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JONATHAN CAPE
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WHAT is important in this fantastic world which the newspapers thrust upon us? The kidnapping of the Lindbergh baby? The suicide of Mr. Kreuger? The death of M. Briand? The results of the Irish sweepstake? Items one and four were chosen by the news-editors; and the Lindbergh baby was an obvious godsend. There was no possibility of mistake here. A baby—all women are interested; a kidnapping—most men; a Lindbergh—everybody. So even The Times put it at the top of the column, and the shooting-down of the hunger-marchers at the Ford Factory below.

Probably the newspapers make a tolerable substitute for eternity, which, Blake said, is in love with the productions of time. In other words—Spinoza’s—which we have frequently impressed upon our readers: Omnis existentia est perfectio. But since we are now in the position of desiring something to happen, we pass by the Lindbergh baby, which didn’t look so pretty as it ought to have done; Mr. Kreuger, who seems to have been a sensitive soul; M. Briand, whose departure will not make much difference; the Irish sweepstake, in which our two family tickets did not win, and concentrate, perhaps arbitrarily, in a letter sent by Professor Zimmern to The New Statesman (March 5) on the subject of Marxism and the Labour Party.

Professor Zimmern, when we knew him, was an advanced young don at Oxford, who had written a book on the Greek Commonwealth. This book concerned itself with the economic background of the Greek city-states. It was mildly Marxian. What other title to fame Professor Zimmern possessed at that time we do not remember, and probably never knew. We suspect him—on internal evidence—of having been a member of the Fabian Society. After the war, if our memory is correct, he became the first Professor of International Relations, or Politics—
something international, anyhow—at a Welsh University. Now, he writes from Oxford to *The New Statesman* to warn the Labour movement against Marxism. Which is a very new-statesmanlike thing to do. Now we come to think of it Professor Zimmern is certainly a new-statesman.

However, his story is best told in his own words. “By a mischance,” he says, “the British movement of the Left became entangled in the early 'eighties with the Marxian ideology’—that vulgar and depressing notion of the class-war, for example. “This created a false intellectual and moral situation which is the greatest handicap British Socialism has had to face in explaining its policy and outlook, whether at home or abroad.” Nevertheless, this alien Marxian strain in British Socialism was, during a period of forty years, being extirpated “until last August, with increasing success.” At this point we note an impressive agreement between Professor Zimmern and the late Mr. Clifford Allen, who also explains the events of last August as a retrogression of the Labour Party to the doctrine of the class-war from the “far more revolutionary doctrine of Socialism,” as professed by Mr. MacDonald, Professor Zimmern and himself.

That is a fairly clear statement. Unfortunately, Professor Zimmern goes on to explain that British Trades Unionism and Marxism are impossible associates. How are we to square this opinion with the former statement that the Marxian strain cropped up again in the Labour Movement in August last? The opposition to the Labour Government then came from the Trades Unions. The Marxian strain appeared in them, not in the Labour Party. Somewhere, Professor Zimmern’s history has gone wrong. The solution to the conundrum is, of course, that in time of crisis the Unions are, unconsciously, Marxian. They instinctively adopt the posture of the class-war. So far from being impossible associates, Marxism and the Trades Unions are blood-brothers. The trouble is that the Trades Unions do not know it; and the people whose business it was to teach them have always shirked the job.

Still, Professor Zimmern makes one point that deserves attention. It is true there has been, and is now, an instinctive distrust of “Marxism” in the Labour Movement in this country. And this distrust has been war-
ranted. "Marxism" was presented to it under its narrowest and most forbidding aspect, by people to whom Marxism was not a dynamic philosophy, but a rule of thumb. The infinite flexibility of Marxism was almost completely ignored: with the consequence that the young and ardent Socialist—the man with the vision—was not attracted, but repelled by Marxism. He became sick of the name of Marx. On the objective side, the English position of economic monopoly permitted the earning of "super-profits" by English capitalism. It was easy to buy off the unconscious working-man. On both sides Marxism was bound to fail. The conscious worker rejected the rigid parody of Marxism that was offered to him—it stifled his innate generosity; the unconscious worker found that the dogmas and prophecies of this pseudo-Marxism were not confirmed by his experience. The Marxian propagandist was talking to him, not merely in a foreign language, but about unrealities.

The forty years are now over. Not only has English economic monopoly gone for good; we even rejoice at it, for it was time that the fatty degeneration of the English heart came to an end. But, primarily in consequence of this economic decline, there is a dumb groping in the British Labour Movement after a faith. It feels it has been "sold"—not by anybody in particular, but by life itself. And that is the feeling of a whole generation of younger men to-day. The disillusion of the modern intellectual and the disillusion of the Labour Movement are fundamentally the same. Life has become unutterably cheap. There is no instinctive sense of purpose in the social body: no sense of a living whole. And it is precisely this sense of the living whole of the social body which true Marxism has to give. At bottom it is the simple seeing how the social body recreates itself through a process of apparent decay. What seems to the superficial vision a merely negative process is revealed as positive. And to that dynamic creative-destructive process in the social body, which is now welcomed instead of repudiated, corresponds a dynamic creative-process in the individual man. He overcomes his own ego, in making a final decision not to impede, but rather to forward, the revolutionary demand which the unconscious growth of the social body makes upon him.

Such a conception of Marxism is, no doubt, alien to the British working-man. It would be foolish to suppose that the working classes
can be quickly permeated by what Mr. Waldo Frank has truly called "the vital mysticism" of Marxism. But one thing is certain. If the leaders of the Labour Movement in the years to come are themselves permeated by this conception of Marxism, they will be trusted and followed as no leaders of Labour in this country have been trusted and followed before, save Keir Hardie himself. Keir Hardie was an instinctive Marxist. He was therefore completely incapable of being seduced by the temptations to which other Labour leaders, great and small, invariably succumb. If they are bourgeois by origin, they remain bourgeois in mind: if they are not bourgeois by origin, they become bourgeois. And the working-man at once despises and envies them. It is bad for him, and bad for them: it is a reciprocal corruption. And it is coming to an end.

J. M. M.
OF all the influences now active in modern German thought, Goethe’s is by far the most powerful and distinctive. We can mark its traces, without much difficulty, in paths apparently so remote from each other as Husserl’s “Phenomenology,” Rudolph Otto’s religious psychology, Karl Barth’s theology, and Oswald Spengler’s historical morphology. Indeed, in our more critical moments we are inclined to pronounce that what is sound in these various systems is what they derive, at one or more removes, from Goethe; and what is specious or exaggerated is their authors’ own. The judgment is extreme; but that it could easily be made plausible is an indication of the potency of Goethe’s influence in the modern world.

Moreover, it is an indication which element in Goethe is potent to-day. If we were to say, abruptly, that it is Goethe the philosopher, and not Goethe the poet, whose influence is active, an important question would have been begged by the separation. It is not easy to distinguish between Goethe the poet and Goethe the philosopher. We can only make the distinction satisfactorily if we accept the emphasis laid by Goethe himself in his later life on immediate experience as the true source of poetry. “Beware,” he said to Eckermann, “of attempting a large work.”

That is what injures our best minds, even those finest in talent and most earnest in effort. I have suffered from this cause and know how much it has injured me. What have I not let fall into the well! If I had written all that I well might, a hundred volumes would not contain it.

(September 18th, 1823).


Goethe’s Conversations with Eckermann. Everyman’s Library. (Dent.) 2s. net.

Goethe, of course, was not condemning large works of poetry. Masterpieces had been written, and he revered them. "Alles grosse bildet." But he was deeply aware that the time for great poems was past. Now, if a poet was to be productive, he must be content to seize his moments. All poems must be "occasioned." Behind this sincere and admirable advice to Eckermann was his sense that, so soon as the poet left the narrow realm of the immediate and the occasioned, he must perforce become a philosopher. He must seek his answer to the riddle of existence, and the search and the answer must be his own. The old synthesis had broken down. The datum of accepted belief which is essential to sustained poetry was no longer forthcoming.

Goethe’s own "Faust" is a clear evidence of this inward disability. For all its depth and beauty it is a mosaic. It is, to use his own distinction, a composed piece rather than a whole, and towards the end of the Second Part, it loses even the semblance of composition, and is merely thrown together. This was not Goethe’s fault. He was a poet living at a time when poetry of the scope he had dreamed was impossible. The "daemon" was bound to fail him. His poetic power had been turned aside into philosophy. Critics sometimes grieve over the change; but there is no cause for lamentation. For not even the reality of those hundred unwritten volumes could have compensated us for the loss of the Goethe who is extant. It is he, and not the lovely lyricist, who is still significant and still active.

But it is inadequate to call this Goethe, Goethe the philosopher, unless we understand the word, as we seldom do nowadays, in the simple and noble sense of the seeker after wisdom. We have suggested that Husserl’s "phenomenology" derives a good deal from Goethe’s continual return, from the mazes of Kantian subjectivity, to the "pure phenomenon" (Urphänomen). But, if Husserl is the philosopher, Goethe certainly is not. Epistemology had no charms, neither had it any terrors, for the man who
cheerfully and comfortably sang:
  Mein kind! ich hab' es klug gemacht,
  Ich habe nie über das Denken gedacht.
That is, for philosophy in the modern sense, a shameless evasion of responsibility. No epistemology, no philosophy. Goethe laughed at the notion. Therein lies the advantage of being a poet-philosopher, "pour qui le monde visible existe." It is, we believe, also a decided philosophical superiority, for the diversion of philosophy into epistemology has had one inevitable and lamentable consequence: it has ended by making philosophy irrelevant to ordinary human experience.

Against this growing tendency, which Goethe immediately detected when, on his return from Italy, he came into contact with the Kantians, he was bound to react. It was alien to his nature. But his reaction was not merely instinctive; it was philosophically instructed as well. He had long since been under the influence of a greater philosopher than Kant, namely, Spinoza. And it is in terms of the conflict between Kant and Spinoza for the decisive influence on Goethe's thinking that his own philosophical originality can most clearly be distinguished. Nevertheless, to speak of a conflict between Kant and Spinoza in Goethe's soul is an exaggeration: the conclusion of such struggle as there was, was foregone. And this was natural, because the specific problem of philosophy for Kant—the problem of knowledge—does not exist for Spinoza, who denies to the subject-object distinction all ultimate validity. That is, perhaps, a misleading description, since it could be asserted also of the post-Kantian German idealists. But the difficulty of describing Spinoza is not due to the difficulty of his views, but rather to his unique simplicity. To understand Spinoza, we need to undergo a sort of spiritual metamorphosis. The mere intelligence does not suffice. For the essential step in Spinozism is to recognise the intelligence itself as merely an animal faculty, and for the human
being to see himself in his own totality as object. To this object there is, and can be, in the ordinary philosophic sense no subject. The philosophic subject itself is become object. This notion of an object without a subject is a kind of nonsense to the ordinary philosophic intelligence, largely because it is not strictly a notion at all, but a spiritual experience.

