

The second half of the nineteenth century was a period of rapid advance in popular education throughout all the Westernized world. There was no parallel advance in the education of the upper classes—some advance, no doubt, but nothing to correspond—and so the great gulf that had divided that world hitherto into the readers and the non-reading mass became little more than a slightly perceptible difference in educational level. At the back of this process was the mechanical revolution, apparently regardless of social conditions, but really insisting inexorably upon the complete abolition of a totally illiterate class throughout the world.

The economic revolution of the Roman republic had never been clearly apprehended by the common people of Rome. The ordinary Roman citizen never saw the changes through which he lived clearly and comprehensively as we see them. But the industrial revolution, as it went on towards the end of the nineteenth century, was more and more distinctly *seen* as one whole process by the common people it was affecting, because presently they could read and discuss and communicate, and because they went about and saw things as no commonalty had ever done before.

In this *Outline of History* we have been careful to indicate the gradual appearance of the ordinary people as a class with a will and ideas in common. It is the writer's belief that massive movements of the "ordinary people" over considerable areas only became possible as a result of the propagandist religions, Christianity and Islam, and their insistence upon individual self-respect.

We have cited the enthusiasm of the commonalty for the First Crusade as marking a new phase in social history. But, before the nineteenth century, even these massive movements were comparatively restricted. The equalitarian insurrections of the peasantry, from the Wycliffe period onward, were confined to the peasant communities of definite localities, they spread only slowly into districts affected by similar forces. The town artisan rioted, indeed, but only locally.

The château-burning of the French Revolution was not the act of a peasantry who had overthrown a government, it was the act of a peasantry released by the overthrow of a government. The Commune of Paris was the first effective appearance of the town artisan as a political power, and the Parisian crowd of the First Revolution was a very mixed, primitive-thinking, and savage crowd compared with any Western European crowd after 1830.

But the mechanical revolution was not only pressing education upon the whole population, it was leading to a big-capitalism and to a large-scale reorganization of industry that was to produce a new and distinctive system of ideas in the common people in the place of the mere uncomfortable recalcitrance and elemental rebellions of an illiterate commonalty.

We have already noted how the industrial revolution had split the manufacturing class, which had hitherto been a middling and various sort of class, into two sections—the employers, who became rich enough to mingle with the financial, merchandizing, and landowning classes; and the employees, who drifted to a status closer and closer to that of mere gang and agricultural labour. As the manufacturing employee sank, the agricultural labourer, by the introduction of agricultural machinery and the increase in his individual productivity, rose.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Karl Marx (1818–83), a German Jew of great scholarly attainments, was pointing out that the organization of the working classes by the steadily concentrating group of capitalist owners was developing a new social classification to replace the more complex class systems of the past. Property, so far as it was power, was being gathered together into relatively few hands, the hands of the big rich men, the capitalist class; while there was a great mingling of workers with little or no property, whom he called the “expropriated,” or “proletariat”—a misuse of this word—who were bound to develop a common “class consciousness” of the conflict of their interests with those of the rich men.

Differences of education and tradition between the various older social elements, which were in process of being fused up into the new class of the expropriated, seemed for a time to contradict this sweeping generalization; the traditions of the professions, the small employers, the farmer peasant and the like, were all different from one another and from the various craftsman traditions of the workers; but, with the spread of education and the cheapening of literature, this “Marxian” generalization became more acceptable.

These classes, who were linked at first by nothing but a common impoverishment, were and are being reduced or raised to the same standard of life, forced to read the same books and share the same inconveniences. A sense of solidarity between all sorts of poor and propertyless men, as against the profit-amassing and wealth-concentrating class, became more evident by the end of the nineteenth century. Old differences were fading away, the difference between craftsman and open-air worker,

between black coat and overall, between poor clergyman and elementary schoolmaster, between policeman and bus-driver. They had all to buy the same cheap furnishings and live in similar cheap houses; their sons and daughters began to mingle and marry; success at the upper levels became more and more hopeless for the rank and file. Marx, who did not so much advocate the class-war, the war of the expropriated mass against the appropriating few, as foretell it, was to some extent justified by events. It was sometimes argued against Marx that the proportion of people who have savings invested had increased in many modern communities. These savings are technically "capital" and their owners "capitalists" to that extent, and this was supposed to contradict the statement of Marx that property concentrates into few and fewer hands. Marx used many of his terms carelessly and chose them ill, and his ideas were better than his words. When he wrote property he meant "property so far as it is power." The small investor has remarkably little power over his invested capital.

§ 3

The Fermentation of Ideas, 1848.

To trace any broad outlines in the fermentation of ideas that went on during the mechanical and industrial revolution of the nineteenth century is a very difficult task. But we must attempt it if we are to link what has gone before in this history with the condition of our world to-day.

It will be convenient to distinguish two main periods in the hundred years between 1814 and 1914. First came the period 1814-48, in which there was a very considerable amount of liberal thinking and writing *in limited circles*, but during which there were no great changes or development of thought in the general mass of the people. Throughout this period the world's affairs were living, so to speak, on their old intellectual capital, they were going on in accordance with the leading ideas of the Revolution and the counter-revolution. The dominant liberal ideas were freedom and a certain vague equalitarianism; the conservative ideas were monarchy, organized religion, social privilege, and obedience.

