blotting out wherever it established its own dominant influence. And this was done not by the stupid expedient of a brutal force after the Teutonic fashion, but by a peaceful pressure. Rome first compounded with the one rival culture that was superior in certain respects to her own and accepted it as part of her own cultural existence and even as its most valuable part; she created a Graeco-Roman civilisation, left the Greek tongue to spread and secure it in the East, but introduced it everywhere else by the medium of the Latin language and a Latin education and succeeded in peacefully overcoming the decadent or inchoate cultures of Gaul and her other conquered provinces. But since even this process might not have been sufficient to abolish all separatist tendency, she not only admitted her Latinised subjects to the highest military and civil offices and even to the imperial purple, so that within less than a century after Augustus, first an Italian Gaul and then an Iberian Spaniard held the name and power of the Caesars, but she proceeded rapidly enough to deprive of all vitality and then even nominally to abolish all the grades of civic privilege with which she had started and extended the full Roman citizen-

ship to all her subjects, Asiatic, European and African, without distinction.

The result was that the whole empire became psychologically and not only politically a single Graeco-Roman unity. Not only superior force or the recognition of Roman peace and good government, but all the desires, associations, pride, cultural affinities of the provinces made them firmly attached to the maintenance of the empire. Every attempt of provincial ruler or military chief to start provincial empires for their own benefit failed because it found no basis, no supporting tendency, no national sentiment and no sense of either material or any other advantage to be gained by the change in the population on whom the successful continuity of the attempt had to depend. So far the Roman succeeded; where he failed, it was due to the essential vice of his method. By crushing out, however peacefully, the living cultures or the incipient individuality of the peoples he ruled, he deprived these peoples of their sources of vitality, the roots of their force. No doubt he removed all positive causes of disruption and secured a passive force of opposition to all disruptive change; but his empire lived only at the centre and when that centre tended to become exhausted, there was no positive and abounding life throughout the body from which it could be replenished. In the end Rome could not even depend on a supply of vigorous individuals from the peoples whose life she had pressed out under the weight of a borrowed civilisation; she had to draw on the frontier barbarians. And when she fell to pieces, it was these barbarians and not the old peoples resurgent who became her heirs. For their barbarism was at least a living force and a principle of life, but the Graeco-Roman civilisation had become a principle of death. All the living forces were destroyed by whose contact it could have modified and renewed its own force. In the end it had itself to be destroyed in its form and its principle resown in the virgin field of the vital and vigorous culture of mediaeval Europe. What the Roman had not the wisdom to do by his organised empire, — for even the profoundest and surest political instinct is not wisdom, — had to be done by Nature herself in the loose but living unity of mediaeval Christendom.

The example of Rome has haunted the political imagination of Europe ever since. Not only has it been behind the Holy Roman Empire of Charlemagne and Napoleon's gigantic attempt and the German dream of a world-empire governed by Teutonic efficiency and Teutonic culture, but all the imperial nations, including France and England, have followed to a certain extent in its footsteps. But, significantly enough, every attempt at renewing the Roman success has failed. The modern nations have not been able to follow Rome completely in the lines she had traced out or if they tried to follow, have clashed against different conditions and either collapsed or been obliged to call a halt. It is as if Nature had said, "That experiment has been carried once to its logical consequences and once is enough. I have made new conditions; find you new means or at least mend and add to the old where they were deficient or went astray."

The European nations have extended their empires by the old Roman method of military conquest and colonisation, abandoning for the most part the pre-Roman principle of simple overlordship or hegemony which was practised by the Assyrian and Egyptian kings, the Indian States and the Greek cities. But this principle also has been sometimes used in the shape of the protectorate to prepare the more normal means of occupation. The colonies have not been of the pure Roman, but of a mixed Carthaginian and Roman type. Official and military, enjoying like the Roman colonies superior civic rights to the indigenous population, they have been at the same time and far more commercial colonies of exploitation. The nearest to the Roman type has been the English settlement in Ulster, while the German system in Poland developed under modern conditions the old Roman principle of expropriation. But these are exceptions, not the rule.

The conquered territory once occupied and secure, the modern nations have found themselves brought up short by a difficulty which they have not been able to surmount as the Romans surmounted it, — the difficulty of uprooting the indigenous culture and with it the indigenous sense of separateness. All these empires have at first carried with them the idea of imposing

their culture along with the flag, first simply as an instinct of the conqueror and as a necessary adjunct to the fact of political domination and a security for its permanence, but latterly with the conscious intention of extending, as it is somewhat pharisaically put, the benefits of civilisation to the "inferior" races. It cannot be said that the attempt has anywhere been very prosperous. It was tried with considerable thoroughness and ruthlessness in Ireland, but although the Irish speech was stamped out except in the wilds of Connaught and all distinctive signs of the old Irish culture disappeared, the outraged nationality simply clung to whatever other means of distinctiveness it could find, however exiguous, its Catholic religion, its Celtic race and nationhood, and even when it became Anglicised, refused to become English. The removal or slackening of the foreign pressure has resulted in a violent recoil, an attempt to revive the Gaelic speech, to reconstitute the old Celtic spirit and culture. The German failed to Prussianise Poland or even his own kin who speak his own language, the Alsatians. The Finn remained unconquerably Finnish in Russia. The mild Austrian methods left the Austrian Pole as Polish as his oppressed brother in German Posen. Accordingly there began to rise everywhere a growing sense of the inutility of the endeavour and the necessity of leaving the soul of the subject nation free, confining the action of the sovereign State to the enforcement of new administrative and economic conditions with as much social and cultural change as may be freely accepted or may come about by education and the force of circumstances.

The German, indeed, new and inexperienced in imperial methods, clung to the old Roman idea of assimilation which he sought to execute both by Roman and by un-Roman means. He showed even a tendency to go back beyond the Caesars of old to the methods of the Jew in Canaan and the Saxon in eastern Britain, methods of expulsion and massacre. But since he was after all modernised and had some sense of economic necessity and advantage, he could not carry out this policy with any thoroughness or in times of peace. Still he insisted on the old Roman method, sought to substitute German speech and culture for the indigenous and, as he could not do it by peaceful

pressure, he tried it by force. An attempt of this kind is bound to fail; instead of bringing about the psychological unity at which it aims, it succeeds only in accentuating the national spirit and plants a rooted and invincible hatred which is dangerous to the empire and may even destroy it if the opposed elements are not too small in number and weak in force. And if this effacing of heterogeneous cultures is impossible in Europe where the differences are only variations of a common type and there are only small and weak elements to overcome, it is obviously out of the question for those empires which have to deal with great Asiatic and African masses rooted for many centuries in an old and well-formed national culture. If a psychological unity has to be created, it must be by other means.

The impact of different cultures upon each other has not ceased but has rather been accentuated by the conditions of the modern world. But the nature of the impact, the ends towards which it moves and the means by which the ends can most successfully be worked out, are profoundly altered. The earth is in travail now of one common, large and flexible civilisation for the whole human race into which each modern and ancient culture shall bring its contribution and each clearly defined human aggregate shall introduce its necessary element of variation. In the working out of this aim, there must necessarily be some struggle for survival. The fittest to survive will be here all that can best serve the tendencies Nature is working out in humanity, — not only the tendencies of the hour, but the reviving tendencies of the past and the yet inchoate tendencies of the future. And it will be too all that can best help as liberating and combining forces, best make for adaptation and adjustment and for deliverance of the hidden sense of the great Mother in her strivings. But success in this struggle is worst and not best served by military violence or political pressure. German culture for good or ill was making rapid conquests throughout the world before the rulers of Germany were ill-advised enough to rouse the latent force of opposing ideals by armed violence. And even now that which is essential in it, the State idea and the organisation of the life of the community by the State which is common both to

German imperialism and to German socialism, is far more likely to succeed by the defeat of the former in the war than it could have done by its victory in a brute struggle.

This change in the movement and orientation of the world's tendencies points to a law of interchange and adaptation and to the emergence of a new birth out of the meeting of many elements. Only those imperial aggregates are likely to succeed and eventually endure which recognise the new law and shape their organisation to accord with it. Immediate victories of an opposite kind may indeed be gained and violence done to the law; but such present successes are won, as history has repeatedly shown, at the cost of a nation's whole future. The recognition of the new truth had already commenced as a result of increased communication and the widening of knowledge. The value of variations had begun to be acknowledged and the old arrogant claims of this or that culture to impose itself and crush out all others were losing their force and self-confidence when the old outworn creed suddenly leaped up armed with the German sword to vindicate itself, if it might, before it perished. The only result has been to give added force and clear recognition to the truth it sought to deny. The importance even of the smallest States, Belgium, Serbia,[5] as cultural units in the European whole has been lifted almost to the dignity of a creed. The recognition of the value of Asiatic cultures, confined formerly to the thinker, scholar and artist, has now been brought into the popular mind by association on the battle-field. The theory of "inferior" races, an inferiority and superiority measured by approximation to one's own form of culture, has received what may well turn out to have been its death-blow. The seeds of a new order of things are being rapidly sown in the conscious mentality of the race.

This new turn of the impact of cultures shows itself most clearly where the European and the Asiatic meet. French culture in Northern Africa, English culture in India cease at once to be French or English and become simply the common European civilisation in face of the Asiatic; it is no longer an imperial

[5] Now Yugoslavia.

domination intent to secure itself by assimilation, but continent parleying with continent. The political motive sinks into insignificance; the world-motive takes its place. And in this confrontation it is no longer a self-confident European civilisation that offers its light and good to the semi-barbarous Asiatic and the latter that gratefully accepts a beneficent transformation. Even adaptable Japan, after the first enthusiasm of acceptance, has retained all that is fundamental in her culture, and everywhere else the European current has met the opposition of an inner voice and force which cries halt to its victorious impetus.[6] The East is on the whole, in spite of certain questionings and scruples, willing and, where not wholly willing, forced by circumstances and the general tendency of mankind to accept the really valuable parts of modern European culture, its science, its curiosity, its ideal of universal education and uplift, its abolition of privilege, its broadening, liberalising, democratic tendency, its instinct of freedom and equality, its call for the breaking down of narrow and oppressive forms, for air, space, light. But at a certain point the East refuses to proceed farther and that is precisely in the things which are deepest, most essential to the future of mankind, the things of the soul, the profound things of the mind and temperament. Here again all points not to substitution and conquest, but to mutual understanding and interchange, mutual adaptation and new formation.

The old idea is not entirely dead and will not die without a last struggle. There are still those who dream of a Christianised India, the English tongue permanently dominating if not replacing the indigenous languages, or the acceptance of European social forms and manners as the necessary precondition for an equal status between a European and Asiatic. But they are those who belong in spirit to a past generation and cannot value the signs of the hour which point to a new era. Christianity, for instance, has only succeeded where it could apply its one or two

[6] There has been a recrudescence of the Europeanising turn in Turkey and in China reinforced by the influence of Bolshevist Russia. Wherever there is a retardatory orthodoxy to overcome, this movement is likely to appear, but only as a passing phase.

features of distinct superiority, the readiness to stoop and uplift the fallen and oppressed where the Hindu bound in the forms of caste would not touch nor succour, its greater swiftness to give relief where it is needed, in a word, the active compassion and helpfulness which it inherited from its parent Buddhism. Where it could not apply this lever, it has failed totally and even this lever it may easily lose; for the soul of India reawakened by the new impact is beginning to recover its lost tendencies. The social forms of the past are changing where they are unsuited to the new political and economic conditions and ideals or incompatible with the increasing urge towards freedom and equality; but there is no sign that anything but a new Asiatic society broadened and liberalised will emerge from this travail. The signs everywhere are the same; the forces everywhere work in the same sense. Neither France nor England has the power — and they are fast or slowly losing the desire — to destroy and replace the Islamic culture in Africa or the Indian in India. All they can do is to give what they have of value to be assimilated according to the needs and the inner spirit of the older nations.

It was necessary to dwell on this question because it is vital to the future of Imperialism. The replacement of the local by the imperial culture and as far as possible by the speech of the conqueror was essential to the old imperial theory, but the moment that becomes out of question and the very desire of it has to be renounced as impracticable, the old Roman model of empire ceases to be of any avail for the solution of the problem. Something of the Roman lesson remains valid, — those features especially that are essential to the very essence of imperialism and the meaning of empire; but a new model is demanded. That new model has already begun to evolve in obedience to the requirements of the age; it is the model of the federal or else the confederate empire. The problem we have to consider narrows itself down to this, is it possible to create a securely federated empire of vast extent and composed of heterogeneous races and cultures? And granting that in this direction lies the future, how can such an empire so artificial in appearance be welded into a natural and psychological unit?

Chapter VII

The Creation of the Heterogeneous Nation

THE PROBLEM of a federal empire founded on the sole foundation that is firm and secure, the creation of a true psychological unity, — an empire that has to combine heterogeneous elements, — resolves itself into two different factors, the question of the form and the question of the reality which the form is intended to serve. The former is of great practical importance, but the latter alone is vital. A form of unity may render possible, may favour or even help actively to create the corresponding reality, but it can never replace it. And, as we have seen, the true reality is in this order of Nature the psychological, since the mere physical fact of political and administrative union may be nothing more than a temporary and artificial creation destined to collapse irretrievably as soon as its immediate usefulness is over or the circumstances that favoured its continuance are radically or even seriously altered. The first question, then, that we have to consider is what this reality may be which it is intended to create in the form of a federal empire; and especially we have to consider whether it is to be merely an enlargement of the nation-type, the largest successful human aggregate yet evolved by Nature, or a new type of aggregate which is to exceed and must tend to supersede the nation, as that has replaced the tribe, the clan and the city or regional state.

The first natural idea of the human mind in facing such a problem is to favour the idea which most flatters and seems to continue its familiar notions. For the human mind is, in the mass, averse to a radical change of conception. It accepts change most easily when its reality is veiled by the continuation of a habitual form of things or else by a ceremonial, legal, intellectual or sentimental fiction. It is such a fiction that some think to

create as a bridge from the nation-idea to the empire-idea of political unity. That which unites men most securely now is the physical unity of a common country to live in and defend, a common economic life dependent on that geographical oneness and the sentiment of the motherland which grows up around the physical and economic fact and either creates a political and administrative unity or keeps it to a secure permanence once it has been created. Let us then extend this powerful sentiment by a fiction; let us demand of the heterogeneous constituents of the empire that each shall regard not his own physical motherland but the empire as the mother or at least, if he clings to the old sentiment, learn to regard the empire first and foremost as the greater mother. A variation of this idea is the French notion of the mother country, France; all the other possessions of the empire, although in English phraseology they would rather be classed as dependencies in spite of the large share of political rights conceded to them, are to be regarded as colonies of the mother country, grouped together in idea as France beyond the seas and educated to centre their national sentiments around the greatness, glory and lovableness of France the common mother. It is a notion natural to the Celtic-Latin temperament, though alien to the Teutonic, and it is supported by a comparative weakness of race and colour prejudice and by that remarkable power of attraction and assimilation which the French share with all the Celtic nations.

The power, the often miraculous power of such fictions ought not for a moment to be ignored. They constitute Nature's most common and effective method when she has to deal with her own ingrained resistance to change in her mentalised animal, man. Still, there are conditions without which a fiction cannot succeed. It must in the first place be based on a plausible superficial resemblance. It must lead to a realisable fact strong enough either to replace the fiction itself or eventually to justify it. And this realisable fact must progressively realise itself and not remain too long in the stage of the formless nebula. There was a time when these conditions were less insistently necessary, a time when the mass of men were more imaginative,

unsophisticated, satisfied with a sentiment or an appearance; but as the race advances, it becomes more mentally alive, self-conscious, critical and quick to seize dissonances between fact and pretension. Moreover, the thinker is abroad; his words are listened to and understood to an extent unprecedented in the known history of mankind: and the thinker tends to become more and more an inquisitor, a critic, an enemy of fictions.

Is then this fiction based upon a realisable parallel, — in other words, is it true that the true imperial unity when realised will be only an enlarged national unity? or, if not, what is the realisable fact which this fiction is intended to prepare? There have been plenty of instances in history of the composite nation and, if this parallel is to be accepted as effective, it is such a composite nation on a large scale which it is the business of the federal empire to create. We must, therefore, cast a glance at the most typical instances of the successful composite nation and see how far the parallel applies and whether there are difficulties in the way which point rather to the necessity of a new evolution than to the variation of an old success. To have a just idea of the difficulties may help us to see how they can be overcome.

The instance most before our eyes both of the successfully evolved composite or heterogeneous nation and of the fortunately evolving heterogeneous empire is that of the British nation in the past and the British Empire in the present, — successfully, but, fortunately, with a qualification; for it is subject to the perils of a mass of problems yet unsolved.[1] The British nation has been composed of an English-speaking Anglo-Norman England, a Welsh-speaking Cymric Wales, a half-Saxon, half-Gaelic English-speaking Scotland and, very imperfectly, very partially, of a Gaelic Ireland with a mainly Anglo-Scotch colony that held it indeed by force to the united body but was never able to compel a true union. Ireland was, until recently, the element of failure in this formation and it is only now and under another form and other circumstances than its other members that

[1] It must be remembered that this was written some decades ago and circumstances and the Empire itself have wholly changed; the problem, as it was then, no longer poses itself.

some kind of unity with the whole, still precarious and with the empire, not with the British nation, is becoming possible, although even yet it has hardly begun to be real.[2] What were the determining circumstances of this general success and this partial failure and what light do they shed on the possibilities of the larger problem?

In building up her human aggregates, Nature has followed in general principle the same law that she observes in her physical aggregates. She has provided first a natural body, next, a common life and vital interest for the constituents of the body, last, a conscious mind or sense of unity and a centre or governing organ through which that common ego-sense can realise itself and act. There must be in her ordinary process either a common bond of descent or past association that will enable like to adhere to like and distinguish itself from unlike and a common habitation, a country so disposed that all who inhabit within its natural boundaries are under a sort of geographical necessity to unite. In earlier times when communities were less firmly rooted to the soil, the first of these conditions was the more important. In settled modern communities the second predominates; but the unity of the race, pure or mixed — for it need not have been one in its origin — remains a factor of importance, and strong disparity and difference may easily create serious difficulties in the way of the geographical necessity imposing itself with any permanence. In order that it may impose itself, there must be a considerable force of the second natural condition, that is to say, a necessity of economic unity or habit of common sustenance and a necessity of political unity or habit of common vital organisation for survival, functioning and aggrandisement. And in order that this second condition may fulfil itself in complete force, there must be nothing to depress or destroy the third in its creation or its continuance. Nothing must be done which will have the result of emphasising disunity in sentiment or perpetuating the feeling of separateness from the totality of the

[2] This was written when Home Rule seemed to be a possible solution; the failure has now become a settled fact and Ireland has become the independent Republic of Ireland.

rest of the organism; for that will tend to make the centre or governing organ psychologically unrepresentative of the whole and therefore not a true centre of its ego-sense. But we must remember that separatism is not the same thing as particularism which may well coexist with unity; it is the sentiment of the impossibility of true union that separates, not the mere fact of difference.

The geographical necessity of union was obviously present in the forming of the British nation; the conquest of Wales and Ireland and the union with Scotland were historical events which merely represented the working of this necessity; but the unity of race and past association were wholly absent and had with greater or less difficulty to be created. It was effected successfully with Wales and Scotland in a greater or less lapse of time, not at all with Ireland. Geographical necessity is only a relative force; it can be overridden by a powerful sentiment of disunion when nothing is done effectively to dissolve the disintegrating impulsion. Even when the union has been politically effected, it tends to be destroyed, especially when there is within the geographical unity a physical barrier or line of division sufficiently strong to be the base of conflicting economic interests, — as in that which divides Belgium and Holland, Sweden and Norway, Ireland and Great Britain. In the case of Ireland, the British rulers not only did nothing to bridge over or dissolve this line of economic division and counteract the sentiment of a separate body, a separate physical country, in the Irish mind, but by a violent miscalculation of cause and effect they emphasised both in the strongest possible manner.

In the first place, the economic life and prosperity of Ireland were deliberately crushed in the interests of British trade and commerce. After that it was of little use to bring about, by means which one shrinks from scrutinising, the political "union" of the two islands in a common legislature, a common governing organ; for that governing organ was not a centre of psychological unity. Where the most vital interests were not only different but in conflict, it could only represent the continued control and assertion of the interests of the "predominant partner" and the

continued subjection and denial of the interests of the foreign body bound by legislative fetters to the larger mass but not united through a real fusion. The famine which depopulated Ireland while England throve and prospered was Nature's terrible testimony to the sinister character of this "union" which was not unity but the sharpest opposition of the most essential interests. The Irish movements of Home Rule and separatism were the natural and inevitable expression of Ireland's will to survive; they amounted to nothing more than the instinct of self-preservation divining and insisting on the one obvious means of self-preservation.

In human life economic interests are those which are, ordinarily, violated with the least impunity; for they are bound up with the life itself and the persistent violation of them, if it does not destroy the oppressed organism, provokes necessarily the bitterest revolt and ends in one of Nature's inexorable retaliations. But in the third order of the natural conditions also British statesmanship in Ireland committed an equally radical mistake in its attempt to get rid by violence of all elements of Irish particularism. Wales like Ireland was acquired by conquest, but no such elaborate attempt was made to assimilate it; after the first unease that follows a process of violence, after one or two abortive attempts at resistance, Wales was left to undergo the peaceful pressure of natural conditions and its preservation of its own race and language has been no obstacle to the gradual union of the Cymric race and the Saxon in a common British nationality. A similar non-interference, apart from the minor problem of the Highland clans, has resulted in a still more rapid fusion of the Scotch race with the English. There is now in the island of Great Britain a composite British race with a common country bound together by the community of mingled blood, by a settled past association in oneness, by geographical necessity, by a common political and economic interest, by the realisation of a common ego. The opposite process in Ireland, the attempt to substitute an artificial process where the working of natural conditions with a little help of management and conciliation would have sufficed, the application of old-world methods to a

new set of circumstances has resulted in the opposite effect. And when the error was discovered, the result of the past Karma had to be recognised and the union has had to be effected through the method demanded by Irish interests and Irish particularist sentiments, first by the offer of Home Rule and then by the creation of the Free State and not under a complete legislative union.

This result may well reach beyond itself; it may create the necessity of an eventual remodelling of the British Empire and perhaps of the whole Anglo-Celtic nation on new lines with the principle of federation at the base. For Wales and Scotland have not been fused into England with the same completeness as Breton, Alsatian, Basque and Provençal were fused into the indivisible unity of France. Although no economic interest, no pressing physical necessity demands the application of the federative principle to Wales and Scotland, yet a sufficient though minor particularist sentiment remains that may yet feel hereafter the repercussion of the Irish settlement and awake to the satisfaction and convenience of a similar recognition for the provincial separateness of these two countries. And this sentiment is bound to receive fresh strength and encouragement by the practical working out of the federative principle in the reorganisation, which one day may become inevitable, of the colonial empire hitherto governed by Great Britain on the basis of Home Rule without federation.[3] The peculiar circumstances both of the national and the colonial formation and expansion of the races inhabiting the British Isles have indeed been such as to make it almost appear that this Empire has throughout been intended and prepared by Nature in her workings to be the great field of experiment for the creation of this new type in the history of human aggregates, the heterogeneous federal empire.

[3] Home Rule now replaced by Dominion Status which means a confederation in fact though not yet in form.

Chapter VIII

The Problem of a Federated Heterogeneous Empire

IF THE building up of a composite nation in the British Isles was from the beginning a foregone conclusion, a geographical and economic necessity only prevented in its entire completion by the most violent and perverse errors of statesmanship, the same cannot be said of the swifter, but still gradual and almost unconscious process by which the colonial empire of Great Britain has been evolving to a point at which it can become a real unity. It was not so long ago that the eventual separation of the colonies carrying with it the evolution of Australia and Canada at least into young independent nations was considered the inevitable end of the colonial empire, its one logical and hardly regrettable conclusion.

There were sound reasons for this mental attitude. The geographical necessity of union was entirely absent; on the contrary, distance created a positive mental separation. Each colony had a clear-cut separate physical body and seemed predestined, on the lines on which human evolution was then running, to become a separate nation. The economic interests of the mother country and the colonies were disparate, aloof from each other, often opposite as was shown by the adoption by the latter of Protection as against the British policy of Free Trade. Their sole political interest in the Empire was the safety given by the British fleet and army against foreign invasion; they did not share and took no direct interest in the government of the Empire or the shaping of its destinies. Psychologically, the sole tie was a frail memory of origin and a tepid sentiment which might easily evaporate and which was combated by a definite separatist sentiment and the natural inclination of strongly

marked human groupings to make for themselves an independent life and racial type. The race origin varied, in Australia British, in South Africa predominantly Dutch, in Canada half French, half English; but in all three countries habits of life, political tendencies, a new type of character and temperament and culture, if it can be so called, were being developed which were as the poles asunder from the old British culture, temperament, habits of life and social and political tendencies. On the other hand, the mother country derived no tangible political, military or economic advantage from these offshoots, only the prestige which the possession of an empire in itself could give her. On both sides, therefore, all the circumstances pointed to an eventual peaceful separation which would leave England only the pride of having been the mother of so many new nations.

Owing to the drawing together of the world by physical Science, the resulting tendency towards larger aggregates, changed political world conditions and the profound political, economic and social changes towards which Great Britain has been moving, all the conditions now are altered and it is easy to see that the fusion of the colonial empire into a great federated commonwealth or something that can plausibly go by that name is practically inevitable. There are difficulties in the way, — economic difficulties, to begin with; for, as we have seen, geographical separation does tend towards a divergence, often an opposition of economic interests, and an imperial Zollverein, natural enough between the States of the German Empire or a Central European Confederation such as was planned by one side in the great war, would be an artificial creation as between widely separated countries and would need constant vigilance and tender handling; yet, at the same time, political unity tends to demand economic union as its natural concomitant and seems to itself hardly complete without it. Political and other difficulties also there are which may yet become manifest and destroy the imperial formation if the practical process of unification is rashly and unwisely handled; but none of these need be insuperable or even a real stumbling-block. The race difficulty which

was at one time serious and menacing in South Africa and is not yet eliminated, need not be more formidable than in Canada; for in both countries there is the English element which, whether a majority or minority, can by friendly union or fusion attach the foreign element to the Empire. Nor is there any such powerful outside attraction or clash of formed cultures or incompatible temperaments as made so difficult the real union of the Austrian Empire.

All that is needed is that England should continue to handle the problem with a right instinct and not commit anything like her fatal American blunder or the mistake she committed but fortunately receded from in South Africa. She has to keep it always in mind that her possible destiny is not that of a dominant country compelling all the parts of her dominions to uniformity with her or to perpetual subordination, but that of the centre of a great confederation of States and nations coalescing by her attraction into a new supra-national unity. Here the first condition is that she must scrupulously respect the free internal life and will, the social, cultural, economic tendencies of the colonies while giving them an equal part with herself in the management of the great common questions of the Empire. She herself can be nothing more in the future of such a new type of aggregate than a political and cultural centre, the clamp or nodus of the union. Given this orientation of the governing mind in England, nothing short of some unforeseen cataclysm can prevent the formation of an empire-unit in which Home Rule with a loose British suzerainty will be replaced by Federation with Home Rule as its basis.[1]

But the problem becomes much more difficult when the question of the other two great constituent parts of the Empire arises, Egypt and India, — so difficult that the first temptation of the political mind, supported by a hundred prejudices and existing interests, was naturally to leave the problem alone and

[1] All this, provided the Empire continues to be victorious and prosper; provided, too, Britain's foreign policy does not make the obligations of federated unity too irksome to the smaller members.

create a federated colonial empire with these two great countries as subject dependencies.[2] It is obvious that such a solution could not last and, if obstinately persisted in, would lead to the most undesirable results, if not to eventual disaster. The renascence of India is as inevitable as the rising of tomorrow's sun, and the renascence of a great nation of three hundred millions with so peculiar a temperament, such unique traditions and ideas of life, so powerful an intelligence and so great a mass of potential energies cannot but be one of the most formidable phenomena of the modern world. It is evident that the new federated empire-unit cannot afford to put itself in permanent antagonism to this renascent nation of three hundred millions and that the short-sighted statesmanship of those servants of today and its interests who would stave off the inevitable issue as long as possible cannot be allowed to prevail. This has indeed been recognised in principle; the difficulty will be in the handling of the problems that will arise when the practical solution of the Indian question can no longer be put off to an uncertain future.

The nature of the difficulties in the way of a practical union between such different aggregates is sufficiently obvious. There is first that geographical separateness which has always made India a country and a people apart, even when it was unable to realise its political unity and was receiving by invasion and mutual communication of cultures the full shock of the civilisations around it. There is the mere mass of its population of three hundred millions whose fusion in any sort with the rest of the nations of the Empire would be a far other matter than the fusion of the comparatively insignificant populations of Australia, Canada and South Africa. There is the salient line of demarcation by race, colour and temperament between the European and the Asiatic. There is the age-long past, the absolute divergence of origins, indelible associations, inherent tendencies

[2] The question of Egypt has already been settled since the above was written, and in a sense adverse to union. India, already even then on the road to a free status, has already achieved it, although its two separating parts have figured for a time as dominions and one of them may possibly adhere for some time to that status while the other has adopted, although an independent Republic, a new formula of adhesion to the Commonwealth.

which forbid any possibility of the line of demarcation being effaced or minimised by India's acceptance of an entirely or predominantly English or European culture. All these difficulties need not necessarily mean the insolubility of the problem; on the contrary, we know that no difficulty can be presented to the human mind which the human mind, if it will, cannot solve. We will assume that in this case there will be both the will and the necessary wisdom; that British statesmanship will commit no irreparable error; that from the minor errors which it cannot fail to commit in the handling of such a problem, it will retreat in time, as has been its temperament and habit in the past; and that, accordingly, a little sooner or a little later some kind of psychological unity may possibly be created between these two widely disparate aggregates of the human race.

The question remains under what conditions this is possible and of what nature the unity will be. It is clear that the governing race must apply with a far greater scrupulosity and firm resolution the principle it has already applied elsewhere with such success and the departure from which has always after a certain stage been so detrimental to its own wider interests. It must allow, respect and even favour actively the free and separate evolution of India subject to the unity of the Empire. So long as India does not entirely govern herself, her interests must take a first place in the mind of those who do govern her, and when she has self-government, it must be of a kind which will not hamper her in her care of her own interests. She must not, for example, be forced into an imperial Zollverein which under present conditions would be disastrous to her economic future until or unless these conditions are changed by a resolute policy of stimulating and encouraging her industrial development, even though that will necessarily be prejudicial to many existing commercial interests within the Empire. No effort must be made to impose English culture or conditions upon her growing life or make them a *sine qua non* for her recognition among the free peoples of the Empire and no effort of her own to defend and develop her own culture and characteristic development must be interfered with or opposed. Her dignity, sentiments, national

aspirations must be increasingly recognised in practice as well as in principle. Given these conditions, the security of her political and economic interests and a care for her own untroubled growth might keep her in the Empire and time might be given for the rest, for the more subtle and difficult part of the process of unification to fulfil itself more or less rapidly.

The unity created could never take the form of an Indo-British empire; that is a figment of the imagination, a chimera which it would never do to hunt to the detriment of the real possibilities. The possibilities might be, first, a firm political unity secured by common interests; secondly, a sound commercial interchange and mutual industrial helpfulness on healthy lines; thirdly, a new cultural relation of the two most important sections of humanity, Europe and Asia, in which they could exchange all that is great and valuable in either as equal members of one human household; and finally, it might be hoped, in place of the common past associations of political and economic development and military glory which have chiefly helped in building up the nation-unit, the greater glory of association and close partnership in the building of a new, rich and various culture for the life of a nobler humanity. For such, surely, should be the type of the supra-national unit which is the possible next step in the progressive aggregation of humanity.

It is evident that this next step would have no reason or value except as a stage which would make possible by practical demonstration and the creation of new habits of sentiment, mental attitude and common life the unity of the whole human race in a single family. The mere creation of a big empire-unit would be a vulgar and even reactionary phenomenon if it had not this greater issue beyond it. The mere construction of a multicoloured Indo-British unity arrayed in armour of battle and divided by commercial, political and military egoism from other huge unities, Russian, French, German, American, would be a retrogression, not an advance. If at all, therefore, this kind of development is destined, — for we have only taken the instance of the British Empire as the best example of a possible new type, — then it must be as such a half-way house and with this ideal

before us that it can be accepted by the lovers of humanity who are not bound by the limitations of the old local patriotism of nation against nation. Always provided that the political and administrative means are those which are to lead us to the unity of the human race, — for on that doubtful hypothesis we are at present proceeding. The probability of such an eventual development is as yet scanty, for the temper both of Muslim and Hindu India is still overwhelmingly in the direction of independence and nothing has been done on the English side to build up the other possibility. But the possibility had still to be considered, as it is not utterly out of question that under changed conditions there might be an acceptance of virtual independence in place of a separate and isolated autonomy. If so, it would be a sign that one of Nature's steps towards the final result was leading towards this passage. This much could be said for it that if such a combination of two so disparate peoples and cultures proved to be possible, the greater question of a world-union would begin to bear a less remote appearance.[3]

[3] Things have taken, as was practically inevitable all through, a different turn; but this part of the chapter has been left as it was because the consideration of this possibility was necessary to the theme. The failure of that possible experiment to come anywhere near realisation is an illustration of the fact that this intermediate stage in the progress towards a total world-union presents difficulties which make it almost impossible. Its place has been taken by such agglomerations as the Commonwealth, the Soviet Union and such possibilities as the proposed United States of Europe and other continental combinations such as are coming into being as between the two Americas and may some day be possible in Asia.

Chapter IX

The Possibility of a World-Empire

THE PROGRESS of the imperial idea from the artificial and constructive stage to the position of a realised psychological truth controlling the human mind with the same force and vitality which now distinguish the national idea above all other group motives, is only a possibility, not a certainty of the future. It is even no more than a vaguely nascent possibility and so long as it has not emerged from this inchoate condition in which it is at the mercy of the much folly of statesmen, the formidable passions of great human masses, the obstinate self-interest of established egoisms, we can have no surety that it will not even now die still-born. And if so, what other possibility can there be of the unification of mankind by political and administrative means? That can only come about if either the old ideal of a single world-empire be, by developments not now apparently possible, converted into an accomplished fact or if the opposite ideal of a free association of free nations overcome the hundred and one powerful obstacles which stand in the way of its practical realisation.

The idea of a world-empire imposed by sheer force is in direct opposition, as we have seen, to the new conditions which the progressive nature of things has introduced into the modern world. Nevertheless, let us isolate these new conditions from the problem and admit the theoretical possibility of a single great nation imposing its political rule and its predominant culture on the whole earth as Rome once imposed hers on the Mediterranean peoples and on Gaul and Britain. Or let us even suppose that one of the great nations might possibly succeed in overcoming all its rivals by force and diplomacy and afterwards, respecting the culture and separate internal life of its subject nations, secure its sway by the attraction of a world-peace, of beneficent administration and of an unparalleled organisation

of human knowledge and human resources for the amelioration of the present state of mankind. We have to see whether this theoretical possibility is at all likely to encounter the conditions by which it can convert itself into a practical possibility, and if we consider, we shall find that no such conditions now exist: on the contrary, all are against the realisation of such a colossal dream — it could only come about by immense changes as yet hidden in the secrecy of the future.

It is commonly supposed that the impulse which brought Germany to her recent struggle with the world was rooted in even such a dream of empire. How far there was any such conscious intention in her directing minds is a question open to some doubt; but it is certain that, if she had prevailed in the war as she had first expected, the situation created would inevitably have led her to this greater endeavour. For she would have enjoyed a dominant position such as no nation has yet possessed during the known period of the world's history; and the ideas which have recently governed the German intellect, the idea of her mission, her race superiority, the immeasurable excellence of her culture, her science, her organisation of life and her divine right to lead the earth and to impose on it her will and her ideals, these with the all-grasping spirit of modern commercialism would have inevitably impelled her to undertake universal domination as a divinely given task. The fact that a modern nation and indeed the nation most advanced in that efficiency, that scientific utilisation of Science, that spirit of organisation, State help and intelligent dealing with national and social problems and ordering of economic well-being which Europe understands by the word civilisation, — the fact that such a nation should be possessed and driven by such ideas and impulses is certainly a proof that the old gods are not dead, the old ideal of dominant Force conquering, governing and perfecting the world is still a vital reality and has not let go its hold on the psychology of the human race. Nor is there any certainty that the recent war has killed these forces and this ideal; for the war was decided by force meeting force, by organisation triumphing over organisation, by the superior or

at any rate the more fortunate utilisation of those very weapons which constituted the real strength of the great aggressive Teutonic Power. The defeat of Germany by her own weapons could not of itself kill the spirit then incarnate in Germany; it may well lead merely to a new incarnation of it, perhaps in some other race or empire, and the whole battle would then have to be fought over again. So long as the old gods are alive, the breaking or depression of the body which they animate is a small matter, for they know well how to transmigrate. Germany overthrew the Napoleonic spirit in France in 1813 and broke the remnants of her European leadership in 1870; the same Germany became the incarnation of that which it had overthrown. The phenomenon is easily capable of renewal on a more formidable scale.

Nor was the failure of Germany any more a proof of the impossibility of this imperial dream than the previous failure of Napoleon. For the Teutonic combination lacked all the necessary conditions except one for the success of so vast an aim. It had the strongest military, scientific and national organisation which any people has yet developed, but it lacked the gigantic driving impulse which could alone bring an attempt so colossal to fruition, the impulse which France possessed in a much greater degree in the Napoleonic era. It lacked the successful diplomatic genius which creates the indispensable conditions of success. It lacked the companion force of sea-power which is even more necessary than military superiority to the endeavour of world-domination, and by its geographical position and the encircling position of its enemies it was especially open to all the disadvantages which must accompany the mastery of the seas by its natural adversary. The combination of overwhelming sea-power with overwhelming land-power[1] can alone bring so vast an enterprise into the domain of real possibility; Rome itself could only hope for something like a world-empire when it had destroyed the superior maritime force of Carthage. Yet so entirely did German statesmanship miscalculate the problem

[1] But now also, in a far greater degree, overwhelming air-power.

that it entered into the struggle with the predominant maritime Power of the world already ranked in the coalition of its enemies. Instead of concentrating its efforts against this one natural adversary, instead of utilising the old hostility of Russia and France against England, its maladroit and brutal diplomacy had already leagued these former enemies against itself; instead of isolating England, it had succeeded only in isolating itself and the manner in which it began and conducted the war still farther separated it morally and gave an added force to the physical isolation effected by the British blockade. In its one-sided pursuit of a great military concentration of Central Europe and Turkey, it had even wantonly alienated the one maritime Power which might have been on its side.

It is conceivable that the imperial enterprise may be renewed at some future date in the world's history by a nation or by statesmen better situated, better equipped, gifted with a subtler diplomatic genius, a nation as much favoured by circumstances, temperament and fortune as was Rome in the ancient world. What then would be the necessary conditions for its success? In the first place, its aim would have small chances of prospering if it could not repeat that extraordinary good luck by which Rome was enabled to meet its possible rivals and enemies one by one and avoid a successful coalition of hostile forces. What possibility is there of such a fortunate progress in a world so alert and instructed as the modern where everything is known, spied on, watched by jealous eyes and active minds under the conditions of modern publicity and swift world-wide communication? The mere possession of a dominant position is enough to set the whole world on its guard and concentrate its hostility against the Power whose secret ambitions it instinctively feels. Therefore such a fortunate succession would only seem to be possible if, in the first place, it were carried out half unconsciously without any fixed and visible ambition on the part of the advancing Power to awaken the general jealousy and, secondly, by a series of favouring occurrences which would lead so near to the desired end that it would be within the grasp before those who could still prevent it had awakened to its possibility.

If, for instance, there were a series of struggles between the four or five great Powers now dominating the world, each of which left the aggressor broken without hope of recovery and without any new Power arising to take its place, it is conceivable that at the end one of them would be left in a position of such natural predominance gained without any deliberate aggression, gained at least apparently in resisting the aggression of others as to put world-empire naturally into its grasp. But with the present conditions of life, especially with the ruinous nature of modern war, such a succession of struggles, quite natural and possible in former times, seems to be beyond the range of actual possibilities.

We must then assume that the Power moving towards world-domination would at some time find inevitably a coalition formed against it by almost all the Powers capable of opposing it and this with the sympathy of the world at their back. Given even the happiest diplomacy, such a moment seems inevitable. It must then possess such a combined and perfectly organised military and naval predominance as to succeed in this otherwise unequal struggle. But where is the modern empire that can hope to arrive at such a predominance? Of those that already exist Russia might well arrive one day at an overwhelming military power to which the present force of Germany would be a trifle; but that it should combine with this force by land a corresponding sea-power is unthinkable. England has enjoyed hitherto an overwhelming naval predominance which it might so increase under certain conditions as to defy the world in arms;[2] but it could not even with conscription and the aid of all its colonies compass anything like a similar force by land, — unless indeed it created conditions under which it could utilise all the military possibilities of India. Even then we have only to think of the formidable masses and powerful empires that it must be prepared to meet and we shall see that the creation of this double predominance is a contingency which the facts themselves show to be, if not chimerical, at least highly improbable.

[2] This is no longer true since the enormous increase of the American Navy.

Given even largely superior numbers on the side of its possible enemies, a nation might conceivably prevail over the coalition of its opponents by a superior science and a more skilful use of its resources. Germany relied on its superior science for the successful issue of its enterprise; and the principle on which it proceeded was sound. But in the modern world Science is a common possession and even if one nation steals such a march on the others as to leave them in a position of great inferiority at the beginning, yet experience has shown that given a little time, — and a powerful coalition is not likely to be crushed at the first blow, — the lost ground can be rapidly made up or at least methods of defence developed which will largely neutralise the advantage gained. For success, therefore, we should have to suppose the development by the ambitious nation or empire of a new science or new discoveries not shared by the rest which would place it in something like the position of superiority over greater numbers which Cortez and Pizarro enjoyed over the Aztecs and Peruvians. The superiority of discipline and organisation which gave the advantage to the ancient Romans or to the Europeans in India is no longer sufficient for so vast a purpose.

We see, therefore, that the conditions for the successful pursuit of world-empire are such that we need hardly take this mode of unification as within the bounds of practical possibility. That it may again be attempted, is possible; that it will fail, may almost be prophesied. At the same time, we have to take into account the surprises of Nature, the large field we have to allow to the unexpected in her dealings with us. Therefore we cannot pronounce this consummation an absolute impossibility. On the contrary, if that be her intention, she will suddenly or gradually create the necessary means and conditions. But even if it were to come about, the empire so created would have so many forces to contend with that its maintenance would be more difficult than its creation, and either its early collapse would bring the whole problem again into the field for a better solution or else it would have, by stripping itself of the elements of force and domination which inspired its attempt, to contradict the essential aim of its great effort. That, however, belongs to another side of our

subject which we must postpone for the moment. At present we may say that if the gradual unification of the world by the growth of great heterogeneous empires forming true psychological unities is only a vague and nascent possibility, its unification by a single forceful imperial domination has passed or is passing out of the range of possibilities and can only come about by a new development of the unexpected out of the infinite surprises of Nature.

Chapter X

The United States of Europe

WE HAVE had to dwell so long upon the possibilities of the Empire-group because the evolution of the imperial State is a dominating phenomenon of the modern world; it governs the political tendencies of the later part of the nineteenth and earlier part of the twentieth centuries very much as the evolution of the free democratised nation governed the age which preceded ours. The dominant idea of the French Revolution was the formula of the free and sovereign people and, in spite of the cosmopolitan element introduced into the revolutionary formula by the ideal of fraternity, this idea became in fact the assertion of the free, independent, democratically self-governed nation. That ideal had not at the time of the great war wholly worked itself out even in the occidental world; for central Europe was only partly democratised and Russia had only just begun to turn its face towards the common goal; and even now there are still subject European peoples or fragments of peoples.[1] Nevertheless, with whatever imperfections, the idea of the free democratic nation had practically triumphed in all America and Europe. The peoples of Asia have equally accepted this governing ideal of the nineteenth century, and though the movements of democratic nationalism in the eastern countries, Turkey, Persia, India, China, were not fortunate in their first attempts at self-realisation, the profound and wide-spread working of the idea cannot be doubted by any careful observer. Whatever modifications may arrive, whatever new tendencies intervene, whatever reactions oppose, it could hardly then be doubted that the principal gifts of the French Revolution must remain and be universalised as permanent acquisitions, indispensable elements

[1] No longer an evident fact, although the substitution of a state of vassalage may still be there.

in the future order of the world, — national self-consciousness and self-government, freedom and enlightenment for the people and so much social equality and justice at least as is indispensable to political liberty; for with any form of fixed and rigid inequality democratic self-government is incompatible.

But before the great nineteenth-century impulse could work itself out everywhere, before even it could realise itself entirely in Europe, a new tendency has intervened and a new idea seized on the progressive mind of humanity. This is the ideal of the perfectly organised State. Fundamentally, the ideal of the perfectly organised State is socialistic and it is based on the second word of the great revolutionary formula, equality, just as the movement of the nineteenth century centered round the first, liberty. The first impulse given by the great European upheaval attained only to a certain kind of political equality. An incomplete social levelling still left untouched the one inequality and the one form of political preponderance which no competitive society can eliminate, the preponderance of the haves over the have-nots, the inequality between the more successful in the struggle of life and the less successful which is rendered inevitable by difference of capacity, unequal opportunity and the handicap of circumstance and environment. Socialism seeks to get rid of this persistent inequality by destroying the competitive form of society and substituting the cooperative. A cooperative form of human society existed formerly in the shape of the commune; but the restoration of the commune as a unit would imply practically the return to the old city state, and as this is not now possible with the larger groupings and greater complexities of modern life, the socialistic idea could only be realised through the rigorously organised national State. To eliminate poverty, not by the crude idea of equal distribution but by the holding of all property in common and its management through the organised State, to equalise opportunity and capacity as far as possible through universal education and training, again by means of the organised State, is the fundamental idea of modern Socialism. It implies an abrogation or at least a rigorous diminution of all individual liberty. Democratic Socialism still clings indeed to the

nineteenth-century ideal of political freedom; it insists on the equal right of all in the State to choose, judge and change their own governors, but all other liberty it is ready to sacrifice to its own central idea.

The progress of the socialistic idea would seem therefore to lead towards the evolution of a perfectly organised national State which would provide for and control the education and training, manage and govern all the economic activities and for that purpose as well as for the assurance of perfect efficiency, morality, well-being and social justice, order the whole or at any rate the greater part of the external and internal life of its component individuals. It would effect, in fact, by organised State control what earlier societies attempted by social pressure, rigorous rule of custom, minute code and Shastra. This was always an inherently inevitable development of the revolutionary ideal. It started to the surface at first under pressure of external danger in the government of France by the Jacobins during the Reign of Terror; it has been emerging and tending to realise itself under pressure of an inner necessity throughout the later part of the nineteenth century; it has emerged not completely but with a first rudimentary sketch of completeness by the combination of the inner and the outer necessity during the present war. What was before only an ideal towards which some imperfect initial steps alone were immediately possible, has now become a realisable programme with its entire feasibility established by a convincing though necessarily hasty and imperfect practical demonstration. It is true that in order to realise it even political liberty has had to be temporarily abolished; but this, it may be argued, is only an accident of the moment, a concession to temporary necessity. In freer conditions what was done partly and for a time by governments which the people have consented to invest with an absolute and temporarily irresponsible authority, may be done, when there is no pressure of war, wholly and permanently by the self-governing democratic State.

In that case the near future of the human group would seem to be the nation, self-governing, politically free, but aiming at perfect social and economic organisation and ready for that

purpose to hand over all individual liberty to the control of the organised national State.[2] As France was in the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century the great propagandist and the experimental workshop of political liberty and equality, so Germany has been in the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century the chief propagandist and the experimental workshop of the idea of the organised State. There the theory of Socialism has taken rise and there its propaganda has been most effective, so that a large proportion of the nation committed itself to the new gospel; there also the great socialistic measures and those which have developed the control of the individual by the State for the common good and efficiency of the nation have been most thoroughly and admirably conceived and executed. It matters little that this was done by an anti-socialistic, militarist and aristocratic government; the very fact is a proof of the irresistible strength of the new tendency, and the inevitable transference of the administrative power from its past holders to the people was all that was needed to complete its triumph.

Throughout the recent decades we have seen the growth of German ideas and the increasing tendency to follow German methods of State interference and State control in other countries, even in England, the home of individualism. The defeat of Germany in the European war no more spelt the defeat of her ideals than the defeat of revolutionary and Napoleonic France by the European coalition and even the temporary triumph of the monarchic and aristocratic system prevented the spread of her new ideas over all Europe. Even if German militarism and Junkerism were destroyed, the collapse of the imperial form of government can only hasten the more thorough development and victory of that which has been working behind them and forcing them to minister to it, the great modern tendency of the perfectly organised socialistic

[2] This was done with a stupendous beginning of thoroughness in Bolshevist Russia, Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and the necessity or the choice of it threatened at one time to spread everywhere.

State, while the evident result of the war in the nations opposed to her has been to force them more rapidly towards the same ideal.

If this were all, the natural development of things aided by the frustration of the German form of imperialism would lead logically to a new ordering of the world on the basis of a system of independent but increasingly organised national States associated together more or less closely for international purposes while preserving their independent existence. Such is the ideal which has attracted the human mind as a yet distant possibility since the great revolutionary ferment set in; it is the idea of a federation of free nations, the parliament of man, the federation of the world. But the actual circumstances forbid any hope of such an ideal consummation in the near future. For the nationalistic, democratic and socialistic ideas are not alone at work in the world; imperialism is equally in the ascendant. Only a few European peoples at the present moment are nations confined to themselves; each is a nation free in itself but dominating over other human groupings who are not free or only partially free. Even little Belgium has its Congo, little Portugal its colonies, little Holland its dependencies in the eastern Archipelago; even little Balkan States have aspired to revive an "empire" and to rule over others not of their own nationality or have cherished the idea of becoming predominant in the peninsula. Mazzini's Italy has its imperialistic ventures and ambitions in Tripoli, Abyssinia, Albania, the Greek islands. This imperialistic tendency is likely to grow stronger for some time in the future rather than to weaken. The idea of a remodelling even of Europe itself on the strict principle of nationality, which captivated liberal minds in England at the beginning of the war, has not yet been made practicable and, if it were effected, there would still remain the whole of Asia and Africa as a field for the imperialistic ambitions of the Western nations and Japan. The disinterestedness that led a majority in America to decree the liberation of the Philippines and restrained the desire to take advantage of the troubles of Mexico is not possible to the mentality of the Old World, and it is doubtful how long it can stand even in America against

the rising tide of imperialistic sentiment. National egoism, the pride of domination and the desire of expansion still govern the mind of humanity, however modified they may now be in their methods by the first weak beginnings of higher motives and a better national morality, and until this spirit is radically changed, the union of the human race by a federation of free nations must remain a noble chimera.

Undoubtedly, a free association and unity must be the ultimate goal of our development and until it is realised the world must be subject to constant changes and revolutions. Every established order, because it is imperfect, because it insists on arrangements which come to be recognised as involving injustice or which stand in the way of new tendencies and forces, because it outlasts its utility and justification, must end in *malaise*, resistance and upheaval, must change itself or be changed or else lead to cataclysms such as periodically trouble our human advance. But the time has not come when the true principle of order can replace those which are artificial and imperfect. It is idle to hope for a federation of free nations until either the present inequalities between nation and nation are removed or else the whole world rises to a common culture based upon a higher moral and spiritual status than is now actual or possible. The imperial instinct being alive and dominant and stronger at present than the principle of nationalism, the evolution of great empires can hardly fail to overshadow for a time at least the tendency to the development of free nationalities. All that can be hoped is that the old artificial, merely political empire may be replaced by a truer and more moral type, and that the existing empires, driven by the necessity of strengthening themselves and by an enlightened self-interest, may come to see that the recognition of national autonomy is a wise and necessary concession to the still vital instinct of nationalism and can be used so as to strengthen instead of weakening their imperial strength and unity. In this way, while a federation of free nations is for the present impossible, a system of federated empires and free nations drawn together in a closer association than the world has yet seen is not altogether impossible; and through this and other steps some

form of political unity for mankind may at a more or less distant date be realisable.[3]

The war brought up many suggestions for such a closer association, but as a rule they were limited to a better ordering of the international relations of Europe. One of these was the elimination of war by a stricter international law administered by an international Court and supported by the sanction of the nations which shall be enforced by all of them against any offender. Such a solution is chimerical unless it is immediately followed up by farther and far-reaching developments. For the law given by the Court must be enforced either by an alliance of some of the stronger Powers as, for instance, the coalition of the victorious allies dominating the rest of Europe, or by a concert of all the European Powers or else by a United States of Europe or some other form of European federation. A dominating alliance of great Powers would be simply a repetition in principle of the system of Metternich and would inevitably break down after some lapse of time, while a Concert of Europe must mean, as experience has shown, the uneasy attempt of rival groupings to maintain a precarious understanding which may postpone but cannot eventually prevent fresh struggles and collisions. In such imperfect systems the law would only be obeyed so long as it was expedient, so long only as the Powers who desired new changes and readjustments not admitted by the others did not consider the moment opportune for resistance. The Law within a nation is only secure because there is a recognised authority empowered to determine it and to make the necessary changes and possessed of a sufficient force to punish all violation of its statutes. An international or an inter-European law must have the same advantages if it is to exercise anything more than a merely moral force which can be set at nought by those who are strong enough to defy it and who find an advantage in the violation. Some form of European federation, however loose, is

[3] The appearance of Hitler and the colossal attempt at German world-domination have paradoxically helped by his defeat, and the reaction against him entirely altered the world circumstances: the United States of Europe is now a practical possibility and has begun to feel towards self-accomplishment.

therefore essential if the idea behind these suggestions of a new order is to be made practically effective, and once commenced, such a federation must necessarily be tightened and draw more and more towards the form of a United States of Europe.

Whether such a European unity can be formed or whether, if formed, it can be maintained and perfected against the many forces of dissolution, the many causes of quarrel which would for long try it to the breaking point, only experience can show. But it is evident that in the present state of human egoism it would, if formed, become a tremendously powerful instrument for the domination and exploitation of the rest of the world by the group of nations which are at present in the forefront of human progress. It would inevitably awaken in antagonism to it an idea of Asiatic unity and an idea of American unity, and while such continental groupings replacing the present smaller national unities might well be an advance towards the final union of all mankind, yet their realisation would mean cataclysms of a kind and scope which would dwarf the present catastrophe and in which the hopes of mankind might founder and fatally collapse rather than progress nearer to fulfilment. But the chief objection to the idea of a United States of Europe is that the general sense of humanity is already seeking to travel beyond its continental distinctions and make them subordinate to a larger human idea. A division on the continental basis might therefore be from this point of view a reactionary step of the gravest kind and might be attended with the most serious consequences to human progress.

Europe, indeed, is in this anomalous position that it is at once ripe for the Pan-European idea and at the same time under the necessity of overpassing it. The conflict of the two tendencies was curiously exemplified not so long ago by certain speculations on the nature of the recent European struggle. It was suggested that the sin of Germany in this war was due to its exaggerated egoistic idea of the nation and its disregard of the larger idea of Europe to which the nation-idea must now be subjected and subordinated. The total life of Europe must now be the all-engrossing unity, its good the paramount

consideration, and the egoism of the nation must consent to exist only as an organic part of this larger egoism. In effect, this is the acceptance after so many decades of the idea of Nietzsche who insisted that nationalism and war were anachronisms and the ideal of all enlightened minds must be not to be good patriots but good Europeans. But immediately the question arose, what then of the increasing importance of America in world politics, what of Japan and China, what of the renewed stirrings of life in Asia? The writer had therefore to draw back from his first formula and to explain that by Europe he meant not Europe but all nations that had accepted the principles of European civilisation as the basis of their polity and social organisation. This more philosophical formula has the obvious or at least the specious advantage that it brings in America and Japan and thus recognises all the actually free or dominant nations in the circle of the proposed solidarity and holds out too the hope of admission into the circle to others whenever they can prove, after the forceful manner of Japan or otherwise, that they too have come up to the European standard.

Indeed, though Europe is still strongly separate in its own conception from the rest of the world, — as was shown by the often expressed resentment of the continual existence of Turkey in Europe and the desire to put an end to this government of Europeans by Asiatics, — yet as a matter of fact it is inextricably tangled up with America and Asia. Some of the European nations have colonies in America, all have possessions and ambitions in Asia, where Japan alone is outside the shadow cast by Europe, or in Northern Africa which is culturally one with Asia. The United States of Europe would therefore mean a federation of free European nations dominant over a half-subject Asia and possessor of parts of America and there standing in uneasy proximity to nations still free and necessarily troubled, alarmed and overshadowed by this giant immiscence. The inevitable result would be in America to bring together more closely the Latin Centre and South and the English-speaking North and to emphasise immensely the Monroe Doctrine with consequences which cannot easily be foreseen, while in Asia there could be only one

of two final endings to the situation, either the disappearance of the remaining free Asiatic States or a vast Asiatic resurgence and the recoil of Europe from Asia. Such movements would be a prolongation of the old line of human development and set at nought the new cosmopolitan conditions created by modern culture and Science; but they are inevitable if the nation-idea in the West is to merge into the Europe-idea, that is to say, into the continental idea rather than into the wider consciousness of a common humanity.

If, therefore, any new supra-national order is to evolve sooner or later as a result of the present upheaval, it must be an association that will embrace Asia, Africa and America as well as Europe and it must be in its nature an organisation of international life constituted by a number of free nations such as Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the United States, the Latin republics and a number of imperial and colonising nations such as are most of the peoples of Europe. Either the latter would remain, as they now are, free in themselves but masters of subject peoples who, with the advance of time, would become more and more intolerant of the yoke imposed on them or else they would be, by an ethical advance which is as yet very far from accomplished, partly centres of free federal empires, partly nations holding in trust races yet backward and undeveloped until they arrived at the capacity of self-administration, as the United States have claimed to hold for a time the Philippines. In the former case, the unity, the order, the common law established would perpetuate and be partly founded on an enormous system of injustice and exposed to the revolts and revolutions of Nature and the great revenges by which she finally vindicates the human spirit against wrongs which she tolerates for a time as necessary incidents of human development. In the latter, there would be some chance that the new order, however far in its beginnings from the ultimate ideal of a free association of free human aggregates, might lead peacefully and by a natural unfolding of the spiritual and ethical progress of the race to such a secure, just and healthy political, social and economic foundation as might enable mankind to turn from its preoccupation with these lower

cares and begin at last that development of its higher self which is the nobler part of its potential destiny or, if not that, — for who knows whether Nature's long experiment in the human type is foredoomed to success or failure, — at least the loftiest possibility of our future which the human mind can envisage.

Chapter XI

The Small Free Unit and the Larger Concentrated Unity

IF WE consider the possibilities of a unification of the human race on political, administrative and economic lines, we see that a certain sort of unity or first step towards it appears not only to be possible, but to be more or less urgently demanded by an underlying spirit and sense of need in the race. This spirit has been created largely by increased mutual knowledge and close communication, partly by the development of wider and freer intellectual ideals and emotional sympathies in the progressive mind of the race. The sense of need is partly due to the demand for the satisfaction of these ideals and sympathies, partly to economic and other material changes which render the results of divided national life, war, commercial rivalry and consequent insecurity and peril to the complex and easily vulnerable modern social organisation more and more irksome both for the economic and political human animal and for the idealistic thinker. Partly also the new turn is due to the desire of the successful nations to possess, enjoy and exploit the rest of the world at ease without the peril incurred by their own formidable rivalries and competitions and rather by some convenient understanding and compromise among themselves. The real strength of this tendency is in its intellectual, idealistic and emotional parts. Its economic causes are partly permanent and therefore elements of strength and secure fulfilment, partly artificial and temporary and therefore elements of insecurity and weakness. The political incentives are the baser part in the amalgam; their presence may even vitiate the whole result and lead in the end to a necessary dissolution and reversal of whatever unity may be initially accomplished.

Still, a result of some kind is possible in the comparatively

near or more distant future. We can see on what lines it is likely to work itself out, if at all, — at first by a sort of understanding and initial union for the most pressing common needs, arrangements of commerce, arrangements of peace and war, arrangements for the common arbitration of disputes, arrangements for the policing of the world. These crude initial arrangements, once accepted, will naturally develop by the pressure of the governing idea and the inherent need into a closer unity and even perhaps in the long end into a common supreme government which may endure till the defects of the system established and the rise of other ideals and tendencies inconsistent with its maintenance lead either to a new radical change or to its entire dissolution into its natural elements and constituents. We have seen also that such a union is likely to take place upon the basis of the present world somewhat modified by the changes that must now inevitably take place, — international changes that are likely to be adjustments rather than the introduction of a new radical principle and social changes within the nations themselves of a much more far-reaching character. It will take place, that is to say, as between the present free nations and colonising empires, but with an internal arrangement of society and an administrative mould progressing rapidly towards a rigorous State socialism and equality by which the woman and the worker will chiefly profit. For these are the master tendencies of the hour. Certainly, no one can confidently predict that the hour will victoriously prevail over the whole future. We know not what surprises of the great human drama, what violent resurgence of the old nation-idea, what collisions, failures, unexpected results in the working out of the new social tendencies, what revolt of the human spirit against a burdensome and mechanical State collectivism, what growth and power perhaps of a gospel of philosophic anarchism missioned to reassert man's ineradicable yearning for individual liberty and free self-fulfilment, what unforeseen religious and spiritual revolutions may not intervene in the very course of this present movement of mankind and divert it to quite another denouement. The human mind has not yet reached that illumination or that sure science by which it can forecast securely even its morrow.

Let us suppose, however, that no such unexpected factor intervenes. The political unity of mankind, of a sort, may then be realised. The question still remains whether it is desirable that it should be realised thus and now, and if so, under what circumstances, with what necessary conditions in the absence of which the result gained can only be temporary as were former partial unifications of mankind. And first let us remember at what cost humanity has gained the larger unities it has already achieved in the past. The immediate past has actually created for us the nation, the natural homogeneous empire of nations kin in race and culture or united by geographical necessity and mutual attractions, and the artificial heterogeneous empire secured by conquest, maintained by force, by yoke of law, by commercial and military colonisation, but not yet welded into true psychological unities. Each of these principles of aggregation has given some actual gain or some possibility of progress to mankind at large, but each has brought with it its temporary or inherent disadvantages and inflicted some wound on the complete human ideal.

The creation of a new unity, when it proceeds by external and mechanical processes, has usually and indeed almost by a practical necessity to go through a process of internal contraction before the unit can indulge again in a new and free expansion of its inner life; for its first need and instinct is to form and secure its own existence. To enforce its unity is its predominant impulse and to that paramount need it has to sacrifice the diversity, harmonious complexity, richness of various material, freedom of inner relations without which the true perfection of life is impossible. In order to enforce a strong and sure unity it has to create a paramount centre, a concentrated State power, whether of king or military aristocracy or plutocratic class or other governing contrivance, to which the liberty and free life of the individual, the commune, the city, the region or any other lesser unit has to be subordinated and sacrificed. At the same time, there is a tendency to create a firmly mechanised and rigid state of society, sometimes a hierarchy of classes or orders in which the lower is appointed to an inferior place and duty and

bound down to a narrower life than the higher, such as the hierarchy of king, clergy, aristocracy, middle class, peasantry, servile class which replaced in Europe the rich and free existence of the city and the tribe or else a rigid caste system such as the one that replaced in India the open and natural existence of the vigorous Aryan clans. Moreover, as we have already seen, the active and stimulating participation of all or most in the full vigour of the common life, which was the great advantage of the small but free earlier communities, is much more difficult in a larger aggregate and is at first impossible. In its place, there is the concentration of the force of life into a dominant centre or at most a governing and directing class or classes, while the great mass of the community is left in a relative torpor and enjoys only a minimum and indirect share of that vitality in so far as it is allowed to filter down from above and indirectly affect the grosser, poorer and narrower life below. This at least is the phenomenon we see in the historic period of human development which preceded and led up to the creation of the modern world. In the future also the need of a concentrating and formative rigidity may be felt for the firm formation and consolidation of the new political and social forms that are taking or will take its place.

The small human communities in which all can easily take an active part and in which ideas and movements are swiftly and vividly felt by all and can be worked out rapidly and thrown into form without the need of a large and difficult organisation, turn naturally towards freedom as soon as they cease to be preoccupied with the first absorbing necessity of self-preservation. Such forms as absolute monarchy or a despotic oligarchy, an infallible Papacy or sacrosanct theocratic class cannot flourish at ease in such an environment; they lack that advantage of distance from the mass and that remoteness from exposure to the daily criticism of the individual mind on which their prestige depends and they have not, to justify them, the pressing need of uniformity among large multitudes and over vast areas which they elsewhere serve to establish and maintain. Therefore we find in Rome the monarchical regime unable to maintain itself and in Greece looked upon as an unnatural and brief usurpation, while

the oligarchical form of government, though more vigorous, could not assure to itself, except in a purely military community like Sparta, either a high and exclusive supremacy or a firm duration. The tendency to a democratic freedom in which every man had a natural part in the civic life as well as in the cultural institutions of the State, an equal voice in the determination of law and policy and as much share in their execution as could be assured to him by his right as a citizen and his capacity as an individual, — this democratic tendency was inborn in the spirit and inherent in the form of the city state. In Rome the tendency was equally present but could not develop so rapidly or fulfil itself so entirely as in Greece because of the necessities of a military and conquering State which needed either an absolute head, an *imperator*, or a small oligarchic body to direct its foreign policy and its military conduct; but even so, the democratic element was always present and the democratic tendency was so strong that it began to work and grow from almost prehistoric times even in the midst of Rome's constant struggle for self-preservation and expansion and was only suspended by such supreme struggles as the great duel with Carthage for the empire of the Mediterranean. In India the early communities were free societies in which the king was only a military head or civic chief; we find the democratic element persisting in the days of Buddha and surviving in small States in the days of Chandragupta and Megasthenes even when great bureaucratically governed monarchies and empires were finally replacing the free earlier polity. It was only in proportion as the need for a large organisation of Indian life over the whole peninsula or at least the northern part of it made itself increasingly felt that the form of absolute monarchy grew upon the country and the learned and sacerdotal caste imposed its theocratic domination over the communal mind and its rigid Shastra as the binding chain of social unity and the binding link of a national culture.

As in the political and civic, so in the social life. A certain democratic equality is almost inevitable in a small community; the opposite phenomenon of strong class distinctions and superiorities may establish itself during the military period of the clan

or tribe, but cannot long be maintained in the close intimacy of a settled city state except by artificial means such as were employed by Sparta and Venice. Even when the distinction remains, its exclusiveness is blunted and cannot deepen and intensify itself into the nature of a fixed hierarchy. The natural social type of the small community is such as we see in Athens, where not only Cleon, the tanner, exercised as strong a political influence as the highborn and wealthy Nicias and the highest offices and civic functions were open to men of all classes, but in social functions and connections also there was a free association and equality. We see a similar democratic equality, though of a different type, in the earlier records of Indian civilisation. The rigid hierarchy of castes with the pretensions and arrogance of the caste spirit was a later development; in the simpler life of old, difference or even superiority of function did not carry with it a sense of personal or class superiority: at the beginning, the most sacred religious and social function, that of the Rishi and sacrificer, seems to have been open to men of all classes and occupations. Theocracy, caste and absolute kingship grew in force *pari passu* like the Church and the monarchical power in mediaeval Europe under the compulsion of the new circumstances created by the growth of large social and political aggregates.

Societies advancing in culture under these conditions of the early Greek, Roman and Indian city states and clan-nations were bound to develop a general vividness of life and dynamic force of culture and creation which the later national aggregates were obliged to forego and could only recover after a long period of self-formation in which the difficulties attending the development of a new organism had to be met and overcome. The cultural and civic life of the Greek city, of which Athens was the supreme achievement, a life in which living itself was an education, where the poorest as well as the richest sat together in the theatre to see and judge the dramas of Sophocles and Euripides and the Athenian trader and shopkeeper took part in the subtle philosophical conversations of Socrates, created for Europe not only its fundamental political types and ideals but practically all its basic forms of intellectual, philosophical,

literary and artistic culture. The equally vivid political, juridical and military life of the single city of Rome created for Europe its types of political activity, military discipline and science, jurisprudence of law and equity and even its ideals of empire and colonisation. And in India it was that early vivacity of spiritual life of which we catch glimpses in the Vedic, Upanishadic and Buddhistic literature, which created the religions, philosophies, spiritual disciplines that have since by direct or indirect influence spread something of their spirit and knowledge over Asia and Europe. And everywhere the root of this free, generalised and widely pulsating vital and dynamic force, which the modern world is only now in some sort recovering, was amid all differences the same; it was the complete participation not of a limited class, but of the individual generally in the many-sided life of the community, the sense each had of being full of the energy of all and of a certain freedom to grow, to be himself, to achieve, to think, to create in the undammed flood of that universal energy. It is this condition, this relation between the individual and the aggregate which modern life has tried to some extent to restore in a cumbrous, clumsy and imperfect fashion but with much vaster forces of life and thought at its disposal than early humanity could command.