On this essential of Spinozism Goethe seized eagerly; and by the simplicity and directness with which he grasped it he became a truer Spinozist than many who were better able than he to expound Spinoza’s subtle distinctions between substance and mode. The most famous acknowledgment of Goethe’s debt to Spinoza is that which he made in “Dichtung und Wahrheit”; but the real nature of Spinoza’s decisive influence is declared most clearly in the remarkable conversation which Eckermann records on February 28th, 1831:

Jesus conceived one only god to whom he attributed all the qualities which he perceived as perfections in himself. God became the essence of Jesus’s own inner beauty, full of goodness and love like him, and such that good men might surrender themselves to him with perfect confidence and embrace this idea of him as the most precious point of contact with things above.

Since, however, the great being we call the Godhead manifests itself not only in mankind, but also in a rich and vast world, and in the mighty processes of history, a conception of him founded on human attributes is, of course, inadequate, and the close observer will soon run up against inconsistencies and contradictions, which will lead to doubt, possibly even to despair, unless he is small enough to be comforted by artificial explanations, or big enough to lift himself up on to a higher plane of thought.

Goethe, in his early years, found such a lofty standpoint in Spinoza, and acknowledges with joy how fully the needs of his youth were satisfied by the views of this great thinker. He discovered himself in him, and consequently could attach himself to him all the more closely (auf das schönste).

Further, since such views were not of a subjective kind, but had their roots in the works and expression of God throughout the
world, they were not merely a skin which had to be sloughed later as a result of his own thorough investigation into the world of nature, but were the original seed and root of a plant which developed through the years in the same healthy way, and flowered at length into a rich and ripe knowledge.

It is difficult to translate such a passage without blurring distinctions which are vital. "Das grosse Wesen, welches wir die Gottheit nennen," when rendered into English as "the great Being whom we call the Godhead" has acquired a distinct tinge of conventional religion which does not rightly belong to it, and above all it has been personalised. That fatally obscures the true process of Goethe's thinking. He regarded Spinoza as one who, though the true lineal successor of Jesus, had expanded and given comprehensive substance to a conception of God proved inadequate by history and by Jesus' own fate. This pregnant and profound interpretation of Spinoza and his doctrine, which Goethe expressed to Eckermann at the very end of his life, had been reached in his early maturity. Fifty-seven years before, Lavater had noted in his diary (June 28, 1774): "Goethe told me a great deal about Spinoza and his writings. He thinks that no one has spoken concerning the Godhead so like the Saviour as Spinoza." Eleven years later, writing to Jacobi, he says of Spinoza: "He does not demonstrate the existence of God, but that existence is God. And for this, if others denounce him as an Atheist, I call him theissimum, yea Christianissimum." His homage to Spinoza was to have received poetic expression in the poem of the Wandering Jew, of which the supreme moment was to have been the hero's encounter with Spinoza. The man condemned by the theologians as a heretic was to have been revealed as the one true disciple of Jesus.

In the diary of the Italian journey Goethe records how Herder — himself a great Spinozist — used to laugh at him for reading but one Latin book: the "Ethics." Goethe explains there that he was
afraid to read any other, for fear of the longing for Italy that it would arouse in him. Even in this regard Spinoza would not have failed him: for the message of Spinoza, as Goethe understood, was not simply, or mainly, a doctrine of Pantheism, but a doctrine of renunciation. The metaphysical doctrine that *Omnis existentia est perfectio* has for its necessary moral corollary that any mode of human existence, however limited, is completely satisfying to the man who can contemplate it *sub specie aeternitatis*. It is an authentic fragment of Eternity. But this kind of renunciation, as Goethe again understood, does not imply asceticism. A full existence is as welcome to the Spinozist as a narrow one; far more welcome, indeed, for the spiritual detachment from the fortunes of the animal body which is essential to Spinozism implies a recognition that the preferences of the animal body are not only real, but valid. But this animal body is not the flesh as opposed to the spirit by the traditional dualism of Christianity. On the contrary, to this animal body both flesh and spirit, in the Christian sense, equally belong. The hunger of the Christian soul for God is, for Spinoza, simply an appetite of the animal body. Appetites of soul, appetites of body—these are alike merely “passions,” from whose dominion, but not from whose incidence, we are liberated when we recognise that they are “passions” and understand them as such. That fine point of understanding is the truly active, and manifestly impersonal, Reason.

From the fundamental Monism of Spinoza, in whom Goethe “found himself,” Goethe never departed; for the good reason that, once it has been apprehended, it is impossible to depart from it. No genuine Spinozist has ever abjured his faith. What Hegel called “the bath of Spinoza” is an irremediable happening to whom it comes; and the mere fact that Hegel was aware of this, implies that unusual circumspection is necessary in interpreting *his* philosophy. All that Goethe did, or conceived himself
to have done, was to examine the ways of existence, which were the ways of the infinite substance. This 'divine' substance was equally present in himself and in the objective world. The separation between these two was unreal; the only moment of real separation in the One was that non-temporal moment when the individual subject became a complete object to itself—the distinctive human moment when in and through man Nature achieves self-consciousness, or, in Spinoza's language, God knows and loves himself.

Between such an attitude and the Kantian there was an unbridgeable gulf. What he learned from Kant, Goethe said, was merely an increased knowledge of the subject as object; it fell into place as a kind of subsection of his expanding Spinozism. Kantianism was for him a kind of natural science of the subject, on a level with, but far more restricted than, the natural science of the objective world to which the subject also belonged. The inherent tendency to subjectivism which was in Kant was decisively rejected. Spinoza had made him proof against the epistemological trap; so that he could speak in "Glückliches Ereignis" with perfect clarity and concision of "The Kantian philosophy, which so exalts the subject, while apparently confining it." And in a letter to Schultz of 1831—during that last year of his life in which his awareness of his own past attained a maximum of lucidity—he wrote:

I am grateful to the critical and idealist philosophy for having made me aware of myself, for that is an immense gain: but it never gets to the object: this object we must accept, as does the reason of the ordinary man, in order that, in a stable relationship towards it, we may find the joy of life.

"But it never gets to the object." The objection was, and is, fatal. But, naturally, Goethe did not make it in the spirit of a narrow "materialism." He was, like Spinoza, a materialist indeed, who would have had no patience with the feeble modern sophistry
which passes under the name. The subject and the object both had to be given their full rights in a true wisdom. The attempt to reach the subject from the side of the object was as dangerous as the attempt to reach the object from the side of the subject. As he wrote to Schiller:

It always seems to me that, if the one school of thought can never reach the spirit working from without inwards, the other working from within outwards, will only with great difficulty attain to the body, so that one always does best to remain in a philosophic state of nature and make the best use of one’s undivided being, until such time as the philosophers agree how they can unite that which for the moment they have separated. (June 1, 1798.)

For that moment we are still waiting. Meanwhile, those who follow Goethe’s advice and remain in “a philosophic state of nature” have the best of it. But Goethe believed that the “state of nature” is itself the highest achievement of philosophy. It is the reverence for the “pure phenomenon” which, according to Goethe himself, was the highest that man could attain. It is not the innocence of the child, but the second innocence of the grown man; and it differs from the innocence of the child most palpably in this, that its light is turned by the man upon his own nature also. It is an immensely subtle naivety, and as such incapable of direct description. As Schiller put it, in the famous essay “Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung”—an essay which, Goethe said, “had taught him much—“They (children) are what we once were. We were once Nature, and our culture must bring us back, by the path of Reason and Freedom, to Nature once again.” The reminiscence of Jesus’ teaching concerning the condition of entry into the Kingdom of God is not accidental. But such an expression, necessarily metaphorical, is only to be understood in virtue of analogous experience; it will not abide a purely intellectual analysis. Yet intellectual analysis is necessary, and may help to bring us nearer to the crucial point of Goethe’s
philosophy. For if we accept Schiller’s simple formulation: that we were once Nature, and must return to it, we must remark that in the period of separation from Nature we have not ceased to belong wholly to it. This is the burden of the famous “Fragment on Nature,” inspired or written by Goethe, which T. H. Huxley translated and accepted as his own creed. What distinguishes this period, and makes it possible for us to call it a period of separation, is that man is unconscious that he does belong wholly to Nature; and often (or even generally) he is not merely unconscious of this complete penetration by the natural, but actively resentful of the imputation. He persists in believing himself to be, according to Spinoza’s words, *imperium in imperio*. And this is the source of the transcendentalism and supernaturalism which Spinoza and Goethe so vehemently rejected. But this rejection carried with it no refusal to recognise the specific humanity of man. Man was, indeed, an animal; but he was a human animal. “In the subject there is everything that there is in Nature, and something more.” There was no trace in this doctrine of that false simplification, which so completely vitiates vulgar materialism—the reduction of man to an order below the human. On the contrary, it demanded a lucid recognition of human nature: of Nature in its specifically human form. Thus it purified human nature in man of the dualistic impediment, and liberated him from the cramping tyranny of a transcendental morality. Man must learn to accept himself.

This attitude to experience is not easy to describe; or rather it can be described from different angles. It is the pursuit of wisdom by knowing Nature, and by knowing Nature in oneself. This twofold pursuit, giving full rights to both the object and the subject, but with the primary and ultimate emphasis on the object, so that the final knowledge of the subject is a detached awareness of itself as object, is dynamic and creative. It is a true process of evolution: of subjective growth through objective
experience. “Jeder neue Gegenstand, wohl beschaut, schliesst ein neues Organ in uns auf.” There it is expressed in terms of an almost purely ‘scientific’ knowledge, of that Naturforschung which was, in Goethe’s view, the true prophylactic against “spiritual sickness.” But it expands immediately beyond these limits. The Gegenstand—invaluable word—that which stands over against us, is not merely the scientific object, but the subject as object also: and the subject not merely as developed by its contemplation of the scientific object, but by its own most intimate life-experience. The continually growing subject, continually becoming object for itself, continually relegated back to the Nature which it is and to which it belongs—such was the “dialectical” process of human growth as Goethe experienced, and conceived it. Behind this attitude, necessarily, was always the fundamental humanity of Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto.