Until 1848 the spirit of the Holy Alliance, the spirit of Metternich, struggled to prevent a revival of the European revolution that Napoleon had betrayed and set back. In America, both North and South, on the other hand, the revolution had triumphed and nineteenth-century liberalism ruled

unchallenged. Britain was an uneasy country, never quite loyally reactionary nor quite loyally progressive, neither truly monarchist nor truly republican, the land of Cromwell and also of the Merry Monarch Charles; anti-Austrian, anti-Bourbon, anti-papal, yet weakly repressive. We have told of the first series of liberal storms in Europe in and about the year 1830; in Britain in 1832 a Reform Bill, greatly extending the franchise and restoring something of its representative character to the House of Commons, relieved the situation.

Round and about 1848 came a second and much more serious system of outbreaks, that overthrew the Orleans monarchy and established a second republic in France (1848-52), raised North Italy and Hungary against Austria, the Poles in Posen against the Germans, and sent the Pope in flight from the republicans of Rome. A very interesting Pan-Slavic conference held at Prague foreshadowed many of the territorial readjustments of 1919. It dispersed after an insurrection at Prague had been suppressed by Austrian troops. The Hungarian insurrection was more vigorous and maintained the struggle for two years. Its great leader was Louis Kossuth; defeated and in exile he still maintained a vigorous propaganda for the liberty of his people.

Ultimately all these insurrections failed; the current system staggered, but kept its feet. There were, no doubt, serious social discontents beneath these revolts, but as yet, except in the case of Paris, these had no very clear form; and this 1848 storm, so far as the rest of Europe was concerned, may be best described, in a phrase, as a revolt of the natural political map against the artificial arrangements of the Vienna diplomatists and the system of suppressions those arrangements entailed.

The history of Europe, then, from 1815 to 1848 was, generally speaking, a sequel to the history of Europe from 1789 to 1814. There were no really new *motifs* in the composition. The main trouble was still the struggle, though often a blind and mis-directed struggle, of the interests of ordinary men against the Great Power system which cramped and oppressed the life of mankind.

But after 1848, from 1848 to 1914, though the readjustment of the map still went on towards a free and unified Italy and a unified Germany, there began a fresh phase in the process of mental and political adaptation to the new knowledge and the new material powers of mankind. Came a great irruption of new social, religious, and political ideas into the general European mind. In the next three sections we will consider the origin and quality of these irruptions. They laid the foundations

upon which we base our political thought to-day, but for a long time they had no very great effect on contemporary politics. Contemporary politics continued to run on the old lines, but with a steadily diminishing support in the intellectual convictions and consciences of men.

We have already described the way in which a strong intellectual process undermined the system of Grand Monarchy in France before 1789. A similar undermining process was going on throughout Europe during the Great Power period of 1848-1914. Profound doubts of the system of government and of the liberties of many forms of property in the economic system spread throughout the social body. Then came the greatest and most disorganizing war in history, so that it was impossible for those who lived immediately after it to estimate the power and range of the accumulated new ideas of those sixty-six years. They had been through a far greater catastrophe and were in a slackwater period corresponding to the period 1815-1830. But neither an 1830 nor an 1848 came to show them where they stood.

§ 4

The Development of the Idea of Socialism.

We have traced throughout this history the gradual restriction of the idea of property from the first unlimited claim of the strong man to possess everything and the gradual realization of brotherhood as something transcending personal self-seeking. Men were first subjugated into more than tribal societies by the fear of monarch and deity. It is only within the last three or at most four thousand years that we have any clear evidence that voluntary self-abandonment to some greater end, without fee or reward, was an acceptable idea to men, or that anyone had propounded it.

Then we find spreading over the surface of human affairs, as patches of sunshine spread and pass over the hill-sides upon a windy day in spring, the idea that there is a happiness in self-devotion greater than any personal gratification or triumph, and a life of mankind different and greater and more important than the sum of all the individual lives within it. We have seen that idea become vivid as a beacon, vivid as sunshine caught and reflected dazzlingly by some window in the landscape, in the teachings of Buddha, Lao Tse, and, most clearly of all, of Jesus of Nazareth.

Through all its variations and corruptions, Christianity has

never completely lost the suggestion of a devotion to God's commonweal that makes the personal pomps of monarchs and rulers seem like the insolence of an overdressed servant, and the splendours and gratifications of wealth like the waste of robbers. No man living in a community which such a religion as Christianity or Islam has touched can be altogether a slave; there is an ineradicable quality in these religions that compels men to judge their masters and to realize their own responsibility for the world.

As men have felt their way towards this new state of mind from the fierce self-centred greed and instinctive combativeness of the early Palaeolithic family group, they have sought to express the drift of their thoughts and necessities very variously. They have found themselves in disagreement and conflict with old-established ideas, and there has been a natural tendency to contradict these ideas flatly, to fly over to the absolute contrary.

Faced by a world in which rule and classes and order seem to do little but give opportunity for personal selfishness and unrighteous oppression, the first impatient movement was to declare for a universal equality and a practical anarchy. Faced by a world in which property seemed little more than a protection for selfishness and a method of enslavement, it was as natural to repudiate all property.