It is possible that, if the old city states and clan-nations could have endured and modified themselves so as to create larger free aggregates without losing their own life in the new mass, many problems might have been solved with a greater simplicity, direct vision and truth to Nature which we have now to settle in a very complex and cumbrous fashion and under peril of enormous dangers and wide-spread convulsions. But that was not to be. That early life had vital defects which it could not cure. In the case of the Mediterranean nations, two most important exceptions have to be made to the general participation of all individuals in the full civic and cultural life of the community; for that participation was denied to the slave and hardly granted at all in the narrow life conceded to the woman. In India the institution of slavery was practically absent and the woman had at first a freer and more dignified position than in Greece and

Rome; but the slave was soon replaced by the proletariate, called in India the Shudra, and the increasing tendency to deny the highest benefits of the common life and culture to the Shudra and the woman brought down Indian society to the level of its Western congeners. It is possible that these two great problems of economic serfdom and the subjection of woman might have been attacked and solved in the early community if it had lived longer, as it has now been attacked and is in process of solution in the modern State. But it is doubtful; only in Rome do we glimpse certain initial tendencies which might have turned in that direction and they never went farther than faint hints of a future possibility.

More vital was the entire failure of this early form of human society to solve the question of the interrelations between community and community. War remained their normal relation. All attempts at free federation failed, and military conquest was left as the sole means of unification. The attachment to the small aggregate in which each man felt himself to be most alive had generated a sort of mental and vital insularity which could not accommodate itself to the new and wider ideas which philosophy and political thought, moved by the urge of larger needs and tendencies, brought into the field of life. Therefore the old States had to dissolve and disappear, in India into the huge bureaucratic empires of the Gupta and the Maurya to which the Pathan, the Moghul and the Englishman succeeded, in the West into the vast military and commercial expansions achieved by Alexander, by the Carthaginian oligarchy and by the Roman republic and empire. The latter were not national but supra-national unities, premature attempts at too large unifications of mankind that could not really be accomplished with any finality until the intermediate nation-unit had been fully and healthily developed.

The creation of the national aggregate was therefore reserved for the millennium that followed the collapse of the Roman Empire; and in order to solve this problem left to it, the world during that period had to recoil from many and indeed most of the gains which had been achieved for mankind by the

city states. Only after this problem was solved could there be any real effort to develop not only a firmly organised but a progressive and increasingly perfected community, not only a strong mould of social life but the free growth and completeness of life itself within that mould. This cycle we must briefly study before we can consider whether the intervention of a new effort at a larger aggregation is likely to be free from the danger of a new recoil in which the inner progress of the race will have, at least temporarily, to be sacrificed in order to concentrate effort on the development and affirmation of a massive external unity.

Chapter XII

The Ancient Cycle of Prenational Empire-Building — The Modern Cycle of Nation-Building

WE HAVE seen that the building of the true national unit was a problem of human aggregation left over by the ancient world to the mediaeval. The ancient world started from the tribe, the city state, the clan, the small regional state — all of them minor units living in the midst of other like units which were similar to them in general type, kin usually in language and most often or very largely in race, marked off at least from other divisions of humanity by a tendency towards a common civilisation and protected in that community with each other and in their diversity from others by favourable geographical circumstances. Thus Greece, Italy, Gaul, Egypt, China, Medo-Persia, India, Arabia, Israel, all began with a loose cultural and geographical aggregation which made them separate and distinct culture-units before they could become nation-units. Within that loose unity the tribe, clan or city or regional states formed in the vague mass so many points of distinct, vigorous and compact unity which felt indeed more and more powerfully the divergence and opposition of their larger cultural oneness to the outside world but could feel also and often much more nearly and acutely their own divergences, contrasts and oppositions. Where this sense of local distinctness was most acute, there the problem of national unification was necessarily more difficult and its solution, when made, tended to be more illusory.

The solution was in most cases attempted. In Egypt and Judaea it was successfully found even in that ancient cycle of historical evolution; but in the latter instance certainly, in the former probably, the full result came only by the hard discipline of subjection to a foreign yoke. Where this discipline was

lacking, where the nation-unity was in some sort achieved from within, — usually through the conquest of all the rest by one strong clan, city, regional unit such as Rome, Macedon, the mountain clans of Persia, — the new State, instead of waiting to base firmly its achievement and lay the foundations of the national unity deep and strong, proceeded at once to overshoot its immediate necessity and embark on a career of conquest. Before the psychological roots of the national unity had been driven deep, before the nation was firmly self-conscious, irresistibly possessed of its oneness and invincibly attached to it, the governing State impelled by the military impulsion which had carried it so far attempted immediately to form by the same means a larger empire-aggregate. Assyria, Macedon, Rome, Persia, later on Arabia followed all the same tendency and the same cycle. The great invasion of Europe and Western Asia by the Gaelic race and the subsequent disunion and decline of Gaul were probably due to the same phenomenon and proceeded from a still more immature and ill-formed unification than the Macedonian. All became the starting-point of great empire-movements before they had become the keystone of securely built national unities.

These empires, therefore, could not endure. Some lasted longer than others because they had laid down firmer foundations in the central nation-unity, as did Rome in Italy. In Greece Philip, the first unifier, made a rapid but imperfect sketch of unification, the celerity of which had been made possible by the previous and yet looser Spartan domination; and had he been followed by successors of a patient talent rather than by a man of vast imagination and supreme genius, this first rough practical outline might have been filled in, strengthened and an enduring work achieved. One who first founds on a large scale and rapidly, needs always as his successor a man with the talent or the genius for organisation rather than an impetus for expansion. A Caesar followed by an Augustus meant a work of massive durability; a Philip followed by an Alexander an achievement of great importance to the world by its results, but in itself a mere splendour of short-lived brilliance. Rome, to whom careful Nature denied any man of commanding genius

until she had firmly unified Italy and laid the basis of her empire, was able to build much more firmly; nevertheless, she founded that empire not as the centre and head of a great nation, but still as a dominant city using a subject Italy for the springing-board to leap upon and subjugate the surrounding world. Therefore she had to face a much more difficult problem of assimilation, that of nation-nebulae and formed or inchoate cultures different from her own, before she had achieved and learned to apply to the new problem the art of complete and absolute unification on a smaller and easier scale, before she had welded into one living national organism, no longer Roman but Italian, the elements of difference and community offered by the Gallic, Latin, Umbrian, Oscan and Graeco-Apulian factors in ancient Italy. Therefore, although her empire endured for several centuries, it achieved temporary conservation at the cost of energy of vitality and inner vigour; it accomplished neither the nation-unit nor the durable empire-unity, and like other ancient empires it had to collapse and make room for a new era of true nation-building.

It is necessary to emphasise where the error lay. The administrative, political, economic organisation of mankind in aggregates of smaller or greater size is a work which belongs at its basis to the same order of phenomena as the creation of vital organisms in physical Nature. It uses, that is to say, primarily external and physical methods governed by the principles of physical life-energy intent on the creation of living forms, although its inner object is to deliver, to manifest and to bring into secure working a supraphysical, a psychological principle latent behind the operations of the life and the body. To build a strong and durable body and vital functioning for a distinct, powerful, well-centred and well-diffused corporate ego is its whole aim and method. In this process, as we have seen, first smaller distinct units in a larger loose unity are formed; these have a strong psychological existence and a well-developed body and vital functioning, but in the larger mass the psychological sense and the vital energy are present but unorganised and without power of definite functioning, and the body is a fluid quantity or a half-nebulous or at most a half-fluid, half-solidified mass,

a plasm rather than a body. This has in its turn to be formed and organised; a firm physical shape has to be made for it, a well-defined vital functioning and a clear psychological reality, self-consciousness and mental will-to-be.

Thus a new larger unity is formed; and this again finds itself among a number of similar unities which it looks on first as hostile and quite different from itself, then enters into a sort of community in difference with them, till again we find repeated the original phenomenon of a number of smaller distinct units in a wider loose unity. The contained units are larger and more complex than before, the containing unity is also larger and more complex than before, but the essential position is the same and a similar problem presents itself for solution. Thus in the beginning there was the phenomenon of city states and regional peoples coexisting as disunited parts of a loose geographical and cultural unity, Italy or Hellas, and there was the problem of creating the Hellenic or Italian nation. Afterwards there came instead the phenomenon of nation-units formed or in formation coexisting as disunited parts of the loose geographical and cultural unity, first, of Christendom, then, of Europe, and with it the problem of the union of this Christendom or of this Europe which, though more than once conceived by individual statesmen or political thinkers, was never achieved nor even the first steps attempted. Before its difficulties could be solved, the modern movement with its unifying forces has presented to us the new and more complex phenomenon of a number of nation-units and empire-units embedded in the loose, but growing life-interdependence and commercial close-connection of mankind, and the attendant problem of the unification of mankind already overshadows the unfulfilled dream of the unification of Europe.

In physical Nature vital organisms cannot live entirely on themselves; they live either by interchange with other vital organisms or partly by that interchange and partly by devouring others; for these are the processes of assimilation common to separated physical life. In unification of life, on the other hand, an assimilation is possible which goes beyond this alternative of either the devouring of one by another or a continued separate

distinctness which limits assimilation to a mutual reception of the energies discharged by one life upon another. There can be instead an association of units consciously subordinating themselves to a general unity which is developed in the process of their coming together. Some of these, indeed, are killed and used as material for new elements, but all cannot be so treated, all cannot be devoured by one dominant unit; for in that case there is no unification, no creation of a larger unity, no continued greater life, but only a temporary survival of the devourer by the digestion and utilisation of the energy of the devoured. In the unification of human aggregates, this then is the problem, how the component units shall be subordinated to a new unity without their death and disappearance.

The weakness of the old empire-unities created by conquest was that they tended to destroy the smaller units they assimilated, as did imperial Rome, and to turn them into food for the life of the dominant organ. Gaul, Spain, Africa, Egypt were thus killed, turned into dead matter and their energy drawn into the centre, Rome; thus the empire became a great dying mass on which the life of Rome fed for several centuries. In such a method, however, the exhaustion of the life in the subject parts must end by leaving the dominant voracious centre without any source for new storage of energy. At first the best intellectual force of the conquered provinces flowed to Rome and their vital energy poured into it a great supply of military force and governing ability, but eventually both failed and first the intellectual energy of Rome and then its military and political ability died away in the midst of the general death. Nor would Roman civilisation have lived even for so long but for the new ideas and motives it received from the East. This interchange, however, had neither the vividness nor the constant flow which marks the incoming and the return of ever new tides of thought and motives of life in the modern world and it could not really revivify the low vitality of the imperial body nor even arrest very long the process of its decay. When the Roman grasp loosened, the world which it had held so firmly constricted had been for long a huge, decorous, magnificently organised death-in-life incapable of new

origination or self-regeneration; vitality could only be restored through the inrush of the vigorous barbarian world from the plains of Germany, the steppes beyond the Danube and the deserts of Arabia. Dissolution had to precede a movement of sounder construction.

In the mediaeval period of nation-building, we see Nature mending this earlier error. When we speak indeed of the errors of Nature, we use a figure illegitimately borrowed from our human psychology and experience; for in Nature there are no errors but only the deliberate measure of her paces traced and retraced in a prefigured rhythm, of which each step has a meaning and its place in the action and reaction of her gradual advance. The crushing domination of Roman uniformity was a device, not to kill out permanently, but to discourage in their excessive separative vitality the old smaller units, so that when they revived again they might not present an insuperable obstacle to the growth of a true national unity. What the mere nation-unity may lose by not passing through this cruel discipline, — we leave aside the danger it brings of an actual death like the Assyrian or Chaldean as well as the spiritual and other gains that may accrue by avoiding it, — is shown in the example of India where the Maurya, Gupta, Andhra, Moghul empires, huge and powerful and well-organised as they were, never succeeded in passing a steam-roller over the too strongly independent life of the subordinate unities from the village community to the regional or linguistic area. It has needed the pressure of a rule neither indigenous in origin nor locally centred, the dominance of a foreign nation entirely alien in culture and morally armoured against the sympathies and attractions of India's cultural atmosphere to do in a century this work which two thousand years of a looser imperialism had failed to accomplish. Such a process implies necessarily a cruel and often dangerous pressure and breaking up of old institutions; for Nature tired of the obstinate immobility of an age-long resistance seems to care little how many beautiful and valuable things are destroyed so long as her main end is accomplished: but we may be sure that if destruction is done, it is because for that end the destruction was indispensable.

In Europe, after the Roman pressure was removed, the city state and regional nation revived as elements of a new construction; but except in one country and curiously enough in Italy itself the city state offered no real resistance to the process of national unification. We may ascribe its strong resuscitation in Italy to two circumstances, first, to the premature Roman oppression of the ancient free city-life of Italy before it had realised its full potentialities and, secondly, to its survival in seed both by the prolonged civil life of Rome itself and by the persistence in the Italian *municipia* of a sense of separate life, oppressed but never quite ground out of existence as was the separate clan-life of Gaul and Spain or the separate city-life of Greece. Thus psychologically the Italian city state neither died satisfied and fulfilled nor was broken up beyond recall; it revived in new incarnations. And this revival was disastrous to the nation-life of Italy, though an incalculable boon and advantage to the culture and civilisation of the world; for as the city-life of Greece had originally created, so the city-life of Italy recovered, renewed and gave in a new form to our modern times the art, literature, thought and science of the Graeco-Roman world. Elsewhere, the city-unit revived only in the shape of the free or half-free municipalities of mediaeval France, Flanders and Germany; and these were at no time an obstacle to unification, but rather helped to form a subconscious basis for it and in the meanwhile to prevent by rich impulses and free movement of thought and art the mediaeval tendency to intellectual uniformity, stagnation and obscuration.

The old clan-nation perished, except in countries like Ireland and Northern and Western Scotland which had not undergone the Roman pressure, and there it was as fatal to unification as the city state in Italy; it prevented Ireland from evolving an organised unity and the Highland Celts from amalgamating with the Anglo-Celtic Scotch nation until the yoke of England passed over them and did what the Roman rule would have done if it had not been stayed in its expansion by the Grampians and the Irish seas. In the rest of Western Europe, the work done by the Roman rule was so sound that even the domination of the

Western countries by the tribal nations of Germany failed to revive the old strongly marked and obstinately separative clan-nation. It created in its stead the regional kingdoms of Germany and the feudal and provincial divisions of France and Spain; but it was only in Germany, which like Ireland and the Scotch highlands had not endured the Roman yoke, that this regional life proved a serious obstacle to unification. In France it seemed for a time to prevent it, but in reality it resisted only long enough to make itself of value as an element of richness and variation in the final French unity. The unexampled perfection of that unity is a sign of the secret wisdom concealed in the prolonged process we watch through the history of France which seems to a superficial glance so miserable and distracted, so long an alternation of anarchy with feudal or monarchic despotism, so different from the gradual, steady and much more orderly development of the national life of England. But in England the necessary variation and richness of the ultimate organism was otherwise provided for by the great difference of the races that formed the new nation and by the persistence of Wales, Ireland and Scotland as separate cultural units with a subordinate self-consciousness of their own in the larger unity.

The European cycle of nation-building differs therefore from the ancient cycle which led from the regional and city state to the empire, first, in its not overshooting itself by proceeding towards a larger unification to the neglect of the necessary intermediate aggregate, secondly, in its slow and ripening progression through three successive stages by which unity was secured and yet the constituent elements not killed nor prematurely nor unduly oppressed by the instruments of unification. The first stage progressed through a long balancing of centripetal and centrifugal tendencies in which the feudal system provided a principle of order and of a loose but still organic unity. The second was a movement of unification and increasing uniformity in which certain features of the ancient imperial system of Rome were repeated, but with a less crushing force and exhausting tendency. It was marked first by the creation of a metropolitan centre which began to draw to it, like Rome, the best life-

energies of all the other parts. A second feature was the growth of an absolute sovereign authority whose function was to impose a legal, administrative, political and linguistic uniformity and centralisation on the national life. A third sign of this movement was the establishment of a governing spiritual head and body which served to impose a similar uniformity of religious thought and intellectual education and opinion. This unifying pressure too far pursued might have ended disastrously like the Roman but for a third stage of revolt and diffusion which broke or subordinated these instruments, feudalism, monarchy, Church authority as soon as their work had been done and substituted a new movement directed towards the diffusion of the national life through a strong and well-organised political, legal, social and cultural freedom and equality. Its trend has been to endeavour that as in the ancient city, so in the modern nation, all classes and all individuals should enjoy the benefits and participate in the free energy of the released national existence.

This third stage of national life enjoys the advantages of unity and sufficient uniformity created by the second and is able to safely utilise anew the possibilities of regional and city-life saved from entire destruction by the first. By these gradations of national progress, it has been made increasingly possible for our modern times to envisage, if and where it is willed or needed, the idea of a federated nation or federal empire based securely upon a fundamental and well-realised psychological unity: this indeed was already achieved in a simple type in Germany and in America. Also we can move now safely, if we will, towards a partial decentralisation through subordinate governments, communes and provincial cities which may help to cure the malady of an excessive metropolitan absorption of the best national energies and facilitate their free circulation through many centres and plexuses. At the same time, we contemplate the organised use of a State intelligently representative of the whole conscious, active, vitalised nation as a means for the perfection of the life of the individual and the community. This is the point which the development of the nation-aggregate has reached at the moment when we are again confronted either, according to future

trends, with the wider problem of the imperial aggregate or the still vaster problems created by the growing cultural unity and commercial and political interdependence of all mankind.

Chapter XIII

The Formation of the Nation-Unit — The Three Stages

THE THREE stages of development which have marked the mediaeval and modern evolution of the nation-type may be regarded as the natural process where a new form of unity has to be created out of complex conditions and heterogeneous materials by an external rather than an internal process. The external method tries always to mould the psychological condition of men into changed forms and habits under the pressure of circumstances and institutions rather than by the direct creation of a new psychological condition which would, on the contrary, develop freely and flexibly its own appropriate and serviceable social forms. In such a process there must be in the nature of things, first, some kind of looser yet sufficiently compelling order of society and common type of civilisation to serve as a framework or scaffolding within which the new edifice shall arise. Next, there must come naturally a period of stringent organisation directed towards unity and centrality of control and perhaps a general levelling and uniformity under that central direction. Last, if the new organism is not to fossilise and stereotype its life, if it is to be still a living and vigorous creation of Nature, there must come a period of free internal development as soon as the formation is assured and unity has become a mental and vital habit. This freer internal activity assured in its heart and at its basis by the formed needs, ideas and instincts of the community will no longer bring with it the peril of disorder, disruption or arrest of the secure growth and formation of the organism.

The form and principle of the first looser system must depend upon the past history and present conditions of the elements that have to be welded into the new unity. But it is

noticeable that both in Europe and Asia there was a common tendency, which we cannot trace to any close interchange of ideas and must therefore attribute to the operation of the same natural cause and necessity, towards the evolution of a social hierarchy based on a division according to four different social activities, — spiritual function, political domination and the double economic function of mercantile production and interchange and dependent labour or service. The spirit, form and equipoise worked out were very different in different parts of the world according to the bent of the community and its circumstances, but the initial principle was almost identical. The motive-force everywhere was the necessity of a large effective form of common social life marked by fixity of status through which individual and small communal interests might be brought under the yoke of a sufficient religious, political and economic unity and likeness. It is notable that Islamic civilisation, with its dominant principle of equality and brotherhood in the faith and its curious institution of a slavery which did not prevent the slave from rising even to the throne, was never able to evolve such a form of society and failed, in spite of its close contact with political and progressive Europe, to develop strong and living, well-organised and conscious nation-units even after the disruption of the empire of the Caliphs; it is only now under the pressure of modern ideas and conditions that this is being done.

But even where this preparatory stage was effectively brought into existence, the subsequent stages did not necessarily follow. The feudal period of Europe with its four orders of the clergy, the king and nobles, the bourgeoisie and the proletariate has a sufficiently close resemblance to the Indian fourfold order of the sacerdotal, military and mercantile classes and the Shudras. The Indian system took its characteristic stamp from a different order of ideas more prominently religious and ethical than political, social or economic; but still, practically, the dominant function of the system was social and economic and there seems at first sight to be no reason why it should not have followed, with whatever differences of detail, the common evolution. Japan with its great feudal order under the spiritual

and secular headship of the Mikado and afterwards the double headship of the Mikado and the Shogun evolved one of the most vigorous and self-conscious nation-units the world has seen. China with its great learned class uniting in one the Brahmin and Kshatriya functions of spiritual and secular knowledge and executive rule and its Emperor and Son of Heaven for head and type of the national unity succeeded in becoming a united nation. The different result in India, apart from other causes, was due to the different evolution of the social order. Elsewhere that evolution turned in the direction of a secular organisation and headship; it created within the nation itself a clear political self-consciousness and, as a consequence, either the subordination of the sacerdotal class to the military and administrative or else their equality or even their fusion under a common spiritual and secular head. In mediaeval India, on the contrary, it turned towards the social dominance of the sacerdotal class and the substitution of a common spiritual for a common political consciousness as the basis of the national feeling. No lasting secular centre was evolved, no great imperial or kingly head which by its prestige, power, antiquity and claim to general reverence and obedience could over-balance or even merely balance this sacerdotal prestige and predominance and create a sense of political as well as spiritual and cultural oneness.

The struggle between the Church and the monarchical State is one of the most important and vital features of the history of Europe. Had that conflict ended in an opposite result, the whole future of humanity would have been in jeopardy. As it was, the Church was obliged to renounce its claim to independence and dominance over the temporal power. Even in the nations which remained Catholic, a real independence and dominance of the temporal authority was successfully vindicated; for the King of France exercised a control over the Gallican Church and clergy which rendered all effective interference of the Pope in French affairs impossible. In Spain, in spite of the close alliance between Pope and King and the theoretical admission of the former's complete spiritual authority, it was really the temporal head who decided the ecclesiastical policy and commanded the

terrors of the Inquisition. In Italy, the immediate presence of the spiritual head of Catholicism in Rome was a great moral obstacle to the development of a politically united nation; the passionate determination of the liberated Italian people to establish its King in Rome was really a symbol of the law that a self-conscious and politically organised nation can have only one supreme and central authority admitted in its midst and that must be the secular power. The nation which has reached or is reaching this stage must either separate the religious and spiritual claim from its common secular and political life by individualising religion or else it must unite the two by the alliance of the State and the Church to uphold the single authority of the temporal head or combine the spiritual and temporal headship in one authority as was done in Japan and China and in England of the Reformation. Even in India the people which first developed some national self-consciousness not of a predominantly spiritual character were the Rajputs, especially of Mewar, to whom the Raja was in every way the head of society and of the nation; and the peoples which having achieved national self-consciousness came nearest to achieving also organised political unity were the Sikhs for whom Guru Govind Singh deliberately devised a common secular and spiritual centre in the Khalsa, and the Mahrattas who not only established a secular head, representative of the conscious nation, but so secularised themselves that, as it were, the whole people indiscriminately, Brahmin and Shudra, became for a time potentially a people of soldiers, politicians and administrators.

In other words, the institution of a fixed social hierarchy, while it seems to have been a necessary stage for the first tendencies of national formation, needed to modify itself and prepare its own dissolution if the later stages were to be rendered possible. An instrument good for a certain work and set of conditions, if it is still retained when other work has to be done and conditions change, becomes necessarily an obstacle. The direction needed was a change from the spiritual authority of one class and the political authority of another to a centralisation of the common life of the evolving nation under a secular rather than

a religious head or, if the religious tendency in the people be too strong to separate things spiritual and temporal, under a national head who shall be the fountain of authority in both departments. Especially was it necessary for the creation of a political self-consciousness, without which no separate nation-unit can be successfully formed, that the sentiments, activities, instruments proper to its creation should for a time take the lead and all others stand behind and support them. A Church or a dominant sacerdotal caste remaining within its own function cannot form the organised political unity of a nation; for it is governed by other than political and administrative considerations and cannot be expected to subordinate to them its own characteristic feelings and interests. It can only be otherwise if the religious caste or sacerdotal class become also as in Tibet the actually ruling political class of the country. In India, the dominance of a caste governed by sacerdotal, religious and partly by spiritual interests and considerations, a caste which dominated thought and society and determined the principles of the national life but did not actually rule and administer, has always stood in the way of the development followed by the more secular-minded European and Mongolian peoples. It is only now after the advent of European civilisation when the Brahmin caste has not only lost the best part of its exclusive hold on the national life but has largely secularised itself, that political and secular considerations have come into the forefront, a pervading political self-consciousness has been awakened and the organised unity of the nation, as distinct from a spiritual and cultural oneness, made possible in fact and not only as an unshaped subconscious tendency.

The second stage of the development of the nation-unit has been, then, the modification of the social structure so as to make room for a powerful and visible centre of political and administrative unity. This stage is necessarily attended by a strong tendency to the abrogation of even such liberties as a fixed social hierarchy provides and the concentration of power in the hands, usually, of a dominant if not always an absolute monarchical government. By modern democratic ideas kingship is only

tolerated either as an inoperative figure-head or a servant of the State life or a convenient centre of the executive administration, it is no longer indispensable as a real control; but the historical importance of a powerful kingship in the evolution of the nation-type, as it actually developed in mediaeval times, cannot be exaggerated. Even in liberty-loving, insular and individualistic England, the Plantagenets and Tudors were the real and active nucleus round which the nation grew into firm form and into adult strength; and in Continental countries the part played by the Capets and their successors in France, by the House of Castile in Spain and by the Romanoffs and their predecessors in Russia is still more prominent. In the last of these instances, one might almost say that without the Ivans, Peters and Catherines there would have been no Russia. And even in modern times, the almost mediaeval role played by the Hohenzollerns in the unification and growth of Germany was watched with an uneasy astonishment by the democratic peoples to whom such a phenomenon was no longer intelligible and seemed hardly to be serious. But we may note also the same phenomenon in the first period of formation of the new nations of the Balkans. The seeking for a king to centralise and assist their growth, despite all the strange comedies and tragedies which have accompanied it, becomes perfectly intelligible as a manifestation of the sense of the old necessity, not so truly necessary now[1] but felt in the subconscious minds of these peoples. In the new formation of Japan into a nation of the modern type the Mikado played a similar role; the instinct of the renovators brought him out of his helpless seclusion to meet this inner need. The attempt of a brief dictatorship in revolutionary China to convert itself into a new national monarchy may be attributed quite as much to the same feeling in a practical mind as to mere personal ambition.[2] It is a sense of this great role played by the kingship in centralising

[1] Now replaced by the spiritual-political headship of an almost semi-divine Leader in a Führer who incarnates in himself, as it were, the personality of the race.

[2] It should be noted that even the democratic idealism of the modern mind in China has been obliged to crystallise itself round the "leader", a Sun Yat Sen or Chiang Kai Shek and the force of inspiration has depended on the power of this living centre.

and shaping national life at the most critical stage of its growth which explains the tendency common in the East and not altogether absent from the history of the West to invest it with an almost sacred character; it explains also the passionate loyalty with which great national dynasties or their successors have been served even in the moment of their degeneration and downfall.

But this movement of national development, however salutary in its peculiar role, is almost fatally attended with that suppression of the internal liberties of the people which makes the modern mind so naturally though unscientifically harsh in its judgment of the old monarchical absolutism and its tendencies. For always this is a movement of concentration, stringency, uniformity, strong control and one-pointed direction; to universalise one law, one rule, one central authority is the need it has to meet, and therefore its spirit must be to enforce and centralise authority, to narrow or quite suppress liberty and free variation. In England the period of the New Monarchy from Edward IV to Elizabeth, in France the great Bourbon period from Henry IV to Louis XIV, in Spain the epoch which extends from Ferdinand to Philip II, in Russia the rule of Peter the Great and Catherine were the time in which these nations reached their maturity, formed fully and confirmed their spirit and attained to a robust organisation. And all these were periods of absolutism or of movement to absolutism and a certain foundation of uniformity or attempt to found it. This absolutism clothed already in its more primitive garb the reviving idea of the State and its right to impose its will on the life and thought and conscience of the people so as to make it one single, undivided, perfectly efficient and perfectly directed mind and body.[3]

It is from this point of view that we shall most intelligently understand the attempt of the Tudors and the Stuarts to impose both monarchical authority and religious uniformity on the people and seize the real sense of the religious wars in France, the Catholic monarchical rule in Spain with its atrocious method of

[3] Now illustrated with an astonishing completeness in Russia, Germany and Italy — the totalitarian idea.

the Inquisition and the oppressive will of the absolute Czars in Russia to impose also an absolute national Church. The effort failed in England because after Elizabeth it no longer answered to any genuine need; for the nation was already well-formed, strong and secure against disruption from without. Elsewhere it succeeded both in Protestant and Catholic countries, or in the rare cases as in Poland where this movement could not take place or failed, the result was disastrous. Certainly, it was everywhere an outrage on the human soul, but it was not merely due to any natural wickedness of the rulers; it was an inevitable stage in the formation of the nation-unit by political and mechanical means. If it left England the sole country in Europe where liberty could progress by natural gradations, that was due, no doubt, largely to the strong qualities of the people but still more to its fortunate history and insular circumstances.

The monarchical State in this evolution crushed or subordinated the religious liberties of men and made a subservient or conciliated ecclesiastical order the priest of its divine right, Religion the handmaid of a secular throne. It destroyed the liberties of the aristocracy and left it its privileges, and these even were allowed only that it might support and buttress the power of the king. After using the bourgeoisie against the nobles, it destroyed, where it could, its real and living civic liberties and permitted only some outward forms and its parts of special right and privilege. As for the people, they had no liberties to be destroyed. Thus the monarchical State concentrated in its own activities the whole national life. The Church served it with its moral influence, the nobles with their military traditions and ability, the bourgeoisie with the talent or chicane of its lawyers and the literary genius or administrative power of its scholars, thinkers and men of inborn business capacity; the people gave taxes and served with their blood the personal and national ambitions of the monarchy. But all this powerful structure and closely-knit order of things was doomed by its very triumph and predestined to come down either with a crash or by a more or less unwilling gradual abdication before new necessities and agencies. It was tolerated and supported so long as the nation felt consciously or

subconsciously its need and justification; once that was fulfilled and ceased, there came inevitably the old questioning which, now grown fully self-conscious, could no longer be suppressed or permanently resisted. By changing the old order into a mere simulacrum the monarchy had destroyed its own base. The sacerdotal authority of the Church, once questioned on spiritual grounds, could not be long maintained by temporal means, by the sword and the law; the aristocracy keeping its privileges but losing its real functions became odious and questionable to the classes below it; the bourgeoisie conscious of its talent, irritated by its social and political inferiority, awakened by the voice of its thinkers, led the movement of revolt and appealed to the help of the populace; the masses — dumb, oppressed, suffering — rose with this new support which had been denied to them before and overturned the whole social hierarchy. Hence the collapse of the old world and the birth of a new age.

We have already seen the inner justification of this great revolutionary movement. The nation-unit is not formed and does not exist merely for the sake of existing; its purpose is to provide a larger mould of human aggregation in which the race, and not only classes and individuals, may move towards its full human development. So long as the labour of formation continues, this larger development may be held back and authority and order be accepted as the first consideration, but not when the aggregate is sure of its existence and feels the need of an inner expansion. Then the old bonds have to be burst; the means of formation have to be discarded as obstacles to growth. Liberty then becomes the watchword of the race. The ecclesiastical order which suppressed liberty of thought and new ethical and social development, has to be dispossessed of its despotic authority, so that man may be mentally and spiritually free. The monopolies and privileges of the king and aristocracy have to be destroyed, so that all may take their share of the national power, prosperity and activity. Finally, bourgeois capitalism has to be induced or forced to consent to an economic order in which suffering, poverty and exploitation shall be eliminated and the wealth of the community be more equally shared by all who help to create

it. In all directions, men have to come into their own, realise the dignity and freedom of the manhood within them and give play to their utmost capacity.

For liberty is insufficient, justice also is necessary and becomes a pressing demand; the cry for equality arises. Certainly, absolute equality is non-existent in this world; but the word was aimed against the unjust and unnecessary inequalities of the old social order. Under a just social order, there must be an equal opportunity, an equal training for all to develop their faculties and to use them, and, so far as may be, an equal share in the advantages of the aggregate life as the right of all who contribute to the existence, vigour and development of that life by the use of their capacities. As we have noted, this need might have taken the form of an ideal of free cooperation guided and helped by a wise and liberal central authority expressing the common will, but it has actually reverted to the old notion of an absolute and efficient State — no longer monarchical, ecclesiastical, aristocratic but secular, democratic and socialistic — with liberty sacrificed to the need of equality and aggregate efficiency. The psychological causes of this reversion we shall not now consider. Perhaps liberty and equality, liberty and authority, liberty and organised efficiency can never be quite satisfactorily reconciled so long as man individual and aggregate lives by egoism, so long as he cannot undergo a great spiritual and psychological change and rise beyond mere communal association to that third ideal which some vague inner sense made the revolutionary thinkers of France add to their watchwords of liberty and equality, — the greatest of all the three, though till now only an empty word on man's lips, the ideal of fraternity or, less sentimentally and more truly expressed, an inner oneness. That no mechanism social, political, religious has ever created or can create; it must take birth in the soul and rise from hidden and divine depths within.

Chapter XIV

The Possibility of a First Step towards International Unity — Its Enormous Difficulties

THE STUDY of the growth of the nation-unit under the pressure indeed of a growing inner need and idea but by the agency of political, economic and social forces, forms and instruments shows us a progress that began from a loose formation in which various elements were gathered together for unification, proceeded through a period of strong concentration and coercion in which the conscious national ego was developed, fortified and provided with a centre and instruments of its organic life, and passed on to a final period of assured separate existence and internal unity as against outside pressure in which liberty and an active and more and more equal share of all in the benefits of the national life became possible. If the unity of the human race is to be brought about by the same means and agents and in a similar fashion to that of the nation, we should expect it to follow a similar course. That is at least the most visible probability and it seems to be consistent with the natural law of all creation which starts from the loose mass, the more or less amorphous vague of forces and materials and proceeds by contraction, constriction, solidification into a firm mould in which the rich evolution of various forms of life is at last securely possible.

If we consider the actual state of the world and its immediate possibilities, we shall see that a first period of loose formation and imperfect order is inevitable. Neither the intellectual preparation of the human race nor the development of its sentiments nor the economic and political forces and conditions by which it is moved and preoccupied have reached to such a point of inner stress or external pressure as would warrant us in expecting a

total change of the basis of our life or the establishment of a complete or a real unity. There cannot as yet be even a real external unity, far less a psychological oneness. It is true that the vague sense and need of something of the kind has been growing rapidly and the object lesson of the war brought the master idea of the future out of the nascent condition in which it was no more than the generous chimera of a few pacifists or internationalist idealists. It came to be recognised that it contains in itself some force of eventual reality, and the voice of those who would cry it down as the pet notion of intellectual cranks and faddists had no longer the same volume and confidence, because it was no longer so solidly supported by the common sense of the average man, that short-sighted common sense of the material mind which consists in a strong feeling for immediate actualities and an entire blindness to the possibilities of the future. But there has as yet been no long intellectual preparation of a more and more dominant thought cast out by the intellectuals of the age to remould the ideas of common men, nor has there been any such gathering to a head of the growing revolt against present conditions as would make it possible for vast masses of men seized by the passion for an ideal and by the hope of a new happiness for mankind to break up the present basis of things and construct a new scheme of collective life. In another direction, the replacing of the individualistic basis of society by an increasing collectivism, there has been to a large extent such an intellectual preparation and gathering force of revolt; there the war has acted as a precipitative force and brought us much nearer to the possibility of a realised — not necessarily a democratic — State socialism. But there have been no such favourable preconditions for a strong movement of international unification. No great effective outburst of a massed and dynamic idealism in this direction can be reasonably predicted. The preparation may have begun, it may have been greatly facilitated and hastened by recent events, but it is still only in its first stages.

Under such conditions the ideas and schemes of the world's intellectuals who would replan the whole status of international life altogether and from its roots in the light of general principles,

are not likely to find any immediate realisation. In the absence of a general idealistic outburst of creative human hope which would make such changes possible, the future will be shaped not by the ideas of the thinker but by the practical mind of the politician which represents the average reason and temperament of the time and effects usually something much nearer the minimum than the maximum of what is possible. The average general mind of a great mass of men, while it is ready to listen to such ideas as it has been prepared to receive and is accustomed to seize on this or that notion with a partisan avidity, is yet ruled in its action not so much by its thought as by its interests, passions and prejudices. The politician and the statesman — and the world is now full of politicians but very empty of statesmen — act in accordance with this average general mind of the mass; the one is governed by it, the other has always to take it into chief account and cannot lead it where he will, unless he is one of those great geniuses and powerful personalities who unite a large mind and dynamic force of conception with an enormous power or influence over men. Moreover, the political mind has limitations of its own beyond those of the general average mind of the mass; it is even more respectful of the *status quo*, more disinclined to great adventures in which the safe footing of the past has to be abandoned, more incapable of launching out into the uncertain and the new. To do that it must either be forced by general opinion or a powerful interest or else itself fall under the spell of a great new enthusiasm diffused in the mental atmosphere of the times.

If the politician mind is left entirely to itself, we could expect no better tangible result of the greatest international convulsion on record than a rearrangement of frontiers, a redistribution of power and possessions and a few desirable or undesirable developments of international, commercial and other relations. That is one disastrous possibility leading to more disastrous convulsions — so long as the problem is not solved — against which the future of the world is by no means secure. Still, since the mind of humanity has been greatly moved and its sentiments powerfully awakened, since the sense is becoming fairly wide-

spread that the old status of things is no longer tolerable and the undesirability of an international balance reposing on a ring of national egoisms held in check only by mutual fear and hesitation, by ineffective arbitration treaties and Hague tribunals and the blundering discords of a European Concert must be now fairly clear even to the politician mind, we might expect that some serious attempt towards the beginning of a new order should be the result of the moral collapse of the old. The passions and hatreds and selfish national hopes raised by the war must certainly be a great obstacle in the way and may easily render futile or of a momentary stability any such beginning. But, if nothing else, the mere exhaustion and internal reaction produced after the relaxing of the tensity of the struggle, might give time for new ideas, feelings, forces, events to emerge which will counteract this pernicious influence.[1]

Still, the most that we could at all expect must needs be very little. In the internal life of the nations, the ultimate effects of the war cannot fail to be powerful and radical, for there everything is ready, the pressure felt has been enormous and the expansion after it has been removed must be correspondingly great in its results; but in international life we can only look forward at the best to a certain minimum of radical change which, however small, might yet in itself turn out to be an irrevocable departure, a seed of sufficient vitality to ensure the inevitability of future growth. If, indeed, developments had occurred before the end of this world-wide struggle strong enough to change the general mind of Europe, to force the dwarfish thoughts of its rulers into greater depths and generate a more wide-reaching sense of the necessity for radical change than has yet been developed, more might have been hoped for; but as the great conflict drew nearer

[1] Written originally in 1916 before the end of the war. This happier possibility could not immediately materialise, but the growing insecurity, confusion and disorder have made the creation of some international system more and more imperative if modern civilisation is not to collapse in bloodshed and chaos. The result of this necessity has been first the creation of the League of Nations and afterwards the U.N.O.: neither has proved very satisfactory from the political point of view, but henceforward the existence of some such arranged centre of order has become very evidently indispensable.

to its close, no such probability emerged; the dynamic period during which in such a crisis the effective ideas and tendencies of men are formed, passed without the creation of any great and profound impulse. There were only two points on which the general mind of the peoples was powerfully affected. First, there was generated a sense of revolt against the possible repetition of this vast catastrophe; still more strongly felt was the necessity for finding means to prevent the unparalleled dislocation of the economic life of the race which was brought about by the convulsion. Therefore, it is in these two directions that some real development could be expected; for so much must be attempted if the general expectation and desire are to be satisfied and to trifle with these would be to declare the political intelligence of Europe bankrupt. That failure would convict its governments and ruling classes of moral and intellectual impotence and might well in the end provoke a general revolt of the European peoples against their existing institutions and the present blind and rudderless leadership.

There was to be expected, then, some attempt to provide a settled and effective means for the regulation and minimising of war, for the limitation of armaments, for the satisfactory disposal of dangerous disputes and especially, though this presents the greatest difficulty, for meeting that conflict of commercial aims and interests which is now the really effective, although by no means the only factor in the conditions that compel the recurrence of war. If this new arrangement contained in itself the seed of international control, if it turned out to be a first step towards a loose international formation or perhaps contained its elements or initial lines or even a first scheme to which the life of humanity could turn for a mould of growth in its reaching out to a unified existence, then, however rudimentary or unsatisfactory this arrangement might be at first, the future would carry in it an assured promise. Once begun, it would be impossible for mankind to draw back and, whatever difficulties, disappointments, struggles, reactions, checks or brutal interruptions might mark the course of this development, they would be bound to help in the end rather than hinder the final and inevitable result.

Still, it would be vain to hope that the principle of international control will be thoroughly effective at first or that this loose formation, which is likely to be in the beginning half form, half nebula, will prevent farther conflicts, explosions, catastrophes.[2] The difficulties are too great. The mind of the race has not as yet the necessary experience; the intellect of its ruling classes has not acquired the needed minimum of wisdom and foresight; the temperament of the peoples has not developed the indispensable instincts and sentiments. Whatever arrangement is made will proceed on the old basis of national egoisms, hungers, cupidities, self-assertions and will simply endeavour to regulate them just enough to prevent too disastrous collisions. The first means tried will necessarily be insufficient because too much respect will be paid to those very egoisms which it is sought to control. The causes of strife will remain; the temper that engenders it will live on, perhaps exhausted and subdued for a time in certain of its activities, but unexorcised; the means of strife may be controlled but will be allowed to remain. Armaments may be restricted, but will not be abolished; national armies may be limited in numbers — an illusory limitation — but they will be maintained; science will still continue to minister ingeniously to the art of collective massacre. War can only be abolished if national armies are abolished and even then with difficulty, by the development of some other machinery which humanity does not yet know how to form or, even if formed, will not for some time be able or willing perfectly to utilise. And there is no chance of national armies being abolished; for each nation distrusts all the others too much, has too many ambitions and hungers, needs to remain armed, if for nothing else, to guard its markets and keep down its dominions, colonies, subject peoples. Commercial ambitions and rivalries, political pride, dreams, longings, jealousies are not going to disappear as if by the touch of a magic wand merely because Europe has in an insane clash of

[2] This prediction, easy enough to make at that time, and the estimate of its causes have been fully justified by the course of events and the outbreak of a still greater, more disastrous war.

long-ripening ambitions, jealousies and hatreds decimated its manhood and flung in three years the resources of decades into the melting-pot of war. The awakening must go much deeper, lay hold upon much purer roots of action before the psychology of nations will be transmuted into that something "wondrous, rich and strange" which will eliminate war and international collisions from our distressed and stumbling human life.

National egoism remaining, the means of strife remaining, its causes, opportunities, excuses will never be wanting. The present war came because all the leading nations had long been so acting as to make it inevitable; it came because there was a Balkan imbroglio and a Near-Eastern hope and commercial and colonial rivalries in Northern Africa over which the dominant nations had been battling in peace long before one or more of them grasped at the rifle and the shell. Sarajevo and Belgium were mere determining circumstances; to get to the root causes we have to go back as far at least as Agadir and Algeciras. From Morocco to Tripoli, from Tripoli to Thrace and Macedonia, from Macedonia to Herzegovina the electric chain ran with that inevitable logic of causes and results, actions and their fruits which we call Karma, creating minor detonations on its way till it found the inflammable point and created that vast explosion which has filled Europe with blood and ruins. Possibly the Balkan question may be definitively settled, though that is far from certain; possibly the definitive expulsion of Germany from Africa may ease the situation by leaving that continent in the possession of three or four nations who are for the present allies. But even if Germany were expunged from the map and its resentments and ambitions deleted as a European factor, the root causes of strife would remain. There will still be an Asiatic question of the Near and the Far East which may take on new conditions and appearances and regroup its constituent elements, but must remain so fraught with danger that if it is stupidly settled or does not settle itself, it would be fairly safe to predict the next great human collision with Asia as either its first field or its origin. Even if that difficulty is settled, new causes of strife must necessarily develop where the spirit of national

egoism and cupidity seeks for satisfaction; and so long as it lives, satisfaction it must seek and repletion can never permanently satisfy it. The tree must bear its own proper fruit, and Nature is always a diligent gardener.

The limitation of armies and armaments is an illusory remedy. Even if there could be found an effective international means of control, it would cease to operate as soon as the clash of war actually came. The European conflict has shown that, in the course of a war, a country can be turned into a huge factory of arms and a nation convert its whole peaceful manhood into an army. England which started with a small and even insignificant armed force, was able in the course of a single year to raise millions of men and in two to train and equip them and throw them effectively into the balance. This object-lesson is sufficient to show that the limitation of armies and armaments can only lighten the national burden in peace, leaving it by that very fact more resources for the conflict, but cannot prevent or even minimise the disastrous intensity and extension of war. Nor will the construction of a stronger international law with a more effective sanction behind it be an indubitable or a perfect remedy. It is often asserted that this is what is needed; just as in the nation Law has replaced and suppressed the old barbaric method of settling disputes between individuals, families or clans by the arbitration of Might, a similar development ought to be possible in the life of nations. Perhaps in the end; but to expect it to operate successfully at once is to ignore both the real basis of the effective authority of Law and the difference between the constituents of a developed nation and the constituents of that ill-developed international comity which it is proposed to initiate.

The authority of Law in a nation or community does not really depend on any so-called "majesty" or mystic power in man-made rules and enactments. Its real sources of power are two, first, the strong interest of the majority or of a dominant minority or of the community as a whole in maintaining it and, secondly, the possession of a sole armed force, police and military, which makes that interest effective. The metaphorical

sword of justice can only act because there is a real sword behind it to enforce its decrees and its penalties against the rebel and the dissident. And the essential character of this armed force is that it belongs to nobody, to no individual or constituent group of the community except alone to the State, the king or the governing class or body in which sovereign authority is centred. Nor can there be any security if the armed force of the State is balanced or its sole effectivity diminished by the existence of other armed forces belonging to groups and individuals and free in any degree from the central control or able to use their power against the governing authority. Even so, even with this authority backed by a sole and centralised armed force, Law has not been able to prevent strife of a kind between individuals and classes because it has not been able to remove the psychological, economic and other causes of strife. Crime with its penalties is always a kind of mutual violence, a kind of revolt and civil strife and even in the best-policed and most law-abiding communities crime is still rampant. Even the organisation of crime is still possible although it cannot usually endure or fix its power because it has the whole vehement sentiment and effective organisation of the community against it. But what is more to the purpose, Law has not been able to prevent, although it has minimised, the possibility of civil strife and violent or armed discord within the organised nation. Whenever a class or an opinion has thought itself oppressed or treated with intolerable injustice, has found the Law and its armed force so entirely associated with an opposite interest that the suspension of the principle of law and an insurgence of the violence of revolt against the violence of oppression were or appeared the only remedy, it has, if it thought it had a chance of success, appealed to the ancient arbitration of Might. Even in our own days we have seen the most law-abiding of nations staggering on the verge of a disastrous civil war and responsible statesmen declaring their readiness to appeal to it if a measure disagreeable to them were enforced, even though it was passed by the supreme legislative authority with the sanction of the sovereign.

But in any loose international formation presently possible

the armed force would still be divided among its constituent groups; it would belong to them, not to any sovereign authority, superstate or federal council. The position would resemble the chaotic organisation of the feudal ages in which every prince and baron had his separate jurisdiction and military resources and could defy the authority of the sovereign if he were powerful enough or if he could command the necessary number and strength of allies among his peers. And in this case there would not be even the equivalent of a feudal sovereign — a king who, if nothing else, if not really a monarch, was at least the first among his peers with the prestige of sovereignty and some means of developing it into a strong and permanent actuality.

Nor would the matter be much improved if there were a composite armed force of control set over the nations and their separate military strength; for this composite would break apart and its elements return to their conflicting sources on the outbreak of overt strife. In the developed nation the individual is the unit and he is lost among the mass of individuals, unable safely to calculate the force he could command in a conflict, afraid of all other individuals not bound to him because he sees in them natural supporters of outraged authority; revolt is to him a most dangerous and incalculable business, even the initial conspiracy fraught at every moment with a thousand terrors and dangers that lower in terrible massed array against a small modicum of scattered chances. The soldier also is a solitary individual, afraid of all the rest, a terrible punishment suspended over him and ready to fall at the least sign of insubordination, never sure of a confident support among his fellows or, even if a little certain, not assured of any effective support from the civil population and therefore deprived of that moral force which would encourage him to defy the authority of Law and Government. And in his ordinary sentiment he belongs no longer to individual or family or class, but to the State and the country or at the very least to the machine of which he is a part. But here the constituents would be a small number of nations, some of them powerful empires, well able to look around them, measure their own force, make sure of their allies, calculate the forces against

them; the chances of success or failure would be all that they would have to consider. And the soldiers of the composite army would belong at heart to their country and not at all to the nebulous entity which controlled them.

Therefore, pending the actual evolution of an international State so constituted as to be something other than a mere loose conglomerate of nations or rather a palaver of the deputies of national governments, the reign of peace and unity dreamed of by the idealist could never be possible by these political or administrative means or, if possible, could never be secure. Even if war were eliminated, still as in the nation crime between individuals exists, or as other means such as disastrous general strikes are used in the war of classes, so here too other means of strife would be developed, much more disastrous perhaps than war. And even they would be needed and inevitable in the economy of Nature, not only to meet the psychological necessity of egoistic discord and passion and ambition, but as an outlet and an arm for the sense of injustice, of oppressed rights, of thwarted possibilities. The law is always the same, that wherever egoism is the root of action it must bear its own proper results and reactions and, however minimised and kept down they may be by an external machinery, their eventual outburst is sure and can be delayed but not prevented for ever.

It is apparent at least that no loose formation without a powerful central control could be satisfactory, effective or enduring, even if it were much less loose, much more compact than anything that seems at present likely to evolve in the near future. There must be in the nature of things a second step, a movement towards greater rigidity, constriction of national liberties and the erection of a unique central authority with a uniform control over the earth's peoples.

Chapter XV

Some Lines of Fulfilment

WHAT FAVOURED form, force, system among the many that are possible now or likely to emerge hereafter will be entrusted by the secret Will in things with the external unification of mankind, is an interesting and to those who can look beyond the narrow horizon of passing events, a fascinating subject of speculation; but unfortunately it can at present be nothing more. The very multitude of the possibilities in a period of humanity so rife with the most varied and potent forces, so fruitful of new subjective developments and objective mutations creates an impenetrable mist in which only vague forms of giants can be half glimpsed. Certain ideas suggested by the present status of forces and by past experience are all that we can permit ourselves in so hazardous a field.

We have ruled out of consideration as a practical impossibility in the present international conditions and the present state of international mentality and morality the idea of an immediate settlement on the basis of an association of free nationalities, although this would be obviously the ideal basis. For it would take as its founding motive power a harmony of the two great principles actually in presence, nationalism and internationalism. Its adoption would mean that the problem of human unity would be approached at once on a rational and a sound moral basis, a recognition, on one side, of the right of all large natural groupings of men to live and to be themselves and the enthronement of respect for national liberty as an established principle of human conduct, on the other, an adequate sense of the need for order, help, a mutual, a common participation, a common life and interests in the unified and associated human race. The ideal society or State is that in which respect for individual liberty and free growth of the personal being to his perfection is harmonised with respect for the needs, efficiency, solidarity,

natural growth and organic perfection of the corporate being, the society or nation. In an ideal aggregate of all humanity, in the international society or State, national liberty and free national growth and self-realisation ought in the same way to be progressively harmonised with the solidarity and unified growth and perfection of the human race.

Therefore, if this basic principle were admitted, there might indeed be fluctuations due to the difficulty of a perfect working combination, as in the growth of the national aggregate there has been sometimes a stress on liberty and at others a stress on efficiency and order; but since the right conditions of the problem would have been recognised from the beginning and not left to be worked out in a blind tug of war, there would be some chance of an earlier reasonable solution with much less friction and violence in the process.

But there is little chance of such an unprecedented good fortune for mankind. Ideal conditions cannot be expected, for they demand a psychological clarity, a diffused reasonableness and scientific intelligence and, above all, a moral elevation and rectitude to which neither the mass of mankind nor its leaders and rulers have yet made any approach. In their absence, not reason and justice and mutual kindliness, but the trend of forces and their practical and legal adjustment must determine the working out of this as of other problems. And just as the problem of the State and the individual has been troubled and obscured not only by the conflict between individual egoism and the corporate egoism of the society, but by the continual clash between intermediate powers, class strife, quarrels of Church and State, king and nobles, king and commons, aristocracy and demos, capitalist bourgeoisie and labour proletariate, this problem too of nation and international humanity is certain to be troubled by the claims of just such intermediate powers. To say nothing of commercial interests and combinations, cultural or racial sympathies, movements of Pan-Islamism, Pan-Slavism, Pan-Germanism, Pan-Anglo-Saxonism, with a possible Pan-Americanism and Pan-Mongolianism looming up in the future, to say nothing of yet other unborn monsters, there will

always be the great intermediate factor of Imperialism, that huge armed and dominant Titan, that must by its very nature demand its own satisfaction at the cost of every suppressed or inconvenient national unit and assert its own needs as prior to the needs of the new-born international comity. That satisfaction, presumably, it must have for a time, that demand it will be for long impossible to resist. At any rate, to ignore its claims or to imagine that they can be put aside with a spurt of the writer's pen, is to build symmetrical castles on the golden sands of an impracticable idealism.

Forces take the first place in actual effectuation; moral principles, reason, justice only so far as forces can be compelled or persuaded to admit them or, as more often happens, use them as subservient aids or inspiring battle-cries, a camouflage for their own interests. Ideas sometimes leap out as armed forces and break their way through the hedge of unideal powers; sometimes they reverse the position and make interests their subordinate helpers, a fuel for their own blaze; sometimes they conquer by martyrdom: but ordinarily they have to work not only by a half-covert pressure but by accommodation to powerful forces or must even bribe and cajole them or work through and behind them. It cannot be otherwise until the average and the aggregate man become more of an intellectual, moral and spiritual being and less predominantly the vital and emotional half-reasoning human animal. The unrealised international idea will have for some time at least to work by this secondary method and through such accommodations with the realised forces of nationalism and imperialism.

It may be questioned whether by the time that things are ready for the elaboration of a firm and settled system, the idea of a just internationalism based on respect for the principle of free nationalities may not by the efforts of the world's thinkers and intellectuals have made so much progress as to exercise an irresistible pressure on States and Governments and bring about its own acceptation in large part, if not in the entirety of its claims. The answer is that States and Governments yield usually to a moral pressure only so far as it does not compel them to

sacrifice their vital interests. No established empire will easily liberate its dependent parts or allow, unless compelled, a nation now subject to it to sit at the board of an international council as its free equal. The old enthusiasm for liberty is an ideal which made France intervene to aid the evolution of a free Italy or France and England to create a new Greek nation. The national liberties for which respect was demanded during the war even at the point of the sword — or, we should say now, even with the voice of the cannon-shell — were those already established and considered therefore to have the right still to exist. All that was proposed beyond that limit was the restoration to already existing free States of men of their own nationality still under a foreign yoke. It was proposed to realise a greater Serbia, a greater Rumania, the restoration of "unredeemed" Italy, and the return of Alsace-Lorraine to France. Autonomy under Russian sovereignty was all that was promised to Poland till the German victory over Russia altered the interest and with it the idealism of the Allies. Autonomy of a kind under an imperial sovereignty or, where that does not yet exist, under imperial "protection" or "influence" are by many considered as more practical ideas now than the restoration of national freedom. That is a sign perhaps of the obscure growth of the idea of federated empires which we have discussed as one of the possibilities of the future. National liberty as an absolute ideal has no longer the old general acceptation and creative force. Nations struggling for liberty have to depend on their own strength and enthusiasm; they can expect only a tepid or uncertain support except from enthusiastic individuals or small groups whose aid is purely vocal and ineffective. Many even of the most advanced intellectuals warmly approve of the idea of subordinate autonomy for nations now subject, but seem to look with impatience on their velleities of complete independence. Even so far has imperialism travelled on its prosperous road and the imperial aggregate impressed its figure on the freest imaginations as an accomplished power in human progress.

How much farther may not this sentiment travel under the new impulse of humanity to organise its international existence

on larger and more convenient lines! It is even possible that the impatience openly expressed by the German in his imperial days against the continued existence of small nationalities opposing their settled barrier of prescribed rights to large political and commercial combinations may, while softening its rigour, yet justify its claim in the future, may be accepted by the general sense of humanity though in a less brutal, a less arrogant and aggressively egoistic form. That is to say, there may grow up a stronger tendency in the political reason of mankind to desire, perhaps eventually to insist on the rearrangement of States in a system of large imperial combines and not on the basis of a *status quo* of mixed empires and free nationalities.[1]

But even if this development does not take place or does not effect itself in time, the actually existing free and non-imperial States will find themselves included indeed in whatever international council or other system may be established, but this inclusion is likely to be very much like the position of the small nobles in mediaeval times in relation to the great feudal princes, a position rather of vassals than of equals. The war brought into relief the fact that it is only the great Powers that really count in the international scale; all others merely exist by sufferance or by protection or by alliance. So long as the world was arranged on the principle of separate nationalities, this might have been only a latent reality without actually important effects on the life of the smaller nations, but this immunity might cease when the necessity of combined action or a continual active interaction became a recognised part or the foundation of the world-system. The position of a minor State standing out against the will of large Powers or a party of Powers would be worse even than that of small neutrals in the present war or of a private company surrounded by great Trusts. It would be compelled to accept the lead of one group or another of the leviathans around it and its independent weight or action in the council of nations would be nil.

[1] If the ambitions of Italy, Germany and Japan and the Fascist idea generally had triumphed, such an order of things might have eventuated.

Undoubtedly, the right of small nations to exist and assert their interests against imperialistic aggression is still a force; it was one at least of the issues in the international collision. But the assertion of this right against the aggression of a single ambitious Power is one thing; its assertion as against any arrangement for the common interest of the nations decided upon by a majority of the great Powers would very likely in the near future be regarded in quite another light. The inconvenience of a number of small neutrals claiming to stand out and be as little affected as possible by an immense international conflict was acutely felt not only by the actual combatants who were obliged to use sometimes an indirect, sometimes a direct pressure to minimise the inconveniences, but by the smaller neutrals themselves to whom their neutrality was preferable only as a lesser evil than the burden and disaster of active participation in the struggle. In any international system, the self-assertion of these smaller liberties would probably be viewed as a petty egoism and intolerable obstacle to great common interests, or, it may be, to the decision of conflicts between great world-wide interests. It is probable indeed that in any constitution of international unity the great Powers would see to it that their voice was equal to their force and influence; but even if the constitution were outwardly democratic, yet in effect it would become an oligarchy of the great Powers. Constitutions can only disguise facts, they cannot abrogate them: for whatever ideas the form of the constitution may embody, its working is always that of the actually realised forces which can use it with effect. Most governments either have now or have passed through a democratic form, but nowhere yet has there been a real democracy; it has been everywhere the propertied and professional classes and the bourgeoisie who governed in the name of the people. So too in any international council or control it would be a few great empires that would govern in the name of humanity.

At the most, if it were otherwise, it could be only for a short time, unless some new forces came into their own which would arrest or dissolve the tendency now dominant in the world towards large imperial aggregations. The position would then

be for a time very much like that of feudal Europe while it was in abortive travail of a united Christendom, — a great criss-cross of heterogeneous, complicated, overlapping and mutually interpenetrating interests, a number of small Powers counting for something, but overshadowed and partly coerced by a few great Powers, the great Powers working out the inevitable complication of their allied, divided and contrary interests by whatever means the new world-system provided and using for that purpose whatever support of classes, ideas, tendencies, institutions they could find. There would be questions of Asiatic, African, American fiefs and markets; struggles of classes starting as national questions becoming international; Socialism, Anarchism and the remainder of the competitive age of humanity struggling together for predominance; clashes of Europeanism, Asiaticism, Americanism. And from this great tangle some result would have to be worked out. It might well be by methods very different from those with which history has made us so familiar; war might be eliminated or reduced to a rare phenomenon of civil war in the international commonwealth or confederacy; new forms of coercion, such as the commercial which we now see to be growing in frequency, might ordinarily take its place; other devices might be brought into being of which we have at present no conception. But the situation would be essentially the same for humanity in general as has confronted lesser unformed aggregates in the past and would have to progress to similar issues of success, modified realisation or failure.

The most natural simplification of the problem, though not one that looks now possible, would be the division of the world into a few imperial aggregates consisting partly of federal, partly of confederate commonwealths or empires. Although unrealisable with the present strength of national egoisms, the growth of ideas and the force of changing circumstances might some day bring about such a creation and this might lead to a closer confederacy. America seems to be turning dimly towards a better understanding between the increasingly cosmopolitan United States and the Latin republics of Central and South America which may in certain contingencies materialise itself into

a confederate inter-American State. The idea of a confederate Teutonic empire, if Germany and Austria had not been entirely broken by the result of the war, might well have realised itself in the near future; and even though they are now broken it might still realise itself in a more distant future.[2] Similar aggregates may emerge in the Asiatic world. Such a distribution of mankind in large natural aggregates would have the advantage of simplifying a number of difficult world-problems and with the growth of peace, mutual understanding and larger ideas might lead to a comparatively painless aggregation in a World-State.

Another possible solution is suggested by the precedent of the evolution of the nation-type out of its first loose feudal form. As there the continual clash of various forces and equipollent powers necessitated the emergence of one of them, at first only predominant among his equals, the feudal king, into the type of a centralised monarchy, so conceivably, if the empires and nations of the world failed to arrive at a peaceful solution among themselves, if the class troubles, the inter-commercial troubles, the conflict of various new ideas and tendencies resulted in a long confusion and turmoil and constant changing, there might emerge a king-nation with the mission of evolving a real and settled out of a semi-chaotic or half order. We have concluded that the military conquest of the world by a single nation is not possible except under conditions which do not exist and of which there is as yet no visible prospect. But an imperial nation, such as England for example, spread all over the world, possessing the empire of the seas, knowing how to federate successfully its constituent parts and organise their entire potential strength, having the skill to make itself the representative and protector of the most progressive and liberal tendencies of the new times, allying itself with other forces and nations interested in their triumph and showing that it had the secret of a just and effective international organisation, might conceivably become the arbiter of the nations and the effective centre of an

[2] The Nazi Third Reich in Germany seemed for a time to be driving towards the realisation of this possibility in another form, a German empire of central Europe under a totalitarian hegemony.

international government. Such a possibility in any form is as yet extremely remote, but it could become under new circumstances a realisable possibility of the future.

Conceivably, if the task of organising the world proved too difficult, if no lasting agreement could be arrived at or no firmly constituted legal authority created, the task might be undertaken not by a single empire, but by two or three great imperial Powers sufficiently near in interest and united in idea to sink possible differences and jealousies and strong enough to dominate or crush all resistance and enforce some sort of effective international law and government. The process would then be a painful one and might involve much brutality of moral and economic coercion, but if it commanded the prestige of success and evolved some tolerable form of legality and justice or even only of prosperous order, it might in the end conciliate a general moral support and prove a starting-point for freer and better forms.

Yet another possibility that cannot be ignored is that the merely inter-governmental and political evolution which alone we have considered, may be broken in upon by the long-threatened war of classes. Labour internationalism broke down, like every other form of internationalism — scientific, cultural, pacific, religious — under the fierce test of war and during the great crisis the struggle between Labour and Capital was suspended. It was then hoped that after the war the spirit of unity, conciliation and compromise would continue to reign and the threatened conflict would be averted. Nothing in human nature or in history warranted any such confident trust in the hopes of the moment. The interclass conflict has long been threatening like the European collision. The advent of the latter was preceded by large hopes of world-peace and attempts at a European concert and treaties of arbitration which would render war finally impossible. The hope of a concert between Labour and Capital idyllically settling all their acute causes of conflict in amoebaean stanzas of melodious compromise for the sake of the higher national interests is likely to be as treacherous and delusive. Even the socialisation of governments and the increasing nationalisation of industry will not remove

the root cause of conflict. For there will still remain the crucial question of the form and conditions of the new State socialism, whether it shall be regulated in the interests of Labour or of the capitalistic State and whether its direction shall be democratic by the workers themselves or oligarchic or bureaucratic by the present directing classes. This question may well lead to struggles which may easily grow into an international or at least an inter-European conflict; it might even rend each nation in two instead of uniting it as in the war crisis. And the results of such a struggle may have an incalculable effect, either in changing the ideas and life of men dynamically in new directions or in breaking down the barriers of existing nations and empires.[3]

[3] This hypothetic forecast was fully justified — and tended to become more and more so — by the post-war developments of national and international life. The internecine butchery in Spain, the development of two opposite types of Socialism in Russia, Italy and Germany, the uneasy political situation in France were examples of the fulfilment of these tendencies. But this tendency has reached its acme in the emergence of Communism and it now seems probable that the future will belong to a struggle between Communism and a surviving capitalistic Industrialism in the New World or even between Communism and a more moderate system of social democracy in the two continents of the Old World. But generally speaking, speculations noted down in this chapter at a time when the possibilities of the future were very different from what they are now and all was in a flux and welter of dubious confusion, are out of date since an even more stupendous conflict has intervened and swept the previous existing conditions out of existence. Nevertheless, some of them still survive and threaten the safe evolution of the new tentative world-order or, indeed, any future world-order.

Chapter XVI

The Problem of Uniformity and Liberty

THE QUESTION with which we started has reached some kind of answer. After sounding as thoroughly as our lights permit the possibility of a political and administrative unification of mankind by political and economic motives and through purely political and administrative means, it has been concluded that it is not only possible, but that the thoughts and tendencies of mankind and the result of current events and existing forces and necessities have turned decisively in this direction. This is one of the dominant drifts which the World-Nature has thrown up in the flow of human development and it is the logical consequence of the past history of mankind and of our present circumstances. At the same time nothing justifies us in predicting its painless or rapid development or even its sure and eventual success. We have seen some of the difficulties in the way; we have seen also what are the lines on which it may practically proceed to the overcoming of those difficulties. We have concluded that the one line it is not likely to take is the ideal, that which justice and the highest expediency and the best thought of mankind demand, that which would ensure it the greatest possibility of an enduring success. It is not likely to take perfectly, until a probably much later period of our collective evolution, the form of a federation of free and equal nations or adopt as its motive a perfect harmony between the contending principles of nationalism and internationalism.

And now we have to consider the second aspect of the problem, its effect on the springs of human life and progress. The political and administrative unification of mankind is not only possible but foreshadowed by our present evolution; the collective national egoism which resists it may be overborne by

an increasing flood of the present unifying tendency to which the anguish of the European war gave a body and an articulate voice. But the question remains whether not in its first loose formation, but as it develops and becomes more complete and even vigorous, a strictly unified order will not necessarily involve a considerable overriding of the liberties of mankind, individual and collective, and an oppressive mechanism by which the free development of the soul-life of humanity will be for some time at least seriously hindered or restricted or in danger of an excessive repression. We have seen that a period of loose formation is in such developments usually followed by a period of restriction and constriction in which a more rigid unification will be attempted so that firm moulds may be given to the new unity. And this has meant in past unifications and is likely to mean here also a suppression of that principle of liberty in human life which is the most precious gain of humanity's past spiritual, political and social struggles. The old circle of progression by retrogression is likely to work itself out again on this new line of advance.

Such a development would be not only probable, but inevitable if the unification of mankind proceeded in accordance with the Germanic gospel of the increasing domination of the world by the one fit empire, nation, race. It would be equally inevitable if the means employed by Destiny were the domination of humanity by two or three great imperial nations; or if the effectuating force were a closely organised united Europe which would, developing the scheme of a certain kind of political thinkers, take in hand the rest of the world and hold the darker-coloured races of mankind in tutelage for an indefinite period.