This process of growth, because it was indeed a process of growth, cannot be analysed beyond a certain point. As Goethe put it in “Glückliches Ereignis”:

Those who view the snug certainty of human reason from a loftier standpoint (the innate reason, that is, of a healthy human being, which doubts neither objects and their relationship, nor its own capacity to know, understand, judge, value and use them), such men will certainly gladly admit that it would be almost to attempt the impossible were one to try to describe the innumerable paths to a purified, freer, self-conscious condition. It cannot be a question of steps in culture, rather of wrong turnings, creepings and slidings, and after that an unpremeditated and joyous leap towards a higher level of being.

The ways of this growth were indeed labyrinthine. None the less the main and recurrent pattern is clear enough. On the one side a continuous opening of the whole receptivity of the subject to all experience, a constant submission of the self to the “pure phenomenon”; and on the other side, an equally constant relegation of the self enlarged by experience to the status of the “pure
phenomenon.” It was an incessant systole and diastole. Inevitably, there always remained on the side of the subject something that there was not in Nature, even when the subject was wholly reintegrated into the matrix. That unattainable $x$ had its analogue in another unattainable $y$ at the heart of objective nature. Such an $x$, such a $y$, there must always be; nevertheless, this was not a fixed and adamantine “unknowable,” it was a continually shifting “unknown.” Here the distinction becomes as tenuous as it is vital. It is the whole distinction between a dynamic and a static agnosticism.

The point of total resolution of the last faint trace of dualism within the human being cannot be reached by any process of knowledge. Although the continual metamorphosis of the growing subject into a natural object does inevitably bring man to a point at which knowledge in the intellectual and philosophic sense is superseded, at which knowledge ceases to be a possible name for the experience, and we must have recourse to Spinoza’s *amor intellectualis*, from which the last element of the personal subject has been refined away, still this is a condition of contemplation, and, relatively to human life, of passivity. The final “return to Nature” is activity. *Im Anfang war die That*; and that primal and final action is not achieved by the pure activity of contemplation. Pure, creative action is necessary for the total resolution of the dualism which Spinoza reduced to the absolute minimum conceptually possible. Spinoza himself, in writing his “Ethics,” would be an example of pure, creative action; and so, very justly, Goethe understood his own life-time’s activity. But it was important that the artist or philosopher should understand that true creative activity (*Produktivität*) was not merely not confined to such as he, but might be more perfectly manifested in another type of man.

Yes, yes, my good friend, one need not write poems and plays to be creative; there is also a creativeness of deeds, which in many
cases stands an important degree higher. The physician himself must be creative, if he really intends to heal; if he is not so, he will succeed only now and then, as if by chance; but on the whole he will be only a bungler.

"You appear," I added, "to call creativeness that which is usually called genius."

"One lies very near the other," said Goethe. "For what is genius but that productive power by which arise deeds that can display themselves before God and Nature, and therefore have consequences and are permanent." (To Eckermann, March 12, 1828.)

The conversation had arisen à propos a prolonged fit of nervous depression in Eckermann. Goethe had urged him to see a doctor, but Eckermann had done nothing. He was like—Goethe told him—Mr. Shandy who spent half his life being annoyed by a creaking door and could not summon up the resolution to fetch the oil-can and cure it.

"But so it is with us all! The darkening and illuminating of man make his destiny. What we need is that the dämon should lead us in leading-strings every day and tell us what to do on every occasion and make us do it. But the good spirit leaves us, and we grow limp and grope in the dark.

"Napoleon was the man! (Da war Napoleon ein Kerl!) Always illuminated, always clear and decided, and at every hour endowed with the energy to carry out instantly what he had recognised to be advantageous and necessary."

This famous conception of the ‘dämon,’ explicitly adopted from Goethe in modern times by Herr Spengler and Herr Ludwig, is practically identical with the conception of the “creative” man. The “creative” man is one who is more or less continually guided by the “dämon.” Once more, Goethe’s thought is quite incapable of precise definition; for the “demonic” is emphatically one of those things of which he said: "Wir würden gar vieles besser kennen, wenn wir es nicht zu genau erkennen wollten.” We cannot hope to do more than attain a fleeting sideway glimpse at what was in his mind.
The ‘daemonic’ has possession of a man when he is completely and significantly active. The young Napoleon is the obvious example. But essentially Napoleon is only the most visible type of the ‘man of destiny.’ The ‘productive spirit’ is manifold.

To receive a simple, pure phenomenon, to recognise it in its significance, and to work with it, demands a creative spirit, capable of taking a comprehensive view of reality, and is a rare gift, found only in really superior natures.

To see the thing simply as it is, not as it is traditionally or conventionally supposed to be, is a gift of the ‘daemonic’ man, the ‘creative’ spirit. This power of simple vision may find expression in the knowledge that is action, or in action in the familiar sense. The fresh, direct and uncorrupted view of the situation, whether in science, or art, or history, or politics is the privilege of the ‘daemonic’ man. So that from this angle we may regard him as the man who reacts, with the speed of instinct, to the actual environment, the true circumstances, instead of to the imaginary situation which the vast majority of men, having only a second-hand vision, take for real. His reaction, or adjustment, is therefore in the highest sense ‘natural,’ but with a naturalness which appears to the ordinary man extraordinary rather than natural. Thus the ‘daemonic’ is essentially revolutionary in appearance, in whatever province of human activity it manifests itself. But it is at once revolutionary and permanent, because it is necessary. It is the necessary creative outcome, uttering itself through a man capable of responding to it, of the actual situation of Nature. Like Nature itself, of whose creative process he is the spear-head, the ‘daemonic’ man is beyond morality; he is himself in Goethe’s pregnant phrase ‘eine Natur.’ And this passing beyond morality is evidently also necessary, because morality is convention and no instinctive response to an actual situation is possible in a man bound by the past. None the less the ‘daemonic’ man is bound, he is perfectly constrained
by the necessity of the true situation; his freedom consists merely in the freedom to be completely responsive to it. He is wholly an instrument of the creative destiny of Nature.

This necessarily inadequate account of one of Goethe's most intimate beliefs may appear dangerously subversive. The truth is that Goethe was, for all his outward semblance of sedateness and decorum, a profoundly revolutionary spirit. It was indeed impossible for one who had such an organic conception of the world-process, or one so conscious of the creative powers within himself, to be otherwise. And even in politics, where he had the reputation and the semblance of being conservative, it is evident that in the situation in which he lived there was nothing else for him to be. But not even Marx himself has spoken with more penetration of political revolution than Goethe.

Because I hated the Revolution, the name of Friend of the established order was bestowed upon me. That is, however, a very ambiguous title, which I beg to decline. Since, with much that is good, there is also much that is bad, unjust and imperfect, a friend of the established order means often little less than the friend of the obsolete and bad.

But human affairs wear every fifty years a different aspect; so that an arrangement which in the year 1800 was perfection may, perhaps, in the year 1850 be a defect.

And, furthermore, nothing is good for a nation but that which arises from its own core and its own general wants, without apish imitation of another; since what to one race of people, at a certain age, is nutriment, may prove poison for another. All endeavours to introduce any foreign innovation, the necessity for which is not rooted in the core of the nation itself, are therefore foolish; and all premeditated revolutions of the kind are unsuccessful, for they are without God, who keeps aloof from such bungling. If, however, there exists an actual necessity for a great reform amongst a people, God is with it and it prospers. He was visibly with Christ and his first adherents; for the appearance of the new doctrine of love was a necessity to the people. He was also visibly with Luther; for the purification of the doctrine corrupted by the priests was no less
a necessity. Neither of the great powers I have named was, however, a friend of the established order; much more were both of them convinced that the old leaven must be got rid of, and that it would be impossible to go on and remain in the untrue, unjust and defective way.

Thus, a revolution is successful because it is necessary. But if it is necessary will it not take place of itself? No. The 'daemonic' man is also necessary to lead the movement, to be as it were the consciousness of Nature's unconscious creative-destructive urge. He also is necessary; but the necessity becomes aware of itself in him as a sense of destiny. The doctrine is, in a sense, mystical. Unless it is understood from within outwards, it can be completely misinterpreted into a mere doctrine of acceptance and conservatism with for its motto: *Die Geschichte hat immer recht.* Such an interpretation would be profoundly unjust to Goethe, who regarded history as a creative process. He was opposed to any attempt to imitate the French Revolution in Germany, because such an attempt would not have grown out of German conditions; it would have lacked creative necessity. This creative necessity, uttering itself in the individual leader as "the daemonic," and in the larger affairs of society as revolutionary and permanent change, is ultimately what Goethe means by God. God was with Christ, and Luther; but he was also with Napoleon and Frederick the Great.

Christian pietism can obtain very small solace from Goethe's conception of the "Divine." In act it is profoundly revolutionary and unmoral; in contemplation, it is completely given in the simple 'awe before the pure phenomenon,' beyond which man cannot go—the satisfying, awe-compelling, absolute otherness and uniqueness of the object directly regarded. There is a moment at which these two elements combine: in the awe-compelling phenomenon of the daemonic and creative and revolutionary man. So that Goethe could, in complete sincerity, speak of his
profound reverence for Christ: a sincerity which those who are anxious to make Goethe an instrument of edification have most insincerely exploited. Fortunately, in his masterly book, “Goethe als religiöser Denker,” Herr Erich Franz has disposed of this disingenuous falsification; it should be difficult for it to raise its head again. As he insists, there is not a particle of evidence for the view that Goethe at the end of his life sought to mitigate his peculiar creative pantheism. His conversation with Eckermann of March 11th, 1832, eleven days before his death, is completely in harmony with the convictions he had expressed, in divers ways, throughout his whole life. It shows that Goethe’s continually increasing clarity had reached a maximum shortly before his death.

There are two points of view from which biblical matters may be regarded. There is the standpoint of a kind of absolute religion (Urreligion), of pure Nature and Reason, which is of divine origin. This will remain the same for ever, and will endure and prevail, so long as divinely gifted beings exist. But it is only for the elect, and is far too high and noble to become universal. Then there is the standpoint of the Church . . . .