Our history shows an increasing impulse to revolt against rulers and against ownership. We have traced it in the Middle Ages burning the rich men's châteaux and experimenting in theocracy and communism. In the French revolutions this double revolt is clear and plain. In France we find side by side, inspired by the same spirit and as natural parts of the same revolutionary movement, men who, with their eyes on the ruler's taxes, declared that property should be inviolable, and others who, with their eyes on the employer's hard bargains, declared that property should be abolished. But what they are really revolting against in each case is that the ruler and the employer, instead of becoming servants of the community, still remain, like most of mankind, self-seeking, oppressive individuals.

Throughout the ages we find this belief growing in men's minds: that there can be such a rearrangement of laws and powers as to give rule and order while still restraining the egotism of any ruler and of any ruling class that may be necessary, and such a definition of property as will give freedom without oppressive power. We begin to realize nowadays that these ends are only to be attained by a complex constructive effort; they arise through the conflict of new human needs against ignorance and old human nature; but throughout the nineteenth century there

was a persistent disposition to solve the problem by some simple formula. (And be happy ever afterwards, regardless of the fact that all human life, all life, is throughout the ages nothing but the continuing solution of a continuous synthetic problem.)

The earlier half of the nineteenth century saw a number of experiments in the formation of trial human societies of a new kind. Among the most important historically were the experiments and ideas of Robert Owen (1771-1858), a Manchester cotton-spinner. He is very generally regarded as the founder of modern Socialism; it was in connexion with his work that the word "socialism" first arose (about 1835).

He seems to have been a thoroughly competent business man; he made a number of innovations in the cotton-spinning industry, and acquired a fair fortune at an early age. He was distressed by the waste of human possibilities among his workers, and he set himself to improve their condition and the relations of employer and employed. This he sought to do first at his Manchester factory, and afterwards at New Lanark, where he found himself in practical control of works employing about two thousand people.

Between 1800 and 1828 he achieved very considerable things: he reduced the hours of labour, made his factory sanitary and agreeable, abolished the employment of very young children, improved the training of his workers, provided unemployment pay during a period of trade depression, established a system of schools, and made New Lanark a model of a better industrialism, while at the same time sustaining its commercial prosperity. He wrote vigorously to defend the mass of mankind against the charges of intemperance and improvidence which were held to justify the economic iniquities of the time. He held that men and women are largely the product of their educational environment, a thesis that needs no advocacy to-day. And he set himself to a propaganda of the views that New Lanark had justified.

He attacked the selfish indolence of his fellow-manufacturers, and in 1819, largely under his urgency, the first Factory Act was passed, the first attempt to restrain employers from taking the most stupid and intolerable advantages of their workers' poverty. Some of the restrictions of that Act amaze us to-day. It seems incredible now that it should ever have been necessary to protect little children of *nine* (!) from work in factories, or to limit the nominal working day of such employees to *twelve hours!*

People are perhaps too apt to write of the industrial revolution as though it led to the enslavement and overworking of poor children who had hitherto been happy and free. But this misinterprets history. From the very beginnings of civilization the little children of the poor had always been obliged to do whatever work they could do. But the factory system gathered up all this infantile toil and made it systematic, conspicuous, and scandalous. The factory system challenged the quickening human conscience on that issue. The British Factory Act of 1819, weak and feeble though it seems to us, was the Magna Charta of childhood; thereafter the protection of the children of the poor, first from toil and then from bodily starvation and ignorance, began.

We cannot tell here in any detail the full story of Owen's life and thought. His work at New Lanark had been, he felt, only a trial upon a small working model. What could be done for one industrial community could be done, he held, for every industrial community in the country; he advocated a resettlement of the industrial population in townships on the New Lanark plan.

For a time he seemed to have captured the imagination of the world. *The Times* and *Morning Post* supported his proposals; among the visitors to New Lanark was the Grand Duke Nicholas, who succeeded Alexander I as Tsar; a fast friend was the Duke of Kent, son of George III and father of Queen Victoria. But all the haters of change, and all—and there are always many such—who were jealous of the poor, and all the employers who were likely to be troubled by his projects, were waiting for an excuse to counter-attack him, and they found it in the expression of his religious opinions, which were hostile to official Christianity, and through those he was successfully discredited. But he continued to develop his projects and experiments, of which the chief was a community at New Harmony in Indiana (U.S.A.), in which he sank most of his capital. His partners bought him out of the New Lanark business in 1828.

Owen's experiments and suggestions ranged very widely, and do not fall under any single formula. There was nothing doctrinaire about him. His New Lanark experiment was the first of a number of "benevolent businesses" in the world; Lord Leverhulme's Port Sunlight, the Cadburys' Bournville, and the Ford businesses in America are contemporary instances, and an approach towards communism. His proposals for State settlements were what we should call State socialism to-day. His American experiment and his later writings point to a

completer form of socialiam, a much wider departure from the existing state of affairs.