The ostensible object and justification of such a tutelage would be to civilise, that is to say, to Europeanise the less developed races. Practically, we know that it would mean their exploitation, since in the course of human nature the benevolent but forceful guardian would feel himself justified in making the best profit out of his advantageous situation, always of course in the interest at once of his own development and that of the world in general. The regime would rest upon superior force for

its maintenance and oppose itself to the velleities of freedom in the governed on the ground either that they were unfit or that the aspiration was immature, two arguments that may well remain valid for ever, since they can never be refuted to the satisfaction of those who advance them. At first this regime might be so worked as to preserve the principle of individual liberty for the governing races while enforcing a beneficial subjection upon the ruled; but that could not endure. The experience of the past teaches us that the habit of preferring the principle of authority to the principle of liberty is engendered in an imperial people, reacts upon it at home and leads it first insensibly and then by change of thought and the development of a fate in circumstances to the sacrifice of its own inner freedom. There could be only two outlets to such a situation, either the growth of the principle of liberty among the peoples still subject or, let us say, administered by others for their own benefit, or else its general decline in the world. Either the higher state must envelop from above or the lower from below; they cannot subsist perpetually together in the same human economy. But nine times out of ten, in the absence of circumstances ending the connection, it is the unhappier possibility that conquers.[1]

All these means of unification would proceed practically by the use of force and compulsion and any deliberately planned, prolonged and extended use of restrictive means tends to discourage the respect for the principle of liberty in those who apply the compulsion as well as the fact of liberty in those to whom it is applied. It favours the growth of the opposite principle of dominating authority whose whole tendency is to introduce rigidity, uniformity, a mechanised and therefore eventually an unprogressive system of life. This is a psychological relation of cause and effect whose working cannot be avoided except by taking care to found all use of authority on the widest possible basis of free consent. But by their very nature and origin the

[1] These considerations have now become irrelevant to the actual condition of things. Asia is now for the most part free or in the process of liberation, the idea of a dominant West or a dominant Europe has no longer any force and has indeed receded out of men's minds and practically out of existence.

regimes of unification thus introduced would be debarred from the free employment of this corrective; for they would have to proceed by compulsion of what might be very largely a reluctant material and the imposing of their will for the elimination of all resisting forces and tendencies. They would be compelled to repress, diminish, perhaps even abolish all forms of liberty which their experience found to be used for fostering the spirit of revolt or of resistance; that is to say, all those larger liberties of free action and free self-expression which make up the best, the most vigorous, the most stimulating part of human freedom. They would be obliged to abolish, first by violence and then by legal suppression and repression, all the elements of what we now call national freedom; in the process individual liberty would be destroyed both in the parts of humanity coerced and, by inevitable reaction and contagion, in the imperial nation or nations. Relapse in this direction is always easy, because the assertion of his human dignity and freedom is a virtue man has only acquired by long evolution and painful endeavour; to respect the freedom of others he is still less naturally prone, though without it his own liberty can never be really secure; but to oppress and dominate where he can — often, be it noted, with excellent motives — and otherwise to be half dupe and half serf of those who can dominate, are his inborn animal propensities. Therefore in fact all unnecessary restriction of the few common liberties man has been able to organise for himself becomes a step backward, whatever immediate gain it may bring; and every organisation of oppression or repression beyond what the imperfect conditions of human nature and society render inevitable, becomes, no matter where or by whom it is practised, a blow to the progress of the whole race.

If, on the other hand, the formal unification of the race is effectuated by a combination of free nations and empires and if these empires strive to become psychological realities and therefore free organisms, or if by that time the race has advanced so far that the principle of free national or cultural grouping within a unified mankind can be adopted, then the danger of retrogression will be greatly diminished. Still, it will

exist. For, as we have seen, the principle of order, of uniformity is the natural tendency of a period of unification. The principle of liberty offers a natural obstacle to the growth of uniformity and, although perfectly reconcilable with a true order and easily coexistent with an order already established into which it has been fitted, is not so easily reconciled as a matter of practice with a new order which demands from it new sacrifices for which it is not yet psychologically prepared. This in itself need not matter; for all movement forward implies a certain amount of friction and difficulty of adjustment, and if in the process liberty suffered a few shocks on one side and order a few shocks on the other, they would still shake down easily enough into a new adjustment after a certain amount of experience. Unfortunately, it is the nature of every self-asserting tendency or principle in the hour of its growth, when it finds circumstances favourable, to over-assert itself and exaggerate its claim, to carry its impulses to a one-sided fruition, to affirm its despotic rule and to depress and even to trample upon other tendencies and principles and especially on those which it instinctively feels to be the farthest removed from its own nature. And if it finds a resistance in these opposite powers, then its impulse of self-assertion becomes angry, violent, tyrannical; instead of the friction of adjustment we have an inimical struggle stumbling through violent vicissitudes, action and reaction, evolution and revolution till one side or the other prevails in the conflict.

This is what has happened in the past development of mankind; the struggle of order and uniformity against liberty has been the dominant fact of all great human formations and developments — religious, social, political. There is as yet no apparent ground for predicting a more reasonable principle of development in the near future. Man seems indeed to be becoming more generally a reasoning animal than in any known past period of his history, but he has not by that become, except in one or two directions, much more of a reasonable mind and a harmonious spirit; for he still uses his reason much more commonly to justify strife and mutual contradiction than to arrive at a wise agreement. And always his mind and reason are very

much at the mercy of his vital desires and passions. Therefore we must suppose that even under the best circumstances the old method of development will assert itself and the old struggle be renewed in the attempt at human unification. The principle of authority and order will attempt a mechanical organisation; the principle of liberty will resist and claim a more flexible, free and spacious system. The two ancient enemies will struggle for the control of the human unity as they did in the past for the control of the growing form of the nation. In the process, the circumstances being favourable to the narrower power, both national and individual liberty are likely to go to the wall — happy if they are not set against it before a firing platoon of laws and restrictions to receive a military quietus.

This might not happen if within the nations themselves the spirit of individual liberty still flourished in its old vigour; for that would then demand, both from an innate sympathy and for its own sake, respect for the liberties of all the constituent nations. But, as far as all present appearances go to show, we are entering into a period in which the ideal of individual liberty is destined to an entire eclipse under the shadow of the State idea, if not to a sort of temporary death or at least of long stupor, coma and hibernation. The constriction and mechanisation of the unifying process is likely to coincide with a simultaneous process of constriction and mechanisation within each constituting unit. Where then in this double process will the spirit of liberty find its safeguard or its alimentation? The old practical formulations of freedom would disappear in the double process and the only hope of healthy progress would lie in a new formulation of liberty produced by a new powerful movement spiritual or intellectual of the human mind which will reconcile individual liberty with the collective ideal of a communal life and the liberty of the group-unit with the new-born necessity of a more united life for the human race.

Meanwhile, we have to consider how far it is either likely or possible to carry the principle of unification in those more outward and mechanical aspects which the external, that is to say, political and administrative method is prone to favour, and

how far they will in their more extreme formulations favour or retard the true progress of the race to its perfection. We have to consider how far the principle of nationality itself is likely to be affected, whether there is any chance of its entire dissolution or, if it is preserved, what place the subordinated nation-unit will take in the new united life. This involves the question of control, the idea of the "Parliament of Man" and other ideas of political organisation as applied to this new portentous problem in the science of collective living. Thirdly, there is the question of uniformity and how far uniformity is either healthful to the race or necessary to unity. It is evident that we enter here upon problems which we shall have to treat in a much more abstract fashion and with much less sense of actuality than those we have till now been handling. For all this is in the dark future, and all the light we can have is from past experience and the general principles of life and nature and sociology; the present gives us only a dim light on the solution which plunges a little further on in Time into a shadowy darkness full of incalculable possibilities. We can foresee nothing; we can only speculate and lay down principles.

We see that there are always two extreme possibilities with a number of more or less probable compromises. The nation is at present the firm group-unit of the human aggregation to which all other units tend to subordinate themselves; even the imperial has hitherto been only a development of the national and empires have existed in recent times, not consciously for the sake of a wider aggregation as did the imperial Roman world, but to serve the instinct of domination and expansion, the land hunger, money hunger, commodity hunger, the vital, intellectual, cultural aggressiveness of powerful and prosperous nations. This, however, does not secure the nation-unit from eventual dissolution in a larger principle of aggregation. Group-units there must always be in any human unity, even the most entire, intolerant and uniform, for that is the very principle not only of human nature, but of life and of every aggregation; we strike here on a fundamental law of universal existence, on the fundamental mathematics and physics of creation. But

it does not follow that the nation need persist as the group-unit. It may disappear altogether; even now the rejection of the nation-idea has begun, the opposite idea of the *sans-patrie*, the citizen of the world, has been born and was a growing force before the war; and though temporarily overborne, silenced and discouraged, it is by no means slain, but is likely to revive with an increased violence hereafter. On the other hand, the nation-idea may persist in full vitality or may assert in the event — after whatever struggle and apparent decline — its life, its freedom, its vigorous particularism within the larger unity. Finally, it may persist, but with a reduced and subjected vitality, or even without real vitality or any living spirit of particularism or separatism, as a convenience, an administrative rather than a psychological fact like a French department or an English county. But still it may preserve just sufficient mechanical distinctness to form a starting-point for that subsequent dissolution of human unity which will come about inevitably if the unification is more mechanical than real, — if, that is to say, it continues to be governed by the political and administrative motive, supported by the experience of economic and social or merely cultural ease and convenience and fails to serve as a material basis for the spiritual oneness of mankind.

So also with the ideal of uniformity; for with many minds, especially those of a rigid, mechanical cast, those in which logic and intellectuality are stronger than the imagination and the free vital instinct or those which are easily seduced by the beauty of an idea and prone to forget its limitations, uniformity is an ideal, even sometimes the highest ideal of which they can think. The uniformity of mankind is not an impossible eventuality, even though impracticable in the present circumstances and in certain directions hardly conceivable except in a far distant future. For certainly there is or has been an immense drive towards uniformity of life habits, uniformity of knowledge, uniformity political, social, economic, educational, and all this, if followed out to its final conclusion, will lead naturally to a uniformity of culture. If that were realised, the one barrier left against a dead level of complete uniformity would be the difference

of language; for language creates and determines thought even while it is created and determined by it, and so long as there is difference of language there will always be a certain amount of free variation of thought, of knowledge and of culture. But it is easily conceivable that the general uniformity of culture and intimate association of life will give irresistible force to the need already felt of a universal language, and a universal language once created or once adopted may end by killing out the regional languages as Latin killed out the languages of Gaul, Spain and Italy or as English has killed out Cornish, Gaelic, Erse and has been encroaching on the Welsh tongue. On the other hand, there is a revival nowadays, due to the growing subjectivism of the human mind, of the principle of free variation and refusal of uniformity. If this tendency triumphs, the unification of the race will have so to organise itself as to respect the free culture, thought, life of its constituent units. But there is also the third possibility of a dominant uniformity which will allow or even encourage such minor variations as do not threaten the foundations of its rule. And here again the variations may be within their limits vital, forceful, to a certain extent particularist though not separatist, or they may be quite minor tones and shades, yet sufficient to form a starting-point for the dissolution of uniformity into a new cycle of various progress.

So again with the governing organisation of the human race. It may be a rigid regimentation under a central authority such as certain socialistic schemes envisage for the nation, a regime suppressing all individual and regional liberty in the interests of a close and uniform organisation of human training, economic life, social habits, morals, knowledge, religion even, every department of human activity. Such a development may seem impossible, as it would be indeed impracticable in the near future, because of the immense masses it would have to embrace, the difficulties it would have to surmount, the many problems that would have to be solved before it could become possible. But this idea of impossibility leaves out of consideration two important factors, the growth of Science with its increasingly easy manipulation of huge masses — witness the present war

— and of large-scale problems and the rapid march of Socialism.[2] Supposing the triumph of the socialistic idea — or of its practice, in whatever disguise — in all the continents, it might naturally lead to an international socialisation which would be rendered possible by the growth of science and scientific organisation and by the annihilation of space difficulties and numerical difficulties. On the other hand, it is possible that after a cycle of violent struggle between the ideal of regimentation and the ideal of liberty the socialistic period of mankind might prove comparatively of brief duration like that of monarchical absolutism in Europe and might be followed by another more inspired by the principles of philosophic Anarchism, that is to say, of unity based upon the completest individual freedom and freedom also of natural unforced grouping. A compromise might also be reached, a dominant regimentation with a subordinate freedom more or less vital, but even if less vital, yet a starting-point for the dissolution of the regime when humanity begins to feel that regimentation is not its ultimate destiny and that a fresh cycle of search and experiment has become again indispensable to its future.

It is impossible here to consider these large questions with any thoroughness. To throw out certain ideas which may guide us in our approach to the problem of unification is all that we can attempt. The problem is vast and obscure and even a ray of light upon it here and there may help to diminish its difficulty and darkness.

[2] Even such apparent reactions as the now-defeated Fascist regime in Italy merely prepare or embody new possibilities of the principle of State control and direction which is the essence of Socialism.

The Ideal of Human Unity

Part II

Chapter XVII

Nature's Law in Our Progress — Unity in Diversity, Law and Liberty

FOR MAN alone of terrestrial creatures to live rightly involves the necessity of knowing rightly, whether, as rationalism pretends, by the sole or dominant instrumentation of his reason or, more largely and complexly, by the sum of his faculties; and what he has to know is the true nature of being and its constant self-effectuation in the values of life, in less abstract language the law of Nature and especially of his own nature, the forces within him and around him and their right utilisation for his own greater perfection and happiness or for that and the greater perfection and happiness of his fellow-creatures. In the old phrase his business is to learn to live according to Nature. But Nature can no longer be imaged, as once it was, as an eternal right rule from which man has wandered, since it is rather a thing itself changing, progressing, evolving, ascending from height to more elevated height, widening from limit to broader limit of its own possibilities. Yet in all this changing there are certain eternal principles or truths of being which remain the same and upon them as bedrock, with them as a primary material and within them as a framework our progress and perfection are compelled to take place. Otherwise there would be an infinite chaos and not a world ordered even in the clash of its forces.

The subhuman life of animal and plant is not subjected to this necessity of knowledge nor of that which is the necessary accompaniment of knowledge, a conscious will impelled always to execute what knowledge perceives. By this exemption it is saved from an immense amount of error, deformation and disease, for it lives spontaneously according to Nature, its knowledge and will are hers and incapable, whether conscient or subconscient, of variation from her laws and dictates. Man seems, on the

contrary, to possess a power of turning his mind and will upon Nature and a possibility of governing her movement, even of varying from the course she dictates to him. But here there is really a deformative trick of language. For man's mentality is also a part of Nature; his mentality is even the most important, if not the largest part of his nature. It is, we may say, Nature become partly conscious of her own laws and forces, conscious of her struggle of progression and inspired with the conscious will to impose a higher and higher law on her own processes of life and being. In subhuman life there is a vital and physical struggle, but no mental conflict. Man is subjected to this mental conflict and is therefore at war not only with others but with himself; and because he is capable of this war with himself, he is also capable of that which is denied to the animal, of an inner evolution, a progression from higher to higher type, a constant self-transcending.

This evolution takes place at present by a conflict and progress of ideas applied to life. In their primary aspect human ideas of life are simply a mental translation of the forces and tendencies of life itself as they emerge in the form of needs, desires and interests. The human mind has a practical intelligence more or less clear and exact which takes these things into account and gives to one and another a greater or less value according to its own experience, preference and judgment. Some the man accepts and helps in their growth by his will and intelligence, others he rejects, discourages and even succeeds in eliminating. But from this elementary process there emerges a second and more advanced character of man's ideas about life; he passes beyond the mere mental translation and ready dynamic handling to a regulated valuation of the forces and tendencies that have emerged or are emerging in him and his environment. He studies them as fixed processes and rules of Nature and endeavours to understand their law and norm. He tries to determine the laws of his mind and life and body, the law and rule of the facts and forces about him that constitute his environment and determine the field and the mould of his action. Since we are imperfect and evolutionary beings, this study of the laws of life is bound to

envisage two aspects: it perceives the rule of what is and the rule of what may or ought to be, the law of our actualities and the law of our potentialities. The latter takes for the human intellect which tends always to an arbitrary and emphatic statement of things, the form of a fixed ideal standard or set of principles from which our actual life is a fall and deviation or towards which it is a progress and aspiration.

The evolutionary idea of Nature and life brings us to a profounder view. Both what is and what may be are expressions of the same constant facts of existence and forces or powers of our Nature from which we cannot and are not meant to escape, since all life is Nature fulfilling itself and not Nature destroying or denying itself; but we may raise and we are intended to raise, change and widen the forms, arrangements and values of these constant facts and forces of our nature and existence, and in the course of our progress the change and perfectioning may amount to what seems a radical transformation, although nothing essential is altered. Our actualities are the form and value or power of expression to which our nature and life have attained; their norm or law is the fixed arrangement and process proper to that stage of evolution. Our potentialities point us to a new form, value, power of expression with their new and appropriate arrangement and process which is their proper law and norm. Standing thus between the actual and the possible, our intellect tends to mistake present law and form for the eternal law of our nature and existence and regard any change as a deviation and fall or else, on the contrary, to mistake some future and potential law and form for our ideal rule of life and all actual deviation from that as an error or sin of our nature. In reality, only that is eternal which is constant through all changes and our ideal can be no more than a progressive expression of it. Only the utmost limit of height, wideness and fullness of self-expression possible to man, if any such limit there be, could be regarded, did we know of it, — and as yet we do not know our utmost possibilities, — as the eternal ideal.

Whatever the ideas or ideals which the human mind extracts from life or tries to apply to life, they can be nothing

but the expression of that life itself as it attempts to find more and more and fix higher and higher its own law and realise its potentialities. Our mentality represents the conscious part of the movement of Nature in this progressive self-realisation and self-fulfilment of the values and potentialities of her human way of living. If that mentality were perfect, it would be one in its knowledge and will with the totality of the secret Knowledge and Will which she is trying to bring to the surface and there would be no mental conflict. For we should then be able to identify ourself with her movement, know her aim and follow intelligently her course, — realising the truth on which the Gita lays stress that it is Nature alone that acts and the movements of our mind and life are only the action of her modes. The subhuman life vitally, instinctively and mechanically does this very thing, lives according to Nature within the limits of its type and is free from internal conflict though not from conflict with other life. A superhuman life would reach consciously this perfection, make the secret Knowledge and Will in things its own and fulfil itself through Nature by her free, spontaneous and harmonious movement unhasting, unresting, towards that full development which is her inherent and therefore her predestined aim. Actually, because our mentality is imperfect, we catch only a glimpse of her tendencies and objects and each glimpse we get we erect into an absolute principle or ideal theory of our life and conduct; we see only one side of her process and put that forward as the whole and perfect system which must govern our ordering of our life. Working through the imperfect individual and still more imperfect collective mind, she raises up the facts and powers of our existence as opposing principles and forces to which we attach ourselves through our intellect and emotions, and favouring and depressing now this and now another she leads them in the mind of man through struggle and conflict towards a mutual knowledge and the sense of their mutual necessity and towards a progressively right relation and synthesis of their potentialities which is represented in an increasing harmony and combination of realised powers in the elastic potentiality of human life.

The social evolution of the human race is necessarily a development of the relations between three constant factors, individuals, communities of various sorts and mankind. Each seeks its own fulfilment and satisfaction, but each is compelled to develop them not independently but in relation to the others. The first natural aim of the individual must be his own inner growth and fullness and its expression in his outer life; but this he can only accomplish through his relations with other individuals, to the various kinds of community religious, social, cultural and political to which he belongs and to the idea and need of humanity at large. The community must seek its own fulfilment, but, whatever its strength of mass consciousness and collective organisation, can accomplish its growth only through its individuals under the stress of the circumstances set for it by its environment and subject to the conditions imposed by its relations to other communities and individuals and to humanity at large. Mankind as a whole has at present no consciously organised common life; it has only an inchoate organisation determined much more by circumstances than by human intelligence and will. And yet the idea and the fact of our common human existence, nature, destiny has always exercised its strong influence on human thought and action. One of the chief preoccupations of ethics and religion has been the obligations of man to mankind. The pressure of the large movements and fluctuations of the race has always affected the destinies of its separate communities, and there has been a constant return-pressure of separate communities social, cultural, political, religious to expand and include, if it might be, the totality of the race. And if or when the whole of humanity arrives at an organised common life and seeks a common fulfilment and satisfaction, it can only do it by means of the relation of this whole to its parts and by the aid of the expanding life of individual human beings and of the communities whose progress constitutes the larger terms of the life of the race.

Nature works always through these three terms and none of them can be abolished. She starts from the visible manifestation of the one and the many, from the totality and its constituent

units and creates intermediary unities between the two without which there can be no full development either of the totality or of the units. In the life-type itself she creates always the three terms of genus, species and individual. But while in the animal life she is satisfied to separate rigidly and group summarily, in the human she strives, on the contrary, to override the divisions she has made and lead the whole kind to the sense of unity and the realisation of oneness. Man's communities are formed not so much by the instinctive herding together of a number of individuals of the same genus or species as by local association, community of interests and community of ideas; and these limits tend always to be overcome in the widening of human thoughts and sympathies brought about by the closer intermingling of races, nations, interests, ideas, cultures. Still, if overcome in their separatism, they are not abolished in their fact, because they repose on an essential principle of Nature, — diversity in unity. Therefore it would seem that the ideal or ultimate aim of Nature must be to develop the individual and all individuals to their full capacity, to develop the community and all communities to the full expression of that many-sided existence and potentiality which their differences were created to express, and to evolve the united life of mankind to its full common capacity and satisfaction, not by suppression of the fullness of life of the individual or the smaller commonalty, but by full advantage taken of the diversity which they develop. This would seem the soundest way to increase the total riches of mankind and throw them into a fund of common possession and enjoyment.

The united progress of mankind would thus be realised by a general principle of interchange and assimilation between individual and individual and again between individual and community, between community and community and again between the smaller commonalty and the totality of mankind, between the common life and consciousness of mankind and its freely developing communal and individual constituents. As a matter of fact, although this interchange is what Nature even now contrives to bring about to a certain extent, life is far from being governed by such a principle of free and harmonious mutuality.

There is a struggle, an opposition of ideas, impulses and interests, an attempt of each to profit by various kinds of war on the others, by a kind of intellectual, vital, physical robbery and theft or even by the suppression, devouring, digestion of its fellows rather than by a free and rich interchange. This is the aspect of life which humanity in its highest thought and aspiration knows that it has to transcend, but has either not yet discovered the right means or else has not had the force to apply it. It now endeavours instead to get rid of strife and the disorders of growth by a strong subordination or servitude of the life of the individual to the life of the community and, logically, it will be led to the attempt to get rid of strife between communities by a strong subordination or servitude of the life of the community to the united and organised life of the human race. To remove freedom in order to get rid of disorder, strife and waste, to remove diversity in order to get rid of separatism and jarring complexities is the impulse of order and regimentation by which the arbitrary rigidity of the intellectual reason seeks to substitute its straight line for the difficult curves of the process of Nature.

But freedom is as necessary to life as law and regime; diversity is as necessary as unity to our true completeness. Existence is one only in its essence and totality, in its play it is necessarily multiform. Absolute uniformity would mean the cessation of life, while on the other hand the vigour of the pulse of life may be measured by the richness of the diversities which it creates. At the same time, while diversity is essential for power and fruitfulness of life, unity is necessary for its order, arrangement and stability. Unity we must create, but not necessarily uniformity. If man could realise a perfect spiritual unity, no sort of uniformity would be necessary; for the utmost play of diversity would be securely possible on that foundation. If again he could realise a secure, clear, firmly-held unity in the principle, a rich, even an unlimited diversity in its application might be possible without any fear of disorder, confusion or strife. Because he cannot do either of these things he is tempted always to substitute uniformity for real unity. While the life-power in man demands diversity,

his reason favours uniformity. It prefers it because uniformity gives him a strong and ready illusion of unity in place of the real oneness at which it is so much more difficult to arrive. It prefers it, secondly, because uniformity makes easy for him the otherwise difficult business of law, order and regimentation. It prefers it too because the impulse of the mind in man is to make every considerable diversity an excuse for strife and separation and therefore uniformity seems to him the one secure and easy way to unification. Moreover, uniformity in any one direction or department of life helps him to economise his energies for development in other directions. If he can standardise his economic existence and escape from its problems, he is likely to have more leisure and room to attend to his intellectual and cultural growth. Or again, if he standardises his whole social existence and rejects its farther possible problems, he is likely to have peace and a free mind to attend more energetically to his spiritual development. Even here, however, the complex unity of existence asserts its truth: in the end man's total intellectual and cultural growth suffers by social immobility, — by any restriction or poverty of his economic life; the spiritual existence of the race, if it attains to remote heights, weakens at last in its richness and continued sources of vivacity when it depends on a too standardised and regimented society; the inertia from below rises and touches even the summits.

Owing to the defects of our mentality uniformity has to a certain extent to be admitted and sought after; still the real aim of Nature is a true unity supporting a rich diversity. Her secret is clear enough from the fact that though she moulds on one general plan, she insists always on an infinite variation. The plan of the human form is one, yet no two human beings are precisely alike in their physical characteristics. Human nature is one in its constituents and its grand lines, but no two human beings are precisely alike in their temperament, characteristics and psychological substance. All life is one in its essential plan and principle; even the plant is a recognisable brother of the animal; but the unity of life admits and encourages an infinite variety of types. The natural variation of human communities from each

other proceeds on the same plan as the variation of individuals; each develops its own character, variant principle, natural law. This variation and fundamental following of its own separate law is necessary to its life, but it is equally necessary to the healthy total life of mankind. For the principle of variation does not prevent free interchange, does not oppose the enrichment of all from a common stock and of the common stock by all which we have seen to be the ideal principle of existence; on the contrary, without a secure variation such interchange and mutual assimilation would be out of the question. Therefore we see that in this harmony between our unity and our diversity lies the secret of life; Nature insists equally in all her works upon unity and upon variation. We shall find that a real spiritual and psychological unity can allow a free diversity and dispense with all but the minimum of uniformity which is sufficient to embody the community of nature and of essential principle. Until we can arrive at that perfection, the method of uniformity has to be applied, but we must not over-apply it on peril of discouraging life in the very sources of its power, richness and sane natural self-unfolding.

The quarrel between law and liberty stands on the same ground and moves to the same solution. The diversity, the variation must be a free variation. Nature does not manufacture, does not impose a pattern or a rule from outside; she impels life to grow from within and to assert its own natural law and development modified only by its commerce with its environment. All liberty, individual, national, religious, social, ethical, takes its ground upon this fundamental principle of our existence. By liberty we mean the freedom to obey the law of our being, to grow to our natural self-fulfilment, to find out naturally and freely our harmony with our environment. The dangers and disadvantages of liberty, the disorder, strife, waste and confusion to which its wrong use leads are indeed obvious. But they arise from the absence or defect of the sense of unity between individual and individual, between community and community, which pushes them to assert themselves at the expense of each other instead of growing by mutual help and interchange and

to assert freedom for themselves in the very act of encroaching on the free development of their fellows. If a real, a spiritual and psychological unity were effectuated, liberty would have no perils and disadvantages; for free individuals enamoured of unity would be compelled by themselves, by their own need, to accommodate perfectly their own growth with the growth of their fellows and would not feel themselves complete except in the free growth of others. Because of our present imperfection and the ignorance of our mind and will, law and regimentation have to be called in to restrain and to compel from outside. The facile advantages of a strong law and compulsion are obvious, but equally great are the disadvantages. Such perfection as it succeeds in creating tends to be mechanical and even the order it imposes turns out to be artificial and liable to break down if the yoke is loosened or the restraining grasp withdrawn. Carried too far, an imposed order discourages the principle of natural growth which is the true method of life and may even slay the capacity for real growth. We repress and over-standardise life at our peril; by over-regimentation we crush Nature's initiative and habit of intuitive self-adaptation. Dwarfed or robbed of elasticity, the devitalised individuality, even while it seems outwardly fair and symmetrical, perishes from within. Better anarchy than the long continuance of a law which is not our own or which our real nature cannot assimilate. And all repressive or preventive law is only a makeshift, a substitute for the true law which must develop from within and be not a check on liberty, but its outward image and visible expression. Human society progresses really and vitally in proportion as law becomes the child of freedom; it will reach its perfection when, man having learned to know and become spiritually one with his fellow-man, the spontaneous law of his society exists only as the outward mould of his self-governed inner liberty.

Chapter XVIII

The Ideal Solution — A Free Grouping of Mankind

THESE principles founded on the essential and constant tendencies of Nature in the development of human life ought clearly to be the governing ideas in any intelligent attempt at the unification of the human race. And it might so be done if that unification could be realised after the manner of a Lycurgan constitution or by the law of an ideal Manu, the perfect sage and king. Attempted, as it will be, in very different fashion according to the desires, passions and interests of great masses of men and guided by no better light than the half-enlightened reason of the world's intellectuals and the empirical opportunism of the world's statesmen and politicians, it is likely to be done by a succession of confused experiments, recoils and returns, resistances and persistences; it will progress in spite of human unreason in the midst of a clamour of rival ideas and interests, stumble through a war of principles, advance by a clash of vehement parties ending in more or less clumsy compromises. It may even, as we have said, be managed in the most unideal, though not the most inconvenient method of all, by a certain amount of violence, the domination of a few vast and powerful empires or even the emergence of a single predominant world-empire, a king-state that will be accepted or will impose itself as the arbiter, if not the ruler of mankind. Not any intelligent principle, but necessity and convenience, not urgent light, but urgent power is likely to be the effective force in any political, administrative and economic unification of the race.

Still, though the ideal may not be immediately practicable, it is that to which our action ought more and more to move. And if the best method cannot always be employed, it is well to know the best method, so that in the strife of principles and forces

and interests something of it may enter into our dealings with each other and mitigate the errors, stumblings and sufferings which our ignorance and unreason compel us to pay as the price of our progress. In principle, then, the ideal unification of mankind would be a system in which, as a first rule of common and harmonious life, the human peoples would be allowed to form their own groupings according to their natural divisions of locality, race, culture, economic convenience and not according to the more violent accidents of history or the egoistic will of powerful nations whose policy it must always be to compel the smaller or less timely organised to serve their interests as dependents or obey their commands as subjects. The present arrangement of the world has been worked out by economic forces, by political diplomacies, treaties and purchases and by military violence without regard to any moral principle or any general rule of the good of mankind. It has served roughly certain ends of the World-Force in its development and helped at much cost of bloodshed, suffering, cruelty, oppression and revolt to bring humanity more together. Like all things that, though in themselves unideal, have been and have asserted themselves with force, it has had its justification, not moral but biological, in the necessity of the rough methods which Nature has to use with a half-animal mankind as with her animal creation. But the great step of unification once taken, the artificial arrangements which have resulted would no longer have any reason for existence. It would be so in the first place because the convenience and good of the world at large and not the satisfaction of the egoism, pride and greed of particular nations would be the object to be held in view, in the second because whatever legitimate claim any nation might have upon others, such as necessities of economic well-being and expansion, would be arranged for in a soundly organised world-union or world-state no longer on the principle of strife and competition, but on a principle of cooperation or mutual adjustment or at least of competition regulated by law and equity and just interchange. Therefore no ground would remain for forced and artificial groupings except that of historical tradition or accomplished fact which

would obviously have little weight in a great change of world conditions impossible to achieve unless the race is prepared to break hundreds of traditions and unsettle the great majority of accomplished facts.

The first principle of human unity, groupings being necessary, should be a system of free and natural groupings which would leave no room for internal discords, mutual incompatibilities and repression and revolt as between race and race or people and people. For otherwise the world-state would be founded in part at least upon a system of legalised injustice and repression or at the best upon a principle of force and compulsion, however mitigated. Such a system would contain dissatisfied elements eager to seize upon any hope of change and throw their moral force and whatever material power they might still keep on the side of any velleities that might appear in the race towards disorder, secession, dissolution of the system and perhaps a return to the old order of things. Moral centres of revolt would thus be preserved which, given the restlessness of the human mind, could not fail to have, in periods favourable to them, a great power of contagion and self-diffusion. In fact, any system which would appear to stereotype anomalies, eternise injustice and inequality or rest permanently on a principle of compulsion and forced subjection, could have no security and would be condemned by its very nature to transience.

This was the principal weakness of the drift during the war towards the settlement of the world on the basis of the actual *status quo* that followed the recent world convulsion. Such a settlement must have had the vice of fixing conditions which in their nature must be transient. It would mean not only the rule of this or that nation over dissatisfied foreign minorities but the supremacy of Europe over most of Asia and all Africa. A league or incipient unity of the nations would be equivalent under such conditions to the control of the enormous mass of mankind by an oligarchy of a few white races. Such could not be the principle of a long-enduring settlement of the world. For then one of two alternatives would be inevitable. The new system would have to support by law and force the existing

condition of things and resist any attempt at radical change; but this would lead to an unnatural suppression of great natural and moral forces and in the end a tremendous disorder, perhaps a world-shattering explosion. Or else some general legislative authority and means of change would have to be established by which the judgment and sentiment of mankind would be able to prevail over imperialistic egoisms and which would enable the European, Asiatic and African peoples now subject to make the claims of their growing self-consciousness felt in the councils of the world.[1] But such an authority, interfering with the egoisms of great and powerful empires, would be difficult to establish, slow to act and not by any means at ease in its exercise of power or moral influence or likely to be peaceful or harmonious in its deliberations. It would either reduce itself to a representative of the sentiments and interests of a ruling oligarchy of great Powers or end in such movements of secession and civil war between the States as settled the question of slavery in America. There would be only one other possible issue, — that the liberal sentiments and principles at first aroused by the war in Europe should become settled and permanent forces of action and extend themselves to the dealings of European nations with their non-European dependencies. In other words, it must become a settled political principle with European nations to change the character of their imperialism and convert their empires as soon as might be from artificial into true psychological unities.

But that would end inevitably in the recognition of the principle we have advanced, the arrangement of the world in a system of free and natural and not as hitherto of partly free and partly forced groupings. For a psychological unity could only be assured by a free assent of nations now subject to their inclusion in the imperial aggregate and the power of free assent would imply a power of free dissent and separation. If owing to incompatibility of culture, temperament or economic or other

[1] The League of Nations started with some dim ideal of this kind; but even its first halting attempts at opposing imperial egoisms ended in secession and avoided a civil war among its members only by drawing back from its own commitments. In fact, it was never more than an instrument subservient to the policy of a few great Powers.

interest the psychological unity could not be established, either such separation would be inevitable or else there must be a resort to the old principle of force, — a difficult matter when dealing with great masses of men who must in the course of the new process have arrived at self-consciousness and recovered their united intellectual force and vitality. Imperial unities of this kind must be admitted as a possible, but by no means an inevitable next step in human aggregation easier to realise than a united mankind in present conditions; but such unities could have only two rational purposes, one as a half-way house to the unity of all the nations of the world and an experiment in administrative and economic confederation on a large scale, the other as a means of habituating nations of different race, traditions, colour, civilisation to dwell together in a common political family as the whole human race would have to dwell in any scheme of unity which respected the principle of variation and did not compel a dead level of uniformity. The imperial heterogeneous unit has a value in Nature's processes only as a means towards this greater unity and, where not maintained afterwards by some natural attraction or by some miracle of entire fusion, — a thing improbable, if possible, — would cease to exist once the greater unity was accomplished. On this line of development also and indeed on any line of development the principle of a free and natural grouping of peoples must be the eventual conclusion, the final and perfect basis. It must be so because on no other foundation could the unification of mankind be secure or sound. And it must be so because once unification is firmly accomplished and war and jealous national competition replaced by better methods of intercourse and mutual adjustment, there can be no object in maintaining any other more artificial system, and therefore both reason and convenience would compel the change. The institution of a natural system of grouping would become as much a matter of course as the administrative arrangement of a country according to its natural provinces. And it would be as much a necessity of reason or convenience as the regard necessarily paid in any system of devolution or free federation to race or national sentiment or long-established local unities. Other considerations

might modify the application of the principle, but there would be none that could be strong enough to abrogate it.

The natural unit in such a grouping is the nation, because that is the basis natural evolution has firmly created and seems indeed to have provided with a view to the greater unity. Unless, therefore, unification is put off to a much later date of our history and in the meanwhile the national principle of aggregation loses its force and vitality and is dissolved in some other, the free and natural nation-unit and perhaps the nation-group would be the just and living support of a sound and harmonious world-system. Race still counts and would enter in as an element, but only as a subordinate element. In certain groupings it would predominate and be decisive; in others it would be set at nought partly by a historic and national sentiment overriding differences of language and race, partly by economic and other relations created by local contact or geographical oneness. Cultural unity would count, but need not in all cases prevail; even the united force of race and culture might not be sufficiently strong to be decisive.

The examples of this complexity are everywhere. Switzerland belongs by language, race and culture and even by affinities of sentiment to different national aggregations, two of sentiment and culture, the Latin and the Teutonic, three of race and language, the German, French and Italian, and these differences worked sufficiently to bewilder and divide Swiss sympathies in the clash of nations; but the decisive feeling overriding all others is the sentiment of Helvetian nationality and that would seem to forbid now and always any idea of a voluntary partition or dissolution of Switzerland's long-standing natural, local and historic unity. Alsace belongs predominantly by race, language and early history to a Germanic union, but the German appealed in vain to these titles and laboured in vain to change Alsace-Lorraine into Elsass-Lothringen; the living sentiments and affinities of the people, national, historical, cultural, bound it still to France. Canada and Australia have no geographical connection with the British Isles or with each other and the former would seem to belong by predestination to an American group-unity; but

certainly, in the absence of a change of sentiment not now easily foreseen, both would prefer to belong to a British grouping rather than the one fuse itself into an increasingly cosmopolitan American nation or the other stand apart as an Australasian union. On the other hand the Slavonic and Latin elements of Austro-Hungary, though they belonged by history, geographical position and economic convenience to that empire, moved strongly towards separation and, where local sentiments permitted, to union with their racial, cultural and linguistic kin. If Austria had dealt with her Slav subjects as with the Magyars or had been able to build a national culture of her own out of her German, Slav, Magyar and Italian elements, it would have been otherwise and her unity would have been secure against all external or internal forces of disruption. Race, language, local relations and economic convenience are powerful factors, but what decides must be a dominant psychological element that makes for union. To that subtler force all others, however restless they may be, must succumb; however much they may seek for free particularist expression and self-possession within a larger unity, they must needs subordinate themselves to the more powerful attraction.

For this very reason the basic principle adopted must be a free grouping and not that of some abstract or practical rule or principle of historic tradition or actual status imposed upon the nations. It is easy to build up a system in the mind and propose to erect it on foundations which would be at first sight rational and convenient. At first sight it would seem that the unity of mankind could most rationally and conveniently arrange itself upon the basis of a European grouping, an Asiatic grouping, an American grouping, with two or three sub-groups in America, Latin and English-speaking, three in Asia, the Mongolian, Indian and West-Asian, with Moslem North Africa perhaps as a natural annexe to the third of these, four in Europe, the Latin, Slavonic, Teutonic and Anglo-Celtic, the latter with the colonies that still chose to adhere to it, while Central and Southern Africa might be left to develop under present conditions but with the more humane and progressive principles upon which the sentiment

of a united humanity would insist. Certain of the actual and obvious difficulties might not be of great importance under a better system of things. We know, for instance, that nations closely connected by every apparent tie, are actually divided by stronger antipathies than those more ideative and less actual which separate them from peoples who have with them no tie of affinity. Mongolian Japan and Mongolian China are sharply divided from each other in sentiment; Arab and Turk and Persian, although one in Islamic religion and culture, would not, if their present sentiments towards each other persisted, make an entirely happy family. Scandinavian Norway and Sweden had everything to draw them together and perpetuate their union, — except a strong, if irrational sentiment which made the continuance of that union impossible. But these antipathies really persist only so long as there is some actual unfriendly pressure or sense of subjugation or domination or fear of the oppression of the individuality of one by the other; once that is removed they would be likely to disappear. It is notable, for instance, that since the separation of Norway and Sweden the three Scandinavian States have been increasingly disposed to act together and regard themselves as a natural grouping in Europe. The long antipathy of the Irish and English nations is declining in the actuality of a juster, though still imperfect relation between these two national individualities, as the antipathy of Austrian and Magyar gave way when once a just relation had been established between the two kingdoms. It is easily conceivable therefore that with a system in which the causes of hostility would disappear, natural affinities would prevail and a grouping of the kind imagined might become more easily practicable. It is arguable also that the trend of mankind under a great stress of tendency towards unification would naturally move to the creation of such a symmetry. It may be that a great change and revolution in the world would powerfully and rapidly abolish all the obstacles, as the obstacles of the old regime to a uniform democratic system were abolished in France by the French Revolution. But any such arrangement would be quite impracticable unless and until the actual sentiments of the peoples corresponded with these systems

of rational convenience: the state of the world is at present far removed from any such ideal correspondence.

The idea of a new basis founded on the principle of national sentiment seemed at one time to be taking within a limited field the shape of a practical proposition. It was confined to a European resettlement and even there it was only to be imposed by the logic of war and force upon defeated empires. The others proposed to recognise it for themselves only in a restricted form, Russia by the concession of autonomy to Poland, England by Home Rule in Ireland and a federation with her colonies, while other denials of the principle were still to persist and even perhaps one or two new denials of it to be established in obedience to imperial ambitions and exigencies. A name even was given to this new principle and for a time the idea of self-determination received an official sanction and almost figured as a gospel. However imperfect the application, this practical enforcement of it, if effected, would have meant the physical birth and infancy of a new ideal and would have held forth to the hopes of mankind the prospect of its eventual application in a larger field until it came to be universalised. Even if the victory of the Allies put an end to these high professions, it is no longer possible to consider this ideal of a rearrangement of the world on the basis of free national groupings as an impossible dream, an altogether chimerical ideal.

Still, the forces against it are considerable and it is idle to hope that they will be overcome except after long and difficult struggles. National and imperial egoism is the first and most powerful of the contrary forces. To give up the instinct of domination and the desire still to be rulers and supreme where rule and supremacy have been the reward of past efforts, to sacrifice the advantages of a commercial exploitation of dependencies and colonies which can only be assured by the confirmation of dominance and supremacy, to face disinterestedly the emergence into free national activity of vigorous and sometimes enormous masses of men, once subjects and passive means of self-enrichment but henceforth to be powerful equals and perhaps formidable rivals, is too great a demand upon egoistic

human nature to be easily and spontaneously conceded where concession is not forced upon the mind by actual necessity or the hope of some great and palpable gain that will compensate the immediate and visible loss. There is, too, the claim of Europe, not yet renounced, to hold the rest of the world in the interests of civilisation, by which is meant European civilisation, and to insist upon its acceptance as a condition for the admission of Asiatic races to any kind of equality or freedom. This claim which is destined soon to lose all its force in Asia, has still a strong justification in the actual state of the African continent. For the present, let us note that it works strongly against a wider recognition of the new-born ideal and that until the problems it raises are resolved, the settlement of the world on any such ideal principle must wait upon the evolution of new forces and the coming to a head both in Asia and Europe of yet unaccomplished spiritual, intellectual and material revolutions.[2]

[2] These revolutions have now happened and these obstacles, though not yet entirely, have faded or are fading out of existence.

Chapter XIX

The Drive towards Centralisation and Uniformity — Administration and Control of Foreign Affairs

SUPPOSING the free grouping of the nations according to their natural affinities, sentiments, sense of economic and other convenience to be the final basis of a stable world-union, the next question that arises is what precisely would be the status of these nation-units in the larger and more complex unity of mankind. Would they possess only a nominal separateness and become parts of a machine or retain a real and living individuality and an effective freedom and organic life? Practically, this comes to the question whether the ideal of human unity points to the forcible or at least forceful fusing and welding of mankind into a single vast nation and centralised world-state with many provinces or to its aggregation under a more complex, loose and flexible system into a world-union of free nationalities. If the former more rigorous idea or tendency or need dominated, we must have a period of compression, constriction, negation of national and individual liberties as in the second of the three historical stages of national formation in Europe. This process would end, if entirely successful, in a centralised world-government which would impose its uniform rule and law, uniform administration, uniform economic and educational system, one culture, one social principle, one civilisation, perhaps even one language and one religion on all mankind. Centralised, it would delegate some of its powers to national authorities and councils, but only as the centralised French government — Parliament and bureaucracy — delegate some of their powers to the departmental prefects and councils and their subordinate officials and communes.

Such a state of things seems a sufficiently far-off dream and

assuredly not, except to the rigid doctrinaire, a very beautiful dream. Certainly, it would take a long time to become entirely practicable and would have to be preceded by a period of loose formation corresponding to the feudal unity of France or Germany in mediaeval Europe. Still, at the rate of ever accelerated speed with which the world is beginning to progress and with the gigantic revolutions of international thought, outlook and practice which the future promises, we have to envisage it as not only an ultimate, but, it may very well be, a not immeasurably far-off possibility. If things continued to move persistently, victoriously in one direction and Science still farther to annihilate the obstacles of space and of geographical and mental division which yet exist and to aggrandise its means and powers of vast and close organisation, it might well become feasible within a century or two, at the most within three or four. It would be the logical conclusion of any process in which force and constraint or the predominance of a few great nations or the emergence of a king-state, an empire predominant on sea and land, became the principal instrument of unification. It might come about, supposing some looser unity to be already established, by the triumph throughout the world of the political doctrine and the coming to political power of a party of socialistic and internationalistic doctrinaires alike in mentality to the unitarian Jacobins of the French Revolution who would have no tenderness for the sentiments of the past or for any form of group individualism and would seek to crush out of existence all their visible supports so as to establish perfectly their idea of an absolute human equality and unity.

A system of the kind, however established, by whatever forces, governed by the democratic State idea which inspires modern socialism or by the mere State idea socialistic perhaps, but undemocratic or anti-democratic, would stand upon the principle that perfect unity is only to be realised by uniformity. All thought in fact that seeks to establish unity by mechanical or external means is naturally attracted towards uniformity. Its thesis would seem to be supported by history and the lessons of the past; for in the formation of national unity, the trend to

centralisation and uniformity has been the decisive factor, a condition of uniformity the culminating point. The precedent of the formation of diverse and often conflicting elements of a people into a single national State would naturally be the determining precedent for the formation of the populations of the earth, the human people, into a single world-nation and World-State. In modern times there have been significant examples of the power of this trend towards uniformity which increases as civilisation progresses. The Turkish movement began with the ideal of toleration for all the heterogeneous elements — races, languages, religions, cultures — of the ramshackle Turkish empire, but inevitably the dominant Young Turk element was carried away by the instinct for establishing, even by coercion, a uniform Ottoman culture and Ottoman nationality.[1] Belgium, composed almost equally of Teutonic Flemings and Gallic Walloons, grew into a nationality under the aegis of a Franco-Belgian culture with French as the dominant language; the Fleming movement which should logically have contented itself with equal rights for the two languages, aimed really at a reversal of the whole position and not merely the assertion but the dominance of the Flemish language and an indigenous Flemish culture. Germany, uniting her ancient elements into one body, suffered her existing States with their governments and administrations to continue, but the possibility of considerable diversities thus left open was annulled by the centralisation of national life in Berlin; a nominal separateness existed, but overshadowed by a real and dominant uniformity which all but converted Germany into the image of a larger Prussia in spite of the more democratic and humanistic tendencies and institutions of the Southern States. There are indeed apparent types of a freer kind of federation, Switzerland, the United States, Australia, South Africa, but even here the spirit of uniformity really prevails or tends to prevail in spite of variation in detail and the latitude of free legislation in minor

[1] This trend has found its completion, after the elimination of the Greek element and the loss of the empire, in the small purely Turkish State of today, but curiously the national uniformity has been topped by the association with it and assimilation of European culture and social forms and habits.

matters conceded to the component States. Everywhere unity seems to call for and strive to create a greater or less uniformity as its secure basis.

The first uniformity from which all the rest takes its start is that of a centralised government whose natural function is to create and ensure a uniform administration. A central government is necessary to every aggregate which seeks to arrive at an organic unity of its political and economic life. Although nominally or to begin with this central government may be only an organ created by several States that still claim to be sovereign within their own borders, an instrument to which for convenience' sake they attribute a few of their powers for common objects, yet in fact it tends always to become itself the sovereign body and desires always to concentrate more and more power into its hands and leave only delegated powers to local legislatures and authorities. The practical inconveniences of a looser system strengthen this tendency and weaken gradually the force of the safeguards erected against an encroachment which seems more and more to be entirely beneficial and supported by the logic of general utility. Even in the United States with its strong attachment to its original constitution and slowness in accepting constitutional innovations on other than local lines, the tendency is manifesting itself and would certainly have resulted by this time in great and radical changes if there had not been a Supreme Court missioned to nullify any legislative interference with the original constitution, or if the American policy of aloofness from foreign affairs and complications had not removed the pressure of those necessities that in other nations have aided the central government to engross all real power and convert itself into the source as well as the head or centre of national activities. The traditional policy of the United States, its pacificism, its anti-militarism, its aversion to entanglement in European complications or any close touch with the politics of Europe, its jealousy of interference by the European Powers in American affairs in spite of their possession of colonies and interests in the Western hemisphere, are largely due to the instinct that this separateness is the sole security for the maintenance

of its institutions and the peculiar type of its national life. Once militarised, once cast into the vortex of old-world politics, as it at times threatens to be, nothing could long protect the States from the necessity of large changes in the direction of centralisation and the weakening of the federal principle.[2] Switzerland owes the security of its federal constitution to a similarly self-centred neutrality.

For the growth of national centralisation is due to two primary needs of which the first and most pressing is the necessity of compactness, single-mindedness, a single and concentrated action against other nations, whether for defence against external aggression or for aggression upon others in the pursuit of national interests and ambitions. The centralising effect of war and militarism, its call for a concentration of powers, has been a commonplace of history from the earliest times. It has been the chief factor in the evolution of centralised and absolute monarchies, in the maintenance of close and powerful aristocracies, in the welding together of disparate elements and the discouragement of centrifugal tendencies. The nations which, faced with this necessity, have failed to evolve or to preserve this concentration of powers, have always tended to fare ill in the battle of life, even if they have not shared the fate long endured by Italy and Poland in Europe or by India in Asia. The strength of centralised Japan, the weakness of decentralised China was a standing proof that even in modern conditions the ancient rule holds good. Only yesterday the free States of Western Europe found themselves compelled to suspend all their hard-earned liberties and go back to the ancient Roman device of an irresponsible Senate and even to a covert dictatorship in order to meet the concentrated strength of a nation powerfully centralised and organised for military defence and attack. If the sense of this necessity could covertly or overtly survive the actual duration of war, there can be no doubt that democracy and liberty would

[2] The Roosevelt policy and the difficulties it encountered illustrate vividly the power of these two conflicting forces in the United States; but the trend towards the strengthening of the federal case, however slow, is unmistakable.

receive the most dangerous and possibly fatal blow they have yet suffered since their re-establishment in modern times.[3]

The power of Prussia to take the life of Germany into its grasp was due almost wholly to the sense of an insecure position between two great and hostile nations and to the feeling of encirclement and insecurity for its expansion which was imposed on the Reich by its peculiar placement in Europe. Another example of the same tendency was the strength which the idea of confederation acquired as a result of war in England and her colonies. So long as the colonies could stand aloof and unaffected by England's wars and foreign policy, this idea had little chance of effectuation; but the experience of the war and its embarrassments and the patent inability to compel a concentration of all the potential strength of the empire under a system of almost total decentralisation seem to have made inevitable a tightening up of the loose and easy make of the British Empire which may go very far once the principle has been recognised and put initially into practice.[4] A loose federation in one form or another serves well where peace is the rule; wherever peace is insecure or the struggle of life difficult and menacing, looseness becomes a disadvantage and may turn even into a fatal defect, the opportunity of fate for destruction.

The pressure of peril from without and the need of expansion create only the tendency towards a strong political and military centralisation; the growth of uniformity arises from the need of a close internal organisation of which the centre thus created becomes the instrument. This organisation is partly called for by the same needs as create the instrument, but much more by the advantages of uniformity for a well-ordered social and

[3] Even as it is, the direction of the drive of forces tends to be evidently away from democracy towards a more and more rigid State control and regimentation.

[4] As yet this has only gone so far as equality of status with close consultation in foreign affairs, attempts at a closer economic cooperation, but a continuation of large wars might either according to its fortunes dissolve the still loose or compel a more coherent system. At present, however, this possibility is held back by the arrival of true Dominion Status and the Westminster Statute which make federation unnecessary for any practical purpose and even perhaps undesirable for the sentiment in favour of a practical independence.

economic life based upon a convenience of which life is careless but which the intelligence of man constantly demands, — a clear, simple and, as far as the complexity of life will allow, a facile principle of order. The human intelligence as soon as it begins to order life according to its own fashion and not according to the more instinctively supple and flexible principle of organic order inherent in life, aims necessarily at imitating physical Nature in the fixity of her uniform fundamental principles of arrangement, but tries also to give to them, as much as may be, a uniform application. It drives at the suppression of all important variations. It is only when it has enlarged itself and feels more competent to understand and deal with natural complexities that it finds itself at all at ease in managing what the principle of life seems always to demand, the free variation and subtly diverse application of uniform principles. First of all, in the ordering of a national society, it aims naturally at uniformity in that aspect of it which most nearly concerns the particular need of the centre of order which has been called into existence, its political and military function. It aims first at a sufficient and then at an absolute unity and uniformity of administration.

The monarchies which the need of concentration called into being, drove first at a preliminary concentration, a gathering of the main threads of administration into the hands of the central authority. We see this everywhere, but the stages of the process are most clearly indicated in the political history of France; for there the confusion of feudal separatism and feudal jurisdictions created the most formidable difficulties and yet by a constant centralising insistence and a final violent reaction from their surviving results it was there that they were most successfully resolved and removed. The centralising monarchy, brought to supreme power by the repeated lessons of the English invasions, the Spanish pressure, the civil wars, developed inevitably that absolutism which the great historic figure of Louis XIV so strikingly personifies. His famous dictum, "I am the State", expressed really the need felt by the country of the development of one undisputed sovereign power which should concentrate in itself all military, legislative and administrative authority as against

the loose and almost chaotic organisation of feudal France. The system of the Bourbons aimed first at administrative centralisation and unity, secondarily at a certain amount of administrative uniformity. It could not carry this second aim to an entirely successful conclusion because of its dependence on the aristocracy which it had replaced, but to which it was obliged to leave the confused debris of its feudal privileges. The Revolution made short work of this aristocracy and swept away the relics of the ancient system. In establishing a rigorous uniformity it did not reverse but rather completed the work of the monarchy. An entire unity and uniformity legislative, fiscal, economic, judicial, social was the goal towards which French absolutism, monarchical or democratic, was committed by its original impulse. The rule of the Jacobins and the regime of Napoleon only brought rapidly to fruition what was slowly evolving under the monarchy out of the confused organism of feudal France.

In other countries the movement was less direct and the survival of old institutions even after the loss of their original reason for existence more obstinate; but everywhere in Europe, even in Germany[5] and Russia, the trend has been the same and the eventual result is inevitable. The study of that evolution is of considerable importance for the future; for the difficulties to be surmounted were identical in essence, however different in form and extent, to those which would stand in the way of the evolution of a world-state out of the loose and still confused organism of the modern civilised world.

[5] Note the absolute culmination of this drive in Germany in the unprecedented centralisation, the rigid standardisation and uniformity of the Nationalist Socialist regime under Hitler.

Chapter XX

The Drive towards Economic Centralisation

THE OBJECTIVE organisation of a national unity is not yet complete when it has arrived at the possession of a single central authority and the unity and uniformity of its political, military and strictly administrative functions. There is another side of its organic life, the legislative and its corollary, the judicial function, which is equally important; the exercise of legislative power becomes eventually indeed, although it was not always, the characteristic sign of the sovereign. Logically, one would suppose that the conscious and organised determination of its own rules of life should be the first business of a society from which all others should derive and on which they should be dependent and therefore it would naturally be the earliest to develop. But life develops in obedience to its own law and the pressure of forces and not according to the law and the logic of the self-conscious mind; its first course is determined by the subconscient and is only secondarily and derivatively self-conscious. The development of human society has been no exception to the rule; for man, though in the essence of his nature a mental being, has practically started with a largely mechanical mentality as the conscious living being, Nature's human animal, and only afterwards can he be the self-conscious living being, the self-perfecting Manu. That is the course the individual has had to follow; the group-man follows in the wake of the individual and is always far behind the highest individual development. Therefore, the development of the society as an organism consciously and entirely legislating for its own needs, which should be by the logic of reason the first necessary step, is actually in the logic of life the last and culminative step. It enables the society at last to perfect consciously by means of

the State the whole organisation of its life, military, political, administrative, economic, social, cultural. The completeness of the process depends on the completeness of the development by which the State and society become, as far as that may be, synonymous. That is the importance of democracy; that is the importance also of socialism. They are the sign that the society is getting ready to be an entirely self-conscious and therefore a freely and consciously self-regulating organism.[1] But it must be remarked that modern democracy and modern socialism are only a first crude and bungling attempt at that consummation, an inefficient hint and not a freely intelligent realisation.

At first, in the early stage of society, there is no such thing as what we understand by law, the Roman *lex*; there are only a mass of binding habits, *nomoi*, *mores*, *ācāra*, determined by the inner nature of the group-man and according to the action upon it of the forces and the necessities of his environment. They become *instituta*, things that acquire a fixed and formal status, institutions, and crystallise into laws. Moreover, they embrace the whole life of the society; there is no distinction between the political and administrative, the social and the religious law; these not only all meet in one system, but run inextricably into and are determined by each other. Such was the type of the ancient Jewish law and of the Hindu Shastra which preserved up to recent times this early principle of society in spite of the tendencies of specialisation and separation which have triumphed elsewhere as a result of the normal development of the analytical and practical reason of mankind. This complex customary law evolved indeed, but by a natural development of the body of social habits in obedience to changing ideas and more and more complex necessities. There was no single and fixed legislative authority to determine them by conscious shaping and selection or in anticipation of popular consent or by direct ideative action upon the general consensus of need and opinion. Kings and

[1] Fascism, National Socialism have cut out the "freely" in this formula and set about the task of creating the organised self-regulating consciousness by a violent regimentation.

prophets and Rishis and Brahmin jurists might exercise such an action according to their power and influence, but none of these were the constituted legislative sovereign; the king in India was the administrator of the Dharma and not at all or only exceptionally and to a hardly noticeable extent the legislator.

It is worth noting, indeed, that this customary law was often attributed to an original legislator, a Manu, Moses, Lycurgus; but the historic truth of any such tradition has been discredited by modern inquiry and perhaps rightly, if we consider only the actual ascertainable facts and the ordinary process of the human mind and its development. In fact, if we examine the profound legendary tradition of India, we see that its idea of the Manu is more a symbol than anything else. His name means man the mental being. He is the divine legislator, the mental demi-god in humanity who fixes the lines upon which the race or people has to govern its evolution. In the Purana he or his sons are said to reign in subtle earths or worlds or, as we may say, they reign in the larger mentality which to us is subconscient and from there have power to determine the lines of development of the conscious life of man. His law is the *mānava-dharmaśāstra*, the science of the law of conduct of the mental or human being and in this sense we may think of the law of any human society as being the conscious evolution of the type and lines which its Manu has fixed for it. If there comes an embodied Manu, a living Moses or Mahomed, he is only the prophet or spokesman of the Divinity who is veiled in the fire and the cloud, Jehovah on Sinai, Allah speaking through his angels. Mahomed, as we know, only developed the existing social, religious and administrative customs of the Arab people into a new system dictated to him often in a state of trance, in which he passed from his conscient into his superconscient self, by the Divinity to his secret intuitive mind. All that may be suprarational or, if you will, irrational, but it represents a different stage of human development from the government of society by its rational and practical mind which in contact with life's changing needs and permanent necessities demands a created and codified law determined by a fixed legislative authority, the society's organised brain or centre.

This rational development consists, as we have seen, in the creation of a central authority, — at first a distinct central force but afterwards more and more conterminous with the society itself or directly representing it, — which gradually takes over the specialised and separated parts of the social activity. At first this authority was the king, elective or hereditary, in his original character a war-leader and at home only the chief, the head of the elders or the strong men and the convener of the nation and the army, a nodus of its action, but not the principal determinant: in war only, where entire centralisation of power is the first condition of effective action, was he entirely supreme. As host-leader, *strategos*, he was also *imperator*, the giver of the absolute command. When he extended this combination of headship and rule from outside inward, he tended to become the executive power, not merely the chief instrument of social administration but the executive ruler.

It was naturally easier for him to become thus supreme in foreign than in internal politics. Even now European governments which have in internal affairs to defer to the popular will or to persuade and cajole the nation, are able in foreign politics to act either entirely or very largely according to their own ideas: for they are allowed to determine their acts by a secret diplomacy in which the people can have no voice and the representatives of the nation have only a general power of criticising or ratifying its results. Their action in foreign politics is nominal or at any rate restricted to a minimum, since they cannot prevent secret arrangements and treaties; even to such as are made early public they can only withhold their ratification at the risk of destroying the sureness and continuity, the necessary uniformity of the external action of the nation and thus destroying too the confidence of foreign governments without which negotiations cannot be conducted nor stable alliances and combinations formed. Nor can they really withhold their sanction in a crisis, whether for war or peace, at the only moment when they are effectively consulted, the last hour or rather the last minute when either has become inevitable. Much more necessarily was this the case in the old monarchies when

the king was the maker of war and peace and conducted the external affairs of the country according to his personal idea of the national interests, largely affected by his own passions, predilections and personal and family interests. But whatever the attendant disadvantages, the conduct of war and peace and foreign politics as well as the conduct of the host in the field of battle had at least been centralised, unified in the sovereign authority. The demand for real parliamentary control of foreign policy and even for an open diplomacy — a difficult matter to our current notions, yet once practised and perfectly capable of practice — indicates one more step in the transformation, far from complete in spite of the modern boast of democracy, from a monarchical and oligarchic to a democratic system, the taking over of all sovereign functions from the one sovereign administrator or the few dominant executive men by the society as a whole organised in the democratic State.

In its seizure of the internal functionings the central authority has a more difficult task, because its absorption of them or of their chief control has to reckon with powerful competing or modifying forces and interests and the strength of established and often cherished national habits and existing rights and privileges. But it is bound in the end to arrive at some unified control of those which are in their nature executive and administrative. This administrative side of the national organisation has three principal parts, financial, executive proper and judicial. The financial power carries with it the control of the public purse and the expenditure of the wealth contributed by the society for national purposes, and it is evident that this must pass into the hands of whatever authority has taken up the business of organising and making efficient the united action of the community. But that authority in its impulse towards an undivided and uncontrolled gestation, a complete unification of powers must naturally desire not only to determine the expenditure according to its own free will, but to determine also the contributions of the society to the public purse both in its amount and in its repartition over the individuals and classes who constitute the nation. Monarchy in its impulse towards a despotic centrality

has always sought to engross and struggled to retain this power; for the control over the purse of the nation is the most important sign and the most effective element of real sovereignty, more essential perhaps than the control over life and limb. In the most despotic regimes, this control is absolute and extends to the power of confiscation and despoliation otherwise than by judicial procedure. On the other hand, a ruler who has to bargain with his subjects over the amount of their contribution and the methods of taxation, is at once hedged in in his sovereignty and is not in fact the sole and entire sovereign. A vital power is in the hands of an inferior estate of the realm and can be turned against him fatally in any struggle for the shifting of the sovereignty from him to that estate. That is the reason why the supreme political instinct of the English people fixed, in the struggle with the monarchy, upon this question of taxation as the first vital point in a conflict for the power of the purse. Once that was settled in the Parliament by the defeat of the Stuarts, the transformation of the monarchical sovereignty into the sovereignty of the people or, more accurately, the shifting of the organic control from the throne to the aristocracy, thence to the bourgeoisie, and again to the whole people, — the latter two steps comprising the rapid evolution of the last eighty years, — was only a question of time. In France, the successful practical absorption of this control was the strength of the monarchy; it was its inability to manage with justice and economy the public purse, its unwillingness to tax the enormous riches of the aristocracy and clergy as against the crushing taxation on the people and the consequent necessity of deferring again to the nation which provided the opportunity for the Revolution. In advanced modern countries we have a controlling authority which claims at least to represent more or less perfectly the whole nation; individuals and classes have to submit because there is no appeal from the will of the whole society. But even so it is questions, not of taxation, but of the proper organisation and administration of the economic life of the society which are preparing the revolutions of the future.

Chapter XXI

The Drive towards Legislative and Social Centralisation and Uniformity

THE GATHERING of the essential powers of administration into the hands of the sovereign is completed when there is unity and uniformity of judicial administration, — especially of the criminal side; for this is intimately connected with the maintenance of order and internal peace. And it is, besides, necessary for the ruler to have the criminal judicial authority in his hands so that he may use it to crush all rebellion against himself as treason and even, so far as may be possible, to stifle criticism and opposition and penalise that free thought and free speech which, by their continual seeking for a more perfect social principle and their subtle or direct encouragement to progress, are so dangerous to established powers and institutions, so subversive of the dominant thing in being by their drive towards a better thing in becoming. Unity of jurisdiction, the power to constitute tribunals, to appoint, salary and remove judges and the right to determine offences and their punishments comprise on the criminal side the whole judicial power of the sovereign. A similar unity of jurisdiction, power to constitute tribunals administering the civil law and the right to modify the laws relating to property, marriage and other social matters which concern the public order of society, comprise its civil side. But the unity and uniformity of the civil law is of less pressing and immediate importance to the State when it is substituting itself for the natural organic society; it is not so directly essential as an instrument. Therefore it is the criminal jurisdiction which is first absorbed in a greater or less entirety.

Originally, all these powers belonged to the organic society and were put into force mainly by various natural devices of a loose and entirely customary character, such as the Indian

panchayat or village jury, the jurisdiction of guilds or other natural associations, the judicial power of the assembly or convocations of the citizens as in the various Roman comitia or large and unwieldy juries chosen by lot or otherwise as in Rome and Athens, and only to a minor extent by the judicial action of the king or elders in their administrative capacity. Human societies, therefore, in their earlier development retained for a long time an aspect of great complexity in their judicial administration and neither possessed nor felt any need of a uniformity of jurisdiction or of a centralised unity in the source of judicial authority. But as the State idea develops, this unity and uniformity must arrive. It accomplishes itself at first by the gathering up of all these various jurisdictions with the king as at once the source of their sanctions and a high court of appeal and the possessor of original powers, which are exercised sometimes as in ancient India by judicial process but sometimes in more autocratic polities by ukase — the latter especially on the criminal side, in the awarding of punishments and more particularly punishments for offences against the person of the king or the authority of the State. Against this tendency to unification and State authority there militates often a religious sense in the community which attaches as in most countries of the East a sacrosanct character to its laws and customs and tends to keep the king or State in bounds; the ruler is accepted as the administrator of justice, but he is supposed to be strictly bound by the law of which he is not the fountain but the channel. Sometimes this religious sense develops a theocratical element in the society, a Church with its separate ecclesiastical authority and jurisdiction, a Shastra in the keeping of Brahmin jurists, a law entrusted to the Ulemas. Where the religious sense maintains its predominance, a solution is found by the association of Brahmin jurists with the king or with the judge appointed by him in every State tribunal and by maintenance of the supreme authority of the Pundits or Ulemas in all moot judicial questions. Where, as in Europe, the political instinct is stronger than the religious, the ecclesiastical jurisdiction comes in time to be subordinated to the State's and finally disappears.

Thus eventually the State — or the monarchy, that great instrument of the transition from the organic to the rational society — becomes the head of the law as well as the embodiment of public order and efficiency. The danger of subordinating the judiciary entirely to an executive possessed at all of arbitrary and irresponsible powers is obvious; but it is only in England — the one country always where liberty has been valued as of equal importance with order and not considered a lesser necessity or no necessity at all — that there was a successful attempt from an early period to limit the judicial power of the State. This was done partly by the firm tradition of the independence of the tribunals supported by the complete security of the judges, once appointed, in their position and emoluments and partly by the institution of the jury system. Much room was left for oppression and injustice, as in all human institutions social or political, but the object was roughly attained. Other countries, it may be noted, have adopted the jury system but, more dominated by the instinct of order and system, have left the judiciary under the control of the executive. This, however, is not so serious a defect where the executive not only represents but is appointed and controlled by the society as where it is independent of public control.

Uniformity of the law develops on different lines from the unity and uniformity of judicial administration. In its beginnings, law is always customary and where it is freely customary, where, that is to say, it merely expresses the social habits of the people, it must, except in small societies, naturally lead to or permit considerable variety of custom. In India, any sect or even any family was permitted to develop variations of the religious and civil custom which the general law of the society was bound within vague limits to accept, and this freedom is still part of the theory of Hindu law, although now in practice it is very difficult to get any new departure recognised. This spontaneous freedom of variation is the surviving sign of a former natural or organic life of society as opposed to an intellectually ordered, rationalised or mechanised living. The organic group-life fixed its general lines and particular divergences by the general sense

and instinct or intuition of the group-life rather than by the stricter structure of the reason.

The first marked sign of a rational evolution is the tendency of code and constitution to prevail over custom. But still there are codes and codes. For first there are systems that are unwritten or only partly written and do not throw themselves into the strict code form, but are a floating mass of laws, *decreta*, precedents, and admit still of a large amount of merely customary law. And again there are systems that do take the strict code form, like the Hindu Shastra, but are really only an ossification of custom and help to stereotype the life of the society but not to rationalise it. Finally, there are those deliberately ordered codes which are an attempt at intelligent systematisation; a sovereign authority fixes the *cadres* of the law and admits from time to time changes that are intelligent accommodations to new needs, variations that do not disturb but merely modify and develop the intelligent unity and reasonable fixity of the system. The coming to perfection of this last type is the triumph of the narrower but more self-conscious and self-helpful rational over the larger but vaguer and more helpless life-instinct in the society. When it has arrived at this triumph of a perfectly self-conscious and systematically rational determination and arrangement of its life on one side by a fixed and uniform constitution, on the other by a uniform and intelligently structural civil and criminal law, the society is ready for the second stage of its development. It can undertake the self-conscious, uniform ordering of its whole life in the light of the reason which is the principle of modern socialism and has been the drift of all the Utopias of the thinkers.

