BRAVE MEN CHOOSE

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by

GARTH LEAN

Then it is the brave man chooses,
While the coward stands aside,
Till the multitude make virtue
Of the faith they had denied.

James Russell Lowell

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G. D. L.

Oxford, December 1960

Introduction

In may 1959, on the morning after a well-known statesman died, a *Daily Express* writer posed and answered a far-reaching question. " Can a Great Power afford to have moral principles ? Most experts in diplomacy answer 'No'." Other writers in other papers, while praising this statesman's courage and tenacity, added in effect that to live too precise moral standards is a heavy handicap for a statesman in the modern world.

Earlier that same spring, a Greek Cypriot leader came to London privately to see Mr. Macmillan. He had recently experienced a moral and spiritual revolution which had cured his bitterness towards Briton and Turk. After speaking of this, he told the Prime Minister : "Events move so fast today, and on such a global scale, that no man is any longer clever enough to calculate the expedient thing to do. Our only hope is to find and do what is right morally. Then events can never overtake us—and we will find we have done the only thing which will outpace the immoral ideology of Communism." From such determination, applied by prominent Cypriots, Greeks, Turks and Britons, the "miracle of Cyprus" sprang.

Which of these propositions—the *Express* man's or the Cypriot's —is right ?

* * * *

The dictum of the *Express* writer is an extension of the well-known principle that a man's private morals have nothing to do with his work, for once morality is considered irrelevant it is but a step to proclaim it dangerous. The principle of irrelevance is simple. A writer, it says, can be dishonest with his wife or tax collector, can be a slave to hate or lust, and yet be an admirable guide to the nation in public affairs. It was in this pathetic faith that certain Press Chiefs placed known homosexuals—and even

Communists—in key positions, believing that their opinions would not affect their work; only to find later on that their papers were honeycombed by under-cover men.

Mr. Tom Driberg, a former Chairman of the Labour Party, and a prominent Church of England layman, illustrates the principle in his clever and revealing defence of Guy Burgess the runaway diplomatist. Homosexuality, he states, is an "irrelevant phenomenon" which "has nothing to do with the real issues in this case". And, by implication, little to do with any similar case—for he declares "there are many homosexuals serving with distinction in the Diplomatic Service, in Her Majesty's Government and in many departments of State" and writes with asperity of the "sweepingly puritanical warning against loose living of any kind" in the Privy Councillors' Committee's report on Security.[1]

In practice, if not in public admission, the belief that personal morality is "irrelevant" is already widely held. Thus, *Time Magazine* points out that a quarter of a recent British Cabinet had been through the divorce courts, while many politicians state privately that active homosexuality is firmly established in the higher ranks of politics. A celebrated author told the present writer twenty years ago that it greatly helped to get a play on the London stage if you practised or favoured homosexuality, and—as is natural—this state of affairs has now spread to other walks of life.

This particular manifestation of evil has spread from the "top". Widespread in certain leading schools, becoming more and more the mark of intellectual circles, it is no longer a bar to the highest positions. Such men stick together and are entrenched in positions of great power. Public acquiescence is such that it is becoming inconvenient, even dangerous, to raise a voice against it. When,

[1]When in 1960 two mathematicians attached to the U.S. National Security Agency fled to Russia, it was stated that the F.B.I. had warned the Agency that one of these men was a homosexual. President Eisenhower said at his Press Conference on September 7th that his experience as a military commander and as President had made him sensitive to the danger to the country created by "these human weaknesses in some people". (*Daily Telegraph*, September 7 and 8, 1960.)

for example, a theological Professor warned Oxford in a University Sermon against the spread of homosexuality in the University, he was met with protests, denials and personal ridicule from expected—and unexpected—quarters. The *Oxford Magazine*, the only journal of Senior Oxford, in the course of a cruelly mocking leader, said that by bringing the subjects of homosexuality and Oxford education together, the Professor had "debased both". In the spring of 1959, when the Oxford police arrested seventeen people, some of them undergraduates, in the course of two hours, for homosexual solicitation in the streets, the *Oxford Magazine* returned to the fray. It protested not at the evil itself, but at the police's methods in exposing it. The police should, it said, have given warning of their impending raid so that the law-breakers could take shelter. "Motorists are warned when police patrols are operating in a given area, and this, presumably, improves their driving. . . . If it is argued that the nature of the offences is different in these cases, this is readily agreed, but the relevance of the difference is not clear", stated the *Oxford Magazine*.

Meanwhile, many Churchmen are more and more lending their support to the campaign to legalise homosexual practices—leading, no doubt, to unions akin to marriage—between consenting males. The tragedy of such an attitude, even when conceived in the name of "compassion" or "Christian charity", is its assumption that Christ can no longer cure and satisfy every human need and longing. So thousands are condemned to the slavery of habits, from which joyful release is both possible and available.

The evidence in the *Lady Chatterley's Lover* case, far more than the verdict, illustrates how far we have slipped from Christian thinking. Celebrated men testified that this detailed description of thirteen admittedly adulterous acts is "highly virtuous" and constitutes a "moral tract" and a "profoundly moral book". A bishop spoke of the sex relationship as described by Lawrence as "in a real sense an act of Holy Communion", while teachers and clergymen stated that young people should be urged to read the

book as it would help them to grow up "mature" and "responsible".

A correspondent in *The Times* summed up the evidence by saying that he was "horrified and a little frightened . . . to hear, all this week, from the lips of prominent men and women that the simple virtues of modesty, decency, reticence and clean living are wrong". He added : "Someone should speak for the millions of ordinary people and let these self-appointed experts who parade through the Court know that they represent no one but themselves." Unhappily, this is not true.[1] They are the vanguard of a vast army, as the immense sale of the book shows. Sex, it is clear, is now being elevated into a religion—"a holy basis for a good life", to quote one of the witnesses—and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (although only second-class Lawrence) is becoming a kind of sacred book.[2] This cult, intentionally or unintentionally, provides a "respectable" and "cultured" cover for the pornography and stripteases of this "bawdiest age in English history".[3]

A slide in morals, as can be seen later in this book, leads to an increase of heartlessness. Is this one factor in the personal cruelty which has recently entered into our behaviour in places like Kenya and Cyprus ? Wrong in themselves, these errors have a disastrous effect ideologically. For while we allow ourselves brutality in forwarding our opinions or interests, we lend a cloak of respectability to the far greater enormities of Communist action in Hungary, Tibet or elsewhere.

To whose advantage, in this ideological age, is the maxim that private and public morality have no connection—or its extension that morality is impractical, even dangerous, in a democratic statesman ? Lenin made it clear years ago that the preliminary

[1]The Archbishop of Canterbury, however, rebuked the bishop. *The Times* said the verdict was "a challenge to society to resist the changes in its manners and conduct that may flow from it." Cardinal Godfrey denounced evil books at large. "Foul means foul, even with a fair name," he said.

[2]Dr. Soper, who declared himself "delighted" at the verdict, complained that the book "will now take on that holy communion look". (*Daily Telegraph*, November 7, 1960.)

[3]Richard Findlater, *The Tatler*, May 25, 1960.

to Communist take-over is the undermining of moral standards in the democracies. "Postpone operations until the moral disintegration of the enemy makes delivery of the mortal blow inevitable and easy", he said, while his friend and Ambassador in Sweden, Mrs. Kollontai, reported : "Immorality in the schools is progressing satisfactorily."

Such was the invariable and successful strategy of world Communism between the wars. A bishop's son, who had become a Communist agent in Scandinavia, told the present author and his friends in 1934 that his instructions were not to mention Marxism to the youth for some years, but to encourage heterosexual and homosexual looseness among them. "When they can no longer say 'No' to themselves, they will be unable to say 'No' to Communism," he was told.

The success of this strategy in Britain can be seen in Dr. Neal Wood's recent study *Communism and the British Intellectual.* Many of the poets, intellectuals and scientists who embraced Communism between the wars did so, he concludes, to escape from the "wasteland of nihilism", consequent upon the throwing over of moral standards. "Conscience, discipline, duty, honour, patriotism, virtue", he writes, "no longer represented what was once venerated. . . . A growing cynicism in regard to the Established Church, a demand for sexual freedom and an interest in birth control were the earliest symptoms of youthful bewilderment and revolt."

Communism's strategy is exactly the same today. It may be found necessary, as a matter of policy, to try to curb licentiousness within Russia or China, but for export Moscow and Peking stick to Lenin's old line. Moscow's instructions to their agents dealing with teen-agers are : "By making readily available drugs of various kinds, by giving the teen-ager alcohol, by stimulating with sex literature and advertising to him or her practices taught at Sexpol, the psycho-political operator can create the necessary attitude of chaos, idleness and worthlessness into which can be cast the solution which will give the teen-ager complete freedom

everywhere—Communism".[1] Mao Tse-tung is just as definite. Eudocio Ravines in *The Yenan Way* describes his careful training by Mao and the other Chinese leaders in how their ideology can be slipped in through the weak points in people's characters. "Make servants for us", Mao ordered Ravines, his most promising South American pupil, "people who serve us through greed, through fear, through inferiority, vengeance, what have you, but who serve us, the party, the cause of revolution." Hundreds of Chiang Kai-shek's officers had, Mao said, been won in this way. The former Premier of China, General Ho Ying-chin, acknowledged the effectiveness of this tactic when he said of the Kuomintang leadership : "We all loved our country, but many of us loved our mistresses too; and we never realised until too late that they were Communists". So every man of influence in the Free World is studied—and the appropriate temptation is dangled before his nose, while our society increasingly accepts that it is "irrelevant" and "puritan" to resist.

* * * *

The Marxist interprets history to show that morality is irrelevant and impractical in public affairs, and the cynics—like the brilliant Lytton Strachey—reinforce the doubt by their debunking. The present author has experience of how such literary softening-up led him, and many of his generation, to the verge of the Communist Party at University between the wars.

But history, in reality, tells a different story. When men have honestly tried to live by absolute moral standards, their experience has borne out what the Greek Cypriot said to the Prime Minister, that our hope is "to find and do what is right morally". This book enquires how certain men—three Parliamentarians, a soldier, some farm labourers, a Cardinal and a Prince—made that attempt in just over a century of British history, and what effect they had upon their age.

[1]Quoted by the Canadian Intelligence Service, April, 1959, from a synthesis of the Russian text books used in training Communist agents.

Each of them believed that human nature could be changed, and faced his own nature and his nation's with the candour of that hope. Each, in his varied degree, let Almighty God deal with the basic motivations of success, sex and security in his heart, and experienced the personal direction of God which comes to the man who listens, willing to obey. Each, though tempted like the rest of us, lived a straight moral life, and so achieved the sound and happy home which supported him in his larger service.

Their faith was not just a personal comfort. It was an explosive force. It made them set out, against tremendous odds and their own inclinations, to put right what was wrong in Britain and the world. All were, at some point, called traitors by much of the nation. Some, like the Tolpuddle men, suffered imprisonment, while others met with ostracism and contempt until, in old age or after death, their country suddenly proclaimed them patriots and took their achievements into the national legend.

Living in that national legend, we are apt to forget the violence and cruelty of the self-interest which they had to face. Thus a modern historian can actually write of our country's hundred-year-long, lion's share of the slave trade : "It was not humanity that Britain lacked, but only imagination." Watching from his deathbed the beginning of the fight to end the trade, John Wesley saw his compatriots more clearly. The last letter he ever wrote was to Wilberforce and drew on fifty years of battle with the malice of his loved countrymen :

> Unless the Divine Power has raised you up to be an *Athanasius contra mundum*, I see not how you can go through with your glorious enterprise in opposing that execrable villainy which is the scandal of religion, of England and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils ; but if God is with you, who can be against you ? Are all of them stronger than God ? Oh, be not weary in well-doing. Go on, in the name of God and in the power of His might. . . .

The secret of each man in this book was that he was clear that he was "raised up for this very thing". And it is encouraging that each pioneer, though he raised a lonely standard, attracted men and women to it on such a scale that in the end his cause has been victorious. Each owed his first impetus to a change of heart, and the thousands who rallied to them—the foot-soldiers of reform—were in the main men similarly transformed.

Through these men's lives a national pattern can be discerned. Shaftesbury would not have been able to win the battle of the Factory Acts, had not Wilberforce and his friends first succeeded in abolishing slavery, and it is unlikely that the pioneers of the Trade Unions and the Labour Party could have won their way, short of revolution, but for the mellowing influence of Wilberforce and Shaftesbury upon the wealthy classes. None of them, again, could have achieved their aims, but for the renaissance Wesley and his colleagues brought to the masses of England.

It is not that all these men agreed on every point—personalities more varied than Prince Albert and Keir Hardie, Sir Henry Lawrence and Cardinal Manning would be difficult to find—but that each did "the very thing" for which he was "raised up". In so doing each played his part in a Plan larger than his own, the Plan of God for his nation and the world. In an age of revolution, they saved Britain from a revolution of blood, and made her—in spite of her self-interest, cruelty and complacency—the leader of the world in their century.

1

A Statesman Lost—or Found?

ONE HUNDRED AND sixty years ago Britain was the world's leading slave trade nation. Her ships sailed out of Liverpool, Bristol or London for the West African coast and there, by direct seizure, purchase from Arab traders or barter with local chiefs, gathered their cargo. Often, encouraged by brandy and gunpowder, chiefs would go to war to capture slaves—or kidnap the whole population of one of their own villages in the middle of the night. At least once a British military governor delivered up a hundred African guests whom he was entertaining at his fort when slave captains arrived.

The men slaves would be packed between decks, chained in pairs on to shelves with only two and a half feet headroom. Women and children, if not chained, were packed equally tight, with no room to lie down and exposed to the savage lusts of the crew. 300 to 600 would be the normal cargo for a ship of 100 to 150 tons. By the time they reached America or the West Indies, ten per cent would normally be dead, while many others would be desperately ill. There, strong men would fetch as much as £40 a piece, while the sick or wounded would be sold off in cheap lots with the women and children.

In 1770 British ships carried over 50% of the 100,000 slaves exported from West Africa. Between 1783 and 1793 Liverpool slavers alone carried 300,000 to the West Indies, selling them for over £15,000,000 at a net profit of 30%. The profit on a round trip, taking into account the goods bartered in Africa and the general cargo brought back from the West Indies, was often well over 100% of the original outlay.

The number of slaves carried by the British in the eighteenth

century is difficult to assess, but certainly ran into millions. By the beginning of that century British traders were dumping 25,000 Negroes on the other side of the Atlantic each year, and an American authority says that Britain supplied three million to the French, Spanish and British colonies before 1776. Whatever the total, an equal number probably died in the ancillary processes—tribal warfare, transportation, suicide, early "discipline" and acclimatization. "Seasoning", the polite word used for the last two processes, was expected to carry off between twenty and fifty per cent of those who got so far.

For England the Trade was not just another successful business, but national policy. Legalized by royal charters of 1631, 1633 and 1672, by Act of Parliament in 1698 and by treaty in 1713, 1725 and 1748, "no less a statesman than the elder Pitt", says Lecky, "made its development a main object of his policy". The most prized fruit of Marlborough's wars was the Assiento clause of the Treaty of Utrecht, by which Britain wrested from France and Spain the virtual monopoly of the trade with America, on condition that she supply at least 144,000 slaves to the Spanish colonies within thirty years. Meanwhile, "The Institution", as slavery itself was called, was regarded as "the great pillar and support of the British plantation trade in North America".

"During the latter part of the eighteenth century", concludes Howse, "the slave trade was thought to be inseparably associated with the commerce and welfare, and even the national security of Great Britain. It had brought to British ports a prosperity they had never known before ; it had returned fabulous profits to ship owners and slave traders ;[1] it had built up an immense plantation system in the West Indies ; and it had provided, so the nation believed, admirable training for British seamen, and an essential recruiting ground for the British navy. It alone, according to general conviction, made possible the prosperity

[1]Such profits were widely distributed in England. "Many of the small vessels that import about an hundred slaves are fitted out by attorneys, drapers, ropers, grocers, tallow-chandlers, barbers, tailors, etc. Almost every order of people is interested in a Guinea cargo", said a Liverpool writer in 1795.

and even the solvency of the herring and Newfoundland fisheries, 'those great nurseries of seamen', and of the sugar refining and ship building and other associated industries."

The national investment involved was considerable. "Abolition", said Colonel Tarleton in the Commons in 1791, "would instantly annihilate a trade, which annually employed upwards of 5,500 sailors, upwards of 160 ships, and whose exports amount to £800,000 sterling, and would undoubtedly bring the West India trade to decay, whose exports and imports amount to upwards of £6,000,000 sterling, and which gave employment to upwards of 160,000 tons of additional shipping, and sailors in proportion." "The present British capital in the West Indies", stated the Duke of Clarence eight years later, "is equal to £100,000,000 sterling."

A trade where so much money and national prestige was concerned naturally had much influence in Parliament and in the country. Many planters and traders had used their new wealth to buy "rotten" and "pocket" boroughs. Thus Lord Chesterfield complained in 1767 that a borough jobber, to whom he had offered £2,500 for a seat, "laughed at" his bid and said that East and West Indian planters had "secured them all" at from £3,000 to £5,000 each. By the end of the century the trade not only had a powerful lobby, but controlled blocks of seats outright.

Such Members were supported by a larger number of public men who held that the "absolute necessity" of slaves to the West Indies meant that the trade could never be discontinued. Few, again, were prepared to meddle with the interests of the West Indian colonists in the years immediately after the loss of the American colonies—and it was felt that if the British ceased to carry slaves, her continental rivals would wax the stronger on her restraint.

Voices of protest against the trade were not entirely lacking. In 1772 Chief Justice Mansfield, after many hesitations, ruled that slavery was illegal in the British Isles and there was much agitation led by the Quakers and others, including a widely

read pamphlet by John Wesley. A case like that of the ship *Zong*, whose captain threw 132 slaves overboard in an attempt to defraud the underwriters, still further aroused the public. But where was the man to carry the fight through Parliament ? Burke, the great "political moralist", had deliberately decided not to take it up for fear that the storm aroused would shatter the Whig Party. Pitt himself dared not lead such a fight in opposition to the King and most of his cabinet. Any man who dared focus the issue in his person would have to say farewell to high office. And to be successful he would have to add to all his other qualities a delicacy of feeling and adroitness which would enable him to peg away year after year at the same cause, without boring or exasperating the House. Where was a man, so fearless, tactful and unself-seeking to be found ?

He was already being prepared. William Wilberforce had taken his seat as Member for Hull in September 1780 at the age of twenty-one, three months before his Cambridge friend William Pitt.

* * * *

Three years later, Wilberforce was at a point of rare opportunity. Although not a Minister, he sat on the Government Front Bench and was perhaps the only attractive debater on whom the young Prime Minister, Pitt, could call in his unequal battle with North, Fox, Burke and their massive majority of talent and numbers. He was, in addition, Pitt's most intimate friend, and that year had won Yorkshire for him in the teeth of the great families. As Member for Yorkshire, he was now a considerable person in his own right, ranking immediately after the top leaders of both parties : so important, indeed, that Pitt once offered to postpone the meeting of Parliament for ten days rather than face the session without him.

The Yorkshire election had revealed his unusual talents, for a great county seat had never before been won by a man of the mercantile class against the wishes of the county magnates. Several thousand Yorkshire electors had poured into York to

hear the rival spokesmen of the Coalition and the King's new Minister. The argument went on hour after hour. Suddenly their interest was riveted by the young Member for Hull. "He spoke like an angel", said Danby. Boswell, who happened to be there, reported, "I saw what seemed a mere shrimp of a man mount on a table : but, as I listened, he grew and grew, until the shrimp became whale." "We'll have this little man as our county Member", shouted the meeting.

Pitt, son of the great Chatham and himself an orator in an age of orators, said Wilberforce had "the greatest natural eloquence of all the men I ever knew". His voice, whose beauty has seldom been equalled in the history of Parliament, caused him to be called "the nightingale of the House of Commons". And he sang as he spoke. He was the star turn among the young men who often drank the night away together. "When I left the House", wrote George Selwyn in 1782, "I left in one room a party of young men who made me, for their life and spirits, wish for one night to be twenty. There was a table full of them drinking—young Pitt, Lord Euston, Berkeley, etc., singing and laughing *à gorge deployé* ; some of them sang very good snatches ; one Wilberforce sang the best."

Wilberforce sang at the Duchess of Devonshire's ball in 1782. He was in great demand thereafter, as it was known that the Prince of Wales had so enjoyed it that he would go anywhere to hear him.

His voice was matched by his charm, and his charm by his wealth. His merchant uncle had left him a nine-bedroomed villa in Wimbledon, where Pitt lived with him for much of five years and where the "grave young Minister" was one morning found to have been up early sowing the flowerbeds, with bits of their friend Rider's opera hat. "Hundreds of times I have roused Pitt out of bed and conversed with him while he was dressing. I was the depository of his most confidential thoughts", Wilberforce said years later. Pitt used the house as his own. He would pass Wilberforce a note in mid-debate that Eliot, Arden and he would

be there "before curfew for an early meal of peas and strawberries". Wilberforce was as free with Pitt's house. They were "exactly like brothers".

From this gay base Wilberforce plunged into London society. He delighted in the art of Mrs. Siddons and the company of Mrs. Crewe. The lovely Duchess of Gordon, who was rumoured to have raised the Gordon Highlanders by giving each recruit a shilling from her mouth, was a frequent visitor to his house. At Goosetree's, Pitt's favourite haunt in Pall Mall, and four other fashionable clubs he became a keen gamester, though never to the extent of Charles James Fox who had lost £100,000 before he was twenty-four, or the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire who lost in all over a million pounds. For Wilberforce added a certain Yorkshire shrewdness to his ardour, and to both a gentleness even rarer, for he gave up the devastating game of "faro" when, winning £600 one evening, he found those most heavily hit to be young men not yet entered into their fortunes.

Through it all, Pitt was the central figure—not only as a friend, but as leader who alone could save the country. So the two young men, identical in age, matched in brilliance, set out for high adventure together.

At this moment an unexpected event took place. Wilberforce, in a matter of months, underwent a change of character which shattered most of his conceptions, and left him a new man, uncertain where his path would lead. This change was a result of the spiritual surge in Britain initiated by the Wesleys and George Whitfield. Young Wilberforce, at the age of ten, had lived for some time with (in his mother's opinion) a too-Methodist aunt at Wimbledon. His mother, fearful lest he be "converted", removed him hastily to the gaieties of Hull, and ironically it was through Hull that this delayed character change came to the rising young Member of Parliament. For, at Hull, he had been under a brilliant young schoolmaster, Isaac Milner, and it was Milner, now a Cambridge don, whom Wilberforce asked to tour

the continent with him in the summer of 1784.[1] Talks with Milner led Wilberforce to a radical re-appraisal of his life. And back in London that autumn his mind was in a ferment.

It was at this time that Wilberforce began his life-long habit of spending the first hours of the day with God. "Began three or four days ago to get up very early", he writes on October 25th. "In the solitude and self-conversation of the morning had some thoughts which I trust will come to something." At the same time he began a private Journal, quite distinct from his diary, to record such thoughts. "Began my journal with a view to make myself humble and watchful. Bacon says : 'Great changes are easier than small ones'", is the first entry, on November 21st. In the next days, among many reappraisals of his way of life, he set down thoughts received for action. One is how to order his meditations. Another is to "open himself" to Pitt. A third—which comes persistently and is strongly resisted—is to "go and converse with Mr. Newton".[2] After a week of struggle he obeyed, and the interview was the turning point. "When I came away, I found my mind in a calm and tranquil state", he wrote.

Every character change of this magnitude leads to a break in settled habits. Indeed such alterations, with the attendant risk to valued relationships and associations, are often the first earnest or proof of the change itself. Wilberforce immediately resigned from his five clubs, gave up cards, dancing, mimicry, drinking through the nights—even attending the theatre. He was aware of the risks. "Though the interest I took in the well-being of my old friends was even greater than it had been before the change", he wrote, "yet, from obvious and natural causes, we were not likely to be such agreeable intimates to each other as heretofore."

[1]Milner, after a time teaching in Hull, went to Cambridge where in 1774 he passed first in mathematics with the word "incomparabilis" after his name. Two years later he was a Fellow of Queens' and the Royal Society. Later he held the Chairs of Natural Philosophy and of Mathematics, was President of Queens' and Vice-Chancellor, and lastly Dean of Carlisle.

[2]John Newton, by now Vicar of St. Mary Woolnuth and a famous preacher, had once been captain of a slave ship. Perhaps he is best known for his hymn: "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear."

Naturally it was of Pitt that he was particularly thinking. Here there was not only the question of long-shared recreations no longer possible, but also that Wilberforce felt he could "no longer be such a party man" as before. Wilberforce wrote to Pitt, Pitt replied affectionately, recognizing that "a new era" had begun for his friend, and a long talk resulted. Pitt, said Wilberforce years later, "tried to reason me out of my convictions, but soon found himself unable to combat their correctness, if Christianity were true. The fact is he had been so absorbed in politics that he had never given himself time for due reflection on religion." Sir Reginald Coupland sums up the interview : "The two parted, one fearing his country had lost a statesman, the other knowing that he had not lost a friend." Wilberforce was and remained, as Sir Winston Churchill writes, "the only person ever to enjoy Pitt's confidence."

Yet some awkwardness persisted, even if mainly because Wilberforce began to see men and events more clearly. "At the levée, and then dined at Pitt's—sort of cabinet dinner—was often thinking that pompous Thurlow and elegant Carmarthen would soon appear in the same row with the poor fellow who waits behind their chairs." And again, "Dined at E's—rout afterwards —what extreme folly is all this ! Yet much entertained."

It was at this moment that Wilberforce began to grip the idea of abolishing the slave trade. Various people had a part in suggesting it, among them the pioneer abolitionist, Clarkson, and the Middletons (he, as Lord Barham, was First Sea Lord at the time of Trafalgar). John Newton too played a part. And it certainly meant much to him that the final suggestion came from Pitt himself. As they sat one day, with Grenville, "at the root of an old tree just above the steep descent to the vale of Keston", Pitt said : "Why don't you, Wilberforce, give notice of a motion on the subject of the slave trade ?"

But the main factor, undoubtedly, was Wilberforce's own change and search for the will of God. "God Almighty has set before me two great objects, the suppression of the slave trade

and the reformation of manners", he wrote in his journal. "The first years that I was in Parliament I did nothing—nothing, I mean, to any good purpose. My own distinction was my darling object", he added later, linking his new aim and his new character.

So, early in 1787 Wilberforce set out to do what Burke had refused to do and what Pitt dared not do.

The Cause and the Man had met.

* * * *

Pitt's reluctance himself to lead the crusade for abolition came no doubt from a realistic assessment of the forces involved. His Secretary of State, Sydney, and the cynical and disloyal Chancellor, Thurlow, were two of the Cabinet who were against it, while Dundas, now Pitt's most intimate political adviser, was opposed to any crusading. The King and the Royal Family, united here as in little else, were also determined opponents of abolition. The future William IV usually led opposition in the Lords and as late as 1804, when the Commons had at last given Wilberforce a majority, four Royal Dukes took their seats in the Lords to vote his measure down.[1]

True, the great personalities of the Commons, Pitt, Fox and Burke, were for abolition ; but many good men were far from convinced. The great sailor Rodney stated that, during his time in the West Indies, he had never known a slave ill-treated, while Lord Heathfield said that by careful calculation he had determined that a slave on the way to the Indies had more cubic space of air to breathe than a British soldier in a regulation tent. A group of admirals went so far as to state that the happiest day in an African's life was when he was shipped away from the barbarities of his home land, and added that they had often envied the slaves their carefree existence in the Indies. The mass of Members were simply against change. They were told, and believed, that the sacred rights of property and liberty were threatened—the property and liberty of Englishmen at home

[1]The Duke of Gloucester, however, spoke for abolition.

and in the Indies. This was Nelson's view. He wrote from the *Victory* : "I was bred in the good old school and taught to appreciate the value of our West Indian possessions, and neither in the field nor the Senate shall their just rights be infringed, while I have an arm to fight in their defence or a tongue to launch my voice against the damnable doctrine of Wilberforce and his hypocritical allies."

The question of humanity did not arise in most people's minds, because slaves were regarded not as men, but as property. Thus, both sides in the *Zong* case of 1783 ignored the loss of 132 lives—thrown overboard by the owner to profit by the insurance. It was, said the Attorney General, "a case of goods and chattels", "a throwing of goods overboard to save the residue", and the law, said Chief Justice Mansfield, was "exactly as if horses had been thrown overboard". The Solicitor-General deprecated the "pretended appeals" to "humanity" and agreed that the master had the unquestioned right to drown as many as he wished without "any shew or suggestions of cruelty" or a "surmise of impropriety". All the Court allowed to be investigated was the "precise distribution of costs and losses". The Earl of Abingdon was stating a settled conviction of the age when he replied hotly to Wilberforce, "Humanity is a private feeling, and not a public principle to act upon".

Lord St. Vincent perhaps got nearest to expressing the secret feelings of the comfortable classes when he cautioned the House of Lords against setting up what was right against what was established. "The whole fabric of society", he said, "would go to pieces if the wedge of abstract right were once entered into any part of it."

So strong was the opposition of the trade and the inertia of the mass that Wilberforce had twenty years—until March 25th 1807, to be precise—to wait for success. Every year, except from 1800 to 1803, he brought the matter before the House. Every year Pitt and Fox stood with him—though there were times when Pitt, in the face of a critical war situation and a divided cabinet,

seemed to weary of well-doing and had to be spurred on by his ever-watchful friend. The whole campaign was given a good Parliamentary debut through what at the time seemed a disaster, but later appeared rather as an intervention of Providence. As he was preparing his first motion for the Commons, Wilberforce fell desperately ill. His life was despaired of. He called on Pitt to lead the crusade in his place. Pitt, greatly moved, agreed—and so it was Pitt, although Wilberforce was by now convalescent, who originally proposed abolition to the House.

In 1805 Pitt died. Fox became Prime Minister. With his better touch with the Prince Regent, Fox was able to secure the neutrality of the Palace and to press the measure more vigorously than ever Pitt had been able to do. So it was in part due to Wilberforce's ability to keep the two great rivals working together for abolition that finally, on that glorious March night, abolition was carried by 283 to 16.[1] Wilberforce sat in his seat and wept, as Romilly hailed him as the saviour of countless lives, and the House, on its feet to a man, gave him round on round of cheers. "Well, Henry," said Wilberforce gaily to his colleague, Thornton, that night, "what do we abolish next?"

Actually, the struggle had only just begun. First came the fight to obtain abolition by other countries—a cause pressed forward by British diplomacy at the Congress of Vienna and theoretically completed in 1817 when Spain and Portugal, on the receipt of British subsidies, agreed to ban the Trade. Then came a long struggle for enforcement, involving the policing of the high seas and agreements for the search of ships. Meanwhile Wilberforce saw ever clearer what to "abolish next" ; slavery itself must cease. And by the strange symmetry which seemed to rule Wilberforce's life this too was accomplished in his life-time. As he lay on his death bed in the last July days of 1833, news came from Parliament that the 800,000 slaves in British territories

[1]As the victors met that evening, one of them exclaimed : " Let us make out the names of those sixteen miscreants." Wilberforce looked up from a note he was writing on his knee : "Never mind the miserable sixteen. Let us think of our glorious 283 !" he said.

would be freed within the year. "Thank God that I have lived to witness the day in which England is willing to give twenty millions sterling for the abolition of slavery!" he exclaimed. Within a week he died.

* * * *

Meanwhile Wilberforce had not neglected the second "great object" which he believed God had "set before" him : the reformation of the nation's "manners". This was, in some ways, an even more formidable task than the abolition of the slave trade, for the cultured aristocracy who governed Britain had not the faintest feeling that their manners needed reforming. They thought of their times as the Age of Enlightenment. Their way of life is not unsympathetically set out by a recent writer :

"The prevailing spirit of the English upper-class society at the time was that of a true aristocracy, 'Do what you will and take the consequences' ", writes Miss Jaeger in *Before Victoria.* "There were few rules except the flexible ones of good taste. In general a man must fight a duel when challenged, and himself challenge when insulted. Everyone must meet his or her gambling debts, if no other. It was proper to be discreet in liaisons ; they might be well-known to everyone in society, but they must not be flaunted. . . . On the wife's side, it was incumbent on her to provide her husband with an heir of his own blood before following her own inclinations. If, as in the case of the Melbournes, the heir died and another man's son was left as legal successor, that was unfortunate, but everyone must make the best of it without fuss. . . . These general rules of civilized behaviour had been imported from the salons of Paris, whence had come the pervading fashionable influence for more than a century—such a line of conduct as is set out in Lord Chesterfield's *Letters to his Son.*[1] The famous letters, published after Chesterfield's death in 1773, received a good deal of hostile criticism. Nor was his adoption

[1]Dr. Johnson, who had some private grudges against Chesterfield, said the letters "teach the morals of a whore and the manners of a dancing-master".

of the French custom that husband and wife should have separate establishments imitated in this country even in the highest ranks of society. However a married couple might rarely see each other in the London season and it was considered provincial, if not positively vulgar, to invite them out together. . . . But if eighteenth century standards were lax, they were exacting in matters of tone and style. It was the fashion to be well-educated, to read widely, to appreciate the arts and literature, to know something of scientific developments, to have an open mind on every subject under the sun, and to discuss them all freely. Above all, it was desirable to possess that graceful insouciance which is the bloom on the cheek of a high civilization ; and the heroes of society were those who best realised this ideal."

"Insouciance" was easier to achieve in high society than elsewhere and the "high civilization" looked better from above than from below ; for eighteenth century society was built on the slave trade, child labour, the economic penury of the mass of people and political corruption in high places. If society was, in Trevelyan's phrase, "one vast casino" and young men could frequently win or lose £10,000 a night at White's or Brook's, it was because the multitudes laboured ceaselessly without hope. "Such frightful contrasts between the excess of luxury and splendour and these scenes of starvation and brutality ought not to be possible", wrote Greville of the Regent's England. "Before many years elapse these things will produce some great convulsion."

The theatre, although somewhat improved in performance by Garrick and others, was not attended mainly in a disinterested worship of art. It was no longer Shakespeare's theatre of the people, but a gentleman's pastime, often valued for its side-show. "A playhouse and the regions about it are the very hotbeds of vice", wrote Johnson's literary executor, Sir John Hawkins, in 1787. "No sooner is a playhouse opened in any part of the kingdom than it at once becomes surrounded by a halo of brothels". In fact, "culture" and immorality were much mixed and the restless

unhappiness of the cultured was masked by an insouciance of manner which, too often, turned to callousness towards others. The Regency bucks who spent their evenings seeking and beating up ancient night watchmen were an expression of the time.

The Church, meanwhile, was supported as an institution. "Scepticism, widely diffused through the upper classes, was of that indolent variety, implying a perfect willingness that the churches should survive, though the Faith should perish", wrote Sir Leslie Stephen. The Church itself took on the characteristics of the age. Absenteeism was rife—Bishop Hoadley, for example, never once visited his diocese of Bangor. Clergy, when looking for a living, would, if they intended to live in their parishes at all, stipulate for a sporting county and a convivial neighbourhood.

Wilberforce believed that these national manners must change if the country was to remain great. His first step had been to change his own ways. Up till then those few society people who had been affected by Wesley had been written off as cranks, but this could not quite be done with Pitt's best friend and one of the ablest speakers in the House. His uncompromising, but courteous, attitude caused many to think. Like Pitt they could not combat the correctness of his thinking "if Christianity be true". Being nominal Christians, they were strangely vulnerable to the challenge that they should live what they professed.

In 1787, the year when he put down his first motion on the slave trade, Wilberforce made a more public move. He induced George III to issue a Royal Proclamation against Immorality and Vice, in which existing laws on a number of moral questions were reiterated and the nation was called to a simpler way of life. The Proclamation was, according to Horace Walpole, "no more minded in Town than St. Swithin's Day"—but a Proclamation Society was founded which, in the next forty years, fought a winning battle with the old morality. By 1800, when Lord Auckland introduced a Bill in the House of Lords to forbid a divorcee from marrying the co-respondent, society could no longer take so airy a view as Walpole. As Lord Melbourne

remarked on another occasion, "Things have come to a pretty pass when religion is allowed to invade private life".

Wilberforce did not himself set great store by preventive legislation, though he did not, as so many do today, discount it either. "I know that by regulative conduct we do not change the hearts of men", he wrote once, "but even they are ultimately wrought upon by these means, and we should at least so far remove the obtrusiveness of temptation that it may not provoke the appetite which might otherwise be dormant or inactive." His main effort, however, was reserved for the changing of men and the creation of a new public opinion.

The Proclamation helped in this process. Its first significant result was that like-minded people began to gather round Wilberforce. Hannah More,[1] the playwright, who quite independently had undergone a change similar to his own, was encouraged by it to come out into the open, and the next year met him at Bath. Groups of like-minded people began to form in Bristol, Reading, Cambridge and elsewhere.

At the same time Wilberforce made a strategic onslaught on the clergy. Men like Newton and Milner, soon to be Dean of Carlisle, and Simeon at Cambridge, were strengthened, and Wilberforce set out to visit six bishops. Bishop Porteus of Chester, soon to be Bishop of London, took a major part. Gradually the reign of absentee clergy faded, and in 1813 Wilberforce was able to say that "the race of buck parsons is almost extinct".

A large part in this campaign was taken by the writings of Wilberforce, of the brilliant Miss More and of others of their friends. Sydney Smith ridiculed them as "the Society for the Suppression of Vice among those with less than £500 a year",

[1]Hannah More was a valued part of the select circle of Dr. Johnson, David Garrick, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Edmund Burke, all of whom remained her constant friends. Her play, *Percy*, was successfully presented at Covent Garden in December 1777 with a Garrick prologue, Garrick nicknamed her "Nine" (the embodiment of the nine muses) and Johnson judged her "the most powerful versificatrix in the English language".

but it is noticeable that Wilberforce's opening gun and Miss More's first two salvoes in her "methodical battery on vice and error" were addressed not to the poor, but the rich.[1] "To expect to reform the poor while the opulent are corrupt is to throw odours on the stream, while the springs are poisoned", she said. Later, she did extend her range. In 1792 she published a pamphlet *Village Politics* by Will Chip—Will Chip being a character of her creation whose homely philosophy caught the fancy of the poorer classes and sold prodigiously. Distribution was skilfully organised, and in the first year of the Cheap Repository Tracts, as they were called, two million were sold. Pedlars took them to the furthest parts of Britain. They became "the principal part of many an English cottager's library".

From now on men and women pledged to a new standard of conduct began to penetrate the top of society, as they had earlier infiltrated the masses. Thus, Selina Trimmer, the daughter of one of Wilberforce's friends, was induced to become governess to the Duchess of Devonshire's household, an eighteenth century family par excellence set at the very pinnacle of society. The heart of this home was a *menage à trois*, consisting of the Duke, the Duchess and Lady Elizabeth Foster. Others present included the three children of the Duke and Duchess ; two children of the Duke and Lady Elizabeth ; two older legitimate sons of Lady Elizabeth ; Caroline Ponsonby, the Duchess's niece, and a French refugee girl (the Duchess's daughter, Eliza, of whom Charles Grey was the father, having been born and stayed abroad until adopted by her father's family). "The emotional disorder of life beneath the drawing-room chandeliers—the Duchess and her friend usually involved in, and in fact, at heart constantly wretched from, either debts or complicated love affairs—was reflected in the disorder in the nursery floor above, where daily

[1] *Thoughts on the Manners of the Great* and *An Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World.* Whether Sydney Smith was more worried about the challenge to the poor or to the rich is questionable. All the same there were incidents when poor people were prosecuted under the Proclamation in a way which, rightly, called out protest.

existence was a mixture of luxury and scrimmage," comments a modern writer.

Such was Selina Trimmer's unlikely flock, round the fringes of which, as the girls grew up, hovered the Lamb boys, making mocking couplets about the guarding dragon. Many and varied were the adventures of governess and children—the marriage of William Lamb[1] and Caroline Ponsonby being the worst tragedy amongst them—but, in sum, it can be said that most of the children, made wretched by the insecurities of their "enlightened" home, turned more and more to Selina and determined that their children should live in different conditions.

The same happened with other families. Indeed the younger generation grasped the new ideas with such speed and enthusiasm that, as early as 1810, Wilberforce was warning young people in his weekly paper not to antagonise parents through zeal not sufficiently tempered by prudence and charity. The Princess Victoria was one of the young people indirectly affected, and by the time she came to the throne there were many young ladies of good family practising these new ideas. One of them, Mary Davy, the daughter of Victoria's gentle tutor of earlier days, found on arrival at court that several of the Queen's ladies were similarly disposed, and that a group of them met each morning before breakfast in Lady Barham's rooms. One such young lady even caught and reformed the notorious Earl of Waterford, the leader of rowdies who in the first years of the reign terrorised the approaches to London as "Springheeled Jack", and who thereafter, until his death in the hunting field fifteen years later, found himself reading a chapter of the Bible each day to his Louisa. All this was in the future, but already in Wilberforce's life-time a fresh breeze was blowing away a deal of dirt and heartlessness from countless corners of national life.

* * * *

Wilberforce came in for plenty of abuse from those whose interests he threatened. Then, as now, character assassination

[1]Later, as Lord Melbourne, Prime Minister.

was a ready weapon of organized evil. While he was yet a bachelor it was authoritatively rumoured that he was a wife-beater—and, said some, that his wife was a Negress. Others called him a Jacobin. "All abolitionists are Jacobins", said Lord Abingdon at the height of the French wars. It was this "smear" that finally set George III against abolition and, after 1792, made all Ministerial help impossible. In the first days of the crusade the King had been kindlier and whispered : "How do your black clients, Mr. Wilberforce ?" but in 1792 and again in 1795 he cut Wilberforce at the levee.