It is clear that the riddle of currency exercised Owen. He understood that we can no more hope for real economic justice while we pay for work with money of fluctuating value, than we could hope for a punctual world if there was a continual inconstant variability in the length of an hour. One of his experiments was an attempt at a circulation of labour notes representine one hour, five hours, or twenty hours of work. The co-operative societies of to-day—societies of poor men which combine for the collective buying and distribution of commodities or for collective manufacture of dairying or other forms of agriculture—arose directly out of his initiatives, though the pioneer co-operative societies of his own time ended in failure. Their successors have spread throughout the whole world, and number to-day some hundred millions of adherents, but they have been much more successful in distribution than production.

A point to note about this early socialism of Owen's is that it was not at first at all "democratic." The democratic idea was mixed up with it later. Its initiative was benevolent, its early form patriarchal; it was something up to which the workers were to be educated by liberally disposed employers and leaders. The first socialism was not a workers' movement; it was a masters' movement. Throughout its history the ideology of socialism has been the work mainly of men not workers. Marx is described by Beer as an "aristocrat"; Engels was a merchant, Lenin an exiled member of a landowning family.

Concerrently with this work of Owen's, another and quite independent series of developments was going on in America and Britain which was destined to come at last into relation with his socialistic ideas. The English law had long prohibited combinations in restraint of trade, combinations to raise prices or wages by concerted action. There had been no great hardship in these prohibitions before the agrarian and industrial changes of the eighteenth century let loose a great swarm of workers living from hand to mouth and competing for insufficient employment. Under these new conditions the workers in many industries found themselves intolerably squeezed. They were played off one against another; day by day and hour by hour none knew what concession his fellow might not have made, and what further reduction of pay or increase of toil might not ensue.

It became vitally necessary for the workers to make agreements—illegal though they were—against such underselling. At first these agreements had to be made and sustained by

secret societies. Or clubs established ostensibly for quite other purposes, social clubs, funeral societies, and the like, served to mask the wage-protecting combination. The fact that these associations were illegal disposed them to violence; they were savage against "blacklegs" and "rats" who would not join them, and still more savage with traitors.

In 1824 the House of Commons recognized the desirability of relieving tension in these matters by conceding the right of workmen to form combinations for "collective bargaining" with the masters. This enabled Trade Unions to develop with a large measure of freedom. At first very clumsy and primitive organizations and with very restricted freedoms, the Trade Unions have risen gradually to be a real Fourth Estate in the country, a great system of bodies representing the mass of industrial workers.

Arising at first in Britain and America, they have, with various national modifications, and under varying legal conditions, spread to France, Germany, and all the Westernized communities.

Organized originally to sustain wages and restrict intolerable hours, the Trade Union movement was at first something altogether distinct from socialism. The Trade Unionist tried to make the best for himself of the existing capitalism and the existing conditions of employment; the Socialist proposed to change the system.

It was the imagination and generalizing power of Karl Marx which brought these two movements into relationship. He was a man with the sense of history very strong in him; he was one of the first to perceive that the old social classes which had endured since the beginning of civilization were in process of dissolution and regrouping. His racial Jewish commercialism made the antagonism of property and labour very plain to him. And his upbringing in Germany—where, as we have pointed out, the tendency of class to harden into caste was more evident than in any other European country—made him conceive of labour as presently becoming "class conscious" and collectively antagonistic to the property-concentrating classes. In the Trade Union movement, which was spreading over the world, he believed he saw this development of class-conscious labour.

What, he asked, would be the outcome of the "class war" of the capitalist and proletariat? The capitalist adventurers, he alleged, because of their inherent greed and combativeness, would gather power over capital into fewer and fewer hands, until at last they would concentrate all the means of production, transit, and the like into a form seizable by the workers, whose

class consciousness and solidarity would be developed *pari passu* by the process of organizing and concentrating industry.

They would seize this capital and work it for themselves. This would be the social revolution. Then individual property and freedom would be restored, based upon the common ownership of the earth and the management by the community as a whole of the great productive services which the private capitalist had organized and concentrated. This would be the end of the "capitalist" system, but not the end of the system of capitalism. State capitalism would replace private-owner capitalism.

This marks a great stride away from the socialism of Owen. Owen (like Plato) looked to the common sense of men of any or every class to reorganize the casual and faulty political, economic, and social structure. Marx found something more in the nature of a driving force in class hostility based on expropriation and injustice. And he was not simply a prophetic theorist; he was also a propagandist of the revolt of labour, the revolt of the so-called "proletariat." Labour, he perceived, had a common interest against the capitalist everywhere, though under the test of the Great Power wars of the time, and particularly of the liberation of Italy, he showed that he failed to grasp the fact that labour everywhere has a common interest in the peace of the world. But with the social revolution in view he did succeed in inspiring the formation of an international league of workers, the First International.

The subsequent history of socialism was chequered between the British tradition of Owen and the German class-feeling of Marx. What was called Fabian Socialism, the exposition of socialism by the London Fabian Society, made its appeal to reasonable men of all classes. What was called "Revisionism" in German Socialism inclined in the same direction. But, on the whole, it was Marx who carried the day against Owen, and the general disposition of socialists throughout the world was to look to the organization of labour, and labour only, to supply the fighting forces that would disentangle the political and economic organization of human affairs from the hands of the more or less irresponsible private owners and adventurers who controlled it.