But before we can arrive at this stage, the great question must be settled, who is to be the State? Is the embodiment of the intellect, will and conscience of the society to be a king and his counsellors or a theocratic, autocratic or plutocratic governing class or a body which shall at least seem to stand sufficiently for the whole society, or is it to be a compromise between some or all of these possibilities? The whole course of constitutional history has turned upon this question and to all appearance wavered obscurely between various possibilities; but in reality,

we can see that throughout there has been acting the pressure of a necessity which travelled indeed through the monarchical, aristocratic and other stages, but had to debouch in the end in a democratic form of government. The king in his attempt to be the State — an attempt imposed on him by the impulse of his evolution — must try indeed to become the fountain as well as the head of the law; he must seek to engross the legislative as well as the administrative functions of the society, its side of efficient thought as well as its side of efficient action. But even in so doing he was only preparing the way for the democratic State.

The king, his council military and civil, the priesthood and the assembly of freemen converting itself for the purposes of war into the host, were perhaps everywhere, but certainly in the Aryan races, the elements with which the self-conscious evolution of society began: they represent the three orders of the free nation in its early and elementary form with the king as the keystone of the structure. The king may get rid of the power of the priesthood, he may reduce his council to an instrument of his will or the nobility which they represent to a political and military support for his actions, but until he has got rid of the assembly or is no longer obliged to convoke it, — like the French monarchy with its States-General summoned only once or twice in the course of centuries and under the pressure of great difficulties, — he cannot be the chief, much less the sole legislative authority. Even if he leaves the practical work of legislation to a non-political, a judicial body like the French Parliaments, he is bound to find there a centre of resistance. Therefore the disappearance of the assembly or the power of the monarch to convoke it or not at his pleasure is always the real mark of his absolutism. But when he has succeeded, when his decrees are laws, when he has got rid of or subordinated to himself all the other powers of the social life, there at that point of his highest success his failure begins; the monarchical system has fulfilled its positive part in the social evolution and all that is left to it is either to hold the State together until it has transformed itself or else to provoke by oppression the movement towards the sovereignty of the people.

The reason is that in engrossing the legislative power the monarchy has exceeded the right law of its being, it has gone beyond its dharma, it has undertaken functions which it cannot healthily and effectively fulfil. Administration is simply the regulation of the outward life of the people, the ordered maintenance of the external activities of its developed or developing being, and the king may well be their regulator; he may well fulfil the function which the Indian polity assigned to him, the upholder of the "dharma". But legislation, social development, culture, religion, even the determination of the economic life of the people are outside his proper sphere; they constitute the expression of the life, the thought, the soul of the society which, if he is a strong personality in touch with the spirit of the age, he may help to influence but which he cannot determine. They constitute the national dharma, — we must use the Indian word which alone is capable of expressing the whole idea; for our dharma means the law of our nature and it means also its formulated expression. Only the society itself can determine the development of its own dharma or can formulate its expression; and if this is to be done not in the old way by a naturally organic and intuitive development, but by a self-conscious regulation through the organised national reason and will, then a governing body must be created which will more or less adequately represent, if it cannot quite embody, the reason and will of the whole society. A governing class, aristocracy or intelligent theocracy may represent, not indeed this but some vigorous or noble part of the national reason and will; but even that can only be a stage of development towards a democratic State. Certainly, democracy as it is now practised is not the last or penultimate stage; for it is often merely democratic in appearance and even at the best amounts to the rule of the majority and works by the vicious method of party government, defects the increasing perception of which enters largely into the present-day dissatisfaction with parliamentary systems. Even a perfect democracy is not likely to be the last stage of social evolution, but it is still the necessary broad standing-ground upon which the self-consciousness of the social being can come

to its own.[1] Democracy and Socialism are, as we have already said, the sign that that self-consciousness is beginning to ripen into fullness.

Legislation may seem at first sight to be something external, simply a form for the administration, not part of the intimate grain of the social life like its economic forms, its religion, its education and culture. It so appears because in the past polity of the European nations it has not been like oriental legislation or Shastra all-embracing, but has confined itself until recently to politics and constitutional law, the principles and process of administration and so much only of social and economic legislation as was barely necessary for the security of property and the maintenance of public order. All this, it might seem, might well fall within the province of the king and be discharged by him with as much efficiency as by a democratic government. But it is not so in reality, as history bears witness; the king is an inefficient legislator and unmixed aristocracies are not much better. For the laws and institutions of a society are the framework it builds for its life and its dharma. When it begins to determine these for itself by a self-conscious action of its reason and will within whatever limits, it has taken the first step in a movement which must inevitably end in an attempt to regulate self-consciously its whole social and cultural life; it must, as its self-consciousness increases, drive towards the endeavour to realise something like the Utopia of the thinker. For the Utopian thinker is the individual mind forerunning in its turn of thought the trend which the social mind must eventually take.

But as no individual thinker can determine in thought by his arbitrary reason the evolution of the rational self-conscious society, so no executive individual or succession of executive individuals can determine it in fact by his or their arbitrary power. It is evident that he cannot determine the whole social life of the nation, it is much too large for him; no society would

[1] It does not follow that a true democracy must necessarily come into being at some time. For man individually or collectively to come to a full self-consciousness is a most difficult task. Before a true democracy can be established, the process is likely to be overtaken by a premature socialistic endeavour.

bear the heavy hand of an arbitrary individual on its whole social living. He cannot determine the economic life, that too is much too large for him; he can only watch over it and help it in this or that direction where help is needed. He cannot determine the religious life, though that attempt has been made; it is too deep for him; for religion is the spiritual and ethical life of the individual, the relations of his soul with God and the intimate dealings of his will and character with other individuals, and no monarch or governing class, not even a theocracy or priesthood, can really substitute itself for the soul of the individual or for the soul of a nation. Nor can he determine the national culture; he can only in great flowering times of that culture help by his protection in fixing for it the turn which by its own force of tendency it was already taking. To attempt more is an irrational attempt which cannot lead to the development of a rational society. He can only support the attempt by autocratic oppression which leads in the end to the feebleness and stagnation of the society, and justify it by some mystical falsity about the divine right of kings or monarchy a peculiarly divine institution. Even exceptional rulers, a Charlemagne, an Augustus, a Napoleon, a Chandragupta, Asoka or Akbar, can do no more than fix certain new institutions which the time needed and help the emergence of its best or else its strongest tendencies in a critical era. When they attempt more, they fail. Akbar's effort to create a new dharma for the Indian nation by his enlightened reason was a brilliant futility. Asoka's edicts remain graven upon pillar and rock, but the development of Indian religion and culture took its own line in other and far more complex directions determined by the soul of a great people. Only the rare individual Manu, Avatar or prophet who comes on earth perhaps once in a millennium can speak truly of his divine right, for the secret of his force is not political but spiritual. For an ordinary political ruling man or a political institution to have made such a claim was one of the most amazing among the many follies of the human mind.

Yet the attempt in itself and apart from its false justifications and practical failure was inevitable, fruitful and a necessary step

in social evolution. It was inevitable because this transitional instrument represented the first idea of the human reason and will seizing on the group-life to fashion, mould and arrange it according to its own pleasure and power and intelligent choice, to govern Nature in the human mass as it has already learned partly to govern it in the human individual. And since the mass is unenlightened and incapable of such an intelligent effort, who can do this for it, if not the capable individual or a body of intelligent and capable individuals? That is the whole rationale of absolutism, aristocracy and theocracy. Its idea is false or only a half-truth or temporary truth, because the real business of the advanced class or individual is progressively to enlighten and train the whole body consciously to do for itself its own work and not eternally to do things for it.[2] But the idea had to take its course and the will in the idea, — for every idea has in itself a mastering will for self-fulfilment, — had necessarily to attempt its own extreme. The difficulty was that the ruling man or class could take up the more mechanical part of the life of society, but all that represented its more intimate being eluded their grasp; they could not lay hands on its soul. Still, unless they could do so, they must remain unfulfilled in their trend and insecure in their possession, since at any time they might be replaced by more adequate powers that must inevitably rise up from the larger mind of humanity to oust them and occupy their throne.

Two principal devices alone seemed adequate and have been employed in all such attempts at complete mastery. One was chiefly negative; it worked by an oppression on the life and soul of the community, a more or less complete inhibition of its freedom of thought, speech, association, individual and associated action, — often attended by the most abominable methods of inquisition and interference and pressure on the most sacred relations and liberties of man the individual and social being, — and an encouragement and patronage of only such thought and

[2] It is not meant that in a perfect society there would be no place for monarchical, aristocratic or theocratic elements; but there these would fulfil their natural function in a conscious body, not maintain and propel an unconscious mass.

culture and activities as accepted, flattered and helped the governing absolutism. Another was positive; it consisted in getting a control over the religion of the society and calling in the priest as the spiritual helper of the king. For in natural societies and in those which, even if partly intellectualised, still cling to the natural principles of our being, religion, if it is not the whole life, yet watches over and powerfully influences and moulds the whole life of the individual and society, as it did till recent times in India and to a great extent in all Asiatic countries. State religions are an expression of this endeavour. But a State religion is an artificial monstrosity, although a national religion may well be a living reality; but even that, if it is not to formalise and kill in the end the religious spirit or prevent spiritual expansion, has to be tolerant, self-adaptive, flexible, a mirror of the deeper soul of the society. Both these devices, however seemingly successful for a time, are foredoomed to failure, failure by revolt of the oppressed social being or failure by its decay, weakness and death or life in death. Stagnation and weakness such as in the end overtook Greece, Rome, the Mussulman nations, China, India, or else a saving spiritual, social and political revolution are the only issues of absolutism. Still it was an inevitable stage of human development, an experiment that could not fail to be made. It was also fruitful in spite of its failure and even by reason of it; for the absolutist monarchical and aristocratic State was the father of the modern idea of the absolutist socialistic State which seems now to be in process of birth. It was, for all its vices, a necessary step because only so could the clear idea of an intelligently self-governing society firmly evolve.

For what king or aristocracy could not do, the democratic State may perhaps with a better chance of success and a greater security attempt and bring nearer to fruition, — the conscious and organised unity, the regularised efficiency on uniform and intelligent principles, the rational order and self-governed perfectioning of a developed society. That is the idea and, however imperfectly, the attempt of modern life; and this attempt has been the whole rationale of modern progress. Unity and uniformity are its principal trend; for how else are the incalculable

complexities of the vast and profound thing we call life to be taken hold of, dominated, made calculable and manageable by a logical intelligence and unified will? Socialism is the complete expression of this idea. Uniformity of the social and economic principles and processes that govern the collectivity secured by means of a fundamental equality of all and the management of the whole social and economic life in all its parts by the State; uniformity of culture by the process of a State education organised upon scientific lines; to regularise and maintain the whole a unified, uniform and perfectly organised government and administration that will represent and act for the whole social being, this is the modern Utopia which in one form or another it is hoped to turn, in spite of all extant obstacles and opposite tendencies, into a living reality. Human science will, it seems, replace the large and obscure processes of Nature and bring about perfection or at least some approach to perfection in the collective human life.

Chapter XXII

World-Union or World-State

THIS, then, in principle is the history of the growth of the State. It is a history of strict unification by the development of a central authority and of a growing uniformity in administration, legislation, social and economic life and culture and the chief means of culture, education and language. In all, the central authority becomes more and more the determining and regulating power. The process culminates by the transformation of this governing sole authority or sovereign power from the rule of the central executive man or the capable class into that of a body whose proposed function is to represent the thought and will of the whole community. The change represents in principle an evolution from a natural and organic to a rational and mechanically organised state of society. An intelligent centralised unification aiming at a perfect rational efficiency replaces a loose and natural unity whose efficiency is that of life developing with a certain spontaneity its organs and powers under the pressure of inner impulse and the needs of the environment and the first conditions of existence. A rational, ordered, strict uniformity replaces a loose oneness full of natural complexities and variations. The intelligent will of the whole society expressed in a carefully thought-out law and ordered regulation replaces its natural organic will expressed in a mass of customs and institutions which have grown up as the result of its nature and temperament. In the last perfection of the State a carefully devised, in the end a giant machinery productive and regulative replaces the vigour and fertility of life with the natural simplicity of its great lines and the obscure, confused, luxuriant complexity of its details. The State is the masterful but arbitrary and intolerant science and reason of man that successfully takes the place of the intuitions and evolutionary experimentations of Nature; intelligent organisation replaces natural organism.

The unity of the human race by political and administrative means implies eventually the formation and organisation of a single World-State out of a newly created, though still loose, natural organic unity of mankind. For the natural organic unity already exists, a unity of life, of involuntary association, of a closely interdependent existence of the constituent parts in which the life and movements of one affect the life of the others in a way which would have been impossible a hundred years ago. Continent has no longer a separate life from continent; no nation can any longer isolate itself at will and live a separate existence. Science, commerce and rapid communications have produced a state of things in which the disparate masses of humanity, once living to themselves, have been drawn together by a process of subtle unification into a single mass which has already a common vital and is rapidly forming a common mental existence. A great precipitating and transforming shock was needed which should make this subtle organic unity manifest and reveal the necessity and create the will for a closer and organised union, and this shock came with the Great War. The idea of a World-State or world-union has been born not only in the speculating forecasting mind of the thinker, but in the consciousness of humanity out of the very necessity of this new common existence.

The World-State must now either be brought about by a mutual understanding or by the force of circumstances and a series of new and disastrous shocks. For the old still-prevailing order of things was founded on circumstances and conditions which no longer exist. A new order is demanded by the new conditions and, so long as it is not created, there will be a transitional era of continued trouble or recurrent disorders, inevitable crises through which Nature will effect in her own violent way the working out of the necessity which she has evolved. There may be in the process a maximum of loss and suffering through the clash of national and imperial egoisms or else a minimum, if reason and goodwill prevail. To that reason two alternative possibilities and therefore two ideals present themselves, a World-State founded upon the principle of centralisation and uniformity, a mechanical and formal unity, or a world-union

founded upon the principle of liberty and variation in a free and intelligent unity. These two ideals and possibilities we have successively to consider.

Chapter XXIII

Forms of Government

THE IDEA of a world-union of free nations and empires, loose at first, but growing closer-knit with time and experience, seems at first sight the most practicable form of political unity; it is the only form indeed which would be immediately practicable, supposing the will to unity to become rapidly effective in the mind of the race. On the other hand, it is the State idea which is now dominant. The State has been the most successful and efficient means of unification and has been best able to meet the various needs which the progressive aggregate life of societies has created for itself and is still creating. It is, besides, the expedient to which the human mind at present has grown accustomed, and it is too the most ready means both for its logical and its practical reason to work with because it provides it with what our limited intelligence is always tempted to think its best instrument, a clear-cut and precise machinery and a stringent method of organisation. Therefore it is by no means impossible that, even though beginning with a loose union, the nations may be rapidly moved by the pressure of the many problems which would arise from the ever closer interworking of their needs and interests, to convert it into the more stringent form of a World-State. We can found no safe conclusion upon the immediate impracticability of its creation or on the many difficulties which would stand in its way; for past experience shows that the argument of impracticability is of very little value. What the practical man of today denies as absurd and impracticable is often enough precisely the thing that future generations set about realising and eventually in some form or other succeed in bringing into effective existence.

But a World-State implies a strong central organ of power that would represent or at least stand for the united will of the nations. A unification of all the necessary powers in the hands of

this central and common governing body, at least in their source — powers military, administrative, judicial, economic, legislative, social, educational — would be indispensable. And as an almost inevitable result there would be an increasing uniformity of human life throughout the world in all these departments, even perhaps to the choice or creation of one common and universal language. This, indeed, is the dream of a unified world which Utopian thinkers have been more and more moved to place before us. The difficulties in the way of arriving at this result are at present obvious, but they are perhaps not so great as they seem at first sight and none of them are insoluble. It is no longer a Utopia that can be put aside as the impracticable dream of the ideal thinker.

The first difficulty would be the character and composition of this governing body, a problem beset with doubts and perils. In ancient times it was solved readily enough in smaller limits by the absolutist and monarchical solution with the rule of a conquering race as the starting-point, as in the Persian and Roman empires. But that resource is no longer as easily open to us in the new conditions of human society, whatever dreams may in the past have entered into the minds of powerful nations or their Czars and Kaisers. The monarchical idea itself is beginning to pass away after a brief and fallacious attempt at persistence and revival. Almost it seems to be nearing its final agony; the seal of the night is upon it. Contemporary appearances are often enough deceptive, but they are less likely to be so in the present instance than in many others, because the force which makes for the disappearance of the still-surviving monarchies is strong, radical and ever increasing. The social aggregates have ripened into self-conscious maturity and no longer stand in need of a hereditary kingship to do their governing work for them or even to stand for them — except perhaps in certain exceptional cases such as the British Empire — as the symbol of their unity. Either then the monarchy can only survive in name, — as in England where the king has less power even, if that be possible, than the French President and infinitely less than the heads of the American republics, — or else it becomes a source of offence,

a restraint to the growing democratic spirit of the peoples and to a greater or less degree a centre, a refuge or at least an opportunity for the forces of reaction. Its prestige and popularity tend therefore not to increase but to decline, and at some crisis when it comes too strongly into conflict with the sentiment of the nation, it falls with small chance of lasting revival.

Monarchy has thus fallen or is threatened almost everywhere — and most suddenly in countries where its tradition was once the strongest. Even in these days it has fallen in Germany and Austria, in China, in Portugal, in Russia; it has been in peril in Greece and Italy;[1] and it has been cast out of Spain. In no continental country is it really safe except in some of the smaller States. In most of them it exists for reasons that already belong to the past and may soon lose if they are not already losing their force. The continent of Europe seems destined to become in time as universally republican as the two Americas. For kingship there is now only a survival of the world's past; it has no deep root in the practical needs or the ideals or the temperament of present-day humanity. When it disappears, it will be truer to say of it that it has ceased to survive than to say that it has ceased to live.

The republican tendency is indeed Western in its origin, stronger as we go more and more to the West, and has been historically powerful chiefly in Western Europe and dominant in the new societies of America. It might be thought that with the entrance of Asia into the active united life of the world, when the eastern continent has passed through its present throes of transition, the monarchical idea might recover strength and find a new source of life. For in Asia kingship has been not only a material fact resting upon political needs and conditions, but a spiritual symbol and invested with a sacrosanct character. But in Asia no less than in Europe, monarchy has been a historical growth, the result of circumstances and therefore subject to disappearance when those circumstances no longer exist. The true mind of Asia has always remained, behind all surface appearances,

[1] Now in Italy too it is gone with practically no hope of return.

not political but social, monarchical and aristocratic at the surface but with a fundamental democratic trend and a theocratic spirit. Japan with its deep-rooted monarchic sentiment is the one prominent exception to this general rule. Already a great tendency of change is manifest. China, always a democratic country at bottom though admitting in its democratic system an official aristocracy of intellect and a symbolic imperial head, is now definitely republican. The difficulty of the attempt to revive monarchy or to replace it by temporary dictatorships has been due to an innate democratic sentiment now invigorated by the acceptance of a democratic form for the supreme government, the one valuable contribution of Western experience to the problem at which the old purely social democracies of the East were unable to arrive. In breaking with the last of its long succession of dynasties China had broken with an element of her past which was rather superficial than at the very centre of her social temperament and habits. In India the monarchical sentiment, which coexisted with but was never able to prevail over the theocratic and social except during the comparatively brief rule of the Moghuls, was hopelessly weakened, though not effaced, by the rule of a British bureaucracy and the political Europeanising of the active mind of the race.[2] In Western Asia monarchy has disappeared in Turkey, it exists only in the States which need the monarch as a centralising power or keystone.

At the two extremes of the Asiatic world in Japan and in Turkey the monarchy after the close of the war still preserved something of its old sacrosanct character and its appeal to the sentiment of the race. In Japan, still imperfectly democratised, the sentiment which surrounds the Mikado is visibly weakened, his prestige survives but his actual power is very limited, and the growth of democracy and socialism is bound to aid the weakening and limiting process and may well produce the same results as in Europe. The Moslem Caliphate, originally the head of a

[2] Now with the liberation of the country and the establishment of a republican and democratic constitution, the ruling princes have either disappeared or become subordinate heads with their small kingdoms becoming partly or wholly democratised or destined to melt into a united India.

theocratic democracy, was converted into a political institution by the rapid growth of a Moslem empire, now broken into pieces. The Caliphate now abolished could only have survived as a purely religious headship and even in that character its unity was threatened by the rise of new spiritual and national movements in Persia, Arabia and Egypt. But the one real and important fact in Asia of today is this that the whole active force of its future is centred not in priesthood or aristocracy, but, as it was formerly in Russia before the Revolution, in a newly-created intelligentsia, small at first in numbers, but increasing in energy and the settled will to arrive and bound to become exceedingly dynamic by reason of the inherited force of spirituality. Asia may well preserve its ancient spirituality; even in its hour of greatest weakness it has been able to impose its prestige increasingly even on the positive European mind. But whatever turn that spirituality takes, it will be determined by the mentality of this new intelligentsia and will certainly flow into other channels than the old ideas and symbols. The old forms of Asiatic monarchy and theocracy seem therefore destined to disappear; at present there is no chance of their revival in new figures, although that may happen in the future.

The only apparent chance eventually for the monarchical idea is that its form may be retained as a convenient symbol for the unity of the heterogeneous empires which would be the largest elements in any unification based upon the present political configuration of the world. But even for these empires the symbol has not proved to be indispensable. France has done without it, Russia has recently dispensed with it. In Austria it had become odious to some of the constituent races as the badge of subjection and was bound to perish even without the collapse of the Great War. Only in England and in some small countries is it at once innocuous and useful and therefore upheld by a general feeling. Conceivably, if the British Empire,[3] even now the leading, the most influential, the most powerful

[3] Now no longer Empire but Commonwealth.

force in the world, were to become the nucleus or the pattern of the future unification, there might be some chance of the monarchical element surviving in the figure — and even an empty figure is sometimes useful as a support and centre for future potentialities to grow and fill with life. But against this stands the fixed republican sentiment of the whole of America and the increasing spread of the republican form; there is little chance that even a nominal kingship representing one element of a very heterogeneous whole would be accepted by the rest in any form of general unification. In the past, at least, this has only happened under the stress of conquest. Even if the World-State found it convenient as the result of experience to introduce or to reintroduce the monarchical element into its constitution, it could only be in some quite new form of a democratic kingship. But a democratic kingship, as opposed to a passive figure of monarchy, the modern world has not succeeded in evolving.

The two determining facts in modern conditions which alter the whole problem are that in this kind of unification nations take the place of individuals and that these nations are mature self-conscious societies, predestined therefore to pass through pronounced forms of social democracy or some other form of socialism. It is reasonable to suppose that the World-State will tend to strive after the same principle of formation as that which obtains in the separate societies which are to constitute it. The problem would be simpler if we could suppose the difficulties created by conflicting national temperaments, interests and cultures to be either eliminated or successfully subordinated and minimised by the depression of separative nationalistic feeling and the growth of a cosmopolitan internationalism. That solution is not altogether impossible in spite of the serious check to internationalism and the strong growth of nationalistic feeling developed by the world war. For, conceivably, internationalism may revive with a redoubled force after the stress of the feelings created by the war has passed. In that case, the tendency of unification may look to the ideal of a world-wide Republic with the nations as provinces, though at first very sharply distinct provinces, and governed by a council or parliament responsible

to the united democracies of the world. Or it might be something like the disguised oligarchy of an international council reposing its rule on the assent, expressed by election or otherwise, of what might be called a semi-passive democracy as its first figure. For that is what the modern democracy at present is in fact; the sole democratic elements are public opinion, periodical elections and the power of the people to refuse re-election to those who have displeased it. The government is really in the hands of the bourgeoisie, the professional and business men, the landholders, — where such a class still exists, — strengthened by a number of new arrivals from the working-class who very soon assimilate themselves to the political temperament and ideas of the governing classes.[4] If a World-State were to be established on the present basis of human society, it might well try to develop its central government on this principle.

But the present is a moment of transition and a bourgeois World-State is not a probable consummation. In each of the more progressive nations, the dominance of the middle class is threatened on two sides. There is first the dissatisfaction of the intellectuals who find in its unimaginative business practicality and obstinate commercialism an obstacle to the realisation of their ideals. And there is the dissatisfaction of the great and growing power of Labour which sees democratic ideals and changes continually exploited in the interests of the middle class, though as yet it has found no alternative to the Parliamentarism by which that class ensures its rule.[5] What changes the alliance between these two dissatisfactions may bring about, it is impossible to foresee. In Russia, where it was strongest, we have seen it taking the lead of the Revolution and compelling the bourgeoisie to undergo its control, although the compromise so effected could not long outlast the exigencies of the war. Since then the old order there has been "liquidated" and the triumph of the new

[4] This has now changed and the Trade Unions and similar institutions have attained an equal power with the other classes.

[5] Written before the emergence of the Soviet State in Russia and of the Fascist States. In the latter it is the middle class itself that rose against democracy and established for a time a new form of government and society.

tendencies has been complete. In two directions it may lead to a new form of modified oligarchy with a democratic basis. The government of a modern society is now growing an exceedingly complicated business in each part of which a special knowledge, special competence, special faculties are required and every new step towards State socialism must increase this tendency. The need of this sort of special training or faculty in the councillor and administrator combined with the democratic tendencies of the age might well lead to some modern form of the old Chinese principle of government, a democratic organisation of life below, above the rule of a sort of intellectual bureaucracy, an official aristocracy of special knowledge and capacity recruited from the general body without distinction of classes. Equal opportunity would be indispensable but this governing élite would still form a class by itself in the constitution of the society. On the other hand, if the industrialism of the modern nations changes, as some think it will, and develops into a sort of guild socialism, a guild aristocracy of Labour might well become the governing body in the society.[6] If any of these things were done, any movement towards a World-State would then take the same direction and evolve a governing body of the same model.

But in these two possibilities we leave out of consideration the great factor of nationalism and the conflicting interests and tendencies it creates. To overcome these conflicting interests, it has been supposed, the best way is to evolve a sort of world Parliament in which, it is to be presumed, the freely formed and freely expressed opinion of the majority would prevail. Parliamentarism, the invention of the English political genius, is a necessary stage in the evolution of democracy, for without it the generalised faculty of considering and managing with the least possible friction large problems of politics, administration, economics, legislation concerning considerable aggregates of men cannot easily be developed. It has also been the one successful

[6] Something of the kind was attempted in Soviet Russia for a time. The existing conditions were not favourable and a definite form of government not revolutionary and provisional is not anywhere in sight. In Fascist Italy a cooperative State was announced but this too took no effectual or perfect shape.

means yet discovered of preventing the State executive from suppressing the liberties of the individual and the nation. Nations emerging into the modern form of society are therefore naturally and rightly attracted to this instrument of government. But it has not yet been found possible to combine Parliamentarism and the modern trend towards a more democratic democracy; it has been always an instrument either of a modified aristocratic or of a middle-class rule. Besides, its method involves an immense waste of time and energy and a confused, swaying and uncertain action that "muddles out" in the end some tolerable result. This method accords ill with the more stringent ideas of efficient government and administration that are now growing in force and necessity and it might be fatal to efficiency in anything so complicated as the management of the affairs of the world. Parliamentarism means too, in practice, the rule and often the tyranny of a majority, even of a very small majority, and the modern mind attaches increasing importance to the rights of minorities. And these rights would be still more important in a World-State where any attempt to override them might easily mean serious discontents and disorders or even convulsions fatal to the whole fabric. Above all, a Parliament of the nations must necessarily be a united parliament of free nations and could not well come into successful being in the present anomalous and chaotic distribution of power in the world. The Asiatic problem alone, if still left unsolved, would be a fatal obstacle and it is not alone; the inequalities and anomalies are all-pervasive and without number.

A more feasible form would be a supreme council of the free and imperial nations of the existing world-system, but this also has its difficulties. It could only be workable at first if it amounted in fact to an oligarchy of a few strong imperial nations whose voice and volume would prevail at every point over that of the more numerous but smaller non-imperialistic commonwealths and it could only endure by a progressive and, if possible, a peaceful evolution from this sort of oligarchy of actual power to a more just and ideal system in which the imperialistic idea would dissolve and the great empires merge their

separate existence into that of a unified mankind. How far national egoism would allow that evolution to take place without vehement struggles and dangerous convulsions, is, in spite of the superficial liberalism now widely professed, a question still fraught with grave and ominous doubts.

On the whole, then, whichever way we turn, this question of the form of a World-State is beset with doubts and difficulties that are for the moment insoluble. Some arise from the surviving sentiments and interests of the past; some menace from the rapidly developing revolutionary forces of the future. It does not follow that they can never or will never be solved, but the way and the line any such solution would take are beyond calculation and can really be determined only by practical experience and experiment under the pressure of the forces and necessities of the modern world. For the rest, the form of government is not of supreme importance. The real problem is that of the unification of powers and the uniformity which any manageable system of a World-State would render inevitable.

Chapter XXIV

The Need of Military Unification

IN THE process of centralisation by which all the powers of an organised community come to be centred in one sovereign governing body, — the process which has been the most prominent characteristic of national formations, — military necessity has played at the beginning the largest overt part. This necessity was both external and internal, — external for the defence of the nation against disruption or subjection from without, internal for its defence against civil disruption and disorder. If a common administrative authority is essential in order to bind together the constituent parts of a nation in the forming, the first need and claim of that central authority is to have in its hands the means to prevent mortal dissidence and violent strife that would weaken or break up the organic formation. The monarchy or any other central body must effect this end partly by moral force and psychological suggestion. For it stands as the symbol of union and imposes respect for their visible and consecrated unity on the constituent parts, however strong may be their local, racial, clan or class instincts of separatism. It embodies the united authority of the nation entitled to impose its moral force as greater than the moral right of the separate parts, even if they be something like sub-nations, and to command their obedience. But in the last resort, since these motives may at any moment fail when revolting interests or sentiments are strong and passions run high, the governing body must have always the greatest military force at its command so as to overawe the constituent elements and prevent the outbreak of a disruptive civil war. Or if the civil war or rebellion comes about, as can always happen when the monarchy or the government is identified closely with one of the parties in a quarrel or is itself the subject of dissatisfaction and attack, then it must have so great a predominance of force behind it as to be morally sure of victory in the conflict. This

can only be secured to the best possible perfection, — it cannot be done absolutely except by an effective disarmament, — if the whole military authority is centred in the central body and the whole actual or potential military force of the society subjected to its undivided control.

In the trend to the formation of the World-State, however subconscient, vague and formless it may yet be, military necessity has begun to play the same large visible part. The peoples of the world already possess a loose and chaotic unity of life in which none can any longer lead an isolated, independent and self-dependent existence. Each feels in its culture, political tendencies and economic existence the influence and repercussion of events and movements in other parts of the world. Each already feels subtly or directly its separate life overshadowed by the life of the whole. Science, international commerce and the political and cultural penetration of Asia and Africa by the dominant West have been the agents of this great change. Even in this loose unacknowledged and underlying unity the occurrence or the possibility of great wars has become a powerful element of disturbance to the whole fabric, a disturbance that may one day become mortal to the race. Even before the European war, the necessity of avoiding or minimising a collision between one or two that might prove fatal to all was keenly felt and various well-intentioned but feeble and blundering devices were tentatively introduced which had that end in view. Had any of these makeshifts been tolerably effective, the world might long have remained content with its present very unideal conditions and the pressing need of a closer international organisation would not have enforced itself on the general mind of the race. But the European collision rendered the indefinite continuance of the old chaotic regime impossible. The necessity of avoiding any repetition of the catastrophe was for a time universally acknowledged. A means of keeping international peace and of creating an authority which shall have the power to dispose of dangerous international questions and prevent what from the new point of view of human unity we may call civil war between the peoples of mankind, had somehow or other to be found or created.

Various ideas were put forward with more or less authority as to the necessary conditions of international peace. The crudest of these was the foolish notion, created by a one-sided propaganda, which imagined that the destruction of German militarism was the one thing needful and in itself sufficient to secure the future peace of the world. The military power, the political and commercial ambitions of Germany and her acute sense of her confined geographical position and her encirclement by an unfriendly alliance were the immediate moral cause of this particular war; but the real cause lay in the very nature of the international situation and the psychology of national life. The chief feature of this psychology is the predominance and worship of national egoism under the sacred name of patriotism. Every national ego, like every organic life, desires a double self-fulfilment, intensive and extensive or expansive. The deepening and enriching of its culture, political strength and economic well-being within its borders is not felt to be sufficient if there is not, without, an extension or expansion of its culture, an increase of its political extent, dominion, power or influence and a masterful widening of its commercial exploitation of the world. This natural and instinctive desire is not an abnormal moral depravity but the very instinct of egoistic life; and what life at present is not egoistic? But it can be satisfied only to a very limited degree by peaceful and unaggressive means. And where it feels itself hemmed in by obstacles that it thinks it can overcome, opposed by barriers, encircled, dissatisfied with a share of possession and domination it considers disproportionate to its needs and its strength, or where new possibilities of expansion open out to it in which only its strength can obtain for it its desirable portion, it is at once moved to the use of some kind of force and can only be restrained by the amount of resistance it is likely to meet. If it has a weak opposition of unorganised or ill-organised peoples to overcome, it will not hesitate; if it has the opposition of powerful rivals to fear, it will pause, seek for alliances or watch for its moment. Germany had not the monopoly of this expansive instinct and egoism; but its egoism was the best organised and least satisfied, the youngest, crudest, hungriest,

most self-confident and presumptuous, most satisfied with the self-righteous brutality of its desires. The breaking of German militarism might ease for a moment the intensity of the many-headed commercial wrestle but it cannot, by the removal of a dangerous and restless competitor, end it. So long as any kind of militarism survives, so long as fields of political or commercial aggrandisement are there and so long as national egoisms live and are held sacred and there is no final check on their inherent instinct of expansion, war will be always a possibility and almost a necessity of the life of the human peoples.

Another idea put forward with great authorities behind it was a league of free and democratic nations which would keep the peace by pressure or by the use of force if need be. If less crude, this solution is not for that any more satisfactory than the other. It is an old idea, the idea Metternich put into practice after the overthrow of Napoleon; only in place of a Holy Alliance of monarchs to maintain peace and monarchical order and keep down democracy, it was proposed to have a league of free — and imperial — peoples to enforce democracy and to maintain peace. One thing is perfectly sure that the new league would go the way of the old; it would break up as soon as the interests and ambitions of the constituent Powers became sufficiently disunited or a new situation arose such as was created by the violent resurgence of oppressed democracy in 1848 or such as would be created by the inevitable future duel between the young Titan, Socialism, and the old Olympian gods of a bourgeois-democratic world. That conflict was already outlining its formidable shadow in revolutionary Russia, has now taken a body and cannot be very long delayed throughout Europe. For the war and its after consequences momentarily suspended but may very well turn out to have really precipitated the advent and accentuated its force. One cause or the other or both together would bring a certain dissolution. No voluntary league can be permanent in its nature. The ideas which supported it, change; the interests which made it possible and effective become fatally modified or obsolete.

The supposition is that democracies will be less ready to go

to war than monarchies; but this is true only within a certain measure. What are called democracies are bourgeois States in the form either of a constitutional monarchy or a middle-class republic. But everywhere the middle class has taken over with certain modifications the diplomatic habits, foreign policies and international ideas of the monarchical or aristocratic governments which preceded them.[1] This continuity seems to have been a natural law of the mentality of the ruling class. In Germany it was the aristocratic and the capitalist class combined that constituted the Pan-German party with its exaggerated and almost insane ambitions. In the new Russia the bourgeoisie during its brief rule rejected the political ideas of the Czardom in internal affairs and helped to overturn autocracy, but preserved its ideas in external affairs minus the German influence and stood for the expansion of Russia and the possession of Constantinople. Certainly, there is an important difference. The monarchical or aristocratic State is political in its mentality and seeks first of all territorial aggrandisement and political predominance or hegemony among the nations, commercial aims are only a secondary preoccupation attendant on the other. In the bourgeois State there is a reverse order; for it has its eye chiefly on the possession of markets, the command of new fields of wealth, the formation or conquest of colonies or dependencies which can be commercially and industrially exploited and on political aggrandisement only as a means for this more cherished object. Moreover, the monarchical or aristocratic statesman turned to war as almost his first expedient. As soon as he was dissatisfied with the response to his diplomacy, he grasped at the sword or the rifle. The bourgeois statesman hesitates, calculates, gives a longer rope to diplomacy, tries to gain his ends by bargainings, arrangements, peaceful pressure, demonstrations of power. In the end he is ready to resort to war, but only when these expedients have failed him and only if the end seems commensurate with the means and the great speculation of war promises a very

[1] So also has Socialist Russia taken over from the Czars these ideas and habits with very little or no modification.

strong chance of success and solid profit. But on the other hand, the bourgeois-democratic State has developed a stupendous military organisation of which the most powerful monarchs and aristocracies could not dream. And if this tends to delay the outbreak of large wars, it tends too to make their final advent sure and their proportions enormous and nowadays incalculable and immeasurable.

There was a strong suggestion at the time that a more truly democratic and therefore a more peaceful spirit and more thoroughly democratic institutions would reign after the restoration of peace by the triumph of the liberal nations. One rule of the new international situation was to be the right of nations to dispose of their own destinies and to be governed only by their free consent. The latter condition is impossible of immediate fulfilment except in Europe, and even for Europe the principle is not really recognised in its total meaning or put into entire practice. If it were capable of universal application, if the existing relations of peoples and the psychology of nations could be so altered as to establish it as a working principle, one of the most fertile causes of war and revolution would be removed, but all causes would not disappear. The greater democratisation of the European peoples affords no sure guarantee. Certainly, democracy of a certain kind, democracy reposing for its natural constitution on individual liberty would be likely to be indisposed to war except in moments of great and universal excitement. War demands a violent concentration of all the forces, a spirit of submission, a suspension of free-will, free action and of the right of criticism which is alien to the true democratic instinct. But the democracies of the future are likely to be strongly concentrated governments in which the principle of liberty is subordinated to the efficient life of the community by some form of State socialism. A democratic State of that kind might well have even a greater power for war, might be able to put forward a more violently concentrated military organisation in event of hostilities than even the bourgeois democracies and it is not at all certain that it would be less tempted to use its means and power. Socialism has been international and pacific

in its tendencies because the necessity of preparation for war is favourable to the rule of the upper classes and because war itself is used in the interests of the governments and the capitalists; the ideas and classes it represents are at present depressed and do not grow by the uses or share visibly in the profits of war. What will happen when they have hold of the government and its temptations and opportunities has to be seen but can easily be forecast. The possession of power is the great test of all idealisms and as yet there have been none religious or secular which have withstood it or escaped diminution and corruption.

To rely upon the common consent of conflicting national egoisms for the preservation of peace between the nations is to rely upon a logical contradiction. A practical improbability which, if we can judge by reason and experience, amounts to an impossibility, can hardly be a sound foundation for the building of the future. A League of Peace can only prevent armed strife for a time. A system of enforced arbitration, even with the threat of a large armed combination against the offender, may minimise the chance of war and may absolutely forbid it to the smaller or weaker nations; but a great nation which sees a chance of making itself the centre of a strong combination of peoples interested in upsetting the settled order of things for their own benefit, might always choose to take the risks of the adventure in the hope of snatching advantages which in its estimation outweighed the risks.[2] Moreover, in times of great upheaval and movement when large ideas, enormous interests and inflamed passions divide the peoples of the world, the whole system would be likely to break to pieces and the very elements of its efficacy would cease to exist. Any tentative and imperfect device would be bound before long to disclose its inefficacy and the attempt at a deliberate organisation of international life would have to be abandoned and the work left to be wrought out confusedly by the force of events. The creation of a real, efficient and powerful authority which would stand for the general sense and the general power

[2] The subsequent history of the League of Nations, which had not been formed at the time of writing, has amply proved the inefficacy of these devices.

of mankind in its collective life and spirit and would be something more than a bundle of vigorously separate States loosely tied together by the frail bond of a violable moral agreement is the only effective step possible on this path. Whether such an authority can really be created by agreement, whether it must not rather create itself partly by the growth of ideas, but still more by the shock of forces, is a question to which the future alone can answer.

An authority of this nature would have to command the psychological assent of mankind, exercise a moral force upon the nations greater than that of their own national authority and compel more readily their obedience under all normal circumstances. It would have not only to be a symbol and a centre of the unity of the race, but make itself constantly serviceable to the world by assuring the effective maintenance and development of large common interests and benefits which would outweigh all separate national interests and satisfy entirely the sense of need that had brought it into existence. It must help more and more to fix the growing sense of a common humanity and a common life in which the sharp divisions which separate country from country, race from race, colour from colour, continent from continent would gradually lose their force and undergo a progressive effacement. Given these conditions, it would develop a moral authority which would enable it to pursue with less and less opposition and friction the unification of mankind. The nature of the psychological assent it secured from the beginning would depend largely on its constitution and character and would in its turn determine both the nature and power of the moral authority it could exercise on the earth's peoples. If its constitution and character were such as to conciliate the sentiment and interest in its maintenance the active support of all or most of the different sections of mankind or at least those whose sentiment and support counted powerfully and to represent the leading political, social, cultural ideas and interests of the time, it would have the maximum of psychological assent and moral authority and its way would be comparatively smooth. If defective in these respects, it would have to make up the deficiency by a greater

concentration and show of military force at its back and by extraordinary and striking services to the general life, culture and development of the human race such as assured for the Roman imperial authority the long and general assent of the Mediterranean and Western peoples to their subjection and the obliteration of their national existence.

But in either case the possession and concentration of military power would be for long the first condition of its security, and the effectiveness of its own control and this possession would have to be, as soon as possible, a sole possession. It is difficult at present to foresee the consent of the nations of the world to their own total disarmament. For so long as strong national egoisms of any kind remained and along with them mutual distrust, the nations would not sacrifice their possession of an armed force on which they could rely for self-defence if their interests, or at least those that they considered essential to their prosperity and their existence, came to be threatened. Any distrust of the assured impartiality of the international government would operate in the same direction. Yet such a disarmament would be essential to the assured cessation of war — in the absence of some great and radical psychological and moral change. If national armies exist, the possibility, even the certainty of war will exist along with them. However small they might be made in times of peace, and international authority, even with a military force of its own behind it, would be in the position of the feudal king never quite sure of his effective control over his vassals. The international authority must hold under its command the sole trained military force in the world for the policing of the nations and also — otherwise the monopoly would be ineffective — the sole disposal of the means of manufacturing arms and implements of war. National and private munition factories and arms factories must disappear. National armies must become like the old baronial armies a memory of past and dead ages.

This consummation would mark definitely the creation of a World-State in place of the present international conditions. For it can be brought into truly effective existence only if the

international authority became, not merely the arbiter of disputes, but the source of law and the final power behind their execution. For the execution of its decrees against recalcitrant countries or classes, for the prevention of all kinds of strife not merely political but commercial, industrial and others or at least of their decision by any other ways than a peaceful resort to law and arbitration, for the suppression of any attempt at violent change and revolution, the World-State, even at its strongest, would still need the concentration of all force in its own hands. While man remains what he is, force in spite of all idealisms and generous pacific hopes must remain the ultimate arbiter and governor of his life and its possessor the real ruler. Force may veil its crude presence at ordinary times and take only mild and civilised forms, — mild in comparison, for are not the jail and the executioner still the two great pillars of the social order? — but it is there silently upholding the specious appearances of our civilisation and ready to intervene, whenever called upon, in the workings of the fairer but still feebler gods of the social cosmos. Diffused, force fulfils the free workings of Nature and is the servant of life but also of discord and struggle; concentrated, it becomes the guarantee of organisation and the bond of order.

Chapter XXV

War and the Need of Economic Unity

THE MILITARY necessity, the pressure of war between nations and the need for prevention of war by the assumption of force and authority in the hands of an international body, World-State or Federation or League of Peace, is that which will most directly drive humanity in the end towards some sort of international union. But there is behind it another necessity which is much more powerful in its action on the modern mind, the commercial and industrial, the necessity born of economic interdependence. Commercialism is a modern sociological phenomenon; one might almost say that is the whole phenomenon of modern society. The economic part of life is always important to an organised community and even fundamental; but in former times it was simply the first need, it was not that which occupied the thoughts of men, gave the whole tone to the social life, stood at the head and was clearly recognised as standing at the root of social principles. Ancient man was in the group primarily a political being, in the Aristotelian sense, — as soon as he ceased to be primarily religious, — and to this preoccupation he added, wherever he was sufficiently at ease, the preoccupation of thought, art and culture. The economic impulses of the group were worked out as a mechanical necessity, a strong desire in the vital being rather than a leading thought in the mind. Nor was the society regarded or studied as an economic organism except in a very superficial aspect. The economic man held an honourable, but still a comparatively low position in the society; he was only the third caste or class, the Vaishya. The lead was in the hands of the intellectual and political classes, — the Brahmin, thinker, scholar, philosopher and priest, the Kshatriya, ruler and warrior.

It was their thoughts and preoccupations that gave the tone to society, determined its conscious drift and action, coloured most powerfully all its motives. Commercial interests entered into the relations of States and into the motives of war and peace; but they entered as subordinate and secondary predisposing causes of amity or hostility and only rarely and as it were accidentally came to be enumerated among the overt and conscious causes of peace, alliance and strife. The political consciousness, the political motive dominated; increase of wealth was primarily regarded as a means of political power and greatness and opulence of the mobilisable resources of the State than as an end in itself or a first consideration.

Everything now is changed. The phenomenon of modern social development is the decline of the Brahmin and Kshatriya, of the Church, the military aristocracy and the aristocracy of letters and culture, and the rise to power or predominance of the commercial and industrial classes, Vaishya and Shudra, Capital and Labour. Together they have swallowed up or cast out their rivals and are now engaged in a fratricidal conflict for sole possession in which the completion of the downward force of social gravitation, the ultimate triumph of Labour and the remodelling of all social conceptions and institutions with Labour as the first, the most dignified term which will give its value to all others seem to be the visible writing of Fate. At present, however, it is the Vaishya who still predominates and his stamp on the world is commercialism, the predominance of the economic man, the universality of the commercial value or the utilitarian and materially efficient and productive value for everything in human life. Even in the outlook on knowledge, thought, science, art, poetry and religion the economic conception of life overrides all others.[1]

[1] It is noticeable that the bourgeois habit of the predominance of commercialism has been taken up and continued in an even larger scale by the new Socialist societies though on the basis of a labour, instead of a bourgeois economy, and an attempt at a new distribution of its profits or else, more characteristically, a concentration of all in the hands of the State.

For the modern economic view of life, culture and its products have chiefly a decorative value; they are costly and desirable luxuries, not at all indispensable necessities. Religion is in this view a by-product of the human mind with a very restricted utility — if indeed it is not a waste and a hindrance. Education has a recognised importance but its object and form are no longer so much cultural as scientific, utilitarian and economic, its value the preparation of the efficient individual unit to take his place in the body of the economic organism. Science is of immense importance not because it discovers the secrets of Nature for the advancement of knowledge, but because it utilises them for the creation of machinery and develops and organises the economic resources of the community. The thought-power of the society, almost its soul-power — if it has any longer so unsubstantial and unproductive a thing as a soul — is not in its religion or its literature, although the former drags on a feeble existence and the latter teems and spawns, but in the daily Press primarily an instrument of commercialism and governed by the political and commercial spirit and not like literature a direct instrument of culture. Politics, government itself are becoming more and more a machinery for the development of an industrialised society, divided between the service of bourgeois capitalism and the office of a half-involuntary channel for the incoming of economic Socialism. Free thought and culture remain on the surface of this great increasing mass of commercialism and influence and modify it, but are themselves more and more influenced, penetrated, coloured, subjugated by the economic, commercial and industrial view of human life.

This great change has affected profoundly the character of international relations in the past and is likely to affect them still more openly and powerfully in the future. For there is no apparent probability of a turn in a new direction in the immediate future. Certain prophetic voices announce indeed the speedy passing of the age of commercialism. But it is not easy to see how this is to come about; certainly, it will not be by a reversion to the predominantly political spirit of the past or the temper and forms of the old aristocratic social type. The sigh of

the extreme conservative mind for the golden age of the past, which was not so golden as it appears to an imaginative eye in the distance, is a vain breath blown to the winds by the rush of the car of the Time-Spirit in the extreme velocity of its progress. The end of commercialism can only come about either by some unexpected development of commercialism itself or through a reawakening of spirituality in the race and its coming to its own by the subordination of the political and economic motives of life to the spiritual motive.

Certain signs are thought to point in this direction. The religious spirit is reviving and even the old discouraged religious creeds and forms are recovering a kind of vigour. In the secular thought of mankind there are signs of an idealism which increasingly admits a spiritual element among its motives. But all this is as yet slight and superficial; the body of thought and practice, the effective motive, the propelling impulsion remain untouched and unchanged. That impulsion is still towards the industrialising of the human race and the perfection of the life of society as an economic and productive organism. Nor is this spirit likely to die as yet by exhaustion, for it has not yet fulfilled itself and is growing, not declining in force. It is aided, moreover, by modern Socialism which promises to be the master of the future; for Socialism proceeds on the Marxian principle that its own reign has to be preceded by an age of bourgeois capitalism of which it is to be the inheritor and to seize upon its work and organisation in order to turn it to its own uses and modify it by its own principles and methods. It intends indeed to substitute Labour as the master instead of Capital;[2] but this only means that all activities will be valued by the labour contributed and work produced rather than by the wealth contribution and production. It will be a change from one side of economism to the other, but not a change from economism to the domination

[2] The connection between Socialism and the democratic or equalitarian idea or the revolt of the proletariate is however an accident of its history, not its essence. In Italian Fascism there arose a Socialism undemocratic and non-equalitarian in its form, idea and temper. Fascism has gone, but there is no inevitable connection between Socialism and the domination of Labour.

of some other and higher motive of human life. The change itself is likely to be one of the chief factors with which international unification will have to deal and either its greatest aid or its greatest difficulty.

In the past, the effect of commercialism has been to bind together the human race into a real economic unity behind its apparent political separativeness. But this was a subconscient unity of inseparable interrelations and of intimate mutual dependence, not any oneness of the spirit or of the conscious organised life. Therefore these interrelations produced at once the necessity of peace and the unavoidability of war. Peace was necessary for their normal action, war frightfully perturbatory to their whole system of being. But because the organised units were politically separate and rival nations, their commercial interrelations became relations of rivalry and strife or rather a confused tangle of exchange and interdependence and hostile separatism. Self-defence against each other by a wall of tariffs, a race for closed markets and fields of exploitation, a struggle for place or predominance in markets and fields which could not be monopolised and an attempt at mutual interpenetration in spite of tariff walls have been the chief features of this hostility and this separatism. The outbreak of war under such conditions was only a matter of time; it was bound to come as soon as one nation or else one group of nations felt itself either unable to proceed farther by pacific means or threatened with the definite limitation of its expansion by the growing combination of its rivals. The Franco-German was the last great war dictated by political motives. Since then the political motive has been mainly a cover for the commercial. Not the political subjugation of Serbia which could only be a fresh embarrassment to the Austrian empire, but the commercial possession of the outlet through Salonika was the motive of Austrian policy. Pan-Germanism covered the longings of German industry for possession of the great resources and the large outlet into the North Sea offered by the countries along the Rhine. To seize African spaces of exploitation and perhaps French coal fields, not to rule over French territory, was the drift of its real intention. In Africa, in China, in Persia,

in Mesopotamia, commercial motives determined political and military action. War is no longer the legitimate child of ambition and earth-hunger, but the bastard offspring of wealth-hunger or commercialism with political ambition as its putative father.

On the other hand the effect, the shock of war have been rendered intolerable by the industrial organisation of human life and the commercial interdependence of the nations. It would be too much to say that it laid that organisation in ruins, but it turned it topsy-turvy, deranged its whole system and diverted it to unnatural ends. And it produced a wide-spread suffering and privation in belligerent and a *gêne* and perturbation of life in neutral countries to which the history of the world offers no parallel. The angry cry that this must not be suffered again and that the authors of this menace and disturbance to the modern industrial organisation of the world, self-styled civilisation, must be visited with condign punishment and remain for some time as international outcastes under a ban and a boycott, showed how deeply the lesson had gone home. But it showed too, as the post-war mentality has shown, that the real, the inner truth of it all has not yet been understood or not seized at its centre. Certainly, from this point of view also, the prevention of war must be one of the first preoccupations of a new ordering of international life. But how is war to be entirely prevented if the old state of commercial rivalry between politically separate nations is to be perpetuated? If peace is still to be a covert war, an organisation of strife and rivalry, how is the physical shock to be prevented? It may be said, through the regulation of the inevitable strife and rivalry by a state of law as in the competitive commercial life of a nation before the advent of Socialism. But that was only possible because the competing individuals or combines were part of a single social organism subject to a single governmental authority and unable to assert their individual will of existence against it. Such a regulation between nations can therefore have no other conclusion, logically or practically, than the formation of a centralised World-State.

But let us suppose that the physical shock of war is prevented, not by law, but by the principle of enforced arbitration

in extreme cases which might lead to war, not by the creation of an international authority, but by the overhanging threat of international pressure. The state of covert war will still continue; it may even take new and disastrous forms. Deprived of other weapons the nations are bound to have increasing resort to the weapon of commercial pressure, as did Capital and Labour in their chronic state of "pacific" struggle within the limits of the national life. The instruments would be different, but would follow the same principle, that of the strike and the lock-out which are on one side a combined passive resistance by the weaker party to enforce its claims, on the other a passive pressure by the stronger party to enforce its wishes. Between nations, the corresponding weapon to the strike would be a commercial boycott, already used more than once in an unorganised fashion both in Asia and Europe and bound to be extremely effective and telling if organised even by a politically or commercially weak nation. For the weaker nation is necessary to the stronger, if as nothing else, yet as a market or as a commercial and industrial victim. The corresponding weapons to the lock-out would be the refusal of capital or machinery, the prohibition of all or of any needed imports into the offending or victim country, or even a naval blockade leading, if long maintained, to industrial ruin or to national starvation. The blockade is a weapon used originally only in a state of war, but it was employed against Greece as a substitute for war, and this use may easily be extended in the future. There is always too the weapon of prohibitive tariffs.

It is clear that these weapons need not be employed for commercial purposes or motives only, they may be grasped at to defend or to attack any national interest, to enforce any claim of justice or injustice between nation and nation. It has been shown into how tremendous a weapon commercial pressure can be turned when it is used as an aid to war. If Germany was crushed in the end, the real means of victory was the blockade, the cutting off of money, resources and food and the ruin of industry and commerce. For the military debacle was not directly due to military weakness, but primarily to the diminution and failure of resources, to exhaustion, semi-starvation and the

moral depression of an intolerable position cut off from all hope of replenishment and recovery. This lesson also may have in the future considerable application in a time of "peace". Already it was proposed at one time in some quarters to continue the commercial war after the political had ceased, in order that Germany might not only be struck off the list of great imperial nations but also permanently hampered, disabled or even ruined as a commercial and industrial rival. A policy of refusal of capital and trade relations and a kind of cordon or hostile blockade has been openly advocated and was for a time almost in force against Bolshevist Russia. And it has been suggested too that a League of Peace[3] might use this weapon of commercial pressure against any recalcitrant nation in place of military force.

But so long as there is not a firm international authority, the use of this weapon would not be likely to be limited to such occasions or used only for just and legitimate ends. It might be used by a strong nation secure of general indifference to crush and violate the weak; it might be used by a combination of strong imperial Powers to enforce their selfish and evil will upon the world. Force and coercion of any kind not concentrated in the hands of a just and impartial authority are always liable to abuse and misapplication. Therefore inevitably in the growing unity of mankind the evolution of such an authority must become an early and pressing need. The World-State even in its early and imperfect organisation must begin not only to concentrate military force in its hands, but to commence consciously in the beginning what the national State only arrived at by a slow and natural development, the ordering of the commercial, industrial, economic life of the race and the control at first, no doubt, only of the principal relations of international commerce,[4] but inevitably in the end of its whole system and principles. Since

[3] Afterwards realised as the League of Nations.

[4] Some first beginnings of this kind of activity were trying to appear in the activities of the now almost moribund League of Nations. These activities were still only platonic and advisory as in its futile discussions about disarmament and its inconclusive attempts to regulate certain relations of Capital and Labour, but they showed that the need is already felt and were a signpost on the road to the future.

industry and trade are now five-sixths of social life and the economic principle the governing principle of society, a World-State which did not control human life in its chief principle and its largest activity would exist only in name.

Chapter XXVI

The Need of Administrative Unity

IN ALMOST all current ideas of the first step towards international organisation, it is taken for granted that the nations will continue to enjoy their separate existence and liberties and will only leave to international action the prevention of war, the regulation of dangerous disputes, the power of settling great international questions which they cannot settle by ordinary means. It is impossible that the development should stop there; this first step would necessarily lead to others which could travel only in one direction. Whatever authority were established, if it is to be a true authority in any degree and not a mere concert for palaver, would find itself called upon to act more and more frequently and to assume always increasing powers. To avoid preventible disturbance and friction, to avert hereafter the recurrence of troubles and disasters which in the beginning the first limitations of its powers had debarred the new authority from averting by a timely intervention before they came to a head, to bring about a coordination of activities for common ends, would be the principal motives impelling humanity to advance from a looser to a closer union, from a voluntary self-subordination in great and exceptional matters to an obligatory subordination in most matters. The desire of powerful nations to use it for their own purposes, the utility for weaker nations of appealing to it for the protection of their interests, the shock of actual or threatened internal disturbances and revolutions would all help to give the international authority greater power and provide occasions for extending its normal action. Science, thought and religion, the three great forces which in modern times tend increasingly to override national distinctions and point the race towards unity of life and spirit, would become more impatient of national barriers, hostilities and divisions and lend their powerful influence to the change. The great struggle

between Capital and Labour might become rapidly world-wide, arrive at such an international organisation as would precipitate the inevitable step or even present the actual crisis which would bring about the transformation.

Our supposition for the moment is that a well-unified World-State with the nations for its provinces would be the final outcome. At first taking up the regulation of international disputes and of economic treaties and relations, the international authority would start as an arbiter and an occasional executive power and change by degrees into a legislative body and a standing executive power. Its legislation would be absolutely necessary in international matters, if fresh convulsions are to be avoided; for it is idle to suppose that any international arrangement, any ordering of the world arrived at after the close of a great war and upheaval could be permanent and definitive. Injustice, inequalities, abnormalities, causes of quarrel or dissatisfaction would remain in the relations of nation with nation, continent with continent which would lead to fresh hostilities and explosions. As these are prevented in the nation-State by the legislative authority which constantly modifies the existing system of things in conformity with new ideas, interests, forces and necessities, so it would have to be in the developing World-State. This legislative power, as it developed, extended, regularised its action, powers and processes, would become more complex and would be bound to interfere at many points and override or substitute its own for the separate national action. That would imply the growth also of its executive power and the development of an international executive organisation. At first it might confine itself to the most important questions and affairs which obviously demanded its control; but it would tend increasingly to stretch its hand to all or most matters that could be viewed as having an international effect and importance. Before long it would invade and occupy even those fields in which the nations are now jealous of their own rights and power. And eventually it would permeate the whole system of the national life and subject it to international control in the interests of the better coordination of the united life, culture,

science, organisation, education, efficiency of the human race. It would reduce the now free and separate nations first to the position of the States of the American union or the German empire and eventually perhaps to that of geographical provinces or departments of the single nation of mankind.

The present obstacle to any such extreme consummation is the still strong principle of nationalism, the sense of group separateness, the instinct of collective independence, its pride, its pleasure in itself, its various sources of egoistic self-satisfaction, its insistence on the subordination of the human idea to the national idea. But we are supposing that the new-born idea of internationalism will grow apace, subject to itself the past idea and temper of nationalism, become dominant and take possession of the human mind. As the larger nation-group has subordinated to itself and tended to absorb all smaller clan, tribal and regional groups, as the larger empire-group now tends to subordinate and might, if allowed to develop, eventually absorb the smaller nation-groups, we are supposing that the complete human group of united mankind will subordinate to itself in the same way and eventually absorb all smaller groups of separated humanity. It is only by a growth of the international idea, the idea of a single humanity, that nationalism can disappear, if the old natural device of an external unification by conquest or other compulsive force continues to be no longer possible; for the methods of war have become too disastrous and no single empire has the means and the strength to overcome, whether rapidly or in the gradual Roman way, the rest of the world. Undoubtedly, nationalism is a more powerful obstacle to farther unification than was the separativeness of the old pettier and less firmly self-conscious groupings which preceded the developed nation-State. It is still the most powerful sentiment in the collective human mind, still gives an indestructible vitality to the nation and is apt to reappear even where it seemed to have been abolished. But we cannot argue safely from the present balance of tendencies in the beginning of a great era of transitions. Already there are at work not only ideas but forces, all the more powerful for being forces of the future and not established powers of the present,

which may succeed in subordinating nationalism to themselves far earlier than we can at present conceive.

If the principle of the World-State is carried to its logical conclusion and to its extreme consequences, the result will be a process analogous in principle, with whatever necessary differences in the manner or form or extent of execution, to that by which in the building of the nation-State the central government, first as a monarchy, then as a democratic assembly and executive, gathered up the whole administration of the national life. There will be a centralisation of all control, military and police, administrative, judicial, legislative, economic, social and cultural in the one international authority. The spirit of the centralisation will be a strong unitarian idea and the principle of uniformity enforced for the greatest practical convenience and the result a rationalised mechanism of human life and activities throughout the world with justice, universal well-being, economy of effort and scientific efficiency as its principal objects. Instead of the individual activities of nation-groups each working for itself with the maximum of friction and waste and conflict, there will be an effort at coordination such as we now see in a well-organised modern State, of which the complete idea is a thoroughgoing State socialism, nowhere yet realised indeed, but rapidly coming into existence.[1] If we glance briefly at each department of the communal activity, we shall see that this development is inevitable.

We have seen already that all military power — and in the World-State that would mean an international armed police — must be concentrated in the hands of one common authority; otherwise the State cannot endure. A certain concentration of the final power of decision in economic matters would be also in time inevitable. And in the end this supremacy could not stop short of a complete control. For the economic life of the world is becoming more and more one and indivisible; but the present

[1] Since this was written, this coming into existence has become much more rapid and thoroughgoing in three at least of the greatest nations and a more hesitating and less clearly self-conscious imitation of it is in evidence in smaller countries.

state of international relations is an anomalous condition of opposite principles partly in conflict, partly accommodated to each other as best they can be, — but the best is bad and harmful to the common interest. On the one side, there is the underlying unity which makes each nation commercially dependent on all the rest. On the other there is the spirit of national jealousy, egoism and sense of separate existence which makes each nation attempt at once to assert its industrial independence and at the same time reach out for a hold of its outgoing commercial activities upon foreign markets. The interaction of these two principles is regulated at present partly by the permitted working of natural forces, partly by tacit practice and understanding, partly by systems of tariff protection, bounties, State aid of one kind or another on the one hand and commercial treaties and agreements on the other. Inevitably, as the World-State grew, this would be felt to be an anomaly, a wasteful and uneconomical process. An efficient international authority would be compelled more and more to intervene and modify the free arrangements of nation with nation. The commercial interests of humanity at large would be given the first place; the independent proclivities and commercial ambitions or jealousies of this or that nation would be compelled to subordinate themselves to the human good. The ideal of mutual exploitation would be replaced by the ideal of a fit and proper share in the united economic life of the race. Especially, as socialism advanced and began to regulate the whole economic existence of separate countries, the same principle would gain ground in the international field and in the end the World-State would be called upon to take up into its hands the right ordering of the industrial production and distribution of the world. Each country might be allowed for a time to produce its own absolute necessities: but in the end it would probably be felt that this was no more necessary than for Wales or Scotland to produce all its own necessities independently of the rest of the British Isles or for one province of India to be an economic unit independent of the rest of the country. Each would produce and distribute only what it could to the best advantage, most naturally, most efficiently and most

economically, for the common need and demand of mankind in which its own would be inseparably included. It would do this according to a system settled by the common will of mankind through its State government and under a method made uniform in its principles, however variable in local detail, so as to secure the simplest, smoothest and most rational working of a necessarily complicated machinery.

The administration of the general order of society is a less pressing matter of concern than it was to the nation-States in their period of formation, because those were times when the element of order had almost to be created and violence, crime and revolt were both more easy and more a natural and general propensity of mankind. At the present day, not only are societies tolerably well-organised in this respect and equipped with the absolutely necessary agreements between country and country, but by an elaborate system of national, regional and municipal governments linked up by an increasingly rapid power of communication the State can regulate parts of the order of life with which the cruder governments of old were quite unable to deal with any full effect. In the World-State, it may be thought, each country may be left to its own free action in matters of its internal order and, indeed, of all its separate political, social and cultural life. But even here it is probable that the World-State would demand a greater centralisation and uniformity than we can now easily imagine.

In the matter, for instance, of the continual struggle of society with the still ineradicable element of crime which it generates in its own bosom, the crudity of the present system is sure to be recognised and a serious attempt made to deal with it in a very radical manner. The first necessity would be the close observation and supervision of the great mass of constantly re-created corrupt human material in which the bacillus of crime finds its natural breeding-ground. This is at present done very crudely and imperfectly and, for the most part, after the event of actual crime by the separate police of each nation with extradition treaties and informal mutual aid as a device against evasion by place-shift. The World-State would insist on an international as

well as a local supervision, not only to deal with the phenomenon of what may be called international crime and disorder which is likely to increase largely under future conditions, but for the more important object of the prevention of crime.

For the second necessity it would feel would be the need to deal with crime at its roots and in its inception. It may attempt this, first, by a more enlightened method of education and moral and temperamental training which would render the growth of criminal propensities more difficult; secondly, by scientific or eugenic methods of observation, treatment, isolation, perhaps sterilisation of corrupt human material; thirdly, by a humane and enlightened gaol system and penological method which would have for its aim not the punishment but the reform of the incipient and the formed criminal. It would insist on a certain uniformity of principle so that there might not be countries that would persevere in backward and old-world or inferior or erratic systems and so defeat the general object. For this end centralisation of control would be necessary or at least strongly advisable. So too with the judicial method. The present system is still considered as enlightened and civilised, and it is so comparatively with the mediaeval methods; but a time will surely come when it will be condemned as grotesque, inefficient, irrational and in many of its principal features semi-barbaric, a half-conversion at most of the more confused and arbitrary methods of an earlier state of social thought and feeling and social life. With the development of a more rational system, the preservation of the old juridical and judicial principles and methods in any part of the world would be felt to be intolerable and the World-State would be led to standardise the new principles and the new methods by a common legislation and probably a general centralised control.

In all these matters, it might be admitted, uniformity and centralisation would be beneficial and to some extent inevitable; no jealousy of national separateness and independence could be allowed under such conditions to interfere with the common good of humanity. But at least in the choice of their political system and in other spheres of their social life the nations might

well be left to follow their own ideals and propensities and to be healthily and naturally free. It may even be said that the nations would never tolerate any serious interference in these matters and that the attempt to use the World-State for such a purpose would be fatal to its existence. But, as a matter of fact, the principle of political non-interference is likely to be much less admitted in the future than it has been in the past or is at present. Always in times of great and passionate struggle between conflicting political ideas, — between oligarchy and democracy in ancient Greece, between the old regime and the ideas of the French Revolution in modern Europe, — the principle of political non-interference has gone to the wall. But now we see another phenomenon — the opposite principle of interference slowly erecting itself into a conscious rule of international life. There is more and more possible an intervention like the American interference in Cuba, not on avowed grounds of national interest, but ostensibly on behalf of liberty, constitutionalism and democracy or of an opposite social and political principle, on international grounds therefore and practically in the force of this idea that the internal arrangements of a country concern, under certain conditions of disorder or insufficiency, not only itself, but its neighbours and humanity at large. A similar principle was put forward by the Allies in regard to Greece during the war. It was applied to one of the most powerful nations of the world in the refusal of the Allies to treat with Germany or, practically, to re-admit it into the comity of nations unless it set aside its existing political system and principles and adopted the forms of modern democracy, dismissing all remnant of absolutist rule.[2]

This idea of the common interest of the race in the internal affairs of a nation is bound to increase as the life of humanity becomes more unified. The great political question of the future

[2] The hardly disguised intervention of the Fascist Powers in Spain to combat and beat down the democratic Government of the country is a striking example of a tendency likely to increase in the future. Since then there has been the interference in an opposite sense with the Franco regime in the same country and the pressure put upon it, however incomplete and wavering, to change its method and principle.

is likely to be the challenge of Socialism, the full evolution of the omnipotent and omnipresent social State. And if Socialism triumphs in the leading nations of the world, it will inevitably seek to impose its rule everywhere not only by indirect pressure, but even by direct interference in what it would consider backward countries. An international authority, Parliamentary or other, in which it commanded the majority or the chief influence, would be too ready a means to be neglected. Moreover, a World-State would probably no more find it possible to tolerate the continuance of certain nations as capitalist societies, itself being socialistic in major part, than a capitalist — or socialist — Great Britain would tolerate a socialist — or capitalist — Scotland or Wales. On the other hand, if all nations become socialistic in form, it would be natural enough for the World-State to coordinate all these separate socialisms into one great system of human life. But Socialism pursued to its full development means the destruction of the distinction between political and social activities; it means the socialisation of the common life and its subjection in all its parts to its own organised government and administration. Nothing small or great escapes its purview. Birth and marriage, labour and amusement and rest, education, culture, training of physique and character, the socialistic sense leaves nothing outside its scope and its busy intolerant control. Therefore, granting an international Socialism, neither the politics nor the social life of the separate peoples is likely to escape the centralised control of the World-State.[3]

Such a world-system is remote indeed from our present conceptions and established habits of life, but these conceptions and habits are already subjected at their roots to powerful forces of change. Uniformity is becoming more and more the law of the world; it is becoming more and more difficult, in spite of sentiment and in spite of conscious efforts of conservation and revival, for local individualities to survive. But the triumph of

[3] This aspect of Socialism in action has received a striking confirmation in the trend to total governmental control in Germany and Italy. The strife between national (Fascist) Socialism and pure Marxist Socialism could not have been foreseen at the time of writing; but whichever form prevails, there is an identical principle.

uniformity would naturally make for centralisation; the radical incentive to separateness would disappear. And centralisation once accomplished would in its turn make for a more complete uniformity. Such decentralisation as might be indispensable in a uniform humanity would be needed for convenience of administration, not on the ground of true separative variations. Once the national sentiment has gone under before a dominant internationalism, large questions of culture and race would be the only grounds left for the preservation of a strong though subordinate principle of separation in the World-State. But difference of culture is quite as much threatened today as any other more outward principle of group variation. The differences between the European nations are simply minor variations of a common occidental culture. And now that Science, that great power for uniformity of thought and life and method, is becoming more and more the greater part and threatens to become the whole of culture and life, the importance of these variations is likely to decrease. The only radical difference that still exists is between the mind of the Occident and the mind of the Orient. But here too Asia is undergoing the shock of Europeanism and Europe is beginning to feel, however slightly, the reflux of Asiaticism. A common world-culture is the most probable outcome. The valid objection to centralisation will then be greatly diminished in force, if not removed altogether. Race-sense is perhaps a stronger obstacle because it is more irrational; but this too may be removed by the closer intellectual, cultural and physical intercourse which is inevitable in the not distant future.