There were other objections. "If anything (i.e. rioting) happens to our island, I should certainly, if I was a planter, insist on Mr. Wilberforce being punished capitally", said Lady Malmesbury in 1791. Boswell, who had been one of the first to spot Wilberforce's abilities and with whom Wilberforce had a "serious talk" in 1792, now wrote :

> Go, W——, with narrow skull,
> Go home and preach away at Hull.
> No longer to the senate cackle
> In strains that suit the tabernacle ;
> I hate your little wittling sneer,
> Your pert and self-sufficient leer,
> Mischief to trade sits on your lips,
> Insects will gnaw the noblest ship.
> Go, W——, begone, for shame,
> Thou dwarf with big resounding name.

What had Wilberforce hit in Boswell that he squealed so ? Readers of Boswell's personal diaries could make a fair guess. Perhaps he saw himself in the "sober sensualist" of Wilberforce's *Practical View.*

John Wesley, who knew more about persecution than most men, said to Wilberforce in the last letter he ever wrote : "Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils ; but if God be for you, who can be against you ? "

How did Wilberforce maintain his poise in the face of such attacks ?

Undoubtedly he was armoured against them by his first decision. His journal makes it clear that his week-long struggle in November 1784 whether or not to visit Newton centred round a willingness to be identified with the keenest, and so most spoken against, spiritual force of the age.[1] This rising politician and established social success wanted to be better, but did not want to be thought odd. God won that struggle, for on January 12th Wilberforce wrote : "Expect to hear myself now universally given out as a methodist :[2] may God grant it may be said with truth." After that victory, he lost most of his fear of men.

In the day-to-day battle it was, more and more, his early morning with God—kept up in spite of late nights and chronic ill-health—and his Sundays which gave him strength and perspective on himself and the world.

In 1805, for example, when a "Peace Government" under Addington was installed, many felt that Wilberforce would be included. He was, he said, "for a little intoxicated and had risings of ambition". Sunday brought the cure. "Blessed be to God for the day of rest and religious occupation wherein earthly things assume their true size. Ambition is stunted. . . " runs the journal. He was not included, nor could be with his inconvenient convictions. To understand his victory over himself one needs to remember, with Trevelyan, that Wilberforce "could

[1]The thought to "go and converse with Mr. Newton", came to him on November 30th and again in the middle of the night. The December 2nd entry begins : "Resolved again about Mr. Newton. . . . It can do no harm for that is a scandalous objection which keeps occurring to me, that if ever my sentiments change, I shall be ashamed of having done it. . . . Kept debating." He went so far that day as to go to town to discover where Newton lived. December 3rd starts : "Had a good deal of debate with myself about seeing Newton. . . ." This debate resulted in him writing Newton "delivering it" himself "to old Newton at his church" on December 4th. In the letter he frankly says the "ten thousand doubts" he has about seeing Newton were all founded in pride—yet he tears his signature off the note and presses Newton twice "to let no man living know of it" and to remember that an M.P.'s face is very well-known.

[2]This term was used, at this time, for anyone who showed signs of living by the more exacting standards pioneered by Wesley. See *A Briton Abroad* page 93. Neither Newton, Wilberforce nor Lawrence left the church of their birth.

probably have been Pitt's successor as Prime Minister if he had preferred party to mankind".

From time to time ambition plagues him. In 1801 he notes it particularly—and counters : "I suspect that I had better allot more time, say two hours or an hour and a half, to religious exercises daily." In 1825 he refused a peerage and commented that he had never sought one because it would have been "carving for myself much more than a Christian ought to do".

His serenity was not easily achieved. Right through his life, but particularly in the early years of his "new era" his journal chronicles daily struggles. He kept a sharp watch on himself. In 1788 he keeps charts showing exactly how all his time has been spent—what with God (half an hour to one and a half hours daily, much more on Sundays), what on work, what in bed, what "squandered". He disciplined tongue, tastes and thoughts equally. "He was not labouring to reduce intemperate habits within the limits of that self-indulgent propriety which contents the generality of men", comment his sons. "It was his object to gain such control over his lower nature, that it should never impede his usefulness in social intercourse, or clog the freedom of his communings with God."

He knew the value of the first hours of the day : "In the calmness of the morning before the mind is heated and weary by the turmoil of the day, you have a season of unusual importance for communing with God and with yourself." He believed in detailed direction. He once asked a visiting clergyman if he believed in "particular providence". "Yes, on Great Occasions", replied his visitor. Wilberforce commented : "As unphilosophical as unscriptural—must not the smallest links be as necessary for maintaining the continuity, as the greatest ? Great and little belong to our littleness, but there is no great and little to God." Obedience to a very detailed thought had, he believed, saved him from drowning in 1803.

To the over-busy man of affairs, he said : "I have always found that I have most time for business, and it is best done, when

I have most properly observed my private devotions." His main worry for Pitt was : "Poor fellow, he never schools his mind by a cessation from political ruminations, the most blinding, hardening and souring of all others." To this same lack he attributed the suicides of Romilly and Castlereaugh. With peaceful Sundays, "the strings would never have snapped as they did from overtension".

So he won serenity for his battle—and faith. After a particularly scurrilous attack in the *Courier* he says, "I am rather animated than discouraged by it". "Remember", he said to Macaulay on another occasion, "that they will by-and-by appear only like the barking of cottage curs on our passing through a village, when on our progress in the journey of life." He certainly preferred curses to flattery. "I had rather he had spat in my face", he said of one flatterer.

Disappointment sometimes assailed him when, year after year, the cause was worsted in the House of Commons. When, in 1797, the advances of the previous year were wiped out (he was voted down by 74 to 70, while twelve of his friends preferred a comic opera to the Commons), he admitted : "This week I have occasionally felt a sinful anger about the slave-carrying Bill and the scandalous neglect of its friends." But when seven years later there was another failure at the same hurdle and the Clerk of the Commons said kindly that, with his experience of life, Wilberforce really should not expect to pass such a measure, Wilberforce replied, "I do expect to carry it ; and what is more, I feel assured I shall carry it speedily." His faith was resilient because it was not in himself, but in "God who has given the very small increase there has been and must give all if there be more".

* * * *

Wilberforce was sustained in his struggle by the fellowship of a unique band of like-minded friends. Six Members of Parliament ; a former Governor-General of India now in the House of Lords ; a director of the East India Company, with several

publicists, their families and the local vicar, they most of them lived together in the village of Clapham ; and those who did not were frequent visitors. They lived together both for the pleasure it gave them, and for the strength they thus gained in their public work. For although they came from different parties, they spoke in Parliament and Press with one voice when it came to questions of morality and humanity.[1]

They were a group "whose brains could not be denied, even by those who sneered at their religion". Monumental capacity for research, sparkling wit and literary style, business sagacity, intimate knowledge of India and the Indies, legal ability, oratory and parliamentary skill were all represented among them in full measure. "No Prime Minister", comments one historian, "had such a Cabinet as Wilberforce could summon to his assistance."

"They carried into their political life", says Howse, "the same standards that governed them elsewhere. Henry Thornton began his Parliamentary career by refusing to pay the bribe of one guinea a vote which was then a matter of course. And his attitude was the considered attitude of the group. Even Babington with less prestige than Wilberforce or Thornton remained in Parliament for twenty years without bribery. The whole group presented to the House of Commons the impressive spectacle of men who put principle before party or profit, 'who look to the facts of the case and not to the wishes of the minister, and who before going into

[1]Members of Parliament in Wilberforce's intimate circle included Henry Thornton, James Stephen, William Smith, Thomas Babington, Edward Eliot (Pitt's brother-in-law) and Charles Grant, who returned from India in 1790 and became the Director of the Court of Directors of the East India Company. All at some point lived in Clapham, as did Grant's friend, Lord Teignmouth (John Shore), when he returned from being Governor-General of India. Others living in Clapham were Granville Sharp, Zachary Macaulay, the principal researcher and literary work horse of the fraternity, and John Venn, the vicar. The most celebrated among the frequent visitors were Miss Hannah More, Dean Milner, Charles Simeon of Cambridge (whose sway in the Church, said Lord Macaulay, "was far greater than that of any primate") and Thomas Gisborne of Yoxall, Staffordshire, one of the great preachers of the age.

Outside this inner group and their families were a much more numerous band who increasingly worked with the men of Clapham—between twenty and thirty M.P.s, and others in proportion.

the lobby required to be obliged with a reason instead of with a job'. Nominally they may have been Tory, as were Wilberforce and Stephen, or Whig, as were Babington and Smith ; actually they were independent. To advance their causes and to uphold their principles they would support any government or oppose any government—even though their action might deal a death blow to their party or their friends." They were not, adds Sir George Trevelyan, crotchety or assertive of artificial scruples, but "the occasions when they made proof of their independence were such as justified, and dignified, their temporary renunciation of their party ties". The result was that they gained a unique moral ascendancy over the House of Commons.

They were bound by a common mind and way of life. Herein lay their effectiveness—their unique quality in English history. There have many times been at Westminster ginger groups of one kind or another dedicated to certain political ideas or to the acquiring of office for some political personality. In the past one thinks of the groups around Disraeli and Lord Randolph Churchill ; in the 1940s of the Young Tories and more recently of the Bevanites. But none of these groups was or is united by a common way of life. Nor are the weakly-linked associations of Christians which have appeared in various Parliaments in the world to-day. For these associations make no drastic moral demands upon the private and public lives of their members, and are sometimes even used by the immoral or subversive as a convenient "front".

Wilberforce and his friends were united by a common experience. Each had been through a decisive experience of rebirth similar to that which had transformed Wilberforce. "Stephen is an improved and improving character, one of those whom religion has transformed and in whom it has triumphed by conquering some strong natural infirmities", notes Wilberforce when his Parliamentary colleague became engaged to his sister. The gentle Eliot, Pitt's brother-in-law and a boon companion of

their Wimbledon days, was another. He was brought to his experience through the death of his wife, settled near Wilberforce and was an eager co-worker till his death in 1797. Henry Thornton said that Wilberforce's sincerity had saved his faith, damaged by the "disgust" felt in youth at seeing so many hypocritical Christians in his father's house. "My education was narrow", wrote Thornton in later life, "and his enlarged mind, his affectionate and understanding manners and his very superior piety were exactly calculated to supply what was wanting to my improvement and my establishment in the right course."

The influence of Wilberforce and his friends, says Howse, was due to "the intensity of their passion". The men of Clapham sharpened this passion and trued their judgement by constant touch with each other. Wilberforce lived with Thornton from 1792 until his marriage and then only moved to Broomfield, Eliot's old house, with its adjoining garden. Even on "what may ironically be called their holidays" they frequented the same watering places. In fact, they planned and worked in a kind of permanent committee that was never dissolved. They came together in their "Cabinet Councils" in Clapham or in Wilberforce's strategic stronghold in Palace Yard, and co-ordinated not only their plans, but their private lives, for all were dedicated twenty-four hours a day. Every day, every project, most personal plans were discussed in the larger light of God's plan for the whole and for the nation. "Decided with Grant and Thornton", "Cabinet Council with Stephen, Thornton and Macaulay", are the most common, inevitable entries in Wilberforce's diaries. When is it best to go into Yorkshire ? Is it right to resign from Parliament ? Shall I live at Broomfield or move to Kensington Gore ? In these, as in many smaller matters, Wilberforce naturally sought the thought of his friends.

They were frank with each other. "Stephen frankly and kindly reproved me", writes Wilberforce. "Two of the best friends I have in the world have endeared themselves to me by the same

friendly frankness,"[1] he tells another who has hesitated to tell his opinion. To another who has mentioned to him Stephen's criticisms : "I thank you for your truly friendly conduct and beg you to join my dear and excellent brother-in-law in helping me correct my infirmities. For this end the first step will always be to tell me my faults. . . ." Another Member of Parliament, the future Cardinal Manning's father—not a Clapham intimate, but one of the wider circle—received the same invitation.

Wives and children took a full part in the Clapham community. Indeed many marriages matured there, for Stephen married Wilberforce's sister, Gisborne Babington's, Babington Macaulay's and Macaulay one of Hannah More's pupils. Wilberforce went to Warwickshire for his wife. They married when he was thirty-six and he numbered "a domestic happiness beyond what could have been conceived possible" the chief among his blessings. She was not a "dominating personality" or a "political hostess" or a "Pavilion lady" he notes gratefully, and his greatest joy was to be with his family. Indeed the weightiest factor in making him resign the Yorkshire seat in 1810 was that he felt he was seeing too little of his six children. "I humbly trust," he wrote at the time, "that I can say that the spiritual interests of my children are my first object". And this meant giving them fun as riotous as he had once enjoyed in his "foining" days at Wimbledon. His greatest fear was that any of them should be "led to affect more than he really feels".

Wife and children were central to his life for another reason. The stream of people thronging to see him at any and every meal—Hannah More used to say that he lived "in such retirement that he does not see above three and thirty at breakfast !"—made him live in a "kind of domestic publicity". And he knew it was just that his character should be judged by the quality of his home.

Many delightful pictures have been given of the common life

[1]To Stephen himself, who had charged him with sacrificing principle to his friendship for Pitt, he wrote : "Go on, my dear sir, and welcome. I wish not to abate anything of the force or frankness of your animadversions. For your frankness I feel much obliged . . . . Openness is the only foundation and preservative of friendship."

at Clapham. One of the circle, John Colquhoun, tells at length of the rapidly changing scene—from the gaiety of the gardens, with Wilberforce in the midst of frolicking children, to the grave cabinet sessions in Thornton's oval library or the evenings of brilliant conversation at Wilberforce's, Teignmouth's or Grant's. "There was plenty of freedom and good fellowship and reasonable enjoyment for young and old", says Sir George Trevelyan. "There can have been little that was narrow and nothing vulgar in the training that produced Samuel Wilberforce, and Sir James Stephen, and Charles and Robert Grant, and Lord Macaulay." "It is a travesty which represents the men of Clapham as being made stern and gloomy by an austere religion", adds Howse. "Stern dealing with their own shortcomings did not make them sour towards others. Those who knew them best emphasize an unusual happiness as the striking feature of their family life."

So "the saints", as Wilberforce and his friends were called not unkindly in the House, built up their common experience. It was this experience—and not any of the causes they championed together[1]—which united them. Change was for them the root, social attitudes the fruit.

"It was, indeed, a unique phenomenon—this brotherhood of Christian politicians", comments Coupland. "There has never been anything like it since in British public life."

* * * *

[1]Besides abolishing the slave trade, these men succeeded in humanising both the prison system and the penal code ; popularising education at a time when even Cobbett thought popular education was "despicable cant and nonsense"; stimulating world missions and at least partially awakening the national conscience to the whole social problem. They founded the London (1795) and the Church (1797) Missionary Societies and championed Catholic Emancipation as well as that of "dissenters". They also backed Pitt's repressive measures after the wars, a fact which many have used to brand them as reactionaries. Certainly they were unmistakably men of their age, but in most of their views and in all their chosen campaigns, they heralded and made inevitable a more liberal age. See Howse in *Saints in Politics*, who shrewdly states: "Wilberforce threw himself against the most titanic iniquity of his time. And to reproach him, and those who, with him, spent a lifetime of unwearied toil in exposing and exterminating one iniquity, for not also exposing and exterminating another is like reproaching Columbus for not also discovering Australia."

Wilberforce was eager that everyone he met should have the chance to discover the same enriching experience which he and his friends had found. This, to him, was the main point of his continuing to go into society. He would often spend a quiet hour thinking out what he called "launchers"—topics which he could gaily and naturally, turn into serious channels. Among his papers was found a "Friend's Paper", marked "to be looked at each Sunday", listing thirty of his friends. Against each name stood thoughts of how best to help each the next step to the end he so greatly desired for them. His aim was the same, whether the friend was a neighbour's footman, a prisoner under sentence or the Czar of all the Russias, "whose vein of mysticism found something kindred and attractive in Wilberforce's conviction of the providential ordering of the world".

Wilberforce, of course, had many disappointments. But it is certain that he was none the less greatly sought after, for the wit of his conversation and the delight of his company. The famous Fanny Burney caught his charm in a letter to her father from Sandgate : "Four hours of the best conversation I have ever, nearly, enjoyed. . . . I had much to communicate, and his drawing me out and comments and episodes were all so judicious, so spirited, so full of information, yet so unassuming, that my shyness all flew away and I felt to be his confidential friend, opening to him upon every occurrence and sentiment with a frankness that is usually won by years of intercourse. I was really and truly delighted and enlightened by him. . . . That his discourse should be edifying could not, certainly, surprise me ; but there was a mixture of simplicity, and vivacity in his manner that I had not expected, and found really captivating." The celebrated Mme de Stael, coming to London, planned long and with exquisite strategy to get him to dinner with her. Afterwards she said : "I have always heard that he is the most religious, but I now know that he is the wittiest man in England." "Witty without sting, tender without softness", runs a profounder explanation of his attraction. Then there was his gaiety : "Singing like a blackbird

wherever he goes, he always has the spirit of a boy." And it was genuine right through : "If he sparkled in general society, he shone at home," wrote his sons. "Never, even in the most unguarded moments of domestic privacy, did his family see obscured, in word or deed, the fullest sunshine of his kindliest affections."

Genuine, too, was his bearing in the House. In his first years there, when "my own distinction was my darling object", his style of oratory had been severe and caustic—so that both Fox and Pitt had rebuked him for "undue personality". Now he was known as "a being gifted with more than human kindness" and "his tone, his manners, his look were all conciliatory even to persuasive tenderness". It was this genuine goodness that won him the affection, as well as the respect, of the House so that when, being always a man of poor health, he retired to a back seat under the gallery and went fast asleep, "to have disturbed the slumber of Mr. Wilberforce would have been, with one consent, scouted as a breach of privilege, for which no ordinary apology could have atoned".

Even an old reprobate like the Prince Regent treated him with respectful affection. When after Waterloo Blucher's ADC reported to the Prince and said he had orders to report to one other, Mr. Wilberforce, the Prince replied, "You will be delighted with him." Later that year, Wilberforce being in Brighton, the Prince pressed him to come to dinner. He reminded him of the first time they had met, when Wilberforce had sung at the Duchess of Devonshire's ball in 1782. "All unawares", relates Coupland, "the Prince had provided Wilberforce with a 'launcher' and the result was delightful. 'We are both, I trust, much altered since, Sir'—was Wilberforce's startling reply. The Prince took a strong hold on himself. 'Yes', he responded with somewhat laboured gravity, 'the time which has gone by must have made a great alteration in us.' 'Something better than that, too, I trust, Sir.' Even now the Prince was not deterred. He repeated his invitation to dinner and assured Wilberforce, with engaging candour, that

'he should hear nothing in his house to give him pain.' And so it was both on that occasion and at another dinner party later on."

Many are astonished that a man of Wilberforce's principles was so welcome, indeed so sought after and beloved in those loose Regency days, that, as a contemporary writes, "every face lit up with pleasure at his entry" late at a big dinner. Perhaps some of Wilberforce's secret lay in his being so crystal-clear and so wholly unself-conscious about his principles. Being free from worry about himself, he was free, with the great delicacy and sweetness that was his, to think of others. People felt that in him.

And there was no touch of superiority about him. As Coupland says, "His moral standards were not, so to speak, of his own prescription. A revelation had come to him, without any conscious volition on his part, and in the light of it he was bound to live as he did. To any of the others, any day, he believed, the same call might come with the same results. . . . He could refuse to conform without seeming to condemn—a rare gift." Rare, yes. But the necessary equipment of one who goes into society not to boost himself, but to win others.

As may well be imagined, the person whom—next to his own children—Wilberforce most desired to see a "true Christian" was Pitt. Winston Churchill sees this as a contest between Wilberforce and Pitt's other close associate, Henry Dundas. In the centre he pictures "the grave, precocious young statesman, eloquent, incorruptible and hardworking". On one side is Dundas, "a good-humoured, easy-going materialist, embodying the eighteenth century with its buying of seats, its full-blooded enjoyment of office, its secret influences and its polished scepticism" ; on the other, Wilberforce "who belonged to the generation which questioned the cheerful complacency of the eighteenth century". Wilberforce, he says, "became the keeper of the young minister's conscience", holding him not unsuccessfully to higher ways and when he seemed tardy "never permitting a syllable of doubt to be spoken unchallenged about his friend". But Pitt regarded himself as dependent on the votes and interests for which Dundas

stood and continually compromised with them. Cataloguing the failure of so many of Pitt's policies, Churchill concludes : "Pitt had been overcome by the dead hand of the eighteenth century." Wilberforce commented, "For personal purity, disinterestedness, integrity and love of country I have never known his equal." But, for himself alone in his journal, he added : "The truth is that great man as he was he had very little insight into human nature."

Wilberforce did not see himself as the "keeper of Pitt's conscience". His concern was, rather, to "keep" his own. He strove to decide his attitude to every question by the light that God gave him in the quiet morning hours. Although he found—for his convictions were far more Tory than Whig—that he could back Pitt more often than he had at first feared, he many times had to oppose him. These times caused him much pain : "I am grieved to the heart, fearful that I must differ", he notes as one such issue arises. During the 1794–5 crisis over Pitt's war policy, the difference was sharp. Wilberforce felt compelled to speak out—and was, for a time, one of the most unpopular men in England, ignored by the King and isolated from Pitt. But after some months, Pitt came round to his view and there was a merry party in Eliot's garden at Battersea "walking, foining, laughing and reading verses as before". Again in 1797 Wilberforce felt compelled, privately and then publicly, to warn the Government against financial dishonesty and extravagance and he notes in his diary : "Saw little of Pitt this last week—vexed him by plain dealing." There was a clash on a more personal matter when Wilberforce heard that Pitt had fought a duel with Tierney. Horrified, Wilberforce hurried to London and put down a motion against duelling. "Your motion is one for my removal", Pitt wrote him angrily, and after some days, Wilberforce, seeing that Pitt's premiership and not duelling would be the point voted upon, withdrew the motion. But Pitt's mute appeal to his old friend in the debate on the corruption that Dundas, now Lord Melville, had allowed to develop under him at the Admiralty

was less successful. "It required no little effort to resist the fascination of that penetrating eye", commented Wilberforce later : but he did resist and his speech was the decisive word which drove Dundas into retirement. Some say this event so weakened Pitt's cabinet that it hastened his death : but Pitt never reproached Wilberforce for it because he knew that Wilberforce could do no other.[1]

These occasions of divergence, no less than the more numerous times of consultation and agreement, had a great influence upon Pitt. It is said that only two events ever caused Pitt to lose sleep—the naval Mutiny at the Nore and Wilberforce's first opposition. Pitt knew that prudence, no less than friendship, laid it upon him to match his measures to Wilberforce's conscience and so to carry with him that powerful independent voice.

Wilberforce, however, had dreamed of something greater than influencing Pitt in this way. He had hoped to implant a self-propagating faith in his friend. Thus, in the final sketch of Pitt which he wrote in 1822, he returns to his respect and admiration for his friend, and to his regret that Pitt had not resolved at the outset of his career "to govern the country by principle rather than by influence". From such a resolve, he wrote, tremendous consequences would have flowed. The whole body politic would have been cleansed and strengthened, and even such a cataclysm as the French revolution would have left it unshaken. "Such a spirit of patriotism would have been kindled, such a generous confidence in the King's Government would have been diffused throughout all classes", continued Wilberforce, "that the very idea of the danger of our being infected with the principles of French licentiousness . . . . would have been an apprehension not to be admitted within the bosom of the most timid politician ;

[1]Wilberforce, however, refused to join in the hunt and impeachment of Dundas. "Must I join the triumph over a fallen friend?" he exclaimed to one who urged him to do so. Dundas must have felt this objectivity, for the next time they met, years later in a narrow passage between the Horse Guards and Downing Street, he greeted Wilberforce warmly. "I would have given a thousand pounds for that handshake", noted Wilberforce in his diary.

while the various reforms which would have taken place and the manifest independence of Parliament would have generated and ensured in the minds of all reasonable men a continually increased gratitude and affection for the constitution and laws of the land. On the other hand the French . . . could never have been so blind to their manifest interest as to engage their people in war with Great Britain from any idea of our confederating with the Crowned Heads of Europe to crush the rising spirit of liberty in France."

Wilberforce believed that had Pitt made the attempt to "govern by principle" from the start, he would have succeeded. "No one who had not been an eye-witness could conceive the ascendancy which Mr. Pitt then possessed over the House of Commons", he wrote. "All his faculties then possessed the bloom of youthful beauty as well as the full vigour of maturer age. His mind was ardent, his principles pure, his patriotism warm, his mind as yet unsullied by habitually associating with men of worldly ways of thinking and acting, in short with a class that may not be unfitly termed 'trading politicians'." Yet something more would be needed, "something", in Coupland's summary, "in the nature of a miracle, something, at any rate, beyond the unaided power of man". It was this greater experience which Wilberforce always coveted for his friend, an experience which would enable him to be not just a bold reformer, but a statesman controlled by God. Again and again Wilberforce's imagination takes fire as he considers the effect of such a liberation upon Pitt and those near to him, upon the use of his brain, his choice of friends, his appointments in Church and State. "Who can say what would have been the effect of those moral and spiritual secretions which throughout the whole political body would have gradually produced their blessed effects ?"

It was with this vision before him that Wilberforce often sought to continue that "serious talk" begun in 1784. In 1792 he went down to Walmer with this in mind, failed the first day and was much distressed. "At night alone with Pitt, but talked only

politics—did not find myself equal to better talk. . . . O Christ, help me." Next day, he did better. "Had some serious talk with Pitt—interrupted, or should have had more." At the time of Pitt's death he adds in sadness : "I have a thousand times wished and hoped that a quiet interval would be afforded him, perhaps in the evening of his life, in which he and I might confer freely on the most important of all subjects. But the scene is closed—for ever."

* * * *

It was partly in this hope of reaching Pitt that Wilberforce wrote his book : *A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians in the Higher and Middle Classes in this Country Contrasted with Real Christianity*. It was an unprecedented thing, in those days, for a leading Parliamentarian to write any considerable work, leave alone one on how to live—and the book, so direct, courageous and sure of touch, had an extraordinary effect. "It was, at the same moment, read by all the leading persons in the nation. An electric shock could not be felt more vividly and instantaneously", writes one authority. "Everyone talked of it. . . . It was acknowledged that such an important work had not appeared for a century." It sold prodigiously in Britain and America, and was translated into French, German, Spanish, Italian and Dutch.

Wilberforce sent an early copy to Pitt with the relevant passages—parts of chapters four and six—marked in the margin. No one knows just what effect it had upon Pitt, but we know that Burke spent much of his last two days in the world reading it. One of his last messages thanked the author for the "unspeakable comfort" it had brought him. Henry Thornton noted that many of Wilberforce's gayest political friends read it, admired it—and recognised themselves in its pages. Legh Richmond, who was to succeed Hannah More and sell five million of his homely tracts in his life-time, declared that the author of that book was his "spiritual father". Arthur Young, the agricultural expert, was similarly transformed by reading it, and thereafter attempted to alter his patron, and former Prime Minister, the Duke of Grafton.

Not everyone was so grateful for Wilberforce's attentions. A head of the Colonial Office in his later years, whom he had felt bound to pursue somewhat relentlessly, remarked : "It is the fashion to speak of Wilberforce as a gentle, yielding character, but I can only say that he is the most obstinate, impracticable fellow with whom I ever had to do." Coming away from a Minister who had appointed a man of notoriously immoral character to high office abroad, Wilberforce said : "I conceived that the honour of the country was involved, and therefore I plainly told him my mind, and that he would have to answer hereafter for his choice, but he was so angry that I thought he would have knocked me down."

His interest in other people was limitless. Sir James Mackintosh said he was the most 'amusable' man he ever met, because he was always interested in what you wanted to talk about. Sir James Stephen adds : "He not merely endured but rejoiced in companions, whose absence would have been a luxury to anyone but himself. When Pitt, Burke and Sheridan were not to be had, he would take the most cordial pleasure in the talk of the most woollen of his constituents at Leeds. When Madame de Stael and Mrs. Crewe were away, some dowager from the Cathedral Whist Club became his inspiring muse, and for the moment, would seem herself to be half inspired. Dullness fled at his approach. The heaviest countenance caught some animation from his eye." And to the end he kept one golden rule—never to monopolize the conversation.

Many spoke of the "sunshine" of Wilberforce's last years. All his life he had triumphed over ill-health, and he was still serene now that lung trouble and failing sight were added to his old gastric condition. Now, too, he showed himself independent of material riches. All his life he had been well-off—and open-handed, in one year giving away £3,000 more than his income.[1]

[1]With a friend, he for many years supplied a pension for Mrs. Charles Wesley. He helped to clear Pitt's debts and, at a time of national emergency, initiated a Voluntary Contribution which yielded £2,300,000. He himself donated an eighth of his income.

On retiring he had bought Highland Hill, building a church there for £5,000, when suddenly, through backing a large agricultural venture for his eldest son William, he lost almost everything. His diary entry two days later was : "What gives me repose in all things is the thought of their being His appointment." "I can scarce understand", he added later, "why my life has been spared so long except it be to show that a man can be as happy without a fortune as with one." He refused the offer of six friends to make up his losses, and simply rejoiced that he was now forced to live with his clergy sons, whom he visited in rotation.

One of the sons brought the young William Gladstone to have breakfast with Wilberforce a few days before he died. The event had a dramatic undercurrent, for Gladstone's first big speech a few weeks earlier had been in defence of his father's slave-holding interests and against the too immediate freeing of the slaves. Gladstone was greatly touched. "He is cheerful and serene, a beautiful picture of old age in sight of immortality", he noted in his diary. "Heard him pray with his family. Blessing and honour are upon his head." Ten days later Gladstone attended the funeral in Westminster Abbey : "It brought solemn thoughts, particularly about the slaves." Years later Gladstone was to record those thoughts : "I can now see plainly enough the sad defects, the real illiberalism of my opinions on this question." So, in death as in life, Wilberforce moulded Britain's leaders.

* * * *

At their first interview after Wilberforce's change, Pitt had, it seems, feared that England had lost a statesman. What is the truth of the matter in the perspective of the years ? Was it a case of a statesman lost or a statesman found ?

It is at once clear that Wilberforce's indirect influence was immense. The effect of his presence in the House upon both Pitt and upon the statesmen that followed him can not be denied. He became not just "the keeper of Pitt's conscience", but a kind of national conscience. If Eden, in 1956, had had beside him a man

of Wilberforce's fearless and unself-righteous principle, what might have been the result ?

Within the country at large the abolition of the slave trade gave him much the same position as the winning of Waterloo gave to Wellington. Southey wrote that his name was the greatest in the land. "When Mr. Wilberforce passes through the crowd", an Italian diplomat once remarked on the day of the opening of Parliament, "everyone contemplates this little old man, worn with age and head sunk upon his shoulders, as a sacred relic—as the Washington of humanity." As such was he treated by the crowned heads of Europe after Waterloo, when his letters were treated as high diplomatic documents and the Czar sat long hours with him under his walnut tree at Kensington.

So great did his reputation become that when Queen Charlotte came to England to claim her rights, it was to Wilberforce that people turned as the only hope of mediation between her and the new King. "If there is anything to be done," wrote William Lamb (later Lord Melbourne) to him, "your presence and influence will do it."

But the direct effect of his actions on the world of the next hundred years is an even clearer measure of his statesmanship. Three instances must suffice.

First, he brought a new climate to British political life. John Marlowe has pointed out in a recent book that during the eighteenth century "the veniality in political life was a counterpart of the coarseness and profligacy of the social life of the English governing classes". There was, he continues, a quality about it even more repulsive than veniality—the quality of heartlessness. Wilberforce and Shaftesbury, he says, made "heartlessness unfashionable" and "set an enduring fashion in respectability which no politician (of the nineteenth century) could afford to neglect". Wilberforce and his friends, in particular, pioneered political integrity in an age of corruption and began a tradition, only now being questioned, that self-restraint and the ability to

build a sound home are important qualifications for anyone who aspires to lead a nation.

Secondly, Wilberforce and his colleagues did much to shape and inform Britain's main gift to the world, parliamentary democracy. For they developed new ways of arousing public opinion and relating it to Parliament, which have been followed by every reformer since then and becomes an essential part of representative government. Lord Elton writes of it : "Without roots in the nation a Parliament must wither ; it can only survive and flourish if in constant and intimate contact with the electorate. Such contact is not to be taken for granted. . . . Intimate contact between the British Parliament and the British People dates from the Abolitionist campaign". It was the lack of such contact—and of the moral and spiritual content which the "saints" permeated through the whole—which, Lord Elton believes, accounts for the failure of Parliamentary institutions in some countries which established the form without first creating the spirit to enliven it. It was Wilberforce and his friends who insured for Britain that "the new democracy would have its roots in religion".[1]

Lastly, there is Wilberforce's legacy to Africa. He lived at the beginning of the European advance into Africa. But for his work the whole of Africa must have been converted into a vast slave Empire, run on the same lines as the West Indies hitherto. Moreover, as Coupland remarks, Wilberforce and his friends "planted in the public conscience of their countrymen not merely a sensitiveness to wrong, but a positive sense of obligation towards the backward peoples of the world. And in so far as the conduct of British Governments . . . was to be inspired throughout the coming century by the ideals of trusteeship, the honour of creating

[1]Also, he might have added, that it became a reforming democracy, for as O. A. Sherrard says, "abolition was, in a sense, the parent stem from which all the other reforms sprang. Being founded on the Christian belief in the brotherhood of man and actuated by the demands of Christian charity, it had offered for forty years an example that compelled respect . . . and in the end turned the thoughts of those less interested in the distant and unseen evils of slavery to the only too obvious evils at home". The astounding victory made men believe anything was possible.

the tradition lay with them". "It would not be too much to say", adds Lord Elton, "that the instincts aroused and personified by Wilberforce and Burke had insured that the Second British Empire would endure, because they had insured that it would be an empire of an entirely different kind (from the First)." Certainly, the modern Commonwealth would be unthinkable without them.

G. M. Trevelyan, describing abolition as "one of the turning events in the history of the world", emphasises the amazing timing of this liberation : "It was only just in time. If slavery had not been abolished before the great commercial exploitation of the tropics began, Africa would have been turned by the world's capitalists into a slave-farm so enormous that it must eventually have corrupted and destroyed Europe herself, as surely as the world-conquest under conditions of slavery destroyed the Roman Empire."

The timing was more than human. Wilberforce lived that higher statesmanship which consists in executing a divine plan—a plan which is always available for statesmen, as for ordinary men, but which has to be actively sought and obeyed.

2

The Dangerous Earl

ONE GUSTY DAY in the second half of the nineteenth century, two boys struggled up the steps of Lord Shaftesbury's house in Grosvenor Square with a sack. They dumped it on the doorstep, rang the bell and ran for a waiting cab. Inside the sack was found Lord Shaftesbury's gold watch—and another boy.

The watch was precious because it was the gift of an old servant woman who, before he was eight and against the influence of school and parents, had set Shaftesbury on his life's course. A few days earlier, in one of his numberless "perambulations" through the poorest parts of London, it had been stolen. Now a community of thieves had sought out the miscreant and delivered him and his booty to Grosvenor Square. Shaftesbury talked to the boy, forgave him and sent him to school.

To no other man of his time and class could such a thing have happened ; but with Shaftesbury the incident seems natural, symbolic. To Melbourne he might be "the most dangerous Jacobin in Your Majesty's dominions", but to the masses he was "the People's Earl" in whom, far more than in Karl Marx, their hopes focussed. He did not fail them, for, as the Hammonds state, he did more than any man or Government "to check the raw power of the new industrial system."

* * * *

Anthony Ashley Cooper[1] had every chance to study the heartlessness of the British governing class in his home and parents. His father, the sixth Earl of Shaftesbury, was for forty years an efficient, if dictatorial, Chairman of Committees in the House of

[1]He became Lord Ashley in 1812 and Earl of Shaftesbury in 1851.

Lords. He was honest in the main, as is shown by his impartial dealing with bills coming before him during the railway mania of 1844–6. But he was heartless to the point of callousness. His wife, a daughter of the Duke of Marlborough, was a fascinating creature, absorbed in fashion and society. Neither had much time for their children.

"We were brought up with great severity, the opinion of our parents being that, to render a child obedient, it should be in constant fear of its father and mother", wrote their eldest son years later. He recalled many days when, left to the servants' care, he had been "pinched with starvation" and had shivered the nights away with too little on his bed.

The fashionable school at Chiswick to which he was sent at the age of seven was no better. "The memory of that place makes me shudder", he wrote in old age. "The treatment was cruelty and starvation. . . . Nothing could surpass it in filth, bullying, neglect and hard treatment of every sort ; nor had it in any respect any one compensating advantage, except, perhaps, it may have given me a horror of oppression and cruelty. It was very similar to Dotheboys Hall." His first biographer, Edwin Hodder, with whom he discussed his life, adds : "In young Ashley's case there was neither joy in going back to school, nor joy in coming home. . . . The fear with which he regarded his schoolmaster and the bullies at school was less than the fear with which he regarded his parents."[1]

The only person from whom the boy received any affection was Maria Millis, the maid who had come from Blenheim with his mother and who had risen to be their housekeeper. She died when Ashley was eight. But before that she had marked the boy's life indelibly and he often described her as the "best friend I ever had". She told him Bible stories and taught him a

[1]At Eton, ten years later, Ashley's younger brother was killed in a fight with an older boy, at which much of the school and some masters cheered them on and plied them with brandy. The masters were only cleared of manslaughter, said *The Times*, because the "quantity of brandy administered had as much to do with his death as the fight itself."

prayer which he used every day until his death at the age of eighty-five. What the prayer was we do not know, but her love must have been such a contrast with the rest of his life and so undemanding that young Ashley caught from it a love for Jesus which motivated his whole career. All his life he was, in a sense, only remembering the care of a servant for an unhappy child and living large her principles.

When he was eleven his father succeeded to the Earldom, and St. Giles, near Wimborne, became his country home. At thirteen Ashley went to Harrow, where he felt like "an emancipated slave". There, coming down Harrow Hill in the year of Waterloo, he also underwent a decisive experience, similar to the young Lincoln's when he saw a Negro girl sold at New Orleans. For as Ashley reached the bottom of the hill, a party of drunks came reeling round the corner carrying a coffin and shouting a lewd song. Just opposite him, they fell in a heap, cursing and swearing. Eventually they picked themselves up and lurched off down the road. Ashley stood transfixed. "Good heavens, can this be permitted because a man is poor and friendless !" he exclaimed. He was only fourteen at the time, but he decided that day to give his life to help the poor and the oppressed.

* * * *

Eleven years later Lord Ashley entered Parliament for Woodstock, with an Oxford first, some foreign travel and his first passionate love affair behind him. "The handsomest young man I ever saw, full of fun and frolic, very tall and his countenance radiant with youthful hope", was a lady's description of him. He was still conscious of his calling on Harrow Hill, but uncertain how to carry it out. The next years were ones of preparation, growing self-knowledge and strengthening conceptions. In his diary, used like Wilberforce's to chronicle his spiritual struggles, he wrote on April 28th 1826, his twenty-fifth birthday: "Generally speaking I have stilled the passions. An attachment at Vienna commenced a course of self-knowledge for me Man never has

loved more furiously or more imprudently. The object was, and is, an angel, but she was surrounded by, and would have brought with her, a halo of hell." He began to pray for the right wife. He found her in an unexpected quarter—in a set famed for loose living and free thinking, and totally opposed to his family politics. She was Emily, daughter of the Whig magnate, Lord Cowper, and a niece of Lord Melbourne. They married in 1830, and his Min was his devoted and spirited partner till she died forty-two years later with the words, "none but Christ" on her lips.

Also on this birthday he notes : "No man ever had more ambitions, and probably my seeming earnestness for great and good purposes was merely proof of hotter ambition and deeper self-deception than exists in others. . . . I will entreat God to raise up for old Britain young and aged saints and sinners, high and low, who may act as well in her interests as I always fancied I wished to do." A year later, just after he had refused office under Canning, he writes : "Time was when I could not sleep for ambition. I thought of nothing but fame and immortality. But I am much changed. I desire to be useful in my generation and die in the knowledge of having advanced true happiness, by having advanced true religion." Six months later he adds : "It is very odd—I can stand a compliment without getting conceited."

Of money he wrote : "Whether I shall ever be well off or not God alone knows : but this I pray, that, never asking for wealth, should it be sent to me, I may receive at the same time a heart and spirit to lay it out for man's happiness and God's glory." He was to spend most of his life harassed by debt, but making many rich.

So, as he began his career, he had shaped his course with regard to sex, success and security, the three motive regions of the human spirit. His aim was : "I shall henceforth be content to float down the stream of time and put ashore at any point where the Almighty may command me."

All the time his conceptions were clearing. Already, in October

1825, he had written : "I have a good mind to found a policy upon the Bible ; in public life observing the strictest justice and not only cold justice, but active benevolence. That is good towards individuals ; is it so towards nations ?" "No one should be Prime Minister of this great country unless deeply imbued with religion ; a spirit which will reflect and weigh all propositions and decide upon the highest ; be content to do good in secret and hold display a bauble compared to the true interests of God and of the Kingdom ; have energy to withstand political jobbery and refuse what is holy as a sacrifice to faction. He must calculate advantages to arise in a century and not shows to glitter at the moment."