These were the broad features of the project called Socialism. It was perhaps inevitable that socialism should be greatly distraught and subdivided by doubts and disputes and sects and schools; they are growth symptoms like the spots on a youth's face. Here we can but glance at the difference between State socialism,

which would run the economic business of the country through its political government, and the later schools of syndicalism and guild socialism, which would entrust a large measure in the government of each industry to the workers of every grade—including the directors and managers—engaged in that industry.

§ 5¹

How Darwinism Affected Religious and Political Ideas.

While the mechanical revolution which the growth of physical science had brought about was destroying the ancient social classification of the civilized state which had been evolved through thousands of years, and producing new possibilities and new ideals of a righteous human community and a righteous world-order—a change at least as great and novel was going on in the field of religious thought. That same growth of scientific knowledge from which sprang the mechanical revolution was the moving cause of these religious disturbances.

In the opening chapters of this *Outline* we have given the main story of the Record of the Rocks; we have shown life for the little beginning of consciousness that it is in the still waiting vastness of the void of space and time. But before the end of the eighteenth century this enormous prospect of the past, which fills a modern mind with humility and illimitable hope, was hidden from the general consciousness of our race. It was veiled by the curtain of a Sumerian legend. The heavens were no more than a stage background to a little drama of kings. Men had been too occupied with their own private passions and personal affairs to heed the intimations of their own great destiny that lay about them everywhere.

They learnt their true position in space long before they placed themselves in time. We have already named the earlier astronomers, and told how Galileo was made to recant his assertion that the earth moved round the sun. He was made to do so by the church, and the church was stirred to make him do so because any doubt that the world was the centre of the universe seemed to strike fatally at the authority of Christianity.

¹ For a closely parallel view of religion to that given here, see *Outspoken Essays*, by Dean Inge, Essays viii and ix on *St. Paul* and on *Institutionalism and Mysticism*.

Now, upon that matter, the teller of modern history is obliged to be at once cautious and bold. He has to pick his way between cowardly evasion on the one hand, and partisanship on the other. As far as possible he must confine himself to facts and restrain his opinions. Yet it is well to remember that no opinions can be altogether restrained. The writer has his own very strong and definite persuasions, and the reader must bear that in mind.

It is a fact in history that the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth had in it something profoundly new and creative; he preached a new Kingdom of Heaven in the hearts and in the world of men. There was nothing in his teaching, so far as we can judge it at this distance of time, to clash or interfere with any discovery or expansion of the history of the world and mankind. But it is equally a fact in history that St. Paul and his successors added to or completed or imposed upon or substituted another doctrine for—as you may prefer to think—the plain and profoundly revolutionary teachings of Jesus, by expounding a subtle and complex theory of salvation, a salvation which could be attained very largely by belief and formalities, without any serious disturbance of the believer's ordinary habits and occupations, and that this Pauline teaching *did* involve very definite beliefs about the history of the world and man.

It is not the business of the historian to controvert or explain these matters; the question of their ultimate significance depends upon the theologian; the historian's concern is merely with the fact that official Christianity throughout the world adopted St. Paul's view, so plainly expressed in his epistles and so untraceable in the Gospels, that the meaning of religion lay not in the future, but in the past, and that Jesus was not so much a teacher of wonderful new things, as a predestinate divine blood sacrifice of deep mystery and sacredness made in atonement of a particular historical act of disobedience to the Creator committed by our first parents, Adam and Eve, in response to the temptation of a serpent in the Garden of Eden. Upon that belief in that Fall as a fact, and not upon the personality of Jesus of Nazareth, upon the theories of Paul, and not upon the injunctions of Jesus, doctrinal Christianity built itself.

We have already noted that this story of the special creation of the world, and of Adam and Eve and the serpent, was also an ancient Babylonian story, and probably a still more ancient Sumerian story, and that the Jewish sacred books were the medium by which this very ancient and primitive "heliolithic" serpent legend entered Christianity. Wherever official Chris-

tianity has gone, it has taken this story with it. It has tied itself up to that story.

Until a century ago and less, the whole Christianized world felt bound to believe, and did believe, that the universe had been specially created in the course of six days by the word of God a few thousand years before—according to Bishop Ussher, 4,004 B.C. (*The Universal History*, in forty-two volumes, published in 1779 by a group of London booksellers, discusses whether the precise date of the first day of Creation was March 21st or September 21st, 4,004 B.C., and inclines to the view that the latter was the more probable season.)

Upon this historical assumption rested the religious fabric of the Western and Westernized civilization, and yet the whole world was littered, the hills, mountains, deltas, and seas were bursting, with evidence of its utter absurdity. The religious life of the leading nations, still a very intense and sincere religious life, was going on in a house of history built upon sand.

There is frequent recognition in classical literature of a sounder cosmogony. Aristotle was aware of the broad principles of modern geology, they shine through the speculations of Lucretius, and we have noted also Leonardo da Vinci's (1452-1519) lucid interpretation of fossils. The great Frenchman Descartes (1596-1650) speculated boldly upon the incandescent beginnings of our globe, and a Dane, Steno (1631-86), began the collection of fossils and the description of strata. But it was only as the eighteenth century drew to its close that the systematic study of geology assumed such proportions as to affect the general authority of the Bible version of the ancient Sumerian narrative.