The dream of the cosmopolitan socialist thinker may therefore be realised after all. And given the powerful continuance of the present trend of world-forces, it is in a way inevitable. Even what seems now most a chimera, a common language, may become a reality. For a State naturally tends to establish one language as the instrument of all its public affairs, its thought, its literature; the rest sink into patois, dialects, provincial tongues, like Welsh in Great Britain or Breton and Provençal in France; exceptions like Switzerland are few, hardly more than one or

two in number, and are preserved only by unusually favourable conditions. It is difficult indeed to suppose that languages with powerful literatures spoken by millions of cultured men will allow themselves to be put into a quite secondary position, much less snuffed out by any old or new speech of man. But it cannot be quite certainly said that scientific reason, taking possession of the mind of the race and thrusting aside separative sentiment as a barbaric anachronism, may not accomplish one day even this psychological miracle. In any case, variety of language need be no insuperable obstacle to uniformity of culture, to uniformity of education, life and organisation or to a regulating scientific machinery applied to all departments of life and settled for the common good by the united will and intelligence of the human race. For that would be what a World-State, such as we have imagined, would stand for, its meaning, its justification, its human object. It is likely indeed that this and nothing less would come in the end to be regarded as the full justification of its existence.

Chapter XXVII

The Peril of the World-State

THIS THEN is the extreme possible form of a World-State, the form dreamed of by the socialistic, scientific, humanitarian thinkers who represent the modern mind at its highest point of self-consciousness and are therefore able to detect the trend of its tendencies, though to the half-rationalised mind of the ordinary man whose view does not go beyond the day and its immediate morrow, their speculations may seem to be chimerical and utopian. In reality they are nothing of the kind; in their essence, not necessarily in their form, they are, as we have seen, not only the logical outcome, but the inevitable practical last end of the incipient urge towards human unity, if it is pursued by a principle of mechanical unification, — that is to say, by the principle of the State. It is for this reason that we have found it necessary to show the operative principles and necessities which have underlain the growth of the unified and finally socialistic nation-State, in order to see how the same movement in international unification must lead to the same results by an analogous necessity of development. The State principle leads necessarily to uniformity, regulation, mechanisation; its inevitable end is socialism. There is nothing fortuitous, no room for chance in political and social development, and the emergence of socialism was no accident or a thing that might or might not have been, but the inevitable result contained in the very seed of the State idea. It was inevitable from the moment that idea began to be hammered out in practice. The work of the Alfreds and Charlemagnes and other premature national or imperial unifiers contained this as a sure result, for men work almost always without knowing for what they have worked. But in modern times the signs are so clear that we need not be deceived or imagine, when we begin to lay a mechanical base for world-unification, that the result contained

in the very effort will not insist on developing, however far-off it may seem at present from any immediate or even any distant possibilities. A strict unification, a vast uniformity, a regulated socialisation of united mankind will be the predestined fruit of our labour.

This result can only be avoided if an opposite force interposes and puts in its veto, as happened in Asia where the State idea, although strongly affirmed within its limits, could never go in its realisation beyond a certain point, because the fundamental principle of the national life was opposed to its full intolerant development. The races of Asia, even the most organised, have always been peoples rather than nations in the modern sense. Or they were nations only in the sense of having a common soul-life, a common culture, a common social organisation, a common political head, but not nation-States. The State machine existed only for a restricted and superficial action; the real life of the people was determined by other powers with which it could not meddle. Its principal function was to preserve and protect the national culture and to maintain sufficient political, social and administrative order — as far as possible an immutable order — for the real life of the people to function undisturbed in its own way and according to its own innate tendencies. Some such unity for the human race is possible in the place of an organised World-State, if the nations of mankind succeed in preserving their developed instinct of nationalism intact and strong enough to resist the domination of the State idea. The result would then be not a single nation of mankind and a World-State, but a single human people with a free association of its nation-units. Or, it may be, the nation as we know it might disappear, but there would be some other new kind of group-units, assured by some sufficient machinery of international order in the peaceful and natural functioning of their social, economic and cultural relations.

Which then of these two major possibilities would be preferable? To answer that question we have to ask ourselves, what would be the account of gain and loss for the life of the human race which would result from the creation of a unified

World-State. In all probability the results would be, with all allowance for the great difference between then and now, very much the same in essence as those which we observe in the ancient Roman Empire. On the credit side, we should have first one enormous gain, the assured peace of the world. It might not be absolutely secure against internal shocks and disturbances but, supposing certain outstanding questions to be settled with some approach to permanence, it would eliminate even such occasional violences of civil strife as disturbed the old Roman imperial economy and, whatever perturbations there might still be, need not disturb the settled fabric of civilisation so as to cast all again into the throes of a great radical and violent change. Peace assured, there would be an unparalleled development of ease and well-being. A great number of outstanding problems would be solved by the united intelligence of mankind working no longer in fragments but as one. The vital life of the race would settle down into an assured rational order comfortable, well-regulated, well-informed, with a satisfactory machinery for meeting all difficulties, exigencies and problems with the least possible friction, disturbance and mere uncertainty of adventure and peril. At first, there would be a great cultural and intellectual efflorescence. Science would organise itself for the betterment of human life and the increase of knowledge and mechanical efficiency. The various cultures of the world — those that still exist as separate realities — would not only exchange ideas more intimately, but would throw their gains into one common fund, and new motives and forms would arise for a time in thought and literature and Art. Men would meet each other much more closely and completely than before, develop a greater mutual understanding rid of many accidental motives of strife, hatred and repugnance which now exist, and arrive, if not at brotherhood, — which cannot come by mere political, social and cultural union, — yet at some imitation of it, a sufficiently kindly association and interchange. There would be an unprecedented splendour, ease and amenity in this development of human life, and no doubt some chief poet of the age, writing in the common or

official tongue — shall we say, Esperanto? — would sing confidently of the approach of the golden age or even proclaim its actual arrival and eternal duration. But after a time, there would be a dying down of force, a static condition of the human mind and human life, then stagnation, decay, disintegration. The soul of man would begin to wither in the midst of his acquisitions.

This result would come about for the same essential reasons as in the Roman example. The conditions of a vigorous life would be lost, liberty, mobile variation and the shock upon each other of freely developing differentiated lives. It may be said that this will not happen, because the World-State will be a free democratic State, not a liberty-stifling empire or autocracy, and because liberty and progress are the very principle of modern life and no development would be tolerated which went contrary to that principle. But in all this, there is not really the security that seems to be offered. For what is now, need not endure under quite different circumstances and the idea that it will is a strange mirage thrown from the actualities of the present on the possibly quite different actualities of the future. Democracy is by no means a sure preservative of liberty; on the contrary, we see today the democratic system of government march steadily towards such an organised annihilation of individual liberty as could not have been dreamed of in the old aristocratic and monarchical systems. It may be that from the more violent and brutal forms of despotic oppression which were associated with those systems, democracy has indeed delivered those nations which have been fortunate enough to achieve liberal forms of government, and that is no doubt a great gain. It revives now only in periods of revolution and excitement, often in the form of mob tyranny or a savage revolutionary or reactionary repression. But there is a deprivation of liberty which is more respectable in appearance, more subtle and systematised, more mild in its method because it has a greater force at its back, but for that very reason more effective and pervading. The tyranny of the majority has become a familiar phrase and its deadening effects have been depicted with a great

force of resentment by certain of the modern intellectuals;[1] but what the future promises us is something more formidable still, the tyranny of the whole, of the self-hypnotised mass over its constituent groups and units.[2]

This is a very remarkable development, the more so as in the origins of the democratic movement individual freedom was the ideal which it set in front both in ancient and modern times. The Greeks associated democracy with two main ideas, first, an effective and personal share by each citizen in the actual government, legislation, administration of the community, secondly, a great freedom of individual temperament and action. But neither of these characteristics can flourish in the modern type of democracy, although in the United States of America there was at one time a tendency to a certain extent in this direction. In large States, the personal share of each citizen in the government cannot be effective; he can only have an equal share — illusory for the individual although effective in the mass — in the periodical choice of his legislators and administrators. Even if these have not practically to be elected from a class which is not the whole or even the majority of the community, at present almost everywhere the middle class, still these legislators and administrators do not really represent their electors. The Power they represent is another, a formless and bodiless entity, which has taken the place of monarch and aristocracy, that impersonal group-being which assumes some sort of outward form and body and conscious action in the huge mechanism of the modern State. Against this power the individual is much more helpless than he was against old oppressions. When he feels its pressure grinding him into its uniform moulds, he has no resource except either an impotent anarchism or else a retreat, still to some extent possible, into the freedom of his soul or the freedom of his intellectual being.

[1] E.g. Ibsen in his drama, "An Enemy of the People".

[2] There was first seen the drastic beginning of this phenomenon in Fascist Italy and Soviet Russia. At the time of writing this development could be seen only in speculative prevision. It assumed afterwards the proportions of a growing fact and we can now see its full and formidable body.

For this is one gain of modern democracy which ancient liberty did not realise to the same extent and which has not yet been renounced, a full freedom of speech and thought. And as long as this freedom endures, the fear of a static condition of humanity and subsequent stagnation might seem to be groundless, — especially when it is accompanied by universal education which provides the largest possible human field for producing an effectuating force. Freedom of thought and speech — the two necessarily go together, since there can be no real freedom of thought where a padlock is put upon freedom of speech — is not indeed complete without freedom of association; for free speech means free propagandism and propagandism only becomes effective by association for the realisation of its objects. This third liberty also exists with more or less of qualifying limitations or prudent safeguards in all democratic States. But it is a question whether these great fundamental liberties have been won by the race with an entire security, — apart from their occasional suspensions even in free nations and the considerable restrictions with which they are hedged in subject countries. It is possible that the future has certain surprises for us in this direction.[3] Freedom of thought would be the last human liberty directly attacked by the all-regulating State, which will first seek to regulate the whole life of the individual in the type approved by the communal mind or by its rulers. But when it sees how all-important is the thought in shaping the life, it will be led to take hold of that too by forming the thought of the individual through State education and by training him to the acceptance of the approved communal, ethical, social, cultural, religious ideas, as was done in many ancient forms of education. Only if it finds this weapon ineffective, is it likely to limit freedom of thought directly on the plea of danger to the State and to civilisation. Already we see the right of the State to interfere with individual thought announced here and there in a most ominous

[3] A surprise no longer, but more and more an accomplished fact. At this moment freedom of speech and thought exists no longer in Russia; it was entirely suspended for a time in Germany and Southern Europe.

manner. One would have imagined religious liberty at least was assured to mankind, but recently we have seen an exponent of "new thought" advancing positively the doctrine that the State is under no obligation to recognise the religious liberty of the individual and that even if it grants freedom of religious thought, it can only be conceded as a matter of expediency, not of right. There is no obligation, it is contended, to allow freedom of cult; and indeed this seems logical; for if the State has the right to regulate the whole life of the individual, it must surely have the right to regulate his religion, which is so important a part of his life, and his thought, which has so powerful an effect upon his life.[4]

Supposing an all-regulating socialistic World-State to be established, freedom of thought under such a regime would necessarily mean a criticism not only of the details, but of the very principles of the existing state of things. This criticism, if it is to look not to the dead past but to the future, could only take one direction, the direction of anarchism, whether of the spiritual Tolstoyan kind or else the intellectual anarchism which is now the creed of a small minority but still a growing force in many European countries. It would declare the free development of the individual as its gospel and denounce government as an evil and no longer at all a necessary evil. It would affirm the full and free religious, ethical, intellectual and temperamental growth of the individual from within as the true ideal of human life and all else as things not worth having at the price of the renunciation of this ideal, a renunciation which it would describe as the loss of his soul. It would preach as the ideal of society a free association or brotherhood of individuals without government or any kind of compulsion.

What would the World-State do with this kind of free thought? It might tolerate it so long as it did not translate itself into individual and associated action; but the moment it spread

[4] It was an error of prevision to suppose that the State would hesitate for a time to suppress freedom of thought altogether. It has been done at once and decisively by Bolshevist Russia and the totalitarian States. Religious liberty is not yet utterly destroyed, but is being slowly ground out in Russia, as it was in Germany, by State pressure.

or turned towards a practical self-affirmation in life, the whole principle of the State and its existence would be attacked and its very base would be sapped and undermined and in imminent danger. To stop the destruction at its root or else consent to its own subversion would be the only alternatives before the established Power. But even before any such necessity arises, the principle of regulation of all things by the State would have extended itself to the regulation of the mental as well as the physical life of man by the communal mind, which was the ideal of former civilisations. A static order of society would be the necessary consequence, since without the freedom of the individual a society cannot remain progressive. It must settle into the rut or the groove of a regulated perfection or of something to which it gives that name because of the rationality of system and symmetrical idea of order which it embodies. The communal mass is always conservative and static in its consciousness and only moves slowly in the tardy process of subconscient Nature. The free individual is the conscious progressive: it is only when he is able to impart his own creative and mobile consciousness to the mass that a progressive society becomes possible.

Chapter XXVIII

Diversity in Oneness

IT IS essential to keep constantly in view the fundamental powers and realities of life if we are not to be betrayed by the arbitrary rule of the logical reason and its attachment to the rigorous and limiting idea into experiments which, however convenient in practice and however captivating to a unitarian and symmetrical thought, may well destroy the vigour and impoverish the roots of life. For that which is perfect and satisfying to the system of the logical reason, may yet ignore the truth of life and the living needs of the race. Unity is an idea which is not at all arbitrary or unreal; for unity is the very basis of existence. The oneness that is secretly at the foundation of all things, the evolving spirit in Nature is moved to realise consciously at the top; the evolution moves through diversity from a simple to a complex oneness. Unity the race moves towards and must one day realise.

But uniformity is not the law of life. Life exists by diversity; it insists that every group, every being shall be, even while one with all the rest in its universality, yet by some principle or ordered detail of variation unique. The over-centralisation which is the condition of a working uniformity, is not the healthy method of life. Order is indeed the law of life, but not an artificial regulation. The sound order is that which comes from within as the result of a nature that has discovered itself and found its own law and the law of its relations with others. Therefore the truest order is that which is founded on the greatest possible liberty; for liberty is at once the condition of vigorous variation and the condition of self-finding. Nature secures variation by division into groups and insists on liberty by the force of individuality in the members of the group. Therefore the unity of the human race to be entirely sound and in consonance with the deepest laws of life must be founded on free groupings, and the groupings again must be the natural association of free individuals. This is

an ideal which it is certainly impossible to realise under present conditions or perhaps in any near future of the human race; but it is an ideal which ought to be kept in view, for the more we can approximate to it, the more we can be sure of being on the right road. The artificiality of much in human life is the cause of its most deep-seated maladies; it is not faithful to itself or sincere with Nature and therefore it stumbles and suffers.

The utility, the necessity of natural groupings may be seen if we consider the purpose and functioning of one great principle of division in Nature, her insistence on diversity of language. The seeking for a common language for all mankind was very strong at the close of the last and the beginning of the present century and gave rise to several experiments, none of which could get to any vital permanence. Now whatever may be the need of a common medium of communication for mankind and however it may be served by the general use either of an artificial and conventional language or of some natural tongue, as Latin, and later on to a slight extent French, was for some time the common cultural tongue of intercourse between the European nations or Sanskrit for the Indian peoples, no unification which destroyed or overshadowed, dwarfed and discouraged the large and free use of the varying natural languages of humanity, could fail to be detrimental to human life and progress. The legend of the Tower of Babel speaks of the diversity of tongues as a curse laid on the race; but whatever its disadvantages, and they tend more and more to be minimised by the growth of civilisation and increasing intercourse, it has been rather a blessing than a curse, a gift to mankind rather than a disability laid upon it. The purposeless exaggeration of anything is always an evil, and an excessive pullulation of varying tongues that serve no purpose in the expression of a real diversity of spirit and culture is certainly a stumbling-block rather than a help: but this excess, though it existed in the past,[1] is hardly a possibility of

[1] In India the pedants enumerate I know not how many hundred languages. This is a stupid misstatement; there are about a dozen great tongues; the rest are either dialects or aboriginal survivals of tribal speech that are bound to disappear.

the future. The tendency is rather in the opposite direction. In former times diversity of language helped to create a barrier to knowledge and sympathy, was often made the pretext even of an actual antipathy and tended to a too rigid division. The lack of sufficient interpenetration kept up both a passive want of understanding and a fruitful crop of active misunderstandings. But this was an inevitable evil of a particular stage of growth, an exaggeration of the necessity that then existed for the vigorous development of strongly individualised group-souls in the human race. These disadvantages have not yet been abolished, but with closer intercourse and the growing desire of men and nations for the knowledge of each other's thought and spirit and personality, they have diminished and tend to diminish more and more and there is no reason why in the end they should not become inoperative.

Diversity of language serves two important ends of the human spirit, a use of unification and a use of variation. A language helps to bring those who speak it into a certain large unity of growing thought, formed temperament, ripening spirit. It is an intellectual, aesthetic and expressive bond which tempers division where division exists and strengthens unity where unity has been achieved. Especially it gives self-consciousness to national or racial unity and creates the bond of a common self-expression and a common record of achievement. On the other hand, it is a means of national differentiation and perhaps the most powerful of all, not a barren principle of division merely, but a fruitful and helpful differentiation. For each language is the sign and power of the soul of the people which naturally speaks it. Each develops therefore its own peculiar spirit, thought-temperament, way of dealing with life and knowledge and experience. If it receives and welcomes the thought, the life-experience, the spiritual impact of other nations, still it transforms them into something new of its own and by that power of transmutation it enriches the life of humanity with its fruitful borrowings and does not merely repeat what had been gained elsewhere. Therefore it is of the utmost value to a nation, a human group-soul, to preserve its language and to make of it

a strong and living cultural instrument. A nation, race or people which loses its language cannot live its whole life or its real life. And this advantage to the national life is at the same time an advantage to the general life of the human race.

How much a distinct human group loses by not possessing a separate tongue of its own or by exchanging its natural self-expression for an alien form of speech, can be seen by the examples of the British colonies, the United States of America and Ireland. The colonies are really separate peoples in the psychological sense, although they are not as yet separate nations. English, for the most part or at the lowest in great part, in their origin and political and social sympathy, they are yet not replicas of England, but have already a different temperament, a bent of their own, a developing special character. But this new personality can only appear in the more outward and mechanical parts of their life and even there in no great, effective and fruitful fashion. The British colonies do not count in the culture of the world, because they have no native culture, because by the fact of their speech they are and must be mere provinces of England. Whatever peculiarities they may develop in their mental life tend to create a type of provincialism and not a central intellectual, aesthetic, spiritual life of their own with its distinct importance for mankind. For the same reason the whole of America, in spite of its powerfully independent political and economic being, has tended to be culturally a province of Europe, the south and centre by their dependence on the Spanish, and the north by its dependence on the English language. The life of the United States alone tends and strives to become a great and separate cultural existence, but its success is not commensurate with its power. Culturally, it is still to a great extent a province of England. Neither its literature, in spite of two or three great names, nor its art nor its thought, nor anything else on the higher levels of the mind, has been able to arrive at a vigorous maturity independent in its soul-type. And this because its instrument of self-expression, the language which the national mind ought to shape and be in turn shaped by it, was formed and must continue to be formed by another country with a different mentality and

must there find its centre and its law of development. In old times, America would have evolved and changed the English language according to its own needs until it became a new speech, as the mediaeval nations dealt with Latin, and arrived in this way at a characteristic instrument of self-expression; but under modern conditions this is not easily possible.[2]

Ireland had its own tongue when it had its own free nationality and culture and its loss was a loss to humanity as well as to the Irish nation. For what might not this Celtic race with its fine psychic turn and quick intelligence and delicate imagination, which did so much in the beginning for European culture and religion, have given to the world through all these centuries under natural conditions? But the forcible imposition of a foreign tongue and the turning of a nation into a province left Ireland for so many centuries mute and culturally stagnant, a dead force in the life of Europe. Nor can we count as an adequate compensation for this loss the small indirect influence of the race upon English culture or the few direct contributions made by gifted Irishmen forced to pour their natural genius into a foreign mould of thought. Even when Ireland in her struggle for freedom was striving to recover her free soul and give it a voice, she has been hampered by having to use a tongue which does not naturally express her spirit and peculiar bent. In time she may conquer the obstacle, make this tongue her own, force it to express her, but it will be long, if ever, before she can do it with the same richness, force and unfettered individuality as she would have done in her Gaelic speech. That speech she had tried to recover but the natural obstacles have been and are likely always to be too heavy and too strongly established for any complete success in that endeavour.

Modern India is another striking example. Nothing has stood more in the way of the rapid progress in India, nothing

[2] It is affirmed that now such an independent development is taking place in America; it has to be seen how far this becomes a truly vigorous reality: at present it has amounted only to a provincial turn, a sort of national slang or a racy oddity. Even in the farthest development it would only be a sort of dialect, not a national language.

has more successfully prevented her self-finding and development under modern conditions than the long overshadowing of the Indian tongues as cultural instruments by the English language. It is significant that the one sub-nation in India which from the first refused to undergo this yoke, devoted itself to the development of its language, made that for long its principal preoccupation, gave to it its most original minds and most living energies, getting through everything else perfunctorily, neglecting commerce, doing politics as an intellectual and oratorical pastime, — that it is Bengal which first recovered its soul, respiritualised itself, forced the whole world to hear of its great spiritual personalities, gave it the first modern Indian poet and Indian scientist of world-wide fame and achievement, restored the moribund art of India to life and power, first made her count again in the culture of the world, first, as a reward in the outer life, arrived at a vital political consciousness and a living political movement not imitative and derivative in its spirit and its central ideal.[3] For so much does language count in the life of a nation; for so much does it count to the advantage of humanity at large that its group-souls should preserve and develop and use with a vigorous group-individuality their natural instrument of expression.

A common language makes for unity and therefore it might be said that the unity of the human race demands unity of language; the advantages of diversity must be foregone for this greater good, however serious the temporary sacrifice. But it makes for a real, fruitful, living unity, only when it is the natural expression of the race or has been made natural by a long adaptation and development from within. The history of universal tongues spoken by peoples to whom they were not natural, is not encouraging. Always they have tended to become dead tongues, sterilising so long as they kept their hold, fruitful only when they were decomposed and broken up into new derivative languages or departed leaving the old speech, where that still persisted, to

[3] Now, of course, everything has changed and these remarks are no longer applicable to the actual state of things in India.

revive with this new stamp and influence upon it. Latin, after its first century of general domination in the West, became a dead thing, impotent for creation, and generated no new or living and evolving culture in the nations that spoke it; even so great a force as Christianity could not give it a new life. The times during which it was an instrument of European thought, were precisely those in which that thought was heaviest, most traditional and least fruitful. A rapid and vigorous new life only grew up when the languages which appeared out of the detritus of dying Latin or the old languages which had not been lost took its place as the complete instruments of national culture. For it is not enough that the natural language should be spoken by the people; it must be the expression of its higher life and thought. A language that survives only as a patois or a provincial tongue like Welsh after the English conquest or Breton or Provençal in France or as Czech survived once in Austria or Ruthenian and Lithuanian in imperial Russia, languishes, becomes sterile and does not serve all the true purpose of survival.

Language is the sign of the cultural life of a people, the index of its soul in thought and mind that stands behind and enriches its soul in action. Therefore it is here that the phenomena and utilities of diversity may be most readily seized, more than in mere outward things; but these truths are important because they apply equally to the thing which it expresses and symbolises and serves as an instrument. Diversity of language is worth keeping because diversity of cultures and differentiation of soul-groups are worth keeping and because without that diversity life cannot have full play; for in its absence there is a danger, almost an inevitability of decline and stagnation. The disappearance of national variation into a single uniform human unity, of which the systematic thinker dreams as an ideal and which we have seen to be a substantial possibility and even a likelihood if a certain tendency becomes dominant, might lead to political peace, economic well-being, perfect administration, the solution of a hundred material problems, as did on a lesser scale the Roman unity in old times; but to what eventual good if it leads also to an uncreative sterilisation of the mind and

the stagnation of the soul of the race? In laying this stress on culture, on the things of the mind and the spirit there need be no intention of undervaluing the outward material side of life; it is not at all my purpose to belittle that to which Nature always attaches so insistent an importance. On the contrary, the inner and the outer depend upon each other. For we see that in the life of a nation a great period of national culture and vigorous mental and soul life is always part of a general stirring and movement which has its counterpart in the outward political, economic and practical life of the nation. The cultural brings about or increases the material progress but also it needs it that it may itself flourish with an entirely full and healthy vigour. The peace, well-being and settled order of the human world is a thing eminently to be desired as a basis for a great world-culture in which all humanity must be united; but neither of these unities, the outward or inward, ought to be devoid of an element even more important than peace, order and well-being, — freedom and vigour of life, which can only be assured by variation and by the freedom of the group and of the individual. Not then a uniform unity, not a logically simple, a scientifically rigid, a beautifully neat and mechanical sameness, but a living oneness full of healthy freedom and variation is the ideal which we should keep in view and strive to get realised in man's future.

But how is this difficult end to be secured? For if an excessive uniformity and centralisation tends to the disappearance of necessary variations and indispensable liberties, a vigorous diversity and strong group-individualism may lead to an incurable persistence or constant return of the old separatism which will prevent human unity from reaching completeness or even will not allow it to take firm root. For it will not be enough for the constituent groups or divisions to have a certain formal administrative and legislative separateness like the States of the American union if, as there, there is liberty only in mechanical variations and all vivid departures from the general norm proceeding from a profounder inner variation are discouraged or forbidden. Nor will it be sufficient to found a unity plus local independence of the German type; for there the real overriding force was a

unifying and disciplined Prussianism and independence survived only in form. Nor will even the English colonial system give us any useful suggestion; for there is there local independence and a separate vigour of life, but the brain, heart and central spirit are in the metropolitan country and the rest are at the best only outlying posts of the Anglo-Saxon idea.[4] The Swiss cantonal life offers no fruitful similitude; for apart from the exiguity of its proportions and frame, there is the phenomenon of a single Swiss life and practical spirit with a mental dependence on three foreign cultures sharply dividing the race; a common Swiss culture does not exist. The problem is rather, on a larger and more difficult scale and with greater complexities, that which offered itself for a moment to the British Empire, how, if it is at all possible, to unite Great Britain, Ireland, the Colonies, Egypt, India in a real oneness, throw their gains into a common stock, use their energies for a common end, help them to find the account of their national individuality in a supra-national life, yet preserve that individuality, — Ireland keeping the Irish soul and life and cultural principle, India the Indian soul and life and cultural principle, the other units developing theirs, not united by a common Anglicisation, which was the past empire-building ideal, but held together by a greater as yet unrealised principle of free union. Nothing was suggested at any time in the way of a solution except some sort of bunch or rather bouquet system, unifying its clusters not by the living stalk of a common origin or united past, for that does not exist, but by an artificial thread of administrative unity which might at any moment be snapped irretrievably by centrifugal forces.

But after all, it may be said, unity is the first need and should be achieved at any cost, just as national unity was achieved by crushing out the separate existence of the local units; afterwards a new principle of group-variation may be found other than the nation-unit. But the parallel here becomes illusory, because an important factor is lacking. For the history of the birth of the nation is a coalescence of small groups into a larger unit among

[4] This may be less so than before, but the improvement does not go very far.

many similar large units. The old richness of small units which gave such splendid cultural, but such unsatisfactory political results in Greece, Italy and India was lost, but the principle of life made vivid by variative diversity was preserved with nations for the diverse units and the cultural life of a continent for the common background. Here nothing of the kind is possible. There will be a sole unity, the world-nation; all outer source of diversity will disappear. Therefore the inner source has to be modified indeed, subordinated in some way, but preserved and encouraged to survive. It may be that this will not happen; the unitarian idea may forcefully prevail and turn the existing nations into mere geographical provinces or administrative departments of a single well-mechanised State. But in that case the outraged need of life will have its revenge, either by a stagnation, a collapse and a detrition fruitful of new separations or by some principle of revolt from within. A gospel of Anarchism might enforce itself, for example, and break down the world-order for a new creation. The question is whether there is not somewhere a principle of unity in diversity by which this method of action and reaction, creation and destruction, realisation and relapse cannot be, if not altogether avoided, yet mitigated in its action and led to a more serene and harmonious working.

Chapter XXIX

The Idea of a League of Nations

THE ONLY means that readily suggests itself by which a necessary group-freedom can be preserved and yet the unification of the human race achieved, is to strive not towards a closely organised World-State, but towards a free, elastic and progressive world-union. If this is to be done, we shall have to discourage the almost inevitable tendency which must lead any unification by political, economic and administrative means, in a word, by the force of machinery, to follow the analogy of the evolution of the nation-State. And we shall have to encourage and revive that force of idealistic nationalism which, before the war, seemed on the point of being crushed on the one side under the weight of the increasing world-empires of England, Russia, Germany and France, on the other by the progress of the opposite ideal of internationalism with its large and devastating contempt for the narrow ideas of country and nation and its denunciation of the evils of nationalistic patriotism. But at the same time we shall have to find a cure for the as yet incurable separative sentiments natural to the very idea to which we shall have to give a renewed strength. How is all this to be done?

On our side in the attempt we have the natural principle of compensating reactions. The law of action and reaction, valid even in physical Science, is in human action, which must always depend largely on psychological forces, a more constant and pervading truth. That in life to every pressure of active forces there is a tendency of reaction of opposite or variative forces which may not immediately operate but must eventually come into the field or which may not act with an equal and entirely compensating force, but must act with some force of compensation, may be taken as well established. It is both a philosophical necessity and a constant fact of experience. For

Nature works by a balancing system of the interplay of opposite forces. When she has insisted for some time on the dominant force of one tendency as against all others, she seeks to correct its exaggerations by reviving, if dead, or newly awakening, if only in slumber, or bringing into the field in a new and modified form the tendency that is exactly opposite. After long insistence on centralisation, she tries to modify it by at least a subordinated decentralisation. After insisting on more and more uniformity, she calls again into play the spirit of multiform variation. The result need not be an equipollence of the two tendencies, it may be any kind of compromise. Or, instead of a compromise it may be in act a fusion and in result a new creation which shall be a compound of both principles. We may expect her to apply the same method to the tendencies of unification and group-variation in dealing with the great mass unit of humanity. At present, the nation is the fulcrum which the latter tendency has been using for its workings as against the imperialistic tendency of unifying assimilation. Now the course of Nature's working in humanity may destroy the nation-unit, as she destroyed the tribe and clan, and develop a quite new principle of grouping; but also she may preserve it and give it sufficient power of vitality and duration to balance usefully the trend towards too heavy a force of unification. It is this latter contingency that we have to consider.

The two forces in action before the war were imperialism — of various colours, the more rigid imperialism of Germany, the more liberal imperialism of England, — and nationalism. They were the two sides of one phenomenon, the aggressive or expansive and the defensive aspects of national egoism. But in the trend of imperialism this egoism had some eventual chance of dissolving itself by excessive self-enlargement, as the aggressive tribe disappeared, for example, the Persian tribe, first into the empire and then into the nationality of the Persian people, or as the city state also disappeared, first into the Roman Empire and then both tribe and city state without hope of revival into the nations which arose by fusion out of the irruption of the German tribes into the declining Latin unity.

In the same or a similar way aggressive national imperialism by overspreading the world might end in destroying altogether the nation-unit as the city state and tribe were destroyed by the aggressive expansion of a few dominant city states and tribes. The force of defensive nationalism has reacted against this tendency, restricted it and constantly thwarted its evolutionary aim. But before the war, the separative force of nationalism seemed doomed to impotence and final suppression in face of the tremendous power with which science, organisation and efficiency had armed the governing States of the large imperial aggregates.

All the facts were pointing in one direction. Korea had disappeared into the nascent Japanese empire on the mainland of Asia. Persian nationalism had succumbed and lay suppressed under a system of spheres of influence which were really a veiled protectorate, — and all experience shows that the beginning of a protectorate is also the beginning of the end of the protected nation; it is a euphemistic name for the first process of chewing previous to deglutition. Tibet and Siam were so weak and visibly declining that their continued immunity could not be hoped for. China had only escaped by the jealousies of the world-Powers and by its size which made it an awkward morsel to swallow, let alone to digest. The partition of all Asia between four or five or at the most six great empires seemed a foregone conclusion which nothing but an unexampled international convulsion could prevent. The European conquest of Northern Africa had practically been completed by the disappearance of Morocco, the confirmed English protectorate over Egypt and the Italian hold on Tripoli. Somaliland was in a preliminary process of slow deglutition; Abyssinia, saved once by Menelik but now torn by internal discord, was the object of a revived dream of Italian colonial empire. The Boer republics had gone under before the advancing tide of imperialistic aggression. All the rest of Africa practically was the private property of three great Powers and two small ones. In Europe, no doubt, there were still a few small independent nations, Balkan and Teutonic, and also two quite unimportant neutralised countries. But the Balkans

were a constant theatre of uncertainty and disturbance and the rival national egoisms could only have ended, in case of the ejection of Turkey from Europe, either by the formation of a young, hungry and ambitious Slav empire under the dominance of Serbia or Bulgaria or by their disappearance into the shadow of Austria and Russia. The Teutonic States were coveted by expanding Germany and, had that Power been guided by the prudently daring diplomacy of a new Bismarck, — a not unlikely contingency, could William II have gone to the grave before letting loose the hounds of war, — their absorption might well have been compassed. There remained America where imperialism had not yet arisen, but it was already emerging in the form of Rooseveltian Republicanism, and the interference in Mexico, hesitating as it was, yet pointed to the inevitability of a protectorate and a final absorption of the disorderly Central American republics; the union of South America would then have become a defensive necessity. It was only the stupendous cataclysm of the world war which interfered with the progressive march towards the division of the world into less than a dozen great empires.

The war revived with a startling force the idea of free nationality, throwing it up in three forms, each with a stamp of its own. First, in opposition to the imperialistic ambitions of Germany in Europe the allied nations, although themselves empires, were obliged to appeal to a qualified ideal of free nationality and pose as its champions and protectors. America, more politically idealistic than Europe, entered the war with a cry for a league of free nations. Finally, the original idealism of the Russian revolution cast into this new creative chaos an entirely new element by the distinct, positive, uncompromising recognition, free from all reserves of diplomacy and self-interest, of the right of every aggregate of men naturally marked off from other aggregates to decide its own political status and destiny. These three positions were in fact distinct from each other, but each has in effect some relation to the actually possible future of humanity. The first based itself upon the present conditions and aimed at a certain practical rearrangement. The second tried to hasten into

immediate practicability a not entirely remote possibility of the future. The third aimed at bringing into precipitation by the alchemy of revolution — for what we inappropriately call revolution, is only a rapidly concentrated movement of evolution — a yet remote end which in the ordinary course of events could only be realised, if at all, in the far distant future. All of them have to be considered; for a prospect which only takes into view existing realised forces or apparently realisable possibilities is foredoomed to error. Moreover, the Russian idea by its attempt at self-effectuation, however immediately ineffective, rendered itself an actual force which must be counted among those that may influence the future of the race. A great idea already striving to enforce itself in the field of practice is a power which cannot be left out of count, nor valued only according to its apparent chances of immediate effectuation at the present hour.

The position taken by England, France and Italy, the Western European section of the Allies, contemplated a political rearrangement of the world, but not any radical change of its existing order. It is true that it announced the principle of free nationalities; but in international politics which is still a play of natural forces and interests and in which ideals are only a comparatively recent development of the human mind, principles can only prevail where and so far as they are consonant with interests, or where and so far as, being hostile to interests, they are yet assisted by natural forces strong enough to overbear these interests which oppose them. The pure application of ideals to politics is as yet a revolutionary method of action which can only be hoped for in exceptional crises; the day when it becomes a rule of life, human nature and life itself will have become a new phenomenon, something almost superterrestrial and divine. That day is not yet. The Allied Powers in Europe were themselves nations with an imperial past and an imperial future; they could not, even if they wished, get away by the force of a mere word, a mere idea from that past and that future. Their first interest, and therefore the first duty of their statesmen, must be to preserve each its own empire, and even, where it can in their view be

legitimately done, to increase it. The principle of free nationality could only be applied by them in its purity where their own imperial interests were not affected, as against Turkey and the Central Powers, because there the principle was consonant with their own interests and could be supported as against German, Austrian or Turkish interests by the natural force of a successful war which was or could be made to appear morally justified in its results because it was invited by the Powers which had to suffer. It could not be applied in its purity where their own imperial interests were affected, because there it was opposed to existing forces and there was no sufficient countervailing force by which that opposition could be counteracted. Here, therefore, it must be acted upon in a qualified sense, as a force moderating that of pure imperialism. So applied, it would amount in fact at most to the concession of internal self-government or Home Rule in such proportion, at such a time or by such stages as might be possible, practicable and expedient for the interests of the empire and of the subject nation so far as they could be accommodated with one another. It must be understood, in other words, as the common sense of the ordinary man would understand it; it could not be and has nowhere been understood in the sense which would be attached to it by the pure idealist of the Russian type who was careless of all but the naked purity of his principle.

What then would be the practical consequences of this qualified principle of free nationality as it would have been possible to apply it after a complete victory of the Allied Powers, its representatives? In America it would have no field of immediate application. In Africa there are not only no free nations, but with the exception of Egypt and Abyssinia no nations, properly speaking; for Africa is the one part of the world where the old tribal conditions have still survived and only tribal peoples exist, not nations in the political sense of the word. Here then a complete victory of the Allies meant the partition of the continent between three colonial empires, Italy, France and England, with the continuance of the Belgian, Spanish and Portuguese enclaves and the precarious continuance for a time of the Abyssinian

kingdom. In Asia it meant the appearance of three or four new nationalities out of the ruins of the Turkish empire; but these by their immaturity would all be foredoomed to remain, for a time at least, under the influence or the protection of one or other of the great Powers. In Europe it implied the diminution of Germany by the loss of Alsace and Poland, the disintegration of the Austrian empire, the reversion of the Adriatic coast to Serbia and Italy, the liberation of the Czech and Polish nations, some rearrangement in the Balkan Peninsula and the adjacent countries. All this, it is clear, meant a great change in the map of the world, but no radical transformation. The existing tendency of nationalism would gain some extension by the creation of a number of new independent nations; the existing tendency of imperial aggregation would gain a far greater extension by the expansion of the actual territory, world-wide influence and international responsibilities of the successful empires.

Still, certain very important results could not but be gained which must make in the end for a free world-union. The most important of these, the result of the Russian Revolution born out of the war and its battle-cry of free nationality but contingent on the success and maintenance of the revolutionary principle, is the disappearance of Russia as an aggressive empire and its transformation from an imperialistic aggregate into a congeries or a federation of free republics.[1] The second is the destruction of the German type of imperialism and the salvation of a number of independent nationalities which lay under its menace.[2] The third is the multiplication of distinct nationalities with a claim to the recognition of their separate existence and legitimate voice in the affairs of the world, which makes for the strengthening of the idea of a free world-union as the ultimate solution of international problems. The fourth is the definite recognition by the British nation of the qualified principle of free nationality in the inevitable reorganisation of the Empire.

[1] Not so free in practice under Bolshevik rule as in principle; but still the principle is there and capable of development in a freer future.

[2] Unfortunately this result seems destined to disappear by the formidable survival of a military Germany under the Führer.

This development took two forms, the recognition of the principle of Home Rule[3] in Ireland and India and the recognition of the claim of each constituent nation to a voice, which in the event of Home Rule must mean a free and equal voice, in the councils of the Empire. Taken together, these things would mean the ultimate conversion from an empire constituted on the old principle of nationalistic imperialism which was represented by the supreme government of one predominant nation, England, into a free and equal commonwealth of nations managing their common affairs through a supple coordination by mutual goodwill and agreement. In other words, such a development could mean in the end the application within certain limits of precisely that principle which would underlie the constitution, on the larger scale, of a free world-union. Much work would have to be done, several extensions made, many counterforces overcome before such a commonwealth could become a realised fact, but that it should have taken shape in the principle and in the germ, constitutes a notable event in world-history. Two questions remained for the future. What would be the effect of this experiment on the other empires which adhere to the old principle of a dominant centralisation? Probably it would have this effect, if it succeeded, that as they are faced by the growth of strong nationalistic movements, they may be led to adopt the same or a similar solution, just as they adopted from England with modifications her successful system of Parliamentary government in the affairs of the nation. Secondly, what of the relations between these empires and the many independent

[3] Now called Dominion Status. Unfortunately, this recognition could not be put into force except after a violent struggle in Ireland and was marred by the partition of the country. After a vehement passive resistance in India it came to be recognised there but in a truncated form shifting the full concession to a far future. In Egypt also it was only after a struggle that freedom was given but subject to a controlling British alliance. Still the nationalistic principle worked in the creation of a free Iraq, the creation of Arab kingdom and Syrian republic, the withdrawal of imperialistic influence from Persia and, above all, in the institution of Dominion Status substituting an internally free and equal position in a commonwealth of peoples for a dominating Empire. Yet these results, however imperfect, prepared the greater fulfilments which we now see accomplished as part of a new world of free peoples.

non-imperial nations or republics which would exist under the new arrangement of the world? How are they to be preserved from fresh attempts to extend the imperial idea, or how is their existence to be correlated in the international comity with the huge and overshadowing power of the empires? It is here that the American idea of the League of free nations intervened and found a justification in principle.

Unfortunately, it was always difficult to know what exactly this idea would mean in practice. The utterances of its original spokesman, President Wilson, were marked by a magnificent nebulous idealism full of inspiring ideas and phrases, but not attended by a clear and specific application. For the idea behind the head of the President we must look for light to the past history and the traditional temperament of the American people. The United States were always pacific and non-imperialistic in sentiment and principle, yet with an undertone of nationalistic susceptibility which threatened recently to take an imperialistic turn and led the nation to make two or three wars ending in conquests whose results it had then to reconcile with its non-imperialistic pacifism. It annexed Mexican Texas by war and then turned it into a constituent State of the union, swamping it at the same time with American colonists. It conquered Cuba from Spain and the Philippines first from Spain and then from the insurgent Filipinos and, not being able to swamp them with colonists, gave Cuba independence under the American influence and promised the Filipinos a complete independence. American idealism was always governed by a shrewd sense of American interests, and highest among these interests is reckoned the preservation of the American political idea and its constitution, to which all imperialism, foreign or American, has to be regarded as a mortal peril.

As a result and as the result of its inevitable amalgamation with that much more qualified aim of the Allied Powers, a League of Nations was bound to have both an opportunist and an idealistic element. The opportunist element was bound to take in its first form the legalisation of the map and political formation of the world as it emerged from the convulsion of the

war. Its idealistic side, if supported by the use of the influence of America in the League, could favour the increasing application of the democratic principle in its working and its result might be the final emergence of a United States of the world with a democratic Congress of the nations as its governing agency. The legalisation might have the good effect of minimising the chances of war, if a real League of Nations proved practicable and succeeded, — even under the best conditions by no means a foregone conclusion.[4] But it would have the bad effect of tending to stereotype a state of things which must be in part artificial, irregular, anomalous and only temporarily useful. Law is necessary for order and stability, but it becomes a conservative and hampering force unless it provides itself with an effective machinery for changing the laws as soon as circumstances and new needs make that desirable. This can only happen if a true Parliament, Congress or free Council of the nations becomes an accomplished thing. Meanwhile, how is the added force for the conservation of old principles to be counteracted and an evolution assured which will lead to the consummation desired by the democratic American ideal? America's presence and influence in such a League would not be sufficient for that purpose; for it would have at its side other influences interested in preserving the *status quo* and some interested in developing the imperialist solution. Another force, another influence would be needed. Here the Russian ideal, if truly applied and made a force, could intervene and find its justification. For our purpose, it would be the most interesting and important of the three anti-imperialistic influences which Nature might throw as elements into her great crucible to reshape the human earth-mass for a yet unforeseen purpose.

[4] The League was eventually formed with America outside it and as an instrument of European diplomacy, which was a bad omen for its future.

Chapter XXX

The Principle of Free Confederation

THE ISSUES of the original Russian idea of a confederation of free self-determining nationalities were greatly complicated by the transitory phenomenon of a revolution which has sought, like the French Revolution before it, to transform immediately and without easy intermediate stages the whole basis not only of government, but of society, and has, moreover, been carried out under pressure of a disastrous war. This double situation led inevitably to an unexampled anarchy and, incidentally, to the forceful domination of an extreme party which represented the ideas of the Revolution in their most uncompromising and violent form. The Bolshevik despotism corresponds in this respect to the Jacobin despotism of the French Reign of Terror. The latter lasted long enough to secure its work, which was to effect violently and irrevocably the transition from the post-feudal system of society to the first middle-class basis of democratic development. The Labourite despotism in Russia, the rule of the Soviets, fixing its hold and lasting long enough, could effect the transition of society to a second and more advanced basis of the same or even to a still farther development. But we are concerned only with the effect on the ideal of free nationality. On this point all Russia except the small reactionary party was from the first agreed; but the resort to the principle of government by force brought in a contradictory element which endangered its sound effectuation even in Russia itself and therefore weakened the force which it might have had in the immediate future of the world-development.[1] For it stands on a moral principle which belongs to the future,

[1] The component States of Sovietic Russia are allowed a certain cultural, linguistic and other autonomy, but the rest is illusory as they are in fact governed by the force of a highly centralised autocracy in Moscow.

while government of other nations by force belongs to the past and present and is radically inconsistent with the founding of the new world-arrangement on the basis of free choice and free status. It must therefore be considered in itself apart from any application now received, which must necessarily be curbed and imperfect.

The political arrangement of the world hitherto has rested on an almost entirely physical and vital, that is to say, a geographical, commercial, political and military basis. Both the nation idea and the State idea have been built and have worked on this foundation. The first unity aimed at has been a geographical, commercial, political and military union, and in establishing this unity the earlier vital principle of race on which the clan and tribe were founded, has been everywhere overridden. It is true that nationhood still founds itself largely on the idea of race, but this is in the nature of a fiction. It covers the historical fact of a fusion of many races and attributes a natural motive to a historical and geographical association. Nationhood founds itself partly on this association, partly on others which accentuate it, common interests, community of language, community of culture, and all these in unison have evolved a psychological idea, a psychological unity, which finds expression in the idea of nationalism. But the nation idea and the State idea do not everywhere coincide, and in most cases the former has been overridden by the latter and always on the same physical and vital grounds — grounds of geographical, economic, political and military necessity or convenience. In the conflict between the two, force, as in all vital and physical struggle, must always be the final arbiter. But the new principle proposed,[2] that of the right of every natural grouping which feels its own separateness to choose its own status and partnerships, makes a clean sweep of these vital and physical grounds and substitutes a purely psychological principle of free-will and free choice as against

[2] This principle was recognised in theory by the Allies under the name of self-determination but, needless to say, it has been disregarded as soon as the cry had served its turn.

the claims of political and economic necessity. Or rather the vital and physical grounds of grouping are only to be held valid when they receive this psychological sanction and are to found themselves upon it.

How the two rival principles work out, can be seen by the example of Russia itself which is now prominently before our eyes. Russia has never been a nation-State in the pure sense of the word, like France, Spain, Italy, Great Britain or modern Germany; it has been a congeries of nations, Great Russia, Ruthenian Ukraine, White Russia, Lithuania, Poland, Siberia, all Slavic with a dash of Tartar and German blood, Courland which is mostly Slav but partly German, Finland which has no community of any kind with the rest of Russia, and latterly the Asiatic nations of Turkistan, all bound together by one bond only, the rule of the Tsar. The only psychological justification of such a union was the future possibility of fusion into a single nation with the Russian language as its instrument of culture, thought and government, and it was this which the old Russian regime had in view. The only way to bring this about was by governmental force, the way that had been long attempted by England in Ireland and was attempted by Germany in German Poland and Lorraine. The Austrian method of federation employed with Hungary as a second partner or of a pressure tempered by leniency, by concessions and by measures of administrative half-autonomy, might have been tried, but their success in Austria has been small. Federation has not as yet proved a successful principle except between States and nations or subnations already disposed to unite by ties of common culture, a common past or an already developed or developing sense of common nationhood; such conditions existed in the American States and in Germany and they exist in China and in India, but they have not existed in Austria or Russia. Or, if things and ideas had been ripe, instead of this attempt, there might have been an endeavour to found a free union of nations with the Tsar as the symbol of a supra-national idea and bond of unity; but for this the movement of the world was not yet ready. Against an obstinate psychological resistance the vital and physical motive

of union could only resort to force, military, administrative and political, which has succeeded often enough in the past. In Russia, it was probably on the way to a slow success as far as the Slavic portions of the Empire were concerned; in Finland, perhaps also in Poland, it would probably have failed much more irretrievably than the long reign of force failed in Ireland, partly because even a Russian or a German autocracy cannot apply perfectly and simply the large, thoroughgoing and utterly brutal and predatory methods of a Cromwell or Elizabeth,[3] partly because the resisting psychological factor of nationalism had become too self-conscious and capable of an organised passive resistance or at least a passive force of survival.

But if the psychological justification was deficient or only in process of creation, the vital and physical case for a strictly united Russia, not excluding Finland, was overwhelming. The work of the Peters and Catherines was founded on a strong political, military and economic necessity. From the political and military point of view, all these Slavic nations had everything to lose by disunion, because, disunited, they were each exposed and they exposed each other to the oppressive contact of any powerful neighbour, Sweden, Turkey, Poland, while Poland was a hostile and powerful State, or Germany and Austria. The union of the Ukraine Cossacks with Russia was indeed brought about by mutual agreement as a measure of defence against Poland. Poland itself, once weakened, stood a better chance by being united with Russia than by standing helpless and alone between three large and powerful neighbours, and her total inclusion would certainly have been a better solution for her than the fatal partition between these three hungry Powers. On the other hand, by union a State was created, so geographically compact, yet so large in bulk, numerous in population, well-defended by natural conditions and rich in potential resources that, if it had been properly organised, it could not only have stood secure

[3] This could no longer be said after the revival of mediaeval barbaric cruelty in Nazi Germany, one of the most striking recent developments of "modern" humanity. But this may be regarded perhaps as a temporary backsliding, though it sheds lurid lights on the still existing darker possibilities of human nature.

in itself, but dominated half Asia, as it already does, and half Europe, as it was once, even without proper organisation and development, almost on the way to do, when it interfered as armed arbiter, here deliverer, there champion of oppression in Austro-Hungary and in the Balkans. Even the assimilation of Finland was justified from this point of view; for a free Finland would have left Russia geographically and economically incomplete and beset and limited in her narrow Baltic outlet, while a Finland dominated by a strong Sweden or a powerful Germany would have been a standing military menace to the Russian capital and the Russian empire. The inclusion of Finland, on the contrary, made Russia secure, at ease and powerful at this vital point. Nor, might it be argued, did Finland herself really lose, since, independent, she would be too small and weak to maintain herself against neighbouring imperial aggressiveness and must rely on the support of Russia. All these advantages have been destroyed, temporarily at least, by the centrifugal forces let loose by the Revolution and its principle of the free choice of nationalities.

It is evident that these arguments, founded as they are on vital and physical necessity and regardless of moral and psychological justification, might be carried very far. They would not only justify Austria's now past domination of Trieste and her Slavic territories, as they justified England's conquest and holding of Ireland against the continued resistance of the Irish people, but also, extended a little farther, Germany's scheme of Pan-Germanism and even her larger ideas of absorption and expansion. It could be extended to validate all that imperial expansion of the European nations which has now no moral justification and could only have been justified morally in the future by the creation of supra-national psychological unities; for the vital and physical grounds always exist. Even the moral, at least the psychological and cultural justification of a unified Russian culture and life in process of creation, could be extended, and the European claim to spread and universalise European civilisation by annexation and governmental force presents on its larger scale a certain moral analogy. This, too, extended, might justify

the pre-war German ideal of a sort of unification of the world under the aegis of German power and German culture. But, however liable to abuse by extension, vital necessity must be allowed a word in a world still dominated fundamentally by the law of force, however mitigated in its application, and by vital and physical necessity, so far at least as concerns natural geographical unities like Russia, the United Kingdom,[4] even Austria within its natural frontiers.[5]

The Russian principle belongs, in fact, to a possible future in which moral and psychological principles will have a real chance to dominate and vital and physical necessities will have to suit themselves to them, instead of, as now, the other way round; it belongs to an arrangement of things that would be the exact reverse of the present international system. As things are at present, it has to struggle against difficulties which may well be insuperable. The Russians were much ridiculed and more vilified for their offer of a democratic peace founded on the free choice of nations to autocratic and militarist Germany bent on expansion like other empires by dishonest diplomacy and by the sword. From the point of view of practical statesmanship the ridicule was justified; for the offer ignored facts and forces and founded itself on the power of the naked and unarmed idea. The Russians, thoroughgoing idealists, acted, in fact, in the same spirit as did once the French in the first fervour of their revolutionary enthusiasm; they offered their new principle of liberty and democratic peace to the world, — not, at first, to Germany alone, — in the hope that its moral beauty and truth and inspiration would compel acceptance, not by the Governments but by the peoples who would force the hands of their governments or overturn them if they opposed. Like the French revolutionists, they found that ours is still a world in which ideals can only be imposed if they have a preponderating vital and physical force in their hands or at their backs. The French Jacobins with their ideal of

[4] Now we must say Great Britain and Ireland, for the United Kingdom exists no longer.

[5] Note from this point of view the disastrous economic results of the breaking up of the Austrian empire in the small nations that have arisen in its place.

unitarian nationalism were able to concentrate their energies and make their principle triumph for a time by force of arms against a hostile world. The Russian idealists found in their attempt to effectuate their principle that the principle itself was a source of weakness; they found themselves helpless against the hard-headed German cynicism, not because they were disorganised, — for revolutionary France was also disorganised and overcame the difficulty, — but because the dissolution of the old Russian fabric to which they had consented deprived them of the means of united and organised action. Nevertheless, their principle was a more advanced, because a moral principle, than the aggressive nationalism which was all the international result of the French Revolution; it has a greater meaning for the future.

For it belongs to a future of free world-union in which precisely this principle of free self-determination must be either the preliminary movement or the main final result, to an arrangement of things in which the world will have done with war and force as the ultimate basis of national and international relations and be ready to adopt free agreement as a substitute. If the idea could work itself out, even if only within the bounds of Russia,[6] and arrive at some principle of common action, even at the cost of that aggressive force which national centralisation can alone give, it would mean a new moral power in the world. It would certainly not be accepted elsewhere, except in case of unexpected revolutions, without enormous reserves and qualifications; but it would be there working as a power to make the world ready for itself and, when it is ready, would play a large determining part in the final arrangement of human unity. But even if it fails entirely in its present push for realisation, it will still have its part to play in a better prepared future.

[6] The idea was sincere at the time, but it has lost its significance because of the principle of revolutionary force on which Sovietism still rests.

Chapter XXXI

The Conditions of a Free World-Union

A FREE world-union must in its very nature be a complex unity based on a diversity and that diversity must be based on free self-determination. A mechanical unitarian system would regard in its idea the geographical groupings of men as so many conveniences for provincial division, for the convenience of administration, much in the same spirit as the French Revolution reconstituted France with an entire disregard of old natural and historic divisions. It would regard mankind as one single nation and it would try to efface the old separative national spirit altogether; it would arrange its system probably by continents and subdivide the continents by convenient geographical demarcations. In this other quite opposite idea, the geographical, the physical principle of union would be subordinated to a psychological principle; for not a mechanical division, but a living diversity would be its object. If this object is to be secured, the peoples of humanity must be allowed to group themselves according to their free-will and their natural affinities; no constraint or force could be allowed to compel an unwilling nation or distinct grouping of peoples to enter into another system or join itself or remain joined to it for the convenience, aggrandisement or political necessity of another people or even for the general convenience, in disregard of its own wishes. Nations or countries widely divided from each other geographically like England and Canada or England and Australia might cohere together. Nations closely grouped locally might choose to stand apart, like England and Ireland or like Finland and Russia. Unity would be the largest principle of life, but freedom would be its foundation-stone.[1]

[1] Necessarily to every principle there must be in application a reasonable limit; otherwise fantastic and impracticable absurdities might take the place of a living truth.

In a world built on the present political and commercial basis this system of groupings might present often insuperable difficulties or serious disadvantages; but in the condition of things in which alone a free world-union would be possible, these difficulties and disadvantages would cease to operate. Military necessity of forced union for strength of defence or for power of aggression would be non-existent, because war would no longer be possible; force as the arbiter of international differences and a free world-union are two quite incompatible ideas and practically could not coexist. The political necessity would also disappear; for it is largely made up of that very spirit of conflict and the consequent insecure conditions of international life apportioning predominance in the world to the physically and organically strongest nations out of which the military necessity arose. In a free world-union determining its affairs and settling its differences by agreement or, where agreement failed, by arbitration, the only political advantage of including large masses of men not otherwise allied to each other in a single State would be the greater influence arising from mass and population. But this influence could not work if the inclusion were against the will of the nations brought together in the State; for then it would rather be a source of weakness and disunion in the State's international action — unless indeed it were allowed in the international system to weigh by its bulk and population without regard to the will and opinion of the peoples constituting it. Thus the population of Finland and Poland might swell the number of voices which a united Russia could count in the council of the nations, but the will, sentiment and opinions of the Finns and Poles be given no means of expression in that mechanical and unreal unity.[2] But this would be contrary to the modern sense of justice and reason and incompatible with the principle of freedom which could alone ensure a sound and peaceful basis for the world-arrangement. Thus the elimination of war and the settlement of differences by peaceful means would

[2] The inclusion of India in the League of Nations has evidently been an arrangement of this type.

remove the military necessity for forced unions, while the right of every people to a free voice and status in the world would remove its political necessity and advantage. The elimination of war and the recognition of the equal rights of all peoples are intimately bound up with each other. That interdependence, admitted for a moment, even though imperfectly, during the European conflict, will have to be permanently accepted if there is to be any unification of the race.

The economic question remains, and it is the sole important problem of a vital and physical order which might possibly present in this kind of world-arrangement any serious difficulties, or in which the advantages of a unitarian system might really outweigh those of this more complex unity. In either, however, the forcible economic exploitation of one nation by another, which is so large a part of the present economic order, would necessarily be abolished. There would remain the possibility of a sort of peaceful economic struggle, a separativeness, a building up of artificial barriers, — a phenomenon which has been a striking and more and more prominent feature of the present commercial civilisation. But it is likely that once the element of struggle were removed from the political field, the stress of the same struggle in the economic field would greatly decrease. The advantages of self-sufficiency and predominance, to which political rivalry and struggle and the possibility of hostile relations now give an enormous importance, would lose much of their stringency and the advantages of a freer give and take would become more easily visible. It is obvious, for example, that an independent Finland would profit much more by encouraging the passage of Russian commerce through Finnish ports or an Italian Trieste by encouraging the passage of the commerce of the present Austrian provinces than by setting up a barrier between itself and its natural feeders. An Ireland politically or administratively independent, able to develop its agricultural and technical education and intensification of productiveness, would find a greater advantage in sharing the movement of the commerce of Great Britain than in isolating itself, even as Great Britain would profit more by an agreement with such an Ireland than by

keeping her a poor and starving helot on her estate. Throughout the world, the idea and fact of union once definitely prevailing, unity of interests would be more clearly seen and the greater advantage of agreement and mutual participation in a naturally harmonised life over the feverish artificial prosperity created by a stressing of separative barriers. That stressing is inevitable in an order of struggle and international competition; it would be seen to be prejudicial in an order of peace and union which would make for mutual accommodation. The principle of a free world-union being that of the settlement of common affairs by common agreement, this could not be confined to the removal of political differences and the arrangement of political relations alone, but must naturally extend to economic differences and economic relations as well. To the removal of war and the recognition of the right of self-determination of the peoples the arrangement of the economic life of the world in its new order by mutual and common agreement would have to be added as the third condition of a free union.

There remains the psychological question of the advantage to the soul of humanity, to its culture, to its intellectual, moral, aesthetic, spiritual growth. At present, the first great need of the psychological life of humanity is the growth towards a greater unity; but its need is that of a living unity, not in the externals of civilisation, in dress, manners, habits of life, details of political, social and economic order, not a uniformity, which is the unity towards which the mechanical age of civilisation has been driving, but a free development everywhere with a constant friendly interchange, a close understanding, a feeling of our common humanity, its great common ideals and the truths towards which it is driving and a certain unity and correlation of effort in the united human advance. At present it may seem that this is better helped and advanced by many different nations and cultures living together in one political State-union than by their political separateness. Temporarily, this may be true to a certain extent, but let us see within what limits.

The old psychological argument for the forcible inclusion of a subject nation by a dominant people was the right or advantage

of imposing a superior civilisation upon one that was inferior or upon a barbarous race. Thus the Welsh and Irish people used to be told that their subjugation was a great blessing to their countries, their languages petty patois which ought to disappear as soon as possible, and in embracing English speech, English institutions, English ideas lay their sole road to civilisation, culture and prosperity. The British domination in India was justified by the priceless gift of British civilisation and British ideals, to say nothing of the one and only true religion, Christianity, to a heathen, orientally benighted and semi-barbarous nation. All this is now an exploded myth. We can see clearly enough that the long suppression of the Celtic spirit and Celtic culture, superior in spirituality if inferior in certain practical directions to the Latin and Teutonic, was a loss not only to the Celtic peoples, but to the world. India has vehemently rejected the pretensions to superiority of British civilisation, culture and religion, while still admitting, not so much the British, as the modern ideals and methods in politics and in the trend to a greater social equality; and it is becoming clear now, even to the more well-informed European minds that the Anglicisation of India would have been a wrong not only to India itself but to humanity.

Still it may be said that, if the old principle of the association was wrong, yet the association itself leads eventually to a good result. If Ireland has lost for the most part its old national speech and Wales has ceased to have a living literature, yet as a large compensation the Celtic spirit is now reviving and putting its stamp on the English tongue spoken by millions throughout the world, and the inclusion of the Celtic countries in the British Empire may lead to the development of an Anglo-Celtic life and culture better for the world than the separate development of the two elements. India by the partial possession of the English language has been able to link herself to the life of the modern world and to reshape her literature, life and culture on a larger basis and, now that she is reviving her own spirit and ideals in a new mould, is producing an effect on the thought of the West; a perpetual union of the two countries and a constant mutual interaction of their culture by this close association would be

more advantageous to them and to the world than their cultural isolation from each other in a separate existence.

There is a temporary apparent truth in this idea, though it is not the whole truth of the position, and we have given it full weight in considering the claims of the imperialistic solution or line of advance on the way to unity. But even the elements of truth in it can only be admitted, provided a free and equal union replaces the present abnormal, irritating and falsifying relations. Moreover, these advantages could only be valuable as a stage towards a greater unity in which this close association would no longer be of the same importance. For the final end is a common world-culture in which each national culture should be, not merged into or fused with some other culture differing from it in principle or temperament, but evolved to its full power and could then profit to that end by all the others as well as give its gains and influences to them, all serving by their separateness and their interaction the common aim and idea of human perfection. This would best be served, not by separateness and isolation, of which there would be no danger, but yet by a certain distinctness and independence of life not subordinated to the mechanising force of an artificial unity. Even within the independent nation itself, there might be with advantage a tendency towards greater local freedom of development and variation, a sort of return to the vivid local and regional life of ancient Greece and India and mediaeval Italy; for the disadvantages of strife, political weakness and precariousness of the nation's independence would no longer exist in a condition of things from which the old terms of physical conflict had been excluded, while all the cultural and psychological advantages might be recovered. A world secure of its peace and freedom might freely devote itself to the intensification of its real human powers of life by the full encouragement and flowering of the individual, local, regional, national mind and power in the firm frame of a united humanity.

What precise form the framework might take, it is impossible to forecast and useless to speculate; only certain now current ideas would have to be modified or abandoned. The idea of a

world-parliament is attractive at first sight, because the parliamentary form is that to which our minds are accustomed; but an assembly of the present unitarian national type could not be the proper instrument of a free world-union of this large and complex kind; it could only be the instrument of a unitarian World-State. The idea of a world-federation, if by that be understood the Germanic or American form, would be equally inappropriate to the greater diversity and freedom of national development which this type of world-union would hold as one of its cardinal principles. Rather some kind of confederation of the peoples for common human ends, for the removal of all causes of strife and difference, for interrelation and the regulation of mutual aid and interchange, yet leaving to each unit a full internal freedom and power of self-determination, would be the right principle of this unity.

But, since this is a much looser unity, what would prevent the spirit of separativeness and the causes of clash and difference from surviving in so powerful a form as to endanger the endurance of the larger principle of oneness, — even if that spirit and those causes at all allowed it to reach some kind of sufficient fulfilment? The unitarian ideal, on the contrary, seeks to efface these opposite tendencies in their forms and even in their root cause and by so doing would seem to ensure an enduring union. But it may be pointed out in answer that, if it is by political ideas and machinery, under the pressure of the political and economic spirit that the unity is brought about, that is to say, by the idea and experience of the material advantages, conveniences, well-being secured by unification, then the unitarian system also could not be sure of durability. For in the constant mutability of the human mind and earthly circumstances, as long as life is active, new ideas and changes are inevitable. The suppressed desire to recover the lost element of variability, separateness, independent living might well take advantage of them for what would then be considered as a wholesome and necessary reaction. The lifeless unity accomplished would dissolve from the pressure of the need of life within, as the Roman unity dissolved by its lifelessness in helpless response to a pressure from without, and

once again local, regional, national egoism would reconstitute for itself fresh forms and new centres.

On the other hand, in a free world-union, though originally starting from the national basis, the national idea might be expected to undergo a radical transformation; it might even disappear into a new and less strenuously compact form and idea of group-aggregation which would not be separative in spirit, yet would preserve the necessary element of independence and variation needed by both individual and grouping for their full satisfaction and their healthy existence. Moreover, by emphasising the psychological quite as much as the political and mechanical idea and basis, it would give a freer and less artificial form and opportunity for the secure development of the necessary intellectual and psychological change; for such an inner change could alone give some chance of durability to the unification. That change would be the growth of the living idea or religion of humanity; for only so could there come the psychological modification of life and feeling and outlook which would accustom both individual and group to live in their common humanity first and most, subduing their individual and group egoism, yet losing nothing of their individual or group power to develop and express in its own way the divinity in man which, once the race was assured of its material existence, would emerge as the true object of human existence.

Chapter XXXII

Internationalism

THE IDEA of humanity as a single race of beings with a common life and a common general interest is among the most characteristic and significant products of modern thought. It is an outcome of the European mind which proceeds characteristically from life-experience to the idea and, without going deeper, returns from the idea upon life in an attempt to change its outward forms and institutions, its order and system. In the European mentality it has taken the shape known currently as internationalism. Internationalism is the attempt of the human mind and life to grow out of the national idea and form and even in a way to destroy it in the interest of the larger synthesis of mankind. An idea proceeding on these lines needs always to attach itself to some actual force or developing power in the life of the times before it can exercise a practical effect. But usually it suffers by contact with the interests and prepossessions of its grosser ally some lesser or greater diminution of itself or even a distortion, and in that form, no longer pure and absolute, enters on the first stage of practice.