The distinction could not well have been made more trenchant. Of this absolute religion Goethe, quite justly, believed himself to be a worthy expositor and vehicle. Certainly, he addressed himself to the elect, and not to those who were “klein genug, sich durch eine Kunstliche Ausrede beschwichtigen zu lassen”; but he has found his audience, and will always find it. And perhaps to-day, more than ever before, can be found those capable of responding to his vision.
RHYS DAVIES

The Journey

I had got on the train at Ventimiglia and to Cannes I was alone in the compartment; few people seemed to favour this train to Paris. I felt depressed at the thought of the seventeen hours' journey alone: an empty train for a long journey is as melancholy as an empty theatre, and though I would be able to rest stretched along the seat, it was preferable to have one or two persons—even if only to look at, or to hate, or from whom to derive, perhaps, a secret amusement.

A woman entered my compartment at Cannes. I glanced at her, a little disappointed. She was a middle-aged Frenchwoman loaded with small parcels and a hat-box; a wispy porter followed her, borne down with two large suit-cases. Dropping her parcels everywhere, she sat in turn on the three corner seats at her disposal and finally selected the one opposite to me, but kept another one reserved by depositing a coat on it. "Someone will join her at Marseilles," I thought, "she is keeping a seat for a friend." But smiling at me brilliantly and displaying a short row of perfectly matched but false teeth she opened conversation by saying it was pleasant to change seats on a long journey and also one didn't want the compartment full.

In my stilted and careful French I politely agreed. Her black, black eyes looked at me with that shrewd, quick glance of the alert Frenchwoman and, after a few tentative observations, she put her head on one side and asked if Monsieur had liked the Riviera.

We drew out of Cannes. The train was cutting along the narrow, brown-yellow plage. It was afternoon and early spring. The air was thick and warm with yellow sunlight, so yellow you felt
it was silk on which you could wipe your hands. And there was
the blue sea, with its slow lazy curls of little waves like white
ostrich feathers as they fell on the sand. The other side of the
train, the gardens of the villas and the near hillside were foamy
with almond-blossom and mimosa and, beyond, the rocky hills
of the inland valleys were cool in their blue-grey silence. North-
wards, it would be cold and wet and the trees would still be
shriven; it would still be winter, a few hours hence.

I told her I admired the Riviera, in spite of its eczema of villas
and its ridiculous millionaire hotels, palaces and casinos. She
differed from me in her tastes, I gathered as, adroitly smiling her
small but glittering smile, she chattered in a pleasant and lively
manner. She liked the smart hotels and the fashionable towns of
the Côte d’Azur. It had been a change for her. Apparently she
had lived a suburban family life outside Paris and had been
enjoying a three weeks’ holiday with her sister, who kept a pen-
sion in Cannes. I had been dawdling along the coast into Italy,
living in villages, for five months. She sat smiling at me and
listened attentively when I spoke, nodding her head, now saga-
ciously, now with an agreeable vivacity, in the politely self-assured
manner of French women. She seemed very alive and of happy
but mature temperament.

“I like gaiety when I am on holiday,” she told me. “In Paris
I work at my home like thousands of other women. Here I have
been among the select and the fashionable of the world.” She
sighed, with an excessive melancholy. “To-morrow I will be back
in my home.”

She had wanted to be gay, I could see; she had wanted romance.
Perhaps the Riviera had given it to her. Her face for three or four
moments had become pensive and sad. She was middle-aged and
married. But she was charming. I liked her, aloofly. I could have
exchanged jokes with her, a discreet train flirtation. Her highly
decorated face amused me, but I gave her credit, too, for taste and
artistry. Her red was not too red, her eye-black thin and delicate, and her cream-pinkish skin was smooth as vellum, freshly powdered. Such mastery of cosmetics I had not seen for some time. My glance rendered her homage, which she received accurately and graciously. Again she smiled. "Monsieur's French is very good indeed," she lied. I was almost offended at this offering, and decided she was clumsy. With disarming intuition she looked at me wistfully and added: "Everyone must be encouraged in their efforts to speak French; one must not be impatient or laugh at them."

Soon, soon we would be leaving that warmly tinted coast. All my five months became like a single drowsy afternoon spent in lazy dreaming, and I held it in my memory as though I were carrying a sun-warmed apricot in my hand. A single afternoon of indolence and soft warm colour. And it was past. The grey rain and the windy streets of the north awaited me. Between the palms and over the red rocks of Théoule the sea spread like soft blue velvet dropped from the shoulders of goddesses who had gone up into the hills to bathe in the sunlight. I had seen beautiful women in the villages; they had been mellowed by the sun and they moved slowly and gracefully, as though they had a contented stillness within them. And the train was rushing away with gathering speed, towards the city.

Sighing, I looked away from the window. Madame, opposite to me, was still gazing out. Her face had become sober. She too, I thought, she too is protesting that there are such things as duty and work, cities with all their horrors of factories and gaunt cliffs of stone where people creep or hurry like insects. Age broke through the careful cosmetics of her face. Perhaps she had been enjoying a romantic episode on this southern coast, perhaps nothing had happened to her, perhaps she disliked her husband in Paris. Now she was returning with a sad acceptance in her dreaming heart.
Knowing my gaze, she turned and looked at me, a prepared expression of faintly wistful interest on her face. I suppose she had heard my sigh.

"Monsieur has regrets at leaving the Côte d’Azur," she suggested with a hesitating smile. Assuring her I had many, she added: "Ah, but you are young, very young yet, and perhaps you can return many, many times. This, I think, will be my last visit." She looked at me with her bright black eyes, that had contradictions of temperament in them, and I could see that she decided I was young enough for her to feel nothing but a maternal interest in me. "I cannot come here very often. But you have everything before you."

In a little while she had extracted from me a few personal details, and from her I learned that she had two young sons who were going to cost a great deal to educate: that was why she would never be able to afford a Riviera holiday again. She said not a word about her husband; perhaps he was dead. Her face, I decided, had a jaunty bravery in it. She wanted to keep young, gleaming, alert—and I admired the pretty art of her face with a renewed approval.

We swept into Marseilles. Now, I thought, we shall be invaded by passengers and we shall have a full compartment for the remaining thirteen hours’ journey to Paris. But again few favoured that train. A man of forty or so put his head inside our door and, after glancing at Madame and then at me, took possession of the corner-seat on her side. Since Madame did not remove her coat from the remaining corner seat, it was not taken, though never once did she use it herself, in spite of her statement that she liked to change seats on a long journey.

The newcomer, I judged, was a commercial traveller. He carried with him a businesslike portfolio, and he was respectably dressed, neat and subdued, except for a glittering tie-pin in his spotted puce cravat. He had the half weary, half efficient face of
the French business man, and it was thinnish and pallid. He was like ten thousand other men, hard-working in routine and commercial honesty. His thin hands in their movements were decisive and crisp. But he looked bloodless.

Madame, I saw, examined him too. I felt that he met with her favour, as far as one's judgments are affected by fellow-passengers on a long train journey. It was not long before they were talking. He had examined her in return; and then she wanted to make sure that there was a dining-car on the train; he was able to inform her definitely. From that they proceeded in a quick, bitten kind of French that tested my knowledge severely.

Evening was approaching and the sky was lilac-coloured over the glimpses of sea one saw beyond Marseilles, the last glimpses. But there was still the Provençal countryside to look at, the tidy vineyards, and the silver-green olive groves, the tiny crouched collections of rust-brown and rose plastered cottages perched here and there on hill-top or in hollow. It would be dark when the formal uneventful landscapes of the Rhône began. After dinner perhaps my two fellow-passengers would cease their lively talking and I might sleep. It was a curse that one could not afford a wagon-lit—and doubtless every chink of ventilation would be closed by my typical fellow-passengers. Their chattering French began to annoy me.

Madame looked at me once or twice again and nodded her head as though in recognition or greeting. But I was really ousted from her interest, I could see. She had her own kind and her own age to talk to now. And the commercial traveller had no use for me at all.

Madame had come to occupy his full attention. He paid her, with gesture, glance and the occasional words I picked up, polite flattery; once he leant to her and patted her arm with a gentle reverence. They passed, I gathered, from a discussion of the Paris shops to the prices of appartements in the different districts. She
placed a gracious intensity into her manner. Her plumpness and her brave rouged face pleased him, I saw. And she opened her shining eyes, that seemed so passionately dark, in delicious surprise at some of his statements.

Of course they dined together. I sat at an opposite table. His deference and solicitation were admirable; I could guess that he wanted her to make a good meal—the garçon returning for those who wanted second helpings, he chose for her with graceful flourishes some select piece on the outstretched platter. They did not share wine—each had a half-bottle, and she, I saw, with that watching forgivable on a weary train journey, paid her own bill. He gave her cigarettes with her coffee and chatted with renewed fervour. Madame, who had taken a very good meal, was a little more subdued. Her rouge had become flaming.

They left the dining-car before me and I thoughtfully lingered over my cognac. We had passed Avignon: the train was rushing into a soft blue night. The shadows over the dim meadows were beautiful to watch, and the trees flying past were mysterious in the gowns of pale evening mist that still clung to them. I ordered another cognac and hoped I would sleep when the gloom of night had fully come. Surely Madame and the commercial traveller would exhaust conversation soon.

I was mistaken. They talked until midnight. He sat closer to her now and, I found, they talked of all subjects, from memories of Sarah Bernhardt to the scandals in the Rue de Lap. Madame was a little less animated than she had been in the early evening, but the arch coyness of her manner was still manifest and she still gazed at the commercial traveller with her sultry-dark eyes. “She is having a last little fling,” I thought, “before she returns to her strict home in the suburbs.” Her pleasure in being able to interest this man to veiled love-making was obvious. She had not yet grown too passé.

When at last she decided to rest, he became beautifully anxious
for her comfort. He shook out the pillow she had hired, he saw that no draught caught her and, with reverential and soothing touch, he took possession of the carpet slippers she had taken out of her bag and, after she had removed her shoes, held them out, one in each hand, to her small and rather shapely feet. She thanked him prettily and then he lifted her feet and placed them gently on the seat, so that she curled up, a little plumply but attractively, to settle herself for the night. He loved achieving these little attentions, he gave a little shake of delight, like a terrier, and smiled again at her . . . and patted her ankle. Then, after demanding if I were agreeable, he switched off the white light and turned on the dim blue. There were nine more hours until we reached Paris.