Contemporaneously with the *Universal History* quoted above, a great French naturalist, Buffon, was writing upon the Epochs of Nature (1778), and boldly extending the age of the world to 70,000 or 75,000 years. He divided his story into six epochs to square with the six days of the Creation story. These days, it was argued, were figurative days; they were really ages. By that accommodating device, geology contrived to make a peace with orthodox religious teaching that lasted until the middle of the nineteenth century.

We cannot trace here the contributions of such men as Hutton and Playfair and Sir Charles Lyell, and the Frenchmen Lamarck and Cuvier, in unfolding and developing the record of the rocks. It was only slowly that the general intelligence of the Western world was awakened to two disconcerting facts: firstly, that the succession of life in the geological record did

not correspond to the acts of the six days of creation; and, secondly, that the record, in harmony with a mass of biological facts, pointed away from the Bible assertion of a separate creation of each species, straight towards a genetic relation between all forms of life, *in which even man was included!* The importance of this last issue to the existing doctrinal system was manifest. If all the animals and man had been evolved in this ascendant manner, then there had been no first parents, no Eden, and no Fall. And if there had been no fall, then the entire historical fabric of Christianity, the story of the first sin and the reason for an atonement, upon which the current teaching based Christian emotion and morality, collapsed like a house of cards.

It was with something like horror, therefore, that great numbers of honest and religious-spirited men followed the work of the English naturalist Charles Darwin (1809-82). In 1859 he published his *Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*, a powerful and permanently valuable exposition of that conception of the change and development of species which we have sketched briefly in Chapter II; and in 1871 he completed the outline of his work with the *Descent of Man*, which brought man definitely into the same scheme of development with the rest of life.

Many men and women are still living who can remember the dismay and distress among ordinary intelligent people in the Western communities as the invincible case of the biologists and geologists against the orthodox Christian cosmogony unfolded itself. The minds of many resisted the new knowledge instinctively and irrationally. Their whole moral edifice was built upon false history; they were too old and set to rebuild it; they felt the practical truth of their moral convictions, and this new truth seemed to them to be incompatible with that. They believed that to assent to it would be to prepare a moral collapse for the world. And so they produced a moral collapse by not assenting to it.

The universities in England particularly, being primarily clerical in their constitution, resisted the new learning very bitterly. During the seventies and eighties a stormy controversy raged throughout the civilized world. The quality of the discussions and the fatal ignorance of the church may be gauged by a description in Hackett's *Commonplace Book* of a meeting of the British Association in 1866, at which Bishop Wilberforce assailed Huxley, the great champion of the Darwinian views, in this fashion.

Facing "Huxley with a smiling insolence, he begged to know,

was it through his grandfather or grandmother that he claimed his descent from a monkey? Huxley turned to his neighbour and said, 'The Lord hath delivered him into my hands.' Then he stood before us and spoke these tremendous words: 'He was not ashamed to have a monkey for his ancestor; but he would be ashamed to be connected with a man who used great gifts to obscure the truth.'" (Another version has it: "I have certainly said that a man has no reason to be ashamed of having an ape for his grandfather. If there were an ancestor whom I should feel ashamed in recalling, it would rather be a man of restless and versatile intellect who plunges into scientific questions with which he has no real acquaintance, only to obscure them by an aimless rhetoric and distract the attention of his audience from the real point at issue by eloquent digressions and skilled appeals to prejudice.") These words were certainly spoken with passion. The scene was one of great excitement. A lady fainted, says Hackett. . . . Such was the temper of this controversy.

The Darwinian movement took formal Christianity unawares, suddenly. Formal Christianity was confronted with a clearly demonstrable error in her theological statements. The Christian theologians were neither wise enough nor mentally nimble enough to accept the new truth, modify their formulæ, and insist upon the living and undiminished vitality of the religious reality those formulæ had hitherto sufficed to express. For the discovery of man's descent from sub-human forms does not even remotely touch the teaching of the Kingdom of Heaven. Yet priests and bishops raged at Darwin; foolish attempts were made to suppress Darwinian literature and to insult and discredit the exponents of the new views. There was much wild talk of the "antagonism" of religion and science.

Now, in all ages there have been sceptics in Christendom. The Emperor Frederick II was certainly a sceptic; in the eighteenth century Gibbon and Voltaire were openly anti-Christian, and their writings influenced a number of scattered readers. But these were exceptional people. . . . Now the whole of Christendom became, as a whole, sceptical. This new controversy touched everybody who read a book or heard intelligent conversation. A new generation of young people grew up, and they found the defenders of Christianity in an evil temper, fighting their cause without dignity or fairness. It was the orthodox theology that the new scientific advances had compromised, but the angry theologians declared that it was religion.

In the end men may discover that religion shines all the

brighter for the loss of all its doctrinal wrappings, but to the young it seemed as if, indeed, there had been a conflict of science and religion, and that in that conflict science had won.

The immediate effect of this great dispute upon the ideas and methods of people in the prosperous and influential classes throughout the westernized world was very detrimental indeed. The new biological science was bringing nothing constructive as yet to replace the old moral stand-bys. A real *de-moralization* ensued.