For himself, Ashley was still in doubt. "What am I fit for ?" his diary reads ; and again, "I must now choose my line and hold to it manfully." In 1828 he accepted office under Wellington, and spent two years as a Commissioner of the India Board. But, although his application gained him golden opinions, he knew he had not found his "line". In 1829 he wondered whether to devote his life to science—and learnt to speak Welsh ; but meanwhile he had begun working to improve the appalling conditions of the insane. This led naturally to the Factory Operatives turning to him when their champion Sadler lost his seat in 1833 and they had little time to find a sponsor for their bill in the Commons.

Ashley realised that this was a decisive step. The choice between two lives had to be made. On the one hand was ease and promotion and troops of friends. On the other ceaseless labours, estrangement of friends, life for and with the poor. He wanted to consult Min—and God. He "obtained respite till the morning and returned home to decide, after meditation, prayer and 'divination', as it were, by the word of God." His answer next day was : "I dare not refuse. I believe it to be my duty to God and to the poor. . . . Talk of trouble ! What do we come to Parliament for ?" His wife agreed : "It is your duty and the consequences we must leave. Go forward, and to victory !"

He did. It was to be a life-time fight.

* * * *

So it was in 1833, the year that Wilberforce died and that the Act freeing all slaves in the British Empire was passed, that Shaftesbury[1] set out on his life's work. This was no accident. For slavery, while it existed, so cheapened all labour and brutalized public opinion that it made industrial reforms difficult, if not impossible. In this sense, Wilberforce made Shaftesbury possible.

Some of Wilberforce's critics, with the idea of splitting the emancipation movements or furthering their own part of it, had maintained that the British workers' conditions had nothing to do with colonial slavery.[2] One of the most violent of these, William Cobbett, admitted the connection in 1832 when he temporarily joined the abolitionists in the hour of victory and said, "These slaves are in general the property of the English borough mongers . . . and the fruit of the labour of these slaves has long been converted into the means of making us slaves at home."

Bready makes this point even more emphatically. "To understand the social problems Shaftesbury faced", he writes, "it must be remembered that both the Commercial Revolution, with its insatiable monetary cupidity, and all the most revolting exploitations of the Industrial Revolution, had already come into being under the influence of the slave trade and under the impact of colonial slavery. Following the Assiento concessions[3], every economic perversion which later was to manifest itself on the titanic scale of the factory system, was present in the economic

[1]Lord Ashley did not become Earl of Shaftesbury till 1851. But since the rest of this story is not written chronologically, he is hereafter called Shaftesbury for convenience.

[2]This division was often the product of stung consciences. Thus, years later, when Lord Shaftesbury headed a declaration of support for American abolitionists, a Southern newspaper (not knowing that Lord Ashley had recently become Lord Shaftesbury) cried : "Who is this Earl of Shaftesbury ? It is a pity that he does not look at home. Where was he when Lord Ashley was so nobly fighting for the Factory Bill and pleading the cause of the English slave ? We never even heard the name of this Lord Shaftesbury then." Wilberforce, like Shaftesbury, saw the two battles to be one—as did Marx from his different standpoint. Wilberforce helped introduce the earliest bills to help children in cotton mills and urged their initiators to go further, faster than they thought wise.

[3]By the Assiento clause of the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), England wrung from Spain and France the virtual monopoly of the slave trade, see page 2.

and industrial fabric of English society. The slave trade and slavery had contaminated every branch of commercial and financial organisation. The South Sea Bubble itself was but symptomatic of the pervasive and almost universal moral collapse. . . . The first imperative of social emancipation was the renewal of spiritual life ; the second was the suppression of the slave trade which, by its manifold repercussions, defiled all trade. Without these preceding achievements, Shaftesbury's intrepid life-work would have been impossible."

"Slavery" was certainly the word for the condition to which multitudes of women and children—not to mention men—were reduced by the industrial revolution. By 1833 some dim realization of the conditions in cotton mills was dawning on Parliament. Following the inventions of Hargreaves and Arkwright, mills had been established by streams in isolated countryside, and in seeking for labour, owners had had the "brilliant" idea that children could do much of the work as well as men. So children sometimes from four or five, but generally between seven and thirteen, were shipped by the bargeload from London and other great cities to Lancashire. Often, churchwardens and parish overseers entered agreements to deliver such children into an "apprenticeship" which bound them until they were twenty-one, and left them completely at the factory owners' mercy. The agreements generally allowed parish authorities to send one idiot child in each batch of twenty.

At the mills the children were employed thirteen, fourteen, fifteen or even sixteen hours a day ; and during rush periods would sometimes work twenty-four hours, with only half an hour off for dinner. In other mills, there were two twelve-hour shifts, so that the beds were never cold as one child followed another—if the children did not drop asleep on the factory floor, too weary to reach bed. As overseers were paid by the children's output, the whip was not idle. Girls and boys were treated exactly the same, and almost every factory child was injured before being cast off useless and without a trade.

In the cotton mills, through the efforts of Sir Robert Peel[1] (the father of the statesman) and Hobhouse, some small concession had been made to children by 1833, and with the accession of Oastler and Sadler in 1830 the movement for reform had quickened. But no help whatever had been given to any children or women in other industries. Shaftesbury pointed out in 1840, in the Commons, that children of seven worked twelve hours daily with no education in tobacco factories, bleaching mills and potteries, while card-setting children of five worked from five or six in the morning, till eight o'clock at night. Calico-printing mills were worse still, while Commissioner Tuffnell stated that "the hardest labour in the worst room in the worst conducted factory is less hard, less cruel, less demoralising than the labour in the best of the coalmines." Here very young children of both sexes (a child of three in one case), and women, did incredibly heavy work, and never saw the light of the sun except on Sundays. "Sometimes I sing when I've light", a five-year-old trapper told the Commission of Enquiry, "but not in the dark : I dare not sing then."

Instances of exploitation are too numerous to record. During the next decade Shaftesbury was to examine and expose scandal after scandal. The state of "climbing boys" aged four and five (climbing naked through chimneys to sweep them and contracting skin cancer), of housing (in a good parish 70% of families lived in one room, many in less) and lodging houses (where landlords made fortunes by sleeping fifty-eight people and three dogs in a small room) are typical examples. And behind it all was the belief of the "wise statesmen", as Shaftesbury contemptuously called them, who believed that the guarantee of tranquillity was to keep the masses ignorant and in poverty. To those people who said of London's 30,000 naked, homeless, wandering children,

[1]Sir Robert Peel was at first a bad employer, but later became aware of his employees' wretched state. He not only changed his methods, but faced the humiliation of having his former methods exposed in Parliament when he brought in his Bill. He was a friend of John Wesley's. Once when he asked Wesley to breakfast, Wesley accepted on condition that he might bring his "Children", and arrived with thirty-six of his preachers.

"What will you do with them when educated ?" he replied, "What will you do with them if left as they are ?"

These were the industrial conditions which Shaftesbury and Marx, who for thirty-four years lived within a few miles of each other, both observed.[1] Marx (with Engels whose family part-owned a cotton mill in Lancashire) accurately described what he saw as a war between the classes ; and constructed upon his observations the pace-setting ideology of the modern age. Living in penury akin to the workers themselves—he lost three of his children through malnutrition during his early years in London—Marx worked with great singleness of purpose and extreme egotism on his world-shaking task. He started from the point that Christianity had been tried for 1,800 years and failed.[2] Knowing no way to change human nature—his own or his enemy's—he set out to change the system, and his own bitter hatreds, love of power and jealousy left their imprint on his ideology.[3]

Shaftesbury hated exploitation no less than Marx. But he

[1]They were also the conditions portrayed by Dickens, which have done so much to confirm Russian Communists in their ideology as Mr. Macmillan discovered on his Moscow visit in 1959.

[2]"The social principles of Christianity", wrote Marx in 1847, " have had eighteen hundred years in which to develop and they need no further development at the hands of the Prussian ecclesiastical commissioners. The social principles of Christianity justified slavery in the classic world and they glorified the medieval serfdom, and if necessary they are quite willing to defend the oppression of the proletariat, even if they wear a somewhat crestfallen appearance the while . . . The social principles of Christianity are sneaking and hypocritical whilst the proletariat is revolutionary."

[3]An objective first-hand sketch of Marx's character comes from Techow, the leader of the Bavarian insurrection of 1848 : "He gave me the impression not only of a rare intellectual superiority, but also of an outstanding personality. If his heart matched his intellect, if he could love as intensely as he can hate, then I would go through fire and water for him. But I am convinced that personal ambition in its most dangerous form has eaten away anything that was good in him. Everything he does is aimed at the acquisition of personal power." Incidentally, Marx destroyed, one by one, every Socialist colleague of standing, except Engels who was always ready to be wholly subordinate to him. He employed what power he had with the same ruthlessness later to be displayed by Stalin and other all-powerful Communist dictators.

came to different conclusions, different principles through which to create a new age.

What were those principles—reiterated again and again in his thousands of speeches ?

First, he opposed exploitation for a very simple and fundamental reason. He believed each man, woman and child to be a child of God, and that foul conditions, oppression and ignorance hindered them from taking up their birth-right. His interest was not sentimental—and not primarily material. He wanted everyone to be free to live God-directed lives.

Secondly, he accepted responsibility for the state of affairs. Again and again, he brings the miseries and sins of the poor (he was not one who considered the poor automatically sinless) home to himself and the well-to-do people he was addressing. "Their guilt is our guilt ; we incur it by conniving at it." "Do not blame them ; blame yourselves ; you are your brother's keeper."

Thirdly, he stated : "What is morally right cannot be politically wrong and what is morally wrong cannot be politically right."[1] He reiterated this maxim year after year ; he also lived by it daily himself.

Finally he brought a passionate determination to his task which equalled that of any materialist revolutionary. On taking up the Ten Hour Bill in 1833, he said he would spare no exertion until it was passed : "If defeated in the present session, I will bring it forward in the next, and so on in every succeeding session till success is complete." Asked once where he would stop, he replied, "I will stop nowhere so long as any portion of this mighty evil remains."

A fair statement of his views can be seen in his first speech on the Ten Hour question in 1833. He said he had read of those who sacrificed their children to Moloch and of infanticide in

[1]Contrast Lord St. Vincent's statement in the House of Lords in 1833, the same year that Shaftesbury began his campaign. " The whole fabric of society would go to pieces", he said, "if the wedge of abstract right were once entered into any part of it."

India, but both people were "merciful compared with the Englishman of the nineteenth century". "These nations destroyed at once their wretched off-spring and prevented a long career of suffering and crime ; but we, having sucked out every energy of body and of soul, toss them on the world a mass of skin and bone, incapable of exertion, brutalized in their understanding and disqualified for immortality." He expected formidable opposition in Parliament. To one consideration he drew special attention : "As long as these horrid facts remained unknown, the guilt attached to the perpetrators only ; but if these terrible systems are permitted to continue any longer, the guilt will descend upon the whole nation." He defined the cause as a "great political, moral and religious question"—"political because it will decide whether thousands shall be left in discontent ; moral because it will decide whether the rising generation shall learn to distinguish between good and evil—be raised above the enjoyment of mere brutal sensibilities and be no longer, as they now are, degraded from the dignity of thinking beings ; religious because it involved the means to thousands and tens of thousands of being brought up in the faith and fear of the God that created them."

These convictions, voiced at the age of thirty-two, were the basis of his thought and energy all his life. They generated a force so powerful that the Hammonds, economic historians who frankly deplore Shaftesbury's basic approach to life, yet state : "He did more than any single man or any single Government in English history to check the raw power of the new industrial system."

* * * *

Shaftesbury's principles were so universal that he became the champion not of any one social reform, but of all social reform. The Hammonds state : "Shaftesbury swept every corner of English life with the passion by which Wilberforce and Zachary Macaulay, the Stephens and the Buxtons had destroyed the most

shameful trade in the world." As Bready says : "Whenever Britons organised themselves to improve the health of children or the physical comfort of adults ; to promote excursions and Olympian-games ; to erect gymnasiums for the people, to shorten hours of labour and to provide Saturday half holidays ; to tear down slums and build decent houses ; to suppress dens of vice and open up parks or recreation grounds ; to remove grimy alleys and establish broad streets ; to suppress grog shops and provide ample supplies of pure water—there stood Shaftesbury, in the midst, a rugged pioneer, with jacket and waistcoat off, sleeves rolled up and shoulder to the wheel." In many fields he was the original pioneer, in others he came in to encourage others. With the Ragged Schools—and he said he would rather be President of the Ragged School Union than command armies or wield the destiny of empires—he encouraged and developed the initiative of others. On sanitation, on the other hand, Florence Nightingale always called Shaftesbury "our leader in sanitary matters", and it was he who drafted the instructions for the Crimea Inquiry which, she said, "saved the army". His first public cause was the reform of the ghastly conditions of lunatics—and he remained an unpaid Commissioner in Lunacy till the year of his death.

His main industrial reforms were the Factory Acts of 1833, 1844, 1847 and 1850 (three of them Government measures forced on them by Shaftesbury's campaigns) ; the Mines and Collieries Bill of 1842 ; the Acts dealing with near slavery in Calico Mills (1845), brickworks (1871) and chimney sweeping (1875). In 1867 he won a victory which revolutionised the treatment of farm labourers and freed women and children from the "tyranny of agricultural gangs". In 1864 and 1867, the Government, by the Extension Acts, extended the victories won for workers in the cotton mills to all industries. In 1879, Shaftesbury even secured a first Factory Act for India.

The four factory acts, down to 1850, freed all children under nine, restricted youngsters under thirteen to six and a half hours

work a day and young persons and women to sixty hours a week, with no night work. Men were similarly benefited indirectly, since without women and children the factories could not function. Saturday half-holidays were assured for all, efficient inspection was instituted and the universal necessity of education was recognised, some hours of it being enforced. This did not provide the clear ten hours for which Shaftesbury had been fighting. Under uniquely favourable circumstances, the Bill of 1847 was passed providing for this. It was, however, frustrated by evasions which were legally sanctioned by the Exchequer Court. In the ensuing scrummage, Shaftesbury felt compelled to compromise with the Government for a ten and a half hour day in exchange for certain concessions, and the ten hour provision was not finally won until 1874. This decision of Shaftesbury's was the most painful of his life, since many of his old companions turned bitterly against him. Rightly or wrongly, he believed these terms to be the very best he could obtain. And in the perspective of a hundred years it is easy to see, as G. M. Young states, that the 1847 Act was "the turning point of the age".[1]

Because Shaftesbury's work was not a dilettante "do-good" philanthropy, but a determined assault on the central problem of his age, he met violent opposition from the vested interests of class and ownership. This opposition was all the stronger because men like Melbourne, Peel and Lord John Russell—indeed the leaders of both parties—were convinced that the only safety in economic affairs was to give capital free play, whatever

[1]Karl Marx was quicker than most to perceive this. At first neither he nor Engels regarded the Ten Hour Bill as important, for they thought it an attempt to put "reactionary fetters" on large-scale industry, which capitalist society must shatter again and again. By 1863 he had changed his tune and was claiming the victory for himself. "The Ten Hour Bill", he said in the Inaugural Address to the International, "was not only a great practical success, but also a victory of principle ; for the first time the political economy of the bourgeoisie was defeated by the political economy of the working class." In *Das Kapital* he calls it "a powerful obstacle preventing the workers selling themselves and their kind into death and slavery by free contract with capital" and the turning point in the workers' fight. He naturally makes no reference to the principles which gained the victory.

the results in the lives of men. This coincided with their personal and class interests, but was justified by their economic philosophy which they believed to be founded on unchangeable laws discovered by Adam Smith and Malthus. Poverty and suffering were unfortunate, but were nature's remedies for overpopulation. Interference with economic processes could only lead to depression and even greater hardship for the workers, since "severe labour with bread is surely better than no labour without bread". So these men felt their task was to safeguard the economy from the unrealistic revolts of idealists against economic facts. Thus Graham, the Home Secretary, writes to Peel : "A Commission .... is often most embarrassing where it discloses the full extent of evils for which no remedy can be provided, as for example the enquiry into the sufferings of children employed in factories and mines."[1]

Shaftesbury's assertion that what was morally right could never be politically or economically wrong naturally irritated these men. He challenged both their self-interest and their economic fatalism. So he was called a "humanity-monger" and worse. "There goes the most dangerous Jacobin in Your Majesty's dominions", said Melbourne half-seriously to the young Queen. Lord John Russell, as Prime Minister, stated in 1838 that Shaftesbury "is under a delusion which he has created himself if he supposes that a great many children are suffering under the infliction of grievance." Peel, when every other Parliamentary strategy had failed, whipped his Conservatives into line by

[1]The same principles were applied in India with equally disastrous results. In 1866, for example, when the crops failed in Orissa, the members of the Board of Revenue there "held by the most rigid rules of political economy. They rejected 'almost with horror' the idea of importing grain. They would not even allow the authorities in Orissa to take grain from a ship which ran ashore on their coast in March. It was bound to Calcutta and to Calcutta the grain must go. In fact, it rotted in the holds, while plans were made to move it. At Haileybury everyone had learnt that political economy was a matter of laws, that money and goods would move by themselves in ways beneficial to mankind. The less any Government interfered the better .... By the time relief came (to Orissa) a quarter of the population were dead". Philip Woodruff : *The Men Who Ruled India.*

threatening to break up his Ministry rather than pass the Ten Hour Bill. Poulett Thompson, moving for the Government in 1836, declared for "liberty"—that children of twelve and thirteen should be allowed to decide for themselves, like their seniors, that sixty-nine hours work per week could do them no harm. Shaftesbury, he said, would throw 35,000 children into unemployment. Indeed liberty and fear of slump were the cries of the manufacturers, and the Anti-Corn Law League added a sharp attack on agricultural conditions in Shaftesbury's father's estate for good measure. Meanwhile a correspondent wrote to Shaftesbury complaining that the children were summoned to the mills by the discordant blasts of a horn and that it was "very disagreeable to have attention drawn to the hardships of the factory children at three, four, five and six in the morning". Would Lord Shaftesbury see that this nuisance was made a punishable offence ?

Shaftesbury felt criticism keenly, but was not swayed by it. " Thank God I truckle to no man ; I hold a straight course and Providence blesses me beyond my deserts", he wrote in 1828 when all men praised him ; and seventeen years later, when he lost backing in Dorset by his decision to vote for repeal of the Corn Laws, he added : "I will not abate one breath of my lips to save the seat." This was the beginning of his greatest trial. For while he had lost his agricultural supporters, the anti-Corn Law League did not allow his conversion to their cause to soften their violence towards him. He noted that now only the working class was left to him—and soon they might go. Within three years, following his decision on the 1850 Factory Act, this last pillar of support seemed removed. "I won for them almost everything ; but for the loss of that very little they (his colleagues Oastler, Fielden, etc.) regard me as an enemy." Shaftesbury showed his greatness by his response. He never answered recriminations in kind. Only once, at a time when meetings were denouncing him as a traitor, did he ever state his view. In time the operatives regained perspective. In 1869 Shaftesbury was cheered by 100,000

people when he appeared at Bradford to unveil Oastler's statue, and after his death it was, in the main, the workers' pennies which raised to him the happiest of memorials, the Eros statue in Piccadilly Circus.

* * * *

In these Parliamentary battles, Shaftesbury's mode of working was always the same.

First, he would study his subject. He always inspected the mills, went down the mines, visited the lodging houses (where vermin fell "like peas" on his hat) personally. "One whiff of Cowyard, Blue Anchor or Baker's Court outweighs ten pages of letterpress . . . ." "I made it an invariable rule to see everything with my own eyes. It gave me a power I could not otherwise have had."

Then, he put the facts starkly before Parliament and the nation. He had no great natural eloquence. His only assets, he used to say, were "feeling, conviction and persistence". But such sincerity and fearlessness, allied to facts, were formidable—and he became a battering-ram of power in the Commons. Cobden, a violent critic, came to him much moved after his speech on the Mines and Collieries Bill, apologised, voted with him and was less virulent thereafter. "I don't think I have ever been put into such a frame of mind in the whole course of my life", he said.

Thirdly, Shaftesbury was backed by a formidable force in the country, where agitation was carried on along the lines worked out during the long fight against the slave trade. Shaftesbury and the other leaders constantly moved around the country and corresponded with their committees. This, in a day of limited franchise, brought a new vitality to democracy.

Shaftesbury was determined that his fight should be entirely with spiritual weapons, no matter what his opponents did. Thus he had clear understandings with the operatives on tactics and methods. They agreed that "the labour of children and young persons alone would be touched" and that there should be "no

strikes, no intimidations and no strong language against employers within or without the walls of Parliament".

This was also good tactics. As has been seen, women, and then men, gained great concessions in the wake of the children. And when strikes were used at one point, they were disastrous failures—as in the circumstances prevailing they were bound to be.

It is a remarkable thing that Shaftesbury was able to secure a revolution in industrial conditions without a day's riot or disruption of the economy. Bready compares it with Lincoln's liberation of the American slaves. "In a vital sense his achievement was even more majestic than that of the Emancipation of the American slaves. For without a civil war,[1] without protracted strike or lock-out, without, indeed, the loss of a single life, Shaftesbury freed his 'slaves' entirely by constitutional and Christian means. . . . No legacy of resentment, therefore, no smouldering hate, was left behind ; but rather a firm foundation on which succeeding social attainments could securely be built."

* * * *

What did taking up this fight mean for Shaftesbury in his daily life ?

Early he decided that, if he were to devote himself to the oppressed he could not take office. So he refused the offers of Prime Ministers of both sides, particularly Peel, Palmerston and Derby. "I will never place myself in any situation where I shall not be free as air to do everything conducive to the happiness, comfort and welfare of that portion of the working class who have entrusted to me their hopes and interests", he decided in 1841, and in 1866 he replied to Derby : "There are still 1,600,000 operatives excluded from the benefit of the Factories Act ; until

[1]Rothstein in *From Chartism to Labourism* states that in 1848 the factory movement "may be said to have saved the country from a revolution which seemed likely to break out at any moment." W. D. Morris in *The Christian Origins of Social Revolt* comments : "The movement which Lord Ashley led certainly offered vent for the angry temper of the working people of that period and gave them enough hope to continue the struggle for an improvement in their lot by physical and constitutional means."

they are brought under the protection of the law I can never take office."

He even refused Lord Aberdeen's offer of the Garter in 1854, because he felt some might think this implied an obligation towards the Government of the day and would make pressing his own Bills more difficult.[1] His conviction had hardened when Peel offered him various Cabinet offices—and Shaftesbury felt it was a bid to use his popularity and keep him quiet. Peel's subsequent stone-walling and then open opposition to the Ten Hour Bill confirmed him in his opinion. And he felt just as strongly—though it was far more difficult to refuse—when his close friend, relation and supporter, Palmerston, implored him to join his Government. Thus in 1855, he describes himself as at his wits' end. "On one side was ranged wife, relations, friends, ambition, influence ; on the other my own objections which seemed sometimes to weigh as nothing in comparison with the arguments brought against them. I could not satisfy myself that to accept office was a divine call ; I *was* satisfied that God had called me to work among the poor."

On this occasion he was actually dressed ready to go to the Palace to kiss hands. Shaftesbury describes the incident, "I never felt so helpless. I seemed to be hurried along without a will of my own ; without any power of resistance. I went and dressed, and then, while I was waiting for the carriage, I went down on my knees and prayed for counsel, wisdom and understanding. Then there was someone at the door, as I thought, to say that the carriage was ready. Instead of that a note, hurriedly written in pencil, was put into my hands. It was from Palmerston. 'Don't go to the Palace.' That was thirty years ago, but I dance with joy at the remembrance of that interposition, as I did when it happened. It was, to my mind, as distinctly an act of special

[1]Later in 1854 when the Government had shown its true colours on certain questions, Shaftesbury commented "The collar of the Garter might have choked me." "I have not, at least, this or any other Government favour against me as a set off to their insolence and oppression."

providence as when the hand of Abraham was stayed and Isaac escaped."

It was on Palmerston's renewed insistence—and on Palmerston's quietly paying the £1,000 of fees involved—that Shaftesbury finally accepted the Garter in 1862. Shaftesbury felt he could not use money for self-decoration which—if he had it—was required for his children and many needy charities.

Shaftesbury's refusal of office meant that in all his sixty years of public service, he never, except in his two years on the India Board, received a penny for his labours. His father lived till he was eighty-three and Shaftesbury himself was fifty. All this time Shaftesbury drew from his father and the family estates only £100 more per year than he had while an undergraduate at Oxford ; and now he had ten children. Also, with his position, he was expected to start most public subscriptions. He was forced to live mainly on loans, and often the situation was desperate, even while most people considered him a rich man. At the time of his father's death he owed £100,000.

He suffered much that he could not give more. One day, visiting the George Yard Ragged School, he noticed that a little boy looked ill. The boy told him he had not eaten for twenty-six hours. And, on questioning the rest of the class, Shaftesbury found many others in the same condition. The founder of the school, George Holland, found him weeping bitterly in his study : "George, these poor children, how will you get on with them ?" "My God shall supply all their needs", said Holland. "Yes", said Shaftesbury, and within two hours a soup meal had arrived for all four hundred cooked in his kitchen in Grosvenor Square. Ten thousand such meals were provided from that kitchen that winter. One of the many seekers after Shaftesbury's support records how delighted he was, thinking he had nothing to give, when he remembered £5 set aside in a jug in the library for some emergency. Many years he gave away more than his income.

He felt keenly the contrast between rich and poor. Summoned

to wait on the Queen in 1848, he found he had two rooms, with two fires, to himself. He noted : "I deplore the waste of fuel when there are so many who have none. . . . The amount of waste is prodigious. The very crumbs and scrapings in a thousand well-fed homes would sustain a hundred persons. 'Gather up the fragments that remain'." Again, "Oh, if some Dives would give me £200 or £300, the price of a horse or a picture, I could set up schools to educate 600 wretched children."

When finally he inherited St. Giles, at the age of fifty, it was little help as he was burdened with debts and found so many slums on his own estate. It was many years' work to set things right, though he immediately built cottages and three schools, planted workers' orchards, repaired the church and abolished the iniquitous truck system of paying labour. For this he sold some of his estate, mortgaged the rest and moved out of the great house into less expensive quarters. He also sold the family pictures one by one.

Much of his situation hinged on his relationship with his father, who had so callously neglected him and his sisters in their youth. Shaftesbury readily forgave him—but his fight for the poor did not endear him to his father, who believed that the way to keep the peace was to keep the workers indigent and uneducated. Indeed, for ten years at one period, Shaftesbury was not invited to his much-loved family home, St. Giles—"The Saint" as he called it. In 1839, however, there was a real reconciliation, and Shaftesbury joyously spent Christmas at St. Giles. But the peace was difficult to maintain. All through this time, Bright, Cobden and the Anti-Corn Law League, as part of their regular propaganda, were attacking Shaftesbury for trying to reform cotton mills, while housing and wages on his family estate (where his control was nil) were poor. Shaftesbury could do little about that, but as Member for Dorset he felt he had to speak out on the conditions in the county.

He did so at a meeting of landowners and farmers at Stourminster on December 1st 1843. He spoke with characteristic

candour, "As your representative I had rather incur your utmost displeasure than refrain from declaring fully, freely and immediately that these things ought not to be. . . ." He said, "Do we admit the assertion that the wages of labour in these parts are scandalously low, painfully inadequate for the maintenance of the husbandman and his family and in no proportion to the profits of the soil ? If we are able to deny this statement let us do so without delay ; but if the reverse, not an hour is to be lost in rolling away the reproach."

Many reacted violently ; not least his father, who told him he was "exciting the people, inducing them to make extortionate demands, etc." "They are not easily put down, when once up", said the Sixth Earl. "They get on very well, I do not know how, on seven and even six shillings a week, and their wages cannot be increased." On December 16th 1844, Shaftesbury notes : "The Stourminster speech is an ingredient of Father's hatred. Strange occurrence ; the League are reviling me for doing nothing, at the moment I am turned out of my father's house for doing too much."

In January 1846, Shaftesbury became convinced—like Peel—that the Corn Laws must be repealed. This was against the opinion of his constituents. So, although the Ten Hour Bill—on which he had laboured for thirteen years—was due to come up for its final battle within a few weeks, he unhesitantly resigned his seat. Leaving his bill at the moment of battle meant far more to him than rejecting any Cabinet position ; but honesty meant still more. Yet two years later, on December 20th 1847, he was able to record in his diary : "Now is the result traceable, in His free mercy to past faith. I resigned my seat in Parliament, and all my public hopes, that I might not give 'occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme', and I surrendered everything to His keeping. Mark the issue ; my Ten Hours Bill is carried in my absence. I am returned to Parliament in a singularly and unusually honourable way. . . . Surely it is the completion of the promise, 'The ones that honour Me, I will honour'."

Shaftesbury's return to Parliament was at the famous Bath election, where he was opposed violently by Roebuck, one of the most inflamed opponents of his social legislation. Shaftesbury refused to enter into personalities, made only one speech and allowed neither ribands, banners or processions and no free beer, in spite of Roebuck's lavish methods and great London press campaign. In the House of Commons some years later Roebuck was frankly to admit he had been wrong about the factory acts, and Graham, Peel's subtle Home Secretary, to follow suit next day.

Indeed Shaftesbury's public life saw many of his most violent critics recanting and turning into friends : while others, like Gladstone, quietly changed their minds without going to the inconvenience of admitting their mistake. The Legislature, Gladstone said in 1864, was now almost unanimous in favour of the factory acts.

* * * *

Shaftesbury often complained that he was "alone" in Parliament. He does not seem to have had Wilberforce's art of winning men of his own stature to be equal comrades of arms with him in the Commons and in the country. "I began in the hope that many of the aristocracy would first follow, then succeed me. A few, at my request, put their hands to the plough, but they looked back and returned not to the furrows." It was this lack of infectiousness, that made Shaftesbury's fight lonely. His diary shows him fighting daily towards self-knowledge and clean motives, and sometimes in the course of this necessary battle slipping into over-sensitiveness and even morbidity. It is doubly hard to find God's will in your life without the humour and objective help of like-minded friends.

Shaftesbury did have some friends, especially Haldane, Bickersteth and Holland, with whom he took counsel : but there is little evidence that they aimed to purify each other's deeper motives. Also, in each of the 150 societies with which he was associated he had "fellow-workers" on whom he greatly relied.

Hodder says that knowing he could not know all, he deliberately "made friends with a few" and "exerted so strong an influence over them that they in turn were able to influence the large bodies they represented." "He had in a singular degree the power of reading men's motives, and he was very rarely deceived in those he selected to be his helpers . . . the demands on the judgment and penetration of Shaftesbury were probably greater than those of any other man of his generation and . . . few men were less rarely deceived."

Class and position had nothing to do with his choice of assistants. Character was everything. He clearly esteemed many a poor man above his fellow peers—and at Beaconsfield's moment of triumph after the Berlin Conference contrasts him most unfavourably with the founder of a Ragged School. Indeed one of the most endearing things about Shaftesbury, for all his tradition and dignity, was his original sense of values in a formal age. When the British Army encamped on his estate and he set out as Lord-Lieutenant to receive them he went in a little open carriage. Overtaking an old country woman hobbling painfully his way, Shaftesbury handed her into the carriage, mounted the box himself and thus arrived and was duly received with military honours.

He was, in fact, in love with people. A little girl, afraid to cross the road, picked him from a file of pedestrians to escort her across the road. When he asked her why, she answered : "Because of your kind face." On his continual "perambulations" through darkest London, he met thousands of unfortunates—men, women and children. Though he could not always remember their names, he never forgot his promises to them—or their needs. Streams of notes, often daily, went about them to his helpers. In March 1873, for example, he writes to Orsman. On the 3rd : "Do not forget the woman who made the braces. We promised her something. I have sent books to the two wives of the cabinet-maker and the old paralysed man." On the 7th : "Your missionaries must talk to the poor cabinet-maker and pray with him.

He is not hardened. Let him have what he wants in his necessity." On the 8th : "I have sent you a book for the two sons of the woman (spectacles). Also picture cards, as I promised, for the little girl, daughter of the shoemaker's wife." All these and his thousands of other letters were in his own hand : he had no secretary.

They knew him in their thousands ; the coster-mongers ; climbing boys ; seamstresses ; flower-girls, and all the others for whom he fought battles. They all knew that if they went to Grosvenor Square they would not be turned away—and knew his cheer, sympathy and straight talking by turns. Perhaps his most characteristic saying was made when far past eighty: "When I feel age creeping on and I know I must soon die—I hope it is not wrong to say it—but I cannot bear to leave the world with all the misery in it." Cardinal Manning noted this identification with people's sorrows. "He spent and was spent, and his own life was a suffering life like the Man of Sorrows." "What a retrospect of work done. It makes me feel that my life has been wasted", added the Cardinal on reading Hodder's biography.

On every occasion Shaftesbury took the chance to give practical help—and his basic moral and spiritual convictions. His own living was such that the strangest audiences listened. In 1848, for example, "forty of the most notorious thieves in London" sent him a signed letter asking him to meet them. Four hundred were present, ranging from "the swell-mob in black coats and white neckcloths to the most fierce-looking, half-dressed savages". When asked by Shaftesbury how many of them lived by burglary and more serious crimes, two hundred stood up.

Shaftesbury took the chair. Some of the thieves spoke : "Anything more graphic, more picturesque, more touching I never heard in my life ; they told the whole truth and disguised nothing." Shaftesbury told them his convictions on change and a new life. "My Lord and Gentlemen of the Jury, prayer is very good, but it won't fill an empty stomach", said one man. Another : "How are we to live till our next meeting ? We must either

steal or die." Shaftesbury much sympathised with their view. He promised them all the support he could. He promised to meet them again—at which a "low deep murmur of gratitude" went up. Within three months, thirteen of those present were doing well in Canada, and a little later three hundred had either emigrated (Shaftesbury's boys were much sought after all over the Dominions) or passed to different employment.

* * * *

The friendship between Shaftesbury and Palmerston is at first sight one of the most unlikely of the age. It sprang from two marriages. For when Shaftesbury reached out into Whig society to find his Min, he acquired that most influential of political hostesses, Lady Cowper, as his mother-in-law. Lady Cowper was already Palmerston's mistress and it has been said, with more truth than accuracy, that her brother, Lord Melbourne, carried him into the cabinet as a kind of "illegitimate brother-in-law". Lady Cowper finally married Palmerston in 1839, that year of famous marriages,[1] and reigned with him through many years of domestic affection and turbulent power.

There was much speculation about Shaftesbury's marriage at the time. Mrs. Arbuthnot, The Duke of Wellington's hostess at Apsley House, exclaimed, "Lord Ashley is thinking of marrying Lady Emily Cowper, who belongs to one of the most profligate families in the Kingdom, he being really as moral and religious a man as exists". Her husband, Charles Arbuthnot, rejoined, "What is there extraordinary or absurd in a man falling in love with the prettiest and most fascinating girl in London ?", while Lord H. Leweson Gower exclaimed, "I hope he will be able to give her good principles or she will make him very wretched". Min's family were no less put out by the match. Lord Cowper thought Shaftesbury "odd" and Lady Cowper confessed she had no fancy for him. Melbourne said it was a "bad look-out and an undesirable connection". And Lady Cowper's favourite brother

[1]The Queen and Albert, the Gladstones and the Disraelis were among them.

Frederick, the diplomat who became Lord Beauvale, demanded, "What has poor Min done to deserve to be linked to such a fate, and a family generally disliked, reputed mad and of feelings, opinions and connections directly the reverse of all of ours. . . . If it were for a man she doted upon and who would live well with all of us it might be endured. . . ."

The fears of both sides proved groundless, the half-despairing hopes came true. "It says a good deal for Ashley", comment the Hammonds, "that his wife, who was a woman of singular charm and beauty, adopted all his views of religion, morals and politics, that his married life was as happy as his early homelife had been miserable, and that his wife's family showed their affection for him by allowing him to treat the Cowper house at Panshanger as if it were his own." Lord Beauvale never changed his opinion, but Lady Cowper found her son-in-law as affectionate as he was upright and after her second marriage Broadlands was as open to him as Panshanger had been. He may well have had some effect on her, for Greville spent New Year of 1832 at Panshanger and noted in his diary : "Distress seems to increase hereabouts, and crime. Methodism and saintship increase too." After recording Lady Cowper's regular if unpunctual church-going ("always half an hour late, still she goes") he describes the "real fountain of benevolence" from Panshanger "which waters all the country around".

The Hammonds picture the strange sight of Palmerston and Shaftesbury growing ever more friendly : "The cynical, free-living survivor of the unbaptised eighteenth century and the earnest, solemn, strait-laced[1] Evangelical developed a warm attachment and respect for each other." The fact was that Palmerston only respected those who stood up to him—and liked others to have high principles provided they lived them and did not just talk about them. This is clear from his relationship with Prince Albert, as well as that with Shaftesbury. Probably he was a

[1]This was not the Palmerston's view of their son-in-law. "Everything he does amuses him," said Lady Palmerston about Shaftesbury ; and Guedalla adds, "Shaftesbury had a strange capacity for enjoyment."

good deal altered by these men, and his mellowing ten years as Prime Minister were more influenced by them than we shall know.[1]

Shaftesbury, on the other hand, recognised the generosity and greatness in the older statesman, who was always the determined enemy of the slave trade and all oppression. He was grateful, too, for the frank way Palmerston was converted to the cause of the factory children. It happened when a party of Shaftesbury's supporters called on Palmerston, finding him just getting up from table. They told him of the many miles that factory children had to walk every day tending their machines. Palmerston wanted a practical demonstration and soon the table and chairs were piled high to represent a machine and the noble Lord and his footmen were hopping around as operatives.

Lady Palmerston, coming down to carry him off for a drive, found him absorbed and convinced. He promised to talk to Shaftesbury about it, and from that day on supported all his social legislation. "I have never known any Home Secretary equal to Palmerston for readiness to undertake every good work of kindness, humanity and social good, especially to the children of the working class", noted Shaftesbury in his diary in 1853. "No fear of wealth, capital or election-terrors : prepared at all times to run atilt if he could do good by it. Has already done more than ten of his predecessors."

Palmerston was equally generous in personal matters. He not only insisted on paying for Shaftesbury's Garter Robes—moved perhaps by Min's distress at Shaftesbury's so often declining the Queen's honour—but intervened with sound advice when he heard that the steward at St. Giles was defrauding his master. When the crash came at St. Giles through his advice being neglected, he sent £5,000 with a note so gracious and tactful that Shaftesbury was delighted to accept it.

[1]"Shaftesbury's hold on Palmerston was odd", wrote Guedalla. "In early days it had taken the old man into the Lobby in support of factory legislation : it tutored him in social reform when he was at the Home Office ; and it led the irreverent critics to term Shaftesbury a Bishop maker." For Prince Albert's influence, see chapter 5.

When Palmerston became Prime Minister, Shaftesbury feared that his church appointments would be "detestable" as these matters were "as strange to him as the interior of Japan". Palmerston, however, rejoicing that he had no son or relative whom he wished to "stuff into" the Church, turned the whole matter over to Shaftesbury, who, for his part, took care to appoint not as he would have done had the whole responsibility been his, but bore in mind that the responsibility was Palmerston's. Though he started by evening up the balance for the Evangelicals, he proceeded to put forward men of various opinions, paying attention only to character. Palmerston only once intervened—in the case of a canon. Between them they appointed five Archbishops, twenty bishops and thirteen deans ; and only one appointment had the slightest political motive in it.[1]

This arrangement, however, led Shaftesbury to lose his objectivity and become wrongly partizan for one of the few times in his career. When in 1857 the Government stumbled into an unjust war with China, he strongly supported the Prime Minister—and vilified his opponents—and his diary shows that he was not uninfluenced by his concern to retain his power to "do good" through ecclesiastical appointments. It is easy for the distant injustice to be outweighed by present usefulness—or power.

* * * *

One of Shaftesbury's gifts to his country was a new conception of the duties of privilege. Indeed when Canon Basil Wilberforce pointed this out in 1884, Shaftesbury commented that the Canon had read his inner intention and it was by this contribution that he would wish most to be remembered.

His example was taken up by Prince Albert. He began, through Shaftesbury's influence, to take an interest in housing and, in 1844, became President of Shaftesbury's Labourers' Friends Society. In the turbulent year of 1848 when, as Shaftesbury said, "revolutions go off like popguns" the Queen and the Prince

[1]The case of the canon, who was appointed in order to assist Gladstone in a difficult electoral situation in Oxford.

summoned Shaftesbury to Osborne to ask him as "the only man who could advise us" how they could show their interest in the masses of the people. As they walked in the garden, Shaftesbury asked whether he should reply freely or observe Court form.

"For God's sake speak out freely," said Prince Albert.

"Put yourself at the head of all the social movements in art and science, and especially of those movements as they bear on the poor," answered Shaftesbury.

This led, that April, to Shaftesbury inviting the Prince to take the chair at a meeting of the Labourers' Friends Society. Fearing for his safety, the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, strongly opposed the Prince attending and became "quite frantic" when Shaftesbury would not take no for an answer. The Prince bombarded Russell with Shaftesbury's arguments, stating that he had "a Duty to perform to the great working classes (and particularly at this moment) which will not allow one's yielding to the fear of possible inconvenience". Russell bridled at the talk of "inconvenience" and "duty", but in the end gave way—and on May 18th the Prince visited the slum houses round George Street and addressed the Society. "Rank, leisure, station are gifts from God, for which men must give account", commented Shaftesbury. A revolutionary at the back of the crowd that day was heard to say : "If the Prince goes on like this, why, he'll upset our applecart."

This event set a new precedent for Royalty. The Prince's interest in the poor was as unlike the attitude of previous sovereigns as Shaftesbury's was unlike his father's.