The idea of internationalism was born of the thought of the eighteenth century and it took some kind of voice in the first idealistic stages of the French Revolution. But at that time, it was rather a vague intellectual sentiment than a clear idea seeing its way to practice; it found no strong force in life to help it to take visible body. What came out of the French Revolution and the struggle that grew around it, was a complete and self-conscious nationalism and not internationalism. During the nineteenth century we see the larger idea growing again in the minds of thinkers, sometimes in a modified form, sometimes in its own pure idealism, till allying itself with the growing forces of socialism and anarchism it took a clear body and a recognisable vital force. In its absolute form, it became the internationalism of

the intellectuals, intolerant of nationalism as a narrow spirit of the past, contemptuous of patriotism as an irrational prejudice, a maleficent corporate egoism characteristic of narrow intellects and creative of arrogance, prejudice, hatred, oppression, division and strife between nation and nation, a gross survival of the past which the growth of reason was destined to destroy. It is founded on a view of things which looks at man in his manhood only and casts away all those physical and social accidents of birth, rank, class, colour, creed, nationality, which have been erected into so many walls and screens behind which man has hidden himself from his fellow-man; he has turned them into sympathy-proof shelters and trenches from which he wages against him a war of defence and aggression, war of nations, war of continents, war of classes, war of colour with colour, creed with creed, culture with culture. All this barbarism the idea of the intellectual internationalist seeks to abolish by putting man face to face with man on the basis of their common human sympathy, aims, highest interests of the future. It is entirely futurist in its view; it turns away from the confused and darkened good of the past to the purer good of the future when man, at last beginning to become a truly intelligent and ethical being, will shake away from him all these sources of prejudice and passion and evil. Humanity will become one in idea and feeling, and life be consciously what it now is in spite of itself, one in its status on earth and its destiny.

The height and nobility of the idea is not to be questioned and certainly a mankind which set its life upon this basis would make a better, purer, more peaceful and enlightened race than anything we can hope to have at present. But as the human being is now made, the pure idea, though always a great power, is also afflicted by a great weakness. It has an eventual capacity, once born, of taking hold of the rest of the human being and forcing him in the end to acknowledge its truth and make some kind of attempt to embody it; that is its strength. But also because man at present lives more in the outward than in the inward, is governed principally by his vital existence, sensations, feelings and customary mentality rather than by his higher thought-mind and feels himself in these to be really alive, really to exist and

be, while the world of ideas is to him something remote and abstract and, however powerful and interesting in its way, not a living thing, the pure idea seems, until it is embodied in life, something not quite real; in that abstractness and remoteness lies its weakness.

The sense of this abstractness imposes on the idea an undue haste to get itself recognised by life and embodied in a form. If it could have confidence in its strength and be content to grow, to insist, to impress itself till it got well into the spirit of man, it might conceivably become a real part of his soul-life, a permanent power in his psychology and might succeed in remoulding his whole life in its image. But it has inevitably a desire to get as soon as possible admitted into a form of the life, for until then it does not feel itself strong and cannot quite be sure that it has vindicated its truth. It hurries into action before it has real knowledge of itself and thereby prepares its own disappointment, even when it seems to triumph and fulfil its object. For in order to succeed, it allies itself with powers and movements which are impelled by another aim than its own, but are glad enough to get its aid so that they may strengthen their own case and claim. Thus when it realises itself at last, it does it in a mixed, impure and ineffective form. Life accepts it as a partial habit, but not completely, not quite sincerely. That has been the history of every idea in succession and one reason at least why there is almost always something unreal, inconclusive and tormented about human progress.

There are many conditions and tendencies in human life at present which are favourable to the progress of the internationalist idea. The strongest of these favourable forces is the constant drawing closer of the knots of international life, the multiplication of points of contact and threads of communication and an increasing community in thought, in science and in knowledge. Science especially has been a great force in this direction; for science is a thing common to all men in its conclusions, open to all in its methods, available to all in its results: it is international in its very nature; there can be no such thing as a national science, but only the nations' contributions to the work and growth of

science which are the indivisible inheritance of all humanity. Therefore it is easier for men of science or those strongly influenced by science to grow into the international spirit and all the world is now beginning to feel the scientific influence and to live in it. Science also has created that closer contact of every part of the world with every other part, out of which some sort of international mind is growing. Even cosmopolitan habits of life are now not uncommon and there are a fair number of persons who are as much or more citizens of the world as citizens of their own nation. The growth of knowledge is interesting the peoples in each other's art, culture, religion, ideas and is breaking down at many points the prejudice, arrogance and exclusiveness of the old nationalistic sentiment. Religion, which ought to have led the way, but owing to its greater dependence on its external parts and its infrarational rather than its spiritual impulses has been as much, or even more, a sower of discord as a teacher of unity, — religion is beginning to realise, a little dimly and ineffectively as yet, that spirituality is after all its own chief business and true aim and that it is also the common element and the common bond of all religions. As these influences grow and come more and more consciously to cooperate with each other, it might be hoped that the necessary psychological modification will quietly, gradually, but still irresistibly and at last with an increasing force of rapidity take place which can prepare a real and fundamental change in the life of humanity.

But this is at present a slow process, and meanwhile the internationalist idea, eager for effectuation, allied and almost identified itself with two increasingly powerful movements which have both assumed an international character, Socialism and Anarchism. Indeed, it is this alliance that most commonly went by the name of internationalism. But this socialistic and anarchistic internationalism was recently put to the test, the fiery test of the European war, and thus tried, it was found sadly wanting. In every country, the Socialist party shed its internationalist promise with the greatest ease and lightness, German socialism, the protagonist of the idea, massively leading the way in this formidable abjuration. It is true that a small minority in

each country either remained heroically faithful to its principles or soon returned to them, and as the general weariness of the great international massacre grew, even the majority showed a sensible turn in the same direction; but this was rather the fruit of circumstance than of principle. Russian socialism, it may be said, has, at least in its extremer form, shown a stronger root of internationalistic feeling. But what it has actually attempted to accomplish is a development of Labour rule on the basis of a purified nationalism, non-aggressive except for revolutionary purposes and self-contained, and not on the larger international idea. In any case, the actual results of the Russian attempt show only up to the present a failure of the idea to acquire the vital strength and efficiency which would justify it to life; it is possible to use them much more as a telling argument against internationalism than as a justification of its truth or at least of its applicability in the present stage of human progress.

But what is the cause of this almost total bankruptcy of the international ideal under the strong test of life? Partly it may be because the triumph of socialism is not necessarily bound up with the progress of internationalism. Socialism is really an attempt to complete the growth of the national community by making the individual do what he has never yet done, live for the community more than for himself. It is an outgrowth of the national, not of the international idea. No doubt, when the society of the nation has been perfected, the society of nations can and even must be formed; but this is a later possible or eventual result of Socialism, not its primary vital necessity. In the crises of life it is the primary vital necessity which tells, while the other and remoter element betrays itself to be a mere idea not yet ready for accomplishment; it can only become powerful when it also becomes either a vital or a psychological necessity. The real truth, the real cause of the failure is that internationalism is as yet, except with some exceptional men, merely an idea; it is not yet a thing near to our vital feelings or otherwise a part of our psychology. The normal socialist or syndicalist cannot escape from the general human feeling and in the test he too turns out, even though he were a professed *sans-patrie* in ordinary times, in

his inner heart and being a nationalist. As a vital fact, moreover, these movements have been a revolt of Labour aided by a number of intellectuals against the established state of things, and they have only allied themselves with internationalism because that too is an intellectual revolt and because its idea helps them in the battle. If Labour comes to power, will it keep or shed its internationalistic tendencies? The experience of countries in which it is or has been at the head of affairs does not give an encouraging answer, and it may at least be said that, unless at that time the psychological change in humanity has gone much farther than it has now, Labour in power is likely to shed more of the internationalist feeling than it will succeed in keeping and to act very much from the old human motives.

No doubt, the European war itself was an explosion of all that was dangerous and evil in successful nationalism, and the resulting conflagration may well turn out to have been a purificatory process that has burned up many things that needed to die. It has already strengthened the international idea and forced it on governments and peoples. But we cannot rely too greatly on ideas and resolutions formed in a moment of abnormal crisis under the violent stress of exceptional circumstances. Some effect there may be in the end, some first recognition of juster principles in international dealings, some attempt at a better, more rational or at least a more convenient international order. But until the idea of humanity has grown not only upon the intelligence but in the sentiments, feelings, natural sympathies and mental habits of man, the progress made is likely to be more in external adjustments than in the vital matters, more in a use of the ideal for mixed and egoistic purposes than at once or soon in a large and sincere realisation of the ideal. Until man in his heart is ready, a profound change of the world conditions cannot come; or it can only be brought about by force, physical force or else force of circumstances, and that leaves all the real work to be done. A frame may have then been made, but the soul will have still to grow into that mechanical body.

Chapter XXXIII

Internationalism and Human Unity

THE GREAT necessity, then, and the great difficulty is to help this idea of humanity which is already at work upon our minds and has even begun in a very slight degree to influence from above our actions, and turn it into something more than an idea, however strong, to make it a central motive and a fixed part of our nature. Its satisfaction must become a necessity of our psychological being, just as the family idea or the national idea has become each a psychological motive with its own need of satisfaction. But how is this to be done? The family idea had the advantage of growing out of a primary vital need in our being and therefore it had not the least difficulty in becoming a psychological motive and need; for our readiest and strongest mental motives and psychological needs are those which grow out of our vital necessities and instincts. The clan and the tribe ideas had a similar origin, less primary and compelling, and therefore looser and more dissoluble; but still they arose from the vital necessity in human nature for aggregation and the ready basis given to it by the inevitable physical growth of the family into clan or tribe. These were natural aggregations, evolutionary forms already prepared on the animal level.

The nation idea, on the contrary, did not arise from a primary vital need, but from a secondary or even tertiary necessity which resulted not from anything inherent in our vital nature, but from circumstances, from environmental evolution; it arose not from a vital, but from a geographical and historical necessity. And we notice that as one result it had to be created most commonly by force, force of circumstances partly, no doubt, but also by physical force, by the power of the king and the conquering tribe converted into a military and dominant State. Or else it came by a reaction against force, a revolt against conquest and domination that brought a slow or sudden compactness

to peoples who, though geographically or even historically and culturally one, had lacked power of cohesion and remained too conscious of an original heterogeneity or of local and regional and other divisions. But still the necessity was there and the nation form after many failures and false successes got into being, and the psychological motive of patriotism, a sign of the growth of a conscious national ego, arose in the form as the expression of its soul and the guarantee of its durability. For without such a soul, such a psychological force and presence within the frame, there can be no guarantee of durability. Without it, what circumstances have created, circumstances easily will destroy. It was for this reason that the ancient world failed to create nations, except on a small scale, little clans and small regional nations of brief duration and usually of loose structure; it created only artificial empires which went to pieces and left chaos behind them.

What then of this international unity now in the first obscure throes of the pre-formatory state resembling a ferment of cells drawing together for amalgamation? What is the compelling necessity behind it? If we look at outward things only, the necessity is much less direct and much less compelling than any that preceded it. There is here no vital necessity; mankind as a whole can get on well enough without international unity, so far as mere living goes; it will not be at all a perfect, rational or ideal collective living of the race, — but after all where is there yet any element in human life or society which is perfect, rational or ideal? As yet at least none; still we get on somehow with life, because the vital man in us, who is the dominant element in our instincts and in our actions, cares for none of these things and is quite satisfied with any just tolerable or any precariously or partly agreeable form of living, because that is all to which he is accustomed and all therefore that he feels to be necessary. The men who are not satisfied, the thinkers, the idealists, are always a minority and in the end an ineffectual minority, because though always in the end they do get their way partly, their victory yet turns into a defeat; for the vital man remains still the majority and degrades the apparent success into a pitiful parody of their

rational hope, their clear-sighted ideal or their strong counsel of perfection.

The geographical necessity for a unification of this kind does not exist, unless we consider that it has been created through the drawing closer together of the earth and its inhabitants by Science and her magical lessening of physical distances and attenuation of barriers. But whatever may happen in the future, this is as yet not sufficient; earth is still large enough and her divisions still real enough for her to do without any formal unity. If there is any strong need, it may be described — if such an epithet can be applied to a thing in the present and the future — as a historical necessity, that is, a need which has arisen as the result of certain actual circumstances that have grown up in the evolution of international relations. And that need is economic, political, mechanical, likely under certain circumstances to create some tentative or preliminary framework, but not at first a psychological reality which will vivify the frame. Moreover, it is not yet sufficiently vital to be precisely a necessity; for it amounts mainly to a need for the removal of certain perils and inconveniences, such as the constant danger of war, and at most to the strong desirability of a better international coordination. But by itself this creates only a possibility, not even a moral certainty, of a first vague sketch and loose framework of unity which may or may not lead to something more close and real.

But there is another power than that of external circumstance which we have a right to take into consideration. For behind all the external circumstances and necessities of which we are more easily aware in Nature, there is always an internal necessity in the being, a will and a design in Nature itself which precedes the outward signals of its development and in spite of all obstacles and failures must in the long end inevitably get itself realised. Nowadays we can see this truth everywhere in Nature down to her lowest forms; a will in the very seed of the being, not quite conscious or only partially conscious in the form itself, but still present there in Nature. It is subconscious or even inconscient if you like, but it is still a blind will, a mute idea which contains beforehand the form it is going to create, is

aware of a necessity other than the environmental, a necessity contained in the very being itself, and creates persistently and inevitably a form that best answers to the necessity, however we may labour to interfere with or thwart its operations.

This is true biologically, but it is also, though in a more subtle and variable way, psychologically true. Now the very nature of man is that of an individual who on one side is always emphasising and developing his individual being to the extent of his power but who is also driven by the Idea or Truth within him to unify himself with others of his species, to join himself to them or agglutinate them to him, to create human groups, aggregates and collectivities. And if there is an aggregate or collectivity which it is possible for him to realise but is not yet realised, we may be sure that that too in the end he will create. This will in him is not always or often quite conscient or foreseeing; it is often largely subconscient, but even then it is eventually irresistible. And if it gets into his conscious mind, as the international idea has now done, we may count on a more rapid evolution. Such a will in Nature creates for itself favourable external circumstances and happenings or finds them created for it in the stress of events. And even if they are insufficient, she will still often use them beyond their apparent power of effectivity, not minding the possibility of failure, for she knows that in the end she will succeed and every experience of failure will help to better the eventual success.

Well then, it may be said, let us trust to this inevitable will in Nature and let us follow out her method of operation. Let us create anyhow this framework, any framework of the aggregate; for she knows already the complete form she intends and she will work it out eventually in her own time; by the power of the idea and our will to realise it, by help of strong force of circumstances, by pressure of all kinds, by physical force even, if need be, since that too seems still to be a part of her necessary machinery, let us create it. Let us have the body; the soul will grow in the body. And we need not mind if the bodily formation is artificial with at first a small or no conscious psychological reality to vivify it. That will begin to form itself as soon as the body has been

formed. For the nation too was at first more or less artificially formed out of incoherent elements actually brought together by the necessity of a subconscient idea, though apparently it was done only by physical force and the force of circumstances. As a national ego formed which identified itself with the geographical body of the nation and developed in it the psychological instinct of national unity and the need of its satisfaction, so a collective human ego will develop in the international body and will evolve in it the psychological instinct of human unity and the need of its satisfaction. That will be the guarantee of duration. And that possibly is how the thing will happen, man being what he is; indeed if we cannot do better, it will so happen, since happen somehow it must, whether in the worse way or the better.

It may be as well to review here briefly in the light of these considerations the main possibilities and powers which are shaping us towards such an end in the present world conditions. The old means of unification, conquest by a single great Power, which would reduce part of the world by force and bring the remaining nations into the condition of dependencies, protectorates and dependent allies, the whole forming the basic structure of a great final unification, — this was the character of the ancient Roman precedent, — does not seem immediately possible. It would require a great predominance of force simultaneously by sea and land,[1] an irresistibly superior science and organisation and with all this a constantly successful diplomacy and an invincible good fortune. If war and diplomacy are still to be the decisive factors in international politics in the future as in the past, it would be rash to predict that such a combination may not arise, and if other means fail, it must arise; for there is nothing that can be set down as impossible in the chances of the future, and the urge in Nature always creates its own means. But, at present, the possibilities of the future do not seem to point in this direction. There is, on the other hand, a very strong possibility of the whole earth, or at least the three continents of the eastern hemisphere, being dominated by three or four great empires largely increased

[1] Now also by air.

in extent of dominion, spheres of influence, protectorates, and thereby exercising a pre-eminence which they could either maintain by agreements, avoiding all causes of conflict, or in a rivalry which would be the cause of fresh wars and changes. This would normally have been the result of the great European conflict.

But there has struck across this possibility a revived strength of the idea of nationality expressed in the novel formula of the principle of self-determination to which the great world-empires have had to pay at least a verbal homage. The idea of international unity to which this intervention of the revived force of nationality is leading, takes the form of a so-called League of Nations. Practically, however, the League of Nations under present conditions or any likely to be immediately realised would still mean the control of the earth by a few great Powers, — a control that would be checked only by the necessity of conciliating the sympathy and support of the more numerous smaller or less powerful nations. On the force and influence of these few would rest practically, if not admittedly, the decision of all important debatable questions. And without it there could be no chance of enforcing the decisions of the majority against any recalcitrant great Power or combination of Powers. The growth of democratic institutions would perhaps help to minimise the chances of conflict and of the abuse of power, — though that is not at all certain; but it would not alter this real character of the combination.

In all this there is no immediate prospect of any such form of unification as would give room for a real psychological sense of unity, much less necessitate its growth. Such a form might evolve; but we should have to trust for it to the chapter of accidents or at best to the already declared urge in Nature expressed in the internationalist idea. On that side, there was at one time a possibility which seemed to be very suddenly and rapidly growing into something more, the emergence of a powerful party in all the advanced countries of the world pledged to internationalism, conscious of its necessity as a first condition for their other aims and more and more determined to give it precedence and to unite internationally to bring it about. That combination of the

intellectuals with Labour which created the Socialist parties in Germany, Russia and Austria, formed anew recently the Labour party in England and has had its counterparts in most other European countries, seems to be travelling in that direction. This world-wide movement which made internationalism and Labour rule its two main principles, had already created the Russian revolution and seemed ready to bring about another great socialistic revolution in central Europe. It was conceivable that this party might everywhere draw together. By a chain of revolutions such as took place in the nineteenth century and of less violent but still rapid evolutions brought about by the pressure of their example, or even by simply growing into the majority in each country, the party might control Europe. It might create counterparts of itself in all the American republics and in Asiatic countries. It might by using the machinery of the League of Nations or, where necessary, by physical force or economic or other pressure persuade or compel all the nations into some more stringent system of international unification. A World-State or else a close confederation of democratic peoples might be created with a common governing body for the decision of principles and for all generally important affairs or at least for all properly international affairs and problems; a common law of the nations might grow up and international courts to administer it and some kind of system of international police control to maintain and enforce it. In this way, by the general victory of an idea, Socialist or other, seeking to organise humanity according to its own model or by any other yet unforeseen way, a sufficient formal unity might come into existence.

The question then arises, how out of this purely formal unity a real psychological unity can be created and whether it can be made a living oneness. For a mere formal, mechanical, administrative, political and economic union does not necessarily create a psychological unity. None of the great empires have yet succeeded in doing that, and even in the Roman where some sense of unity did come into being, it was nothing very close and living; it could not withstand all shocks from within and without, it could not prevent what was much more dangerous, the peril of decay

and devitalisation which the diminution of the natural elements of free variation and helpful struggle brought with it. A complete world-union would have indeed this advantage that it would have no need to fear forces from without, for no such forces would any longer exist. But this very absence of outer pressure might well give greater room and power to internal elements of disintegration and still more to the opportunities of decay. It might indeed for a long time foster an internal intellectual and political activity and social progress which would keep it living; but this principle of progress would not be always secure against a natural tendency to exhaustion and stagnation which every diminution of variety and even the very satisfaction of social and economic well-being might well hasten. Disruption of unity would then be necessary to restore humanity to life. Again, while the Roman Empire appealed only to the idea of Roman unity, an artificial and accidental principle, this World-State would appeal to the idea of human unity, a real and vital principle. But if the idea of unity can appeal to the human mind, so too can the idea of separative life, for both address themselves to vital instincts of his nature. What guarantee will there be that the latter will not prevail when man has once tried unity and finds perhaps that its advantages do not satisfy his whole nature? Only the growth of some very powerful psychological factor will make unity necessary to him, whatever other changes and manipulations might be desirable to satisfy his other needs and instincts.

The formal unification of mankind would come in upon us in the shape of a system which would be born, grow, come to its culmination. But every system by the very nature of things tends after its culmination to decay and die. To prevent the organism from decaying and dying there must be such a psychological reality within as will persist and survive all changes of its body. Nations have that in a sort of collective national ego which persists through all vital changes. But this ego is not by any means self-existent and immortal; it supports itself on certain things with which it is identified. First, there is the geographical body, the country; secondly, the common interests of all

who inhabit the same country, defence, economic well-being and progress, political liberty, etc.; thirdly, a common name, sentiment, culture. But we have to mark that this national ego owes its life to the coalescence of the separative instinct and the instinct of unity; for the nation feels itself one as distinguished from other nations; it owes its vitality to interchange with them and struggle with them in all the activities of its nature. Nor are all these altogether sufficient; there is a deeper factor. There must be a sort of religion of country, a constant even if not always explicit recognition not only of the sacredness of the physical mother, the land, but also, in however obscure a way, of the nation as a collective soul which it is the first duty and need of every man to keep alive, to defend from suppression or mortal attaint or, if suppressed, then to watch, wait and struggle for its release and rehabilitation, if sicklied over with the touch of any fatal spiritual ailment, then to labour always to heal and revivify and save alive.

The World-State will give its inhabitants the great advantages of peace, economic well-being, general security, combination for intellectual, cultural, social activity and progress. None of these are in themselves sufficient to create the thing needed. Peace and security we all desire at present, because we have them not in sufficiency; but we must remember that man has also within him the need of combat, adventure, struggle, almost requires these for his growth and healthy living; that instinct would be largely suppressed by a universal peace and a flat security and it might rise up successfully against suppression. Economic well-being by itself cannot permanently satisfy and the price paid for it might be so heavy as to diminish its appeal and value. The human instinct for liberty, individual and national, might well be a constant menace to the World-State, unless it so skilfully arranged its system as to give them sufficient free play. A common intellectual and cultural activity and progress may do much, but need not by themselves be sufficient to bring into being the fully powerful psychological factor that would be required. And the collective ego created would have to rely on the instinct of unity alone; for it would be in conflict with the

separative instinct which gives the national ego half its vitality.

It is not impossible that the indispensable inner factor for this outer frame might be increasingly created in its very process of growth, but certain psychological elements would have to be present in great strength. There would be needed, to make the change persist, a religion of humanity or an equivalent sentiment much more powerful, explicit, self-conscious, universal in its appeal than the nationalist's religion of country; the clear recognition by man in all his thought and life of a single soul in humanity of which each man and each people is an incarnation and soul-form; an ascension of man beyond the principle of ego which lives by separativeness, — and yet there must be no destruction of individuality, for without that man would stagnate; a principle and arrangement of the common life which would give free play to individual variation, interchange in diversity and the need of adventure and conquest by which the soul of man lives and grows great, and sufficient means of expressing all the resultant complex life and growth in a flexible and progressive form of human society.

Chapter XXXIV

The Religion of Humanity

A RELIGION of humanity may be either an intellectual and sentimental ideal, a living dogma with intellectual, psychological and practical effects, or else a spiritual aspiration and rule of living, partly the sign, partly the cause of a change of soul in humanity. The intellectual religion of humanity already to a certain extent exists, partly as a conscious creed in the minds of a few, partly as a potent shadow in the consciousness of the race. It is the shadow of a spirit that is yet unborn, but is preparing for its birth. This material world of ours, besides its fully embodied things of the present, is peopled by such powerful shadows, ghosts of things dead and the spirit of things yet unborn. The ghosts of things dead are very troublesome actualities and they now abound, ghosts of dead religions, dead arts, dead moralities, dead political theories, which still claim either to keep their rotting bodies or to animate partly the existing body of things. Repeating obstinately their sacred formulas of the past, they hypnotise backward-looking minds and daunt even the progressive portion of humanity. But there are too those unborn spirits which are still unable to take a definite body, but are already mind-born and exist as influences of which the human mind is aware and to which it now responds in a desultory and confused fashion. The religion of humanity was mind-born in the eighteenth century, the *mānasa putra*[1] of the rationalist thinkers who brought it forward as a substitute for the formal spiritualism of ecclesiastical Christianity. It tried to give itself a body in Positivism, which was an attempt to formulate the dogmas of this religion, but on too heavily and severely rationalistic a basis for acceptance even by an Age of Reason. Humanitarianism has been its most prominent emotional result.

[1] Mind-born child, an idea and expression of Indian Puranic cosmology.

Philanthropy, social service and other kindred activities have been its outward expression of good works. Democracy, socialism, pacificism are to a great extent its by-products or at least owe much of their vigour to its inner presence.

The fundamental idea is that mankind is the godhead to be worshipped and served by man and that the respect, the service, the progress of the human being and human life are the chief duty and the chief aim of the human spirit. No other idol, neither the nation, the State, the family nor anything else ought to take its place; they are only worthy of respect so far as they are images of the human spirit and enshrine its presence and aid its self-manifestation. But where the cult of these idols seeks to usurp the place of the spirit and makes demands inconsistent with its service, they should be put aside. No injunctions of old creeds, religious, political, social or cultural, are valid when they go against its claims. Science even, though it is one of the chief modern idols, must not be allowed to make claims contrary to its ethical temperament and aim, for science is only valuable in so far as it helps and serves by knowledge and progress the religion of humanity. War, capital punishment, the taking of human life, cruelty of all kinds whether committed by the individual, the State or society, not only physical cruelty, but moral cruelty, the degradation of any human being or any class of human beings under whatever specious plea or in whatever interest, the oppression and exploitation of man by man, of class by class, of nation by nation and all those habits of life and institutions of society of a similar kind which religion and ethics formerly tolerated or even favoured in practice, whatever they might do in their ideal rule or creed, are crimes against the religion of humanity, abominable to its ethical mind, forbidden by its primary tenets, to be fought against always, in no degree to be tolerated. Man must be sacred to man regardless of all distinctions of race, creed, colour, nationality, status, political or social advancement. The body of man is to be respected, made immune from violence and outrage, fortified by science against disease and preventable death. The life of man is to be held sacred, preserved, strengthened, ennobled, uplifted. The heart

of man is to be held sacred also, given scope, protected from violation, from suppression, from mechanisation, freed from belittling influences. The mind of man is to be released from all bonds, allowed freedom and range and opportunity, given all its means of self-training and self-development and organised in the play of its powers for the service of humanity. And all this too is not to be held as an abstract or pious sentiment, but given full and practical recognition in the persons of men and nations and mankind. This, speaking largely, is the idea and spirit of the intellectual religion of humanity.

One has only to compare human life and thought and feeling a century or two ago with human life, thought and feeling in the pre-war period to see how great an influence this religion of humanity has exercised and how fruitful a work it has done. It accomplished rapidly many things which orthodox religion failed to do effectively, largely because it acted as a constant intellectual and critical solvent, an unsparing assailant of the thing that is and an unflinching champion of the thing to be, faithful always to the future, while orthodox religion allied itself with the powers of the present, even of the past, bound itself by its pact with them and could act only at best as a moderating but not as a reforming force. Moreover, this religion has faith in humanity and its earthly future and can therefore aid its earthly progress, while the orthodox religions looked with eyes of pious sorrow and gloom on the earthly life of man and were very ready to bid him bear peacefully and contentedly, even to welcome its crudities, cruelties, oppressions, tribulations as a means for learning to appreciate and for earning the better life which will be given us hereafter. Faith, even an intellectual faith, must always be a worker of miracles, and this religion of humanity, even without taking bodily shape or a compelling form or a visible means of self-effectuation, was yet able to effect comparatively much of what it set out to do. It to some degree humanised society, humanised law and punishment, humanised the outlook of man on man, abolished legalised torture and the cruder forms of slavery, raised those who were depressed and fallen, gave large hopes to humanity, stimulated philanthropy

and charity and the service of mankind, encouraged everywhere the desire of freedom, put a curb on oppression and greatly minimised its more brutal expressions. It had almost succeeded in humanising war and would perhaps have succeeded entirely but for the contrary trend of modern Science. It made it possible for man to conceive of a world free from war as imaginable even without waiting for the Christian millennium. At any rate, this much change came about that, while peace was formerly a rare interlude of constant war, war became an interlude, if a much too frequent interlude of peace, though as yet only of an armed peace. That may not be a great step, but still it was a step forward. It gave new conceptions of the dignity of the human being and opened new ideas and new vistas of his education, self-development and potentiality. It spread enlightenment; it made man feel more his responsibility for the progress and happiness of the race; it raised the average self-respect and capacity of mankind; it gave hope to the serf, self-assertion to the down-trodden and made the labourer in his manhood the potential equal of the rich and powerful. True, if we compare what is with what should be, the actual achievement with the ideal, all this will seem only a scanty work of preparation. But it was a remarkable record for a century and a half or a little more and for an unembodied spirit which had to work through what instruments it could find and had as yet no form, habitation or visible engine of its own concentrated workings. But perhaps it was in this that lay its power and advantage, since that saved it from crystallising into a form and getting petrified or at least losing its more free and subtle action.

But still in order to accomplish all its future this idea and religion of humanity has to make itself more explicit, insistent and categorically imperative. For otherwise it can only work with clarity in the minds of the few and with the mass it will be only a modifying influence, but will not be the rule of human life. And so long as that is so, it cannot entirely prevail over its own principal enemy. That enemy, the enemy of all real religion, is human egoism, the egoism of the individual, the egoism of class and nation. These it could for a time soften, modify, force

to curb their more arrogant, open and brutal expressions, oblige to adopt better institutions, but not to give place to the love of mankind, not to recognise a real unity between man and man. For that essentially must be the aim of the religion of humanity, as it must be the earthly aim of all human religion, love, mutual recognition of human brotherhood, a living sense of human oneness and practice of human oneness in thought, feeling and life, the ideal which was expressed first some thousands of years ago in the ancient Vedic hymn and must always remain the highest injunction of the Spirit within us to human life upon earth. Till that is brought about, the religion of humanity remains unaccomplished. With that done, the one necessary psychological change will have been effected without which no formal and mechanical, no political and administrative unity can be real and secure. If it is done, that outward unification may not even be indispensable or, if indispensable, it will come about naturally, not, as now it seems likely to be, by catastrophic means, but by the demand of the human mind, and will be held secure by an essential need of our perfected and developed human nature.

But this is the question whether a purely intellectual and sentimental religion of humanity will be sufficient to bring about so great a change in our psychology. The weakness of the intellectual idea, even when it supports itself by an appeal to the sentiments and emotions, is that it does not get at the centre of man's being. The intellect and the feelings are only instruments of the being and they may be the instruments of either its lower and external form or of the inner and higher man, servants of the ego or channels of the soul. The aim of the religion of humanity was formulated in the eighteenth century by a sort of primal intuition; that aim was and it is still to re-create human society in the image of three kindred ideas, liberty, equality and fraternity. None of these has really been won in spite of all the progress that has been achieved. The liberty that has been so loudly proclaimed as an essential of modern progress is an outward, mechanical and unreal liberty. The equality that has been so much sought after and battled for is equally an outward and mechanical and will turn out to be an unreal equality. Fraternity

is not even claimed to be a practicable principle of the ordering of life and what is put forward as its substitute is the outward and mechanical principle of equal association or at the best a comradeship of labour. This is because the idea of humanity has been obliged in an intellectual age to mask its true character of a religion and a thing of the soul and the spirit and to appeal to the vital and physical mind of man rather than his inner being. It has limited his effort to the attempt to revolutionise political and social institutions and to bring about such a modification of the ideas and sentiments of the common mind of mankind as would make these institutions practicable; it has worked at the machinery of human life and on the outer mind much more than upon the soul of the race. It has laboured to establish a political, social and legal liberty, equality and mutual help in an equal association.

But though these aims are of great importance in their own field, they are not the central thing; they can only be secure when founded upon a change of the inner human nature and inner way of living; they are themselves of importance only as means for giving a greater scope and a better field for man's development towards that change and, when it is once achieved, as an outward expression of the larger inward life. Freedom, equality, brotherhood are three godheads of the soul; they cannot be really achieved through the external machinery of society or by man so long as he lives only in the individual and the communal ego. When the ego claims liberty, it arrives at competitive individualism. When it asserts equality, it arrives first at strife, then at an attempt to ignore the variations of Nature, and, as the sole way of doing that successfully, it constructs an artificial and machine-made society. A society that pursues liberty as its ideal is unable to achieve equality; a society that aims at equality will be obliged to sacrifice liberty. For the ego to speak of fraternity is for it to speak of something contrary to its nature. All that it knows is association for the pursuit of common egoistic ends and the utmost that it can arrive at is a closer organisation for the equal distribution of labour, production, consumption and enjoyment.

Yet is brotherhood the real key to the triple gospel of the idea of humanity. The union of liberty and equality can only be achieved by the power of human brotherhood and it cannot be founded on anything else. But brotherhood exists only in the soul and by the soul; it can exist by nothing else. For this brotherhood is not a matter either of physical kinship or of vital association or of intellectual agreement. When the soul claims freedom, it is the freedom of its self-development, the self-development of the divine in man in all his being. When it claims equality, what it is claiming is that freedom equally for all and the recognition of the same soul, the same godhead in all human beings. When it strives for brotherhood, it is founding that equal freedom of self-development on a common aim, a common life, a unity of mind and feeling founded upon the recognition of this inner spiritual unity. These three things are in fact the nature of the soul; for freedom, equality, unity are the eternal attributes of the Spirit. It is the practical recognition of this truth, it is the awakening of the soul in man and the attempt to get him to live from his soul and not from his ego which is the inner meaning of religion, and it is that to which the religion of humanity also must arrive before it can fulfil itself in the life of the race.

Chapter XXXV

Summary and Conclusion

IN OTHER words, — and this is the conclusion at which we arrive, — while it is possible to construct a precarious and quite mechanical unity by political and administrative means, the unity of the human race, even if achieved, can only be secured and can only be made real if the religion of humanity, which is at present the highest active ideal of mankind, spiritualises itself and becomes the general inner law of human life.

The outward unity may well achieve itself, — possibly, though by no means certainly, in a measurable time, — because that is the inevitable final trend of the working of Nature in human society which makes for larger and yet larger aggregations and cannot fail to arrive at a total aggregation of mankind in a closer international system.

This working of Nature depends for its means of fulfilment upon two forces which combine to make the larger aggregation inevitable. First, there is the increasing closeness of common interests or at least the interlacing and interrelation of interests in a larger and yet larger circle which makes old divisions an obstacle and a cause of weakness, obstruction and friction, and the clash and collision that comes out of this friction a ruinous calamity to all, even to the victor who has to pay a too heavy price for his gains; and even these expected gains, as war becomes more complex and disastrous, are becoming more and more difficult to achieve and the success problematical. An increasing perception of this community or interrelation of interests and a growing unwillingness to face the consequences of collision and ruinous struggle must push men to welcome any means for mitigating the divisions which lead to such disasters. If the trend to the mitigation of divisions is once given a definite form, that commences an impetus which drives towards closer and closer union. If she cannot arrive by these means, if the incoherence is too great for

the trend of unification to triumph, Nature will use other means, such as war and conquest or the temporary domination of the powerful State or empire or the menace of such a domination which will compel those threatened to adopt a closer system of union. It is these means and this force of outward necessity which she used to create nation-units and national empires, and, however modified in the circumstances and workings, it is at bottom the same force and the same means which she is using to drive mankind towards international unification.

But, secondly, there is the force of a common uniting sentiment. This may work in two ways; it may come before as an originating or contributory cause or it may come afterwards as a cementing result. In the first case, the sentiment of a larger unity springs up among units which were previously divided and leads them to seek after a form of union which may then be brought about principally by the force of the sentiment and its idea or by that secondarily as an aid to other and more outward events and causes. We may note that in earlier times this sentiment was insufficiently effective, as among the petty clan or regional nations; unity had ordinarily to be effected by outward circumstances and generally by the grossest of them, by war and conquest, by the domination of the most powerful among many warring or contiguous peoples. But in later times the force of the sentiment of unity, supported as it has been by a clearer political idea, has become more effective. The larger national aggregates have grown up by a simple act of federation or union, though this has sometimes had to be preceded by a common struggle for liberty or a union in war against a common enemy; so have grown into one the United States, Italy, Germany, and more peacefully the Australian and South African federations. But in other cases, especially in the earlier national aggregations, the sentiment of unity has grown up largely or entirely as the result of the formal, outward or mechanical union. But whether to form or to preserve the growth of the sentiment, the psychological factor is indispensable; without it there can be no secure and lasting union. Its absence, the failure to create such a sentiment or to make it sufficiently living, natural, forcible has been the cause of

the precariousness of such aggregates as Austro-Hungary and of the ephemeral character of the empires of the past, even as it is likely to bring about, unless circumstances change, the collapse or disintegration of the great present-day empires.

The trend of forces towards some kind of international world-organisation eventuating in a possible far-off unification, which is now just beginning to declare itself as an idea or aspiration though the causes which made it inevitable have been for some time at work, is enforced by the pressure of need and environment, by outward circumstances. At the same time, there is a sentiment helped and stimulated by these outward circumstances, a cosmopolitan, international sentiment, still rather nebulous and vaguely ideal, which may accelerate the growth of the formal union. In itself this sentiment would be an insufficient cement for the preservation of any mechanical union which might be created; for it could not easily be so close and forcible a sentiment as national feeling. It would have to subsist on the conveniences of union as its only substantial provender. But the experience of the past shows that this mere necessity of convenience is in the end not strong enough to resist the pressure of unfavourable circumstances and the reassertion of old or the effective growth of new centrifugal forces. There is, however, at work a more powerful force, a sort of intellectual religion of humanity, clear in the minds of the few, vaguely felt in its effects and its disguises by the many, which has largely helped to bring about much of the trend of the modern mind and the drift of its developing institutions. This is a psychological force which tends to break beyond the formula of the nation and aspires to replace the religion of country and even, in its more extreme forms, to destroy altogether the national sentiment and to abolish its divisions so as to create the single nation of mankind.

We may say, then, that this trend must eventually realise itself, however great may be the difficulties; and they are really enormous, much greater than those which attended the national formation. If the present unsatisfactory condition of international relations should lead to a series of cataclysms, either large and world-embracing like the present war or, though each more

limited in scope, yet in their sum world-pervading and necessarily, by the growing interrelation of interests, affecting even those who do not fall directly under their touch, then mankind will finally be forced in self-defence to a new, closer and more stringently unified order of things. Its choice will be between that and a lingering suicide. If the human reason cannot find out the way, Nature herself is sure to shape these upheavals in such a way as to bring about her end. Therefore, — whether soon or in the long run, whether brought about by its own growing sentiment of unity, stimulated by common interest and convenience, or by the evolutionary pressure of circumstances, — we may take it that an eventual unification or at least some formal organisation of human life on earth is, the incalculable being always allowed for, practically inevitable.

I have tried to show from the analogy of the past evolution of the nation that this international unification must culminate or at least is likely to culminate in one of two forms. There is likely to be either a centralised World-State or a looser world-union which may be either a close federation or a simple confederacy of the peoples for the common ends of mankind. The last form is the most desirable, because it gives sufficient scope for the principle of variation which is necessary for the free play of life and the healthy progress of the race. The process by which the World-State may come starts with the creation of a central body which will at first have very limited functions, but, once created, must absorb by degrees all the different utilities of a centralised international control, as the State, first in the form of a monarchy and then of a parliament, has been absorbing by degrees the whole control of the life of the nation, so that we are now within measurable distance of a centralised socialistic State which will leave no part of the life of its individuals unregulated. A similar process in the World-State will end in the taking up and the regulation of the whole life of the peoples into its hands; it may even end by abolishing national individuality and turning the divisions that it has created into mere departmental groupings, provinces and districts of the one common State. Such an eventuality may seem now a fantastic dream or an unrealisable

idea; but it is one which, under certain conditions that are by no means beyond the scope of ultimate possibility, may well become feasible and even, after a certain point is reached, inevitable. A federal system and still more a confederacy would mean, on the other hand, the preservation of the national basis and a greater or less freedom of national life, but the subordination of the separate national to the larger common interests and of full separate freedom to the greater international necessities.

It may be questioned whether past analogies are a safe guide in a problem so new and whether something else might not be evolved more intimately and independently arising from it and suitable to its complexities. But mankind even in dealing with its new problems works upon past experience and therefore upon past motives and analogies. Even when it seizes on new ideas, it goes to the past for the form it gives to them. Behind the apparent changes of the most radical revolutions we see this unavoidable principle of continuity surviving in the heart of the new order. Moreover, these alternatives seem the only way in which the two forces in presence can work out their conflict, either by the disappearance of the one, the separative national instinct, or by an accommodation between them. On the other hand, it is quite possible that human thought and action may take so new a turn as to bring in a number of unforeseen possibilities and lead to a quite different ending. And one might upon these lines set one's imagination to work and produce perhaps a utopia of a better kind. Such constructive efforts of the human imagination have their value and often a very great value; but any such speculations would evidently have been out of place in the study I have attempted.

Assuredly, neither of the two alternatives and none of the three forms considered are free from serious objections. A centralised World-State would signify the triumph of the idea of mechanical unity or rather of uniformity. It would inevitably mean the undue depression of an indispensable element in the vigour of human life and progress, the free life of the individual, the free variation of the peoples. It must end, if it becomes permanent and fulfils all its tendencies, either in a death in

life, a stagnation, or by the insurgence of some new saving but revolutionary force or principle which would shatter the whole fabric into pieces. The mechanical tendency is one to which the logical reason of man, itself a precise machine, is easily addicted and its operations are obviously the easiest to manage and the most ready to hand; its full evolution may seem to the reason desirable, necessary, inevitable, but its end is predestined. A centralised socialistic State may be a necessity of the future, once it is founded, but a reaction from it will be equally an eventual necessity of the future. The greater its pressure, the more certainly will it be met by the spread of the spiritual, the intellectual, the vital and practical principle of Anarchism in revolt against that mechanical pressure. So, too, a centralised mechanical World-State must rouse in the end a similar force against it and might well terminate in a crumbling up and disintegration, even in the necessity for a repetition of the cycle of humanity ending in a better attempt to solve the problem. It could be kept in being only if humanity agreed to allow all the rest of its life to be regularised for it for the sake of peace and stability and took refuge for its individual freedom in the spiritual life, as happened once under the Roman Empire. But even that would be only a temporary solution. A federal system also would tend inevitably to establish one general type for human life, institutions and activities; it would allow only a play of minor variations. But the need of variation in living Nature could not always rest satisfied with that scanty sustenance. On the other hand, a looser confederacy might well be open to the objection that it would give too ready a handle for centrifugal forces, were such to arise in new strength. A loose confederation could not be permanent; it must turn in one direction or the other, end either in a close and rigid centralisation or at last by a break-up of the loose unity into its original elements.

The saving power needed is a new psychological factor which will at once make a united life necessary to humanity and force it to respect the principle of freedom. The religion of humanity seems to be the one growing force which tends in that direction; for it makes for the sense of human oneness, it

has the idea of the race, and yet at the same time it respects the human individual and the natural human grouping. But its present intellectual form seems hardly sufficient. The idea, powerful in itself and in its effects, is yet not powerful enough to mould the whole life of the race in its image. For it has to concede too much to the egoistic side of human nature, once all and still nine-tenths of our being, with which its larger idea is in conflict. On the other side, because it leans principally on the reason, it turns too readily to the mechanical solution. For the rational idea ends always as a captive of its machinery, becomes a slave of its own too binding process. A new idea with another turn of the logical machine revolts against it and breaks up its machinery, but only to substitute in the end another mechanical system, another credo, formula and practice.

A spiritual religion of humanity is the hope of the future. By this is not meant what is ordinarily called a universal religion, a system, a thing of creed and intellectual belief and dogma and outward rite. Mankind has tried unity by that means; it has failed and deserved to fail, because there can be no universal religious system, one in mental creed and vital form. The inner spirit is indeed one, but more than any other the spiritual life insists on freedom and variation in its self-expression and means of development. A religion of humanity means the growing realisation that there is a secret Spirit, a divine Reality, in which we are all one, that humanity is its highest present vehicle on earth, that the human race and the human being are the means by which it will progressively reveal itself here. It implies a growing attempt to live out this knowledge and bring about a kingdom of this divine Spirit upon earth. By its growth within us oneness with our fellow-men will become the leading principle of all our life, not merely a principle of cooperation but a deeper brotherhood, a real and an inner sense of unity and equality and a common life. There must be the realisation by the individual that only in the life of his fellow-men is his own life complete. There must be the realisation by the race that only on the free and full life of the individual can its own perfection and permanent happiness be founded. There must be too a discipline and a way of salvation

in accordance with this religion, that is to say, a means by which it can be developed by each man within himself, so that it may be developed in the life of the race. To go into all that this implies would be too large a subject to be entered upon here; it is enough to point out that in this direction lies the eventual road. No doubt, if this is only an idea like the rest, it will go the way of all ideas. But if it is at all a truth of our being, then it must be the truth to which all is moving and in it must be found the means of a fundamental, an inner, a complete, a real human unity which would be the one secure base of a unification of human life. A spiritual oneness which would create a psychological oneness not dependent upon any intellectual or outward uniformity and compel a oneness of life not bound up with its mechanical means of unification, but ready always to enrich its secure unity by a free inner variation and a freely varied outer self-expression, this would be the basis for a higher type of human existence.

Could such a realisation develop rapidly in mankind, we might then solve the problem of unification in a deeper and truer way from the inner truth to the outer forms. Until then, the attempt to bring it about by mechanical means must proceed. But the higher hope of humanity lies in the growing number of men who will realise this truth and seek to develop it in themselves, so that when the mind of man is ready to escape from its mechanical bent, — perhaps when it finds that its mechanical solutions are all temporary and disappointing, — the truth of the Spirit may step in and lead humanity to the path of its highest possible happiness and perfection.

A Postscript Chapter

AT THE time when this book was being brought to its close, the first attempt at the foundation of some initial hesitating beginning of the new world-order, which both governments and peoples had begun to envisage as a permanent necessity if there was to be any order in the world at all, was under debate and consideration but had not yet been given a concrete and practical form; but this had to come and eventually a momentous beginning was made. It took the name and appearance of what was called a League of Nations. It was not happy in its conception, well-inspired in its formation or destined to any considerable longevity or a supremely successful career. But that such an organised endeavour should be launched at all and proceed on its way for some time without an early breakdown was in itself an event of capital importance and meant the initiation of a new era in world history; especially, it was an initiative which, even if it failed, could not be allowed to remain without a sequel but had to be taken up again until a successful solution has safeguarded the future of mankind, not only against continued disorder and lethal peril but against destructive possibilities which could easily prepare the collapse of civilisation and perhaps eventually something even that could be described as the suicide of the human race. Accordingly, the League of Nations disappeared but was replaced by the United Nations Organisation which now stands in the forefront of the world and struggles towards some kind of secure permanence and success in the great and far-reaching endeavour on which depends the world's future.

This is the capital event, the crucial and decisive outcome of the world-wide tendencies which Nature has set in motion for her destined purpose. In spite of the constant shortcomings of human effort and its stumbling mentality, in spite of adverse

possibilities that may baulk or delay for a time the success of this great adventure, it is in this event that lies the determination of what must be. All the catastrophes that have attended this course of events and seem to arise of purpose in order to prevent the working out of her intention have not prevented, and even further catastrophes will not prevent, the successful emergence and development of an enterprise which has become a necessity for the progress and perhaps the very existence of the race. Two stupendous and world-devastating wars have swept over the globe and have been accompanied or followed by revolutions with far-reaching consequences which have altered the political map of the earth and the international balance, the once fairly stable equilibrium of five continents, and changed the whole future. A third still more disastrous war with a prospect of the use of weapons and other scientific means of destruction far more fatal and of wider reach than any ever yet invented, weapons whose far-spread use might bring down civilisation with a crash and whose effects might tend towards something like extermination on a large scale, looms in prospect; the constant apprehension of it weighs upon the mind of the nations and stimulates them towards further preparations for war and creates an atmosphere of prolonged antagonism, if not yet of conflict, extending to what is called "cold war" even in times of peace. But the two wars that have come and gone have not prevented the formation of the first and second considerable efforts towards the beginning of an attempt at union and the practical formation of a concrete body, an organised instrument with that object: rather they have caused and hastened this new creation. The League of Nations came into being as a direct consequence of the first war, the U.N.O. similarly as a consequence of the second world-wide conflict. If the third war which is regarded by many if not by most as inevitable does come, it is likely to precipitate as inevitably a further step and perhaps the final outcome of this great world-endeavour. Nature uses such means, apparently opposed and dangerous to her intended purpose, to bring about the fruition of that purpose. As in the practice of the spiritual science and art of Yoga one has to raise

up the psychological possibilities which are there in the nature and stand in the way of its spiritual perfection and fulfilment so as to eliminate them, even, it may be, the sleeping possibilities which might arise in future to break the work that has been done, so too Nature acts with the world-forces that meet her on her way, not only calling up those which will assist her but raising too, so as to finish with them, those that she knows to be the normal or even the unavoidable obstacles which cannot but start up to impede her secret will. This one has often seen in the history of mankind; one sees it exampled today with an enormous force commensurable with the magnitude of the thing that has to be done. But always these resistances turn out to have assisted by the resistance much more than they have impeded the intention of the great Creatrix and her Mover.

We may then look with a legitimate optimism on what has been hitherto achieved and on the prospects of further achievement in the future. This optimism need not and should not blind us to undesirable features, perilous tendencies and the possibilities of serious interruptions in the work and even disorders in the human world that might possibly subvert the work done. As regards the actual conditions of the moment it may even be admitted that most men nowadays look with dissatisfaction on the defects of the United Nations Organisation and its blunders and the malignancies that endanger its existence and many feel a growing pessimism and regard with doubt the possibility of its final success. This pessimism it is unnecessary and unwise to share; for such a psychology tends to bring about or to make possible the results which it predicts but which need not at all ensue. At the same time, we must not ignore the danger. The leaders of the nations, who have the will to succeed and who will be held responsible by posterity for any avoidable failure, must be on guard against unwise policies or fatal errors; the deficiencies that exist in the organisation or its constitution have to be quickly remedied or slowly and cautiously eliminated; if there are obstinate oppositions to necessary change, they have somehow to be overcome or circumvented without breaking the institution; progress towards its perfection, even if it cannot be

easily or swiftly made, must yet be undertaken and the frustration of the world's hope prevented at any cost. There is no other way for mankind than this, unless indeed a greater way is laid open to it by the Power that guides through some delivering turn or change in human will or human nature or some sudden evolutionary progress, a not easily foreseeable leap, *saltus*, which will make another and greater solution of our human destiny feasible.

In the first idea and form of a beginning of world-union which took the shape of the League of Nations, although there were errors in the structure such as the insistence on unanimity which tended to sterilise, to limit or to obstruct the practical action and effectuality of the League, the main defect was inherent in its conception and in its general build, and that again arose naturally and as a direct consequence from the condition of the world at that time. The League of Nations was in fact an oligarchy of big Powers each drawing behind it a retinue of small States and using the general body so far as possible for the furtherance of its own policy much more than for the general interest and the good of the world at large. This character came out most in the political sphere, and the manoeuvres and discords, accommodations and compromises inevitable in this condition of things did not help to make the action of the League beneficial or effective as it purposed or set out to be. The absence of America and the position of Russia had helped to make the final ill-success of this first venture a natural consequence, if not indeed unavoidable. In the constitution of the U.N.O. an attempt was made, in principle at least, to escape from these errors; but the attempt was not thoroughgoing and not altogether successful. A strong surviving element of oligarchy remained in the preponderant place assigned to the five great Powers in the Security Council and was clinched by the device of the veto; these were concessions to a sense of realism and the necessity of recognising the actual condition of things and the results of the second great war and could not perhaps have been avoided, but they have done more to create trouble, hamper the action and diminish the success of the new institution than anything else in

its make-up or the way of action forced upon it by the world situation or the difficulties of a combined working inherent in its very structure. A too hasty or radical endeavour to get rid of these defects might lead to a crash of the whole edifice; to leave them unmodified prolongs a malaise, an absence of harmony and smooth working and a consequent discredit and a sense of limited and abortive action, cause of the wide-spread feeling of futility and regard of doubt the world at large has begun to cast on this great and necessary institution which was founded with such high hopes and without which world conditions would be infinitely worse and more dangerous, even perhaps irremediable. A third attempt, the substitution of a differently constituted body, could only come if this institution collapsed as the result of a new catastrophe: if certain dubious portents fulfil their menace, it might emerge into being and might even this time be more successful because of an increased and a more general determination not to allow such a calamity to occur again; but it would be after a third cataclysmal struggle which might shake to its foundations the international structure now holding together after two upheavals with so much difficulty and unease. Yet, even in such a contingency, the intention in the working of Nature is likely to overcome the obstacles she has herself raised up and they may be got rid of once and for all. But for that it will be necessary to build, eventually at least, a true World-State without exclusions and on a principle of equality into which considerations of size and strength will not enter. These may be left to exercise whatever influence is natural to them in a well-ordered harmony of the world's peoples safeguarded by the law of a new international order. A sure justice, a fundamental equality and combination of rights and interests must be the law of this World-State and the basis of its entire edifice.

The real danger at the present second stage of the progress towards unity lies not in any faults, however serious, in the building of the United Nations Assembly but in the division of the peoples into two camps which tend to be natural opponents and might at any moment become declared enemies irreconcilable and even their common existence incompatible.

This is because the so-called Communism of Bolshevist Russia came to birth as the result, not of a rapid evolution, but of an unprecedentedly fierce and prolonged revolution sanguinary in the extreme and created an autocratic and intolerant State system founded upon a war of classes in which all others except the proletariat were crushed out of existence, "liquidated", upon a "dictatorship of the proletariat" or rather of a narrow but all-powerful party system acting in its name, a Police State, and a mortal struggle with the outside world: the fierceness of this struggle generated in the minds of the organisers of the new State a fixed idea of the necessity not only of survival but of continued struggle and the spread of its domination until the new order had destroyed the old or evicted it, if not from the whole earth, yet from the greater part of it and the imposition of a new political and social gospel or its general acceptance by the world's peoples. But this condition of things might change, lose its acrimony and full consequence, as it has done to some degree, with the arrival of security and the cessation of the first ferocity, bitterness and exasperation of the conflict; the most intolerant and oppressive elements of the new order might have been moderated and the sense of incompatibility or inability to live together or side by side would then have disappeared and a more secure *modus vivendi* been made possible. If much of the unease, the sense of inevitable struggle, the difficulty of mutual toleration and economic accommodation still exists, it is rather because the idea of using the ideological struggle as a means for world domination is there and keeps the nations in a position of mutual apprehension and preparation for armed defence and attack than because the coexistence of the two ideologies is impossible. If this element is eliminated, a world in which these two ideologies could live together, arrive at an economic interchange, draw closer together, need not be at all out of the question; for the world is moving towards a greater development of the principle of State control over the life of the community, and a congeries of socialistic States on the one hand, and on the other, of States coordinating and controlling a modified Capitalism might well come to exist side by side and develop

friendly relations with each other. Even a World-State in which both could keep their own institutions and sit in a common assembly might come into being and a single world-union on this foundation would not be impossible. This development is indeed the final outcome which the foundation of the U.N.O. presupposes; for the present organisation cannot be itself final, it is only an imperfect beginning useful and necessary as a primary nucleus of that larger institution in which all the peoples of the earth can meet each other in a single international unity: the creation of a World-State is, in a movement of this kind, the one logical and inevitable ultimate outcome.

This view of the future may under present circumstances be stigmatised as a too facile optimism, but this turn of things is quite as possible as the more disastrous turn expected by the pessimists, since the cataclysm and crash of civilisation sometimes predicted by them need not at all be the result of a new war. Mankind has a habit of surviving the worst catastrophes created by its own errors or by the violent turns of Nature and it must be so if there is any meaning in its existence, if its long history and continuous survival is not the accident of a fortuitously self-organising Chance, which it must be in a purely materialistic view of the nature of the world. If man is intended to survive and carry forward the evolution of which he is at present the head and, to some extent, a half-conscious leader of its march, he must come out of his present chaotic international life and arrive at a beginning of organised united action; some kind of World-State, unitary or federal, or a confederacy or a coalition he must arrive at in the end; no smaller or looser expedient would adequately serve the purpose. In that case, the general thesis advanced in this book would stand justified and we can foreshadow with some confidence the main line of advance which the course of events is likely to take, at least the main trend of the future history of the human peoples.

The question now put by evolving Nature to mankind is whether its existing international system, if system it can be called, a sort of provisional order maintained with constant evolutionary or revolutionary changes, cannot be replaced by

a willed and thought-out fixed arrangement, a true system, eventually a real unity serving all the common interests of the earth's peoples. An original welter and chaos with its jumble of forces forming, wherever it could, larger or smaller masses of civilisation and order which were in danger of crumbling or being shaken to pieces by attacks from the outer chaos was the first attempt at cosmos successfully arrived at by the genius of humanity. This was finally replaced by something like an international system with the elements of what could be called international law or fixed habits of intercommunication and interchange which allowed the nations to live together in spite of antagonisms and conflicts, a security alternating with precariousness and peril and permitting of too many ugly features, however local, of oppression, bloodshed, revolt and disorder, not to speak of wars which sometimes devastated large areas of the globe. The indwelling deity who presides over the destiny of the race has raised in man's mind and heart the idea, the hope of a new order which will replace the old unsatisfactory order and substitute for it conditions of the world's life which will in the end have a reasonable chance of establishing permanent peace and well-being. This would for the first time turn into an assured fact the ideal of human unity which, cherished by a few, seemed for so long a noble chimera; then might be created a firm ground of peace and harmony and even a free room for the realisation of the highest human dreams, for the perfectibility of the race, a perfect society, a higher upward evolution of the human soul and human nature. It is for the men of our day and, at the most, of tomorrow to give the answer. For, too long a postponement or too continued a failure will open the way to a series of increasing catastrophes which might create a too prolonged and disastrous confusion and chaos and render a solution too difficult or impossible; it might even end in something like an irremediable crash not only of the present world-civilisation but of all civilisation. A new, a difficult and uncertain beginning might have to be made in the midst of the chaos and ruin after perhaps an extermination on a large scale, and a more successful creation could be predicted only if a way

was found to develop a better humanity or perhaps a greater, a superhuman race.

The central question is whether the nation, the largest natural unit which humanity has been able to create and maintain for its collective living, is also its last and ultimate unit or whether a greater aggregate can be formed which will englobe many and even most nations and finally all in its united totality. The impulse to build more largely, the push towards the creation of considerable and even very vast supra-national aggregates has not been wanting; it has even been a permanent feature in the life-instincts of the race. But the form it took was the desire of a strong nation for mastery over others, permanent possession of their territories, subjugation of their peoples, exploitation of their resources: there was also an attempt at quasi-assimilation, an imposition of the culture of a dominant race and, in general, a system of absorption wholesale or as complete as possible. The Roman Empire was the classic example of this kind of endeavour and the Graeco-Roman unity of a single way of life and culture in a vast framework of political and administrative unity was the nearest approach within the geographical limits reached by this civilisation to something one might regard as a first figure or an incomplete suggestion of a figure of human unity. Other similar attempts have been made though not on so large a scale and with a less consummate ability throughout the course of history, but nothing has endured for more than a small number of centuries. The method used was fundamentally unsound in as much as it contradicted other life-instincts which were necessary to the vitality and healthy evolution of mankind and the denial of which must end in some kind of stagnation and arrested progress. The imperial aggregate could not acquire the unconquerable vitality and power of survival of the nation-unit. The only enduring empire-units have been in reality large nation-units which took that name like Germany and China and these were not forms of the supra-national State and need not be reckoned in the history of the formation of the imperial aggregate. So, although the tendency to the creation of empire testifies to an urge in Nature towards larger unities of human

life, — and we can see concealed in it a will to unite the disparate masses of humanity on a larger scale into a single coalescing or combined life-unit, — it must be regarded as an unsuccessful formation without a sequel and unserviceable for any further progress in this direction. In actual fact a new attempt of world-wide domination could succeed only by a new instrumentation or under novel circumstances in englobing all the nations of the earth or persuading or forcing them into some kind of union. An ideology, a successful combination of peoples with one aim and a powerful head like Communist Russia, might have a temporary success in bringing about such an objective. But such an outcome, not very desirable in itself, would not be likely to ensure the creation of an enduring World-State. There would be tendencies, resistances, urges towards other developments which would sooner or later bring about its collapse or some revolutionary change which would mean its disappearance. Finally, any such stage would have to be overpassed; only the formation of a true World-State, either of a unitary but still elastic kind, — for a rigidly unitary State might bring about stagnation and decay of the springs of life, — or a union of free peoples could open the prospect of a sound and lasting world-order.

It is not necessary to repeat or review, except in certain directions, the considerations and conclusions set forward in this book with regard to the means and methods or the lines of divergence or successive development which the actual realisation of human unity may take. But still on some sides possibilities have arisen which call for some modification of what has been written or the conclusions arrived at in these chapters. It had been concluded, for instance, that there was no likelihood of the conquest and unification of the world by a single dominant people or empire. This is no longer altogether so certain, for we have just had to admit the possibility of such an attempt under certain circumstances. A dominant Power may be able to group round itself strong allies subordinated to it but still considerable in strength and resources and throw them into a world struggle with other Powers and peoples. This possibility would be increased if the dominating Power managed to procure, even if

only for the time being, a monopoly of an overwhelming superiority in the use of some of the tremendous means of aggressive military action which Science has set out to discover and effectively utilise. The terror of destruction and even of large-scale extermination created by these ominous discoveries may bring about a will in the governments and peoples to ban and prevent the military use of these inventions, but, so long as the nature of mankind has not changed, this prevention must remain uncertain and precarious and an unscrupulous ambition may even get by it a chance of secrecy and surprise and the utilisation of a decisive moment which might conceivably give it victory and it might risk the tremendous chance. It may be argued that the history of the last war runs counter to this possibility, for in conditions not quite realising but approximating to such a combination of circumstances the aggressive Powers failed in their attempt and underwent the disastrous consequences of a terrible defeat. But after all, they came for a time within a hair's breadth of success and there might not be the same good fortune for the world in some later and more sagaciously conducted and organised adventure. At least, the possibility has to be noted and guarded against by those who have the power of prevention and the welfare of the race in their charge.

One of the possibilities suggested at the time was the growth of continental agglomerates, a united Europe, some kind of a combine of the peoples of the American continent under the leadership of the United States, even possibly in the resurgence of Asia and its drive towards independence from the dominance of the European peoples, a drawing together for self-defensive combination of the nations of this continent; such an eventuality of large continental combinations might even be a stage in the final formation of a world-union. This possibility has tended to take shape to a certain extent with a celerity that could not then be anticipated. In the two American continents it has actually assumed a predominating and practical form, though not in its totality. The idea of a United States of Europe has also actually taken shape and is assuming a formal existence, but is not yet able to develop into a completed and fully realised possibility

because of the antagonism based on conflicting ideologies which cuts off from each other Russia and her satellites behind their iron curtain and Western Europe. This separation has gone so far that it is difficult to envisage its cessation at any foreseeable time in a predictable future. Under other circumstances a tendency towards such combinations might have created the apprehension of huge continental clashes such as the collision, at one time imagined as possible, between a resurgent Asia and the Occident. The acceptance by Europe and America of the Asiatic resurgence and the eventual total liberation of the Oriental peoples, as also the downfall of Japan which figured at one time and indeed actually presented itself to the world as the liberator and leader of a free Asia against the domination of the West, have removed this dangerous possibility. Here again, as elsewhere, the actual danger presents itself rather as a clash between two opposing ideologies, one led by Russia and Red China and trying to impose the Communistic extreme partly by military and partly by forceful political means on a reluctant or at least an infected but not altogether willing Asia and Europe, and on the other side a combination of peoples, partly capitalist, partly moderate socialist who still cling with some attachment to the idea of liberty, — to freedom of thought and some remnant of the free life of the individual. In America there seems to be a push, especially in the Latin peoples, towards a rather intolerant completeness of the Americanisation of the whole continent and the adjacent islands, a sort of extended Monroe Doctrine, which might create friction with the European Powers still holding possessions in the northern part of the continent. But this could only generate minor difficulties and disagreements and not the possibility of any serious collision, a case perhaps for arbitration or arrangement by the U.N.O., not any more serious consequence. In Asia a more perilous situation has arisen, standing sharply across the way to any possibility of a continental unity of the peoples of this part of the world, in the emergence of Communist China. This creates a gigantic bloc which could easily englobe the whole of Northern Asia in a combination between two enormous Communist Powers,

Russia and China, and would overshadow with a threat of absorption South-Western Asia and Tibet and might be pushed to overrun all up to the whole frontier of India, menacing her security and that of Western Asia with the possibility of an invasion and an overrunning and subjection by penetration or even by overwhelming military force to an unwanted ideology, political and social institutions and dominance of this militant mass of Communism whose push might easily prove irresistible. In any case, the continent would be divided between two huge blocs which might enter into active mutual opposition and the possibility of a stupendous world-conflict would arise dwarfing anything previously experienced: the possibility of any world-union might, even without any actual outbreak of hostilities, be indefinitely postponed by the incompatibility of interests and ideologies on a scale which would render their inclusion in a single body hardly realisable. The possibility of a coming into being of three or four continental unions, which might subsequently coalesce into a single unity, would then be very remote and, except after a world-shaking struggle, hardly feasible.

At one time it was possible to regard as an eventual possibility the extension of Socialism to all the nations; an international unity could then have been created by its innate tendencies which turned naturally towards an overcoming of the dividing force of the nation-idea with its separatism and its turn towards competitions and rivalries often culminating in open strife; this could have been regarded as the natural road and could have turned in fact into the eventual way towards world-union. But, in the first place, Socialism has under certain stresses proved to be by no means immune against infection by the dividing national spirit and its international tendency might not survive its coming into power in separate national States and a resulting inheritance of competing national interests and necessities: the old spirit might very well survive in the new socialist bodies. But also there might not be or not for a long time to come an inevitable tide of the spread of Socialism to all the peoples of the earth: other forces might arise which would dispute what seemed at one time and perhaps still seems the most likely outcome of

existing world tendencies; the conflict between Communism and the less extreme socialistic idea which still respects the principle of liberty, even though a restricted liberty, and the freedom of conscience, of thought, of personality of the individual, if this difference perpetuated itself, might create a serious difficulty in the formation of a World-State. It would not be easy to build a constitution, a harmonised State-law and practice in which any modicum of genuine freedom for the individual or any continued existence of him except as a cell in the working of a rigidly determined automatism of the body of the collectivist State or a part of a machine would be possible or conceivable. It is not that the principle of Communism necessitates any such results or that its system must lead to a termite civilisation or the suppression of the individual; it could well be, on the contrary, a means at once of the fulfilment of the individual and the perfect harmony of a collective being. The already developed systems which go by the name are not really Communism but constructions of an inordinately rigid State Socialism. But Socialism itself might well develop away from the Marxist groove and evolve less rigid modes; a cooperative Socialism, for instance, without any bureaucratic rigour of a coercive administration, of a Police State, might one day come into existence, but the generalisation of Socialism throughout the world is not under existing circumstances easily foreseeable, hardly even a predominant possibility: in spite of certain possibilities or tendencies created by recent events in the Far East, a division of the earth between the two systems, capitalistic and socialistic, seems for the present a more likely issue. In America the attachment to individualism and the capitalistic system of society and a strong antagonism not only to Communism but to even a moderate Socialism remains complete and one can foresee little possibility of any abatement in its intensity. The extreme success of Communism creeping over the continents of the Old World, which we have had to envisage as a possibility, is yet, if we consider existing circumstances and the balance of opposing Powers, highly improbable and, even if it occurred, some accommodation would still be necessary, unless one of the two forces gained an overwhelming eventual

victory over its opponent. A successful accommodation would demand the creation of a body in which all questions of possible dispute could be solved as they arose without any breaking out of open conflict, and this would be a successor of the League of Nations and the U.N.O. and move in the same direction. As Russia and America, in spite of the constant opposition of policy and ideology, have avoided so far any step that would make the preservation of the U.N.O. too difficult or impossible, this third body would be preserved by the same necessity or imperative utility of its continued existence. The same forces would work in the same direction and a creation of an effective world-union would still be possible; in the end the mass of general needs of the race and its need of self-preservation could well be relied on to make it inevitable.

There is nothing then in the development of events since the establishment of the United Nations Organisation, in the sequel to the great initiation at San Francisco of the decisive step towards the creation of a world-body which might end in the establishment of a true world-unity, that need discourage us in the expectation of an ultimate success of this great enterprise. There are dangers and difficulties, there can be an apprehension of conflicts, even of colossal conflicts that might jeopardise the future, but total failure need not be envisaged unless we are disposed to predict the failure of the race. The thesis we have undertaken to establish of the drive of Nature towards larger agglomerations and the final establishment of the largest of all and the ultimate union of the world's peoples still remains unaltered: this is evidently the line which the future of the human race demands and which conflicts and perturbations, however immense, may delay, even as they may modify greatly the forms it now promises to take, but are not likely to prevent; for a general destruction would be the only alternative destiny of mankind. But such a destruction, whatever the catastrophic possibilities balancing the almost certain beneficial results, hardly limitable in their extent, of the recent discoveries and inventions of Science, has every chance of being as chimerical as any early expectation of final peace and felicity or a perfected society of the human

peoples. We may rely, if on nothing else, on the evolutionary urge and, if on no other greater hidden Power, on the manifest working and drift or intention in the World-Energy we call Nature to carry mankind at least as far as the necessary next step to be taken, a self-preserving next step: for the necessity is there, at least some general recognition of it has been achieved and of the thing to which it must eventually lead the idea has been born and the body of it is already calling for its creation. We have indicated in this book the conditions, possibilities, forms which this new creation may take and those which seem to be most desirable without dogmatising or giving prominence to personal opinion; an impartial consideration of the forces that work and the results that are likely to ensue was the object of this study. The rest will depend on the intellectual and moral capacity of humanity to carry out what is evidently now the one thing needful.