The general level of social life in those classes was far higher in the early twentieth than in the early seventeenth century, but in one respect—in respect to disinterestedness and conscientiousness in these classes—it is probable that the tone of the earlier age was better than the latter. In the owning and active classes of the seventeenth century, in spite of a few definite “infidels,” there was probably a much higher percentage of men and women who prayed sincerely, who searched their souls to find if they had done evil, and who were prepared to suffer and make great sacrifices for what they conceived to be right, than in the opening years of the twentieth century.

There was a real loss of faith after 1859. The true gold of religion was in many cases thrown away with the worn-out purse that had contained it for so long, and it was not recovered. Towards the close of the nineteenth century a crude misunderstanding of Darwinism had become the fundamental mindstuff of great masses of the “educated” everywhere. The seventeenth-century kings and owners and rulers and leaders had had the idea at the back of their minds that they prevailed by the will of God; they really feared him, they got priests to put things right for them with him; when they were wicked, they tried not to think of him. But the old faith of the kings, owners and rulers of the opening twentieth century had faded under the actinic light of scientific criticism.

Prevalent peoples at the close of the nineteenth century believed that they prevailed by virtue of the Struggle for Existence, in which the strong and cunning get the better of the weak and confiding. And they believed further that they had to be strong, energetic, ruthless, “practical,” egotistical, because God was dead, and had always, it seemed, been dead—which was going altogether further than the new knowledge justified.

They soon got beyond the first crude popular misconception of Darwinism, the idea that every man is for himself alone. But they stuck at the next level. Man, they decided, is a social

animal like the Indian hunting dog. He is much more than a dog—but this they did not see. And just as in a pack it is necessary to bully and subdue the younger and weaker for the general good, so it seemed right to them that the big dogs of the human pack should bully and subdue. Hence a new scorn for the ideas of democracy that had ruled the earlier nineteenth century, and a revived admiration for the overbearing and the cruel.

It was quite characteristic of the times that Mr. Kipling should lead the children of the middle and upper-class British public back to the Jungle, to learn "the law," and that in his book *Stalky and Co.* he should give an appreciative description of the torture of two boys by three others, who have by a subterfuge tied up their victims helplessly before revealing their hostile intentions.

It is worth while to give a little attention to this incident in *Stalky and Co.*, because it lights up the political psychology of the British Empire at the close of the nineteenth century very vividly. The history of the last half-century is not to be understood without an understanding of the mental twist which this story exemplifies. The two boys who are tortured are "bullies," that is the excuse of the tormentors, and these latter have further been incited to the orgy by a clergyman. Nothing can restrain the gusto with which they (and Mr. Kipling) set about the job. Before resorting to torture, the teaching seems to be, see that you pump up a little justifiable moral indignation, and all will be well. If you have the authorities on your side, then you cannot be to blame. Such, apparently, is the simple doctrine of this typical imperialist. But every bully has to the best of his ability followed that doctrine since the human animal developed sufficient intelligence to be consciously cruel.

Another point in the story is very significant indeed. The head master and his clerical assistant are both represented as being privy to the affair. They *want* this bullying to occur. Instead of exercising their own authority, they use these boys, who are Mr. Kipling's heroes, to punish the two victims. Head master and clergyman turn a deaf ear to the complaints of an indignant mother. All this Mr. Kipling represents as a most desirable state of affairs.

In this we have the key to the ugliest, most retrogressive, and finally fatal idea of modern imperialism; the idea of a *tacit conspiracy between the law and illegal violence*. Just as the Tsardom wrecked itself at last by a furtive encouragement of the ruffians of the Black Hundreds, who massacred Jews and other people supposed to be inimical to the Tsar, so the good

name of the British Imperial Government has been tainted—and is still tainted—by an illegal raid made by Doctor Jameson into the Transvaal before the Boer War, by the adventures, which we shall presently describe, of Sir Edward Carson (afterwards Lord Carson) in Ireland, and by the tacit connivance of the British Government in Ireland with the so-called “reprisals” undertaken by the loyalists against the perpetrators, or alleged perpetrators, of Sinn Fein outrages.

By such treasons against their subjects, empires destroy themselves. The true strength of rulers and empires lies not in armies and navies, but in the belief of men that they are inflexibly open and truthful and legal. So soon as a government departs from that standard, it ceases to be anything more than “the gang in possession,” and its days are numbered.

§ 6

The Idea of Nationalism.

We have already pointed out that there must be a natural political map of the world which gives the best possible geographical divisions for human administrations. Any other political division of the world than this natural political map will necessarily be a misfit, and must produce stresses of hostility and insurrection tending to shift boundaries in the direction indicated by the natural political map.

These would seem to be self-evident propositions were it not that the diplomatists at Vienna evidently neither believed nor understood anything of the sort, and thought themselves as free to carve up the world as one is free to carve up such a boneless structure as a cheese. Most of the upheavals and conflicts that began in Europe as the world recovered from the exhaustion of the Napoleonic wars were quite obviously attempts of the ordinary common men to get rid of governments that were such misfits as to be in many cases intolerable. Generally, the existing governments were misfits throughout Europe because they were not socially representative, and so they were hampering production and wasting human possibilities; but when there were added to these universal annoyances, differences of religion and racial culture between rulers and ruled (as in most of Ireland), differences in race and language (as in Austrian North Italy and throughout most of the Austrian Empire), or differences in all these respects (as in Poland and the Turkish Empire in Europe), the exasperation drove towards bloodshed.