Shaftesbury much respected the Prince. He was not blind, however, to the temptations of his station and noted in his diary that the Prince was showered with enough flattery to spoil anyone spoilable. He did not make that mistake in his own contacts with royalty. Called to Windsor to give his opinion on whether the Queen should be styled "Empress of India", he said he felt the title "presumptuous and unnecessary". He was told to convey his view to Mr. Disraeli, which he did. In the House of Lords

he pleaded that the title had "an air military, despotic, offensive and intolerable, alike in the East and the West of the Dominions of England". He carried his motion to a vote, expecting to have twenty supporters at the most. In the event ninety-one peers voted with him against the majority of one hundred and thirty-seven.

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Shaftesbury voted against the Reform Bills of 1832 and 1867 and often spoke of "democracy" with suspicion. He regretted much of the platform and even more the methods of Chartism, and thought of Socialism as little better than anarchy. Here many saw a paradox. Holyoake wrote : "Shaftesbury was a nobleman of two r atures. In politics he would withhold power from the workers. In humanity he would withhold nothing from them which could do them good."

Probably this attitude came in large part from the impact of events around him. He grew up in the heat of the French wars. His decisive experience on Harrow Hill was in the year of Waterloo. Visions of the Rule of Terror with Parliamentary Government replaced by mob rule, were burnt deep into him. Nor was the progress of France through the century—from Empire to commune to Empire again—reassuring to a mind bent on ordered progress. From all this he deduced that people must be educated to a high sense of responsibility before they could choose the best form of Government. He was not convinced that the present electorate achieved this—though he fought consistently for a better standard of election morality—and was wary of widening it meanwhile.

He was certainly no alarmist, for he had an unusual sense of proportion. "Talk of the dangerous classes", he said. "The dangerous classes in England are not the people. The dangerous classes are the lazy ecclesiastics, of whom there are thousands, and the rich who do no good with their money. I fear them more than whole battalions of chartists."

His fundamental belief was that basic problems could not be solved by parliaments (though no man fought harder for good

legislation) but only by a change of heart, personally and nationally. He insisted that the Christian aim of change must be the centre of all reform, and this made him distrust many projects—some political, some educational—where such a principle was to take second or no place. Yet he firmly believed that "true Christianity is essentially favourable to freedom of institutions in Church and State, because it imparts a judgement of your own and others' rights, a sense of public and private duty and an enlarged philanthropy and self-restraint" essential to democracy.

What, then, was Shaftesbury's contribution to his age and to ours ?

The Prime Minister at the time of his death, Lord Salisbury, agreed that it was "to his influence, character and persistence that the social reforms of the nineteenth century were largely due". His very existence gave hope to millions. At a time when Marx preached class war from Soho, Shaftesbury from Grosvenor Square did much to soften class antagonism by altering the conceptions of the rich and giving honour and self-respect to the poor. While Marx built his ideology on the proposition that human nature could not be changed, Shaftesbury was a living proof that a change in men could change conditions.

On the Eros Monument, which was erected with the penny pieces collected in factory, mill and mine, is an inscription written by Gladstone, which gives the mature judgement of England on this dangerous Earl : "During a public life of half a century he devoted the influence of his station, the strong sympathies of his heart and the great power of his mind to honouring God by serving his fellow men, an example to his order, a blessing to his people and a name to be by them ever gratefully remembered."

If Wilberforce was the "Washington of Humanity", Shaftesbury was the Lincoln of the industrial worker and his family. He gave them an impetus which, whether he liked it or not, led inevitably on to the further fight for social justice conducted by men like Keir Hardie in the next generation.

3

Reluctant Revolutionaries

IN THE EARLY dawn of February 24th 1834 the Dorset village of Tolpuddle woke to its day's work as usual. The first light of morning found the farm-workers leaving their derelict cottages and making their quiet way to work, as they had done for centuries. No one could foresee that this day was to make history for the workers of the world and transform six ordinary labourers into the heroes of a struggle for liberty and justice.

Yet such was the case. For that morning George and James Loveless, Thomas and James Standfield, James Hammett and James Brine were arrested on their way to work by the local constable. They were forced to walk the seven miles to Dorchester, charged before the magistrates with administering an "unlawful oath" and cast into gaol to await trial.

That day was to start a desperately hard period for these men and their families. But it was also to make them into a symbol for the workers of England more potent, perhaps, than any up till that time. For that day's work enabled them, as Arthur Henderson noted a hundred years later, to "bring to birth a great movement for social regeneration". Reluctantly they were drawn into revolution—and because of their inner quality it turned out to be a revolution of the spirit which saved England a revolution of blood.

* * * *

What was behind the sudden arrest of these six unknown men ?

The French Revolution had brought fear to the rulers of Britain. "Under its shock", writes Sir Winston Churchill, "the English governing classes closed their minds and their ranks to

change." The shock was lasting, and even in 1834 the Government was haunted by the dread that French ideas were spreading in England.

There had been much discontent in the English countryside for two generations. At the beginning of the eighteenth century many of the cottages were hovels, but the villager still possessed his strip of land and his traditional rights on common land, and the woman and children could also supplement the father's earnings by cottage industries. But by the beginning of George III's reign common land was being enclosed at a rapid rate. "Enclosure", write the Hammonds, "robbed the villager of the strip he tilled, of the cow that he kept on the village pasture, of the fuel that he picked up in the woods and of the turf that he tore from the common." Simultaneously, the growth of factory production destroyed cottage industries. The small-holder's whole way of life and place in society were shattered. The landowner and big farmer reaped a plentiful harvest.

It is easy to show that this change-over in the countryside was nevitable and even necessary. The wasteful strip system no onger produced enough food for the growing population, and the and was losing its fertility. The new system did produce more food : but the way the change-over was brought about added insult to injury.

Whereas in Denmark great care was taken to safeguard the interests of the small man, would-be enclosers in Britain up to 1774 were not even required to give notice to those whom they intended to dispossess. After that date notice had to be given, but that proved little safeguard for the procedure was loaded against the peasant. A landowner in Parliament would simply promote a Bill to enclose a specific piece of common land. A Committee, not of impartial persons, but of the promoting M.P.'s friends and neighbours would be set up to hear complaints. The peasant had a right to plead before this body, but as he probably had no water-tight legal proof of his traditional rights, and lacked both the means to get to London and the skill to

present his case, he stood little chance. So, while the new landlord produced more food, the peasant became a landless labourer, wholly dependent on the wages paid by the farmer.

A further blow soon robbed the labourer of his self-respect. In 1795 there appeared the Speenhamland system, named after the Berkshire village where it was first practised, by which low wages became the rule and were supplemented, where necessary, by poor relief. The practice spread swiftly through the South of England. Everywhere the agricultural worker became a pauper, dependent on poor relief administered by the village triumvirate of squire, farmer and parson.

These conditions provoked periodic outbreaks of rick-burning. But in 1830 a wider peasant's revolt broke out in Kent, spread swiftly to Sussex, Hampshire and Wiltshire and even set off riots in placid Dorset. Wellington's Tory Government, convinced that the long-feared revolution had broken out, smashed it with troops. A Commission of judges—although the only life lost had been one of the rioters—hanged nine labourers, imprisoned some four hundred and transported 457 men and boys to Australia. The Tory Home Secretary, Sir Robert Peel, in handing over to his Whig successor, Lord Melbourne, in 1831, warned him that the agricultural situation and the Trades Unions, legalised six years earlier, were the most alarming menace which the Government would have to face.

In spite of this repression, workers in Kent, Hampshire and Suffolk, acting with some degree of organisation, continued to press for a rise in wages. In the early months of 1831 wages went up from seven shillings and eightpence to ten shillings a week in some parts of Hampshire and the agitation spread to Dorset. Thus, in the autumn of 1833—the year that Parliament decreed the freeing of slaves and Shaftesbury began his fight for the factory workers—labourers in the lovely Dorset village of Tolpuddle appointed one of their number, George Loveless, their spokesman and asked the farmers to raise their wages from nine

shillings to the ten shillings which was now normal in other districts.

Loveless enlisted the good offices of the Vicar of Tolpuddle, Dr. Warren, and the farmers agreed to their request at a brief and friendly meeting. Dr. Warren declared : "I am a witness between you men and your masters that if you will go quietly to your work, you shall receive for your labour as much as any man in the district, and if your masters should attempt to run from their word, I will see you righted, so help me God." But the farmers did not carry out their promise ; instead they reduced wages to eight shillings. The men appealed to the magistrates, calling Dr. Warren to witness their bargain ; but James Frampton, the Chairman of the Bench, said he had no power to intervene and their case collapsed when Dr. Warren suddenly denied that any promise had been made.

Now the farmers determined to teach the men a lesson. They reduced wages to seven shillings, and threatened that they would shortly bring them down to six.

George Loveless had read about the trade unions springing up in London and the north of England and suggested to his fellow workmates, "Why don't we form a trade union ? We now know it is useless to seek redress from farmers, magistrates or Parson." The suggestion was joyfully received and in October 1833 the first meeting was held. Two delegates from the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union[1] came from London to help and in the little room of Thomas Standfield's cottage the "Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers" was founded.

On December 9th 1833, a labourer named Edward Legg attended the meeting and asked to become a member of the Society. He was admitted into membership with a solemn ritual and initiation ceremony common to all Friendly Societies at that time. The heart of the ceremony was a pledge of loyalty taken on oath. Individual loyalty was the only guarantee a society had

[1]This mammoth union, started by Robert Owen, reached its peak of one million members, drawn from every trade, during these years. Soon after it fell to pieces under the attack of the Government, employing classes and economic depression.

for the protection of its funds and the safety of its members against the spy and the informer. The purpose of the ceremony was to impress on the mind of the newly admitted member the responsibility which he had undertaken. It was a survival from the days before 1824 when trades unions were illegal and was similar to ceremonies practised among the Orangemen, Freemasons and other upper class societies.

Edward Legg was, in fact, a spy sent by the magistrates and farmers to infiltrate and inform on the men who were the "ringleaders" in this attempt to improve wages. It was on his evidence that the warrant for the arrest of Loveless and his friends was issued.

Two days before the men were arrested placards had been posted in the village and surrounding areas warning :—

> Whereas it has been represented to us from several quarters that mischievous and designing persons have been for sometime past, endeavouring to induce, and have induced, many labourers in various parishes in this County, to attend meetings and to enter into illegal societies or unions, to which they bind themselves by unlawful oaths, administered secretly by persons concealed, who artfully deceive the ignorant and unwary—We the undersigned Justices think it our duty to give this Public notice and Caution that all persons may know the danger they incur by entering into such societies. Any person who shall become a member of such a society, or take an oath, or consent to any test to declaration not authorised by law will become guilty of a felony, and be liable to be Transported for seven years.

The notice was signed by James Frampton, his son Henry, his half-brother C. B. Wollaston and others, including four Church of England clergymen.

George Loveless read one of these notices and put it in his pocket. Later the magistrates contended that this proved that he had been warned and had knowingly broken the law. When Wollaston challenged him on the point, Loveless remarked that the notice was not posted till February 22nd, whereas the meeting concerning which he was tried and convicted took place nine weeks previously. "And yet you say I paid no attention to the

magistrates, but listened to idle fellows going about the country !" "Ah, it is no good talking to you", replied Mr. Wollaston. "No, sir, unless you talk more reasonably", Loveless rejoined.

Much of the case was equally unreasonable, for it was pre-arranged in order to crush the men. Frampton had been for some weeks in touch with Lord Melbourne on how best to suppress the Tolpuddle workers. On the 31st January, Melbourne was already advising Frampton to use the Act 57 George III, C 19, which was directed against seditious meetings, remarking : "Perhaps you will be able to make an example by such means." Moreover—that there should be no mistake—the Member for the County and Melbourne's brother-in-law, W. S. Ponsonby, M.P. had already agreed to preside over the Grand Jury—for the problem was not whether to condemn the men, but how to condemn them. Having once committed the men for trial, the magistrates also received the open connivance of the Government in the appointment of a new judge, Baron Williams, who later admitted that he was under instruction to "make an example" of the men and to give them the maximum sentence.

* * * *

Many trade unionists, before and after the Tolpuddle men, have suffered for their beliefs. What was the unique quality of these men that transformed them into a national symbol ?

Sidney and Beatrice Webb, writing with the perspective of a hundred years, single out their "gentle innocence" in the face of savagery. The official history of the Farm Workers' Union also points to their character. "The rulers of Britain", it says, "cultured, urbane, secure in their ease, wielding almost despotic power by right of birth and place, stripped aside the mask for one moment and showed only too clearly the fear in their hearts and the selfish cruelty on which their power rested. By this single act of intolerance and savagery they stand condemned for all time. By contrast the six labourers are honoured. Perhaps too much as trade unionists, too little as men, men superior in every way to their persecutors."

The striking thing is that men so unjustly treated should have been so free of bitterness. Each misfortune drew out rather than quenched their spirit. Twenty-two year old James Hammett, for example, was not a member of the union and was arrested in mistake for his brother John. Because John was married and expecting a baby, James said nothing of the mistake and, without feeling himself a martyr, kept silent throughout the years of transportation, forbidding anyone to mention it. It was he who, finding their leader George Loveless momentarily downcast in Dorchester Jail, said : "Don't let these things make you bitter, George. God will bring you through. I am putting my trust in Him and it is helping me to bear up." "I needed that", said George next day. "Irons or no irons, I will keep my head high."

The quality that shines out is a robust faith. These men were first men of faith, and only trades unionists as a result. For they were typical products of the surging life that John Wesley had brought to the bitter English countryside. Riding his horse through storm and shine, preaching four and five times every day for fifty years, this Oxford don, whose heart had been "strangely warmed", transformed tens of thousands of lives in city, town and hamlet.[1] The seven hundred whole-time men who, by the time of Wesley's death, were travelling the same road lived the same vigorous faith. For them "no weather was too inclement, no road too boggy, no ford too swollen, no community too degraded, no privation too severe". One travelled not less than one hundred thousand miles on one horse. Another, his horse worn out, journeyed twelve hundred miles on foot in one winter. Some were killed by mobs, others carried off by press gangs. Many were thrown into ponds or burnt out of house and home. "For what pay would you procure men to do this service ? To be always ready to go to prison and death ?" asked Wesley.

[1]Overton, the authority on the Church in the 18th century, gives content to these transformations when he writes "of the faith which made selfish men self-denying, the discontented happy, the worldling spiritually-minded, the drunkard sober, the sexual chaste, the liar truthful, the thief honest, the proud humble, the godless godly, the thriftless thrifty."

Such men had left behind them societies of dedicated men in every town and most villages, men who had found a new dignity and independence through their new faith. Such were the Tolpuddle labourers. Five of them were prominent village Methodists and the sixth, young James Brine, caught a faith from the others during their common trial.

George Loveless, their spokesman, was the typical village leader of the new age. Thirty-seven years old and naturally intelligent, he had learnt to read from his Bible. By stern self-denial he had scraped together a few books, the books which Wesley had edited and cheaply printed precisely for the training of men like him. He had learnt public speaking as a local preacher, and it was natural that his brother James, the Standfields, Hammett and the others should turn to him for leadership when their livelihood was threatened.

Committed to Dorchester Castle to await their trial, these men of faith were put repeatedly to the test. George Loveless was approached by the attorney for the defence, a Mr. Young, and offered freedom if he would tell the magistrates the names of those in the union and promise himself to quit it.

"Do you mean I am to betray my companions ?" asked George.

"Yes, that's just it."

"You may tell the magistrates I will not do it. I would rather undergo any punishment", replied Loveless.

They were confined in conditions of filth. With dirty food and damp straw on stone floors for a bed, their companions were drunkards, thieves and filthy men. Uncertain of their own fate and that of their families, they remembered Paul and Silas, and they found comfort in singing their favourite hymn :

All things are possible for him
That can in Jesu's name believe ;
If nothing is too hard for Thee,
All things are possible for me.
The thing impossible shall be ;
All things are possible for me.

* * * *

These were the men who stood in the dock at Dorchester Assizes on March 15th 1834 charged with administering an unlawful oath under the Act 37 George III, Cap 123—the act and section which the Law Officers, after much cogitation, decided to be the most plausible available. It was an act for the suppression of mutiny and had been passed to deal with the naval mutiny at the Nore. The prosecution had to prove, under this act, both that the oath was administered and that the union itself was seditious—the latter a hard task in view of Rule 23 of the Society. This rule, which was in the hands of the Court, read : "The object of this Society can never be promoted by any act of violence, but, on the contrary, all such proceedings must tend to hinder the cause and destroy the Society itself. This Order will not countenance any violations of the law." So the prosecution decided to bring in another statute which was not in the indictment—a statute which made it illegal for any society to adminster any oath not required by the law. As the Act defined in its preamble an intention wholly other than anything applicable to this case, the Judge assisted the prosecution by ruling that he was not bound by the intention of Parliament, but only by the words of the clause relied upon. On this specious wedding of two parts of two acts the trial proceeded.

The Grand Jury, presided over by Ponsonby, consisted of Frampton and his fellow magistrates. They swiftly found a true bill—and the Petty Jury, everyone of whom was a farmer, took over. The prosecution witnesses, along with Legg, turned out to be employees of the magistrates and farmers.

Baron Williams conducted the case with brutality and bullying, putting words into the witnesses' mouths when they faltered. He refused to allow the men to speak and time after time threatened them, but could not shake them. When he insisted that the men must write their defence, George Loveless's was so simple and forthright that Baron Williams was loath to read it to the court.

Loveless wrote : "My Lord, if we have violated any law, it is not done intentionally. We have injured no man's reputation, character, person or property : we were uniting together to preserve ourselves, our wives and our children, from utter degradation and starvation. We challenge any man or number of men, to prove that we have acted, or intended to act, different from the above statement."

The Judge asked Loveless if he wished the statement to be read to the court. When Loveless said, "Yes", it was read in such a mumble that George Loveless himself could not understand it. As the Judge was about to pass sentence, one of the counsel, no friend of the prisoners, rose in the court and said that not one charge which had been brought against the prisoners at the bar was proved. If they were found guilty a great number of persons would be dissatisfied "and I shall for one" he added. Fearing the effect of this on the jury, the judge said he would adjourn the court and give judgement later.

Two days later, in a court which did not contain the same people, the prisoners were brought to receive sentence. The Judge made it clear that he was not punishing the men for their own act, but mainly as an example to others. "Not for anything that you have done, or, as I can prove, that you intended to do, but for example to others, I consider it my duty to pass the sentence of seven years transportation across His Majesty's high seas to each and every one of you", stated Baron Williams.

As the men, shocked by the inhumanity of the sentence, returned to prison, George Loveless let fall from his fettered hands a scrap of paper on which he had written two verses to the tune of his favourite hymn, "All things are possible to Him". The guard recovered the paper and took it to the Judge who saw in the words evidence justifying his belief that he had put down a plot against the security of the throne and Government. The verses were later smuggled out of prison and they kindled a flame in thousands of hearts throughout the country. They were :

God is our guide ; from field, from wave,
From plough, from anvil and the loom,
We come, our country's rights to save,
And speak the tyrant factions doom,
We raise the watchword "Liberty",
We will, we will, we will be free.

God is our guide—no swords we draw,
We kindle not war's battle fires,
By reason, justice, union, law,
We claim the birthright of our sires.
We raise the watchword "Liberty",
We will, we will, we will be free.

* * * *

After the Assizes the prisoners were separated. George Loveless became ill and was unable to travel to the prison hulks where the men were to be confined until transportation. So, on March 27th 1834, James Hammett, the two Standfields, James Brine and James Loveless, hands manacled and chained together, were taken from Dorchester by coach for the twelve hour journey to the prison hulks. James Loveless was confined in the *Leviathan* and the others on the *York*.

It was a cruel age as may be seen from some of the savage sentences passed for the most trivial offences. In 1834, at the quarter sessions, the Dorchester magistrates sentenced a lad of seventeen to transportation for life for wounding a sheep. A boy of eleven was sentenced to three months' hard labour and a public whipping for stealing a garment, whilst another aged eighteen was transported for seven years for a similar offence. The theft of a loaf of bread was punished with two months hard labour and a public whipping, but an assault on a woman, in which she was kicked and two of her ribs broken, was judged to be adequately punished by a fine.

Is it any wonder that the conditions on the hulks were harsh and degrading ? Ten years after the Tolpuddle labourers were sentenced, public opinion was so aroused by the horror of conditions and treatment on them that they were broken up.

They were old wooden warships used as floating prisons and had been described by a London magistrate as "seminaries of profligacy and vice". During twenty-five years one man out of every three confined to the hulks died. The *York* housed about five hundred prisoners on her decks. The prisoners were never free from the chain between ankle and waist and their bodies, clothes, beds and the walls of the hulk itself were infested with vermin.

George Loveless, lying ill in Dorchester Gaol, heard that his comrades had left the prison and asked to be taken to them. He was not allowed to travel until April 5th when he too went to the *York*. The rest of his friends had, in the meantime, been transferred to the convict ship *Surrey* and on April 11th sailed for New South Wales. George was kept on the *York* until May 17th when he was transferred to the convict ship *William Metcalfe* and sailed for Tasmania, which was seven hundred miles from where his friends were to serve their sentence.

The journey took a hundred and one days, and for eighty of them George Loveless was unable to lie down. He writes that each man was supplied with a small bed, pillow and a blanket "which would have been greatly to our comfort, had there been sufficient room to have lain on them, but we could not. A berth about five feet six inches square, was all that was allowed for six men to occupy day and night with the exception of four hours we were allowed daily on deck, two hours in the forenoon and two hours in the afternoon for air."

None of these conditions shook his faith. He wrote to his wife on the eve of his departure—"I shall never forget the promise made at the Altar ; and though we may be apart awhile, I shall consider myself under the same obligation as though living in your immediate presence. Be satisfied, my dear Betsy, on my account. Depend upon it, it will work together for good and we shall yet rejoice together. I hope you will pay particular attention to the moral and spiritual interest of the children. Don't send me any money to distress yourself. I shall do well, for He who is

Lord of the winds and the waves will be my support in life and in death."

* * * *

When Lord Melbourne became Home Secretary most people, like Greville, thought him too lazy to succeed. But he acted with such ruthless vigour towards the agricultural rioters of 1830 that, within a month, men talked of him as the one strong man in the Government. He displayed the same energy in the Tolpuddle Affair. His life-long maxim had been that "all letters answer themselves in a fortnight", but now notes streamed out from the Home Office and his house in South Street, directing every stage of the offensive. In the six weeks after the men's conviction, he wrote seven times to James Frampton alone.

Lord David Cecil finds Melbourne's attitude to the agricultural workers something of an enigma. "Surely so kind a man should have had more qualms in applying a criminal code of this ferocity", he writes—and explains it by "the uncontrollable fear which always attacked him (Melbourne) at a serious threat to the tranquility and stability which he valued more than anything else in life". But was he really kind in the full sense of the word ? Certainly he was not heartless to the extent, say, of the sixth Earl of Shaftesbury. His tender anxiety for his imbecile son contrasts sharply with the old Earl's harshness and neglect towards Anthony Ashley ; he showed considerable restraint towards his difficult wife and great loyalty towards his lady friends even after they had got him—or he them—into trouble. His kindness, however, did not go so far as to make him refrain from taking his pleasures where he liked and his attitude to slavery[1]—and

[1]"I say, Archbishop", remarked Melbourne to Archbishop Whateley, "what do you think I would have done about this slavery business if I had had my way. I would have done nothing at all. I would have left it alone. It is a pack of nonsense. There always have been slaves in most civilised countries. However they would have their way and we have abolished slavery. But it is all great folly."

indeed to everything which was not an extension of himself—was as harsh or indifferent as his attitude to the workers. Perhaps it was, as Cecil says, that he deliberately refused to enter imaginatively into the sufferings of such people. But one is reminded rather of Professor Kilpatrick's dictum in an Oxford University sermon : "An unconcern with God is accompanied by callous wickedness towards man."

Few hints of tenderness, in any event, protruded into his letters to Frampton. True he cautioned Frampton, as he had already cautioned King William, that it would be both illegal and unwise to dismiss all workers who were union members. But a few days later he wrote again to clarify his view : "I shall be very glad to learn that farmers refuse to employ those labourers who have engaged in the union, and I am of the opinion that it will be much better that they should do so of their own accord and from themselves rather than on the recommendation of the magistrates."

The main point of Lord Melbourne's letters was to collect ammunition with which to answer the fusillade of protest in London. He enquired minutely into the men's characters, particularly into their alleged part in the riots of 1830 and the case of a piece of pig iron once stolen by one of them. And he promised to expedite the sending of the men overseas, as their case might then be judged hopeless and the agitation die down.

The Home Secretary was wise to arm himself. For within five days of the sentence Robert Owen's Grand Consolidated Union held a meeting of 10,000 in London and during the next week a committee was formed to organise national protests and to support the families who had by now been evicted from their cottages. On April 3rd 12,000 met with Dr. Wade, a radical clergyman, in the chair and sang fervently the verses written by George Loveless. Meanwhile petition after petition was presented to Parliament, and was in each case ordered to lie upon the table. Finally on April 21st, ten days after the five men had left for Botany Bay, 100,000 met in Copenhagen Fields and marched to Whitehall, where Lord Melbourne refused to receive

a delegation carrying a monster petition. The Government stood pat : but agitation in town and countryside went on.

While Melbourne was Home Secretary and during his first brief term as Prime Minister, the Parliamentary agitation made no headway. But in April 1835, Lord John Russell became Home Secretary in Melbourne's second administration. At the same time Thomas Wakley, the editor of the "Lancet", took up the issue in Parliament. He showed that 800,000 people had signed petitions for the pardon of the Tolpuddle men and, although his motions were defeated in the House, he convinced Lord John Russell that injustice had been done. "To be sure the Duke of Cumberland and the Duke of Gordon (who had administered oaths in Orange Lodges) are far more guilty than the labourers, but the law does not reach them", Lord John wrote to Melbourne. Melbourne was still against revision. But by now Lord John was determined. In March 1836 he announced in the House that His Majesty had been pleased to grant a pardon to all six men. It took three years more, due to slow communications, obstruction and red tape, before the men had received their pardons and set foot on English soil again.

The Governor of Van Dieman's Land, where George Loveless spent his exile, reported on the 1830 transportees that their punishment was most efficacious. "Several died almost immediately from disease, induced apparently by despair", he wrote. "A great many of them went about dejected and stupefied with care and grief, and their situation, after assignment, was not for a long time much less unhappy." The Tolpuddle men suffered all the rigours of their punishment, but came through with faith unimpaired. Returning to England, they settled on two small farms in Essex, provided for them by the Dorchester Labourers' Farm Tribute Fund ; then in 1844, the lease of the farms running out, they emigrated to Canada.

Only James Hammett stayed in England. He had come back from Australia a year later than the others, and after a short time in Essex had returned to Tolpuddle. There he took up

building work. He was still living there in 1872 when Archbishop Manning supported Joseph Arch at the great meeting in London of a new national union for agricultural workers ; and in 1875 Arch travelled to Tolpuddle to honour him in the name of the growing union. Later, old and blind, Hammett refused to be a burden to his children and quietly went into the workhouse to die. When they buried him in Tolpuddle churchyard, the Squire stood by the grave to make sure that no one spoke that day in favour of the union.

* * * *

The fight of the Tolpuddle men had no immediate effect in improving the farm labourers' lot. Ten years after their trial, wages in Dorset averaged only seven shillings and sixpence a week, and not for twenty years did they rise over twelve shillings. But the men became a symbol of justice and freedom, and forty years later, when the Agricultural Union was refounded, men remembered them. In the meanwhile, what fighting spirit survived was fostered in the chapels. "Here", says the Union's official historian, "labourers learnt self-respect, self-government, self-reliance and organisation ; here men learnt to speak, to read, to write, to lead their fellows", as Loveless had done before them.

In these years three ideas were at work in the British Labour movement as a whole—the rationalism of the French Revolution, the materialism of Marx, Engels and the Communist Manifesto and the Christian faith of the Tolpuddle men and hundreds of other humble pioneers. The last of these three won, and it was in such faith and experience that the British Labour movement struck its roots.

Thus, Professor Halevy, in his monumental *History of the English People*, writes : "The majority of the great Trade Union Movement that would arise after 1815 will belong to the non-conformist sects. They will often be local preachers. Their spiritual ancestors were the founders of Methodism." Sidney Webb, in his *Story of the Durham Miners*, confirms that it was always such

men "who were to be found taking the lead and filling the posts of influence" and Frank Hodges, when General Secretary of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain, said : "In most of the English counties the old and many of the present leaders of the Miners' Federation were, and still are, influenced by the Methodist Church. In the early forties the leaders of the miners were invariably local preachers and those who fought hardest and best for the men oftentimes found their inspiration in the hard pews of the non-comformist churches."

That the Labour movement sprang from such origins is undeniable. Its principal inspiration, right into the earliest years of the twentieth century, came from men and women whose drive for social justice sprang from their Christian experience of change. It was such men who by fighting for a spiritual revolution, saved Britain from a revolution of blood in the nineteenth century. Like the Tolpuddle men they were, in a sense, reluctant revolutionaries, and it is the irony of events that the very rulers whom they saved from ruin persecuted them as dangerous men ; and so forced many into the darker, materialist ideology which stalks the world today. But for a hundred years after Tolpuddle, it was the men of faith who predominated. Only now are the militant materialists winning an ascendancy, which, if it continues, will abolish free trade unions from the earth.

4

A Briton Abroad

ONE EUROPEAN in India foresaw the coming and scope of the conflict which we call the Indian Mutiny. He was Sir Henry Lawrence.

This convulsion, which took place just over one hundred years ago and in the hundredth year after Plassy, was forecast by Lawrence fourteen years before it happened. In the *Calcutta Review* in 1843 he prophesied almost the exact course that events would take in Meerut and Delhi in 1857. In 1846 he ruffled a complacent group of officers at Agra by remarking: "Don't be surprised, Gentlemen, if you find yourselves one day imprisoned in this very fort by your own army." That too came to pass.

Indeed Lawrence saw further. In the flood days of British expansion, so much of which he opposed, he spoke openly of the day when Britain would leave India. Britain's aim should be, he wrote, to make India "a noble ally, brought into the scale of nations under our guidance and fostering care."

In the years before 1857, Lawrence advocated in vain reforms in the army which might have gone far to satisfy the Sepoys. He also pleaded for a new attitude by Europeans generally in India. Whether his ideas if carried through in India at large would have averted the crisis is not known. But it is certain that the crisis would have been far worse had he not been able, in the face of much opposition, to exert so wide an influence in large parts of Northern India.

More important than any reforms was the belief among Indians that Lawrence understood and cared for them. As the biographer of his brother and chief rival wrote : "No Englishman in India has ever influenced other men so much for good ; nobody has

done so much toward bridging the gulf that separates race from race and creed from creed ; nobody has ever been so beloved or ever deserved to be so beloved as Sir Henry Lawrence."

A hundred years have passed. India and Pakistan have become two of the great self-governing powers of the new world. Yet the vexed problem of how Englishmen affect men of other races and nations remains. We still hold sway in some parts of the globe where men of other races dwell. We still—perhaps more then ever—raise passions in others which we find it difficult to understand. These passions are even now a major factor in Asia, Africa—and the Middle East.

Henry Lawrence held a view different from many British of his—and our—day on how a Briton should behave abroad.

* * * *

Like so many soldiers of faith and fortune down to the present day, Lawrence came of Scots-Irish ancestry. His father, a retired colonel of great gallantry, quick temper and little means, had eleven children. The sons left one by one for India, as was the custom in those days of bulging nurseries and slim incomes. It was a hard parting as home leave was normally granted only once in ten years, and death from disease or battle was common.

The sense of family was strong. Once in India a major preoccupation was the "Lawrence Fund", gradually gathered and invested by the four brothers for their mother's future. The story is told of Alexander, George and Henry, all soldiers, seeking a staff appointment to benefit the fund. They decided to call jointly on a senior officer. "How if he asks us what we can do ?" asked Henry. "Well, anyhow we can stand on our heads !" replied George buoyantly. On arrival, the senior officer duly confronted them with the dreaded question. The brothers looked at each other in dismay ; then without a word, each went to his corner, and stood on his head. Whether they got their appointment is not recorded. John came out later. "I set agoing our fund, and rather dunned John into aiding it at first", said Henry,

"but I mistook my man, for, instead of requiring to be encouraged, he has put me to shame."

Henry worked for the "Lawrence Fund" with a zeal which, incidentally, set him apart from the easy-going society of his fellows and kept him out of debt. He needed money for an additional reason. After four years in India he had been invalided home, "not twenty-one, yet reduced by sickness and suffering to more than double that age." At home he met a friend of his sister's, a certain Honoria Marshall. Honoria, also from Northern Ireland and one of sixteen, was both brilliant and beautiful. The two fell in love. Henry, always a humble man for all his daring, did not speak to her. He spoke first to his sister, and then to Honoria's closest friend. The latter pointed out that he could not hope to support a wife for many years and said it would be unwise, indeed unfair, to talk to Honoria. Henry felt his commitment to his mother must come first and left for his ten years' spell in India, without saying a word.

When, therefore, in 1833 the fund was nearly completed and Henry was transferred to the better paid job of Assistant Revenue Surveyor, he saw with joy that at last he could approach Honoria. Characteristically he wrote first to his sister, Letitia : "I really think I shall be mad enough to tell her my story and try to make her believe I have loved her for five years, and said nothing." Letitia's reply, reaching him after many months in the post, shattered his peace. His father was dying, and Honoria had become engaged to some one else. "Now and then are very different words", he lamented. "Had I but tried, as one in his senses would have done, to gain her heart, matters might have been managed. . . ."

But, where two people are meant for each other and each tries honestly to find God's will, it takes a great deal to keep them apart. Without knowing Henry's feelings, Honoria broke off her engagement. They began to write to each other. On April 3rd 1837 she set out on the four months' voyage to Calcutta and Henry.

* * * *

Meanwhile Henry was assisting in a rapid and comprehensive survey of two Provinces. With a staff of three assistants, a dozen clerks and hundreds of Indians for measuring, writing, carrying chains, etc., he ranged vast areas, fixing boundaries and re-assessing taxes (for taxes were based on land, and bad or no surveying meant bad assessment and unfair taxation). This brought him, for the first time, into direct touch with village life—and it is the hundreds of thousands of villages which make up India. He met the ordinary man, listened to his stories of local tyranny and the blindness of the white sahib—settled their quarrels and began to know their qualities, good and bad.

Now for the first time people began to see the power in Henry Lawrence. His life-long friend, Herbert Edwardes, sketches him at this period : "Time had subdued nothing in him. There he was, in the vigour of early manhood, self-taught, self-disciplined, self-reliant ; fiery in his zeal for public work ; hot of temper with reprobates and idlers, and as hot to reward the diligent ; impatient of contradiction, ignorant of the impossible, scorning compromise . . . rough, angular, strong."

Honoria's description was : "He is thirty-one, but looks older, is rather tall, very thin and sallow, and has the appearance of worse health than he really has. . . . Very active and alert in his habits, but very unmethodical. As to dress and externals, perfectly careless and would walk out with a piece of carpet about his shoulders as readily as with a coat, and would invite people to dinner on a cold shoulder of mutton as readily as to a feast."

To this man and his passionate labour came Honoria. She fitted in immediately. Practical brother John advised Henry to seek another job as "you cannot drag your wife through the jungle in the hot wind". Neither Henry nor Honoria agreed. In the year of her arrival Henry was committed to survey an area of three thousand square miles. Over every foot of the way Honoria went with him.

She wrote to England of a typical day's travel in a country

"without roads or bridges or inns". "It was only fourteen miles but we travelled twice the distance. From our jungle camp we set out before daylight on an elephant. On this huge creature we passed through a belt of forest ; then mounted our ponies and cantered across country till we reached a wide piece of water. A canoe, scooped out of a tree-trunk, conveyed us to the far side, where another elephant waited to joggle us through a second belt of forest. By that time the sun was well up . . ." and so on. Saunders Abbott met them one day in a dense piece of jungle : "To my utter astonishment I found Mrs. Lawrence with him. She was seated on the bank of a nullah, her feet overhanging the den of some wild animal, writing overland letters ; her husband, at no great distance, laying his theodolite." Abbott continues : "In such roughings this admirable wife was delighted to share ; and at other times she would lighten his labour by reading books he wished to consult, or making notes and extracts for his literary work. She was one in a thousand. A woman highly gifted in mind, of a most cheerful disposition, she fell into his ways of unbounded hospitality with no attempt at luxury or refinement. She would share with him the wretched 'Castles' (little better than cowsheds) in the highland districts, where she would be the happiest of the happy. Or we would find them sharing a tent, some twelve feet square; a shawl hung up to separate their bed and dressing room from the hospitable breakfast table ; she and he both in their glory. No man ever devoted himself so entirely to what he considered his duty . . . and none ever had better helpmate than he had in his wife."

Honoria brought something with her which meant much to Lawrence—a growing faith in God. Many times in her diary she speaks of her absolute need of God. Before her first child came, in her many illnesses, in the times of sudden separation and danger you see again and again the struggle of this high-spirited woman to put her will under the will of God. And again and again she comes through radiant and peaceful.

Perhaps the most searching incident was the sudden illness of

her first two children, when her baby daughter, aged one, died in a few hours and her boy of three came through to life after a long struggle. The blow struck in the August heat, when Henry was away on one of his lightning trips. A month later Honoria wrote home about those hours, when she sat beside her boy, with her baby girl laid across her knees : "In that holy calm I felt the Saviour saying, 'Suffer your little one to come to me.' I felt myself carrying her through the dark valley. I saw the glory she was entering. Had God offered to restore her to me then, I would not have taken her back. . . . The evening wore away. She lay perfectly tranquil breathing away her spirit. I dreaded to call for candles. When they came, I saw the terrible change. At half-past eight she ceased to breathe ; and I laid her down to take up my still living child. All night he continued apparently dying. But next day he rallied a little. . . . It was not till the suspense was over that I felt my own bereavement. But, oh Mary—this is sorrow without a sting ; and I can say with joy and praise that on our fourth wedding day we were happier, yes happier, in each other and in our hopes of eternity than we had ever been before. We could never have so loved, had we not sorrowed together." Honoria later dated her "personal feeling of considering the Saviour as a friend" from this experience.

Henry too had faith—less articulate in the beginning, but growing firmer through the years. The major influence of his youth had been his sister Letitia who had often met Wilberforce and the Thorntons and "quietly drunk in their wit and conversation" from her invalid couch. Henry of all the brothers, says our informant, was "most amenable to her influence" in this field. Henry himself met Hannah More, and the story of her life was the first in the series which he wrote in later years for the encouragement of his son. It was one of Wilberforce's "outer circle" of M.P.s who obtained for Henry and his brothers their cadetships in India.

Henry was, therefore, of the new tradition of Indian service, as initiated by Charles Grant and John Shore of the Clapham

brotherhood—who were respectively Director of the Court of Directors of the East India Company and Governor-General of India. Up till their time even those, like Pitt and Burke, who respected India's ancient civilization, considered Britain's relations with her to be commercial and her responsibilities purely political. Few believed that the British had any duty to encourage education or live morally. Indeed, most British in India had been so affected by easy money and separation from home that a common Indian impression was : "Christian religion, devil religion ; Christian much drink, much do wrong, much beat, much abuse others." Grant and Shore saw Britain's responsibilities in quite a different light. They initiated the first missionary effort under British rule, but held (as Shore said) that Europeans "needed first to Christianize themselves". Shore started with himself, for, as Sir John Kaye said, "in a time when to be corrupt was to be like one's neighbour, Shore preserved, in poverty and privation, the most inflexible integrity".[1]

Henry Lawrence was an heir to this tradition. At the time he went to India, moreover, he came into close contact with some who were more conscious than he of this fact. For he met again a certain Lieutenant Lewin, whom he had known at the East India Company College at Addiscombe, and was astonished by a remarkable alteration in him. "His whole thought seems *now* to be what good he can do. I wish I were like him", Henry wrote home. "Of course", he added, "he is designated a Methodist, but I wish we had a few more such Methodists." When Lewin and the Assistant Chaplain, George Craufurd, who had been instrumental in changing Lewin's life on the ship out, asked Henry to join them at Fairy Hall, their centre for like-minded officers in the cantonment at Dum Dum, Henry accepted. "We may safely say Henry Lawrence once and for all chose his side", comments Sir Herbert Edwardes. Neither Lewin nor Craufurd

[1]Grant, on arrival in India, lived the conventional life of an Englishman of the day and soon owed £20,000 as a result of extravagance, gambling and unfortunate business deals. His change came as a result of family tragedy, when he lost his two sons in nine days.

were wholly satisfied with the change in Lawrence, but he himself later said that his times with them were the beginning of his independent faith.

He believed in the guidance of God, and frequently prayed for it—in emergencies as have many great soldiers, but also in normal days as well. His Indian troops at Lucknow said of him : "When Lawrence Sahib looks twice up to heaven and once down at earth, then strokes his beard—he knows what to do." His life was a progressive struggle for purity of intention, and he learnt a great deal through Honoria, both in life and through her death.