I slept intermittently in that train crashing and swaying through a night, but the mournful noises of the journey penetrated those snatches of slumber. The grind of wheels, the hiss of steam, the sound of the torn air, mingled with the fragmentary dreams that came to me. Drowsily I saw that journey as a crossing between the extreme periods of life. The fresh gaily-tinted charm of the south was passed and already the train had entered the bare cold regions where it was winter. I hated it that I was being rushed on in this night. Sometimes I rubbed my eyes and peered out of the window, but the darkness was vast and impenetrable. Madame, opposite to me, dozed with her head fallen on her chest, and the commercial traveller seemed to be sleeping with ease and comfort, his pale face lapsed into the immobility of a man calmly dead.

Twice, almost overcome by the stuffiness of the compartment, I stumbled out into the deserted corridor and, in a stupor, walked up and down. How the train swayed as it screeched and ground its way through the thick darkness! It seemed to have a downward plunge and writhing steam hissed up from beneath the coaches and shrouded the windows. It was as though we were crashing into an inferno.
Again I slept. When I fully woke it was late morning. In an hour we would be in Paris. I felt dirty and dazed and went to wash myself. Madame and the commercial traveller were both awake—she sat hunched in her corner, with averted face gazing out of the window, and he, I think, was waiting for her to turn to him again.

I had a scrappy wash and returned to the compartment: there was no breakfast to be obtained on that train. The atmosphere of the compartment, I sensed, had become forlorn and, in spite of the stuffiness, cold. Cold. Madame still sat averted and hunched, her face hidden from us. Through the dirtied windows one could dimly see the wintry countryside, the shriven trees, the wet grey fields, and a grey, hostile sky. I did not want to look out too long.

What was wrong with Madame, why did she crouch there hiding herself, unmoving, in an untidy lump? I could see part of her face, since I was opposite to her. Her charming colour seemed gone. Why did she not go out and freshen herself, apply more cosmetics? Huddled and still, she continued to stare out of the window, the collar of her coat turned up. The commercial traveller still waited in his corner, quiet but watchful, his brown eyes a little hurt.

Only once did she stir for a few moments out of that dazed stillness—and that was when the commercial traveller left the compartment for a while. She merely shook herself a little, turned, looked at me for a moment, and then moved back to her huddled and averted staring out of the window. And when she looked at me, in a single blind glance, colourless, I almost averted my face too.

She was changed almost out of recognition. Not so much because of the colouring that had disappeared in the night, but because of the almost saturnine despair in her face. She, who had been so gay and lively. I went out to the corridor. Perhaps she wanted to be left quite alone for a few minutes.

But she had done nothing to revive her former appearance
when I returned to the compartment a little while after the commercial traveller. She still sat in her almost sinister brooding at the window. And he still waited for her to turn to him, looking hurt and pathetic and at a loss. The grey light of the morning made the skin of his face into a kind of oyster-grey, too. But he awaited her pleasure watchfully, his arms folded, his hair watered and plastered down freshly.

Paris at last. A light brownish fog hung over the suburbs. How disconsolate and weary those suburbs looked, shrinking under the dirty brown shawls of fog. And I thought of the fluttering naked-pink almond-blossom in the warm spring breeze of the south, and the yellow air that was like silk. Cities, cities, why were they necessary?

I was afraid to look across openly at Madame. I knew her sorrow and her despair. But I wanted to render her some service, or I should have liked to have seen her smile a little. And I was sad now that the journey was passed. To the last she ignored the commercial traveller, and I was glad that I managed to forestall him in lifting down her bags from the rack. Not once did she turn her face to him as the train drew into the Gare de Lyon and we prepared to part. He began to look indignant, those last few moments. When the train stopped in the station he hesitated, to give her another opportunity, and then, flashing me a sulky glance, hurried away disappointed.

I did not care to intrude on the privacy she obviously desired, so I allowed her to wait until a porter would come to help her with her bags. I saw her once more, on the platform, a porter hurrying after her with her two heavy suit-cases. She passed quite near to me. Her face was heavy and resentful, but shut in a kind of blind determination. She hurried on quickly. It seemed as though she had some bitter duty she was determined at all costs to perform. But I was glad to see that her despair had given place to this strength of motive, sullen
as it seemed. And I wondered at her destination.

Outside the station, the morning air smelt of the nearby fog. The sky was a waste of grey ice. It was very cold. I would go to bed for a comfortable sleep when I reached the hotel. Then it would be evening, and the warm lights would shine out, white in the streets, but in my favourite café, among the tarnished mirrors, the cupids, the faded plush and the tinted glasses, yellow.

Service

I may not be
The light that guides you home,
The hand that lifts the latch,
The lips that give themselves to you
And ecstasy.

But I may be
Sometimes for you a stone:
The firm stone where you set mechanic foot
And cross a stream;
The white stone, warning of the narrow track,
Whereby you steer
Yet steer without a thought;
The milestone on the desolate heath,
Itself perpetually alone,
That tells of coming welcome, friendly cheer;
And, with my verse,
The headstone yet to be upthrust,
Singing the excellence in you, the love in me,
After we both are dust:
These I will be.

For stones are strong,
And storms may beat upon them long,
And still they are stone.

LESLEY GREY
Communism for Englishmen

To know the truth and to receive it are, unhappily, two quite different things. There are certain truths about the world, and about Great Britain’s place in it to-day, that every thinking man and woman knows intellectually. It is a matter not of opinion but of knowledge that the era of economic individualism is over, and that we are passing into a world that can be run only on a basis of conscious collective organisation. It is a matter of knowledge, and not of mere opinion, that in this new world old values must give place to new, and ethical and social ideas, as well as economic standards of living, be fundamentally re-cast. It is something we know, and not merely think, that this new world needs conscious planning and active personal service on a scale and of an order that have never been attempted in the world before.

But it is one thing to know all this, and quite another to receive it into ourselves, so as to make it the focus of our living and of our practical activity in whatever field may be ours. And to-day countless men and women, knowing it full well, are either disregarding it, and living as if they did not know it at all, or consciously turning their backs on it, and positively working against it. In theological phrase, they are sinning against the light.

Most of these people, no doubt, are but half-conscious of what they are doing. For a purely intellectual awareness has no power fully to penetrate the mind, or to break down the closed compartments within it. There must come into our knowing an element that is not purely intellectual before we can know a thing not merely as a fact, but as a value to which we
have to adjust our entire way of living.

This non-intellectual element in our knowing is what Mr. Middleton Murry, in his Necessity of Communism,* calls “ethical passion.” It is essentially a reception into the mind of the idea of collective social organisation in such a way as to make it not merely an idea, but a living value. He finds in the great lives of the past—a somewhat arbitrary and personal portrait gallery of heroes from Jesus to D. H. Lawrence—a passionate sense of values; and he sees in the linking of this passion to the material opportunities of the time the hope for the world’s future. Lawrence, indeed, saw the light, and rejected it; but in Marx, as in Jesus, Mr. Murry finds acceptance, a clear intellectual view of the world transfused with strong ethical passion. The secret of Marx’s living appeal, as of the old appeal of Christianity, lies, he says, just in this powerful moral objectivity—which he also calls by the name of “disinterestedness.”

He himself has been led, he tells us, by way of a difficult struggle to this ethical passion for Communism—not Communism as it is in Russia, and much less a mere imitation of Russian Communism, but a Communism for the very different circumstances and minds of English people. “In England Communism must be English. If Communism does not feel and obey the inward necessity of becoming English, then Communism will never gain a hold of this country.”

So Mr. Middleton Murry sets out to state, with that ethical passion which is the symbol of his own conversion, the case for an English Communism. This Communism, he tells us, must be revolutionary—as revolutionary to the full as the Communism of Russia, or even more revolutionary. For it must aim at an utter change in our ways of living and in our standards of value. But it need not be “bloody revolutionary,” unless its opponents force it to the shedding of blood; for the shrinking from bloody

* The Necessity of Communism. By John Middleton Murry. (Jonathan Cape.)
revolution of the main body of the English people is an objective fact, an essential part of the material circumstances on which an English Communism has to be built. "It is sheer tomfoolery to imagine that there is in this country any considerable body of workers who have an instinctive impulse towards bloody revolution. They have as a body an instinctive impulse against it. That is why it is not easy to convince them that they have, as they plainly have, and must inevitably have, an instinctive impulse towards revolution itself."

"The word," he tells us, "sticks in their gizzards." And accordingly they can be led to accept its necessity only if it can be so presented to them as to offer them a new set of ethical values, based on an appreciation of the necessities imposed upon them by the material circumstances of to-day. Without this ethical passion, any movement will be impotent; but ethical passion is no less impotent by itself. It must act upon the objective situation, and find an objective situation upon which it can act with effect. "For it is utterly mistaken to suppose, as do some well-meaning 'spiritualists', that disinterestedness propagates itself in some transcendental fashion, and that the ethical passion of individuals can change the world. . . Ethical passion, to be effective, must await an objective situation appropriate to itself."

So Mr. Middleton Murry accepts and receives Marx's materialist conception of history, and asks us to realise that there is the fullest consistency between this kind of materialism and the force of the ethical passion to which he appeals. He sees the events of last summer, when the main body of the working class, almost leaderless and without a policy, rallied behind the Labour Party as a response to class-instinct hardly the less powerful for being unable to give any clear account of itself in intellectual terms. But he sees that event as a tragedy, just because this instinctive class-loyalty was left, and is left now, leaderless and without a policy, devoid of men who can speak to it in terms of an ethical
passion based on a clear intellectual vision of the needs of to-day.*

For the Labour Party seems to Mr. Middleton Murry to be totally lacking in vision. “It accepts the old system, and on to the old system seeks to fasten, parasitically, high wages, social services, and unemployment insurance”—which the old system, having lost its world monopoly, can no longer afford. At last year’s General Election, he tells us, “the issue was between a Capitalism demanding to be allowed to function, and a parasitic Socialism which would choke the Capitalist process while having no purpose or plan of its own with which to replace it.” As a criticism of the late Labour Government this view is, I think, valid; and I largely agree that the Labour Party, after the loss of its best known leaders, went into the fight on instinct and without a plan. I agree that the purged Labour Party is still largely bourgeois in attitude, though it has shown itself revolutionary in instinct. And I agree that the task ahead is to turn this instinctive non-violent revolutionism to constructive use, and that this task requires leaders dominated by an ethical passion which must be based on a clear intellectual conviction.