Europe was a system of governing machines abominably adjusted. From the stresses of this maladjustment the various "nationalist" movements that played so large a part in the history of the nineteenth century drew their driving force.

What is a nation? What is nationality? If our story of the world has demonstrated anything, it has demonstrated the mingling of races and peoples, the instability of human divisions, the swirling variety of human groups and human ideas of association. A nation, it has been said, is an accumulation of human beings who think they are one people; but we are told that Ireland is a nation, and Protestant Ulster certainly does not share that idea; and Italy did not think it was one people until long after its unity was accomplished. When the writer was in Italy in 1916, people were saying: "This war will make us one nation."

Again, are the English a nation or have they merged into a "British nationality?" Scotsmen do not seem to believe very much in this British nationality. It cannot be a community of race or language that constitutes a nation, because the Gaels and the Lowlanders make up the Scottish "nation"; it cannot be a common religion, for England has scores; nor a common literature, or why is Britain separated from the United States, and the Argentine Republic from Spain? We may suggest that a nation is in effect any assembly, mixture, or confusion of people which is either afflicted by or wishes to be afflicted by a foreign office of its own, in order that it should behave collectively as if its needs, desires, and vanities were beyond comparison more important than the general welfare of humanity.

We have already traced the development of the Machiavellian monarchies into the rule of their foreign offices playing the part of "Powers." The "nationality" which dominated the political thought of the nineteenth century was really no more than the romantic and emotional exaggeration of the stresses produced by the discord of the natural political map with unsuitable political arrangements in the interests of such "Powers."

Throughout the nineteenth century, and particularly throughout its latter half, there has been a great working up of this nationalism in the world. All men are by nature partisans and patriots, but the natural tribalism of men in the nineteenth century was unnaturally exaggerated, it was fretted and overstimulated and inflamed and forced into the nationalist mould.

Nationalism was taught in schools, emphasized by newspapers, preached and mocked and sung into men. It became a monstrous cant which darkened all human affairs. Men were

brought to feel that they were as improper without a nationality as without their clothes in a crowded assembly. Oriental peoples, who had never heard of nationality before, took to it as they took to the cigarettes and bowler hats of the West. India, a galaxy of contrasted races, religions, and cultures, Dravidian, Mongolian, and Aryan, became a "nation." There were perplexing cases, of course, as when a young White-chapel Jew had to decide whether he belonged to the British or the Jewish nation.

Caricature and political cartoons played a large part in this elevation of the cult of these newer and bigger tribal gods—for such, indeed, the modern "nations" are—to their ascendancy over the imagination of the nineteenth century. If one turns over the pages of *Punch*, that queer contemporary record of the British

soul, which has lasted now since 1841, one finds the figures of Britannia, Hibernia, France, and Germania embracing, disputing, reproving, rejoicing, grieving.

It greatly helped the diplomatists to carry on their game of Great Powers to convey politics in this form to the doubting

Tribal Gods—national symbols for which men would die — of the 19th Century



general intelligence. To the common man, resentful that his son should be sent abroad to be shot, it was made clear that instead of this being merely the result of the obstinacy and greed of two foreign offices, it was really a necessary part of a righteous inevitable gigantic struggle between two of these dim vast divinities. France had been wronged by Germania, or Italia was showing a proper spirit to Austria.

The boy's death ceased to appear an outrage on common sense; it assumed a sort of mythological dignity. And insurrection could clothe itself in the same romantic habiliment as diplomacy. Ireland became a Cinderella goddess, Cathleen ni Houlihan, full of heartrending and unforgivable wrongs; and young India transcended its realities in the worship of Bande Mataram.

The essential idea of nineteenth-century nationalism was the "legitimate claim" of every nation to complete sovereignty, the claim of every nation to manage all its affairs within its own territory, regardless of any other nation. The flaw in this idea is that the affairs and interests of every modern community extend to the uttermost parts of the earth. The assassination of Sarajevo in 1914, for example, which caused the Great War, produced the utmost distress among the Indian tribes of Labrador, because that war interrupted the marketing of the furs upon which they relied for such necessities as ammunition, without which they could not get sufficient food.

A world of independent sovereign nations means, therefore, a world of perpetual injuries, a world of states constantly preparing for or waging war. But concurrently and discordantly with the preaching of this nationalism there was, among the stronger nationalities, a vigorous propaganda of another set of ideas, the ideas of imperialism, in which a powerful and advanced nation was conceded the right to dominate a group of other less advanced nations or less politically developed nations or peoples whose nationality was still undeveloped, who were expected by the dominating nation to be grateful for its protection and dominance.

This use of the word empire was evidently a different one from its former universal significance. The new empires did not even pretend to be a continuation of the world empire of Rome. They had lost the last connexion between the idea of the empire and the peace of the world.

These two ideas of nationality and, as the crown of national success, "empire," ruled European political thought, ruled, indeed, the political thought of the world, throughout the latter