Honoria was not one of those women who, like the equally gifted Mrs. Gladstone, harmed their husbands by telling them and the world that they are always right. She approximated more to the modern wife who said to her husband : "I love you as you are, but will fight for you to become what you are meant to be." In the early days, on his first birthday with her, July 28th 1838, she points out to him that "you, dearest, scarcely ever address a native without an abusive epithet—even when you are not angry". He accepted her thought—and changed his ways. A little later he feels that he is in honour bound to fight a duel. She, after protesting a number of times with no effect, writes him a letter. She speaks of her own feelings and continues : "These are woman's feelings—men must act from a different view . . . I only put it on the ground of fearing God, or fearing men. There is deliberate sin in giving or accepting a challenge. Oh ! Consider these things ; and before you decide, pray earnestly that God may direct you." He did not easily give way, but in the end no duel was fought. Honoria sums up her conception in a pencil scrawl on a stray leaf of her diary : "The wife who praises and blames, persuades and resists, warns or exhorts—upon occasion given—who carries her love through all with a strong heart, not a mere weak fondness—she is the true helpmate."

* * * *

The happy days with the Indian Survey ended in September 1838 with a dash to join Lord Auckland's Afghan expedition. Frustrated from taking part in that ill-judged venture—at the time it seemed to him a personal tragedy, but later very providence—Lawrence did much to make General Pollock's relieving operation possible. "He seems to mount the first flash of lightning that happens to be going his way ; and when you fancy him forty miles away—behold him at your side", said one of Pollock's staff—which was refreshing in a day where camp-followers were often four times as numerous as combatants and where one aide was accompanied by an elephant, four horses, eight camels and twenty servants for his own comfort alone.

Much as he wished it, Lawrence never got through to Afghanistan with Pollock. He was kept at Peshawar as Political Officer and, through his understanding of the Sikhs, secured the vital southern end of the Khyber Pass. He subdued, without bloodshed, a Sikh mutiny and led the formerly mutinous force through the Pass, only to be sent back himself to his base. Meanwhile he felt he had found his chosen field of action and hoped, at the end of the war, to be appointed Resident in Lahore, the capital of the Sikh Kingdom of the Punjab. The new Governor-General, the erratic Ellenborough, preferred to use him to settle several difficult hill districts—in one of which he showed his unique powers by solving an ancient frontier dispute involving five local kingdoms—and finally made him Resident in Nepal.

His instructions in Nepal were to observe the intrigues of the court, but not to interfere—a new discipline for this man of action. He spent the early months between disappointment, even resentment, at being excluded from the Punjab and joy at having leisure with Honoria. They began to think out their basic conceptions and express some of them in the *Calcutta Review*. One article included his famous warning and forecast of the Great Mutiny. In it he lamented the lack of energy and decisiveness in English officers and the lack of opportunities and promotion for Indians. He proposed that the army should be reformed

and—a revolutionary suggestion in those days—that the posts of adjutant and second-in-command should be opened to Indians.

He was sure that the British could give much in India. But he was by no means certain that British rule had been an unmixed blessing : "Looking back on fifty years of English Dominion", he wrote, "although it were calumny to say that nothing has been done, it may be safely said that much has been left undone, that our principle of Government enervates the executive for good, and does not restrain it from evil. . . . Would it not be well, while time offers, to ask ourselves what it is that makes our rule seem founded on expedients?"

Honoria took the matter a step further : "Twenty years of varied civil experience have given Sir Henry Lawrence a rare knowledge of these people's language and character, their wants and wrongs, the good and the evil that our system has introduced among them. I watch the conduct of the English in India, from the private soldier to the general officer—from the clerks to the Judge ; and I see prevalent the spirit that talks of the 'black fellows', that assumes—perhaps unconsciously—that the Natives are very much in our way, in their own country, except so far as they may be turned to our comfort or aggrandisement. It therefore provokes me to see the slender appreciation of a man who uses his authority as a trust, on behalf of the people, so strangely brought under our rule."

Honoria did not write these words till much later, but these basic conceptions were clear to them as they came to the end of "two most happy years" in Nepal, and moved down to Segauli for the Christmas of 1844, lingering there some days before Honoria was to leave for England with their son Alick. There they heard that the Sikh army had crossed the Sutlej and invaded British India. A letter from Sir Frederick Currie arrived on January 6th : "We have had some very hard fighting. Our loss is heavy—Broadfoot is killed ; and you are required forthwith. The Punjab is before us. Come quickly. Lose no time in coming. You are a long way off."

Lawrence left within hours, Honoria and Alick proceeding to Calcutta and England alone. On his headlong ride, he saw John in Delhi, shocked the officers in Agra with his pregnant prophecies and arrived with the army with no baggage, clad in some leather shorts borrowed from John. Here he met with an eager welcome, for Ellenborough had, the previous year, been recalled and supplanted by Lord Hardinge, one of Wellington's generals and the "hero of Albuera". This pacific soldier who had followed a bellicose civilian had read Lawrence's articles in the *Calcutta Review* and recognised his worth. Immediately after the war, he appointed Lawrence Resident in Lahore and General Agent for the North-West Frontier. So Lawrence came back to the Punjab. His aim was to make annexation unnecessary—a desperately difficult aim in the face of the internal quarrels of the Sikh leaders. "Could any Native State have been rescued, in spite of itself, from British Dominion, the Punjab would have been saved by the hand of Henry Lawrence", it was said.

* * * *

Lawrence set to work with a handpicked band of assistants. A man can often be judged by his assistants. Some "great" men pick small men to work near them, or reduce their helpers to cyphers. Others inspire men while they themselves are present, but do not train them to independent responsibility. True greatness consists in developing and changing men's characters so that they flower to the limit of their capacities—and beyond.

Lawrence's young men were, on any basis, a remarkable bunch. His dealings with them hold few parallels in British history. One writer said of them : "Far from faultless, differing widely, with the individual differences of strong natures, yet alike in one essential quality—they feared God, and they feared nothing else in heaven or earth." This observer adds : "Through that compound of faith and fearlessness, they set up a standard of British character in Eastern eyes ; and they looked unanimously to Henry Lawrence as leader, exemplar and friend."

These men—John Nicholson, Herbert Edwardes, James Abbott, Reynell Taylor and the rest (leaving out, for the moment, the brothers George and John Lawrence)—were each picked by Henry Lawrence personally. He expected them to live clean and straight. For example, they would have nothing to do with the then common British custom of taking Indian women as mistresses.[1] Lawrence wrote : "I would endeavour to get rid of any assistant who kept a woman." In his dealings with them he was guided by no rules or attitude, but by the needs of each man. He had an artist's perception of character and in choosing his subordinates seldom made a mistake. "The qualities in him that called forth the best in them were rare in a man of action", comments Hesketh Pearson. "It is difficult to find a parallel, though Lincoln, to whom he also bore some physical resemblance, was more akin to him than any other notable figure."

Thus when he met Herbert Edwardes, a subaltern of twenty-six, with a love of books and writing, a sensitive gift of leadership and great resources of courage and endurance, he decided he was a man to have near him. Looking up from writing a letter Lawrence suddenly asked, "How would you like to be my personal assistant ?" Edwardes accepted eagerly. "Very well. That's settled", said Lawrence. A few minutes later he looked up again : "There's one thing I wish you to remember. If I say or do anything that hurts or vexes you, don't brood over it. Just out with it ; and we shall come to an understanding at once." Lawrence had touched Edwardes' weak spot, a pride that would not let him admit that he was hurt. From that frank moment, a great partnership grew—and, when Lawrence was dead, Edwardes went far to supply the same dynamic understanding to Nicholson and others.

[1]The East India Company Vade-Mecum, published in 1810, a book written to "promote the welfare" of young men in the Company's service and dedicated to the Court of Directors, included forty-six pages on native mistresses, their upkeep, cosmetics and ornaments. The author amusedly relates how one elderly man kept sixteen of various ages and, when asked how he looked after so many, replied : "Oh, I give them a little rice and let them run about."

In Nicholson, Lawrence faced a personality of greater power—and greater difficulty. This young man who habitually hunted tigers armed only with a sword, whom British generals compared with Clive, and hill tribes, much against his will, worshipped as God, was taciturn, proud and fiery of temper. His mess-mates did not at first like him. Beneath his reserve, Lawrence had sensed a character of great strength and nobility. Directly he became Resident, he secured Nicholson a post in Kashmir and later moved him back to the Frontier.

Nicholson's biographer comments : "By stirring all that was finest in the younger man, Lawrence captured the heart and head of Nicholson. . . . Nicholson felt that Christianity, which as a practical creed was out of tune with his temperament, was justified in Lawrence, and he tried . . . to harmonise it with the sterner features of his own nature."

Lawrence set himself to hasten this process. He did not hesitate to discipline his fiery subordinate, and it is interesting to see how he did it. It was not the detail of conduct or the success of a project which concerned him most, but the character of the man. He writes to Nicholson in 1849 :

> My dear Nicholson. . . . Let me advise you, as a friend, to curb your temper, and bear and forbear with natives and Europeans, and you will be as distinguished as a civilian as you are as a soldier. Don't think it is necessary to say all you think to everyone. The world would be one mass of tumult if we all gave candid opinions of each other. I admire your sincerity as much as any man can do, but say thus much as a general warning. Don't think I allude to any specific act ; on the contrary, from what I saw in camp, I think you have done much towards conquering yourself ; and I hope to see the conquest completed.

Lawrence's aim was to develop character and build faith. It was partly that he believed that England's strength lay in that faith—when the Maharajah of Kashmir pressed him to say why the British were always victorious in the end, he wrote IHS[1]

[1]Greek for "Jesus the Saviour". The Maharajah was so impressed that he inscribed the symbol on his coinage.

on a slip of paper, passed it to the Maharajah and went on with his work. But his care went deeper than that. It was of Nicholson that Honoria thought on her deathbed, sending him her New Testament with the message : "Tell him I love him dearly as if he were my son. I know he is noble and pure to his fellow men, that he does not think of himself ; but tell him he is a sinner, that he will one day be as weak and near to death as I am." Four years later, mortally wounded before Delhi, Nicholson in his turn sent a message to Edwardes : "Tell him I would have been a better man if I had continued to live with him, and our heavy public duties had not prevented us seeing more of each other privately. I was always the better for a residence with him and his wife, however short. Give my love to them both."

Some, like Kincaid, have scoffed at the deathbed scenes of the Lawrences and those near them. But is there any other time when more truth comes out ?

* * * *

Once Henry Lawrence had picked a man, he trusted him with big events. In 1847, he sent his young men off each to be the only white man in a wild tribal area bidding them : "Settle the people, make the people happy and avoid rows." One of them sent to Kashmir to build the first of the hill schools for English children which were one of Lawrence's most farsighted legacies, wrote to a friend : "You would be amused to see me undertake this *magnum opus* with so little previous training. It is only a specimen of the way in which India brings a man out ; so varied and so unusual are the calls on one's faculties of mind and body. Colonel Lawrence invariably replies to every question: 'Do what you think right, I give you carte blanche to act in my name—draw on my funds.' He trusts me so implicitly it would be a shame not to work." When his school was built, this young man was sent off to build a road for forty miles, from Lahore to the Sutlej. "I fancied I knew nothing at all about the matter. But here I am !"

So it was with all Lawrence's men. They rode hard, met grievances, gave "justice in shirt-sleeves", never considered anything impossible. Their people knew their word must be obeyed, but could be trusted. Most of the victories were bloodless ones. Edwardes, for example, subdued the Banu Valley, including two Afghan tribes who had been at war with the Sikhs for twenty-four years, without firing a shot. Of James Abbott it was said : " He lived with his people more like a patriarch than a magistrate", and fifty years after he left men would say : "On that stone Father Abbott sat." There was no evil-doer for hundreds of miles, an Indian said, who did not "shiver in his pyjamas" at the thought of Nicholson ; but the verdict of his district was that he "resembled a good Mohammedan of the kind told of in the old books, but not to be met with nowadays". "I wish with all my heart it were true", commented Nicholson.

Nicholson was typical of many. Now in the Rawalpindi district, he found his main task was to protect the poor from the ruthlessness of tax-gatherers and the plundering soldiers. When no one could catch a famous bandit, he would leave his office, ride to the spot and capture the man single-handed. On one occasion he found an uncle had seized his infant nephew's property and that, though the fact was common knowledge, no one would dare to give evidence against him. Next day, at dawn the uncle found Nicholson's horse tethered to a tree on the land in question. "Whose land is this ?" thundered Nicholson. "It is my nephew's", said the uncle, preferring to lose the land rather than be charged with stealing Nicholson's horse. The case was quickly settled.

Mentioning a dozen of his assistants by name Henry wrote to a friend, "They are men such as you will seldom see anywhere, but when collected under one administration were worth double and treble the number taken at haphazard. Each was a good man : the most were excellent officers. My chief help, however, was in my brother John, without whom I should have had difficulty in carrying on."

After eighteen months, Edwardes, Nicholson, George Lawrence

and the others reported complete quiet in their areas, often areas where there had not been order or peace for many years. Lawrence himself had, meanwhile, brought peace in Lahore by helping the Sikh chiefs to remove the scheming Queen Mother ("a blend of prostitute, tigress and Machiavellian Prince"), who with her lover, had long bedevilled life there. Everything seemed set fair. Lawrence, however, having worked straight through two hot weathers, was ordered to England on sick leave. He asked Lord Hardinge, who had chosen him so wisely and backed him so whole-heartedly, that his brother John might substitute for him in Lahore. Hardinge decided to trust Lahore to an older and weaker man, Sir Frederic Currie, but he invited Lawrence to travel home to England with him and recommended him for a KCB as the officer, of all those he left in India, who deserved best of his country. So, in January 1849, Hardinge and Lawrence left India,[1] the former assuring his successor, Lord Dalhousie, that "it should not be necessary to fire a gun in India for seven years to come."

* * * *

Lord Dalhousie was an able administrator of great courage—and great ambitions. Coming to India at the age of thirty-six, he swiftly took control of half a dozen intricate situations. His view was frankly imperialist. He aimed to bring as much of India as possible under direct British rule, and justified it by a genuine, if inordinate, belief in Progress.[2]

[1]Lord Ashley (shortly to be Lord Shaftesbury) attended the welcoming dinner for his friend Hardinge and met Henry Lawrence there. Later he described Lawrence as "the greatest man (as compounded of the statesman and the Christian) perhaps that India has produced, a man as remarkable for vigour in action as for gentleness of soul . . . whose name I can never utter without the deepest emotion and reverence."

[2]Certainly the state of the Indian princes of the day encouraged Dalhousie's beliefs. Gulab Singh, the only man whom Hardinge and Lawrence could find capable of governing Kashmir, told Nicholson indignantly he had never flayed 1,200 people alive at once, but only three — hundred. Of his predecessor, John Lawrence said : "If Gulab Singh flayed a chief alive, Imamuddin boiled a Pundit to death : they are certainly a pair of amiables."

He was small of stature, and made up for it by autocratic self-assertion. His Commander-in-Chief, Charles Napier, described him as "weak as water, as vain as a pretty woman or an ugly man". The first part of this judgement was wildly astray, as Napier soon discovered. Whatever the truth about vanity, he was certainly not a man likely to tolerate independent subordinates.

Of the Indians he thought little : "I don't deny that I detest the country and many people in it. I don't proclaim it ; but I don't doubt that my face does not conceal it from those I have to do with", he wrote. Such a chief was unlikely to approve of Henry Lawrence of whom it was said that no one ever sat at his table without getting a kindlier understanding of the Indians.

And there were other likely causes of friction. Only three months after Lawrence sailed away with Hardinge, two British officers sent by Currie to Multan were murdered by the supporters of a petty chief. A scribbled note from one of them got through to Edwardes who acted promptly, as did Nicholson and George Lawrence now both in Peshawar. They almost succeeded in stopping the revolt single-handed and would have done so with the slightest help from Gough, the then Commander-in-Chief or from Dalhousie. But Gough was spending the hot weather in Simla and in no hurry to move. Dalhousie was in Calcutta, and many think he deliberately delayed action until the whole Sikh nation was in flames. "The insurrection, if let alone, would come to a head, locally ; and in the cold season we should be obliged to walk into them", he wrote home. "I see no escape from annexing the infernal country." "Since they have forced me to war", he added later, "I have drawn the sword. And this time I have thrown away the scabbard."

On hearing of the war, Sir Henry Lawrence hurried back to India, bringing Honoria with him. He had written frankly to Dalhousie that the war need never have taken place, which did not endear him to that purposeful autocrat. Morison notes that

Dalhousie was "always disinclined to allow others to convict him of sin." Lawrence joined Dalhousie and Gough at their camp. Meanwhile Gough, in a bungling campaign, with many losses, was winning costly victories. Lawrence's suggestions for generous peace terms were rejected with energy and edge. "Lawrence thinks himself King of the Punjab. . . . I object to sharing chairs", commented Dalhousie. And ten days later, "I have my Resident's nose tidily down."

Even before Gough's final victory, Lawrence, back in Lahore and pinned down by the most detailed orders, was thinking of whether the Punjab could be run entirely for the benefit of the people of the state with no profit to the Company "through the pick of the Sikhs and Punjabis". His brother John saw a different future—a British province, guarding British India from invasion and becoming a financial asset to British India and the Company. Meanwhile Dalhousie had decided on annexation. For form's sake he must confer with his famous Resident. Lawrence, however, decided to send to him his brother John—a man more in tune with Dalhousie's own ideas, yet fairminded and knowing his own. John went, and he and Dalhousie immediately "clicked". He returned with Dalhousie's order for immediate annexation.

Henry felt Dalhousie's lack of confidence keenly, and suggested he should resign. Dalhousie, knowing that Henry's prestige was needed to put through his unpopular policy, countered that the Sikhs would suffer if anyone less sympathetic than Sir Henry was in charge at the time of transition—an argument which Henry could not resist. But Dalhousie was not prepared to leave Henry in sole command. He set up a Board of Administration, with Henry responsible for political, military and diplomatic affairs, John for finance and C. G. Mansell for the magistracy—but with main decisions to be taken jointly. Later these were to be termed "the travelling, the working and the sleeping partners", because Henry delighted to inspect the regions while John held the office in Lahore.

The two brothers, living together in the old Residency, with

Edwardes and their other assistants around them and a crowd of officers always coming and going, certainly made a strong combination. Their rule, said an observer, was "unsurpassed for efficiency, unequalled in the rapidity and thoroughness, with which a disorganised State was brought in order, an embittered and turbulent race turned into a loyal and contented population." "Between them they produced, for a little while, the high point of British rule in India", says Michael Edwardes, and most people would agree. But each day the strain on the two brothers grew. The stage was set for a classic and tragic cleavage between two great men.

Some have written that John, using Dalhousie's distrust of Henry, deliberately worked to displace his brother through ambition. Few men are wholly free from ambition and Dalhousie himself at the time noted gleefully : "Mr. John is a very ambitious man" ; but the cause of the clash was deeper. Here were two classic types of Englishman, brothers yet very different. The difference in character led to divergent policies, and the divergence was watchfully stimulated by their attentive chief.

John was the prototype of incorruptible British civil servant. Strong, swift of decision, a glutton for work, he stood foursquare and unruffled in the stormiest days. Lord Stanley said that he had a "certain heroic simplicity". He felt he should serve his employers, and did it well. During the convulsion of 1857 he was a tower, perhaps *the* tower of strength, behind every operation. And in the midst of everything, he found time to be the most thoughtful of husbands and to keep his brother Henry's financial affairs in review and so salvage from Henry's generosity something for his children.

Finance was indeed a strong point with John—and one of the causes of divergence. A contemporary said of the brothers : " Henry would have had a contented people and an empty treasury ; John, a full revenue and a mutinous population." Another has said less dramatically : "John's aim, first and last, was to make the land yield, in revenue, all it reasonably could;

while Henry aimed chiefly at making it serve the welfare and happiness of the people." [1]

Then John believed in "justice", while Henry—though no one was less deceived by the characters of some of those with whom he dealt—thought generosity and mercy wiser and better. The difference is revealed in the exchange of letters when Henry, in 1853, left the Punjab for Rajputana. Henry wrote appealing once more for kindness towards the Sikh leaders : "If you preserve the peace of the country and make the people happy, high and low, I shall have no regrets that I have vacated the field for you. . . . I think we are doubly bound to treat them kindly because they are down. . . . I would simply do to them as I would be done by. . . ." John replied : "I will give every man a fair hearing and endeavour to give every man his due. More than this no one should expect." Hesketh Pearson shrewdly comments : "The chief objection to acting fairly instead of generously is that man's sense of justice is fallible. Henry knew his weaknesses, John did not."

That Henry knew his faults is shown in a prayer that he wrote down at this time. "Oh, Lord, give me grace and strength to do Thy will, to begin each day and end it with prayer and searching of my own heart, with reading of Thy word. Make me to understand it, to understand Thee. . . . Make me humble, reasonable and contented, thankful, just and considerate. Restrain my tongue and my thoughts. May I not fear man and man's opinions, but remember that Thou knowest my motives and my thoughts, that Thou wilt be my Judge. It is not in me to be regular. Let me be so, as much as I can. Let me do today's work today, not postponing ; so living in humility, thankfulness, contentment."

The prayer is a repetition of many entries in his diary. John, who was also a Christian, was not given to consider his faults much. His mother, in one of her few letters, noted how intolerant

[1]It is pleasant to note that John was carefree enough to mislay the Koh-i-noor diamond for six weeks. When Queen Victoria sent for it, he remembered he had left it in the waistcoat pocket of a soiled suit. His bearer had kept the "old piece of glass"—and so it went to London.

he was of advice, and Henry in a letter in which he admits his own shortcomings wrote : "However honest and industrious John may be, he may rely upon it that there are many others who work as hard and honestly. His great error is over-reliance in his own judgement. . . ." John's trouble was not that he was ambitious, for example—for so were other men including Henry ; but that he was quite unaware of it and never fought it.

John's biographer hints at the same thing in the only paragraph, in 1,200 pages of fascinating narrative, that he gives to John's faith : "He never talked of religion, hardly ever said a word that was distinctly religious even to his intimate friends or relations. Yet everybody knew it was there. Levity and irreligion stood abashed in his presence. His religion seemed to be too secret or too simple to admit of handling in common talk. It was a plant with roots so deep and so tender that he would not allow himself, still less anyone else, to pluck it up to see how it was growing." In fact, you get the sense it was not growing at all. It was there—a set of principles tenaciously upheld—but not a maturing experience like Henry's. He did not let God near enough to convict him of fault daily—or even weekly. So his faith did not capture others as Henry's did.

Nicholson is a measure of this difference between the brothers. When Henry left the Punjab, Nicholson wanted to leave too. Henry and Edwardes dissuaded him. John knew his value ; "the best district officer on the frontier, well worth the wing of a regiment", he wrote to Dalhousie—and treated him with great patience and forbearance. Never was this more evident than during the quarrel between Nicholson and Neville Chamberlain. But John never stirred Nicholson's heart, never was within a mile of changing his mind or will. He lacked Henry's magic of understanding, and also his spiritual authority. Nicholson recognised those qualities in Henry—and in Edwardes—but not in John. John saw it dimly in 1857 when he said to Daly : "Henry has a greater grip of men than I ever had."

Henry knew his faults, but he did not always get victory over

them. In those months of heat at Lahore his temper flared up as John set his obstinate jaw. Each checked certain faults in the other's administration, but as Edwardes points out they also "confirmed each other's faults. Sir Henry was more lavish in his proposals, because he thought that John would cut down any proposal which he made ; and John was more hard and stingy, upon parallel reasoning."

As relations got more and more difficult, both Lawrences wrote to Dalhousie, saying the partnership was impossible and offering to move elsewhere. Dalhousie refused John. To Henry he replied in a peculiarly wounding letter stating that the Government of the Punjab, if it were to be entrusted to any one man, could only be given to a civilian (John, at the insistence of his elder brother, had entered the Civilian Branch, but it was an insult, which Dalhousie gloated over in his letters home, to suggest that Henry lacked any civilian experience.) Henry then suggested that he might take the vacant post of Resident in Hyderabad. Dalhousie said it was already promised and moved the reluctant Agent in Rajputana to Hyderabad so as to relegate Henry to Rajputana. Dalhousie had a perfect right to move a subordinate in whom he had lost confidence, but Henry took it badly. "What was it but a push—a kick ?" asked Henry.

Perhaps if he had found a fuller answer to his own self-will in these day-to-day affairs in Lahore, Henry might have broken the deadlock with John who, deep down, loved and respected him. Henry certainly fought his weakness. As Honoria and he paused, all packed up for the move to Rajputana, they knelt in the Residency and Henry prayed "with the simplicity of a child" for a blessing on John's administration. Edwardes wrote of it to Nicholson : "We, who know all that they felt, the passionate fire of their natures, her intense love and admiration of him, whose fame was the breath of her nostrils, must see, in the victory of that prayer, one of the finest pictures our lives ever can know."

The people of the Punjab mourned his going. His line of march was thronged with men of every degree, flocking to pay their

respects to him. A Lahore paper said : "Let Sir Henry go where he will, the kindly memory of him and his good deeds, in thousands of Punjab homes, will follow after him like a blessing."

But the greatest tribute of all was the change that came over John. It was, observers said, not only in his policy, but in himself. One said : "He seemed to succeed to many of the graces of his lost brother." Another declared : "The influence of Henry Lawrence was greater on his brother, and was even more felt through the Punjab, after he had left the country for ever."

* * * *

Henry's four years in Rajputana were far from inactive. This network of feudal principalities "as old as the sun and moon" needed a deal of understanding, and Henry was ideally suited for the job. By his settlement of the affairs of Karauli, for example, he saved it from the annexation which Dalhousie had planned for it and his rule, followed by that of the faithful brother George, who succeeded him, insured that Rajputana was quiet throughout 1857.

An advantage of this appointment was that he could make his headquarters at the hill station of Mount Abu. There Honoria died on January 15th 1854. Through the tumultuous years at Lahore and the hard days of banishment, she had been to Henry a strong tower. Thinking of her children in England and "all those fine fellows in the Punjab and how we neglected them", she passed on. Henry was left at Mount Abu with his four-year-old daughter, "a very precious little thing, clever and self-willed, a sunbeam running in and out of my room all day. Takes care of me, helps me to dress, tells me not to walk on the grass for fear of snakes." His grief, said Edwardes, made him grey and worn, but became him like the scars of battle. "His character came out of the fire refined and sweet to a degree that we never saw before. He had come to that calm peaceful estimate of time and eternity, of himself and the judgement which could only

come of wanting and finding Christ."[1] The early days in Rajputana had been marred by Henry's deep resentment against Dalhousie, that slighted sense of grievance, which was Henry's recurrent temptation whenever out of line with a superior. At this time it came nearer solution than ever before.

Dalhousie, meanwhile, had moved on his steady course. The great Kingdom of Oudh, whose Ruler was debauched and devoted chiefly to his thousands of pet animals, was his final aim. Henry continued to warn, "It is the fashion to cry out for annexation . . . and bad as we are, I believe we are better than any native ruler of this present age, but does that justify us in picking their pockets or breaking treaties ?" On the Bengal Army he reiterated : "We ought either to disband the army or open our posts of honour to its aspiring members. We act contrary to common sense in supposing that the present system can end in anything but a convulsion." It is interesting to contrast this with Dalhousie's final minute of the same date : "Hardly any circumstance in the condition of the sepoy is in need of improvement."

Permission for the annexation of Oudh came through from London in time for Dalhousie to make it his "parting coup".[2] General Outram was put in charge and, later, Lord Canning, the new Governor-General, appointed three Civilians who proceeded to quarrel among themselves and produce a state of universal resentment and chaos. It was not until the fateful year of 1857 that Canning appointed Henry Lawrence to clear up the mess. Although he had "some five or six different diseases

[1]Lady Daly made the same observation : "He certainly more than any one I ever knew gives one the feeling of living for another world. He is perfectly cheerful, active and interested in this, yet every now and then some little observation falls from his lips which proves how perfect is his faith that the real life is to come."

[2]On his return to England, Palmerston offered Dalhousie a place in the cabinet. The forty-three-year-old proconsul refused. "I should never act with other men", he explained. "It is not (I hope and believe) that I arrogantly insist on my own opinion, but I can't take the same view as other fellows seem to do—in fact, I suppose I am crotchety." Dalhousie, who was worn out and in constant pain, died soon afterwards.

about me" and was due for leave in England, he accepted at once. He reached Lucknow, the capital, in April. Within two months he had put right many wrongs and much eased the situation in the province.

But he had come too late. The convulsion which he had so long foretold was relentlessly upon its way. The match to the powder keg was the religious horror set off by the treatment of new cartridges with beef fat and hog's lard, which when bitten—as the drill proscribed—would defile Hindu and Muslim alike. But the powder keg itself had been prepared by the British over many years. Failure in the Afghan Wars had shaken their prestige, and continuous annexations had left the country strewn with discontented princelings, landowners and ex-pensioners. The Oudh Annexation precipitated much, for it cancelled the privileges given to Oudh recruits (which had made Oudh the best recruiting ground in India), and masses of disbanded or discontented sepoys returned to Oudh to conspire and agitate. Henry wrote to Canning : "We measure by English standards ; and expect, contrary to all experience, that the energetic and aspiring should like our arrogating to ourselves—even where we are notorious imbeciles—of all authority and all emoluments. . . . Until we treat natives, and especially soldiers, as having the same ambitions and feelings as ourselves, we shall never be safe." He foresaw that the whole Army, except his own "children" the Sikhs, would revolt. And it was so. Sir Robert Montgomery, the third of the Punjab Board, who often agreed with John rather than Henry, said this attitude in the Sikhs must be largely attributed to Henry's spirit and the spirit with which he imbued all around him.

So Henry waited for the attack, stationed on the verge of a turbulent city of 700,000 with no fort or strong place of any kind. Quietly but swiftly he made his preparations, bombarded Canning with sage counsel by telegram and letter, urged his brother even now to treat the Sikhs kindly and himself spent many nights in disguise roaming the city for news. His firmness and fairness

delayed the outbreak in Lucknow far longer than could be expected, and, in the event, a large proportion of his Indian troops decided to stay with him. This delay, allowing for the fortifying and supplying of the Residency, made the long defence possible and saved the lives of those entrusted to him. "But for him not one would have escaped", wrote Montgomery later.

Henry himself did not escape. On June 30th, when the Residency area came under close siege, he chose a small room at the top of his house as his headquarters. He was observed, and the room came under heavy fire, an eight inch shell bursting between Henry and his secretary, without hurting them, on the morning of July 1st. Urged to take up safer quarters, he joked that the enemy boasted no gunner smart enough to send a second shell into so small a room, but finally agreed to shift next day. Next morning, as he snatched an hour's rest, another shell mortally wounded him. In the forty-eight hours that remained to him, he gave minute orders for the conduct of the siege. "No surrender" was his cry. For himself he insisted that he be buried with the others killed that day : "No fuss. No nonsense—here lies Henry Lawrence who tried to do his duty."

His last words were : "I forgive everyone. I forgive John." He died without knowing that London, in a gesture which would have healed all the past, had selected him as provisional Governor-General should need arise. And indeed, since the next Governor-General, Lord Elgin, died soon after arriving in India, Henry would probably have taken office. Had he done so he might have done much to counteract "the self-conscious isolation of the English community in India which continued with little change for more than half a century after the Mutiny".[1] As it was, it was John who was to become Baron Lawrence of the

[1]Kincaid : *British Social Life in India.* This grew out of the anger and fear following 1857. An extreme instance is a letter by Britannicus to the *Englishman* of Calcutta which started : "The only people who have any right to India are the British ; the so-called Indians have no right whatever." Lord Elgin wrote in 1857 : "I have seldom, from man or woman since I came to the East, heard a sentence which was reconcilable with the hypothesis that Christianity had ever come into the world."

Punjab and Viceroy. He was a strong Viceroy but lacked the magic of his brother.

* * * *

The test of Henry Lawrence's life was not whether he or Dalhousie were right on this point or that or whether he could, with more backing, have avoided the conflagration of 1857. His service was rather in the quality of his living, for, as Lord Stanley said, "his personal character was far above his career, eminent as that career had been".

Speaking nearly a hundred years later, during the final struggle for independence, a broadminded and highly educated Burmese lady said of the British : "They have given us material improvement of every kind, they have given us freely of the fruits of their heads and hands—but they have not given us their hearts, so it is almost impossible for us to love them." K. M. Pannikar, in the most authoritative Asian study yet written of the age of Western domination, makes the same point more bluntly. He insists that the greatest bitterness was caused not by English commercial exploitation, but through "the conviction held by every European in India of a final and enduring racial superiority". Pannikar continues : "Seton Kerr, a Foreign Secretary in the Government, explained it as 'the cherished conviction of every Englishman in India, from the highest to the lowest . . . the conviction in every man that he belongs to a race whom God destined to govern and to subdue'. Many authoritative statements of this point of view could be quoted to show how universal this conviction was up to the time of the first world war."[1]

[1]Lord Kitchener, for example, declared : "It is this consciousness of the inherent superiority of the European which has won us India. However well-educated or clever a native may be, and however brave he may have proved himself, I believe that no rank we bestow on him would cause him to be considered the equal of a British officer." Pannikar adds that "missionary Christianity failed" because of its disunities, but above all because "the missionary brought with him an attitude of moral superiority and a belief in his own exclusive righteousness" and added it to the general conviction of racial superiority in which he fully shared.

On the other hand, Pannikar states : "Lord Ripon, because he was considered 'good' ; and Lord Irwin later for the same reason impressed Indians, and the same was true of lesser personages like Munro whose 'good works' and religious faith earned respect, while the durbar-holding and prestige-worshipping viceroys and officials made themselves only ludicrous in the eyes of the people."

Henry Lawrence was a prototype of such Britons. If more of us had lived like him, the movement towards independence would have been smoother and better feeling would have been left behind—not only in India, but throughout Asia, Africa and the Middle East. The whole ideological map of the world today would be different.

That father of ideology, Karl Marx, wrote interesting things about India in the *New York Tribune* in the years before the Mutiny. "The question is not whether the English had the right to conquer India", he wrote, "but whether we should have preferred her to have been conquered by Turks, or Persians, or Russians. In causing social revolution in India, England was, it is true, guided by the lowest motives, and conducted it dully and woodenly. But that is not the point. The question is whether humanity can fulfill its purpose without a complete social revolution in Asia. If not, then England, in spite of her crimes, was an unconscious instrument of history in bringing about the revolution."

The social revolution in Asia is now in full flood. The question now is whether it can be worked out in freedom or must go through the genocide of Tibet to the slavery of the communes. If Britain is to have any part in resolving that question aright, it can only be through Britons who, like Henry Lawrence, are humble, disinterested and clean. The arrogant, the selfish, the indulgent merely assist those followers of Marx who no longer think that England has the capacity to become an instrument of history for freedom.

5

A Stranger in Britain

WHEN THE PRINCE Consort died, the Earl of Orford put on his gayest clothes to mark his joy that one more foreigner was out of Britain.

The remarkable thing was that so few agreed with this eccentric Norfolk nobleman. For the German Prince, who had been Britain's real ruler for twenty-one years, had begun by having his allowance insultingly cut by Parliament and only seven years before his death had been called traitor by most of the British Press. Nor had he gone out of his way to please the English, for he was shy, never sure he liked them and not given to dissembling. Yet, by the day he died, he had won a unique position of respect as well as of power. Even his old enemy Palmerston, on hearing of it, burst into tears and wrote of him as "that Perfect Being". And as year has followed year his reputation has grown.

Many achievements have been attributed to him, some of which have their influence even today. His encouragement of science and industry set a fashion which grows in importance every year. His part, during his last illness, in averting war with America has made easier the alliance of modern times. His care for the working classes—a new thing in British royalty—has become the mean for all his successors. And the new concept of an impartial Sovereign set above politics has survived when much of the power which he won for the monarch had disappeared. Yet underlying and undergirding all these achievements is another, both simpler and more profound. He, with his wife, established a new moral tradition for both monarchy and nation, a tradition which strengthened Britain and saved its throne when so many others fell.

When he reached London for his marriage, grave, handsome and twenty-one, Albert found a situation which would have taxed one far more experienced. The Queen, though in love with him, was controlled by a closely-knit power ring. This ring—the principal elements of which were Lord Melbourne, the Paget family and Baroness Lehzen—managed almost every detail of her public and private life. It was strong because of the hold its leading members had upon the Queen's affections. It did not welcome an intruder, and hoped he would turn out manageable like Queen Anne's husband, who was "very fat, loving news, his bottle and the Queen".

The ring was not perhaps immoral in the sense that immoral and subversive rings exist today in politics, diplomacy and elsewhere. But it had a definitely immoral tinge. Lord Melbourne had twice been cited as co-respondent in famous divorce cases, and when the cases collapsed most people agreed with his brother that "no man's luck could go further". Melbourne's nominees, the Lord Chamberlain and the Lord Steward, one a Paget, the other married to one, had each installed his mistress in a sinecure office and convenient apartments within the Palace. And the Baroness, the Queen's constant companion, had developed an unhealthy and dominating influence on the young bride and Sovereign.

The key figure, in many ways, was "dearly-beloved, angelic Lehzen". She had been with Victoria since she was five and was her "only friend" in the "years of imprisonment" which the Princess's mother, the Duchess of Kent, fondly imposed upon her. It was to her that Victoria turned when her mother, egged on by Sir John Conroy, tried to force a Regency on her, even after she came of age. It was to her, again that the young Queen turned on the morning of her accession when she decided, as her first royal act, to move out of the bedroom which she had until then shared with her mother. In her resentment at her mother's control the Queen passed under the more ingratiating, but in the end no less possessive, influence of the younger woman.

The Baroness's position was further strengthened by Lord Melbourne's decision that no Private Secretary should be appointed, but that he would double the office with the Prime Ministership. This, in practice, meant that the Baroness was Private Secretary in all but the largest political questions. She also controlled the Privy Purse.

Meanwhile Lord Melbourne's kindly charm had won the Queen's "unbounded affection and admiration". While it is true that the Queen drew the best out of Melbourne and profited enormously from his wise political guidance, it is also true that his fascination delayed her marriage with Albert for more than a year as it had in Fulford's words, "driven from her head all thoughts of a more natural, more appropriate passion". They each felt a delight in each other which was exclusive of others, and the dangers of the situation became clear when Victoria refused to accept Peel as Prime Minister in 1838. "The simple truth is that the Queen could not endure the thought of being parted from Melbourne", wrote Greville at the time. "Her feelings, which are sexual though she does not know it. . . . are of a strength sufficient to bear down all prudential considerations." The crowd agreed with Greville, and shouted "Mrs. Melbourne" when she appeared on the balcony, at Ascot.

Well might the Prince remark that he was "only the husband, and not the master in the house". Not only was he kept from seeing any state papers ("Albert helped me with the blotting paper" is a typical comment of the first months), but he had to fight every inch of his way in the Household controlled by the Baroness and the Pagets. He was not even allowed to choose his own personal household. In spite of pathetic protests, Lord Melbourne's own private secretary, George Anson, was forced upon him, the only concession being that Anson should not, as was first proposed, remain Melbourne's secretary at the same time.

It did not seem a promising situation for one whose idea of marriage written to "dearest Victoria" before their wedding, was "one heart, one mind". And dearest Victoria herself did

not make things much easier. On the one hand she was crystal clear that she alone was Sovereign and that Melbourne, not Albert, was her true adviser. On the other, she was, under the primness imposed by her mother, a true Hanoverian and inclined rather to the easy ways of the English nobility than to her standards. Thus, the Duke of Wellington told Greville that it was the Prince "who insisted on spotless character (the Queen not caring a straw for it)" and that the Prince was "a great stickler for morality, whereas she was rather the other way". So, while she was largely innocent in the wrong relationships with Melbourne and Lehzen, her nature was on their side. And the girl who feared marriage because it would be "a dreadful thing" if her husband crossed her will, cannot always have been an easy convert.

In such a position a weak man might have given way to the forces around him or even caught some of the loose ways which were the tradition of his wife's family and of his own. This was what Melbourne naturally expected, for he angered the Queen for almost the only time in their association by saying : "But, damn it, Madame, you don't expect that he'll always be faithful to you, do you ?"

An ambitious man could, on the other hand, have caused such rifts as to break permanently his influence for good in his new country. Albert chose quietly to set about winning the Queen's confidence as he had won her love, taking interest in public affairs not out of ambition but for her sake. The husband of the sovereign, he later wrote to the Duke of Wellington, "should entirely sink his own individual existence in that of his wife—should aim for no power by himself or for himself—should fill up every gap which as a woman she naturally leaves in the exercise of her regal functions—should continually and anxiously watch every part of the public business in order to advise and assist her". Throughout his career, he was always ready to take second place, and to see his ideas attributed to others.

Meanwhile he directed their private life into simple, affectionate,

steady paths. Whereas, before marriage, she had loved London, dancing and late hours—she summoned an all-night dance for the third day of their honeymoon—she now began to discover the quieter domestic entertainments which Albert so much preferred. "Since the blessed hour of my marriage", she was writing within the year, "I dislike and am unhappy to leave the country."

She responded swiftly to his affection and steady unselfishness. Anson proved a true friend, and (with Stockmar advising behind the scenes) Albert moved steadily forward as month succeeded month. In May 1840 he was told the full story of the Duchess of Kent and began to work for reconciliation between mother and daughter. By September he was seeing important papers, and in her first letter after the birth of the Princess Royal in November the Queen directed Melbourne to get Chubbs to make a key for the Secret Boxes for Albert's use. By the beginning of 1841, he was in effect the Queen's Secretary. Meanwhile he had had his first victorious battle with Lord Uxbridge, the Lord Chamberlain, forcing him to give up his rooms in the Palace in spite of his angry appeal to the Prime Minister.