But what is the content of this conviction to be? What is the content of Mr. Middleton Murry’s Communism? It is much easier to say what it is not than what it is; and he defines it in fact largely in terms of what it involves giving up. His potential leaders are to identify themselves completely with the interests of the work-

* In this part of his book, Mr. Middleton Murry criticises me for giving, in my election pamphlets, a false view of what the Labour Party’s policy was. He thinks the Labour Party ought to have, but did not, put forward the policies I was urging; and he adds that “it is not merely an intellectual, but a moral mistake to try to make it appear that they did put them forward.” May I be acquitted, at any rate, of conscious dishonesty? The election was, on the Labour side, a soldiers’ battle; and I believe most Labour candidates were urging what I urged, and, moreover, that if Labour had got back to office it would have done what I proposed, as the one practicable alternative to the “national” policy of retrenchment at the expense of the poor. I agree that the Labour Party ought officially to have given a much clearer fighting lead. But, lacking that lead, I was one of the soldiers in the battle, using what weapons I had to rationalise the instinctive response of the working class.
ing class, and this is to be a test of their disinterestedness. There is to be a "complete economic sacrifice of ourselves," an "annihilation of the ego," a complete detachment from our own interests, a readiness to surrender all values and varieties that thrive only in the soil of economic inequality. Perhaps so complete a sacrifice may not be in practice demanded of us; but we must be ready to make it without question if it is.

In the demand for sacrifice, who are Mr. Middleton Murry's "we"? Not the proletariat as a class; for "to require disinterestedness from it, as a class, is fantastic." The disinterested few have to identify themselves with the cause of the interested many. Not even a selected few largely drawn from the proletariat; for he says that "we ought to be astonished that so many of them have attained a level of disinterestedness which puts ours to shame" (italics mine). Mr. Middleton Murry's appeal is primarily to the relatively rich, to those who are at any rate lifted economically above the proletariat by the possession of some degree of economic security. To persons of this class, to which both he and I belong, his book is chiefly addressed.

Now here he is on very difficult ground. In what sense can he and I identify ourselves with the proletariat? "Real identification with the proletariat," he says, "involves real incorporation with it." In what sense? Even if we sold all we have, and gave it to the cause, we should not become proletarians that way, he will agree. For the identification must be one of spirit and idea, and not only of way of living. But can he and I become proletarians in spirit and idea? He certainly has not, in this book, and I know I cannot. But we can, he says, subordinate our class-values, and make the cause of the proletariat utterly our own, ready to sacrifice any conflicting class-value of our own to the exigencies of the cause. I agree we can; but the more we do that the less like the proletariat we shall become. For, as he says, the proletariat as a class is no more disinterested than any other class. It is a cause, a
historic process, and not a class with which we have to identify ourselves, though our identification involves fighting on the side of a class.

"What is the matter with us, as individuals, to-day is simply this: that no one dares to demand sacrifice enough from us." That is Mr. Middleton Murry's conclusion; but I do not find it satisfying. For to identify yourself with a cause in which you believe is not self-sacrifice, but self-expression. You believe in the thing: you want it; and therefore you want to work for it. This may involve sacrifices; but they are sacrifices of things you want less. You would sacrifice more if you sacrificed the cause. Ethical passion, yes; disinterestedness, yes. But sacrifice, no; for that is not at all the root of the matter, and to see it as the root is a deficiency of belief. It is vision that we want, rather than sacrifice—vision that will reduce necessary sacrifices to their right proportions.

But vision, disinterestedness and ethical passion we do need; and Mr. Middleton Murry is abundantly right in urging that Marx had them all. We shall get the ethical passion and the disinterestedness if we get the vision; and we shall get the vision if we will accustom our mind's eye to look squarely at the facts. For we shall see that Capitalism is fast becoming a sheerly impossible system for the conduct of the world's affairs; and we shall see too that the change from Capitalism to a better social system must be a change in ourselves as well as in our environment and in the organisation of society. You cannot get peaceful co-operation between nations which themselves consist of warring units. "The world-state of bourgeois idealism is a dream. Because you cannot overcome individualism as between nations until you have overcome individualism within the nations themselves." That is true, and profound. And it is no less true that, within a nation, individuals cannot replace individualist by collective institutions until at any rate enough of them to take the lead have overcome
individualism within themselves. Only men who think in the terms of the new collective values can build the new collective Society. But this is essentially a call not for sacrifice, but for vision of the new values that correspond to the new era of human co-operation.

Now, the conquest of this vision may come to men of any class, and living at any standard of life. There is no "we" and "they" about it, as far as the vision itself is concerned. And we must beware of leaders who incline to think of their followers as "they" if there is the slightest hint that the distinction between the "we" and the "they" is one of class. Mr. Middleton Murry, I think, has not rid himself wholly of this confusion. He is still a little inclined, quite unconsciously, to visualise his leaders stepping down to the proletariat rather than up out of it. What is true is that real leadership involves putting the cause first, and stepping out of any other devotion of class or idea into that devotion to the cause.

But—to come back to my main point—Mr. Middleton Murry's Communism is more easily defined by what it involves than by what it is. He wants a devoted order of leaders, leading a revolutionary party, and aiming at the realisation, in politics and economics, of the new collective values appropriate to the modern world. He accepts what has been done in Russia as a form, not our form, of this realisation; and it clearly includes the socialisation of industry and the institution of economic equality. These are its objectives; but how are we to work towards them? By making a new Labour Party, or Communist Party—at all events a revolutionary party with objects and methods appropriate to English conditions. Mr. Middleton Murry rules out as inappropriate to these conditions the idea and propaganda of bloody revolution. He insists, rightly, that we must take the English proletariat as it is. But how, and whither, are we to take it?

We have to repudiate religion, and become Marxian materialists. That is to say, we have not merely to drop away from religion:
what is required is the deliberate and positive rejection of religion, *in a religious act*. We have to accept materialism, in the sense of understanding, with Spinoza, that all forces, including spiritual forces, are material. And, in becoming Marxist materialists, we shall get the strength that comes to men who feel that their vision is the vision of what must be, the logical outcome of the material forces that have to be controlled.

This is stiff medicine for the British Labour movement—far stiffer than Mr. Middleton Murry appears to think; for he greatly underestimates the hold which religion still has in this country. But I feel that he is right, because the essential claim of religion is that its values are ultimate and beyond question, so that acceptance of it is bound to clash with acceptance of another set of ultimate values, such as Socialism or Communism involves. Russian Communism has become, if not a religion, still something that leaves no place for religion, because it fills the space in the mind that a religion might fill. And British Socialism, or Communism, will have to fill that space in our minds if it is to change our world. But in Great Britain not even the negative half of the battle against religion has been won. Nor is it likely to be won by anti-religious propaganda, but only by giving people a new faith strong enough to push religion out of their minds.

So the task of building up here a body of disinterested leadership, filled with the ethical passion for the new co-operative order, is even harder than Mr. Middleton Murry supposes. Yet I agree with him that it must be done; and I welcome his book, though there is much in it that repels me, as a contribution towards this end. Mr. Middleton Murry has, for me, too moralising a mind; and he often puts his point in a way that half-alienates my sympathy. But what he has to say is for the most part fundamentally right, and of overmastering importance for this generation of men. And, while his way of saying it is not mine, or for me, that, I know, does not prove it wrong. For England is a profoundly
moralising nation; and it is high time the moralists should be enlisted on the right side. And, while his Marxism is not quite my Marxism, we agree that Marxism is itself the essential basis for the new order.

FRANCES WARFIELD

*Virginibus Puerisque*

My dear little relatives and friends of the youngest generation, please, just for Aunty’s sake, won’t you cut Aunty off your correspondence lists? I’m not feeling very well and I’ve got bills and I can’t bear your letters. I think you’re all grand, but I don’t care to hear from you personally. Every time I pick up a promising envelope addressed by one of your mothers and find nothing inside except ruled stationery decorated with upright pencil marks, it brings on one of my depressions. I gather you are all learning to write. Fine! Bravo! Hurrah! Look, just let me take it for granted. Let me mull along the best I can without a line from any of you in ages. Let me alone.


You, Betty, are “sorry to hear” that I have been sick. Two “r’s” in “sorry.” Besides, your punctuation is faulty and the way to write is not to print but to write. As to your content, take that bit about “We skate on the pavement. We have fun.” Betty, that just isn’t provocative. You say you take dancing lessons every
Saturday, and I ought to see how nice you can dance. Dance, little lady. Dance and nothing else. See what I mean?

Thornton says: “We are all well and fine.” Ho hum, Thornton. Ho hum for your teacher named Miss Clark that you like very much, too. Finally, you say: “I will close now.” Good! Swell! The phrase lacks distinction, though, Thornton—and that goes for Sylvia, Mary Lee, George, and Buddy, and all the rest.

You get the idea, don’t you, darlings? I know it’s hard to find something for you to do on rainy holidays. I know your social consciousness must be built up. But write to Santa Claus and to the Easter Rabbit. Write to the brownies and to Uncle Don. Write to the New York Times. I’ll make out all right. Because, listen, the next cute little youngster who sends me a cute little letter in his own handwriting does so at his own little risk.

GEOFFREY SAINSBURY

The Breach of Cultural Continuity

The first materialism freed truth from the dominion of morality. The second materialism has still to conquer morality in the name of truth. At the end of the last century the materialist historian, Brooks Adams, wrote:

The value of history lies not in the multitude of facts collected, but in their relation to each other, and in this respect an author can have no larger responsibility than any other scientific observer. If the sequence of events seems to indicate a law governing social development, such a law may be suggested, but to approve or disapprove of it would be as futile as to discuss the moral bearings of gravitation.

In these words, prefaced to The Law of Civilization and Decay, he exorcised moral judgments. He was quite right to do so, for
what chance had facts to be recognised if all unpleasant ones were to be disqualified by the prevailing values? But having ruled out values for the sake of truth, man then realised that he missed them. And this has led to the attempt to rediscover them. But how could the scientist find values in the world he was observing—had he not precisely ruled them out? Was it not inevitable that he should turn rather shamefacedly to the priests wondering after all whether it was not in their keeping that was the light he sought?

What materialism has now to realise is that its former banishment of values was a formal act whose real effective purpose was to rule out certain moral, religious, even aesthetic preconceptions which were not in harmony with facts. Obviously, the materialist could not start by ruling out these particular prejudices alone. That would have been denounced, and not without justice, as unfair. He had to rule them all out, or at least, all he could. But this assumption of a non-moral, non-beautiful world has tacitly been taken as itself constituting evidence that the world of common reality was neither moral nor beautiful. It is as though legal procedure, which insists that an accused person must be assumed innocent, was then taken as evidence of it. Brooks Adams' proviso that history was no more moral than gravity was a proper piece of legal procedure necessary to the opening stages of an inquiry. No more than that. And now that it has done its work (and unfortunately a good deal more than its work) it is time it was repealed. Personally, I should have no hesitation in discussing the moral bearings of gravitation if only I knew what to say about them.