We conclude then that in the conditions of the world at present, even taking into consideration its most disparaging features and dangerous possibilities, there is nothing that need alter the view we have taken of the necessity and inevitability of some kind of world-union; the drive of Nature, the compulsion of circumstances and the present and future need of mankind make it inevitable. The general conclusions we have arrived at will stand and the consideration of the modalities and possible forms or lines of alternative or successive development it may take. The ultimate result must be the formation of a World-State and the most desirable form of it would be a federation of free nationalities in which all subjection or forced inequality and subordination of one to another would have disappeared and, though some might preserve a greater natural influence, all would have an equal status. A confederacy would give the greatest freedom to the nations constituting the World-State, but this might give too much room for fissiparous or centrifugal tendencies to operate; a federal order would then be the most desirable. All else would be determined by the course of events and by general agreement or the shape given by the ideas and necessities that may grow up in the future. A world-union of this

kind would have the greatest chances of long survival or permanent existence. This is a mutable world and uncertainties and dangers might assail or trouble for a time; the formed structure might be subjected to revolutionary tendencies as new ideas and forces emerged and produced their effect on the general mind of humanity, but the essential step would have been taken and the future of the race assured or at least the present era overpassed in which it is threatened and disturbed by unsolved needs and difficulties, precarious conditions, immense upheavals, huge and sanguinary world-wide conflicts and the threat of others to come. The ideal of human unity would be no longer an unfulfilled ideal but an accomplished fact and its preservation given into the charge of the united human peoples. Its future destiny would lie on the knees of the gods and, if the gods have a use for the continued existence of the race, may be left to lie there safe.

War and Self-Determination

Foreword to the First Edition

THE FOUR essays published in this volume[1] were not written at one time or conceived with any intentional connection between them in idea or purpose. The first was written in the early months of the war, two others when it was closing, the last recently during the formation and first operations of that remarkably ill-jointed, stumbling and hesitating machine, the League of Nations. But still they happen to be bound together by a common idea or at least look at four related subjects from a single general standpoint, — the obvious but practically quite forgotten truth that the destiny of the race in this age of crisis and revolution will depend much more on the spirit which we are than on the machinery we shall use. A few words on the present bearing of this truth by way of foreword may not be out of place.

The whole difficulty of the present situation turns upon the peculiar and critical character of the age in which we are living. It is a period of immense and rapid changes so swift that few of us who live among them can hope to seize their whole burden or their inmost meaning or to form any safe estimate of their probable outcome. Great hopes are abroad, high and large ideals fill the view, enormous forces are in the field. It is one of those vast critical moments in the life of the race when all is pressing towards change and reconstitution. The ideals of the future, especially the ideals of freedom, equality, commonalty, unity, are demanding to be brought out from their limited field in the spiritual life or the idealism of the few and to be given some beginning of a true soul of action and bodily shape in the life of the race. But banded against any such fulfilment there are powerful obstacles, and the greatest of them

[1] *The present edition includes two additional essays. — Ed.*

come not from outside but from within. For they are the old continued impulsions and obstinate recalcitrance of mankind's past nature, the almost total subjection of its normal mind to egoistic, vital and material interests and ambitions which make not for union but for strife and discord, the plausibilities of the practical reason which looks at the possibilities of the day and the morrow and shuts its eyes to the consequences of the day after, the habits of pretence and fiction which impel men and nations to pursue and forward their own interest under the camouflage of a specious idealism, a habit made up only partly of the diplomatic hypocrisy of politicians, but much more of a general half-voluntary self-deception, and, finally, the inrush of blinder unsatisfied forces and crude imperfect idealisms — of such is the creed of Bolshevism — to take advantage of the unrest and dissatisfaction prevalent in such times and lay hold for a while on the life of mankind. It is these things which we see dominant around us and not in the least degree any effort to be of the right spirit and evolve from it the right method. The one way out harped on by the modern mind which has been as much blinded as enlightened by the victories of physical science, is the approved western device of salvation by machinery; get the right kind of machine to work and everything can be done, this seems to be the modern creed. But the destinies of mankind cannot be turned out to order in an American factory. It is a subtler thing than that which is now putting its momentous problem before us, and if the spirit of the things we profess is absent or falsified, no method or machinery can turn them out for us or deliver the promised goods. That is the one truth which the scientific and industrialised modern mind forgets always, because it looks at process and commodity and production and ignores the spirit in man and the deeper inner law of his being.

The elimination of war is one of the cherished ideals and expectations of the age. But what lies at the root of this desire? A greater unity of heart, sympathy, understanding between men and nations, a settled will to get rid of national hatreds, greeds, ambitions, all the fertile seeds of strife and war? If so, it is well with us and success will surely crown our efforts. But

of this deeper thing there may be something in sentiment, but there is still very little in action and dominant motive. For the masses of men the idea is rather to labour and produce and amass at ease and in security without the disturbance of war; for the statesmen and governing classes the idea is to have peace and security for the maintenance of past acquisitions and an untroubled domination and exploitation of the world by the great highly organised imperial and industrial nations without the perturbing appearance of new unsatisfied hungers and the peril of violent unrests, revolts, revolutions. War, it was hoped at one time, would eliminate itself by becoming impossible, but that delightfully easy solution no longer commands credit. But now it is hoped to conjure or engineer it out of existence by the machinery of a league of victorious nations admitting the rest, some if they will, others whether they like it or not, as subordinate partners or as protégés. In the magic of this just and beautiful arrangement the intelligence and good will of closeted statesmen and governments supported by the intelligence and good will of the peoples is to combine and accommodate interests, to settle or evade difficulties, to circumvent the natural results, the inevitable Karma of national selfishness and passions and to evolve out of the present chaos a fair and charmingly well-mechanised cosmos of international order, security, peace and welfare. Get the clockwork going, put your pennyworth of excellent professions or passably good intentions in the slot and all will go well, this seems to be the principle. But it is too often the floor of Hell that is paved with these excellent professions and passable intentions, and the cause is that while the better reason and will of man may be one hopeful factor in Nature, they are not the whole of nature and existence and not by any means the whole of our human nature. There are other and very formidable things in us and in the world and if we juggle with them or put on them, in order to get them admitted, these masks of reason and sentiment, — as unfortunately we have all the habit of doing and that is still the greater part of the game of politics, — the results are a foregone conclusion. War and violent revolution can be eliminated, if we will, though

not without immense difficulty, but on the condition that we get rid of the inner causes of war and the constantly accumulating Karma of successful injustice of which violent revolutions are the natural reactions. Otherwise, there can be only at best a fallacious period of artificial peace. What was in the past will be sown still in the present and continue to return on us in the future.

The intelligent mind or the best intellectual reason and science of man are not the sole disposers of our future. Fortunately for the order of things a greater unseen power, a Universal Will, or, if you please, a universal Force or Law is there which not only gives us all the framework and conditions of our idea and effort, but evolves by them and by the law of these conditions out of the thing in being the thing that is to be. And this power deals with us not so much according to the devices of our reason, the truths or fictions of our intelligence, but much rather according to the truth of what man is and the real soul and meaning of what he does. God is not to be deceived, says the Scripture. The modern mind does not believe in God, but it believes in Nature: but Nature too is not to be deceived; she enforces her law, she works out always her results from the thing that really is and from the real spirit and character of the energy we put into action. And this especially is one of the ages in which mankind is very closely put to the question. The hopes, the ideals, the aspirations that are abroad in it are themselves so many severe and pregnant questions put to us, not merely to our intelligence but to the spirit of our being and action. In this fateful examination it is not skill and cleverness, machinery and organisation which will ultimately prevail, — that was the faith which Germany professed, and we know how it ended, — but the truth and sincerity of our living. It is not impossible for man to realise his ideals so that he may move on to yet greater undreamed things, but on condition that he makes them totally an inner in order that they may become too an outer reality. The changes which this age of reconstruction portends will certainly come, but the gain they will bring to humanity depends on the spirit which governs us during the time of their execution.

We of today have not the excuse of ignorance since we have before us perfectly clear ideals and conditions. Freedom and unity, the self-determination of men and nations in the framework of a life drawn together by cooperation, comradeship, brotherhood if it may be, the acceptance of a close interrelation of the common aims and interests of the race, an increasing oneness of human life in which we cannot deny any longer to others what we claim for ourselves, — are things of which we have formed a definite conception. The acknowledgment of them is there in the human mind, but not as yet any settled will to practise. Words and professions are excellent things in themselves and we will do them all homage; but facts are for the present more powerful and the facts will have their results, but the results which we deserve and not those aimed at by our egoism. The principle of self-determination is not in itself a chimera, it is only that if we choose to make it so. It is the condition of the better order of the world which we wish to bring into being, and to make jettison of it at the very first opportunity is an unpromising beginning for so great and difficult an endeavour. Self-determination is not a principle which can stand by itself and be made the one rule to be followed; no principle can rightly stand in that way isolated and solely dominant in the complicated web of life and, if we so treat it, it gets falsified in its meaning and loses much of its virtue. Moreover, individual self-determination must harmonise with a common self-determination, freedom must move in the frame of unity or towards the realisation of a free unity. And it may readily be conceded to the opportunist, the practical man and all the minds that find a difficulty in looking beyond the circumstances of the past and present, that there are in very many instances great difficulties in the way of applying the principle immediately and in its full degree. But when in the light of a great revealing moment a principle of this kind has been recognised not only as an ideal but as a clear condition of the result at which we aim, it has to be accepted as a leading factor of the problem to be worked out, the difficulties sincerely considered and met and a way found by which without evasion or equivocation

and without unnecessary delay it can be developed and given its proper place in the solution. But it is the very opposite method that has been adopted by the governments of the world, and admitted by its peoples. The natural result is that things are being worked out in the old way with a new name or at the most with some halting change and partial improvement of the method.

The botched constitution and limping action of the League of Nations is the result of this ancient manoeuvre. The League has been got into being by sacrificing the principles which governed the idea behind its inception. The one thing that has been gained is a formal, regularised and established instrument by which the governments of the leading nations can meet together habitually, consult, accommodate their interests, give some kind of consideration to the voice and the claim of the smaller free nations, try to administer with a common understanding certain common or conflicting interests, delay dangerous outbreaks and collisions or minimise them when they come, govern the life of the nations that are not free and not already subjects of the successful empires under the cover of a mandate instead of the rough-and-tumble chances of a scramble for markets, colonies and dependencies. The machine does not seem to be acting even for these ends with any remarkable efficiency, but it is at least something, it may be said, that it can be got to act at all. In any case it is an accomplished fact which has to be accepted without enthusiasm, for it merits none, but with a practical acquiescence or an enforced recognition. All the more reason that the imperfections it embodies and the evils and dangers its action involves or keeps in being, should not be thrust into the background, but kept in the full light so that the imperfections may be recognised and mended and there may be some chance of avoiding the worst incidence of the threatened evils and dangers. And all the more reason too that the ideals which have been ignored or converted in the practice into a fiction, should insist on themselves and, defrauded of the present, still lift their voice to lay their claim on the future.

For these ideals stand and they represent the greater aims

of the spirit in man which through all the denials, obstacles and imperfections of his present incomplete nature knows always the perfection towards which it moves and the greatness of which it is capable. Circumstance and force and external necessity and past nature may still be too strong for us, the Rudra powers still govern our destinies and the Lords of truth and justice and the Lords of love have to wait for their reign, but if the light of the ideal is kept burning in its flame of knowledge and its flame of power, it will seize even on these things and create out of their evil its greater inevitable good. At present it may seem only an idea and a word unable to become a living reality, but it is the Idea and the Word expressing what was concealed in the Spirit which preside over creation. The time will come when they will be able to seize on the Force that works and turn it into the instrument of a greater and fairer creation. The nearness or the distance of the time depends on the fidelity of the mind and will of man to the best that he sees and the insistence of his self-knowledge, unobsessed by subjection to the circumstances he suffers and the machinery he uses, to live out its truth within himself so that his environment may accept it and his outward life be shaped in its image.

The Passing of War?

THE PROGRESS of humanity proceeds by a series of imaginations which the will in the race turns into accomplished facts and a train of illusions which contain each of them an inevitable truth. The truth is there in the secret Will and Knowledge that are conducting our affairs for us and it reflects itself in the soul of mankind; the illusion is in the shape we give to that reflection, the veil of arbitrary fixations of time, place and circumstance which that deceptive organ of knowledge, the human intellect, weaves over the face of the Truth. Human imaginations are often fulfilled to the letter; our illusions on the contrary find the truth behind them realised most unexpectedly, at a time, in ways, under circumstances far other than those we had fixed for them.

Man's illusions are of all sorts and kinds, some of them petty though not unimportant, — for nothing in the world is unimportant, — others vast and grandiose. The greatest of them all are those which cluster round the hope of a perfected society, a perfected race, a terrestrial millennium. Each new idea religious or social which takes possession of the epoch and seizes on large masses of men, is in turn to be the instrument of these high realisations; each in turn betrays the hope which gave it its force to conquer. And the reason is plain enough to whosoever chooses to see; it is that no change of ideas or of the intellectual outlook upon life, no belief in God or Avatar or prophet, no victorious science or liberating philosophy, no social scheme or system, no sort of machinery internal or external can really bring about the great desire implanted in the race, true though that desire is in itself and the index of the goal to which we are being led. Because man is himself not a machine nor a device, but a being and a most complex one at that, therefore he cannot be saved by machinery; only by an entire change which shall affect all the

members of his being can he be liberated from his discords and imperfections.

One of the illusions incidental to this great hope is the expectation of the passing of war. This grand event in human progress is always being confidently expected and since we are now all scientific minds and rational beings, we no longer expect it by a divine intervention, but assign sound physical and economic reasons for the faith that is in us. The first form taken by this new gospel was the expectation and the prophecy that the extension of commerce would be the extinction of war. Commercialism was the natural enemy of militarism and would drive it from the face of the earth. The growing and universal lust of gold and the habit of comfort and the necessities of increased production and intricate interchange would crush out the lust of power and dominion and glory and battle. Gold-hunger or commodity-hunger would drive out earth-hunger, the dharma of the Vaishya would set its foot on the dharma of the Kshatriya and give it its painless quietus. The ironic reply of the gods has not been long in coming. Actually this very reign of commercialism, this increase of production and interchange, this desire for commodities and markets and this piling up of a huge burden of unnecessary necessities has been the cause of half the wars that have since afflicted the human race. And now we see militarism and commercialism united in a loving clasp, coalescing into a sacred biune duality of national life and patriotic aspiration and causing and driving by their force the most irrational, the most monstrous and nearly cataclysmic, the hugest war of modern and indeed of all historic times.

Another illusion was that the growth of democracy would mean the growth of pacifism and the end of war. It was fondly thought that wars are in their nature dynastic and aristocratic; greedy kings and martial nobles driven by earth-hunger and battle-hunger, diplomatists playing at chess with the lives of men and the fortunes of nations, these were the guilty causes of war who drove the unfortunate peoples to the battle-field like sheep to the shambles. These proletariates, mere food for powder, who had no interest, no desire, no battle-hunger driving them to

armed conflict, had only to become instructed and dominant to embrace each other and all the world in a free and fraternal amity. Man refuses to learn from that history of whose lessons the wise prate to us; otherwise the story of old democracies ought to have been enough to prevent this particular illusion. In any case the answer of the gods has been, here too, sufficiently ironic. If kings and diplomatists are still often the movers of war, none more ready than the modern democracy to make itself their enthusiastic and noisy accomplice, and we see even the modern spectacle of governments and diplomats hanging back in affright or doubt from the yawning and clamorous abyss while angry shouting peoples impel them to the verge. Bewildered pacifists who still cling to their principles and illusions, find themselves howled down by the people and, what is piquant enough, by their own recent comrades and leaders. The socialist, the syndicalist, the internationalist of yesterday stands forward as a banner-bearer in the great mutual massacre and his voice is the loudest to cheer on the dogs of war.

Another recent illusion was the power of Courts of Arbitration and Concerts of Europe to prevent war. There again the course that events immediately took was sufficiently ironic; for the institution of the great Court of international arbitration was followed up by a series of little and great wars which led by an inexorable logical chain to the long-dreaded European conflict and the monarch who had first conceived the idea, was also the first to unsheathe his sword in a conflict dictated on both sides by the most unrighteous greed and aggression. In fact this series of wars, whether fought in Northern or Southern Africa, in Manchuria or the Balkans, were marked most prominently by the spirit which disregards cynically that very idea of inherent and existing rights, that balance of law and equity upon which alone arbitration can be founded. As for the Concert of Europe, it seems far enough from us now, almost antediluvian in its antiquity, — as it belongs indeed to the age before the deluge; but we can remember well enough what an unmusical and discordant concert it was, what a series of fumblings and blunderings and how its diplomacy led us fatally to the inevitable event against

which it struggled. Now it is suggested by many to substitute a United States of Europe for the defunct Concert and for the poor helpless Hague tribunal an effective Court of international law with force behind it to impose its decisions. But so long as men go on believing in the sovereign power of machinery, it is not likely that the gods either will cease from their studied irony.

There have been other speculations and reasonings; ingenious minds have searched for a firmer and more rational ground of faith. The first of these was propounded in a book by a Russian writer which had an enormous success in its day but has now passed into the silence. Science was to bring war to an end by making it physically impossible. It was mathematically proved that with modern weapons two equal armies would fight each other to a standstill, attack would become impossible except by numbers thrice those of the defence and war therefore would bring no military decision but only an infructuous upheaval and disturbance of the organised life of the nations. When the Russo-Japanese war almost immediately proved that attack and victory were still possible and the battle-fury of man superior to the fury of his death-dealing engines, another book was published, called by a title which has turned into a jest upon the writer, *The Great Illusion*, to prove that the idea of a commercial advantage to be gained by war and conquest was an illusion and that as soon as this was understood and the sole benefit of peaceful interchange realised, the peoples would abandon a method of settlement now chiefly undertaken from motives of commercial expansion, yet whose disastrous result was only to disorganise fatally the commercial prosperity it sought to serve. The present war came as the immediate answer of the gods to this sober and rational proposition. It has been fought for conquest and commercial expansion and it is proposed, even when it has been fought out on the field, to follow it up by a commercial struggle between the belligerent nations.

The men who wrote these books were capable thinkers but they ignored the one thing that matters, human nature. The present war has justified to a certain extent the Russian writer though by developments he did not foresee; scientific warfare

has brought military movement to a standstill and baffled the strategist and the tactician, it has rendered decisive victory impossible except by overwhelming numbers or an overwhelming weight of artillery. But this has not made war impossible, it has only changed its character; it has at the most replaced the war of military decisions by that of military and financial exhaustion aided by the grim weapon of famine. The English writer on the other hand erred by isolating the economic motive as the one factor that weighed; he ignored the human lust of dominion which, carried into the terms of commercialism, means the undisputed control of markets and the exploitation of helpless populations. Again, when we rely upon the disturbance of organised national and international life as a preventive of war, we forget the boundless power of self-adaptation which man possesses; that power has been shown strikingly enough in the skill and ease with which the organisation and finance of peace were replaced in the present crisis by the organisation and finance of war. And when we rely upon Science to make war impossible, we forget that the progress of Science means a series of surprises and that it means also a constant effort of human ingenuity to overcome impossibilities and find fresh means of satisfying our ideas, desires and instincts. Science may well make war of the present type with shot and shell and mines and battleships an impossibility and yet develop and put in their place simpler or more summary means which may bring back an easier organisation of warfare.

So long as war does not become psychologically impossible, it will remain or, if banished for a while, return. War itself, it is hoped, will end war; the expense, the horror, the butchery, the disturbance of tranquil life, the whole confused sanguinary madness of the thing has reached or will reach such colossal proportions that the human race will fling the monstrosity behind it in weariness and disgust. But weariness and disgust, horror and pity, even the opening of the eyes to reason by the practical fact of the waste of human life and energy and the harm and extravagance are not permanent factors; they last only while the lesson is fresh. Afterwards, there is forgetfulness;

human nature recuperates itself and recovers the instincts that were temporarily dominated. A long peace, even a certain organisation of peace may conceivably result, but so long as the heart of man remains what it is, the peace will come to an end, the organisation will break down under the stress of human passions. War is no longer, perhaps, a biological necessity, but it is still a psychological necessity; what is within us, must manifest itself outside.

Meanwhile it is well that every false hope and confident prediction should be answered as soon as may well be by the irony of the gods; for only so can we be driven to the perception of the real remedy. Only when man has developed not merely a fellow-feeling with all men, but a dominant sense of unity and commonalty, only when he is aware of them not merely as brothers, — that is a fragile bond, — but as parts of himself, only when he has learned to live not in his separate personal and communal ego-sense, but in a larger universal consciousness can the phenomenon of war, with whatever weapons, pass out of his life without the possibility of return. Meanwhile that he should struggle even by illusions towards that end, is an excellent sign; for it shows that the truth behind the illusion is pressing towards the hour when it may become manifest as reality.

The Unseen Power

A WAR has ended, a world has perished in the realm of thought and begun to disappear in the order of outward Nature. The war that has ended, was fought in physical trenches, with shell and shot, with machine-gun and tank and aeroplane, with mangling of limbs and crash of physical edifices and rude uptearing of the bosom of our mother earth; the new war, or the old continued in another form, that is already beginning, will be fought more with mental trenches and bomb-proof shelters, with reconnaissances and batteries and moving machines of thought and word, propaganda and parties and programmes, with mangling of the desire-souls of men and of nations, crash of many kinds of thrones and high-built institutions and strong uptearing of the old earth of custom which man has formed as a layer over the restless molten forces of evolutionary Nature. The old world that is shaken outwardly in its bases and already crumbling in some of its parts, is the economic and materialistic civilisation which mankind has been forming for the last few centuries from once new materials now growing rapidly effete pieced out with broken remnants of antiquity and the middle ages. The period of military conflict just at an end came to breach that which thought had already been sapping, an era of revolutions has opened which is likely to complete the ruin and prepare the building of a new structure. In this struggle the question arises to the thinking man, what Power or what Powers are expressing their will or their strivings in this upheaval? and we, what power or powers shall we serve? to what thing inward or superhuman, since outward thrones and systems are but as leaves driven before the storm-wind of the breath of Time, shall we owe allegiance? what or whom is it that we shall fight to enthrone?

Men fight for their personal or communal or national interests or for ideas and principles of which they make watchwords and battle-cries. But the largest human interests are only means and instruments which some Force greater than themselves breaks or uses in its inconscient impulse or else for its conscious purposes; ideas and principles are births of our minds which are born, reign and pass away and they are mere words unless they express some power of our being and of world-being which finds in them a mental self-expression. Something there is greater than our thoughts and desires, something more constant and insistent which lasts and grows beyond and yet by their changings. If no such thing were, then all this human effort would be a vain perturbation, the life of man only the busy instinctive routine of the hive and the ant-hill on a little higher scale, but with more useless suffering in it and less economy and wisdom, and our thought a vain glittering of imaginations weaving out involuntarily a web like that of old legend that is spun and respun only to be undone and again undone and of reasonings that build a series of intellectual and practical conventions which we represent to ourselves as the truth and the right, making the fallacies of our minds a substitute for wisdom and the fallacies of our social living a substitute for happiness. For this is certain that nothing we form and no outward system we create can last beyond its appointed or else its possible time. As this great materialistic civilisation of Europe to which the high glowing dawn of the Renaissance gave its brilliant birth and the dry brazen afternoon of nineteenth-century rationalism its hard maturity, is passing away and the bosom of earth and the soul of man heave a sigh of relief at its going, so whatever new civilisation we construct after this evening of the cycle, *yuga-sandhyā*, on which we are entering, — for those are surely mistaken who think it is already the true dawn, — will also live its time and collapse fiercely or decay dully, — unless indeed there is that eternal Spirit in things and he should have found in its keynote the first sounds of the strain of his real harmony, in which case it may be the first of an ascending series of changes to the creation of a greater humanity. Otherwise, all this vast clash

and onset of peoples and world-wide bloodshed would be only a fortuitous nightmare, and the happiest known age of nation or mankind only the pleasant dream of a moment. Then the old-world gospel which bade us look upon human life as a vanity of vanities, would be the only wisdom.

But with that creed the soul of man has never remained contented and still less can we at the present day live in it, because this intuition of a greater Power than our apparent selves in the workings of the world is now growing upon the race and the vast sense of an unaccomplished aim in the urge of life is driving it to an unprecedented effort of human thought and energy. In such a moment even the hugest calamities cannot exhaust the life or discourage its impetus, but rather impel it to a new élan of endeavour; for the flames of thought rise higher than the flames of the conflagration that destroys and see in it a meaning and the promise of a new creation. In the destruction that has been effected, in the void that has been left the mind sees only more room for hope to grow and a wide space that the Spirit who builds in Time has cleared for his new structure. For who that has eyes at all to see cannot see this, that in what has happened, immense Powers have been at work which nourish a vaster world-purpose than the egoistic mind of individual or nation could mete with their yard-measure of narrow personal idea or communal interest and for which the motives and passions of governments and peoples were only tools or opportunities? When the autocrats and the war-lords of the east and the centre resolved to dare this huge catastrophe in order to seize from it the crown of their ambitions, when they drove madly to the precipice of an incalculable world-conflict, they could have no inkling that within four years or less their thrones would have fallen, themselves be slain or flee into exile and all for which they stood be hastening into the night of the past; only that which impelled them foresaw and intended it. Nor were the peoples who staggered unwillingly over the brink of war, more enlightened of the secret purpose: defence of what they were and possessed, wrath at a monstrous aggression which was a menace to their ordered European civilisation, drove their will and inflamed their

resolution. Yet to convict that civilisation of error and prepare another era of humanity was the intention of the Force that has given them victory, its voice echoed confusedly in their thought and growing clearer in the minds of those who entered later with a deliberate and conscious will into the struggle.

Great has been the havoc and ruin, immense the suffering, thick the blood-red cloud of darkness enveloping the world, heavy the toll of life, bottomless the expenditure of treasure and human resources, and all has not yet been worked out, the whole price has not yet been paid; for the after-effects of the war are likely to be much greater than its present effects and much that by an effort of concentration has resisted the full shock of the earthquake will fall in the after-tremblings. Well might the mind of a man during the calamity, aware of the Power that stood over the world wrapped in this tempest, repeat the words of Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra, —

dṛṣṭvādbhutaṁ rūpam ugraṁ tavedaṁ
lokatrayaṁ pravyathitaṁ mahātman. . . .
dṛṣṭvā hi tvāṁ pravyathitāntarātmā
dhṛtiṁ na vindāmi śamaṁ ca viṣṇo. . . .
yathā nadīnāṁ bahavo'mbuvegāḥ
samudram evābhimukhā dravanti,
tathā tavāmī nara-loka-vīrā
viśanti vaktrāṇyabhivijvalanti.
yathā pradīptaṁ jvalanaṁ pataṅgā
viśanti nāśāya samṛddhavegāḥ,
tathaiva nāśāya viśanti lokās
tavāpi vaktrāṇi samṛddhavegāḥ.
lelihyase grasamānaḥ samantāl
lokān samagrān vadanair jvaladbhiḥ,
tejobhir āpūrya jagat samagraṁ
bhāsas tavogrāḥ pratapanti viṣṇo.
ākhyāhi me ko bhavān ugrarūpo
namo'stu te devavara prasīda,
vijñātum icchāmi bhavantam ādyaṁ
na hi prajānāmi tava pravṛttim.

"When is seen this thy fierce and astounding form, the three worlds are all in pain and suffer, O thou mighty Spirit. . . . Troubled and in anguish is the soul within me as I look upon thee and I find no peace or gladness. . . . As the speed of many rushing waters races towards the ocean, so all these heroes of the world of man are entering into thy many mouths of flame. As a swarm of moths with ever increasing speed fall to their destruction into a fire that someone has kindled, so now the nations with ever increasing speed are entering into thy jaws of doom. Thou lickest the regions all around with thy tongues and thou art swallowing up all the nations in thy mouths of burning; all the world is filled with the blaze of thy energies; fierce and terrible are thy lustres and they burn us, O Vishnu. Declare to me who art thou that comest to us in this form of fierceness; salutation to thee, O thou great godhead, turn thy heart to grace! I would know who art thou who wast from the beginning, for I know not the will of thy workings."

If the first answer might seem to come in the same words that answered the appeal of Arjuna, "I am the Time-Spirit, destroyer of the world, arisen huge-statured for the destruction of the nations,"

kālo'smi loka-kṣaya-kṛt pravṛddho
lokān samāhartum iha pravṛttaḥ,

and the voice the same to those who would shrink back hesitating from participation in the devastating struggle and massacre, "Without thee even all these shall cease to be who stand in the opposing hosts, for already have I slain them in my foreseeing will; know thyself to be an instrument only of an end predestined," — still in the end it is the Friend of man, the Charioteer of his battle and his journey who appears in the place of the form of destruction and the outcome of all the ruin is the *dharmarājya*, the kingdom of the Dharma. To humanity as to the warrior of Kurukshetra the concluding message has been uttered, "Therefore arise, destroy the foe, enjoy a rich and happy kingdom." But the kingdom of what Dharma? It is doubtful enough whether as the nations were blind to the nature of the destruction that

was coming, they may not be at least purblind to the nature of the construction that is to be created. An increase of mechanical freedom to be lavished or doled out according to the needs, interests, hesitations of the old-world forces that still remain erect, a union effected by a patchwork of the remnants of the past and the unshaped materials of the future, a credit and debit account with fate writing off so much of the evil and error of the past as can no longer be kept and writing up as good capital, — with some diminutions by way of acquitment of conscience, part payment of overdue debts, — all that has not been hopelessly destroyed, an acceptance of the change already effected by the tempest or made immediately inevitable and a new system of embankments to prevent the farther encroachments of the flood, is not likely to put a successful term to the cataclysm. Even if a short-sighted sagacity could bring this about for a time by a combined effort of successful and organised egoisms making terms with the powerful Idea-forces that are abroad as the messengers of the Time-Spirit, still it would be only an artificial check leading to a new upheaval in the not distant future. A liquidation of the old bankrupt materialistic economism which will enable it to set up business again under a new name with a reserve capital and a clean ledger, will be a futile attempt to cheat destiny. Commercialism has no doubt its own dharma, its ideal of utilitarian justice and law and adjustment, its civilisation presided over by the sign of the Balance, and, its old measures being now annulled, it is eager enough to start afresh with a new system of calculated values. But a *dharmarājya* of the half-penitent Vaishya is not to be the final consummation of a time like ours pregnant with new revelations of thought and spirit and new creations in life, nor is a golden or rather a copper-gilt age of the sign of the Balance to be the glorious reward of this anguish and travail of humanity. It is surely the kingdom of another and higher dharma that is in preparation.

What that dharma is we can only know if we know this Power whose being and whose thought are at work behind all that we attempt and suffer, conceive and strive for. A former humanity conceived of it as a creative Divinity or almighty Power

high above man and his being and his effort or of a pantheon or hierarchy of universal Powers who looked upon and swayed the labour and passion and thought of the race. But the system of cosmic deities lacked a base and a principle of unity in their workings and above it the ancients were obliged to conceive of a vague and ineffable Divinity, the unknown God to whom they built a nameless altar, or a Necessity with face of sphinx and hands of bronze to whom the gods themselves had to give an ignorant obedience, and it left the life of man at once the victim of an inscrutable fate and the puppet of superhuman caprices. That to a great extent he is so long as he lives in his vital ego and is the servant of his own personal ideas and passions. Later religions gave a name and some body of form and quality to the one unknown Godhead and proclaimed an ideal law which they gave out as his word and scripture. But the dogmatism of a partial and unlived knowledge and the external tendencies of the human mind darkened the illuminations of religion with the confusions of error and threw over its face strange masks of childish and cruel superstitions. Religion too by putting God far above in distant heavens made man too much of a worm of the earth little and vile before his Creator and admitted only by a caprice of his favour to a doubtful salvation in superhuman worlds. Modern thought seeking to make a clear riddance of these past conceptions had to substitute something else in its place, and what it saw and put there was the material law of Nature and the biological law of life of which human reason was to be the faithful exponent and human science the productive utiliser and profiteer. But to apply the mechanical blindness of the rule of physical Nature as the sole guide of thinking and seeing man is to go against the diviner law of his being and maim his higher potentiality. Material and vital Nature is only a first form of our being and to overcome and rise beyond its formula is the very sense of a human evolution. Another and greater Power than hers is the master of this effort, and human reason or human science is not that Godhead, but can only be at best one and not the greatest of its ministers. It is not human reason and human science which have been working out their

ends in or through the tempest that has laid low so many of their constructions. A greater Spirit awaits a deeper questioning to reveal his unseen form and his hidden purpose.

Something of this truth we have begun to see dimly, in the return to more spiritual notions and in the idea of a kingdom of God to be built in the life of humanity. On the old sense of a Power in the universe of which the world that we live in is the field, is supervening the nearer perception of a Godhead in man, the unseen king of whom the outer man is the veil and of whom our mind and life can be the servants and living instruments and our perfected souls the clear mirrors. But we have to see more lucidly and in the whole before we can know this Godhead. There are three powers and forms in which the Being who is at work in things presents himself to our vision. There is first the form of him that we behold in the universe, but that, or at least what we see of it in the appearances of things, is not the whole truth of him; it is indeed only a first material shape and vital foundation which he has offered for the starting-point of our growth, an initial sum of preliminary realisations from which we have to proceed and to transcend them. The next form is that of which man alone here has the secret, for in him it is progressively revealing itself in a partial and always incomplete accomplishing and unfolding. His thoughts, his ideals, his dreams, his attempts at a high self-exceeding are the clues by which he attempts to discover the Spirit, the moulds in which he tries to seize the form of the Divinity. But they too are only a partial light and not the whole form of the Godhead. Something waits beyond which the human mind approaches in a shapeless aspiration to an ineffable Perfection, an infinite Light, an infinite Power, an infinite Love, a universal Good and Beauty. This is not something that is not yet in perfect being, a God who is becoming or who has to be created by man; it is the Eternal of whom this infinite ideal is a mental reflection. It is beyond the form of the universe and these psychological realisations of the human being and yet it is here too in man and subsists surrounding him in all the powers of the world he lives in. It is both the Spirit who is in the universe and the invisible king in man who is the master of his works. It

develops in the universe through laws which are not complete here or not filled in in their sense and action until humanity shall have fully evolved in its nature the potentialities of the mind and spirit. It works in man, but through his individual and corporate ego so long as he dwells within the knot of his present mentality. Only when his race knows God and lives in the Divine, will the ideal sense of his strivings begin to unfold itself and the kingdom be founded, *rājyaṁ samṛddham*.

When we try to build our outer life in obedience to our ego, our interests, our passions or our vital needs only or else in a form of our vital needs served and enlarged by our intellect, but not enlightened with a greater spiritual meaning, we are living within the law of the first cosmic formulation. It is as insistent Rudra that the unseen Power meets us there, the Master of the evolution, the Lord of Karma, the King of justice and judgment, who is easily placated with sacrifice and effort, for even to the Asura and Rakshasa, the Titan and the giant he gives the fruit of their *tapasyā*, but who is swift also to wrath and every time that man offends against the law, even though it be in ignorance, or stands stiff in his ego against the urge of the evolution or provokes the rebound of Karma, he strikes without mercy; through strife and stumblings, through passioning and yearning and fierce stress of will and giant endeavour, construction and destruction, slow labour of evolution and rushing speed of revolution Rudra works out the divine purpose. When on the contrary we seek to shape our life by the Ideal, it is the severe Lord of Truth who meets us with his questioning. Then in so far as we work in the sincerity of the inner truth, we shall live in an increasing harmony of the result of a divine working. But if the measures of our ideal are false or if we cast into the balance the unjust weights of our egoism and hypocrisy and self-deceiving or if we misuse the truth for our narrower ends, if we turn it into a lie or a convention or an outward machinery without the living soul of the truth in it, then we must pay a heavy reckoning. For as before we fell into the terrible hand of Rudra, so now we fall into the subtler more dangerous noose of Varuna. Only if we can see the Truth and live in it, shall our aspiration be satisfied.

Then it is the Master of Freedom, the Lord of Love, the Spirit of unity who shall inform the soul of the individual and take up the world's endeavour. He is the great Liberator and the strong and gentle founder of Perfection.

It is the wrath of Rudra that has swept over the earth and the track of his footprints can be seen in these ruins. There has come as a result upon the race the sense of having lived in many falsehoods and the need of building according to an ideal. Therefore we have now to meet the question of the Master of Truth. Two great words of the divine Truth have forced themselves insistently on our minds through the crash of the ruin and the breath of the tempest and are now the leading words of the hoped-for reconstruction, — freedom and unity. But everything depends, first, upon the truth of our vision of them, secondly, upon the sincerity with which we apply it, last and especially on the inwardness of our realisation. Vain will be the mechanical construction of unity, if unity is not in the heart of the race and if it be made only a means for safeguarding and organising our interests; the result will then be only, as it was in the immediate past, a fiercer strife and new outbreaks of revolution and anarchy. No paltering mechanisms which have the appearance but not the truth of freedom, will help us; the new structure, however imposing, will only become another prison and compel a fresh struggle for liberation. The one safety for man lies in learning to live from within outward, not depending on institutions and machinery to perfect him, but out of his growing inner perfection availing to shape a more perfect form and frame of life; for by this inwardness we shall best be able both to see the truth of the high things which we now only speak with our lips and form into outward intellectual constructions, and to apply their truth sincerely to all our outward living. If we are to found the kingdom of God in humanity, we must first know God and see and live the diviner truth of our being in ourselves; otherwise how shall a new manipulation of the constructions of the reason and scientific systems of efficiency which have failed us in the past, avail to establish it? It is because there are plenty of signs that the old error continues and only a minority, leaders perhaps

in light, but not yet in action, are striving to see more clearly, inwardly and truly, that we must expect as yet rather the last twilight which divides the dying from the unborn age than the real dawning. For a time, since the mind of man is not yet ready, the old spirit and method may yet be strong and seem for a short while to prosper; but the future lies with the men and nations who first see beyond both the glare and the dusk the gods of the morning and prepare themselves to be fit instruments of the Power that is pressing towards the light of a greater ideal.

Self-Determination

A NEW phrase has recently been cast out from the blood-stained yeast of war into the shifty language of politics, — that strange language full of Maya and falsities, of self-illusion and deliberate delusion of others, which almost immediately turns all true and vivid phrases into a jargon, so that men may fight in a cloud of words without any clear sense of the thing they are battling for, — it is the luminous description of liberty as the just power, the freely exercised right of self-determination. The word is in itself a happy discovery, a thought-sign of real usefulness. For it helps to make definite and manageable what was apt till now to be splendidly vague and nebulous. Its invention is a sign at once of a growing clarity of conception about this great good which man has been striving to achieve for himself through the centuries, as yet without any satisfying success to boast of anywhere, and of the increasing subjectivity of our ideas about life. This clarity and this subjectivity must indeed go together; for we can only get good hold of the right end of the great ideas which should govern our ways of living when we begin to understand that their healthful process is from within outward, and that the opposite method, the mechanical, ends always by turning living realities into formal conventions. No doubt, to man the animal the mechanical alone seems to be real; but to man the soul, man the thinker through whom we arrive at our inner manhood, only that is true which he can feel as a truth within him and feel without as his external self-expression. All else is a deceptive charlatanry, an acceptance of shows for truths, of external appearances for realities, which are so many devices to keep him in bondage.

Liberty in one shape or another ranks among the most ancient and certainly among the most difficult aspirations of our race: it arises from a radical instinct of our being and is yet

opposed to all our circumstances; it is our eternal good and our condition of perfection, but our temporal being has failed to find its key. That perhaps is because true freedom is only possible if we live in the infinite, live, as the Vedanta bids us, in and from our self-existent being; but our natural and temporal energies seek for it at first not in ourselves, but in our external conditions. This great indefinable thing, liberty, is in its highest and ultimate sense a state of being; it is self living in itself and determining by its own energy what it shall be inwardly and, eventually, by the growth of a divine spiritual power within determining too what it shall make of its external circumstances and environment; that is the largest and freest sense of self-determination. But when we start from the natural and temporal life, what we practically come to mean by liberty is a convenient elbow-room for our natural energies to satisfy themselves without being too much impinged upon by the self-assertiveness of others. And that is a difficult problem to solve, because the liberty of one, immediately it begins to act, knocks up fatally against the liberty of another; the free running of many in the same field means a free chaos of collisions. That was at one time glorified under the name of the competitive system, and dissatisfaction with its results has led to the opposite idea of State socialism, which supposes that the negation of individual liberty in the collective being of the State can be made to amount by some mechanical process to a positive sum of liberty nicely distributable to all in a carefully guarded equality. The individual gives up his freedom of action and possession to the State which in return doles out to him a regulated liberty, let us say, a sufficient elbow-room so parcelled out that he shall not at all butt into the ribs of his neighbour. It is admirable in theory, logically quite unexceptionable, but in practice, one suspects, it would amount to a very oppressive, because a very mechanical slavery of the individual to the community, or rather to something indefinite that calls itself the community.

Experience has so far shown us that the human attempt to arrive at a mechanical freedom has only resulted in a very relative liberty and even that has been enjoyed for the most part

by some at the expense of others. It has amounted usually to the rule of the majority by a minority, and many strange things have been done in its name. Ancient liberty and democracy meant in Greece the self-rule — variegated by periodical orgies of mutual throat-cutting — of a smaller number of freemen of all ranks who lived by the labour of a great mass of slaves. In recent times liberty and democracy have been, and still are, a cant assertion which veils under a skilfully moderated plutocratic system the rule of an organised successful bourgeoisie over a proletariate at first submissive, afterwards increasingly dissatisfied and combined for recalcitrant self-assertion. The earliest use of liberty and democracy by the emancipated proletariate has been the crude forceful tyranny of an ill-organised labour oligarchy over a quite disorganised peasantry and an impotently recalcitrant bourgeoisie. And just as the glorious possession of liberty by the community has been held to be consistent with the oppression of four-fifths or three-fifths of the population by the remaining fraction, so it has till lately been held to be quite consistent with the complete subjection of one half of mankind, the woman half, to the physically stronger male. The series continues through a whole volume of anomalies, including of course the gloriously beneficent and profitable exploitation of subject peoples by emancipated nations who, it seems, are entitled to that domination by their priesthood of the sacred cult of freedom. They mean no doubt to extend it to the exploited at some distant date, but take care meanwhile to pay themselves the full price of their holy office before they deliver the article. Even the best machinery of this mechanical freedom yet discovered amounts to the unmodified will of a bare majority, or rather to its selection of a body of rulers who coerce in its name all minorities and lead it to issues of which it has itself no clear perception.

These anomalies, — anomalies of many kinds are inseparable from the mechanical method, — are a sign that the real meaning of liberty has not yet been understood. Nevertheless the aspiration and the effort itself towards the realisation of a great idea cannot fail to bear some fruit, and modern liberty and

democracy, however imperfect and relative, have had this result that for the communities which have followed them, they have removed the pressure of the more obvious, outward and aggressive forms of oppression and domination which were inherent in the systems of the past. They have made life a little more tolerable for the mass, and if they have not yet made life free, they have at least given more liberty to thought and to the effort to embody a freer thought in a more adequate form of life. This larger space for the thought in man and its workings was the necessary condition for a growing clarity which must enlighten in the end the crude conceptions with which the race has started and refine the crude methods and forms in which it has embodied them. The attempt to govern life by an increasing light of thought rather than allow the rough and imperfect actualities of life to govern and to limit the mind is a distinct sign of advance in human progress. But the true turning-point will come with the farther step which initiates the attempt to govern life by that of which thought itself is only a sign and an instrument, the soul, the inner being, and to make our ways of living a freer opportunity for the growing height and breadth of its need of self-fulfilment. That is the real, the profounder sense which we shall have to learn to attach to the idea of self-determination as the effective principle of liberty.

The principle of self-determination really means this that within every living human creature, man, woman and child, and equally within every distinct human collectivity growing or grown, half developed or adult there is a self, a being, which has the right to grow in its own way, to find itself, to make its life a full and a satisfied instrument and image of its being. This is the first principle which must contain and overtop all others; the rest is a question of conditions, means, expedients, accommodations, opportunities, capacities, limitations, none of which must be allowed to abrogate the sovereignty of the first essential principle. But it can only prevail if it is understood with a right idea of this self and its needs and claims. The first danger of the principle of self-determination, as of all others, is that it may be interpreted, like most of the ideals of our human

existence in the past, in the light of the ego, its interests and its will towards self-satisfaction. So interpreted it will carry us no farther than before; we shall arrive at a point where our principle is brought up short, fails us, turns into a false or a half-true assertion of the mind and a convention of form which covers realities that are quite the opposite of itself.

For the ego has inalienably the instinct of a double self-assertion, its self-assertion against other egos and its self-assertion by means of other egos; in all its expansion it is impelled to subordinate their need to its own, to use them for its own purpose and for that purpose to establish some kind of control or domination or property in what it uses, whether by force or by dexterity, openly or covertly, by absorption or by some skilful turn of exploitation. Human lives cannot run upon free parallels; for they are compelled by Nature continually to meet, impinge on each other, intermix, and in the ego life that means always a clash. The first idea of our reason suggests that our human relations may be subjected to a mechanical accommodation of interests which will get rid of the clash and the strife; but this can only be done up to a certain point: at best we diminish some of the violence and crude obviousness of the clashing and the friction and give them a more subtle and less grossly perceptible form. Within that subtler form the principle of strife and exploitation continues; for always the egoistic instinct must be to use the accommodations to which it is obliged or induced to assent, as far as possible for its own advantage, and it is only limited in this impulse by the limits of its strength and capacity, by the sense of expediency and consequence, by the perception of some necessity for respecting other egoisms in order that its own egoism too may be respected. But these considerations can only tone down or hedge in the desire of a gross or a subtle domination and exploitation of others; they do not abrogate it.

The human mind has resorted to ethics as a corrective; but the first laws of ethical conduct also succeed at best in checking only the egoistic rule of life and do not overcome it. Therefore the ethical idea has pushed itself forward into the other and

opposite principle of altruism. The main general results have been a clearer perception of collective egoisms and their claim on the individual egoism and, secondly, a quite uncertain and indefinable mixture, strife and balancing of egoistic and altruistic motive in our conduct. Often enough altruism is there chiefly in profession or at best a quite superficial will which does not belong to the centre of our action; it becomes then either a deliberate or else a half-conscious camouflage by which egoism masks itself and gets at its object without being suspected. But even a sincere altruism hides within itself the ego, and to be able to discover the amount of it hidden up in our most benevolent or even self-sacrificing actions is the acid test of sincere self-introspection, nor can anyone really quite know himself who has not made ruthlessly this often painful analysis. It could not be otherwise; for the law of life cannot be self-immolation; self-sacrifice can only be a step in self-fulfilment. Nor can life be in its nature a one-sided self-giving; all giving must contain in itself some measure of receiving to have any fruitful value or significance. Altruism itself is more important even by the good it does to ourselves than by the good it does to others; for the latter is often problematical, but the former is certain, and its good consists in the growth of self, in an inner self-heightening and self-expansion. Not then any general law of altruism, but rather a self-recognition based upon mutual recognition must be the broad rule of our human relations. Life is self-fulfilment which moves upon a ground of mutuality; it involves a mutual use of one by the other, in the end of all by all. The whole question is whether this shall be done on the lower basis of the ego, attended by strife, friction and collision with whatever checks and controls, or whether it cannot be done by a higher law of our being which shall discover a means of reconciliation, free reciprocity and unity.

A right idea of the rule of self-determination may help to set us on the way to the discovery of this higher law. For we may note that this phrase self-determination reconciles and brings together in one complex notion the idea of liberty and the idea of law. These two powers of being tend in our first conceptions,

as in the first appearances of life itself, to be opposed to each other as rivals or enemies; we find therefore ranged against each other the champions of law and order and the defenders of liberty. There is the ideal which sets order first and liberty either nowhere or in an inferior category, because it is willing to accept any coercion of liberty which will maintain the mechanical stability of order; and there is the ideal which on the contrary sets liberty first and regards law either as a hostile compression or a temporarily necessary evil or at best a means of securing liberty by guarding against any violent and aggressive interference with it as between man and man. This use of law as a means of liberty may be advocated only in a minimum reducible to the just quantity necessary for its purpose, the individualistic idea of the matter, or raised to a maximum as in the socialistic idea that the largest sum of regulation will total up to or at least lead up to or secure the larger sum of freedom. We have continually too the most curious mixing up of the two ideas, as in the old-time claim of the capitalist to prevent the freedom of labour to organise so that the liberty of contract might be preserved, or in the singular sophistical contention of the Indian defenders of orthodox caste rigidity on its economic side that coercion of a man to follow his ancestral profession in disregard not only of his inclinations, but of his natural tendencies and aptitudes is a securing to the individual of his natural right, his freedom to follow his hereditary nature. We see a similar confusion of ideas in the claim of European statesmen to train Asiatic or African peoples to liberty, which means in fact to teach them in the beginning liberty in the school of subjection and afterwards to compel them at each stage in the progress of a mechanical self-government to satisfy the tests and notions imposed on them by an alien being and consciousness instead of developing freely a type and law of their own. The right idea of self-determination makes a clean sweep of these confusions. It makes it clear that liberty should proceed by the development of the law of one's own being determined from within, evolving out of oneself and not determined from outside by the idea and will of another. There remains the problem of relations, of the individual and

the collective self-determination and of the interaction of the self-determination of one on the self-determination of another. That cannot be finally settled by any mechanical solution, but only by the discovery of some meeting-place of the law of our self-determination with the common law of mutuality, where they begin to become one. It signifies in fact the discovery of an inner and larger self other than the mere ego, in which our individual self-fulfilment no longer separates us from others but at each step of our growth calls for an increasing unity.

But it is from the self-determination of the free individual within the free collectivity in which he lives that we have to start, because so only can we be sure of a healthy growth of freedom and because too the unity to be arrived at is that of individuals growing freely towards perfection and not of human machines working in regulated unison or of souls suppressed, mutilated and cut into one or more fixed geometrical patterns. The moment we sincerely accept this idea, we have to travel altogether away from the old notion of the right of property of man in man which still lurks in the human mind where it does not possess it. The trail of this notion is all over our past, the right of property of the father over the child, of the man over the woman, of the ruler or the ruling class or power over the ruled, of the State over the individual. The child was in the ancient patriarchal idea the live property of the father; he was his creation, his production, his own reproduction of himself; the father, rather than God or the universal Life in place of God, stood as the author of the child's being; and the creator has every right over his creation, the producer over his manufacture. He had the right to make of him what he willed, and not what the being of the child really was within, to train and shape and cut him according to the parental ideas and not rear him according to his own nature's deepest needs, to bind him to the paternal career or the career chosen by the parent and not that to which his nature and capacity and inclination pointed, to fix for him all the critical turning-points of his life even after he had reached maturity. In education the child was regarded not as a soul meant to grow, but as brute psychological stuff to be

shaped into a fixed mould by the teacher. We have travelled to another conception of the child as a soul with a being, a nature and capacities of his own who must be helped to find them, to find himself, to grow into their maturity, into a fullness of physical and vital energy and the utmost breadth, depth and height of his emotional, his intellectual and his spiritual being. So too the subjection of woman, the property of the man over the woman, was once an axiom of social life and has only in recent times been effectively challenged. So strong was or had become the instinct of this domination in the male animal man, that even religion and philosophy have had to sanction it, very much in that formula in which Milton expresses the height of masculine egoism, "He for God only, she for God in him," — if not actually indeed for him in the place of God. This idea too is crumbling into the dust, though its remnants still cling to life by many strong tentacles of old legislation, continued instinct, persistence of traditional ideas; the fiat has gone out against it in the claim of woman to be regarded, she too, as a free individual being. The right of property of the rulers in the ruled has perished by the advance of liberty and democracy; in the form of national imperialism it still indeed persists, though more now by commercial greed than by the instinct of political domination; intellectually this form too of possessional egoism has received its death-blow, vitally it still endures. The right of property of the State in the individual which threatened to take the place of all these, has now had its real spiritual consequence thrown into relief by the lurid light of the war, and we may hope that its menace to human liberty will be diminished by this clearer knowledge. We are at least advancing to a point at which it may be possible to make the principle of self-determination a present and pressing, if not yet an altogether dominant force in the whole shaping of human life.

Self-determination viewed from this subjective standpoint carries us back at once towards the old spiritual idea of the Being within, whose action, once known and self-revealed, is not an obedience to external and mechanical impulses, but proceeds in each from the powers of the soul, an action self-determined by

the essential quality and principle of which all our becoming is the apparent movement, *svabhāva-niyataṁ karma*. But it is only as we rise higher and higher in ourselves and find out our true self and its true powers that we can get at the full truth of this swabhava. Our present existence is at the most a growth towards it and therefore an imperfection, and its chief imperfection is the individual's egoistic idea of self which reappears enlarged in the collective egoism. Therefore an egoistic self-determination or a modified individualism, is not the true solution; if that were all, we could never get beyond a balance and, in progress, a zigzag of conflict and accommodation. The ego is not the true circle of the self; the law of mutuality which meets it at every turn and which it misuses, arises from the truth that there is a secret unity between our self and the self of others and therefore between our own lives and the lives of others. The law of our self-determination has to wed itself to the self-determination of others and to find the way to enact a real union through this mutuality. But its basis can only be found within and not through any mechanical adjustment. It lies in the discovery within by the being in the course of its self-expansion and self-fulfilment that these things at every turn depend on the self-expansion and self-fulfilment of those around us, because we are secretly one being with them and one life. It is in philosophical language the recognition of the one self in all who fulfils himself variously in each; it is the finding of the law of the divine being in each unifying itself with the law of the divine being in all. At once the key of the problem is shifted from without to within, from the visible externalities of social and political adjustment to the spiritual life and truth which can alone provide its key.

Not that the outer life has to be neglected; on the contrary the pursual of the principle in one field or on one level, provided we do not limit or fix ourselves in it, helps its disclosure in other fields and upon other levels. Still if we have not the unity within, it is in vain that we shall try to enforce it from without by law and compulsion or by any assertion in outward forms. Intellectual assertion too, like the mechanical, is insufficient; only the spiritual can give it, because it alone has the secure

power of realisation. The ancient truth of the self is the eternal truth; we have to go back upon it in order to carry it out in newer and fuller ways for which a past humanity was not ready. The recognition and fulfilment of the divine being in oneself and in man, the kingdom of God within and in the race is the basis on which man must come in the end to the possession of himself as a free self-determining being and of mankind too in a mutually possessing self-expansion as a harmoniously self-determining united existence.

A League of Nations

ANCIENT tradition believed in a golden age of mankind which lay in the splendid infancy of a primeval past; it looked back to some type or symbol of original perfection, Saturnian epoch, Satya Yuga, an age of sincere being and free unity when the sons of heaven were leaders of the human life and mind and the law of God was written, not in ineffective books, but on the tablets of man's heart. Then he needed no violence of outer law or government to restrain him from evil or to cut and force his free being into the machine-made Procrustean mould of a social ideal; for a natural divine rule in his members was the spontaneous and sufficient safeguard of his liberty. This tradition was once so universal that one might almost be tempted to see in it the race memory of some golden and splendid realisation, not perhaps a miraculous divine beginning, but some past spiral cusp and apex, some topmost gloriously mounting arc of the cycles, — if there were not the equal chance of its being no more than a heightened example of that very common ideally retrospective tendency in the human mind which glorifies the past out of all perspective or proportion, blots out its shadows and sees it in some haze or deceiving light against the dark immediate shadow of the present, or else a projection from his sense of the something divine, pure and perfect within him from which he has fallen, placed by symbolic legend not in the eternal but in time, not inwardly in his spiritual being, but outwardly in his obscure existence on this crude and transient crust of Earth. What concerns us more is that we find often associated with this memory or this backward-looking illusion, a vague hope far or near, or even a more precise prophetic or religious forward-looking tradition of a coming back to us of that golden perfection, *Astraea redux, Saturnia regna*, — let us say, a return from the falling line of the cycle to another similar, perhaps even

greater high-glowing cusp and apex. Thus in the human mind which looks always before and after, its great dream of the ideal past completed itself by a greater dream of the ideal future.

These things modern man with his scientific and secularised mentality finds it difficult to believe in unless he has first theosophised or mysticised himself into a fine freedom from the positive scientific intelligence. Science which traces so confidently the nobly complete and astonishing evolution of our race in a fairly swift straight line from the ape man to the dazzlingly unfixable brilliancy of Mr. Lloyd George and the dyspeptic greatness of Rockefeller, rejects the old traditions as dreams and poetic figments. But to recompense us for our loss it has given us instead a more practicable, persistent and immediate vision of modern progress and the future hope of a rational and mechanically perfectible society: that is the one real religion still left, the new Jerusalem of the modern creed of a positivist sociology. The ideal past has lost its glamour, but a sober glamour of the future is brought near to us and takes on to the constructive human reason a closer hue of reality. The Asiatic mind is indeed still incurably prone to the older type of imagination which took and still takes so many inspiring forms, second coming of Christ, City of God, the Divine Family, advent of Messiah, Mahdi or Avatar, — but whatever the variety of the form, the essence is the same, a religious or spiritual idealisation of a possible future humanity. The European temperament — and we are all trying to become for the moment, superficially at least, white, brown, yellow or black Europeans, — demands something more familiarly terrestrial and tangible, a secular, social, political dream of evolving humanity, a perfected democracy, socialism, communism, anarchism. But whichever line we take and whether it be truth or illusion, the thing behind is the same and would seem to be a necessity of our human mind and will to action. We cannot do without some kind of futurist idealism. Something we must labour to build individually and collectively out of ourselves and our life, unless we would be content with the commonness and stumbling routine of a half-made and half-animal manhood, — a self-dethronement

to which that which is greatest in us will never consent,—and man cannot build greatly whether in art or life, unless he can conceive an idea and form of perfection and, conceiving, believe in his power to achieve it out of however rebellious and unductile a stuff of nature. Deprive him of this faith in his power for perfection and you slay or maim his greatest creative or self-creative faculty. In the absence then of any immediate practicability of that higher and profounder dream of a spiritually united and perfected humanity, the dream of social and political meliorism may be accepted as the strongest available incentive to keep humanity going forward. It is better that it should have the ideal of a saving machinery than that it should have no ideal at all, no figure of a larger, better and sweeter life.

This secular dream of a future golden or half-golden age of a more perfected, rational and peacefully cooperative society has taken recently a singular step forward in the effectuating imagination of mankind and even got as far as some attempt at a first step towards actual effectuation. In ideal and imagination it has assumed the form of a political and economic society of the nations which will get rid of the cruel and devastating device of war, establish a reign of international law and order and solve without clash, strife or collision, by reason, by cooperation, by arbitration, by mutual accommodation all the more dangerous problems which still disturb or imperil the comfortable peace, amity and organised productiveness which should be the reasonable state of mankind. International peace, an ordered legality and arrangement of the world's affairs, a guaranteed liberty,—or for the unfit a preparation and schooling for liberty,—an organised unity of the life of the race, this is the figure of the golden age which we are now promised. At the first sight one has some sense of a lacuna somewhere, a suspicion of a perfection too external and too well-regulated by clockwork and a timidly insistent idea that it may perhaps be neither so readily feasible nor so lyrically enchanting as its prophets pretend. One may be disposed to ask, what of the spirit and soul of man, the greatness of the inner perfection which can

alone support and give security and some kind of psychological reality to even the most ideal arrangement of his outer life, — how far that has gone or is likely to go in the near future, or what means or opportunities the new order proposes to offer for its growth and satisfaction. But this is no doubt too esoteric a way of looking at things. The practical western mind does not trouble itself overmuch with these subtleties; it prefers, and rightly enough, since to get something done seems to be the chief actual business of man in life, to hasten to the matter in hand and realise something useful, visible and tangible, good enough for a practical beginning or step forward. It believes besides in the omnipotence of law and institution to make the life of man conformable to his intellectual or spiritual ideals; it is satisfied if it can write down and find sanctions for a good and convenient system of laws, a compact or constitution, set up the mechanical means for the enforcement of its idea, build into effective form a workable institution. Other less palpable things, if they are at all indispensable, are expected to develop of themselves, as surely they ought under good mechanical conditions.

Good philosophical as well as practical justification may be put forward for this attitude. Form after all is an effective suggestion to the soul; machinery, as even churches and religions have been prone to believe, is all-powerful and can be trusted to create whatever you may need of the spirit. God himself or contriving Nature had first to invent the machinery and form of a universe and could only then work out in its mould some figure of the spirit. Therefore the sign of great hope, the good tidings of peace and good will unto men is not that a new and diviner or simply a more human spirit has been born into humanity, seized upon its leaders and extended itself among its ego-ridden, passion-driven, interest-governed millions, but that an institution has been begotten at Paris with the blessings of Premiers and Presidents, — the constitution of an international society, supported by the armed force of great nations and empires and therefore sure to be practicable, prosper and succeed, has been got into shape which will make war, militarism, oppression, exploitation an ugly dream of the past, induce Capital and Labour, lion and

lamb, to lie down side by side in peace and not, as a wicked Bolshevism proposes, one well digested inside the other, and in fact bring about before long, sooner it is hoped rather than later, the grand fraternity of mankind. This is good news, if true. Still, before we enter the house of thanksgiving, let us pause a little and cast an eye of scrutiny on this new infant phenomenon.

A just, generous, cordial and valid League of nations is the thing which has been created, it seems, to replace the old unjust Balances of Power and stumbling, quarrelsome Concerts. And if it is to succeed better than the loose, ineffective and easily dissoluble things which it supplants, it must satisfy, one would think, certain conditions which they did not even attempt to fulfil. And one would at first sight fix something like the following as the indispensable conditions. First, this League must draw into its circle in one way or another all the existing nations of the earth; and that it must do on both just and agreeable terms so that they may join willingly and gladly and without any serious misgivings, reservations or heart-burnings; it must satisfy each and all by a fair and effective and, one must add in these democratic days, an honourable and equal position in this new society of the peoples. Since it should command and retain their moral assent and support, if it is to maintain in being an otherwise insecure material adhesion, it must, in order to do that constantly, not only at the moment of formation but in the future, base itself on no self-regarding law or established table of institutions fixed by any arbitrary will of those who for the moment are the strongest but on some firm, recognisable and always evolvable principle of equity and justice, for only where these things are is there a moral guarantee and security. The constitution of the League must provide a trustworthy means for the solution of all difficult, delicate and embarrassing questions which may hereafter endanger the infant and precarious framework of international society, and for that purpose it must establish a permanent, a central and a strong authority which all nations can readily recognise and accept as a natural head and faithful dynamic expression of the corporate being of mankind. These, one would think, are not at all nebulous, fanciful or too

idealistic demands, but the practical necessities of any system of yet loose unification such as now is contemplated, conditions it must from the first and increasingly satisfy if it is to survive the enormous difficulties of an enterprise which, as it proceeds, will have to work out of being most of the natural egoistic instincts and rooted past habits of the international mentality of the race.

This new gigantic bantling which has come into existence with War for its father and an armed and enforced Peace for its mother, with threatening and bloodily suppressed revolutions, a truncated internationalistic idealism and many half-curbed, just snaffled rearing national egoisms for its witnesses and godparents, has not, when looked at from this standpoint, in spite of certain elements of promise, an altogether reassuring appearance. The circumstances of its inception were adverse and except by a tremendous effort of self-conquest in the minds of the rulers and statesmen of the victorious nations, a self-conquest rendered a thousand times more difficult by the stupendous magnitude and the intoxicating completeness of their victory, any at all complete result and auspicious new beginning could not be hoped for. This league now in the last throes of formation has not been a spontaneous creation of a peaceful, equal and well-combined will towards unity of all the world's peoples. It comes into being overshadowed by the legacy of hatreds, reprisals, apprehensions, ambitions of a murderous world war chequered by revolutions which have opened a new and alarming vista of world-wide unrest and disturbance. It has grown out of a vague but strong aspiration, — more among the rank and file of the nations, and even so not equally common to all of them, than among their governing men or classes, — to find some means for the future avoidance of violent catastrophes in the international life of mankind. It has been precipitated into actual and immediate being by the determination of an eminent idealistic statesman with the modified and in some cases unwilling assent of others who shared only partially or not at all his idealism, one man of strong will who aided by a commanding position given to him by circumstances and a flexible obstinacy in his use of them, has been able to impose some shadow or some first incomplete

form of his ideal — the future alone can show which it is to be — on the crude course of events and the realistic egoism of governments and imperial nations. But in present fact the large and complete ideal with which he began his work, has been so impinged upon by the necessities of national passions, ambition, self-interest and by pressure of the force of circumstances — still in spite of all idealism the chief determining factors of life — that it is difficult to put one's hand on anything in the concrete arrangement formulated and say without doubt or qualm that here is the very embodiment of the high principles in whose name the great war was fought and won. This is not surprising, nor should it be disappointing except to those who trusted more to their hopes than to experience. All we have to see is whether those high original principles were indeed necessary to the future security and evolution of this new association of the peoples and, if so, what chance they have of emerging from the forms in which they now seem to have been rather buried than given a body. And that will depend on the extent to which the conditions already suggested are realised or evolvable from the league's incipient constitution.

An effective League of Nations must draw into itself all the existing nations of mankind; for any considerable omission or exclusion will bring in almost inevitably an element of future danger, of possible disagreements and collisions, perhaps of a rival grouping with jealousies which must lead to another and more colossal catastrophe. In its ostensible figure this new League does not by any means wear a catholic appearance. Professedly, it is nothing but an association of actual friends and allies. In the front rank stand confident and masterful five great and powerful empires or nations, — the sole great powers left standing by the hurricane in unimpaired strength, and two of them indeed with an enormously increased power, influence and dominion: behind crowd in dimly and ineffectively a number of smaller European and American peoples, those who were allied to them or otherwise on their side in the war, and one feeble and disjointed oriental leviathan; but all these seem to partake only with a passive assent or a subordinate cooperation, — and

in fact with very much of the first and very little of the latter, — whether in the determining of the form of the League or in its control and government. And the immediate professed object of the association is not to knit the world together in the beginnings of a well-conceived unity, — that could only have been done if all the peoples had taken a free and equal part in these deliberations, whereas in fact the whole thing has been hastily constructed in semi-secret conference by the victors of the war, and chiefly by the will of the five leading powers. Its object is to regulate the interests and mutual relations of the members of the League by rule, agreement, deliberation and arbitration and their relations with other states outside the League as much as may be by the same means; it is this only and in the beginning it is nothing more. But a door is left open for the nations still outside to enter in a given time, provided they subscribe unquestioningly to a system which they will have had no hand in framing, though under it they will have to live. On the other hand a door of egress is also provided for any nation wishing to recede hereafter from the League, and if disunion should set in among the greater powers, this dangerous, though under the circumstances perhaps unavoidable provision, may easily lead to the automatic dissolution of even this hesitating first frame of a partial unity.

But the facts and forces of the situation are perhaps more favourable than ostensible paper provisions. The nations not yet included are with two great and perilous exceptions small and inconsiderable and their position outside will be so disadvantageous, they will be at every turn so much at the mercy of this formidable combination, — for the five dominant powers will easily be able, if they are determined and united, to enforce their will vigorously against all dissidents, — that they may be expected to subscribe more or less readily to its terms or at any rate to enter in after a few years' experience of exclusion. The Great Powers too are not likely to have strong reasons for breaking asunder for some years to come, and time may perhaps, provided no new revolutions sweep across the world, confirm the habit of united action. We may assume that here we have in

fact, though not yet in name, the beginnings of a council or an imperfect federation of the world's peoples.