With the Prime Minister, the Prince gained a greater victory. He won his respect and friendship, even while he brought the Queen to a clearer view of her relationship. Melbourne, who for all his cynicism, possessed a tender heart, genuinely desired the Queen's happiness. From the time that he saw that he must wane, he worked with his mind, if not always with all his heart, to establish Albert in her counsels. On his last evening at Windsor as Prime Minister, he said to the Queen with tears in his eyes : "I have seen you daily and I liked it better every day", and continued that he left the Queen with a quieter heart because she had the Prince beside her. The Prince's perspective on the matter can be read in his wife's journal : "My unbounded affection and admiration for Lord Melbourne, which I said to Albert I hardly knew from what it arose, excepting the fact that I clung to someone and having very warm feelings. Albert thinks I worked myself up to what really became quite foolish."

The Baroness was a tougher proposition. She too had genuinely loved and served Victoria for many years. The possessiveness had gained ground imperceptibly and was a temptation difficult to avoid, or even to recognise. Nor was it easy to follow her old friend Stockmar's logic when, after urging her to step between mother and daughter, he told her she would never be forgiven for getting between husband and wife. She clung to her position with great tenacity, resenting Albert without perhaps knowing exactly why.

Once Albert lost patience with her and ordered her from the Palace, to which she replied that he "had no power to turn me out of the Queen's house". At the beginning of 1841, after a major battle in which Albert had to enlist the Queen's aid, the nursery was taken out of her control. "Victoria is much annoyed that I should disturb her with such quarrels", wrote Albert to Stockmar. "She takes everything about the Baroness so much to heart and feels she ought to be her champion." That summer when the royal pair made a round of country houses, the Baroness was left behind and the Queen, parted from her for the first time since she was five, confessed to "feeling a little low". With the disappearance of Lord Melbourne and Uxbridge after the November election, the Baroness's power waned swiftly until, in September 1842, she left England for ever, to live on twenty-eight years in Hanover. Only when she had left did Albert fully open his mind to the Queen. She was horrified : "I blame myself for my blindness . . . I shudder to think what my beloved Albert had to go through . . . it makes my blood boil to think of it."

Roger Fulford, who has revealed these relationships of the early years in his brilliant book, said he wonders that the Prince was not more direct and did not have "the courage to tackle this thorny problem boldly with the Queen". One wonders whether in so sensitive, so explosive a matter the Prince was not wise to move slowly. Certainly everyone agrees that this relationship, while it lasted, destroyed confidence between husband and wife, as such relationships have done in every age. Anson again

and again alludes to the joyous consequences of Lehzen's departure.

Albert's coming had been a well-timed gift for Victoria. On the morning of her accession, she had startled her mother with her independence and dedication. Asked whether her lords in council frightened her, she replied : "No, it was my duty to face them, and God gave me all the strength I needed." But the two first years of her reign proved perilous. She enjoyed the sweets of independence and the dangers of flattery and, as she said herself, always had her own way. Melbourne, for all his care to curb his conversation in her presence, perforce transferred to her more of his philosophy than he knew. As Lytton Strachey says : "Lord Melbourne with his gentle instruction had sought to lead her in the paths of moderation and industry, but the whole unconscious movement of his character had swayed her in a very different direction." Harriet Martineau noticed the result, which she, too, attributed to Melbourne. "The expression on her face was totally changed from what it had been at her accession, when she had an ingenuous and serene air", she wrote of this time. "It had become bold and discontented." The fact is that, emphatic as Victoria's character always seemed, she was much shaped by the person who engaged her deepest affections at any moment, and it is probable that her character would have solidified more nearly in the mould of her uncles, if Albert had not come to her when he did.

The public was beginning to fear this. The romantic honeymoon period, in which England was simply enchanted to be ruled by a fresh young girl, was over. As G. M. Young points out ; "Victoria was not in her girlhood a popular sovereign. She was tactless ; she was partizan ; the tragic story of Lady Flora Hastings showed her heartless as well. The figure that made its way into the hearts of the middle classes was not the gay, self-willed little Whig of 1837, but the young matron, tireless, submissive, dutiful."

In old age the Queen herself looked back on it all and said :

" I can never be sufficiently thankful that I passed safely through those two years to my marriage."

* * * *

Released from the cramp of an evil, though cherished, domination, the Queen's powers sparkled into life. Anson had said that the Baroness's presence was an insuperable obstacle to any moral improvement in the Queen's character, and her going proved him right. Now the zest for life, deep feeling and love of fun which made her the "most delightful companion a man can wish for" found natural expression. For if she inherited some dangerous qualities from her royal line, she also glowed with Hanoverian courage, decision and love of life. These qualities combined with new ones which her husband sought to develop in her, for now he consciously set about "reforming her mind and drawing out her powers". Her intellect sharpened, her interests broadened, a new maturity came to her emotions.

These were the days when the characteristics of the great Queen described by Morley were created. "Queen Victoria stands in the first place, for not only was her rank and station illustrious", he wrote after her death, "but her personality was extraordinary—in its vigour, tenacity, integrity and in the union of all these stubborn qualities with the suppleness and adaptability required from a Sovereign in a constitutional system." Many qualities were inherent. But the Queen was conscious herself that Albert drew them into power. "It is you who have entirely formed me", she told the Prince.

Where Victoria had first loved Albert emotionally, now she loved him also for his character and his intellectual gifts. Her own character began to change, as her imperiousness gave way to humility before him. She became reconciled to her mother at his bidding. Where she had characterised the Duke of Wellington as "that old rebel", she now smiled on him and allowed him to carry the Sword of State at Prince Edward Albert's christening. Peel, who had led the attack against the Prince's

allowance, noted that he found "no shade of personal soreness" in Albert—and the Queen, too, was soon accepting him as the greatest of statesmen, largely because he was becoming Albert's best friend.

By 1840, Greville is noting a marked improvement in the Queen, while Albert is rejoicing that "Victoria is now willing to give up something for my sake". After eight years of marriage, Stockmar thought Albert had made "great strides" and was even more positive on the growth in the Queen : "She makes daily advances in discernment and experience ; the candour, the love of truth, the fairness, the considerateness with which she judges men and things, are truly delightful and the ingenuous self-knowledge with which she speaks about herself is simply charming."

These were years of growing unity. "Love of you fills my heart", wrote the Prince, while the Queen informed Sir Robert Peel : "He is so good and kind and loves me for myself." Theirs was, in Albert's words, a "union of heart and soul". Each felt entirely content in the other's company, yet each was dedicated to something larger—the service of the nation. She had been dedicated in some sort from the time of her accession, and he, in the days immediately before his marriage, as Justin McCarthy wrote, "gave up every habit, however familiar and dear, every predilection, no matter how sweet, every indulgence and sentiment and amusement that in any way threatened to interfere with the steadfast performance of his part".

These decisions placed a happy, purposeful family at the heart of the nation for the first time for generations. And through the years this element was to grow. For the Prince genuinely preferred to take his leisure in the family circle. There his shyness fell away and he was anything but the stern Victorian paterfamilias. He was full of gaiety and affection, and his children looked back in after-life to a really happy childhood. Some might consider the Court dull, but all agreed that the Royal nursery was irresistible.

From this stronghold Queen and Prince went out to their labours. They simply and unhesitatingly believed that sound family life was necessary for sound policy. They were not blind to the need for other qualities, but they placed character in first place and believed that character had a moral backbone. As early as September 1841, Melbourne began to feel the force of this belief. "That damned morality seems to be entirely (i.e. the only thing) thought of and will be the destruction of everything", he spluttered. "The system is horrible, and you might as well set up two public censors of morals to pass judgement on every man who was thought of (for office)."

Peel, his successor, lived a model family life at Drayton, and immediately saw the point. He agreed to keep men of doubtful personal record out of court appointments, however much trouble it should cause with his political friends. Lord Derby, when he became Prime Minister in 1852, took a little longer to grasp that the Prime Minister was, in the Prince's words, "a kind of Keeper of the Queen's conscience who should help the Crown to keep up the necessary moral standards". He finally agreed not to make Lord Wilton, a near relative whose nick-name was "the wicked Earl", Master of the Horse. He also revised his Court Appointments list of which the Prince said "the greater part were the Dandies and Roués of London and the Turf". "I saw that all this placed Lord Derby in considerable difficulties ; however, he said he would take care and not apply Lord Melbourne's epithet (about this 'damned morality') to the objections", noted Albert that night.

This same principle was the inner cause of the royal pair's struggle with Lord Palmerston. The battle raged around the issue whether a Foreign Secretary should send off important despatches without submitting them to the Palace and focussed on specific points of policy ; but the deeper cause was that Queen and Prince were restive while the conduct of foreign affairs was in the hands of a man who, they believed, lacked honour in his private life.

They, of course, knew about "Lord Cupid's" dashing reputation, and that he had been assisted to high office by making Lord Melbourne's married sister his mistress and being carried as a kind of "illegitimate brother-in-law" into the Cabinet. The vital incident however was when Palmerston, staying at Windsor, broke into the bedroom of Mrs. Bland, one of the Queen's ladies, and only desisted when the castle was roused by her screams. Palmerston carried the occasion off with the utmost nonchalance, and Anson maintained that he had "probably from force of habit floundered in" as he had been accustomed to sleep with a lady in that room in previous years. The royal pair did not hear of the incident at once, but when they did it confirmed their worst suspicions.

Thus on April 2nd 1850, Albert writes to Lord John Russell, discouraging him from giving Palmerston the leadership of the House of Commons : "Lord Palmerston is an able politician with large views and an energetic mind, an indefatigable man of business, a good speaker ; but a man of expediency, of easy temper, no very high standard of honour and not a grain of moral feeling. He is consequently quite unscrupulous as to any line of policy he is to follow or any means he is to use, as long as they lead to his ends." And just after Palmerston's triumph in the House on the Don Pacifico issue, when he electrified his hearers and even his old enemy *The Times* with his *Civis Romanus Sum* peroration,[1] Albert wrote to his brother : "You and all Europe certainly feel with us in the unhappy combination of circumstances that granted our *immoral one for foreign affairs* such a triumph in the Commons. We are still more weakened by

[1]Palmerston ended his five hour speech : "Whether, as the Roman in the days of old held himself free from indignity when he could say *Civis Romanus Sum*, so also a British subject, in whatever land he may be, shall feel confident that the watchful eye and the strong arm of England will protect him against injustice and injury." *The Times*, which a little earlier had asked : "Why must this man be allowed to indulge his immoderate appetite for being hated?" now swung to Palmerston's support. It is now generally agreed that Palmerston's policy was ill-judged and Don Pacifico's injury much exaggerated.

it, we and all those who advise Christian straightforwardness, peace and love."

By now Albert and the Queen feared that Palmerston would be forced on them as Prime Minister. The Queen summoned Lord John to the Palace on July 11th, and after the official audience, Albert drew him aside and told him that the Queen's principal objections were connected with "her knowledge of Lord Palmerston's worthless personal character". He then told the Prime Minister the facts about the Mrs. Bland incident. "How could the Queen consent to take a man as her chief and confidential adviser in all matters of state, religion, society, etc., etc. who as her Secretary of State and while a guest under her roof at Windsor Castle had committed a brutal attack on one of her ladies ?" demanded the Prince. "This is very bad", muttered Lord John, and hastened off to consider how to break it all to his formidable Foreign Secretary.

When at length he did, Palmerston sought an interview with the Prince. The Prince spoke frankly. Later he reported of his visitor : "He was very much agitated and had tears in his eyes so as to quite move me, who never under any circumstances had known him otherwise than with a bland smile on his face."

Many feel that the Prince was hard on the Minister, now ten years older than the invader of bedrooms and happily married to Lord Melbourne's sister, whose husband had died. Certainly the Minister had settled down to a more regular middle age, and perhaps the acquiring of a new son-in-law in the shape of Lord Ashley may have had some little to do with it. Yet it is likely that Palmerston, like many another generous, bursting nature, thought the better of the Prince for his intervention. Perhaps the close co-operation and understanding between Prince and Minister in their Crimean War days came in part from the respect born in this interview—which Hector Bolitho described as the "finest proof of the Prince's sense of justice and his ability to build up a conversation gently, thinking always of the main purpose and never of self-justification".

It was only with such strong convictions, lived personally and carried into policy, that the Prince and Queen could have played their part in changing the moral climate of an age. Palmerston was the last Whig and the last of the Regency men. The Prince was the framer of a new and wider epoch.

* * * *

Prince Albert was able to challenge other men's standards because his own were high. All the statesmen of the day—Melbourne, Peel, Palmerston, Disraeli and Gladstone—spoke with one voice about his character, and—which is more impressive, since they saw him in unguarded moments and wrote with no prospect of the Queen seeing their words—his Private Secretaries echoed their good opinions. "Mr. Anson has seen much of the world, but in no Person in any Profession has he ever seen so spotless and so pure a character as the Prince's", wrote Anson, a Melbourne Whig who never lost his cynical twist of mind, while Sir Charles Phipps simply called him "the best man that I ever met in my life". Lady Ponsonby, the first person to write really frankly about Queen Victoria and no flatterer, remarked : "The qualities of the Prince's character would place him, I think, on a far higher level than those of his mind. Unselfish, patient, kind-hearted, truthful and just, one felt it possible to rely upon him as upon a strong rock."

How the Prince came by such a character was more mysterious. Baron Stockmar thought it amazing in one "with such a father and such a brother, both equally unprincipled". Nor can it quite have come from his mother who—though much provoked—eloped with a handsome officer when Albert was five. Nor can his "high-minded" uncle Leopold have been the sole originator of virtue, for he was not himself above his illicit recreations, one of the worst-treated being the niece of Baron Stockmar who did little to discourage the affair. The fact is that Albert seems to have learnt from his own experiences. He remembered all his life the shock of parting with his mother, understood his

father's part in it and ever after associated loose morals with unhappiness.

The Prince himself attributed his development to the influence of his first tutor, Florschutz, who, he said, gave him both his orderly habits and his dislike of evil. Florschutz credited much to Albert's "real and living faith, giving colour to his whole life", and the Queen, whose mind is seen in Sir Theodore Martin's five volumes, agreed with him. Probably they knew better than most. Certainly the fact that his brother described him as having "no natural piety" or that Albert did not espouse the young Oxford movement[1] does not dispose of their evidence.

Indeed the Prince's "living faith" shines through at many points. It was real enough, for example, to take away fear or shrinking from death. "I do not cling to life. . . . I set no store by it", he said to the Queen a few months before he died. "If I knew that those I love were well cared for, I would be quite ready to die tomorrow." "This was said", adds Martin, "without a trace of sadness. He was content to stay if such were Heaven's will ; he was equally ready to go hence, should that will be otherwise." But, while in this world his faith was very practical. So, when his second son Alfred was to be confirmed, he remembered that he had to face "the rough life of the Navy" and stressed that religion "was not a thing of dogma, but a life". He felt, says Martin, that his son (in addition to instruction from clergymen) was entitled to expect from him and the Queen "such help as their experience and affection could suggest in applying the great principles of the Christian faith as rules of

[1]His lack of enthusiasm was not just due to his being, in Bishop Samuel Wilberforce's words, "a thoroughly sincere Lutheran", but because he deprecated the violent dogmatic controversies of the age. Thus he wrote the Bishop, a close friend, who owed to him his preferment, saying that a Bishop in the House of Lords should speak out boldly and manfully on the great humanitarian questions and should take the "part of a Christian and not a mere Churchman". And when the Bishop launched into dogmatic controversy, Albert reminded him that "the History of the Christian Church in all parts of the Globe shows the objectionable nature of such judgements by divines upon divines upon points of view". Samuel Wilberforce, perhaps because he saw the Archbishopric slipping from him, took to his bed with a fever.

conduct amid the trials and temptations from within and without, to which on entering into the freer life of puberty he must inevitably be exposed."

Albert's tragedy—perhaps his one major failure[1]—lay in this realm—that he was unable to pass on his character to his eldest son. This was not just a matter of the parents' dream for a son being frustrated, for these parents knew, and everyone was constantly telling them, that the boy was also England's.

A new conception of monarchy had been built up by the intelligence, vigour and morality of the monarch, and 1848 was a sharp reminder that Europe was no longer tolerant of kingship apart from such qualities. Everything seemed to depend on their son escaping the easy-going, self-indulgent habits of the Queen's uncles and Albert's father and brother. Albert, when the boy was born, remarked that "the greatest object must be to make him as unlike as possible to all his great uncles".

From the earliest days the young royal pair were deluged with memoranda on this important subject, ranging from Baron Stockmar's treatise opening with the truism : "The child is born with natural dispositions to good and evil" to Bishop Wilberforce's assertion that "the great object in view is to make him the most perfect man". All except the dying Lord Melbourne (who remarked that education "may mould and direct character, but rarely alters it") agreed with Stockmar that the hope lay in education. So out of all the counsel, a rigorous system of learning was evolved by Albert, and tutors galore—most of them highly unsuitable—were hired. But the Prince of Wales showed no

[1]His other major disappointment was the failure of his German policy. This, as Eyck shows in his recent book, was to establish in Germany the constitutional monarchy which he found and developed in Britain, and so to make Germany a counterpoise to Russian despotism and Bonapartism. He saw Prussia as the key, and sought to bring about the change first through Frederick William IV, then through William I (whom he befriended and influenced in 1848) and finally through the marriage of his much-loved daughter to the Emperor's eldest son. Death finally frustrated him—his own (William only appointed Bismarck after Albert's death) and his son-in-law's after only a year on the throne.

desire to learn and became more and more obstinate, as the pressure increased.

It has been generally circulated, and often believed, that this was due to the fact that the Prince was a heavy, not to say pompous, father. But the facts do not support this. The Prince was at his best within his family. He was much loved by the children—particularly the older ones—and felt keenly for them. And he certainly was no ordinary hypocrite who expected his family to live better than he did himself. Like many fathers, however, he probably was closer to his daughters than to his sons—and he was frightened by his oldest son's Hanoverian social gift and concern for people rather than things. He did not try to direct, but to stifle it. "He has a strange nature", he once wrote, " . . . he has no interest in things, but all the more for persons. This trait in his character, which is often found in the Royal Family, has made the family so popular. But it also arouses the dangerous inclination for what the people here call 'small talk'."

Other factors were also at work—factors common to parents of every age. There was a very understandable over-anxiety, which frustrated itself. There was, particularly on the Queen's part, a determination that Bertie should grow up like his father—something which he was not intended by nature to do. There was also some disunity between the parents, and the inability of the father to communicate his own standards.

The lack of unity was the subject of a confidential talk between the Prince and Lord Clarendon. The Prince said that the aggressive treatment of their eldest son by the Queen and himself had been a mistake. The disagreeable task of punishment had always fallen on him, and he hesitated to resist the harshness of the Queen because of fear of exciting her if she were thwarted.

The failure to communicate—the age-old answer to the question why "good" parents have "bad" children—is also common to every age. The child, unable to live up to the standard of rectitude portrayed by the parent, finishes by putting the parent on a

pedestal—or damning him—and giving up the struggle. Such seems to have been the situation with the Prince of Wales. He was, for example, tempted by a pretty face. Indeed it was news of such an escapade which reached Albert one evening in November 1861 and, in the Queen's words, "broke my Angel's heart". Albert's anxiety can not have been lessened by the fact that the boy was already engaged to Princess Alexandra of Denmark. Albert wrote to him on November 20th assuring him that all those around him would do everything in their power to help him "but they will be powerless unless they are met on your part with that openness and honesty which must characterise the dealings of one gentleman towards another". Five days later he proceeded to Cambridge by special train, stayed the night with his son and returned "much relieved". Clearly, however, he gave his son no satisfying answer.

Indeed he was ill-equipped to do so. He was a good man—Anson said he was the purest man he ever met—but vice "depressed him, grieved him, horrified him". He once told the family at Windsor that he had never feared temptation from women because he had no inclination that way and that species of vice disgusted him. However pure he may have been, he would, had he known himself better, have realised that as Jesus was "tempted at all points like as we", so he was tempted at all points like his son. This could have enabled him to open up a road of escape for him. Indeed it is possible that his wife's tendency to boast of Albert's "utter indifference to the attractions of all ladies"—a boast which Anson told her was premature—may have helped Albert slide over any temptation, rather than to be honest within himself. Failure to find common ground with a sinner is generally due to lack of honesty not lack of temptation. Albert's brother, Ernst, once said that Albert was "pure . . . not as though he did not know what sin was—the earthly temptations, the weakness of man—but because he knew and still knows how to struggle against them". This realistic struggle, which helped Ernst in their youth, had clearly become blurred by the time he

needed to help a grown son. Bolitho says of him in later life, "he lived above the temptations of common men—he had compassion for the sinner, but no comprehension of the sin".

The Prince of Wales seems to have felt that kind of affectionate, despairing desire for change which comes from watching a "perfect being" and having no notion how to be like him. At the Royal Academy after his father's death, he attempted to speak of him but broke down in a burst of sobbing and on his accession he referred to "my father, ever to be lamented, good and wise". On the night of his father's death he embraced the Queen, with tears, saying, "I will become everything you wish".

The Cambridge incident had a sad effect on the future. It was on the day after his return from Cambridge that Prince Albert was first seen to be really ill. In less than three weeks he was dead, and the Queen was convinced that his death was provoked by worry over the conduct of the Prince of Wales. In this belief she was supported by the doctor's assurance early in the illness that her husband was only suffering from "worry and overwork" and by Sir James Clark's statement in his review of the case that "there was excessive mental excitement on one very recent occasion". It was this conviction—held with all the invincible tenacity of her nature—which gave the Queen that "unconquerable aversion" for her son which Palmerston noticed and Gladstone later, unsuccessfully, tried to soften. Shortly after Albert's death, she said to Lord Clarendon about the Prince of Wales, "It quite irritates me to see him in the room."

This danger was greatly magnified in the brooding months and years of the Queen's grief. Strangely, Albert had been striving during that last year of his life to meet the very need in his wife's nature which made that mourning so long and unconsolable. For in the Spring of 1861 the Queen's mother had died, at the age of seventy-four. The Queen's grief was almost hysterical—she writes weeks after the event of "the weeping which day after day is my welcome friend"—and the rumour was abroad in the courts of Europe that her mind was becoming unhinged like that

of her grandfather. Here Albert was a rock of sympathy, firmness and hope. In October, when the Queen was due to move back to Windsor where her mother had died, he wrote her the following letter :

> What I can do to contribute to your getting over the painful sensations which a return to Windsor under such sadly altered circumstances must produce will be readily and cheerfully done. My advice to be less occupied with yourself and your own feelings is really the kindest I can give, for pain is felt in dwelling on it and can thereby be heightened to an *unbearable extent.* This is not hard philosophy, but common sense supported by common and general experience. If you will take increased interest in things unconnected with personal feelings, you will find the task much lightened of governing those feelings in general which you state to be your difficulty in life. God's assistance and support will not fail you in your endeavour.

It was almost as though the Prince knew he must prepare her for the greater grief which was so soon to come. His words were to bring her abiding comfort in her long battle to fight the self-indulgence of grief when she was left alone to face so many and varied problems. Had she learnt this lesson more fully, her relationship with the Prince of Wales might have been more harmonious. Perhaps in their common loss they might have found the character change from which unity could spring. And the future King Edward by being allowed to see state papers, as Gladstone wished, would earlier have developed the flair for diplomacy which he inherited from his father.

* * * *

The Earl of Orford's eccentric gesture on hearing of Albert's death stemmed from an ugly current in British thinking which often made Albert's task difficult in his life-time. Because he was German-born, many were always prepared to make him the scapegoat when anything went wrong. Thus, in the winter of 1853–54, the popular ballad ran :

> We'll send him home, and make him groan,
> Oh Al ! you've played the deuce then ;
> The German lad has acted sad
> And turned tail with the Russians.

As the Crimean War approached—and Albert, almost alone, fought to build up the defences of the country—the Press freely stated that he had turned traitor to the Queen and the country and only cared for the interests of Coburg. The rumour even got abroad that he and the Queen were to be imprisoned in the Tower, and crowds gathered on the river side to watch them pass.

"There is no kind of treason to the country of which I have not been guilty", Albert wrote, summarizing the newspaper comment. "All this must be borne tranquilly."

Nor was such calumny a new thing for him. As he noted in a moment of exasperation : "Peel cut down my income ; Wellington refused me my rank ; the Royal Family cried against the foreign interloper ; the Whigs in office were only inclined to concede to me just as much space as I could stand upon." So it was from the beginning, and so it continued almost to the end. Assailants varied with the years, except that *The Times* ever appeared to be leading the pack. Albert, in general, bore it tranquilly, though he sometimes allowed himself a private reference to the "street-boy press". He won over many of his detractors, as he had won Peel, by showing "no shade of personal soreness".

From what did this long river of niggle and persecution spring ?

British pride and prejudice against a foreigner takes first place, and can be seen, as lively as ever, in the British Press today. A recent survey revealed that, in 1958, there was nearly ten times as much criticism of the American and West German Governments as of the Russian Government in the British Press—which makes one feel that, as a nation, we are no less dangerously proud, and blinded, today than were our forefathers.

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When Prince Albert died in 1861, a major political force was removed, for in the words of Lord John Russell "he was an informal but potent member of all cabinets". His immense application and knowledge of every branch of government gave

him a unique authority. The Queen clung with all her matchless tenacity to the constitutional power which he had won for her, but his absence and the march of events gradually outdated this conception, leaving the more lasting benefits of the character and tradition he had formed.

By now the monarchy, which seemed so insecure when Albert came to England, was firmly based in the people. As one of the first statesmen to work for the welfare of a whole people, irrespective of birth, wealth and influence, Albert had turned, both naturally and deliberately, away from complete dependence on the nobility to the middle classes and the masses. It was the middle classes who most appreciated what General Grey called "the beauty of a domestic life beyond reproach". But Albert had also recognised the Crown's duty to the poor, "that class of our community which has most of the toil and least of the enjoyments". He believed that the tragedy of the unhappy poor would "be solved first here, in England". As early as 1841 he startled the landowners of England by writing that the country's greatest evil was "the unequal division of property and the dangers of poverty and envy arising therefrom". In the same year he broke his own rule of political impartiality to assure Shaftesbury of the Queen's and his support in the controversial fight to ease children's conditions in the Coal Mines. His speech to Shaftesbury's Society for Improving the Conditions of the Labouring Classes—a speech made in spite of the "frantic" opposition of the Prime Minister—was thought by many to be "rank socialism". Instead of condemning strikes, he reprimanded capitalists, warning them "to avoid any dictatorial interference with labour and employment". He made his words practical by the model housing which he erected, as well as by his kindness to workers at Osborne who, released for the harvest, were urged to return whenever they needed work. It was the ballast-heavers who came under him in his capacity as Master of Trinity House who named him Albert the Good. The Whig official, Le Marchant, said he had never heard the Prince's name mentioned by the

lower or middle classes without commendation. And the Great Exhibition in 1851, in R. H. Mottram's words, "inaugurated a new relationship between the Court and the manufacturing and moneyed classes and, most important of all, the new mechanic class". All future Sovereigns were to follow him in an equal interest for all classes of the nation.

So he reshaped the monarchy, just as, in Disraeli's words, "he formed and guided his generation with benignant power". And more than his generation, for he lived ahead of his age.[1] Speaking at the beginning of the Crimean War, Albert remarked with some justice that Aberdeen still lived in 1814, Lord John Russell in 1830 and Palmerston in 1848. Albert himself is in many ways still ahead of us today. For if there is any stable future for Britain, it must depend on a return to those wholesome standards which he pioneered for his Queen and which we, in our "wisdom" have largely forsaken.

[1]For example, the turmoils of 1848 were hardly over before he began planning his reply in the Great Exhibition, and his suggestion that the Queen transfer her court for periods to Ireland is only to-day being realised through the Sovereign's increasing visits to distant parts of the Commonwealth.

6

Father of London

In 1833 the year when Wilberforce died, when Shaftesbury took up the battle for the factory worker and the Dorsetshire Labourers founded their union, an event took place in Oxford which was to affect the causes and families of all of them. Henry Newman launched the Oxford Movement and set out on the long journey which led him to Rome.

Wilberforce's four sons speedily became affected by Newman's action. Three followed him to Rome, while the fourth became the principal champion of the Oxford Movement on the Bench of Bishops.

Shaftesbury strove all his life against the Movement's influence, precisely because he felt it deflected men like the young Wilberforces from the practical application of Christianity into what he regarded as a more sacerdotal channel.

Strangely enough it was the Dorsetshire Labourers, of all our heroes, who were in the end to have most direct cause to welcome Newman's action. For the ferment which he and his friends created was, in the fullness of years, to establish a Cardinal-Archbishop at Westminster who understood Labour and dared to back their successor, Joseph Arch, in his fight for the Agricultural Labourers' Union. The Archbishop's name was Henry Manning. Indeed even Shaftesbury, who never quite reconciled himself to Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, saw in Manning a kindred spirit, and in old age they worked together for the emancipation of England above the level of old controversies.

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Henry Edward Manning was the son of a prosperous West Indian merchant and Governor of the Bank of England, who

during thirty-seven years in Parliament supported William Wilberforce in the fight for Abolition. Henry went to Harrow where he was captain of cricket, but learnt little, and like young Lord Ashley a few years before, needed special tuition before going to Oxford. Both went to Canon William Fisher at Poulshot in Wiltshire, and each attributed to him his First in Classics.

Manning's chief interest at Oxford was the Union Debating Society, recently founded by Samuel Wilberforce and still dominated by that eloquent son of an eloquent father. When Wilberforce went down, Manning stepped into his shoes—just as he was succeeded by William Gladstone, who described him as "one of the three handsomest men at Oxford, not at all religious". Gladstone was then bound for the Church, but Manning's heart was set on politics. His dream, he once said, was to champion reform and carry it against a hostile Commons ; and, with his own abilities and his father's influence, his path seemed clear ahead.

But, in his last year in Oxford, his father's business failed.[1] As they went to the Guildhall, where the father yielded up his seals, his father whispered : "I have belonged to men with whom bankruptcy was synonymous with death." It was a bitter day for Henry too. He had to give up dreams of politics and set about earning a living.

Manning's father had intended him for the Church—but his own heart had rejected it. He had no "call"—and little belief. But in this time of crisis, he saw much of an old Harrow friend, Robert Bevan, and his sister, Mrs. Mortimer, a writer of tracts in the Hannah More manner. During months spent at their house at Belmont, Hertfordshire, and through much correspondence, he found a real faith. This he always called his "conversion"—and it was an evangelical conversion. When he told his brother-in-law about it in a bookshop while sheltering from a rainstorm, he held in his hand a sermon by Wesley not

[1]This failure partly came from the fall in West Indian land values following the abolition of the slave trade—the cause which he had supported in Parliament.

an Oxford Tract. Almost immediately he left his temporary clerkship at the Colonial Office, obtained a Merton Fellowship for a time and then was appointed—in Henry Wilberforce's stead—as curate at Lavington in Sussex.

At Lavington he came under a famous evangelical vicar, John Sargent, and lived with his family, which included four "sylph-like" daughters. He arrived by coach in January 1833 and was married to Caroline in November, Samuel Wilberforce, who had married another Sargent daughter, presiding. In the brief interval Mr. Sargent had died and Manning had been appointed vicar by Mrs. Sargent senior, the lady of the manor.

The Mannings had four happy years of married life. Then Caroline died of consumption, as her three sisters were to die after her. He wrote to Gladstone who had just been elected to Parliament : "God has been graciously pleased to lead me into a way that is desert and to bid me serve Him with entire surrender of myself. On Monday last, at ten to five in the evening, my beloved wife was taken out of this changeful evil life. I bless God for the tender, pitiful hand with which He dealt out her sufferings and my sorrows. I know you will both feel and pray for me. As indeed I do for you in your very different but severer trial—for I have ever found the time of our tribulation safer than the time of our wealth. I give you joy of your success. . . ." In 1841 he wrote to Archdeacon Hare on his marrying : "May you be blessed as I have been. May you be blessed much longer. And yet, if sorrow be as good for you as for me, may your lot be as mine. What can I say more ?" He hardly ever mentioned his pain again, though the blow was deep, and in the early years he sat day by day at the grave writing his sermons.[1]

[1]On the day he entered the Roman Academia as a priest, he made a last allusion to his wife in his diary. "Natal C. dssima" ("Birthday of Caroline most lamented"). In old age he wrote, in his only other reference : "Knowing nothing of the Catholic life, or instincts, or perfection, in November 1833 I married, and in July 1837 found myself again in the state in which I have been for more than forty years." On his death bed he handed Herbert Vaughan a notebook, in which Caroline had written her prayers and meditations, with the words : "Take precious care of it."

At Lavington, among the country folk on the broad downs in the days before the railway, he threw himself into his work, won much affection and gave it, and made his parish a model. Soon he was appointed Archdeacon of Chichester, which rejoiced and surprised both Gladstone and Newman because he was already getting a reputation for sympathy with the Oxford Movement and their controversial doctrines.

For the standard Newman had raised in Oxford had gathered many of the ablest and best young minds in England, and the air was resounding with tracts and counter-tracts. Manning was attracted—and repelled. When Newman hinted his imminent conversion to him and Gladstone—these two kept in close touch in their double battle with Rome and the low church—Manning went to Oxford and denounced the Catholic Church in St. Mary's. Next day he slipped out to Littlemore to see Newman, only to be told that Newman was not at home. From this time the cry of many a fearful Anglican changed from "I believe in Newman" to "as safe as Manning".

In all these years—while doctrinal *cause célèbre* after *cause célèbre* shook the country—Manning's aim was to wrest the Church of England from the domination of the state, as reflected in Queen and Parliament. He aimed to do this through Gladstone—and worked largely through a marathon correspondence, the "sincerest and most deeply weighed of their two lives". Manning's concern seems to have been rather to use Gladstone for the achieving of his end, than to help him to moral or spiritual growth. Indeed there is little evidence that either man came to grips with the essentials of the other's character.[1] In later years, Manning was wont to say that it was Gladstone's "invincible obstinacy" which kept him from the Catholic Church. Be that as it may, Gladstone's self-will was to become a strong and growing factor in his own and in British life. Had Manning answered his needs—and he alone except for Mrs. Gladstone could

[1]It was, however, during this period that Gladstone wrote to his wife a remarkable letter on how to find the Will of God. See page 158.

have done so—the effect on the world could have been great. Perhaps he concentrated too much on the intellectual, too little on the moral claims of religion at this time. Or perhaps he had no such answer to his own self-will and ambition. Manning's comment on the relationship is illuminating. "Mr. Gladstone is a substantive and likes to be attended by adjectives, and I am not exactly an adjective."

A turning point in the moral battle within Manning was a grave illness in 1847. Manning became acutely conscious of the worthlessness of even the best he had done. On February 20th he writes : "I dare not think of anything I have ever done for His sick poor, for I have learnt how coldly and heartlessly I have visited them, especially if they have been trying or unattractive." But this led up, on March 18th, to "the greatest conscious act of my life"—and a return of joy. On the 27th, Easter Day : "I have prayed that all pride, vanity, envy, jealousy, rivalry and ambition may be crucified in me and I accept them as a nail driven into me and desire to be wholly crucified. I had rather suffer any humiliation and disappointment than harbour the accursed slime of jealousy."

Manning was at grips with his greatest enemy, the devil of ambition. He had ardently desired, and failed to achieve, the Preachership of Lincoln's Inn. Now, in his revulsion, he refused the sub-almonership to the Queen which Samuel Wilberforce was vacating, and an almost certain stepping-stone to a Bishopric. "Could I be content to live and die no more than I am ?" he asks in his diary. "I doubt it. I do feel real pleasure in honour, precedence, elevation, the society of grand people. And all this is very shameful and mean." And in April : "Either such a life as St. Charles is an illusion or mine is. If I were so blessed as to be the shadow of the least of such a saint, I might be less afraid to die."

Sent away for his health, Manning made straight for Rome. On his last visit there, in 1838, he had spent his time with Gladstone, witnessing his courtship of Catherine, being reproved by

him for buying apples on a Sunday and meeting Monsignor Wiseman at the English college. Now he saw most of the Sidney Herberts, Florence Nightingale and Mary Stanley, a quartette with whom he was to meet again in a time of national crisis.

He returned to England in a moment of religious crisis. His friends were going one by one to Rome : Henry Wilberforce, Dodsworth and the others. His own mind had been moving further and further from the Church of England position. The appointment of the "heretical" Dr. Hampton as Bishop had moved him a long way, because it embodied the hated Royal Supremacy in obvious form. And in the Gorham Judgement, the issue again was dramatised which both he and Gladstone believed to be fundamental. Together—or almost together—they fought the issue, but finally parted. Manning left Gladstone in a little church off Buckingham Palace Road.[1] As the Communion Service began, Manning got to his feet. "I can no longer accept the Communion in the Church of England", and then with his hand on Gladstone's shoulder, "Come". Gladstone stayed there on his knees, while Manning went forth. It was a costly decision. "God knows that when we parted I chose between Him and you", Manning told Gladstone years later. Gladstone felt it no less keenly, for he lost his two closest friends, Manning and Hope, at one stroke.

The occasion of his official break with the Church of England came when the clergy of Chichester convened a conference to denounce the Papal establishment of a hierarchy in Britain. He addressed them and resigned as archdeacon. For six weeks he drifted rudderless in London. Then on April 4th 1851, with his friend Hope, he was received into the Roman Church. Ten weeks later Wiseman, with unusual haste, ordained him priest.

Manning often said that life in England immediately after his reception into the Catholic Church was like dying and coming

[1]This building is now the Westminster Theatre. Originally called Charlotte Chapel, it was one of the "proprietary chapels" which were such a feature of the eighteenth century.

back to earth again after death. Old friends like Gladstone, relatives like Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, would have nothing to do with him. He sat unregarded in the audience, watching old colleagues play the familiar drama of power, lay and ecclesiastical. At forty-four, he had quit certain preferment, and saw little chance of receiving any in his new life. More, he had lost the chance of public action and influence which was the breath of his nostrils. "After this I shall sink to the bottom and disappear", he wrote to Robert Wilberforce.

He had not however died alone. Dodsworth, his curate at Lavington, and Henry Wilberforce had preceded him. Hope, co-godfather with him of Willie Gladstone, went with him. Robert Wilberforce and numerous friends and relatives soon followed. Gladstone and Samuel Wilberforce, who had constituted themselves a two-man board for discouraging the flood, had a busy time.

Manning spent most of the next three years in Rome. He studied, on the Pope's personal command, at the Academia Ecclesiastica. During these years, he saw and spoke freely with the Pope once a month and became a close friend of other high officials, including the General of the Jesuits. But these visits are not mentioned in his diaries. He is concerned rather with his own spiritual struggles.

He was tempted to look back to the old life—"the past all bright, beautiful and blessed". He had great temptation to defend himself against those who were "setting about reports of me". "A horror falls on me lest I should be falsely accused of a thing of which God knows my innocence." Joys came too. On March 28th 1852, he notes that he has been having the "same feelings I remember in 1832–3 down to the summer of that year. My past then seemed pardoned—twenty-three years blotted out, and I had a lightness of heart and simple trust in the love of God. Heaven seemed blessed and near, and Holy Scripture heaven upon earth. Then came years of a loaded conscience, and some of doubt, and strife. . . . And now once

more, twenty years later again, I am blotted out and Heaven and God's Word come back to sweetness. . . . The one visible, infallible, imperishable Kingdom in which in 1833 I believed *in confuso* I have found, am in it and am its servant. Wonderful grace carrying me through all." On Good Friday 1853, he sums up a time of trials : "I have long prayed for humility, and He seems to be answering me by humiliations which I embrace with joy."

Ambition returned to plague him. "I am conscious", he notes in the spring of 1854, "of a desire to be in such a position (1) as I had in the past, (2) as my present circumstances imply by the act of others, (3) as my friends think me fit for, (4) as I feel my faculties tend to. But, God being my helper, I will not seek it by the lifting of a finger or the saying of a word."

In these years, the Pope permitted him to spend the hot weather in England and Cardinal Wiseman was continually requesting his return to assist in what he felt to be the imminent conversion of England. In the end the Cardinal prevailed, and during the next years, when the Cardinal used him in many ventures, the care of individual souls by letter and personal talk became Manning's greatest usefulness.

Two of those who sought his spiritual help were Florence Nightingale and Mary Stanley, sister to Dean Stanley. He had first met them on his 1847 visit to Rome, when they and Archdeacon Manning spent much time with Sidney Herbert and his new wife. Here the chief actors in a great drama met all unknowing—and here Mary Stanley formed a "passion" for Florence Nightingale.

In the years between, Florence Nightingale had been slowly, painfully—with the aid of the Herberts, Shaftesburys, Palmerstons and Manning—struggling free from the possessive mania of her mother. Her vocation—literally, for this call came to her like the Voices of St. Joan—was to nurse. She saw women doing just that in the Catholic Church. To Manning she poured out her complaints and longings : "You think it would be a sacrifice

to me to join the Catholic Church, a temptation to remain where I am. If you knew what a home the Catholic Church would be to me ! All I want I should find in her. All my difficulties would be removed. . . . The daughters of St. Vincent would open their arms to me. They have already done so, and what should I find there ? My work already laid out for me, instead of seeking it to and fro, and finding none ; my home ; sympathy, human and divine." She had been greatly impressed by Manning's instant action on behalf of a girl of fourteen, whom she befriended. Her Anglican friends did nothing. He acted within the hour. She must have come near to becoming a Catholic. But she shied away. Also it seems that Manning felt her desire was more for a door into her chosen profession than a door into the Church—and would not accept her on this basis.