If we wish to use the word value at all we must give it universal validity. It must be applicable to the whole range of experience. What value, you ask, can a rock have? The answer is, the value
it naturally has and has always had, until it has been deprived of value *by definition*.

The heathen in his blindness
Bows down to wood and stone.

Perhaps not so blind after all. It is true we know a thing or two he doesn’t, and can do lots of things he can’t, but when he looks out on the world he sees one world, a world *one with himself*, and in that respect he is philosophically sane, and not half so blind as some people of our latitudes. They see a world of fact and a world of value, and are anxious to know the relation of one world to the other. The relation is very simple: it is called *identity*.

What value can a rock have? For answer I will quote a little passage from a British Museum guide book, *An Introduction to the Study of Rocks*:

In terrestrial circumstances neither a perfect glass nor a perfect crystal can long retain its perfection. It may be suddenly strained and broken by reason of earth-movements or slowly ground down by tidal action on a sea-shore: it may be corroded by vapours or liquids. Again, long ages after the formation and the breakage of a crystal, a mere fragment may once more find itself in favourable conditions for growth; it may then repair its broken surfaces and take again the outer form of a perfect crystal.

This little handbook is most sober, orderly and scientific, but there is something about its author’s language which makes me think that he liked minerals, even loved them. Was he touched by their vicissitudes, their infinite long-suffering, their perpetual desire to grow? Romanticism. Well, why not? I shall never be tired of quoting Otto Weininger’s dictum: *Man is important inasmuch as things are important to him*. That is the best touchstone of human nature I know of. This passage makes no ‘appeal’; it does not apostrophise or exhort. It is just surren-
dered to the intrinsic nobility of things. Speaking of rocks as though they were important, it has itself something important to say. Indeed, it is one of the triumphs of the human mind that it has turned to rocks and shown them to be seething with movement, causation, destruction, regeneration. Here is nature, but no longer exploited, as in the lyric, as an anodyne to human suffering. And is she after all so cold? Cold, indeed, to those who go to her for comfort, but warm enough to those who go to her to understand her and accept her. He who finds nature ‘valuable’ is himself a man of value in the natural world. Man is important inasmuch as things are important to him.

It should be one of the elementary rules of thought that a hiatus in the scheme of things must not be postulated, unless it can be demonstrated. It is this assumption of continuity which the materialist has in common with that heathen in the hymn. The latter sees his environment, and thinks it must be like himself. He sees human powers everywhere, and seeks in human wise to propitiate or coerce them. The materialist looks at man and thinks he must be like the world. Probing, dissecting, he finds in human beings energies and structures such as he has learnt to recognise elsewhere. But beyond the basic assumption of a single world there is very little in common between these two. The difference in angle of approach is crucial, leading to very different results. If we call these different results just different aspects of a single truth, we imply that we can veer from one standpoint to the other, and so synthesise a true picture of the whole. That is quite impossible. It is tried again and again; but the two pictures superimposed make no picture at all—merely a blur—and no honesty of purpose is proof against confusion of mind. But with science on the one hand and culture on the other we have got the two pictures superimposed. That is why I am asking that we should break with the cultural tradition.
If we turn to the architecture of the present day in England, we see at once that it is experiencing all the *malaise* of revolutionary change. That *malaise* is the expression of a struggle between the architect, the individual, the man of culture, and the building itself, its possibilities, its requirements, its own inherent laws. It is a struggle between a cultural tradition and a mass technique. It is true the young architect is given instruction in strength of materials, sanitary requirements, and so on, but he comes to his subject more as an artist than an engineer, and he is grounded above all in the history of architecture. His ideal is not service but genius, the subordination of matter to the expression of the human spirit. Against him stands building, structure, resisting his authority, wanting to fulfil certain functional needs—above all, non-historical, resting on natural law, seeking no mandate from the realm of taste. If we analyse some completely utilitarian factory, that analysis takes us not back into history but down into physics, not back to Renaissance, Gothic, Roman, Greek, but to triangles of forces, stresses and strains, limits of elasticity, factors of safety.

But is not science, too, a historical process? Yes, in a sense it is. But it derives no authority from history. We delve down to Newton’s laws, not back to Newton. Science has grown in history, but as it stands it is in itself essentially non-historical. Similarly it has been made by men, but it is in itself essentially anonymous. Ohm’s law does not belong to Ohm; it is the property of every electrician. A great scientist may, it is true, exert a personal authority, but that personal authority is not science and may even be an obstacle to science, though science will undermine it sooner or later. The scientific world has also its fashions and snobberies, but in the long run science will subdue them too. If it failed to do so it would cease to be science and become a cult.
A naval constructor once told me that no man could design a battleship, as its complexity far transcends the capacities of the sharpest mind. A battleship, or so he said, was always planned by modification of some previous plan. If this is the case it is an excellent example of how mass technique is ousting individualism. A battleship’s beauty is no longer the expression of genius, or if it is, it is the genius of humanity, not the genius of a man. The warship is the product of evolutionary forces, and I shall perhaps be told that evolution is only another word for history, and that my example has brought us back to tradition. But it is not tradition which provides its justification, its value. Its justification is utilitarian, functional, competitive. If a type proves unsuccessful or less successful than a rival type, tradition shall not save it. This descent to an anonymous, non-historical technology has not yet been effected in architecture. The architect is still the presiding genius. He is given a technical job to do, but instead of surrendering himself to the job he seeks to stamp his personality all over it. He wants the building, his building to win a place, to win him a place, in the history of culture. So he hides all utilitarianism beneath what wealth of cultural ornament his client can afford.

Another last flicker of individualism is burning itself out in the arts and crafts—the desire that everything should be made by hand, that the hand should leave its mark on the thing it touches, and through the hand the individual mind. With this attitude modernity can make no compromise. It must stoutly affirm that things are the more beautiful the less they are stamped with the workman’s imprint. At our present stage, things will only suffer degradation by being submitted to the dictatorship of the artist. They will be lovely, more lovely than they are now, when once the artist submits to the dictatorship of things.
Not only the artist. The politician, too, must submerge his mind beneath the rising flood of mass technology. I should vote for the party which promised to replan and rebuild London—providing, of course, there was any chance of believing them and believing they would do it properly. Or any other enterprise of similar magnitude would do. The carrying out of any gigantic undertaking would, in itself, be the solution of some political problems, and would involve the solution of many others, if not all. The war very nearly socialised the distribution of food in this country. But, I shall be answered, that was not socialism, but state-capitalism. That's just the point I am getting at. Socialism, state-socialism, state-capitalism, communism, fascism—these are all words which belong more or less to what may fairly be called the cultural tradition in politics. If one calls oneself a materialist one really needs no further label. The materialist attitude is to think of the job and argue backwards from the job to the people who must do it, and from that again to how they shall live. What we want in politics is the engineer's attitude: it works or it does not work. Capitalism has worked, that is its justification; it has ceased to work properly, that is its condemnation. If only people could be brought to say this without being already hopelessly tied up with personal or semi-personal alliances and antagonisms, we could perhaps get straight to the job—and do it.

The dictatorship of things. We have here a more fundamental version of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Certainly as a materialist it is impossible for me to see the future in terms of a class war, though I am ready to admit that a class war might incidentally be involved. Mr. Murry asks the rich man to get ready to sacrifice his economic privilege. I do not deny the necessity for that sacrifice, but what I am asking now is that the cultured man shall sacrifice his culture, and even the politician his
politics. If we are to keep the word culture we must come down to the meaning it has in ‘cultural’ anthropology, in which a chipped stone or a piece of iron is a ‘cultural’ object. Indeed I ask only a little more than that we should take an anthropological view of the present day. Anthropology is untainted by sneers at utilitarianism. The first seed that was planted, the first rough shelter built, the first wild animal that was domesticated, the first tool that was made—these are the basic facts of the anthropological notion of civilisation: they may equally be respected as fundamental facts or idealised as romantic conquests or creations.

But, economic or cultural, a sacrifice is there. There is, however, a difference which cannot be slurred over in the nature of the sacrifice we ask. Some time ago I wrote:

What England in her crisis needs to-day is a generation who would scorn to save their souls until the traffic can move properly along Oxford Street.

To which Mr. Murry answers: “The traffic will never move properly along Oxford Street until the Englishman saves his soul.” Mr. Murry wants sacrifice to begin with. He is afraid that unless we face up to sacrifice at the outset we shall somehow manage to shirk it altogether. I admit the argument. Nevertheless, I want first of all the thing for which the sacrifice is to be made. For I am afraid that if there is no aim in view men will justly say “Your sacrifice is only another ritual.” Must we, however, make a definite choice between these two alternatives? Perhaps not. There are often alternative approaches to truth or duty, and it may be that some can make the sacrifice for the sake of what they desire to create, while others make it unconscious of where it will lead them, and then having made it discover their goal.

The question, however, cannot be disposed of so lightly as
that, for these two approaches illustrate the very point we have set out to discuss. The first is materialistic in nature, the second cultural. The materialistic version of sacrifice has been demonstrated again and again in the history of modern thought. First astronomy demanded that man should surrender the privileged position his earth held in the heavens. Despite his reluctance this demand was enforced; man made the sacrifice imposed upon him. Then came the much more drastic demand formulated by the evolutionists—man was to surrender his own privileged position in the animal world. Again he did not want to, but he had to. About the same time Maine’s Ancient Law deprived man of the sacredness of his legal institutions. In our day the physiologists have even questioned the autonomy of a man’s own mind and have asked him to surrender his precious consciousness.

In this sacrifice there is nothing sacramental, no beatitude. There have, of course, been the fervid ones to whom each advance in knowledge was a triumph. But those triumphs were not merely a victory of man’s intellect; they were in perhaps still greater degree a victory of man’s environment, its triumph over man. And those who to-day are asking that man should be himself the author of his own self-sacrifice are seeking to regain some of that autonomy of mind which materialism has denied and will deny still more. They hold still to the cultural tradition. The sacrifice they ask is essentially religious. It is prompted by ecstasy.