But the constitution of this Council and the conditions under which the variously circumstanced nations are admitted into or brought under it, have a still more baffling appearance. They do not at all correspond with the democratic idealism of the human mind of today but rather strike one as a structure of almost mediaeval irregularity, complexity, incoherent construction, a well-nigh feudal political building with some formal concessions on its ground floor to the modern canon of liberty and equality. A unification of mankind may proceed very much on the same lines as past unifications of smaller peoples into nations or empires. It might have been brought about by the military force or the political influence of some powerful king-state preponderant by land and sea, — *pampotent par terre et mer*, as Nostradamus prophetically described the British Empire, — not necessarily despotic and absolute but easily first among equals; and that I suppose is what would have happened if Germany had come up top dog in the struggle instead of a very much mutilated and flattened undermost. Nor is it at all certain that something of the sort will not eventually come about if the present attempt or crude sketch of a system should come to grief; but for the moment this contingency has been prevented or at least postponed. That possibility eliminated, the unification may still take the form of an oligarchy or hegemony of great powers, leaders and masters of the herd, with the weaker rabble rest hanging on the flanks or posteriors of their mighty bellwethers and following them and their omnipotent decisions in sometimes a submissive and approbatory, sometimes a mutinous and discordant chorus; something very much of this kind is what this new league has certainly been in its formation and is likely to turn out in its execution. But there was also the vain present hope or dream, the strong future though far-off possibility of an equal, just and democratic federation of the peoples in which the dwarf and Goliath nations, the strong and the weak, the wealthy and the less wealthy, the immediately successful and the long or temporarily unfortunate, — who may yet have better gifts, have

done really more for mankind than the arrivistes among the nations, — will have, as is the rule or the ideal in all democratic bodies, in law and in initial fact an equal position, and there will be only a natural leadership and influence to differentiate by a freely accorded greater weight and voice. These were the three possibilities, and they represent respectively the ideal of the past which is said to have been buried in the grave of imperial Germany, the fact of the present which is a fact only and to none an ideal, and the ideal of the future, loudly trumpeted during the war, though there is none now, except the vanquished, the subject and the revolutionary, so poor and weak as to do it reverence.

The initial constitution of the League is almost frankly oligarchic in its disposal of the international balance of power, — not quite an absolute oligarchy, indeed, for there is certainly a general assembly which is so far democratic that all its members will exult in the dignifying possession of an equal vote. Honduras and Guatemala may, if the fancy pleases them, indulge themselves in some feeling of being lifted up to an equality with imperial England, America, the new arbiter of the world, and victorious France. But this is an illusion, a *trompe l'oeil.* For we find that this general assembly is in no sense the governing body but only a secondary authority, a court of approval and reference, to which the powerful executive nations will refer, mostly at their own discretion, this or that doubtful question for discussion. In practice and fact the new sovereign of the world under this constitution, — *jagadīśvaro vā?* — will be the executive body of the League of Nations. But there the five great powers will sit in a secure and formidable permanence, while a changeable selection of representatives picked out from the common herd will diminutively assist their deliberations, assisting or discussing in the giant obscurity of their shadow. One can easily see how the superior management of the world's affairs will go under these conditions and in fact have already had a taste of its quality in the process of this formation and this building of a basis for what it is still hoped by many will be a long or even a permanent peace. Evidently in such a governing body the Great

Five will determine the whole policy and action; nothing will readily pass which will be at all displeasing to these new masters of the earth, or let us say, to this new composite hegemony, — for its decisions will at no time be guided by that perilous, ductile and variable thing, a majority, but must be by unanimity. What in principle is this system but a novel, an improved, an enlarged and regularised edition of the Concert of Powers — liberalised a little in form because buttressed by a democratic general assembly which may, indeed, as circumstances develop and conditions change, become something, but may equally remain a dignified or undignified cypher, — but still in essence another and firmer Avatar of that old loose and dubious body? Even something of that historic device, the balance of power, though now much changed, shifted, disjointed and perilously lopsided, still remains subtly concealed in this form of a novel order. And that element is likely to pronounce itself later on; for where there is no impersonal governing principle and no clear original structure in the international body, its motions must be determined by a balance of interests, and the balance of interests can only be kept reasonably steady by carefully preserving an established balance of power. That was the justification of the old armed order; it is likely to be a necessity of this new system for regulating chaos.

This creation is a realistic practical construction with a very minimum concession to the new idealism: it has been erected by statesmen who have been concerned to legalise the actual facts and organise the actual forces which have emerged from the world-war; a few inconveniently new-born and of a menacing significance have been barred and boycotted, blockaded or pressed out of existence: it is hoped also to secure their system against attack by any resuscitable ghost of the past or violently subversive genius of the future. From that point of view it has been constructed with a remarkable skill and fidelity to present realities, though one may be tempted to think with an insufficient allowance for obscure but already visible potentialities. The correspondence between fact and form is accurate to perfection. Five powers have been the real victors of the war, three of them

central and decisive forces who now actually control the world by their will, and two others who intervened as less powerful subsidiary strengths, but can put in some effective claim and material weight into the future balance of forces. This fact is reproduced in the constitution of the governing body; it is these five who by virtue of their wealth and force are to have in it a permanent voice, the three great ones to strike the major chords and determine the general harmony of the concert, the two others to bring in, as best they can and when they can, minor chords and unessential variations. Then there are the great number of small or weaker nations who have at their command minor material effectives and, though incapable of being principals in any very great conflict may be useful as minor auxiliaries, the free peoples, allies included from the beginning by right, neutrals invited to participate in a settled organisation of peace though they did not throw their weight into the decision of war, enemies, old or new, who may be admitted when they have satisfied more or less onerous or crushing and disabling conditions. These will make the general assembly: some of them will have from time to time an uncertain voice in the governing body; the rest will be the mass, the commons, the general body who will possess some limited amount of actual power and some kind of moral force behind the executive. Labour too has been made by the War a great though as yet incoherent international power, and the League, wishing evidently to be wise in time and make terms with this formidable new fact, recognises at its side Labour in a special separate conference.

But there are also new Asiatic peoples who cannot now be admitted, because they are infants and unripe; there are subject and protected nations for whom the war was not fought and who cannot share in the once hoped-for general freedom, but must trust to the generous and unselfish liberalism of their rulers and protectors; there are African tribes who are the yet unmanufactured raw material of humanity. These are to be left under the old or put under a new control or are to be entrusted to the paternal hands of this or that governing power who will be in the legal style of the new dispensation, not masters and conquerors, — for

in this just and miraculous peace there are no annexations, only rectified arrangements of control and territory, — but trustees, mandatories. A mandate from the League will be the safeguard of these less fortunate peoples. For we are, it seems, about to live in quite a new moralised world in which the general conscience of mankind will be wide awake and effective and the League is there to represent it. As its representative it will take a periodical report of their trust from the trustees, — who also as the great powers of the League will be themselves at once mandatories, leaders and deputies of this same general conscience. All existing forces are represented in just proportions in this very remarkable constitution.

The idealist may find much to object against the perpetuation and hardening of the unideal existent fact on which the system of the League is founded, but undoubtedly that system has a good deal to say for itself, can urge very urgent considerations from the point of view of practical possibility. One indispensable condition of its success is a solid central authority, strong and permanent, capable of enforcing its decisions, and it must be an organ which all nations can accept as the natural head and faithful dynamic expression of the corporate being of mankind. As far as is at all practicable at the moment, here is, it may be said, just such an authority. The international body of mankind is still an amorphous mass, its constituent peoples unaccustomed to act together, heterogeneous by virtue of their various degrees of development, organised power, experience, civilisation: a free general assembly, a parliament of the world, an equal federation of mankind, is out of the question; even an equal federation of free and civilised peoples is likely to be an incoherent and futile body incapable of effective corporate action. What is to enforce and give practicality to the general needs and desires if not the power, influence, authority and, where need is, the strong arm of the great nations and empires acting in concert but with a due regard for the common interests and general voice? Who else are to determine preponderatingly the decisions they will have to enforce or can give to them a permanent principle or sustained practical policy? No combination of little American republics

and minor European powers could dictate a world policy to the United States, France and the British Empire or could be allowed to play by the blind rule of a majority with these great interests. But in the League the various constituents of the corporate body are so ranked and related as to give precisely a faithful dynamic expression of it in its present conditions; whatever evolution is necessary can be worked out through a general control and a periodical revision of treaties and relations. In brief, the whole international condition of the world is a chaos that has to be brought into order and shape, and that is a work which cannot be done by an idyllic idealism or an abstract perfection of principles which are not in correspondence with the actualities of things and, if prematurely applied, are likely to bring in a worse confusion, but can only be accomplished by a strong and capable organised Force which will take things as they stand, impose a new system of law and order on this chaos, some firm however imperfect initial framework, and watch over its development with a strict eye on the practical possibilities of progress. On that safe and firm basis a slow but sure and deliberate advance can be made towards a future better law and ideal order. There is another side to the question, but let us suppress it for the moment and give full value and weight to these considerations.

But all the more indispensable does it then become that the principles of the progress to be made shall be recognised from the beginning in the law and constitution of the League, or at least indicated in such a way and so impressed on its system as to ensure that on those lines or towards the fulfilment of those principles its action should proceed and not be diverted to other, baser, reactionary or obstructive uses. The declaration of general principles and their embodiments and safeguards in the democratic constitutions promulgated in the eighteenth century were no barren ideologists' formularies, — any more than the affirmation of constitutional principles in earlier documents like the Magna Charta, — but laid down the basis on which government and progress must proceed in the new-born order of the world and were at once a signpost and an effective moral guarantee for the assured march of Democracy.

We look in vain in the constitution of the League for any such great guiding principles. The provisions for the diminution of the possibilities of war, the creation of some new small nations and the safety given to those that already existed can hardly be called by that name. There is here no hint of any charter of the international rights and duties of the peoples in a new order making at once for liberty and union. The principle of self-determination over which the later stages of the war were fought has been ruthlessly thrown overboard and swallowed up in the jaws of a large pot-bellied diplomatic transaction, — it may be only for a time like the prophet in the stomach of the whale, but for the nonce there is an almost perfect disappearance. Some infinitesimal shadow of it we see in petty transactions like the arrangement about Schleswig-Holstein, but for the rest the map of the world has been altered very much in the old familiar fashion without any consistent regard to nationality or choice, but rather by the agreement and fiat of armed victorious nations. A famous pronouncement during the war had denounced the theory of trusteeship, that cloak which can cover with so noble a grace the hard reality of domination and exploitation, — things now too gross in their nakedness to be presented undraped to the squeamish moral sense of a modern humanity. But in this after-war system that very theory of trusteeship is glorified and consecrated, though with the gloss of a mandate subject to examination — by a body whose action and deliberation will be controlled by the trustees. Subject nations are still to exist in this world; for the system of mandates is only to be applied where a previous subjection has been abrogated, it is to be applied to some of the Asiatic or African peoples who lay under the uplifted scourge of the now fallen empires; the rest who had the advantage of milder masters, the remaining subject peoples from Ireland to Korea, have no need of any such safeguard!

It may be that all this denial of a too ideal principle of liberty was inevitable; for we must, we are now told, not be in too great a hurry to get from midnight to midday; the law of the times and seasons must be observed, a mitigated darkness must first come and then twilight and then dawn and then the

glad confident morning before we can live in the golden noon of a universalised liberty and justice. But meanwhile what other guiding principle, what embodied idea of law and right, what equitable and equal balance of obligations is to be the firm basis of the new order? We find none, only a machinery for the diminution of the chances of war, not for their removal, by compulsory arbitration, by the threat or actuality of armed force and economic pressure; for the revision of treaties; for the secured possession of colonies, dependencies, markets, frontiers, ports, mandates; for the international discussion and settlement of the conflicting claims of Capital and Labour. There is a system of immediately practicable relations, an attempt to affirm and to secure a new *status quo*, a provision for minor manipulations and alterations; but there is little actual foundation for a new and nobler world-order. A preparation for it may have been the intention of the institutors, but the fulfilment of their intention is left very much at the mercy of the uncertain chances of the future. The idealism of the founder has so far triumphed as to get some limited form of a League of Nations admitted and put into shape, but at every other point the idealist has gone under and the stamp of the politician and diplomat is over this whole new modern machine, — of the mere practical man with his short sight and his rough and ready methods. It is a leaky and ill-balanced ship launched on waters of tempest and chaos without a chart or compass or sailing instructions.

Well, but in other times devices as rough and unbecoming have been the foundations of great structures, and if this League can be kept in being there may be some chance of getting it suffused with the principles and ideals for whose realisation the vague heart and conscience of mankind, baffled always by its own lax complicities, is beginning to thirst and weary. But to the eye of the critic this new pact would seem to carry in itself the ominous seeds of its own future mutability and perhaps dissolution. For first of all the League is entering into being with a very limited and feeble enthusiasm on its behalf even in the nations which are interested in its maintenance; America does not seem to be in a quite flawless harmony of agreement

with its President in his self-satisfaction over the shapely beauty of his nursling; the world of Labour and socialism is critical, dissatisfied, distrustful, uneasy, simmering over into brief and uncertain but wide-spread and menacing strikes and formidable demands and murmurings. These are not favourable signs. The League will need all the support and hearty acquiescence it can get to overcome the difficulties that it will meet in constructing the world according to its own idea and fashion, a task which will not end but only be just beginning when peace is concluded, and it is doubtful whether it will have what it needs in any but the most grudging measure. Not enthusiastic support, but a sort of muttering acquiescence for want of any chance of a better thing at the moment is the general mood of the world's peoples whose interests it proposes to manage. A poor starting wind for so momentous a voyage.

But let us suppose the system accepted and under way, — what are the actual facts which will meet it in the future? Its system will stand for a long time to come for the nations conquered in the war as a perpetuation of their downfall, diminution and disgrace; it will be to them a gaoler and inflicter of penalties, a guardian of tasks and payments with an uplifted scourge. It need not have been so, if a generous and equal peace had been made or, better, if apart from all such questions, there had been a peace based not on the will of a conquering might, even though better-minded than the might it conquered, but on clear and undeniable principles, such as the utmost possible self-determination, equal opportunity, equal position for the world's peoples; that would have been indeed a peace without any other victors or vanquished than vanquished force and wrong and victorious equity. But the leading nations have chosen to impose a diplomatic peace in which the league which imposes it figures as an administrator of criminal justice. The vanquished nations, now for the most part democracies and no longer the old aggressive militarisms which made the war, were, it is said, criminals and breakers of peace and the penalty inflicted is far too light in comparison with their crimes. It may be so in literal terms, — though a criminal justice inflicted by one of two parties

in a quarrel on his beaten opponent and not by an impartial judge is apt rightly or wrongly to be suspect to the mere human reason and at best much of what is called justice is only legalised revenge, — but still it may be that nothing but justice or even less than justice has been done. But that makes no difference to the fact that a number of new democracies, vigorous and intellectual peoples, born to a new life which should have been one of hope and good will to the coming order, will be there inevitably as a source of revolt and disorder, eager to support any change which will remove their burdens, gratify their resentment and heal their festering wounds. They may be held down, kept weak and maimed, even though one of them is laborious, skilful, organised Germany, but that will mean a weakness and an ill-balance in the new order itself, and if they recover strength, it will not be to acquiesce in their inferior place and the perpetual triumph and greatness of their ancient rivals. Only in a legalised system of equal democracies can there be some true chance of the cessation of these jealousies, enmities, recurrent struggles. Otherwise war will break out again or in some other form the old battle continue. An unequal balance can never be a security for a steady and peaceful world-system.

Pass, if this were the only peril of the newly inaugurated system. But this league seems also to stand for a perpetuation of a new *status quo* to be arrived at by the peace which is being made its foundation. The great powers, it would seem, have arrived at a compact to secure their dominions and holdings against any future menace of diminution. This arrangement is of the nature at once of a balance of power — but with all the dangers of an unequal balance — and of an attempt to perpetuate for ever certain at present preponderating influences and established greatnesses. That attempt is against all the teaching of history and all the perennial movement of Nature; the league which stands committed to it is committed to a jealously guarded insecurity and the preservation of an unstable equilibrium. It is not certain that the constructing powers will themselves remain consistently satisfied with the terms of their compact or able to resist that urge of national and of human destiny which is

greater than any diplomatic arrangement or the wills of governments and statesmen. But even if that unheard-of thing be realised between them, a durable international friendship and alliance, it may serve for a time, but will it serve for a very long time against the world's urge towards change? Power rots by having and security, and those who are powerful today to impose their will on the nations, may not always keep that force in spite of their bulk and wealth and armed magnitudes. Then there are old sores perpetuated and new sores opened by this arrangement of a hastily made peace of devices and compromises. Whether the Balkan question will be permanently settled is at least dubious; but there will be now the question of a German Bohemia, a particoloured Poland, perhaps a Saar region with its wealth in the possession of a foreign power, an insoluble question of Yugoslav and Italian, a new question of Tyrol, an Irish trouble and a Korean trouble in which the League cannot interfere without deep offence to England and Japan and which yet clamour more and more for a settlement, a Russian chaos. There is a Mahomedan world which will one day have a word to say about the new *status quo*. There is the whole question of Asia and Africa, which is the most formidable but of which much need not be said, for its issues are patent to every eye. The partition of Africa between a few European powers with all its economic advantages can be no permanent solution. Asia is arising in the surge of an upward wave and cannot always be kept in a condition of weakness, tutelage and vassalage. When the time comes, how will a league mainly of European and American peoples deal with her claims? Will Europe be content to recede from Asia? Will the mandatories be in any haste to determine their mandate? Can there be any modified perpetuation of present conditions which will be at all compatible with an equality between the two continents? These are questions which no imperfect sketch of a league of nations on the existing basis can decide according to its phantasy; only the onward moving world-spirit can give them their answer.

None of these dangers and difficulties are as yet formidable in their immediate incidence, but there is another problem of a

pressing, immediate insistency and menace which touches with its close foreshadowing finger the very life of any new international system and that is the approaching struggle for supremacy between Capital and Labour. This is a far other matter than the clash of conflicting imperialisms in the broad spaces or the wrangle of quarrelsome nationalisms snarling at each other's heels or tearing each other in the narrower ways of the Earth; for those are questions at most of division of power, territory and economic opportunity on the present basis of society, but this means a questioning of that basis and a shaking of the very foundations of the European world-order. This League is a league of governments, and all these governments are bourgeois monarchies or republics, instruments of a capitalistic system assailed by the tides of socialism. Their policy is to compromise, to concede in detail, but to prolong their own principle so that they may survive and capitalism be still the dominant power of a new mixed semi-socialistic order, very much as the governments which formed the Holy Alliance sought to save the dominance of the old idea of aristocratic monarchy by a compromise with the growing spirit of democracy. What they offer is better and more human conditions for the labourer, even a certain association in the government of the society, but still a second and not a primary place in the scale. This was indeed all to which Labour itself formerly aspired, and it is all to which the rear of its army still looks forward, but it is already ceasing to be the significance of the Labour movement; a new idea has arisen, the dominance, the rule of labour, and it has already formulated itself and captured a great portion of the forces of socialism. It has even established for a while in Russia a new kind of government, a dictatorship of the proletariate, which aspires to effect a rapid transition to another order of society.

Against this novel idea and its force the existing governments are compelled by the very principle of their being to declare war and to struggle against its coming with all the strength at their disposal and strive to mobilise against it whatever faith in existing things still remains in the mind of the peoples. The old order has still no doubt strength enough to crush out of

existence, if it wills, the form which this coming of Demogorgon has already taken and to make a more or less speedy end of Russian Bolshevism. The Bolshevist system, isolated in a single country, weakened by its own initial crudities and revolutionary violences, struggling fiercely against impracticable odds, may well be annihilated; but the thing which is behind Bolshevism and has given it its unexpected virility and vitality, cannot be so easily conjured or pressed out of being. That thing is the transference of the basis of society from wealth to labour, from the power of money to the simple power of the man and his work, and that cannot be stopped or prevented, — though it may be for a time put off, — not because labour any more than wealth is the true basis of society, but because this is the logical and inevitable outcome of the whole evolution of European society. The rule of the warrior and aristocrat, the Kshatriya, founded upon power has given place to the rule of the Vaishyas, the professional and industrial classes, founded upon wealth and legalism, and that again must yield to the rule of the Shudra, the proletariate, founded upon work and association. This change like the others cannot be accomplished without much strife and upheaval and there is every sign that its course will be attended with the shattering violence of revolution.

It is proposed indeed to the new force that it shall work itself out calmly, slowly, peacefully by the recognised means of Parliamentarism; but Parliamentarism is passing through a phase of considerable discredit, and a doubt has arisen in the minds of the workers whether it is at all a right or possible means for their object and whether by a reliance upon it they will not be playing into the hands of their opponents: for Parliament is actually a great machine of the propertied classes and even the Parliamentary socialist tends easily to become a semi-disguised or a half and half bourgeois. The new order of society would seem to demand the institution of a new system of government. If then a new order of society is bound to come with its inevitable reversal of existing conditions, and still more if it comes by a revolutionary struggle, how will a system of a League of Nations based upon existing conditions, a League

not really of nations but of governments, and of governments committed to the maintenance of the old order and using their closer association as a means for combating the new idea which is hostile to their own form of existence, be likely to fare in this earth-shaking or this tornado? It is more likely to disappear than to undergo a gentle transformation, and if it disappears, another system of international comity may replace it, but it will not be a League of Nations.

We will suppose, however, or even trust, that the League, embodying in spite of appearances the best combined statesmanship of the world, circumvents all these perils, weathers every storm and leads forward the destinies of mankind in the paths of an at first more or less uneasy, but eventually firmer increasing peace and mutual accommodation. What is it then that it will have at the beginning or in the end actually accomplished? It will have made some beginning of the substitution of a state of law for the older international status which alternated and oscillated between outbreaks of war and an armed peace. That, no doubt, if at all firmly done, will be a great step forward in the known history of human civilisation. For it will mean that what was founded in the unit of the nation centuries ago, will be now at last founded in the society of the nations. But let us not leap too easily at what may well be an unsound parallel. What civilised society has done most effectively from the beginning is to substitute some kind of legalised relation, legalised offence and defence, legalised compensation or revenge for injuries in place of the state of insecure peace and frequent private or tribal warfare in which each man had to claim what he considered to be justice by the aid of his kin or the strength of his own hand. At present the persistent survival of crime is the only remnant of that earlier pre-legal state of natural violence. But for an organised society to deal with the refractory individual is a comparatively facile task; here the units are nations with a complex corporate personality, great masses of men themselves too organised, representing the vital interests, claims, passions of millions of men divided by corporate, powerful and persistent exclusivenesses, hatreds, jealousies, antipathies which the

founding of this would-be all-healing League and new society of peoples finds much acerbated, much more pronounced than in the days before the deluge when a tolerant and easy cosmopolitanism was more in fashion, and which its dispositions seem calculated to deepen and perpetuate rather than to heal and abolish. And it is on this incoherent mass of peoples void of all living principle or urgent will of union that a status of peace and settled law has to be imposed and this in a period of increasing chaos, upheaval and menace of revolution.

The national society succeeded only in proportion as it developed an indivisible unity and a single homogeneous authority which could both legislate, or at least codify and maintain law, and see to the rigorous execution of its settled rules, decrees, and ordinances. Here the work has to be done by an institution which represents no embodied unity, but rather a jamming or stringing together of very strongly separate units, and which does not legislate, but only passes very partial and opportunist special decrees *ad hoc*, and to enforce them has constantly to resort to intimidation, blockade, economic pressure, menace of a wholesale starvation of peoples, menace of violent military occupation, — things which prolong the after-war state of unrest and recoil in their secondary effects upon the countries whose governments are engaged in this singular international pastime. It is not difficult to see that a better system and a better means must be found if the latest strong hope of humanity is to turn out anything more than one other generous illusion of the intellectuals and one other chimerical wave of longing in the vague heart of the peoples.

Even the national society has not been able after so long a time and so much experience to eliminate in its own body the disease of strife between its members, class war, bitter hostility of interests and ideas breaking out at times into bloody clashes, civil wars, sanguinary revolutions or disastrous, grimly obstinate and ruthless economic struggles which are the preparers of an eventual physical conflict. And the reason is not far to seek. Law for all its ermine of pomp and solemn bewigged pretension of dignity was in its origin nothing but the law of the stronger

and the more skilful and successful who imposed their rule on the acquiescent or subjugated rest of the people. It was the decrees of the dominant class which were imposed on the previous mass of existing customs and new-shaped them into the mould of the prevailing idea and interest; Law was itself a regulated and organised Force establishing its own rules of administration and maintaining them by an imminent menace of penalty and coercion. That is the sense of the symbolic sword of Justice, and as for her more mythical balance, a balance is a commercial and artificial sign, not a symbol of either natural or ideal equity, and even so this balance of Justice had for its use only a theoretical or not always even a theoretical equality of weights and measures. Law was often in great measure a system of legalised oppression and exploitation and on its political side has had often enough plainly that stamp, though it has assumed always the solemn face of a sacrosanct order and government and justice.

The history of mankind has been very largely a long struggle to get unjust law changed into justice, — not a mystic justice of an imposed decree and rule "by law established" claiming to be right because it is established, but the intelligible justice of equality and equity. Much has been done, but as much or more still remains to be done, and so long as it is not established, there can be no sure end to civil strife and unrest and revolution. For the injustice of law can only be tolerated so long as there is either in those who suffer by it a torpid blindness or acquiescent submission or else, the desire of equity once awakened, a ready means to their hand of natural and peaceful rectification. And a particular unjust law may indeed be got altered with less of effort and difficulty, but if injustice or, let us say simply, absence of just equality and equity pervades a state of things, a system, then there must be grave trouble and there can be no real equilibrium and peace till it is amended. Thus in modern society strikes and lockouts are its form of civil war, disastrous enough to both sides, but still they are constantly resorted to and cannot be replaced by a better way, because there is no confidence in any possible legal award or "compulsory" arbitration which can be provided for under the existing conditions. The stronger side

relies on the advantage which it enjoys under the established system, the weaker feels that the legalised balance of the State exists by a law which still favours the capitalist interest and the domination of wealth and that at most it can get from this State only inadequate concessions which involve by their inadequacy more numerous struggles in the future. They cling to the strike as their natural weapon and one trustworthy resource. For that reason all ingeminations and exhortations to economic peace and brotherhood are a futile counsel. The only remedy is a better, more equal and more equitable system of society. And this is only a particular instance of a situation common enough in different forms under the present world-order.

The application is evident to the present international attempt and its hopes of a legalised and peaceful human society. The League of Nations has been established by victorious Force, claiming no doubt to be the force of victorious right and justice, but incapable by the vice of its birth of embodying the real non-combatant justice of an equal and impartial equity. Its decrees and acts are based on no ascertainable impersonal principle, but are mainly the decrees, the *sic volo, sic jubeo* of three or four mighty nations. Even if they happen to be just, they have this fatal vice that there is nothing to convince the mind of the losing parties or even the common mind that there is behind them any surety of a general and reliable equity, and as a matter of fact many of them have aroused very generally grave dissatisfaction and hostile criticism. And the Supreme Council, that veiled hieratic autocrat of the situation, does not seem itself to appeal to any distinct higher principles in its action, even when such do actually exist and could be insisted on with force and clarity. At the time of writing, there has been a case of the denudation of a suffering and now half-starved country by the army of a small occupying power — victorious not by its own arms, but by the moral and economic pressure of the League — and the council has very rightly interfered. But it has not done that publicly on grounds that have anything to do with international justice or humanity or even the rudiments of international ethics, such as they are, but on this ground that the property of the

vanquished country is the common spoil, or, let us say, means of compensation of the victors and this one little rapacious ally cannot be allowed to appropriate it all by main force to the detriment of its greater fellow-administrators of a self-regarding justice, — who may even as a result find Hungary thrown as a starving pauper on their hands instead of serving their will as a solvent debtor! If this realistic spirit is to be the spirit of the new international system and that is to persist, its success is likely to be more formidable to humanity than its failure. For it may mean to the suffering portions of mankind the legalisation and perpetuation of intolerable existing injustices for which there could have been a hope of more easy remedy and redress in the previous looser conditions. If this league of nations is to serve and not merely to dominate mankind, if it is to raise and free, as it claims and professes, and not to bind and depress humanity, it must be cast in another mould and animated by another spirit. This age is not like that in which the reign of law was established in individual nations; men are no longer inclined, as then they were, to submit to existing conditions in the idea that they are an inevitable dispensation of nature. The idea of equity, of equality, of common rights has been generalised in the mind of the race, and human society must move henceforward steadily towards its satisfaction on peril of constant unrest and a rising gradation of catastrophe.

That means that the whole spirit and system of the league will have to be remodelled, the initial mistakes of its composition rectified and the defects inherent in its origin got rid of, before it can be brought into real consonance with the nobler hopes or even the pressing needs of the human race. At present it is, to reverse the old phrase, a pouring of an old and very musty wine into showy new bottles, — the old discredited spirit of the diplomacy of concert and balance and the government of the strongest, of the few dominant kingdoms, states and empires. That must disappear in a more just and democratic international system. The evil legacy of the war with its distinctions between "enemy", allied and friendly nations or more favoured or less favoured peoples, will have to be got out of the system of the

league, for so long as it is there, it will act as a virus which will prevent all healthy growth and functioning. A league of nations which is to bring a real peace and beginning of justice and ordered comity in progress to the world and a secret council of allied governments imposing as best they can their irresponsible will on a troubled and dissatisfied Europe, Asia and Africa are two very different things, and while one lasts, the other cannot be got into being. The haphazard make of the League will have to be remoulded into a thing of plain and candid structure and meaning and made to admit that element of clear principle which it has omitted from its constitution. An equal system of international rights and obligations, just liberties and wholesome necessary restrictions can alone be a sound basis of international law and order. And there can be no other really sound basis of the just and equal liberty of the peoples than that principle of self-determination which was so loudly trumpeted during the war, but of which an opportunist statesmanship has made short work and reduced to a deplorable nullity. A true principle of self-determination is not at all incompatible with international unity and mutual obligation, the two are rather indispensable complements, even as individual liberty in its right sense of a just and sufficient room for healthy self-development and self-determination is not at all incompatible with unity of spirit and mutual obligation between man and man. How to develop it out of present conditions, antipathies, ambitions, grievances, national lusts, jealousies, egoisms is indeed a problem, but it is a problem which will have to be attended to today or tomorrow on peril of worse things. To say that these developments are impossible is to say that a league of nations in the real sense as opposed to a league of some nations for their common benefit, a dominant alliance, is an impossibility. In that case the present institution called by that imposing name can only be an enlarged and more mechanised edition of the old Concert or a latter-day Holy Alliance of the governments and will sooner or later go the way of its predecessors. If that is so, then the sooner we recognise it, the better for all concerned; there will be less of false hopes and misdirected energies with their burden of

disappointment, unrest, irritation and perilous reaction. To go on upon the present lines is to lead straight towards another and greater catastrophe.

To insist on these things is not to discourage unduly the spirit of hope which humanity needs for its progress; it is necessary in order that that hope may not nourish itself on illusions and turn towards misdirecting paths, but may rather see clearly the right conditions of its fulfilment and fix its energy on their realisation. It is a comfortable but a dangerous thing to trust with a facile faith that a bad system will automatically develop into a good thing or that some easy change is bound to come which will make for salvation, as for instance that Europe will evolve true democracy and that the League of Nations, now so imperfectly established, will be made perfect by its better spirit. The usual result of this temper of sanguine acceptance or toleration is that the expected better state makes indeed some ameliorations when it comes, but takes into it too a legacy of the past, much of its obscure spirit and a goodly inheritance of its evils, while it adds to the burden new errors of its own making. Certainly, the thing which was behind this new formation, this league of governments, is bound in some way or other to come; for I take it that a closer system of international life is sooner or later inevitable because it is a necessary outcome of modern conditions, of the now much closer relations and interactions of the life of the human race, and the only alternative is increasing trouble, disorder and ultimate chaos. But this inevitable development may take, according to the way and principle we follow, a better or a worse turn. It may come in the form of a mechanical and oppressive system as false and defective as the industrial civilisation of Europe which in its inflated and monstrous course brought about the present wreck, or it may come in the form and healthy movement of a sounder shaping force which can be made the basis or at least the starting-point for a still greater and more beneficial human progress. No system indeed by its own force can bring about the change that humanity really needs; for that can only come by its growth into the firmly realised possibilities of its own higher nature, and this growth depends on an

inner and not an outer change. But outer changes may at least prepare favourable conditions for that more real amelioration, — or on the contrary they may lead to such conditions that the sword of Kalki can alone purify the earth from the burden of an obstinately Asuric humanity. The choice lies with the race itself; for as it sows, so shall it reap the fruit of its Karma.

And that brings us back to the idea with which we started and with it we may as well close, however remote it may sound to the practical mind of a still materialistic generation. The idea which Europe follows of an outer political and social perfection reposes, as far as it goes, on a truth, but only on one half of the truth and that the lower half of its periphery. A greater side of it is hidden behind the other older idea, still not quite dead in Asia and now strong enough to be born again in Europe, that as with the individual, so with the community of mankind, salvation cannot come by the outer Law alone; for the Law is only an intermediate means intended to impose a rein of stringent obligation and a better standard on the original disorder of our egoistic nature. Salvation for individual or community comes not by the Law but by the Spirit.[1] The conditions of individual and social perfection are indeed the same, freedom and unity; the two things are complements and to follow one at the expense of the other is a vain heresy. But real unity cannot come to the race, until man surmounting his egoistic nature is one in heart and spirit with man and real freedom cannot be till he is free from his own lower nature and finds the force of the truth which has been so vainly taught by the saints and sages that the fullness of his perfected individuality is one thing with a universality by which he can embrace all mankind in his heart, mind and spirit. But at present individuals and nations are equally remote from accepting any such inner mantra of unity and we can only hope at most that the best will increasingly turn their minds in that direction and create again and this time with a newer and more luminous insistence a higher standard of human aspiration. Till then jarring leagues of nations and some mechanical dissoluble

[1] We in India have also yet to realise that truth — not by the Shastra, but by the Atman.

federation of the race must serve our turn for practice and for a far-off expectation. But only then can the dream of a golden age of a true communal living become feasible and be founded on a spiritual and therefore a real reign of freedom and unity when the race learns to turn its eyes inward and not any longer these things, but mankind, the people of God and a soul and body of the Divine, becomes the ideal of our perfection.

1919

THE YEAR 1919 comes to us with the appearance of one of the most pregnant and historic dates of the modern world. It has ended the greatest war in history, begotten a new thing in the history of mankind, a League of Nations which claims to be the foundation-stone for the future united life of the human race, and cleared the stage for fresh and momentous other constructions or destructions, which will bring us into another structure of society and of the framework of human life than has yet been known in the recorded memory of the earth's peoples. This is record enough for a single year and it looks as if there were already sufficient to give this date an undisputed pre-eminence in the twentieth century. But it is possible that things are not quite what they look to the contemporary eye and that posterity may see them in a very different focus. 1815 must have seemed the date of dates to the men of the day whose minds were filled with the view of the long struggle between the ancient regimes and revolutionary France and then between Europe and Napoleon. But when we look back at present, we see that it was only a stage, the end of the acutest phase of struggle, the commencement of a breathing-time, the date of a makeshift which could not endure. We look back from it to 1789 which began the destruction of an old order and the birth of a new ideal and beyond it to later dates which mark the progress of that ideal towards its broadening realisation. So too posterity may look back beyond this year 1919 to the beginning of the catastrophe which marks the first collapse of the former European order and forward beyond it to dates yet in the womb of the future which will mark the progress towards realisation of whatever order and ideal is destined to replace it. This year too may be only the end of an acute phase of a first struggle, the commencement of a breathing-time, the year of a makeshift, the

temporary halt of a flood in motion. That is so because it has not realised the deeper mind of humanity nor answered to the far-reaching intention of the Time-Spirit.

In the enthusiasm of the struggle a hope arose that it would sweep away all the piled-up obstacles to human progress and usher in with a miraculous immediateness a new age. A vague ideal also syllabled eloquently of peace, of brotherhood, of freedom, of unity, which for the moment partly enlightened and kindled the soul of the race and gave its intellect a broader vista. Men spoke of the powers of good and evil separated on opposite sides and locked in a decisive conflict. These ideas were the exaggerations of sentiment and idealistic reason and in their excessive and blinding light many things took covert which were of a very different nature. The hope could not but be an illusion, a halo scene of the dream mind when it sees a future possibility in its own light apart from existing conditions. Human mind and action are too much of a tangled coil to admit of such miraculous suddennesses; the physical shock of war and revolution can break down stifling obstructions, but they cannot of themselves create either the kingdom of good or the kingdom of God; for that a mental and spiritual change is needed to which our slowly moving human nature takes time to shape its customary being. The ideal, a thing of the intellect and the sentiment only, cannot so easily bring about its own effectuation; force of circumstance, the will to survive of existing actualities, the insistent past of our own nature are not so easily blown away by the eager shouting of a few high and great words or even by the breath of the thought behind them, however loudly blare the trumpets of the ideal. Nor was the war itself precisely a definite issue between pure good and pure evil, — such distinctions belong to the world of the idealistic reason of which our actual intricate existence in whose net opposites are very bafflingly fused together, is as yet at least no faithful reproduction, — but a very confused clash and catastrophe of the intertangled powers of the past, present and future. The result actually realised is only such as might have been expected from the balance of the forces at work. It is not the last result nor the end of the whole matter, but it

represents the first sum of things that was ready for working out in the immediateness of the moment's potency. More was involved which will now press for its reign, but belongs to the future.

The cataclysm of the last five years had a Janus face, one side turned towards the past, one turned towards the future. In its dealings with the past it was a conflict between two forces, one represented by Germany and the central Powers, the other by America and the western nations of Europe. Outwardly, imperial Germany represented a very nakedly brutal imperialism and militarism satisfied of its own rightful claim and perfection and opposed to the broader middle-class democracy — but democracy tainted with a half-hearted, uneasy, unwilling militarism and a liberalised, comfortably half-idealistic imperialism — of western Europe. But this was only the outside of the matter, in itself it would not have been a sufficient occasion for so great a catastrophe. Imperial Germany and all it represented had to go because it was the worst side of European civilisation enthroned in all the glory of a perfect mechanical and scientific efficiency. Its figure was a composite godhead of Moloch and Mammon seated between the guardian figures of Intelligence and Science. It had its ideal, a singular combination of the remnants of the old spirit of monarchy and feudalism now stripped of all its past justification, of a very modern burdensome organised aggressive commercialism and industrialism and of a mechanised State socialism administered by an empire and a bureaucracy, all guided by an expert intelligence and power of science. This triple-headed caricature of a future ideal for the world with its claim to take possession of the race and mechanise its life for it had to be broken, and with it passed away almost all the old phantoms of aristocracy and survivals of aristocratic monarchy which still lived on in an increasingly democratic Europe. So much the war has swept away; but its more important and positive result is not the destruction of the past, but a shaking even of the present bases and a clearing of the field for the forces of the future.

The future does not belong to that hybrid thing, a middle-

class democracy infected with the old theory of international relations, however modified by concessions to a new broader spirit of idealism. The peace which closes the war is evidently in part a prolongation of the past and a thing of the moment, its only importance for the future is its association with the plan for a league of nations. But this league also is a makeshift, a temporary device awaiting the possibility of a more perfect formation. Its insecurity lies in the degree to which it is a concession to the past and founded on a present which is indeed still dominant, but very evidently doomed to a rapid passing. The future destined to replace this present is evident enough in some of its main outward tendencies, in society away from plutocracy and middle-class democracy to some completeness of socialism and attempt at a broad and equal commonalty of social living, in the relations of the peoples away from aggressive nationalism and balances of power to some closer international comity. But these are only symptoms, feelings out, mechanical tendencies, not likely by themselves, whatever changes they bring, to satisfy for long the soul of humanity. Behind them lies a greater question of the spirit and ideal which are to govern the relations of man with man and people with people in the age that is opening, the most critical because the most far-reaching in its hopes of all the historic ages of humanity.

Meanwhile much is gone that had to go, though relics and dregs of it remain for destruction, and the agony of a sanguinary struggle is ended, and for that there may well be rejoicing. But if something is ended, all has yet to be begun. The human spirit has still to find itself, its idea and its greater orientation.

After the War

THE GREAT war has for some time been over: it is already receding into the near distances of the past. Around us is a black mist and welter of the present, before us the face of a dim and ambiguous future. It is just possible, however, to take some stock of the immediate results of the war, although by no stretch of language can the world situation be called clear, for it is marked rather by chaotic drift and an unexampled confusion. The ideals which were so loud of mouth during the collision — mainly as advertising agents of its conflicting interests — are now discredited and silent: an uneasy locked struggle of irreconcilable forces entangled in an inextricable clasp of enmity, but too weak or too exhausted to prevail against each other and unable to separate, a bewildered opportunism incapable of guiding itself or finding an issue is the character of the present situation. Humanity has the figure of a derelict with broken mast and rudder drifting on a sea still upheaved by the after swell of the tempest, the statesmen of the Supreme Council figuring as its impotent captains and shouting directions that have not the least chance of useful execution and have to be changed from moment to moment. Nowhere is there a guiding illumination or a just idea that is at all practicable. A great intellectual and moral bankruptcy, an immense emptiness and depression has succeeded to the delirium of massacre.

This is indeed the most striking immediate after result of the war, the atmosphere of a world-wide disappointment and disillusionment and the failure of great hopes and ideals. What high and large and dazzling things were promised us during the war, and where are they now? Rejected, tarnished, dishonoured they lie cast aside dead and stripped and desecrated on the blood-stained refuse heap that the war has left behind it. Not one remains to us. The war that was fought to end war has been only

the parent of fresh armed conflict and civil discord and it is the exhaustion that followed it which alone prevents as yet another vast and sanguinary struggle. The new fair and peaceful world-order that was promised us has gone far away into the land of chimeras. The League of Nations that was to have embodied it hardly even exists or exists only as a mockery and a byword. It is an ornamental, a quite helpless and otiose appendage to the Supreme Council, at present only a lank promise dangled before the vague and futile idealism of those who are still faithful to its sterile formula, a League on paper and with little chance, even if it becomes more apparently active, of being anything more than a transparent cover or a passive support for the domination of the earth by a close oligarchy of powerful governments or, it may be even, of two allied and imperialistic nations. The principle of self-determination once so loudly asserted is now openly denied and summarily put aside by the victorious empires. In its place we have the map of Europe remade on old diplomatic principles, Africa appropriated and partitioned as the personal property of two or three great European powers and western Asia condemned to be administered under a system of mandates that are now quite openly justified as instruments of commercial exploitation and have to be forced on unwilling peoples by the sovereign right of the machine-gun and the bayonet. The spectacle of subject peoples and "protected" nations demanding freedom and held down by military force continues to be a principal feature of the new order. The promised death of militarism is as far off as ever: its spirit and its actuality survive everywhere, and only its centre of strength and main operation has shifted westward — and eastward. All these things were foreseen while yet the war continued by a few who even while holding to the ideal persisted in seeing clearly: they are now popular commonplaces.

This however is only one side of the situation, the most present, insistent and obvious, but not therefore the most important and significant. It marks a stage, it is not the definite result of the great upheaval. The expectation of an immediate and magically complete transformation and regeneration of the

world by the radical operation of the war was itself an error. It was an error to imagine that the power of the past rooted in the soil of long-seated human custom and character would disappear in one fierce moment or abdicate at once to the virgin power of the future. The task to be accomplished is too great to be so easy: the regeneration of man and his life, his rebirth into a higher nature is not to be effected by so summary and outward a process. It was an error to suppose that the war was or could be the painful, the terrible, but in the end the salutary crisis by which that great change would be decisively effected, — a change that would mean a complete renovation and purification of the soul, mind and life of humanity. The war came only as a first shock and overturn, an opportunity for certain clearances, a death-blow to the moral though not as yet to the material hold of certain ideas and powers that were till then confident and throned, sure of the present and hopeful of their possession of the future. It has loosened the soil, but the uprooting of all the old growths was more than it could effectuate. It has cleared a certain amount of ground, but the fruitful filling of that ground is an operation for other forces: it has ploughed and upturned much soil, but it is as yet a far cry to the new sowing and the harvest. It was, finally, and it still continues a cherished error to imagine that the mere alteration, however considerable, of political or other machinery is the sufficient panacea for the shortcomings of civilisation. It is a change of spirit, therefore a spiritual change, that can alone be the sanction and the foundation of a greater and better human existence.

The survival of old principles and conditions is still not the important matter. However great their appearance of outward and material strength, inwardly they are sick, weakened and have forfeited the promise of the future: all their intellectual and moral hold is gone and with that disappearance there is evident a notable failing of their practical effectuating wisdom and of their sustaining self-confidence. The instinct of self-continuation, the impetus of their past motion keeps them going, and they must last so long as they have some hold in the inert continuity of the

past mental and vital habit of the peoples and are not pushed over by the growing and arising strength of the new forces that belong to the future. All their movements only serve to increase that strength, and whether they seek to perpetuate themselves by a violent insistence on their own principle or haggle and compromise with the quite opposite principles that are destined to replace them, each step they take brings them nearer to their ending. It is more fruitful to regard rather the new things that are not yet in possession of the present but already struggling to assert themselves against its ponderous and effective but ephemeral pressure.

It was very evident during the progress of the war that there were two great questions that it would not solve but rather must prepare for an acute stage of crisis, the growing struggle between Capital and Labour and the Asiatic question, no longer a quarrel now between rival exploiters but the issue between invading Europe and a resurgent Asia. The war itself was in its immediate aspect a battle between the German idea and the middle-class liberalism represented by the western peoples, France, England, America, and during the settlement of that present issue the other two questions more momentous for the future had to be held in abeyance. There was a truce between Capital and Labour, a truce determined only by a violent concentration of national feeling that proved too strong for the vague idealistic internationalism of the orthodox socialistic idea, not by any essential issue; for the futile idyllic promise of a rapprochement and a reconciliation between the hostile classes was too hollow an unreality to count as a factor. At the same time the Asiatic question too was in suspension and even enticing prospects of self-determination and independence or more qualified but still tempting allurements were proffered by the liberal empires to peoples who had been till then held as beyond the pale of civilisation. The Asiatic peoples too weak for an independent action ranged themselves on the side whose success seemed to offer to them the greater hope or else the least formidable menace. All this is now of the past: the natural and inevitable relations have reasserted themselves and these great questions are coming to a head. The modern contest

between Capital and Labour has entered into a new phase and the two incurably antagonistic principles are evidently moving in spite of many hesitations and indecisions towards the final and decisive battle. In Asia the issue has already been joined between the old rule of dependency and protectorate with their new particoloured variation the mandate and the clear claim of the Asiatic peoples to equality and independence. All other things still in the forefront belong to the prolongation of the surviving or else to the liquidation of the dead past: these two alone are living questions of the immediate future.

The forces of Socialism and Capitalism now look each other in the face all over Europe, — all other distinctions are fading, the old minor political quarrels within the nation grow meaningless, — but have not yet joined battle. The old middle-class regime still holds the material power, keeps by the prestige of possession and men's habit of preferring present ills to an insecure adventure the mind of the uncertain mass and summons all its remaining forces to maintain its position. It is faced by the first actuality of a successful socialistic and revolutionary regime in Russia, but hitherto, although its repeated efforts to stifle it in its birth have been in vain, it has succeeded in isolating, in blockading and half starving it, in erecting against its westward urge an artificial frontier and in stemming the more rapid propagation of its master ideas by a constant campaign of discredit. Attempts at any soviet revolution west of the Russian line have been put an end to for the moment by legal or military repression. On the other hand, the economic condition of the world becomes worse and not better every year and it is becoming more and more evident that Capitalism has not only lost its moral credit but that it is unable to solve the material problems it has itself raised and brought to a head, while it blocks the way to any other solution. Every year that passes in this deadlock sees an enormous increase in the strength of the socialistic idea and the number and quality and the extremist fervour of its adherents. There is undoubtedly almost everywhere a temporary stiffening and concentration of the old regime; this as a phenomenon very much resembles the similar stiffening and concentration of the

old monarchic and aristocratic regime that was the first result of the war between revolutionary France and Europe: but it has less reality of force and little chance of an equal duration; for the current of revolution is now only checked and not as then temporarily fatigued and exhausted and the accumulated rush of the ideas and forces that make for change is in our day immeasurably greater. The materials of an immense political, social and economic overturn, perhaps of a series of formidable explosions strengthened in force by each check and compression, everywhere visibly accumulate.

The outstanding portent of things to come is the continued existence, success, unbroken progress of the Russian revolution. This event promises to be as significant in human history as the great overturn of established ideas and institutions initiated in France in the eighteenth century, and to posterity it may well be this and not the downfall of Germany for which the great war will be ever memorable. Its importance is quite independent of the merits and demerits or the chances of survival of the present Bolshevik regime. The Bolshevik dictatorship is admittedly only an instrument of transition, a temporary concentration of revolutionary force, just as the Supreme Council and all that it supports is a temporary concentration of the opposing conservative forces. The achievements of this extraordinary government have been of a sufficiently astonishing character. Assailed continually from within and without, ruthlessly blockaded and starved and deprived of all means of sustenance and action except those it could create for itself out of itself or else conquer, repeatedly brought to the verge of downfall, it has survived all difficulties and dangers and rather derived always new strength from misfortune, overcome its internal and withstood its external enemies, spread itself in Asia beyond its own borders, organised out of chaos a strong civil and military instrument, and has had the force in the midst of scarcity, civil strife and foreign menace to lay the initial basis of a new type of society. This miracle of human energy is in itself no more than that, a repetition under more unfavourable circumstances of the extraordinary achievement of the Jacobins during the French Revolution. More important

is the power of the idea that is behind these successes and has made them possible. It is a fact of only outward significance that the Bolsheviks not so long ago threatened with the loss of Moscow are now on the road to Warsaw. It is of much more significance that the western Powers find themselves driven at last to negotiate with the first successful communist government of modern times still denounced by them as a monstrosity to be destroyed and a danger to civilisation. But the thing of real significance is not these events that might have gone and might still go otherwise and might turn out to be only an episode; it is rather this fundamental fact affecting future possibilities that a great nation marked out as one of the coming leaders of humanity has taken a bold leap into the hidden gulfs of the future, abolished the past foundations, made and persisted in a radical experiment of communism, replaced middle-class parliamentarism by a new form of government and used its first energy of free life to initiate an entirely novel social order. It is acts of faith and audacities of this scale that change or hasten the course of human progress. It does not follow necessarily that what is being attempted now is the desirable or the definite form of the future society, but it is a certain sign that a phase of civilisation is beginning to pass and the Time-Spirit preparing a new phase and a new order.

It may well take time for the communistic idea to make its way westward and it may too undergo considerable modifications in the passage, but there is already a remarkable evolution in that sense. The Labour movement is everywhere completing its transformation from a reformist into a socialistic and therefore necessarily, in spite of present hesitations, a revolutionary type. The struggle of Labour for a better social status and a share in the government has grown obsolete: the accepted ideal is now the abolition of the capitalistic structure of society and the substitution of labour for wealth as the social basis and the governing power. The differences within the body of the movement touch no longer the principle but the means and process of the change and the precise form to be given to the coming socialistic government and society. It is only this division of counsels that

still retards the onward motion and prevents the joining of the decided issue of battle. It is noticeable that the strength of the socialist and communistic idea increases as one goes eastward, diminishes in the opposite direction: the movement of progress is no longer from the west eastwards but from the east towards the occident. The more extreme forces are however daily increasing everywhere and are making themselves felt even in plutocratic America. In any case, whatever retardation of pace there may be, the direction of the stream is already clear and the result hardly doubtful. The existing European system of civilisation at least in its figure of capitalistic industrialism has reached its own monstrous limits, broken itself by its own mass and is condemned to perish. The issue of the future lies between a labour industrialism not very different except in organisation from its predecessor, some greater spirit and form of socialistic or communistic society such as is being attempted in Russia or else the emergence of a new and as yet unforeseen principle.

The upcoming force that opens a certain latitude for this last possibility is the resurgence of Asia. It is difficult to believe that Asia once free to think, act and live for herself will be for long content merely to imitate the past or the present evolution of Europe. The temperament of her peoples is marked off by too deep-seated a difference, the build and movement of their minds is of another character. At present, however, the movement of resurgence in Asia is finding expression more by a preface, an attempt to vindicate her bare right to live for herself, than by any pregnant effort of independent creative thought or action. The Asiatic unrest is still the second prominent feature of the situation. It is manifest in different forms from Egypt to China. It takes the shape in the Moslem world of a rejection of protectorates and mandates and a ferment of formation of independent Asiatic states. It manifests in India in a growing dissatisfaction with half methods and a constantly accentuated vehemence of the demand for complete and early self-government. It is creating in the Far East obscurer movements the sense of which has yet to emerge. This unrest envisages as yet little beyond the beginnings of a free action and existence. It appeals to the ideas of liberty

that have long been fully self-conscious and the formulas that are systematically applied in Europe, self-government, Home Rule, democracy, national independence. At the same time there is involved, subconscient as yet in the great Asiatic masses but already defining itself in more awakened minds, another issue that may seem at first sight incompatible or at least disparate with this imitative seizing on principles associated with the modern forms of freedom and progress, — an ideal of spiritual and moral independence and the defence against the European invasion of the subtle principle of Asiatic culture. In India the notion of an Asiatic, a spiritualised democracy has begun to be voiced, though it is as yet vague and formless. The Khilafat agitation has a religious and therefore a cultural as well as a political motive and temper. The regime of the mandate is resisted because it signifies the political control and economic exploitation of Asia by Europe, but there is another more latent source of repugnance. The effective exploitation is impossible without the breaking and recasting of Asiatic life into the harsh moulds of European capitalism and industrialism and, although Asia must learn to live no longer in the magnificent but insufficient past but in the future, she must too demand to create that future in her own image. It is this twofold claim carrying in it the necessity of a double, an inner and an outer resistance that is the present meaning of the Asiatic unrest and the destined meaning of the Asiatic resurgence.

The capitalistic governments of Europe embarrassed by Asiatic unrest and resistance attempt to meet it with a concession in form and a denial in fact and principle. India is granted not the beginning of responsible government, but a first "substantial" step towards it; but it is a step hedged in with a paralysing accumulation of safeguards for British political and capitalistic interests and a significant condition that her farther progress must depend on the extent to which she is prepared to reform herself politically, economically and socially in the image of the British spirit. A French military force occupies Damascus, expels the king and government elected by the people, but promises to establish an indigenous government subservient to the European

interest and its mandate. England offers Mesopotamia an Arab government saddled with an Anglo-Indian administration and the moral and material benefits of the exploitation of the oil of Mosul; meanwhile she is fighting the insurgent population in order to force on it its own greater good against its own barbarous and ignorant will to independence. A British control is to guarantee the integrity of Persia. Palestine is to be colonised by a Jewish immigration from Europe and to be administered by a High Commissioner in the interests — but against the will — of all its races. The Turkish people stripped of temporal empire and the prestige of the Caliphate are to be free under a strict and close international control and to be compelled by a Greek army to accept this unprecedented happiness and this unequalled opportunity of becoming a civilised modern nation. Here much more than against the organised forces of Labour the old regime has the material power to enforce its dictates. It remains none the less certain that a solution of this kind will not put an end to the unrest of Asia. The attempt is likely to recoil upon itself, for these new burdens must impose a greatly added strain on an already impossible financial condition and hasten the social and economic revolution in Europe. And even if it were otherwise, the resurgence of a great continent cannot be so held under. One day it will surely prevail against whatever difficulties and possess its inevitable future.

These two predestined forces of the future, socialism and the Asiatic resurgence, tend for the moment to form at least a moral alliance. The Labour and socialistic parties in the now dominant nations are strongly opposed to the policy of their governments and extend their support to the claims of subject or menaced nationalities in Asia as well as in Europe. In the more advanced Asiatic countries, as in Ireland, the national movement allies itself closely with a nascent labour movement. Bolshevik Russia is in alliance with or sovietises and controls the policy of the existing independent states of central Asia, casts a ferment into Persia and lends whatever moral support it can to the Turk or the Arab. This tendency may have in itself little meaning beyond the sympathy created by reaction against a common pressure.

Forces and interests in action are always opportunist and grasp in emergency at help or convenience from whatever quarter; but these alliances of pure interest, unless they find some more permanent support, are fragile and ephemeral combinations. Bolshevist Russia may set up Soviet governments in Georgia and Azerbaijan, but if these are only governments of occasion, if Sovietism does not correspond to or touch something more profound in the instinct, temperament and idea of these peoples, they are not likely to be durable. British Labour, although it makes no present conditions, expects a self-governing India to evolve in the sense of its own social and economic idea, but it is conceivable that a self-governing India may break away from the now normal line of development and discover her own and an unexpected social and economic order. All that we can say certainly at present is that the dominant governments of Europe have so managed that they find their scheme of things in opposition at once to the spirit and menaced by the growth of two great world forces, both compressed and held back by it and both evident possessors of the future.

That means that we are as yet far from a durable order and can therefore look forward to no suspension of the earth's troubles. The balance of the present, if such a chaotic fluctuation of shifts and devices can be called a balance, has no promise of duration, is only a moment of arrest, and we must expect, as soon as the sufficient momentum can come or circumstance open a door of escape for the release of compressed forces, more surprising and considerable movements, radical reversals and immense changes. The subject of supreme interest is not the circumstance that will set free their paths, for fate when it is ready takes advantage of any and every circumstance, but the direction they will take and the meaning they will envelop. The evolution of a socialistic society and the resurgence of Asia must effect great changes and yet they may not realise the larger human hope. Socialism may bring in a greater equality and a closer association into human life, but if it is only a material change, it may miss other needed things and even aggravate the mechanical burden of humanity and crush more heavily towards

the earth its spirit. The resurgence of Asia, if it means only a redressing or shifting of the international balance, will be a step in the old circle, not an element of the renovation, not a condition of the step forward and out of the groove that is now felt however vaguely to be the one thing needful. The present international policy of Labour carries in itself indeed at its end, — provided Labour in power is faithful to the mind of Labour in opposition, — one considerable promise, a juster equation between the national and the international idea, an international comity of free nations, a free, equal and democratic league of peoples in place of the present close oligarchy of powers that only carries the shadow of an unreal League as its appendage. An international equality and cooperation in place of the past disorder or barbaric order of domination and exploitation is indeed a first image that we have formed of the better future. But that is not all: it is only a framework. It may be at lowest a novel machinery of international convenience, it may be at most a better articulated body for the human race. The spirit, the power, the idea and will that are meant to inform or use it is the greater question, the face and direction of destiny that will be decisive.

The two forces that are arising to possess the future represent two great things, the intellectual idealism of Europe and the soul of Asia. The mind of Europe laboured by Hellenism and Christianity and enlarging its horizons by free thought and science has arrived at an idea of human perfectibility or progress expressed in the terms of an intellectual, material and vital freedom, equality and unity of close association, an active fraternity or comradeship in thought and feeling and labour. The difficulty is to make of the component parts of this idea a combined and real reality in practice and the effort of European progress has been a labour to discover and set up a social machinery that shall automatically turn out this production. The first equation discovered, an individualistic democracy, a system of political liberty and equality before the law, has helped only to a levelling as between the higher orders, the competitive liberty of the strongest and most skilful to arrive, an inhuman social in-

equality and economic exploitation, an incessant class war and a monstrous and opulently sordid reign of wealth and productive machinery. It is the turn now of another equation, an equality as absolute as can be fabricated amid the inequalities of Nature by reason and social science and machinery, — and most of all an equal association in the labour and the common profits of a collective life. It is not certain that this formula will succeed very much better than its predecessor. This equality can only be presently secured by strict regulation, and that means that liberty at least for a time must go under. And at any rate the root of the whole difficulty is ignored, that nothing can be real in life that is not made real in the spirit. It is only if men can be made free, equal and united in spirit that there can be a secure freedom, equality and brotherhood in their life. The idea and sentiment are not enough, for they are incomplete and combated by deep-seated nature and instinct and they are besides inconstant and fluctuate. There must be an immense advance that will make freedom, equality and unity our necessary internal and external atmosphere. This can come only by a spiritual change and the intellect of Europe is beginning to see that the spiritual change is at least a necessity; but it is still too intent on rational formula and on mechanical effort to spare much time for discovery and realisation of the things of the spirit.

Asia has made no such great endeavour, no such travail of social effort and progress. Order, a secure ethical and religious framework, a settled economic system, a natural, becoming fatally a conventional and artificial, hierarchy have been her ordinary methods, everywhere indeed where she reached a high development of culture. These things she founded on her religious sense and sweetened and made tolerable by a strong communal feeling, a living humanity and sympathy and certain accesses to a human equality and closeness. Her supreme effort was to discover not an external but a spiritual and inner freedom and that carried with it a great realisation of spiritual equality and oneness. This spiritual travail was not universalised nor any endeavour made to shape the whole of human life in its image. The result was a disparateness between the highest inner

individual and the outward social life, in India the increasing ascetic exodus of the best who lived in the spirit out of the secure but too narrow walls of the ordinary existence and the sterilising idea that the greatest universal truth of spirit discovered by life could yet not be the spirit of that life and is only realisable outside it. But now Asia enduring the powerful pressure of Europe is being forced to face the life problem again under the necessity of another and a more active solution. Assimilative, she may reproduce or imitate the occidental experiment of industrialism, its first phase of capitalism, its second phase of socialism; but then her resurgence will bring no new meaning or possibility into the human endeavour. Or the closer meeting of these two halves of the mind of humanity may set up a more powerful connection between the two poles of our being and realise some sufficient equation of the highest ideals of each, the inner and the outer freedom, the inner and the outer equality, the inner and the outer unity. That is the largest hope that can be formed on present data and circumstance for the human future.

But also, as from the mixing of various elements an unforeseen form emerges, so there may be a greater unknown something concealed and in preparation, not yet formulated in the experimental laboratory of Time, not yet disclosed in the design of Nature. And that then, some greater unexpected birth from the stress of the evolution, may be the justifying result of which this unquiet age of gigantic ferment, chaos of ideas and inventions, clash of enormous forces, creation and catastrophe and dissolution is actually amid the formidable agony and tension of this great imperfect body and soul of mankind in creative labour.

Appendixes

The two pieces that follow are connected with *The Ideal of Human Unity* and *War and Self-Determination*. Appendix I is a note Sri Aurobindo wrote during the 1930s or 1940s with reference to a proposed solution of international problems on the basis of principles put forward in *The Ideal of Human Unity*. Appendix II consists of a fragment found in a notebook containing miscellaneous writings by Sri Aurobindo. It appears to be a draft for the opening of an essay like those included in *War and Self-Determination*. It is clear from its content that it was written not long after the end of World War I, perhaps in 1919.

APPENDIX I

We seem at the present moment to be very far away from such a rational solution[1] and indeed at the opposite pole of human possibility; we have swung back to an extreme of international disorder and to an entire application of the vital and animal principle of the struggle for survival, not of the humanly fittest, but of the strongest.

But the very intensity of this struggle and disorder may be the path Nature has chosen towards the true escape from it; for it is becoming more and more evident that a long continuance of the present international state of humanity will lead not to any survival, but to the destruction of civilisation and the relapse of the race towards barbarism, decadence, an evolutionary failure. The antipathy or hostility or distrust of nations, races, cultures, religions towards each other is due to the past habit of egoistic self-assertion, desire for domination, for encroachment upon the lebensraum one of another and the consequent sense of unfriendly pressure, the fear of subjugation or domination and the oppression of the individuality of one by the other. A state of things must be brought about in which mutual toleration is the law, an order in which many elements, racial, national, cultural, spiritual can exist side by side and form a multiple unity; in such an order all these antipathies, hostilities, distrusts would die from lack of nourishment. That would be a true state of perfectly developed human civilisation, a true basis for the higher progress of the race. In this new order India with her spiritual culture turned towards the highest aims of humanity would find her rightful place and would become one of the leaders of the human evolution by the greatness of her ideals and the capacity of her peoples for the spiritualisation of life.

[1] The "rational solution" referred to was a proposal for solving international problems along the lines sketched by Sri Aurobindo in chapter 18 of *The Ideal of Human Unity*, "The Ideal Solution — A Free Grouping of Mankind".

APPENDIX II

The war is over, though peace still lingers, her way sadly embarrassed by blockades, armistices, secret negotiations, conferences where armed and victorious national egoisms dispute the blood-stained spoils of the conflict, political and other advantages, captured navies, indemnities, colonies, protectorates, torn fragments of dismembered States and nations, embarrassed most of all perhaps by the endeavour of the world's rulers and wise men to found upon the ephemeral basis of the results of war an eternal peace for humanity. But still the cannon at least is silent except where the embers of war still smoke and emit petty flames in distracted Poland and Russia, and peace though a lame and perhaps much mutilated peace must before long arrive. The great war is over and that may seem the main thing to [*sentence left incomplete*]

Note on the Texts

The chapters that make up the principal contents of *The Human Cycle*, *The Ideal of Human Unity* and *War and Self-Determination* were first published in the monthly review *Arya* between 1915 and 1920. The three works subsequently were revised by the author and published as books.

The Human Cycle. The twenty-four chapters making up this work appeared in the *Arya* under the title *The Psychology of Social Development* between August 1916 and July 1918. Sri Aurobindo began with a discussion of the psychological theory of social and political development put forward by the German historian Karl Lamprecht (1856–1915), about which he had read in an article published in the May/June 1916 issue of the *Hindustan Review*. Retaining some of Lamprecht's terminology, he went on to develop his own theory of "the cycle of society". During the 1930s, probably around 1937, he revised the *Arya* text of *The Psychology of Social Development* in two stages: the first revision was marked on a set of pages from the *Arya*, the second revision on a typed copy of the first. The revised text remained unpublished until 1949. At that time Sri Aurobindo considered making extensive alterations and additions to bring it up to date, but abandoned the idea and dictated only minor changes in the final stage of revision.

The book was published in 1949 by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram under the new title *The Human Cycle*. An American edition was brought out the next year. In 1962 a combined edition of *The Human Cycle*, *The Ideal of Human Unity* and *War and Self-Determination* was published by the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education. In 1971 the three works were published under the title *Social and Political Thought* as volume 15 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. This has been reprinted several times under the combined titles of the constituent works. A separate edition of *The Human Cycle* was published in 1977.

The Ideal of Human Unity first appeared in the *Arya* in thirty-five chapters between September 1915 and July 1918. At the time he commenced the series, Sri Aurobindo wrote to the Mother:

> I have begun in the issue of the Arya which is just out a number of articles on the Ideal of Human Unity. I intend to proceed very cautiously and not go very deep at first, but as if I were leading the intelligence of the reader gradually towards the deeper meaning of unity — especially to discourage the idea that mistakes uniformity and mechanical association for unity.

The *Arya* text of *The Ideal of Human Unity* was brought out as a book by the Sons of India, Ltd., Madras, in 1919. Sri Aurobindo revised this during the late 1930s, apparently in 1938. (The date is inferred partly from a footnote he added while revising Chapter 5 — later replaced by a different footnote — referring to the "Anschluss", Germany's annexation of Austria in March 1938. Sri Aurobindo is unlikely to have worked on the revision after his accident in November 1938.) The revised text remained unpublished for more than a decade. In June 1949, asked about the possiblity of publishing this book and *The Psychology of Social Development* (which had not yet been renamed *The Human Cycle*), Sri Aurobindo answered that

> they have to be altered by the introduction of new chapters and rewriting of passages and in *The Ideal* changes have to be made all through the book in order to bring it up to date, so it is quite impossible to make these alterations on the proofs. I propose however to revise these two books as soon as possible; they will receive my first attention.

Sri Aurobindo did not revise either book to the extent he had proposed. Although he made minor changes throughout *The Ideal of Human Unity*, his attempt to bring it up to date was largely confined to adding and revising footnotes (see the next paragraph). The only new chapter introduced was a long Postscript Chapter reviewing the book's conclusions in the light of recent international developments. The second edition of *The Ideal of Human Unity* was published by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1950; it was followed by an American edition

later the same year. (In the American edition the Postscript Chapter appeared as an Introduction.) In 1962, 1971 and subsequently this work was included in the combined editions mentioned above under *The Human Cycle*.

Footnotes to *The Ideal of Human Unity*. The seventy-eight footnotes in the present edition of *The Ideal of Human Unity* reflect the complex history of the text. Only three of these can be traced to the *Arya* (two other footnotes found in the *Arya* were deleted during revision). Sri Aurobindo added more than fifty footnotes in his first revision, many of them referring to political developments of the 1930s such as the rise of Fascism. In his second, lighter revision, undertaken more than ten years later, he also made extensive use of footnotes for updating the text. Some two dozen new footnotes were added at this time and an equal number of the earlier ones revised. Thus the majority of the footnotes in the final version may be taken to represent the standpoint of 1949 – 50. Detailed information on the dating of footnotes and other significant revision is provided in the reference volume (volume 35).

War and Self-Determination. Sri Aurobindo published five articles on current political topics in the *Arya*: "The Passing of War?" (April 1916), "Self-Determination" (September 1918), "The Unseen Power" (December 1918), "1919" (July 1919) and "After the War" (August 1920). In 1920 the first three of these, along with a Foreword and a newly written essay, "The League of Nations", were brought out as a book by S. R. Murthy & Co., Madras. A second edition was published by Sarojini Ghose (Sri Aurobindo's sister) in 1922. Sri Aurobindo dictated a few scattered revisions to these essays during the late 1940s or in 1950. A third edition of the book was brought out in 1957. "After the War", which had been published as a separate booklet in 1949, was added to this edition. Since 1962 *War and Self-Determination* has appeared in the combined editions mentioned above under *The Human Cycle*. "1919" was first reproduced in the 1962 edition, where it was placed at the end. In the present edition, "1919" and "After the War" are printed in the order in which they were written.

The present edition. This edition of *The Human Cycle*, *The Ideal of Human Unity* and *War and Self-Determination* has been thoroughly

checked against the *Arya* and the texts of all revised editions. A note written with reference to *The Ideal of Human Unity* and a fragment related thematically to *War and Self-Determination* have been included as Appendixes.