Mary Stanley, on the other hand, was on the verge of submission at the outbreak of the Crimean War, which was to give Florence Nightingale her opportunity. Some credit Manning with the first suggestion that Florence should lead a mission to the Crimea. Certainly, when she accepted the invitation of the War Minister, Sidney Herbert, to take nurses to the front, it was Manning who persuaded the Catholic authorities to let Catholic nursing sisters go as part of her party. It was he too who helped Mary Stanley to mobilize the second expedition—the arrival of which, without her consent, so upset Florence Nightingale's delicate situation *vis-à-vis* the military authorities in the Crimea. The task became doubly hard, and though the conduct of the nuns was beyond praise, it is not clear that Mary Stanley came so well out of the venture. She returned after two months' half-hearted work—"spiritual flirtation", Florence crisply called it.

Manning, the Protestants said, was trying to "steal" some of Florence Nightingale's glory for his Church. Florence Nightingale did not take that view. She said Manning had always dealt fairly with her—and paid tribute to the nuns that he had sent her. Manning's purpose was rather, as with his supplying of Catholic

chaplains, to establish his Church's place in army and nation—the first of many steps he was to take to bring the Catholic Church back into the mainstream of the nation's life. It was for this that he bade the nuns to "make the hospital a cloister and their heart a choir".

If there was a failure it was in not tackling the personal moral problems involved—as, for example, Mary Stanley's hate-love relationship with Florence Nightingale. Changing faiths does not always mean a change of character. Nor does membership of the same church necessarily bring heart unity, for the two Mother Superiors sent with the two parties quarrelled like any two other women. But Florence Nightingale recognised Manning's contribution—and showed her own greatness—when she wrote to the Mother of the Bermondsey nuns who accompanied her : "I do not presume to express praise or gratitude to you, because it would look as though I thought you had done the work, not unto God, but unto me. You were far above me in fitness both in worldly talents of administration and far more in the spiritual qualifications which God values in a Superior."

* * * *

If his conversion to Rome brought Manning clear faith, greater holiness and added peace, it in no way blunted his political skill in pursuit of causes. In the years to come he was constantly to be engaged in battle within the Church—first as the agent of Cardinal Wiseman and then as Archbishop. Among many, three famous battles were whether Archbishop Errington should succeed Cardinal Wiseman as Archbishop of Westminster, whether the Church should proclaim the Infallibility of the Pope, and whether the great Orders should be their own masters or subject to the control of the hierarchy in each country and diocese. Each was a battle of principle and in each case the final battle-field was Rome. In all three cases, Manning's cause prevailed, even if Errington won some points of substance by the way and

the Church's interpretation of Infallibility today is nearer to Newman's than to Manning's.

In the Errington case the issue was whether Archbishop Errington who had been appointed co-adjutant to Cardinal Wiseman at Westminster, with the expressed right of succession to the Archdiocese, should retain that right—or should resign or be superseded. Errington was a representative of the old Catholic families who had borne the persecutions of the centuries, but who were largely on the defensive. He was not sympathetic to and saw no special opportunity in the Irish emigrants and the intellectual converts who were to become so significant a part of the Church in England in the last half of the nineteenth century. Wiseman's thought had moved hopefully onwards, under the stimulus of the Oxford conversions, and he believed that the Church must leave its old defensive attitude. In fact—partly through Manning's influence—his view had so changed that he felt that Errington would, as his successor, undo his best work. Errington refused to resign even when requested by the Pope to do so, and stood by his rights at Canon Law. So the battle was joined.

Manning's position looks even more delicate today than it looked then. Purcell, by publishing an incomplete correspondence with Monsignor Talbot, Pius IX's confidential friend, made people think that Manning was actively working for his own succession to Wiseman, and Lytton Strachey, decorating Purcell's half-facts with his diamond-pointed brilliance, has Manning destroying the characters of rival candidates and even receiving a mythical promise of preferment from the Pope four years before his conversion. Manning heard similar charges and commented : "Some have said that when I saw it impossible for me to be an Anglican Bishop, I aimed at a Catholic Bishopric. If so it was indeed vaulting ambition and deserved success ! Why not believe in a Divine Government in the lives of men ?"

Actually when the time came for a new Archbishop to be appointed, Manning seems not to have considered himself even

a possible candidate. He opposed Errington and others who, he felt, would undo Wiseman's work. But he strongly recommended Bishops Ullathorne and Cornthwaite. It was in Rome, not in London, that the idea of Manning succeeding began to form. And finally, after a month's special prayer, the Pope himself was undecided. Then, at midnight, in his private chapel, he heard the clear command : "Put him there. Put him there." The Pope believed he had been directed by God to put Manning at Westminster—and that is the simple origin of his much discussed remark that the removal of Errington from the succession was "a coup d'état of the Lord God."

The battle whether the Church should proclaim the Infallibility of the Pope, and in what terms, was fought out in the Vatican Council, the first General Council of the Church since the Council of Trent three hundred years earlier. Seven hundred bishops attended, secular Governments regarded themselves as vitally affected and numerous high-powered free-lances, like Lord Acton, took a prominent part in the back stage manoeuvres. Gladstone, as Prime Minister, opposed the proclamation, and the French threatened to withdraw the protection of their troops from Rome. Manning early became a leader, if not the leader, of the Infallibility party.

The battle for control of the Orders became a duel between Manning and the Jesuits. The controversy raged for years, and every stratagem was used by both sides. Of Manning's part in these events, Shane Leslie in his spirited biography says : "The Bull *Romanos Pontifices*, with the Dogma of the Infallibility, contained Manning's most lasting mark upon the Church. The whole Catholic Church to all time was affected by the dispute of the English Bishops and the Jesuits. . . . Needless to say that great Order, who had once borne their suppression without wincing or a word of complaint from a single member, accepted the decision of Leo with such gusto that ten years later, Vaughan wrote to Manning: 'He (the General of the Order) said that he would not have Romanos Pontifices changed in anything,

that it was most satisfactory and that it had been applied to all their recent establishments, even in countries where the Bull was not promulgated.' "

These battles were all fought out in Rome. To the uninstructed they seem battles of a subtlety inappropriate in spiritual affairs. Manning often described himself as "sick of intrigue"—and his opponents felt much the same. In speaking of the Order battle, Shane Leslie illumines the whole process : "It became a pitched struggle between the General of the Jesuits and Manning, and they prepared to fight to a finish according to the rules of the canonical arena. Rome encourages discussion, and permits delay even to tedium. When good men invoke the Saints against each other, and await providential death in order that they may win their case in canon law, Rome is not shocked, but indulgently affords them full scope and every weapon that prayer or casuistry may suggest. Out of their well-threshed strife, she knits her abiding decisions."

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Manning had a decisive influence on the attitude of the Catholic world to the emerging labour movement—and so on Labour's attitude to spiritual things. Since his death the rise of world Communism has brought this contribution into strong relief. Organised Labour throughout the Catholic world—and particularly on the continent of Europe—started in stark opposition to religion and, in particular, to the Catholic Church. Though the allegiance of the masses has never been recaptured, it is fair to say that but for Cardinal Manning much more would have been lost.

His sympathy for the workers went back to Lavington days, but was intensified by the fact that the masses in his diocese consisted of the poor Irish immigrants to London. He was disturbed that so many of them left the Church on reaching London, and here he met a special problem. For careful study convinced him that this, like " more than half their poverty" and "almost

all their crime", was due to drunkenness. So, while believing that "there is no more evil in the intoxicating power of wine than in the explosive power of gun-powder", he quickly became a campaigner for temperance and total abstinence.

At first he himself continued to take his one glass of wine with his usual luncheon of cold mutton. But he found that that glass cut his usefulness. When he explained to workmen in Southwark that his doctors would not let him take the pledge, which he was urging upon them, a voice from the back shouted : "Never mind the doctors, come and see what good it has done in our homes." Manning immediately accepted the challenge.

Manning met a great deal of opposition. A humorous publican put his emaciated countenance in his pub window with the caption : "A warning to teetotallers" ! But from the clergy it was more serious. Some said he was "laying a new burden on men's consciences", while others alleged he was at fault in his moral theology. The Bishop of Nottingham criticized him in the Catholic press under the pseudonym, "Senex." At the beginning only two priests supported him—though by 1890 there were forty.

Manning saw it as part of his fight to raise the standard of the priesthood : "God forbid that we, Catholic Priests, should be left behind in self-denial for the love of souls". "Every bishop", he added in a note of 1890, "knows the scandals and sorrows he has in priests, not only in drunkards, but in those who are never seen to be drunk but are lowered in mind and soul by suspected or unsuspected drinking." To his Protestant nephew, Canon Basil Wilberforce, he wrote thanking him for "having the manhood, in the midst of this havoc, of totally abstaining. . . . Every day tells me I never did anything better for the saving of souls".

Manning enjoyed the chance to go out among the people. He spoke many times in Hyde Park, Trafalgar Square and on Tower Hill. He usually spent his annual week's holiday walking the North with the Bishop of Newport on temperance campaigns. He founded the League of the Cross to fight the battle among his Irish, and used to consult with its leaders every week. He

achieved his purpose, for the whole of the St. Patrick's Day celebrations changed and magistrates began to say that the tone of the Irish community had radically altered. And he believed that it was his temperance work which won the affection of the masses. "It was this that gave me a hold on the strike of last year, not only of my own men but also of the Englishmen who were as two to one", he wrote in 1890.

This strike was the famous 1889 Dock Strike for the "Dockers' Tanner", led by Ben Tillett, John Burns and Tom Mann. Encouraged by the amazing success of the Gasworkers of London who had earlier in the year gained a reduction of their hours from twelve to eight per day, the dockers struck against their casual and crushing conditions of work. They demanded sixpence instead of fivepence per hour. The directors resisted and tried to recruit other labour. Violence seemed imminent and troops were mobilised.

Manning was now eighty years old, mainly concerned, he said, with "making a good end", seldom stirring from Westminster. On August 30th an emissary came to him from the strikers. "Religion ?" said Newman, the butler, pointing to the chapel. "No, politics." "The Cardinal isn't as young as he was", replied Newman. "Half an hour later", related the emissary, "I saw Cardinal Manning. Then I went away to fetch a list of the Dock Directors. When I came back he was saying Mass. After that I had the satisfaction of seeing him drive off in his carriage to the City." "A dying man", comments Shane Leslie, who tells the tale, "went down to rescue a dead city." Manning found the Lord Mayor and the Home Secretary on holiday—he never took one himself—and went on to address the Dock Directors. He had "never preached to so impenitent a congregation", he told the Lord Mayor when he returned a week later.

A strong committee including Bishop Temple of London gathered round Manning and the Lord Mayor. Manning spent day after day from ten till seven or eight at the Mansion House "interviewing, negotiating, sometimes waiting hour after hour

patiently but anxiously", never cast down by set-backs. At one point the strikers issued a manifesto repudiating everything to which their leaders had agreed. The Bishop of London withdrew in disgust. Manning went down to meet the strikers at the Wade Street School—and several days later the "Cardinal's Peace" was signed. In an address, sending him £160, with which he endowed a bed at the London Hospital, the dockers said : "When we recall to mind your venerable figure in our midst for over four hours in the Wade Street School, listening to our complaints and giving us advice in our doubts and difficulties, we seem to see a father in the midst of a loving and well-loved family rather than an ordinary mediator in the thick of a trade dispute."

Ben Tillett said that Manning's influence always encouraged him in his fight for the workers. "How it (Manning's influence) burned and singed my nature and called out of the depths the primitive courage, and so the persistence, which helped in the formation of the Gasworkers' Union!" In the next years Manning would half-seriously bind Tillett over to make no wild speeches. Visiting the old man, Tillett would admit a little defiantly he had only been fairly successful in keeping his promise. The Cardinal would take one of Tillett's strongest speeches from his drawer and read it slowly and clearly. Then as Tillett turned away, he'd say : "My dear Benjamin if I were as young as you, I'd do just the same." In old age Ben Tillett said to the present author : 'Manning was a saint of God. I shall never forget his words : "Remember, Ben, if you want to wear the crown you must learn to bear the Cross.' "[1]

Manning's intervention in the 1889 strike was only one of many instances of his sympathetic understanding of Labour. His sympathies were clear from the days when his friends were

[1]Tillett also said that the other comparable friendship in his life was with Dr. Frank Buchman, the initiator of Moral Re-Armament. From his death bed he sent Buchman this message : "Go on fighting. You have a great international movement. Use it, it is the hope of tomorrow. It will bring sanity back to the world."

the shepherds on the downs. In 1872 he created something of a sensation when, as Archbishop, he "spoke up nobly" for Joseph Arch, at a time when the Bishop of Gloucester wished Arch ducked in a horse pond, and appeared on the platform of a meeting in support of the Agricultural Union. In 1874, at Leeds, he gave his famous address on "The Dignity and Rights of Labour". Later, he worked with Cardinal Gibbons, who regarded himself as Manning's disciple, to avert the condemnation already prepared in Rome for the Knights of Labour. To Tom Mann, he wrote : "The public authorities ought to find work for those who want to work or relief for those who cannot."

The 1889 settlement had two swift results. In Britain it established the principle of arbitration. In his remaining years Manning was in close touch with Sir Samuel Boulton, the author of the first arbitration machinery, who happened to own the house in which he had been born. In Rome it influenced Pope Leo XIII to produce his great Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. This document, which still sets out the Church's view on Capital and Labour, was greeted by Tillett as "a very courageous one indeed, one that will test good Catholics much more effectively than any exhortation to religious worship". The Pope ascribed both this and his Encyclical on slavery to the English Cardinal's influence.

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Sitting over his fire in his carpetless, curtainless room in Westminster, Manning lived his life again, wrote his spiritual children and mused over the marvellous ways of God. To a Catholic Member of Parliament, on whom he had urged the duty of public service, he wrote, "As I go to bed I look out and see the light on your clock-tower, and I say to myself, 'If I had been able to have my own way and to go there, what a rascal I should be by this time.' " In a memorandum, after reading Samuel Wilberforce's biography, he wrote : "I believe that it was God's Will that I should be a priest and that only."

All his life this meant to him the care and cure of souls. "Give me souls, take all else", said St. Ignatius Loyola, and after all the strife, it was Manning's deepest concern. All his life there had been the long, constant, never-faltering correspondence with his friends and spiritual children. Some were famous. Many were obscure. Now, in old age, he continued to write—though he confessed himself "so old and indolent as to write on my knees, not in profane imitation of sybils and prophets, but because sitting up at a table is wearisome."

Many came to see him. Many, like the statesman Dilke in the midst of his famous divorce proceedings, told him what they told no other. And a large number were neither themselves Catholics nor ever likely to be. The Prince of Wales turned to him in the hour of his son's death, and an Anglican Archbishop wrote : "At a time of terrible anguish I asked for your special intention for me at the Altar. Relief came to me in a wonderful manner, almost if not quite visibly supernatural. I am now in great anxiety about the circumstances of my family. I would again ask for your remembrance at the Altar."

He was careful not to unsettle the faith of others. Thus, he knelt at the deathbed of an old servant of Lavington days, and prayed like the Archdeacon whom the old man remembered. To a privileged Anglican friend and canon he wrote : "While the world is drifting to chaos and suicide, I have no will for controversies." He found himself at one on many points with the aged Shaftesbury—and if Shaftesbury was perhaps the wiser in advising against making Bradlaugh into a martyr, Manning was the more generous in welcoming General Booth's first work in London.

He fought like Shaftesbury to bring Christianity to bear on every-day life. He felt keenly that up to that time the name of no English Catholic was to be found among the records of the great social reformers from the abolition of the slave trade onwards. He himself became a mainstay, with the Prince of Wales, of the Royal Commission on Housing. He urged Catholics

to go into Parliament, where they have since played a distinguished part, and it was in his time that a custom began to arise of having at least one Catholic in the Cabinet.

He himself was neutral in politics. Lord Salisbury said : "No one can say of what party he is." He kept touch with leaders of all parties, not only to secure Catholic rights in education and as an intermediary with the Irish hierarchy but to forward all moral and spiritual questions. Lord Randolph Churchill changed his attitude to the question of the Parliamentary Oath of Allegiance through Manning's intervention, and the Cardinal bombarded not only Gladstone, but Disraeli, Salisbury and many others, with letters. John Morley slipped in to see him and next day to everyone's astonishment proclaimed the rights of the Catholic schools in the Commons.

Manning much enjoyed meetings of the Metaphysical Society, where, to Newman's horror, he read papers and heard Professor Huxley read one on the Resurrection. "Perhaps it is a ruse of the Cardinal to bring the Professor into the clutches of the Inquisition", observed Newman. Actually Manning saw it as his chance to reach the doubters. Sometimes all the members gave definitions. Huxley defined Faith as "the surest and strongest conviction you can have" ; Manning as "that rational act of the intellect which, after finding sufficient evidence that a thing is revealed—believing it to be true—refuses to doubt it any more".

But his associations were not all political or with the great. London coster-mongers sent him pawn tickets to redeem and he bailed many a drunkard out of prison in person. "Wherever there was suffering he lifted his hands : to the Pope in temporal humiliation, to Ireland under coercion, to children under neglect, to animals under torture, to strikers under starvation, to outcasts both men and women whom he tried to rehabilitate. . . . To the broken and battered he was affectionate and long-suffering. He was accessible to the pariah and humble to the humble. On the other hand he was proud to the proud and unyielding to the obstinate."

Many said Manning was an autocrat. Certainly he did not welcome contrary views from those over whom he had been set to rule, and he would give himself so fully to a cause that human and spiritual motives became hard to separate. Purcell, in an unhappy phrase, said that his life was a long struggle to "square God's will with his own". He explains : "The human side of his character was displayed to the fullest—self-will, a despotic temper and love of power. But the supernatural side of his character was still more strongly marked and more potent : a vivid belief in the Divine Presence, in the Voice of God speaking almost audibly, to use Cardinal Manning's own words, to his soul and in the perpetual guidance of the Holy Ghost. In the dark and crucial hour of trial his vivid faith illumined his soul and in spite of human weakness and wilfulness he was constrained by grace and guidance to submit absolutely and unreservedly his will to the Will of God."

Shane Leslie makes much the same point when he describes Manning's battles—with Newman where his actions are hardest to excuse—as those of "a strong, self-willed and lonely man who believed he was fighting the battles of Divine policy in the Church".

"Strong, self-willed, lonely. . . ." It is every man's battle to know his nature so well that he can surrender it wholly and find and follow God's direction. With the help of loving, dedicated and fearless friends, it is a battle that can be won. It was Manning's tragedy, like Shaftesbury's, that he had so few friends who gave him such equal fellowship.

St. Francis, who more than most men knew and heard the Voice of God, gave a classic example of how to find the Will of God, which his friends later wrote down in *The Little Flowers*. When he had received direction about the whole trend of his career, whether he should preach or not, he sent to his three holiest friends and asked them to seek guidance whether he had heard aright. He received their replies with his arms stretched out like a Cross in token that he would do what they had been

commanded. Because he so dealt with his self-will, he knew how to help others to find and follow the Will of God. He created a fellowship where under God men stimulated, checked and cured each other.

Manning lacked such friends. His confessors no doubt did their duty, as when he "flew" to them when his nephew, at the height of the Orders battle, sent him a letter accusing him of autocracy. But the day-to-day crossing of your will may never take place when you are an Archbishop.

All the same, it is worth noting that the Archbishop obeyed his own rules. When he wrote *The Pastoral Office*, he submitted it to Bishop Ullathorne who made drastic corrections, all except one of which Manning at once adopted "though it is pain and grief to me". Ullathorne, who from hostility was won to deep friendship, commented : "It is not a little thing for any man to have a book taken to pieces and yet to take it kindly."

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The great Cardinal "slowed into the terminus". Years ago the fear of death had possessed him. Now, as he had been promised he went peacefully. Like Shaftesbury his regret was that so much was left undone.

His funeral, like Shaftesbury's, was an extraordinary demonstration of affection by the people of London. Thousands of workers lined the streets, in scenes rarely seen before. At his lying-in-state, an old working man was seen circling round and round the coffin. After a time it was felt he had to be moved on as he was holding up the passage of thousands more. When this became clear to him, he faced the dead Cardinal and with tears streaming down his face cried, "Goodbye, you blasted old kipper."

Just as Gladstone wrote the people's tribute to Shaftesbury on the Eros monument in Piccadilly, so it was he, Manning's oldest friend, who expressed what many subconsciously felt : "The immense gifts of his original nature and intense cultivation, his warm affections, his lifelong devotion, his great share in the

reviving of England, but above all his detachment, place him on such a level that from my place of thought and life I can only look at him as a man looks at the stars."

NOTE TO CHAPTER SIX

GLADSTONE ON HOW TO FIND GOD'S WILL

IN THE WINTER of 1844, Catherine Gladstone was kept at Hawarden looking after the children while William was in London. The separation irked her spirit deeply and she wrote about it to her husband. He replied :

"I am going to end this day of peace by a few words to show that what you said did not lightly pass away from my mind. There is a beautiful little sentence in the works of Charles Lamb concerning one who has been afflicted : 'He gave his heart to the Purifier, his will to the Will that governs the Universe.' But there is a speech in the Third Canto of the Paradiso of Dante, spoken by a certain Piccardo, which is a rare gem. I will only quote this one here : *In la sua voluntate e nostra pace.* The words are few and simple yet they appear to me to have an inexpressible majesty of truth about them as if they were spoken from the very mouth of God. . . . The final state which we are to contemplate with hope and to seek by discipline is that in which our will shall be one with the will of God ; not merely shall submit to it, not merely shall follow after it, but shall live and move

with it even as the pulse of the blood in the extremities acts with the central movement of the heart. And this is to be obtained through a double process ; the first, that of checking, repressing, quelling, the inclination of the will to act with reference to self as a centre—that is, to mortify it ; the second, to cherish, exercise and expend, its new and heavenly power of acting according to the will of God, first, perhaps, by painful effort in great feebleness and with many inconsistencies, but with continually augmenting regularity and force until obedience become a necessity of second nature.

"And these two processes are carried on together. Your abundant overflowing affection as a wife leads you to wish we were together, while duty keeps us apart. You check that affection, school and subdue it, that is mortifying the individual will. That of itself is much more than the whole of what is contemplated by popular opinion as a Christian duty, for resignation is too often conceived to be merely a submission not unattended with complaint to what we have no power to avoid ; but it is less than the whole of the work of a Christian. Your full triumph, as far as that particular occasion of duty is concerned, will be to find that you not merely repress outward complaint—nay, not merely repress inward tendencies to murmur—but that you would not if you could alter what in any manner God has plainly willed ; that you have a satisfaction and a comfort in it because it is His will, although from its own native taste you would have revolted. Here is the great work of religion ; here is the path through which sanctity is attained, the highest sanctity. And yet it is a path evidently to be traced in the course of our daily duties ; for it is clear that the occasions of every day are numberless amidst the diversities of events upon which a true spiritual discrimination may find employment in discerning the Will of God, and in which also the law of love and self-denial may be applied in the effort to conform to it both inwardly and outwardly so soon as it shall have been discerned. And thus the high attainments that have their crown and their reward in

heaven do not require, in order that we may learn them, that we should depart from our common duties, but they lie by the wayside of life ; every pilgrim of this world may, if he have grace, become an adept in them.

"When we are thwarted in the exercise of some innocent, laudable and almost sacred affection, as in this case, though its scale be small, out of which all this has grown, Satan has us at an advantage, because when the obstacle occurs we have a sentiment that the feeling baffled is a right one, and in indulging a rebellious temper we flatter ourselves that we are merely, as it were indignant on behalf, not of ourselves, but of a duty which we have been interrupted in performing. But our duties can take care of themselves when God calls us away from any of them, and when He interrupts the discharge of one it is to ascertain, by the manner of bearing the interruption, whether we are growing fit for another which is higher. To be able to relinquish a duty upon command shows a higher grace than to be able to give up a mere pleasure for a duty ; it shows a more practical discernment of the Divine Will to distinguish between two things differing only in measure than between one which has a manifest stamp of God upon it and another which is but remotely related to Him, or what is commonly (and hazardously) called indifferent."

The next morning he added a postscript :

"This far last night. Today I only add that what preceded is with me speculation, not practice."

7

The Damnedest Aristocrat

WHEN DISRAELI, IN 1845, proclaimed that England was two nations, he did not make a startling discovery, but he did point to the central problem of the coming age. The industrial revolution, which had made the rich richer, had begun by making the poor poorer. Even by mid-century, when the bitterest edge of exploitation and economic fatalism was beginning to be blunted by the work of men like Wilberforce, Shaftesbury and Prince Albert, the gap between rich and poor was immense. And it was a gap—social, financial and political—which would have to be bridged or liquidated by some means or another in the next hundred years.

Meanwhile, in 1840, Engels had moved into England, followed shortly by Karl Marx. Their observations of industrial conditions here confirmed them in their theory of the class war—and in 1848 they proclaimed their way of dealing with the gap in the Communist Manifesto. Socialist action, which had been on the decline in Britain, sprang to life under their influence. It looked as if the older Christian tradition of British Socialism, as typified by the Tolpuddle men, might be eclipsed by their mounting materialist ideology.

At about this time, eight years after the Communist Manifesto and shortly before Albert was created Prince Consort, a boy was born in a one-roomed, mud-walled Scottish cot who was to do as much as any man to make Britain into one nation. Though so different in social background and political opinions from Wilberforce and Shaftesbury, he was to complement and complete their work. Though united with Marx and Engels in his hot impatience at injustice and oppression, he was to give British

Socialism a tradition different from theirs and establish, for a time at least, Labour's spiritual positives. The boy's name was Keir Hardie, known at home as Jamie.

* * * *

Keir Hardie was brought up as the eldest of seven sons and two daughters. His mother was a domestic servant on a Lanarkshire farm, he was illegitimate and his father, registered as William Aitken, miner, refused to acknowledge him. When he was three, his mother married David Hardie and took the child to Glasgow with them. There they lived in a two-room "but and ben", one of eighteen families in a tenement close, where five families shared their draughty corridor and the single lavatory on the landing at the half turn of the stairs.

David Hardie was by turns sailor, carpenter and miner. When he was working there was bread and jam, warm tea with plenty of sugar in it, even a whole egg for Sunday breakfast. When accident or unemployment intervened, the odds and ends of ornaments and brass candlesticks from the dresser would disappear to the pawn-broker. There would be whole days with no food in the house. Then Keir's mother's bright personality would turn hard and bitter, while his father, losing all confidence, became morose and furtive, filled with shame and failure. Sometimes, too, he drank and became quarrelsome, taunting his wife over "the bastard". These bitter scenes gave the sensitive boy his life-long dread of drink.

At the age of eight Keir got a job as a messenger boy at two shillings and sixpence a week. Later he was a riveter's boy in the shipyards at four shillings and sixpence, but accidents were so frequent—the lad beside him falling one day to his death—that his mother made him take a safer job at a little less money. At about this time he had his first bitter experience of the sack. His father had been out of work for nearly six months, his young brother was sick of a fever from which he died and his mother was near her fourth confinement. Keir had been up half the night,

and reached the baker's shop where he worked, soaked, without breakfast—and half an hour late. He was warned that day—and when the same thing happened next day, the boss, who was noted for his "piety", interrupted his family prayers to dismiss him. Fifty years later Keir described the scene : "In front of the master was a very wonderful-looking coffee boiler, in the great glass bowl of which the coffee was bubbling. The table was loaded with delicacies. My master looked at me and said : 'Boy, this is the second morning you have been late, and my customers leave me if they are kept waiting for their hot breakfast rolls. I therefore dismiss you and, to make you more careful in future, I have decided to fine you a week's wages. And now you may go !' I wanted to speak and explain about my home, but the servant took me by the arm and led me downstairs. . . . I knew my mother was waiting for my wages. As the afternoon was drawing to a close I ventured home and told her what had happened. It seemed the final blow. That night the baby was born, and the sun rose on the first of January 1867 over a home in which there was neither fire nor food." "The memory of these early days abides with me and makes me doubt the sincerity of those who make pretence in their prayers", commented the Hardie of fifty years on.

That same year Keir went down the pit as a trapper. For ten hours a day—and four on Sunday even—he sat alone in the darkness, opening and shutting the door which kept the air flowing through the pit. The only sounds in the silent black were the whistling of air and the scuffling of rats. From trapper he was promoted to pony-driver. So from that age he seldom saw the sun in winter.

When he was twelve Keir was entombed in the mine, the cage being stuck in the shaft through a fall of rock. The horror of those hours lived with him. Long after he described the scene : "The men gathered in groups, each with his little lamp in his bonnet, their blackened, serious faces discussing what should be done. The roaring and cracking, as if of artillery, went on overhead

and gloom settled on every countenance. Some of the more susceptible were crying, and I remember two by themselves who were praying and crossing themselves. By and by I began to feel sleepy and made my way to the stables whither Donald (the pit pony) had already gone. By this time it was evident that the worst of the crisis was over but the shaft was closed. We were prisoners indeed. After cleaning Donald down, I gave him a feed of corn, put some hay in the manger, and rolling myself in this, kissed him, as was our wont, and then went off to sleep. How long I slept I have no means of knowing. It was Rob Muir's voice, swearing if the truth be told, and some vigorous punches from his fist which brought me back to consciousness." The men had been released but, when brought to the top, found Hardie was missing and went down again for him. "Rob pretended to be angry, but he wasn't", concluded Hardie. "The reception at the top was the most trying part of the affair. At least it was the only part where I cried."

Hardie received no schooling, except for a few months in which he did not even complete his first and only penny halfpenny notebook. He learnt to read from his mother's Bible, from spelling out the placards in the street and later laboriously reading the open pages of books in booksellers' windows. Later still he went to night school, where he learnt writing—he could not write his own name till he was fifteen—and shorthand. He began to read Carlyle, Burns and Henry George with fierce absorption and a sense of discovery. He also joined the Good Templars, the temperance movement then establishing itself in the mining villages. His father and mother, in whom the iron of life had bitten deep, had now become strong radicals. Hardie shared their radicalism, but not their active hostility towards organised religion. But it was not until 1879, when he was twenty-three that he wrote in his diary that he had been converted to Christianity. At this time he joined the Evangelical Union Church in Old Cummock and became a lay preacher, speaking in the neighbouring chapels and at street corners.

"The world is sick and weary at heart", he wrote at the time. "Even our clergy are for the most part dumb dogs who dare not bark. So it was in the days of Christ. They who proclaimed a God-given message to the world were the poor and the comparatively unlettered. We need today a return to the principles of the gospel, which, by proclaiming all men sons of God and brethren one of another, makes it impossible for one, Shylock-like, to insist on his rights at the expense of another." It was from that time that, in his own words, Christianity became "the chief inspiration and driving power of my life".

* * * *

1879 was a key year for Keir Hardie. It was the year in which his life's course was set. During it he not only found his faith, but left the mine and married a wife.

Industrial conditions had thrown him into prominence. When the miners held a protest meeting about their conditions and wages, which had been reduced to two shillings a day, he was voted into the chair and asked to take a deputation to the colliery managers. His temperance friends warned him against accepting, for they said it would get him on the wrong side of the management. How right they were! The very next morning the cage which was taking him down the shaft stopped half-way and then moved back to the surface. At the top the manager was waiting. He ordered Hardie to get off the company's ground at once. His tools would be sent after him. "We'll hae no damned Hardies in this pit", he shouted, and sacked Keir's two younger brothers for good measure.

The Hardie family was soon blacklisted throughout the whole Lanarkshire coalfield. They had to leave the "company house", so they moved to another village. With their pitifully small savings Mrs. Hardie opened a grocery shop and Keir a tobacconist's and stationer's nearby. He also got himself appointed local correspondent of the *Glasgow Weekly Mail*. So they lived meagrely on their earnings.

Later in the same year a group of miners appointed Hardie "National Secretary of the Scottish Miners"—but there was no miners' federation of which to be secretary. It was a hope for the future, not a present reality. Meanwhile the local miners were desperate—and hopeless. They went on strike time after time, only to be driven back to work by the hunger of their wives and children. For they had no organisation, no funds and lacked unity, always seeming to strike at the times most convenient to the coal-owners.

Hardie knew that he must first build a united and disciplined force which could meet the owners on equal terms. But, although he did not agree with striking before such strength was built, he did not get bitter with the miners, for he understood their impatience. The first strike he led became known as the "Tattie Strike" because, instead of strike pay, Hardie and his friends distributed potatoes to feed the men's families. Into this effort went all the resources of his own and his mother's shops and at the end of the strike he was left with a load of debt which took years to clear. They lost the strike—and in the aftermath Hardie had to move on once more.

To many it would have seemed a poor time to marry and start a family. But Hardie felt otherwise, for he had met and fallen in love with Lily Wilson and knew she was the companion for his life. He tackled this new hurdle with characteristic honesty and courage. "I have little to offer you except a life of trouble and strife", he told her. "The miners vote me their agent today, but maybe tomorrow they will decide I am too cautious or extreme and will want a change. I am no better or stronger than other men and I can make mistakes like the rest—easier, for I have to make the big decisions. I may end up in prison, for I am already a marked man, and enemy of the rich, and the employers are certain to take measures against me. The miners can only afford to give me a pittance. I write a bit but it brings in no more than keeps me alive. So you see, Lily, I have nothing to offer you except my love." Lily had been used to thinking of miners

as rough, ignorant creatures. But this man, with his fire and honesty, was different. She accepted him. She was eighteen years old.

In 1880 they moved into a two-roomed cottage in Cummock, Ayrshire, where Hardie had for some months been helping to form a union. No union existed and little or no salary was attached. Keir and Lily knew this to be the battle of their life. All they had to take with them was a bed, a table and a couple of chairs contributed by Keir's mother. When they reached Cummock they found their little home filled with gifts from the miners. One had given a lamp, another a table, this one a chair, that one the gay curtains hanging in the window. Store cupboards were filled, a fire lit and a veritable feast of good Scottish food prepared. All these things came from the miners' homes and Keir knew how ill they could be spared. The young couple knew that they had been accepted as "one of us".

Orange boxes were quickly converted into bookshelves to hold Keir's precious collection of books, and in no time at all the cottage was a home. Everyone dropped in for a cup of tea. The young couple gave counsel on the problems of the pit, comfort to the hearts bitter in bereavement, material help to those fallen on evil days. And as the children were born—James in 1881, Sarah in 1884, Agnes in 1885 and Duncan in 1887—they added life and laughter to the scene. From the first day until the end of his life Hardie's home was to be a haven of love with an open door to those in need.

It took a year to build even the semblance of an organisation. Then, in August 1881, Hardie put in a claim for a ten per cent rise in wages. The masters refused—and a ten week strike resulted. The miners in all pits acted together. They again lost the strike—but were soon afterwards given their rise. But the union funds were exhausted, apathy followed and they could no longer afford to employ Hardie. So, again, Lily and he faced destitution. At this very moment luck—or providence as he would term it—once more stepped in. A local minister, leaving the area for a

time, asked him if he would take over his £1 a week job for the *Cummock News*. The minister never returned, and Hardie held the job till 1886, when the miners again asked him to be their paid secretary. This time he was Secretary of the Ayrshire Miners, with a salary of £75 a year. No sooner was his ground secure in Ayrshire than he turned to make the Scottish Miners Federation, of which he had again been appointed Secretary, a reality. It was an epic fight, which he prosaically depicted in his annual report for 1887. He had attended 77 Federation meetings, addressed 57 public gatherings, been present at 40 Executive meetings and conferences, undertaken 6,000 miles of railway travel, written 1,500 letters and printed and distributed 60,000 leaflets—all for a salary of £3 15s. 0d.

To assist in the struggle he had, in January 1887, founded *The Miner*, and it was in writing for this paper that he formulated his ideas. One Sunday morning, as he was brooding on a "leader", the thought came to him that organising the miners on an industrial front was not enough. The country needed a Christian Socialist Party, free from all others—and his miners would be the spearhead of the struggle. He must train a force of men and women who would create a wholly new climate of thinking in the nation. The dinner went cold. Lily called, but got no reply. Then Hardie burst into the parlour and poured out his teeming thoughts.

"It is more than a cause now, more a religion", he said. "I call it Christian Socialism because it is based on the New Testament and asks only that Christianity should be put into practice here on earth."

"Then you will preach it far and wide if need be", replied Lily. "You can't help yourself. You don't belong to yourself any more. I doubt if you have ever wholly belonged to yourself."

* * * *

Up to this time working class men who had gone into Parliament had stood and sat as Liberals, under the label Lib-Lab. The

Liberals helped them with their campaigns and generally paid them a salary once elected. In return they voted with the Liberals in the House.

Hardie believed that such Members generally ended up by deserting their principles, becoming apologetic about their class and trying to "ape the manners" of the other Members. He considered this dishonest—and ridiculous. His own "moving impulse" was, in Philip Snowden's words, "a profound belief in the common people and their capacity".[1] His aim was not to get a few working men into Parliament so that they could in time graduate into gentlemen, but to bring the whole working class to bear on the affairs of the nation. Only so, he believed, would their interests be safeguarded, and would they begin to play their legitimate part in the leadership of the nation. Only so could Britain become one nation. And the first step, he felt sure, was to elect Labour men who would remain independent and faithful to their origins.

These convictions were tested in 1888 when he was adopted as Independent Labour Candidate in a by-election in Mid-Lanark. In the middle of the campaign the Liberals approached him with a handsome offer. If he would retire from the contest, they would find him a seat at the next General Election, pay his election expenses and give him a salary of £300 a year when in Parliament. To their surprise Hardie refused. They could not understand why a working man should find so generous an offer insulting. When Threlfall, the Secretary of the Labour Electoral Association, arriving specially from London, excitedly told Hardie that he had fixed everything with the Liberals and Hardie only had to stand down to be certain of patronage later on, Hardie lost his temper and chased him from the room.

[1]Marx, on the other hand, referred to the workers as "asses", "stupid", "the red communist mob", constantly, in private. Techow was amazed to find that "the only people Marx really respects are the aristocrats" and that he planned to substitute for them another aristocracy, led by himself. "In order to supplant the aristocracy", says Techow, "he needs a strength which he can find only among the proletariat. So he has built his whole system around them. But he laughs at the fools who join in his proletarian litany."

Hardie only polled 617 votes at the election, but a new political force was born. "In the days to come", Hardie told his supporters prophetically, "the great Liberal victory in Mid-Lanark will be remembered only in connection with the stand you made. Your vote marks a turning point in history". Within three months, as a direct result of the contest, the Scottish Labour Party was formed with R. J. Cunningham Graham, the landowner and aristocrat, as Chairman, and Hardie as Secretary. The Independent Labour Party followed five years later, for it resulted from the Scottish party's propaganda and the stimulus which it gave to the forming of similar bodies in England.

Meanwhile, in line with his broadening commitments, Hardie had widened the scope of *The Miner* and renamed it *The Labour Leader*. It appeared first monthly and then weekly, "I determined I would make it worthy of the working class", he wrote years later. "There was no lack of journals in London and elsewhere catering for the working man. . . . But these started from the assumption that the working man is a lower order of creation, solely interested in the details of divorce, breach of promise, and affiliation cases. I have had to stop taking in one democratic paper because my boy was getting old enough to read. I will not insult the class to which I am proud to belong by offering them anything which would tend to degenerate young or old." This paper, written mostly in railway trains, on stations between journeys, in cold, fireless bedrooms in countless towns and villages which he visited in his ceaseless campaigns, became the voice, conscience and educator of millions of workers in the next quarter of a century.

In 1888 and 1889, too, Hardie attended his two first international Socialist conferences, one in London, the other in Amsterdam. Here, for the first time, he came into close touch with the followers of Marx and Engels. This sharpened his own thinking, clarified his basic philosophy. He admired these single-minded Continental Socialists. "They know what they want and mean to have it", he commented in 1888. "They have the

fiery zeal which always characterises men who are fighting for a principle. We (British) stolid, dullish and not at all like men in earnest. Theirs may be a madness without method, ours is a method without life." But he did not yield. "The Marxists are a strong group, very strong. They maintain that you cannot achieve Socialism by peaceful means, that it is in the interests of the workers to encourage hate and war so that they can take advantage of the situation in the defeated countries and overthrow their kingly and capitalistic tyrants. I could never agree with that—that is not my Socialism and I hope it will never be yours. Mine can come only out of a change of heart and in peace and not in war."

His conception was to build with love not destroy with hate : "Socialism makes war on a system not on a class. To narrow it into a class struggle will lead men's minds away from the true nature of the struggle. Mere class antagonism, class instinct, will never give us Socialism. It is a moral force more than a mental one and if you proceed to take the heart out of it you will rob it of its vitality, its urge, its inspiration." As G. D. H. Cole states : "Keir Hardie could be moved by cruelty or injustice to fierce anger and to violence of expression. But his anger was always ethical, and his entire attitude made Socialism a moral crusade for human decency and good fellowship." "On no other basis", adds Cole, "could British Socialism have grown so rapidly."

But such outspoken views led to fierce opposition. Hardie's first opponents had been some of his own union colleagues—men grown comfortable in their positions of leadership. But his stand for spiritual and material revolution challenged all sections of the nation. He became at the same time one of the most loved and best hated men in the land. Conservative trade unionists, Marxists, Anarchists, Liberals, Capitalists, Christians and Atheists alike attacked him. He was by turns a dangerous revolutionary, a sentimental Christian, an atheist, a traitor, a visionary. To all these critics he was silent—but he did not deviate. Someone asked him why he did not answer personal slanders. "I am in

the habit of settling with my own conscience before taking a step, and once it is taken it must supply its own defence", he replied.

And it was something more positive than conscience. He lived under a direction from outside himself. The first Labour Prime Minister who worked with him intimately for so many years, wrote : "His whole being lay under the shadow of a Crowning Authority which told him of Its presence now by a lightning flash, now by a whisper, now by a mere tremor of the soul. He was responsive to every movement of this spirit and never rejected the most child-like thought. Always willing to listen, never willing to yield, if it conflicted with what he called the inner light."

* * * *

Hardie was elected to Parliament in the West Ham by-election in 1892. On the day when he was to take his seat, he felt both excited and apprehensive. He put on his best suit of Scots home-spun and its appropriate headgear, a deerstalker cap. He would have worn the brand-new felt hat bought for him by his wife for the occasion, but it had not arrived in time. He planned to take the bus to Whitehall and walk to the gates of Westminster Palace, where John Burns, the only other Independent Member and his sponsor that day, was to meet him. But the people of West Ham had other ideas. Outside his lodging Hardie found a wagonette with a trumpeter up beside the driver, and fifty jubilant supporters who had sacrificed a day's wages to escort their new Member to the House. So they proceeded to Westminster.

The Press made the most of the incident. Hardie, it said, had defied all tradition by arriving in a toilworn suit and cloth cap, accompanied by a noisy brass band. "Precincts Sacred to the Topper Violated by the New Member from West Ham", ran one headline. But Hardie did not stop at shocking the Commons by his unconventional dress. He fearlessly ventilated the condition of the people. Ugly words like unemployment, slums and

poverty were kept so persistently before the House that he became known as the Member for the Unemployed.

Almost his first act on entering Parliament was to move an amendment to the Address asking for an Autumn Session "to help the unemployed and restore the right to work". This was ruled out of order, but he was soon back in the ring. When, in February 1893, he moved a resolution on Unemployment, his graphic description of the condition of the four million on Poor Relief won him 109 votes against the Government's 276, even though John Burns would not second him. It was his burning sincerity that won him ground, his determination to fight on even if alone.

This quality was clearly shown in his most famous intervention of that first Parliament. It was occasioned by a series of events at the end of June 1894. On the 23rd the Duchess of York gave birth to a child and 260 men and boys lost their lives in a mining disaster in South Wales. On the 24th the French President was assassinated. On the 25th the Leader of the House, Sir William Harcourt, moved a vote of condolence with the French people. Hardie rose to ask whether the Government proposed to move a similar vote of sympathy with the relatives of the dead miners.

"Oh no", replied Harcourt in an off-hand tone of voice, "I can dispose of that quite easily now by saying that the House does sympathize with these poor people."

Hardie was stung to fury by Harcourt's tone. When the congratulatory address to the Queen on the birth of the royal child came before the House, he moved an amendment asking the Queen to sympathise with the miners' relatives and the House to express detestation of a system which made the periodic sacrifice of men's lives inevitable. This was regarded as an insult to the Royal Family. The whole House rose against him. "In all my life I have never witnessed a scene like this", said one reporter, "They howled and screamed and yelled, but he stood his ground."

In the House he was ostracised, while the Press denounced

him as a dangerous agitator and a notoriety-seeking vulgarian. This was just a foretaste of how the Press was to pillory Hardie. But neither abuse nor flattery turned him from his course. "He was the first man of the workers who completely understood them, completely sympathised with them, completely realised their plight and completely championed them", commented Bruce Glasier. "The first working man who, having entered Parliament, never deserted them, never turned back on a single principle, never drifted away in thought, feeling or faith."

In spite of the shocks he gave them, the House came quickly to respect him. When he brought forward his first resolution on the Socialist Commonwealth a hostile House filled and sat silent at nearly midnight, while he proclaimed his faith, economic and ideological. His resolution was radical and uncompromising. It read : "That considering the increasing burden which the private ownership of land and capital is imposing upon the industrial and useful classes of the community, the poverty and destitution and the general moral and physical deterioration resulting from a competitive system of wealth production which aims primarily at profit making, the alarming growth of trusts and syndicates, able by reason of their great wealth to influence governments and plunge peaceful nations into war to serve their own interests, this House is of the opinion that such a state of matters is a menace to the well-being of the realm and calls for legislation designed to remedy the same by inaugurating a Socialist Commonwealth founded upon the common ownership of land and capital, production for use and not for profit and equality of opportunity for every citizen."

Concluding his speech he declared, "Only by moral power can the necessary zeal and sacrifice be developed to carry our work through. I know of no movement for the good of the human race that has not been inspired by moral purpose. The best in life cannot be gained by looking after Number One. Socialism is a religious movement akin to the Reformation, and it is the only force able to inspire men with the boundless devotion and

utter disregard for personal interest or even personal safety. No man can act dishonestly without becoming dishonest. We are called upon to decide the questions propounded in the Sermon on the Mount as to whether we worship God or Mammon." "Hardie is above all a spiritual and yet a simply practical man", wrote a reporter next morning.

This balanced character in Hardie's socialism is made plain in a speech he made later on to the Independent Labour Party. "I am a Socialist because Socialism means fraternity founded on justice", he said. "The fact that in order to secure this it is necessary to transfer land and capital from private to public ownership is a mere detail in the crusade. My contention is that under present circumstances we are under the necessity of keeping this side uppermost, and my protest is against this being considered the whole of Socialism or even the vital part of it."

It was during Hardie's second term in Parliament that the Independent Labour Party was founded, at a conference in Bradford, where Hardie took the chair. The I.L.P became the pioneer and political spearhead of the whole Labour movement and Hardie was its heartbeat. But his aim was a far larger "Labour Alliance", a party with an independent life but based on the mass organisation of the trades unions. This became a reality in 1900 with the forming of the Labour Representative Committee, which put up fifteen candidates in the 1900 election. Only two were returned—John Bell for Derby and Hardie for Merthyr. But with the sharpening of Trades Union thinking, mainly due to the Taff Vale Case, it was a far stronger force which faced the election in 1906. Twenty-nine Labour candidates were elected—and henceforth they were known as the Labour Party.

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The Taff Vale Case, it has been said, created the Labour Party ; but no one doubted that Keir Hardie was its human father. Now, as the leader of the third force in Parliament, he

continued his battle for Social Justice. At first it was mainly a matter of supporting the vast Liberal majority in its whirlwind of reforms. The Government restored to the unions the right to strike, taken away by the judgement in the Taff Vale Case, and the Labour Party supported them in measures like the starting of Old Age Pensions and the Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Act. The primary Labour Measure was the Right to Work Bill, which they introduced session after session under different names. This Bill, which stated that it was the duty of the state to find either satisfactory work or, in default of it, adequate maintenance for every citizen was the child of Hardie's heart. It had been his first legislative aim ever since he went to Westminster. The Government responded with the Insurance Act, which introduced unemployment and health insurance on the basis of compulsory contributions from the workman, employer and the state.

But it was in the country that Hardie believed the main battle to lie. After two years, he resigned the chairmanship of the Parliamentary Party and resumed his ceaseless campaigning. His impact everywhere—even in Oxford and Cambridge—was enormous. In the Welsh Valleys, he was received like a prophet. "This man came into the midst of our confusion and showed us a way out", wrote W. J. Edwards in *From the Valleys I Came.* "Why was it that he, a stranger, could drive home a message of hope when the same message from others might mean little". It was Hardie's complete integrity. He had no oratorical tricks, none of the wiles of the serpent in expressing his thoughts. He offered complete sincerity ; he was without guile and told the truth simply, and that went straight to the hearts and minds of even the most ignorant miners."

Through the sincerity shone his rich humanity. He felt for the poor because he had shared their sufferings ; he also felt for every man, because he just loved men. "He had the faculty of attracting children to him and most certainly 'he forbade them not' ", Cunningham Graham writes. "They would come to

him in the miner's cottage and lean against him after the first few minutes. One felt he was 'a family man' and so I suppose did the children." Hardie himself tells of an incident in South Africa, where he was subject to the most violent abuse and attempts of physical attack. "The street was wide and brilliantly lit and a cordon of police kept a space round the hotel. When I appeared to go to my meeting the usual howl was set up by the crowd, but just as I reached the middle of the street a child broke loose from the footpath, and rushing toward me, clasped me round the legs and looked up and laughingly greeted me. She had been a passenger on the way up from Australia and we had become fast friends. It was sweet of her to remember me."

There was in him too a great and simple sensitivity. Many have said that if he had not given himself to politics, he could have been a great creative writer. All through his writings, alongside the searing condemnation of what he felt was injustice, his love of nature breaks through in tender descriptive passages. Thus, after a particularly bitter strike among quarry men in North Wales, in which Hardie had virtually blasted the owners for their inhumanity and the government for sending troops to subdue the strikers, he returns to Scotland and writes—"after six weeks of hot air and the irritated atmosphere of wordy nothings, to get to where the moonbeams can be seen and the silence felt is a luxury. Then to see the sheep sheltering her lambs from the blast with her own body—the kye meditatively chewing the cud, and to drive the good steel spade six inches into the brown earth is to get into touch with nature and reality, and the word-spinners and all that pertains to them become mere phantoms of some ugly hideous dream and life begins to reassert itself."

It was this mixture of qualities which made Hardie a leader whom men wanted to follow. As Bernard Shaw wrote of him, "He is the damnedest natural aristocrat in the House of Commons."

* * * *

The Boer War broke out a few months before Hardie was elected for Merthyr. Like Lloyd George, Morley and other "progressives" he opposed it. But he had, of course, his own distinct reasons : "Over 1,000 men dead and buried in the veldt, 5,000 wounded, 3,000 prisoners in Pretoria—and the fighting not yet begun", he wrote. "And for what ? That knaves grow rich. . . . Prices and conditions of life are steadily rising, meaning more profit all round. . . . If the working class get a 5% increase in wages, it will be more than absorbed by increased prices."

Once more he became the target for abuse. "Yesterday the cheer, today the jeer, but tomorrow will gain from it", he declared, and certainly the disillusion that followed the war and the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war turned thousands towards the I.L.P and the Socialist societies. From these battles, Hardie emerged with one of the great passions of his later years—the determination to avert war. He began to spend more and more time at international gatherings. In 1904, he attended the Socialist International in Amsterdam, where Russian and Japanese delegations were present in spite of the war raging between their nations. Hardie once more proclaimed his hope for peace through a united world labour movement. Once again, too, he objected to Socialism being overlaid by the "dogmatic interpretation of the class war", for he knew that peace could not be won by a philosophy of division. After his speech the Russians and Japanese publicly pledged themselves to allow no hatred to separate them.

At Amsterdam, India attended the International for the first time. This led to Hardie's first visit to Asia—and to the other great passion of his latter years. The appalling poverty of India's millions burnt deep into him, and from that day he believed that the suffering millions of the East were as much his responsibility as were the workers of Britain. He would, he said, "know no colour, race or creed in Asia". He freely owned his nation's mistakes, and challenged "the right of the British to tell other

people what they should do and how they should do it". His practical proposals were moderate—and only remarkable for being years ahead of most British and some Indian thinking. Asians greeted him with acclaim, recognising the same sincerity which had won the Welsh valleys ; but many British accused him of sedition and tried to muzzle him. As well try to stop the flow of Niagara as try to silence Hardie.

On Egypt too, he had prophetic words to say : "We are divided from you", he said, "in language, in religion, in outlook upon life. East and West may be friends, each lending the other of her gifts, but the relationships can only exist between peoples, who being mutually free, respect and trust each other. You are bound to hate the British occupation, since it puts upon you the badge of inferiority. We who love freedom are bound to show you that hate should be directed against a system which oppresses the weak of all lands, and not against the British people. And so by strengthening the ties of fellowship between East and West we shall be binding up the world in the bonds of a lasting peace and weaning mankind from the madness of love of gold and the power of the sword."

Back in Europe he moved constantly between Paris, Brussels, Berlin, Budapest and Amsterdam striving in hope and fear to build his answer to war—an international of workers who would put peace before nationalism, unity before personal ambition and be ready to risk personal safety in direct action on an international scale if war were declared. At the same time he foresaw that such action must be for a right end. "The Communist Manifesto, however correct it may be in words, is lacking in feeling and makes no allowance for the law of growth and development", he said on one of these visits. "Behind nature there is a power unseen but felt. I myself have found it in the Christianity of Christ, the inspiration which first of all drove me into the movement and which has carried me on in it."

But even in his burning desire for peace Hardie was no pacifist dogmatist. Years before he made his position crystal clear.

"Naval military expenditure", he said, "is for ever increasing. When every other voice is silent it is necessary that we should make it known that we are opposed to war on principle as well as on account of the cause for which it is now being waged. I do not say we should never fight. The Almighty has endowed us with life and doubtless meant us to defend it. War in the past was inevitable when the sword constituted the only court of appeal. But the old reasons for war have passed away, and the reasons gone, war should go also." It is even more doubtful whether today, with materialist ideologies stalking the world and destroying freedom, trades unionism and all the things he held dear, he would have been manoeuvred into playing the Communist game by co-operating in their "peace" campaigns.

But in the circumstances of 1914, he fought with all his strength for peace, although he sensed that he was losing his mighty gamble. In July 1914 he attended the last meeting of the Bureau of the Socialist International. A resolution was duly passed calling on the workers of every country to declare a general strike simultaneously if war were declared. But Hardie was under no illusions. He said of the meeting, "The International—the apostles of political progress—met in search of unity of theory and endeavour, yet disturbed by strong undercurrents of intrigue, of manoeuvring for positions and power, of personal ambitions which were the negation of the belief we held. Not one strong, simple, unifying ideal, not one common dynamic, not one solid moral force, but a dozen of them, all claiming the same ultimate aim, but differing almost as night from day in the means to that end."

Sure enough, when war was declared, the very people who a month before had passed the resolution to prevent war had become supporters of the war in their different governments. The edifice had fallen, and crushed Hardie's heart beneath it. The hardest blow of all was when he went to Aberdare, shortly after the British declaration of war, and the miners would not hear him, the meeting breaking up in violent disorder. "I understand now,

as well as any man alive, what Christ suffered in the Garden of Gethsemane", he said. As crowd after crowd gave him the same reception, he returned more and more to his beloved home at Cummock. There he died peacefully on September 26th 1915.

* * * *

What kind of a party did Hardie seek to build ?

His biographer, William Stewart, defined the I.L.P. as "a great social fellowship, joining in bands of friendship all its adherents in every part of the land and forming a communion comparable to that of some religious fraternity whose members have taken vows of devotion to a common cause". Lord Snell, an early pioneer, says : "Even the old had their youthful enthusiasms renewed under the glow and warmth of the new spiritual fellowship. They were born again and they were in the grip of a new and compelling faith."

Hardie himself found this impetus in "the Christianity of Christ", as distinct from the "Christianity" of organised religion, where he found much hypocrisy. But, as he makes clear in one of his last articles, he did not expect such a profession from all. Some of the pioneers were avowed atheists, he declared, "but the sweetness of their lives, the elevation of their thought and the altruism of their work proclaimed them to be animated by a truer conception of their duty towards the race than many of greater religious profession". "Who can miss the moral basis on which our Socialism is based?" he concludes. Writing elsewhere of this moral purpose, he says: "If you proceed to take the heart out of Socialism, you will rob it of its vitality, its urge, its inspiration."

He saw this basis as a quality of life in men, not as a written provision or a mere intellectual belief. He speaks again and again of "earnest men", "men for whom the House of Commons will not be a place of ease but a workshop, men who will be a vitalising force, not only in Parliament, but in the country, who will spend and be spent". "The meaningless drivel of ordinary politicians

will give place to the burning needs of earnest men, whose hearts are on fire with love for their kind; men who believe in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man."

The leadership qualities which he looked for were, therefore, simple, but searching.

Honesty was one of them. "Once a man begins to play fast and loose with his principles, he gets on the slippery slope at the bottom of which is the slough of time-serving expediency", he said to the fifty Labour candidates to the 1906 election. "What shall it profit a man if he gain a seat in Parliament and lose his self-respect?" His own standards were exact. In "Bribes I Have Been Offered" this party leader, who even in his triumphant fiftieth year had only £90, after paying his official expenses, on which to maintain his wife and family in Scotland and feed himself in London, told of princely sums he had refused. Some were indeed bribes; others were presents which he refused because there might just possibly be some *quid pro quo* expected. Similarly he insisted on paying back the money a rich friend advanced him so that he could build his own house in Cummock, although no strings would ever be attached.

Disinterestedness was another needed quality. Of one man whom he thought ambitious he said: "He will betray the movement." He himself gave an example by resigning the Chairmanship of the I.L.P. in 1900 and of the Parliamentary Labour Party in 1907 after only two years. His strong reason for the latter, he said at the time, was that "I may be free to speak out occasionally", but an ambitious man would not have been open to such reasoning. On a later occasion he opened his mind still further: "Those of us who are more advanced in years may easily become cumberers of the ground. I am not going to die if I can help it, but there is a dead spirit which blocks the path to the young. I shall die as I have lived, a member of the I.L.P., but I want the Party to have freedom to grow, and I don't want young men and women to say: 'We might have done this or that if it had not been for old Keir.' I will accept no position which will give me standing over you,

I will fight for what I think the right thing, but I will trust your judgement."

Personal self-discipline was another essential for his "earnest men". One of his early comments in *The Miner* upon the Welsh miners' leader and Lib-Lab M.P., "Mabon", was: "Like most of those who have risen from the ranks he was a total abstainer. Now he drinks wine, though we trust it will not be for long, as nobody knows better than himself how far the force of example goes in one who is a recognised leader of his fellows." In fact, the four first independent Labour M.P.s elected—by 1903—did not drink. Part of Hardie's feelings in this matter came from his childhood experiences, but part was more akin to Field Marshal Montgomery's when he writes: "Excessive drinking clouds the brain; where men's lives are at stake this must never be allowed to happen and it does happen often." The House of Commons was Hardie's battleground, and he believed that men's lives were at stake there every day. That was why he three times proposed that the bar there should be abolished.

One of the essential assets of a public man was, in his view, a sound and happy home life. He was very much away from home himself, but was always glad to get back to the little house by the Lugar Water. "What a blessed thing is the holy calm of this home retreat", he writes. "London is a place which I remember with haunting horror, as if I had been confined there once in some long ago stage of a former existence. Here are warm hearts and peace. Where these are, heaven is." "Lily and I have a pact", he wrote on another occasion, "that at ten each evening we will sit quiet and think of each other and let each other know how things are going." Here lay the source of much of his strength.

For the rest Hardie saw his party's task in the broadest world terms. While its first objective was to rescue the poor and right the economic injustices of the day, he did not see it as a mere class organisation. Nor was its task limited to Britain. As he visited Europe, Asia and Africa he believed that it had a world task—to make the work and wealth of the world available to all,

but for the exploitation of none. He believed that, if its spiritual core was sound, it could have an idea powerful enough to drive mere materialist socialism from the minds of the workers throughout the world.

* * * *

In the years since Hardie's death Labour has come to power in many nations, while many of his social aims have been adopted as indispensable objectives by all parties in most modern states. Many of the injustices which fired him to wrathful action have been set to rights in Britain and elsewhere, and nations have become integrated as the working class has taken its due place of leadership. This has been a tremendous gain, and without it democracy might well have been engulfed by one materialist ideology or another.

Yet, on a world scale, democracy has not won the battle of ideas against the very ideology which Hardie saw and protested against in his own day. Everywhere, rather, it is on the defensive, while hundreds of millions of people have been lost to its rival. Is not this because, in our legitimate striving for material fruits we have neglected the spiritual roots?

When the free world comes to believe that material things of themselves satisfy, what message has it for Africa and Asia in the face of Communism's proof in Russia and China that it can create industrial nations? A half-hearted materialism will never stand against a full-blooded one. Labour will lead the world when, like Hardie, it is led by God, and democracy will go on the offensive when it finds and lives a moral and spiritual ideology as compellingly as the Communists live theirs. Then, indeed, the wealth and work of the world would be available to all and exploited by none, and the classless society for which Hardie longed and lived could come to pass.

8

Epilogue

THE PERSONALITIES WHO dominate these pages were men of the nineteenth century, but their experience has relevance for us in the twentieth. Britain once more faces a revolutionary age. From the squalid London room where Marx lost three children through malnutrition and from which he observed the triumphant self-interest of our industrial expansion, an ideology has gone forth and conquered a third of the world.

Shaftesbury and Keir Hardie outmatched Marx in their country and generation. But today and on a world scale the violent sage of Soho is marching from victory to victory. They gained some battles. He is increasingly winning the war. Already one thousand million people are living under Communist rule; and, even in the Free World, there is virtually no political party or Church, and hardly a newspaper, factory or college, where a group of dedicated men is not working, secretly or openly, to bring Communism to power.

Britain is no exception. Communist influence in the factories and the trade unions is obvious, and its hidden hold in our schools and universities can be seen from the fact that leaders such as the Shah of Persia and U Nu of Burma state that some seventy per cent of the students they send to Britain and the United States return as Communists—or morally corrupted. Mr. Gaitskell in 1952 said that one-sixth of the constituency party delegates to the Labour Party Conference seemed to be "Communist or Communist-inspired"[1], and, in 1960, he referred to "fellow-

[1]On October 5, 1952, Mr. Gaitskell said : "A most disturbing feature of the Labour Party Conference was the number of resolutions and speeches which were Communist-inspired, based not even on the *Tribune* but on the *Daily Worker*. I was told by some observers that about one-sixth of the constituency party delegates to the Conference appeared to be Communist or Communist-inspired."

travellers" as a major influence behind the Conference decision for unilateral nuclear disarmament.

Here he touched the real problem and not only for the Labour Party—for Moscow's secret directives since the General Election make it clear both that most of their best men are undercover and that their number one targets for infiltration are now the Conservative Party and Church circles.[1]

Moreover they expect to get many people working for them who are genuinely against Communism. The leader of the Canadian Communist Party underlined this strategy when he said in 1959 that "the Party in Canada is gaining few new members, but is advancing through the nation-wide acceptance of Communist-inspired issues". Thus, the strength of the Communist ideology in Britain is not to be judged by the votes won by the Party in the General Elections, but by the alacrity with which politicians, business men and Church leaders are, from whatever motives, taking up Communist-inspired policies, such as bitter criticism of our allies, expanding trade with Communist countries,[2] and the call to ban the bomb without adequate controls.[3] The most surprising people get caught up in this process. Is this what is happening when the Archbishop of Canterbury endorses Mr. Krushchev's United Nations speech so enthusiastically that the "*Daily Worker*" prints his remarks without comment in place of its

[1]Cominform Report, October, 1959.

[2]For Lenin, on the Communist view of trade, see footnote on page 187. Japanese students who, in 1960, led the riots against President Eisenhower's visit to Japan told the present author that students were paid 1,000 yen per day by the Communists to take part. It was established in the Japanese Diet that this money came from Chinese Communist receipts on their trade with Japan. Similarly, much of the money which financed the Communist Party in Kerala came from Indian trade with Czechoslovakia.

[3]Defeatism is another element which seems to operate powerfully for the benefit of Communism in Church circles. One Oxford chaplain said to the present author : "We are in a dying civilisation. Nothing can be done to reverse the trend. If Communism comes, it will purify the Church, as it has done in Russia". Two other Oxford ecclesiastics have given variants of the same theme in my hearing. Dr. Donald Soper, speaking on Disarmament said : "Whether we are Communist or Methodist, religious or irreligious, Krushchev is our man". (*Observer*, January 10, 1960).

editorial, while the Communist Party uses them, world-wide, to show that Communist Russia is the only really Christian country ?[1]

Lenin foretold this willing co-operation in our own destruction as long ago as 1918. He stated that his years of exile had convinced him that the "cultivated strata" in the Western democracies—"the governing classes, the financial aristocracy, the bourgeoisie and the democratic idealists"—were "deaf-mutes" ideologically and that all plans must take this into account.[2] And certainly Britain today, in the midst of the third world war—the decisive war of ideas—and almost wholly unaware of it, lacks the faith, and so the insight, of the previous century. She seems unable even to distinguish her enemies from her friends.

Marx has succeeded in the long run because he created an ideology—an idea that dominates the whole of a man, his motives, thinking and living—and because his disciples in millions have given themselves singleheartedly to live and spread that ideology. The faith of a Shaftesbury or a Keir Hardie partook of the same absolute quality and, being linked with the strongest force in the world—God at work in the human heart—was of unique power. The Conservative and Labour Parties of today—in a sense their successors—do not live that faith. They have no ideology, but are swayed at best by some political or economic principle or vague idealism, at worst by materialism, politics, expediency. So they

[1] *Daily Worker*, October 22, 1959.

[2] In his memorandum of "Basic considerations for setting up a People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade." He continues, in part : "In order to conquer these countries, we must express our eagerness, our very great eagerness to set up friendly trade relations with the capitalist countries on a basis of complete non-intervention in their internal politics. The deaf-mutes will believe this. They will be delighted to open their doors wide. Through them the Komintern agents will speedily find their way as our trade representatives. . . . The deaf-mute capitalist money-makers will be so eager to conquer the Soviet market that they will shut their eyes to the truth. They will grant us credits which will be used to supply with funds the Communist organisations in their countries. Meanwhile by supplying all kinds of products, they will strengthen and perfect our war industry, which will be essential for our future attacks and victories over our suppliers." "Telling the truth", adds Lenin, "is a bourgeois prejudice. In so far as they are effective, lies are justified" (The Lenin Records : Box 307D. Folder 215. Notebook 38, No 84c).

are powerless against Communism's ideological attack. Opposing ideology with politics, they are outflanked in the world and infiltrated at home.

Today when the Communist onslaught is world-wide, perpetual and backed by the manpower and resources of great nations, new demands are being made on democratic leaders which the men of the nineteenth century, including the men in this book, did not have to face. Evil has always abounded, but now, as never before in history, it is organised and exploited on a world scale by men and nations who work to a definite strategy. On the one hand there is no longer any private weakness—for every private weakness is exploited in the war of ideas and becomes a public danger. On the other hand, private virtue by itself is powerless to turn back evil unless all men of goodwill everywhere work on a united and dynamic strategy to change men and nations.

"We can put up with the Church so long as it has no ideology," says the East German Communist leader, Walter Ulbricht, and in fact, as Lenin predicted long ago, Churches, without the moral edge and insight which an ideology brings, can easily be infiltrated and used.[1] Indeed Moscow relies heavily upon confused Churchmen in countries like Britain and America to publicise Communism's current issues, dressed up as Christianity; which is why a convinced atheist like Krushchev, during his 1959 American tour, made some thirty-one references to God, all—as one gullible Christian delightedly remarked—"favourable" to the Almighty.

The fact is that no one Church, sect or nation can, by itself turn back the tide of world-wide Communism, which has infiltrated

[1]Mao Tse-tung made it clear in his training talks with Ravines that the "weakness" of a generous, but sentimental, idealism or religion can be used as easily as the weakness of fear, ambition or lust (page xiii). "Christian piety, charity and all the virtues preached by different religions help Communism, unless they are based on absolute moral standards", comments Ravines. Compare this with the comment in the Russian text book for training Communist agents in America : "While we today seem to be kind to the Christian remember we have yet to influence the 'Christian world' to our ends. When that is done we shall have an end of them everywhere. You may see them here in Russia as trained apes. They do not know their tether is long only until the apes in other lands have become unwary."

every Church, sect, religion and nation. Only a universal moral ideology can meet the challenge—an ideology where God creates the new type of man which both East and West need so desperately, but are powerless to produce.[1]

The roots of this moral ideology can be found in the experience of the men in this book. But the greater pressures of the present age mean that their heritage to us must be re-examined—and re-applied with an even greater dedication by multitudes of people and on a world scale. Where Wesley, and those who followed him, saved a nation, we today must concern ourselves with every nation.

Providentially, such a world-wide bid is being made. Moscow Radio and the Russian Press have, in the last ten years, been speaking more and more of a "global ideology" which they plainly fear to be that very "above-class ideology" which Lenin believed to be impossible. This ideology, states Moscow Radio, "has the power to capture radical, revolutionary minds" and "contaminates the minds of the masses by substituting for the inevitable class war the eternal struggle between good and evil". Moreover, it has "bridgeheads in every nation" and "is in its final stage of total expansion throughout the world". The global ideology, says Moscow, is Moral Re-Armament, initiated by Dr. Frank Buchman.

* * * *

Frank Buchman was born in Pennsylvania, but, like the other men in this book, he received his decisive call to action in Britain. Walking in the Cumberland hills in 1908, just about the time when Keir Hardie first led a coherent force in the Commons, he turned in at a little chapel and there underwent an experience of Christ, comparable with those of Ignatius in the sickroom at Loyola and Wesley in the upper room at Aldersgate. Someone, in the chapel, was speaking of truths which Buchman had long known, and they suddenly came alive for him.

Years later he wrote of that experience : "I realized for the

[1]See footnote to page 190.

first time the great gulf which separated me from Christ on the Cross. I saw myself with all my pride, my selfishness, my failure and my sin. 'I' was at the centre of my life. If I was to be different, then the big 'I' had to be crossed out. I saw the resentments I had against six men standing out like tombstones in my heart. I asked God to change me, and He told me to put things right with them. I obeyed, and wrote six letters of apology."

That day was the turning point for Buchman, and his experience proved infectious, for he passed it on that same evening to a young University man, the son of the house where he was staying. In the fifty years since then, he has just as naturally met the character needs of countless others from over a hundred countries. They, in their turn, have passed on the secret of God-directed living to others, bringing a new power to bear in social, national and international affairs. The result, in M. Robert Schuman's judgement, has been "the beginning of a far-reaching transformation of society", while Chancellor Adenauer says: "Unless this work is carried forward, peace in the world cannot be maintained."

Any objective person, attending one of the world assemblies of Moral Re-Armament—in Switzerland, America, Japan or the Philippines—must agree that it has proved its universal appeal.[1] On the wall of the main hall in one such centre is a mural which pictures something of the story, in simple form. Around Buchman, now a man of eighty, are grouped some of those who have become his friends and colleagues. Here are Adenauer and Schuman, who attribute to him an essential impetus towards Franco-German reconciliation since World War II. U Nu and Magsaysay represent

[1]Dr. Bernardus Kaelin, Abbot Primate of the Benedictine Order, 1947–59, said at Caux on September 20, 1960: "Moral Re-Armament is right in stressing man's need of a definite ideology, a system of ideas which governs men's lives. The ideology of Moral Re-Armament can win all men because its standards are universally valid. Wherever I have a chance I will declare that Moral Re-Armament can be universally applied and that it is valid for us who are Priests and in the Orders. It would not be Benedictine to say we are already perfect. Indeed the main task for us Benedictines is to strive for greater perfection. It can be said that Moral Re-Armament and the Benedictine Order have the same aim. Everyone of us must first of all listen to God and get from Him the strength to carry out the ideology without compromise."

the statesmen of Asia who say he has brought them a new relationship with Japan, and Hatoyama stands for a succession of Japanese Prime Ministers who have learned from him something of the "diplomacy of the humble heart".[1] A group of veteran Communists are there. They say that he showed them a more satisfying revolution and a truly classless society. Business leaders stand with them, and assert that Buchman gave them a new motive for industry, "to make the work and wealth of the world available for all and for the exploitation of none". Leaders of black Africa, who say that "what Abraham Lincoln did for America, Moral Re-Armament is doing for Africa", appear with white South Africans who have abandoned the doctrine of racial superiority. Beside Christian bishops are leaders of the Buddhist and Muslim worlds. Gandhi, who said Moral Re-Armament was the greatest thing to come out of the West, is there, while his grandson, Rajmohan Gandhi, is one of thousands of young people now giving their lives, without salary, in this struggle.

To all these, and to many like them, Buchman has been a catalyst of good.[2] They are comrades, with him, in a perpetual fight to put right what is wrong in the world. He has not asked them to join a movement, but to live a quality of life. "If this were just another theory, I should not be interested", said Robert Schuman. "But it is a philosophy of life applied in action." Buchman's strength is that he applies it first in his own life. He demonstrates in his own living the power and freedom of moral standards, when lived without compromise. He proves the ever-availability of God's direction and its swift, certain ability to untangle the most complex situations. Above all, he shows the

[1]See Gabriel Marcel's *Fresh Hope for the World.* (Longmans).

[2]Rajmohan Gandhi writes : "Think of Frank Buchman and you must think of countless ordinary people of Asia, Africa and Europe, of every colour, culture, creed and background who count him as their true friend. His secret has been his intense care for people and for nations, and his ability to see what, under God, they can become. To be with him is an experience. While others protest, criticise or are cynical, he always has the faith, born of the experience of his own life, that the most difficult man, or the most divided nation, can change and demonstrate an answer."

effectiveness of a world force, united in a moral ideology and commanded by no man, but by the Almighty, to tackle the danger areas of the world.

Thus, directly after World War II, the Works Councils of industry in the Ruhr were 72% Communist and Russia expected to take over that decisive area from within. Following a massive MRA assault, so many hard-core Communists found a "more satisfying" ideology that forty of the North-Rhine Westphalian Executive of the Party were expelled for being "tainted with moral re-armament". By 1952, the Communist representation on the Councils had fallen to 8%, and Chancellor Adenauer has commented: "MRA's success in answering Communism in the Ruhr was for me the test of its effectiveness."[1]

Again, in 1949 Nigeria was on the verge of a revolution akin, in many ways, to Mau Mau. Thousands of returned service men and young intellectuals knew which white man each should kill, which strongholds they should occupy. They only awaited the word to begin. The acknowledged leader of the nationalist cause, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, was at that moment in London on his way to Moscow, driven on by the indifference of British politicians and the insults of the British press. He was invited to Caux[2] and went there instead. He discovered there "an island of peace in a sea of discord". He himself has said that it was at Caux that he found the answer to bitterness and learned to put the unity and future of his country before personal position or power. As a result, Nigeria took the peaceful and not the bloody road to freedom.[3] Today, Nigeria has made him their first Governor-General in recognition that it is to him, more perhaps than to any other man, that they owe their independence. His aim for Africa is, "Under God to create a hate-free, fear-free and greed-free continent peopled by free men and women".

[1]For a documented account of how this took place see *Out of the Evil Night* by Leif Hovelsen (Blandford Press).
[2]Caux is the MRA Assembly Centre in Switzerland.
[3]See *The World Rebuilt* by Peter Howard (Blandford Press).

In Kerala and in Cyprus, in 1959, as in many other areas before and since, the intervention of God through obedient man was no less decisive. Speaking of how the Indian state of Kerala has trodden the unusual path back from Communism to democracy, the Archbishop of Trivandrum says: "History will record our permanent gratitude to Mannath Padmanabhan,[1] not only for ousting the Communists, but for creating the unity of all communities, following his return from Caux." While Zenon Rossides, the principal Greek Cypriot negotiator, states: "If there is a case where the spirit of Moral Re-Armament has worked it is certainly the case of Cyprus. Indeed it is that spirit that has brought about a settlement—a settlement which seemed quite hopeless even by force." Archbishop Makarios and Dr. Kutchuk have repeatedly thanked Buchman for his part in it.

Buchman's statesmanship is of such a direct and unusual order that the hide-bound find it hard to grasp. Readers of this book can find a parallel in the story of the abolition of the slave trade. Burke, says John Morley, thought seriously of taking up the fight for abolition, but rightly judged it beyond his scope. "He was quite right", commented Morley, "in refusing to hope from any political action what could only be effected after the moral preparation of the bulk of the nation—and direct moral apostleship was not his function." Wilberforce, following his own conversion, was better equipped. In fact, while Burke's—and Pitt's—statesmanship was only the classic "art of the possible", Wilberforce was used of God to make possible today what had been impossible yesterday.

Buchman, on a far larger scale, shows the same quality. Thus it was one thing for Churchill, after the war, to go to Strasbourg and call on France and Germany to forget their hatreds. But it was a very different thing so to heal the hates and fears of thousands of French and Germans—both statesmen and ordinary men—that the reconciliation could become reality, and this is the

[1]The 82-year-old Hindu statesman who led the Liberation Movement.

service for which both Governments have decorated Buchman. Again, it is a good thing for Mr. Macmillan to recognise that a wind of change is blowing in Africa, but it is statesmanship of a different order so to cure the superiorities and fears of Europeans and the hates and resentments of Africans that the wind of change can blow peacefully through the continent. Someone, so to say, has to put the *moral* change into the wind of change, and it is because he is doing it that the King of Morocco and the President of Tunisia, as well as leaders of the newer African countries, thank Buchman for making freedom, without bloodshed, possible. Indeed in this ideological age, when so few questions can be settled by political action alone, it is doubtful whether a statesmanship of the possible is any longer statesmanship at all.

Buchman himself would disclaim any personal achievement. "I have done nothing," he often says. "I have been wonderfully *led*." He, and his co-workers, feel able to speak boldly of what has happened through the moral re-armament of men, because they, like Wilberforce, know that not they, but God, has done it.

* * * *

Buchman's master-passion is that God's Mind should control the world through human nature that has been changed. So he has naturally had to bear the hostility of those who are fighting, for whatever motive, that man's mind should dominate the world, through human nature that has been exploited. Among these are those elements in our society whom we have seen attacking, in turn, each pioneer in this book—the men whose vested interests are threatened, the immoral and those who like the Lord St. Vincent of Wilberforce's day fear that "the whole fabric of society would go to pieces if the wedge of abstract right were once entered into any part of it". They have been joined by more formidable antagonists, the materialist ideologists of left and right. Thus the Gestapo, in its 126-page analysis of Buchman's work, condemned him for "uncompromisingly taking up a frontal position against

National Socialism" and ordered that his friends be arrested in occupied countries, at precisely the same time that the Communists were branding him pro-Nazi, as a part of their systematic campaign of character assassination. Colonel Langston, the Deputy Director of the American call-up system, who had to examine these matters officially, commented: "Nothing but a moral and spiritual force of global proportions could possibly be honoured by antagonisms so venomous and contradictory in character, and so world-wide in scope."

In a world where the majority of mankind want neither the materialistic Communism of the East nor the materialistic Capitalism of the West, millions are now turning to Moral Re-Armament. So, too, are pivotal Communists. They all agree, in the words of Eudocio Ravines,[1] that "thousands of Communists only fear to renounce Communism, even though they have doubts about it, because they know of nothing better to take its place". "If men make Moral Re-Armament the priority of their lives", adds Ravines, "it will inevitably become the ideology of the world". Certainly, it is a matter of fact that, whereas hundreds of hard-core Communists have embraced MRA, no trained MRA men, anywhere, have gone over to Communism.

MRA is not just a response to Communism. It would be necessary if Communism had never existed, or were to vanish tomorrow. For God's conception of His world may be as different from the materialism of many in the West as it is from the materialism that is official in the East. The materialism of the West can be as cruel as that of the East, and can succeed no better in dealing with the motives of fear, hate and greed, in creating the new type of man which is necessary.

But the materialism of the East, being an ideology, is stronger than the haphazard materialism of the West—so it is bound to

[1]Eudocio Ravines constructed the Popular Front in Chile, founded the Communist Party in Peru and took part in the second phase of the Spanish Civil War. He was at one time a professor at the Lenin Academy in Moscow and for many years a member of the Comintern.

win the world battle of co-existence unless the Free World finds and lives a superior ideology, where God is accepted as the Supreme Authority, personally and nationally.

That is why the choice is ultimately between Moral Re-Armament and Communism. The nature of this choice is not political but ideological as Dr. Max Schoch, the distinguished correspondent of the *Neue Zurcher Zeitung*, states. In the course of a 4,000 word analysis, he writes :

" It would be a wrong evaluation of MRA if one thought that the future of this world was simply a question of the Kremlin or Caux. That would be too small a description of Communism and Moral Re-Armament.

"Communism is for Frank Buchman an attitude of mind and spirit which cannot be defined by membership in a Party organisation. Nor does it mean Marxism as a particular philosophy of history. Communism means the striving of man to be his own master and through his mind and spirit aiming to dominate and control the world by exploiting his fellow men. The Soviet totalitarian State and the Communist Party are the logical political expression of this spirit. But anyone can, without realising it, be giving covering fire to the advance of Communism. All striving for power, all egoism, all that is immoral supports the power of the 'anti' spirit, Communism.

"The only counter principle to a Communism which is understood as a logical hostility to God is obedience to God's Spirit, will and command. Moral Re-Armament is equally not to be identified with an organisation. It is the attitude of obedience on the part of man, whose aim is that God's Spirit should rule over the individual and over the whole world.

"That is the meaning of the alternative, the two poles 'Communism or Moral Re-Armament'. Hence the supreme importance attached by Frank Buchman and his friends to the guidance of God and to man's freedom from all sins and moral sicknesses. That is why the fight against Communism is linked with the personal moral fight. That is why every attitude of 'goodwill'

as well as every purely political anti-Communism is rejected as inadequate or disastrous.

"This is what one has to fight for, whether one is Liberal, Conservative, Social Democrat or Nationalist. All one's political activity must be as a partisan of the good Spirit of God against the principles of evil. In one's party as well as in one's religion one must stand as a man who listens to God and uncompromisingly bases his life on the four absolute moral standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love. Mankind will only conquer Communism if the fight is carried forward on the moral level".

And the fight is being carried on. Peking Radio recently stated that Moral Re-Armament was the one force they feared in the West. Indeed, many feel that the world balance has been radically altered by the presence of a global force of people who do change communist and capitalist, and who expect to transform not only Britain and America, but Russia and China as well.

Many miss the miracle, and because they do not see it state that it does not exist. So did the leaders of polite society in eighteenth century England. They had no notion that anything fundamental was happening in their nation through John Wesley; yet, as has been seen, he was the most significant Englishman of his age. "No man lived nearer to the centre, neither Pitt, nor Clive, neither Mansfield, nor Johnson", wrote Augustine Birrell a hundred years after. "You cannot cut him out of the national life. No single figure influenced so many minds, no single voice touched so many hearts. No other man did such a life's work for England."

In years to come, when the great names of this century are reviewed, the discerning historian may well say of Frank Buchman: "No man did such a life's work for the world."

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