But ecstasy is clumsy in the presence of things. It is even dangerous in the presence of machinery. We do not ask that our busmen should drive ecstatically. That may sound merely a quip, but it is rather more than that. A little time ago I said:

It would not be too much to say that the fact that man now lives in close contact with the motor car rather than with the horse has more general significance for him, practically, ethically, aesthetically, than all that the physicists have so far discovered in this century.
I am sure there are many who must think it merely empty rhetoric to speak of a car as ethically significant, but it is not. It is of enormous significance that in a man's hand is a lever where formerly he held a whip. The whip is the emblem of a personal ascendancy of will, and within limits the more savage and imperious that will the greater will be the output in actual haulage. But the lever belongs not so much to man as to the machine of which it forms a part. If it places certain powers in his hands it none the less confines them to certain possibilities. It gives control, but at the same time limits that control. A brutal, frenzied driver will get less out of his car than another who is more controlled. 'Controlled' by what? By the laws, needs, possibilities of that which he is controlling.

Man has always used things, and it may be asked whether there is anything very modern in this situation. Indeed there is. Man develops slowly, and so long as his environment develops slowly, too, he may roughly be said to be master of his world. There have been times, and after all they can be called normal times, when a man's environment changed little in his lifetime. Of course, he had to handle things, but not in any great degree, to learn from them. He was taught to handle them by his parents, so that knowledge of them was bound up with parental authority and the cultural tradition. But nowadays man's environment is changing with increasing rapidity, and the possibilities of change are increasing more rapidly still. It is not man himself, the inward man, who is primarily responsible for the future course of civilisation, but his environment including his works. To maintain himself at all he will have to place himself under their protection. So parental authority is being undermined, and the threads of cultural continuity are snapping one by one. What is he to do? The alternative seems obvious. He might destroy that environment before it finally engulfs him, returning almost completely
to some primitive barbarism (a small step back is hardly conceivable, a smash of any kind would send him right back). Or on the other hand he might let snap those threads, or even deliberately sever them. Merely to state plainly this alternative disposes of it. There is no question of going back, at least, not voluntarily. There is really only one choice before us, and that is between going forward reluctantly and going forward with good will—plunging into the world of common fact and function, and ready to call it good.

Do I talk as though humanity hardly counted? Do I picture a world where “only man is vile,” to quote again that hymn which seems to haunt me? Perhaps I do present my case with some exaggeration. I am not, however, suggesting that man should exterminate himself for the benefit of things. What I am suggesting is that mankind should forget itself for once and turn its gaze outwards, on to its world. People cry out for humanity to pull together. Perhaps it might if it could find some common objective which lay outside itself. Self-forgetfulness lies at the source of all creation.

Creation seems a strong word to use of an age which has been described as being largely a victory of man’s environment over man. It is a strong word and cannot stand without qualification. I have already maintained that there is in science, even in the most precise of sciences, an element, call it an aesthetic element, an anthropomorphic element, an element of faith, at any rate, a non-rational element. Sooner or later the point comes when the scientist must make a choice and make it with no other implement than his scientific ‘instinct.’ It may be in his initial conceptions, it may be in the direction in which he turns his eye, it may be in the manner in which he looks at the material chosen, it may be in the theory which he finally formulates. He can never
wholly escape the employment of his instinct. He can, of course, *assume* he does, but that assumption is itself more than half instinctive and not with the best instinct at that. This admission of instinct may seem to refute all that I have been maintaining, but that is not the case. When I speak of instinct I am not speaking of a non-materialistic element. To the materialist instinct is just as materialistic as anything else. We cannot go deeply into this question here, but instinct might provisionally be taken as the biological counterpart of physical inertia—the ‘instinct’ of a physical body to go its own way.

This reaffirmation of instinct includes a reaffirmation of religious, moral and aesthetic values. What we need to break away from is a traditional *formulation* of values, culture. We must believe that in the end all values belong to nature. If we accept the rule of natural forces ungrudgingly we shall find again truth, beauty and goodness. It is the old, old story. If we want to save anything we must be ready to sacrifice all. If science kills art, then it is more robust than art. And if it is more robust than art it is only right and proper that the weaker should perish. If the artist can only say that, then he is immediately saved, for he then throws himself on the side of what is most vital, most creative, and so becomes again a creative force himself. Nor must he enter into this new state stipulating that he will come only if he is made a leader. If he is really an artist he will be a leader. People ask whether there is ‘room’ for art in the modern world. An absurd question, when viewed in this light. Those who lead us into the future, who help to give that future form and substance, they will be called, and rightly, the artists of the new world.

I want the artist: I want him at my side. This brings us face to face with a question which we have so far been skirting. Why do
I so particularly want him? Because I know instinctively that my appeal is more likely to be understood by a few bold spirits among artists than by practical men. If I make a creed of engineering I ought at least to be sure of the engineer's support. But I cannot feel sure of it; in fact, I feel fairly sure that, in the first place at least, it will be withheld. If I take my case to him how shall I be received? More important still where shall I be received? In a 'well-appointed residence,' built on the model of a manor house, with all the usual gables, oak beams, lattice windows—at best aristocratic rusticity. And if, while the port is being passed, I discourse on the beauties of steel and sing the praise of cantilevers, I shall be regarded as the particularly boring bore, the man who talks shop out of season.

It is the same on the religious side. I should be dishonest if I did not frankly admit that I have never had much confidence in the atheism of those who had not previously been Christians. So here I am back again in the paths of culture seeking the allegiance of those who stand in the cultural tradition. Are we then to teach Christianity just to make good atheists; are we to teach literature, music, and painting just to make good engineers? Those are questions which I really cannot answer. All I know is that materialism as a personal belief is only valuable, only solid, in those who have approached it through culture. There is, of course that other materialism, the materialism of things themselves—but I am not so quixotic that I can preach a sermon to things. All I can do is to preach to men, asking them not to obstruct things, but to accept them as intrinsically valuable. The preacher is perhaps himself a 'cultural' object; but my creed stands even if it makes a fool of me.

These latter considerations are not mere philosophic subtleties, included just to show a cultural awareness. They teach a very
definite and very important lesson which is that nothing would be more intolerable than any doctrinaire repudiation of culture. If such a movement were once afoot it would soon become a snobbery, however conscientiously it had been initiated. But with all reservations made we come back to our thesis—the breach of cultural continuity. It still holds good, even if it has already in its first presentation suffered one or two reverses, and so pronounces its verdict on historical culture in a somewhat quieter voice than when it began. Let the cultured ones pursue their culture *creatively* to its end, that end where I desire to meet them. The road which leads anywhere in thought, invariably leads through it. Those who do not come out are those who dig themselves in. We shall never destroy values by denouncing valuations. If we lose the old faith we shall find a new sincerity, and that sincerity will be nothing less than the materialistic version of religious faith. If we let go of the old morality we shall find ourselves free to undertake new obligations, and if we fulfil them we shall be moral yet. If we lose the priest from the pulpit we shall find him again at some odd corner with his collar reversed; if we lose the artist from the studio we shall find him again in the factory. We must not want things both ways, but must trust to the compensations of nature. If we have no longer the faith to move mountains, we have the technique to move them if we will.

ROBERT MELVILLE

*Proletarian Fantasia*

> In a long narrow street, between tall tenement buildings, a multitude searches its pockets fiercely for cigarettes and matches. Now the street is packed with men smoking. The smoke rises from their cigarettes in long straight lines.
In every tenement women lie dead in childbirth. Beside each woman lies a babe crying itself black.

A few men who are not smoking are playing on brass instruments. When they pause for breath the street is full of heads listening for the thin wailing which creeps from every house and increases in volume as the echoes of revolutionary music fade away. As each man discovers for himself that every tenement contributes its full quota of mournful messages he draws madly at his cigarette or lights another with erratic gestures, and the ascending lines of smoke grow to thick rich plumes.

One man snatches crazily at a trumpet, and, crunching the mouthpiece between his teeth, amplifies the noises of a convulsion. All the others turn to stare at him with cold disapproval. A neighbour says: "There must be discipline, comrade."
The trumpet is forced from his hands. Someone lights a cigarette and presses it against the clenched teeth.

"Discipline, comrade," breathes a mouth close to his ear.

"THEY CANNOT LAST MUCH LONGER."
The band begins to play the International. The men take the cigarettes from their lips. They stand rigid, caught in a strange ecstasy. The man who snatched the trumpet is sitting in the road, crying. Two others bring him to his feet and hold him under the armpits to keep him from falling. "Discipline, comrade," they murmur.

The women lie rigid and frowning in death, as if straining to hear the cries of their children. All the heads have become strong and violent.

Suddenly the men are singing the International. The noise is deafening.

All the turnings off the street are blocked by hearses and funeral carriages. They have even been backed on to the footpaths. The gaps are stopped with a shabby army of unemployed waiting for jobs as bearers.
Two men carrying a banner move among the unemployed. The banner says: **Death must not impoverish the worker! These men are your comrades!**

Two women move among the unemployed, carrying a banner. The banner says: **Demand safe childbirth for working women! Women of the Proletariat unite!**

Shock troops continually storm the street of standing men.

"**Comrades!**" shouts the representative of a crematorium, "**Comrades!** Give me a hundred bodies to burn, and I will cut the usual rate by 20 per cent! Give me two hundred full grown bodies, and I will burn the same number of sucklings free, gratis and for nothing! Give me..." "**Comrades!**" cries an insurance agent, "**Oh Comrades!** My Company grieves for you. They have sent me to help you..." Megaphones like great black lilies heave up out of the crowd. An undertaker, carrying a long box, tries to force black gloves on to the men's hands. Florists move among the men with weeping flowers.

The men lift their heads and offer their porcelain faces to the sky. A dog stares in at the open door of a tenement.

The band ceases to play. The street is filled with listening heads. The cajolers wait cunningly, slanting their ears to a sales angle to catch the wailing of dying children.

At first there is only silence. (An abortionist is slipping her address into the men's pockets.) Then from a solitary building comes a faint and fitful, pale and puny whining, that ceases only to begin again, fitful and faint.

A man begins to sway. He shouts something with his eyes closed. Hands are clapped over his mouth. But bolteyed salesmen run towards him, gabbling, and the men have to beat them off with black jacks.

The scuffle dissolves, leaving a hard core of silent men. The salesmen are running past posters of enormous faces filled with insane laughter.
The men are alone, except for two of the unemployed, who hold a banner bearing the words: Say it with flowers. The last wail is drawn discreetly into the silence of death: is not heard. The street is as still as death.

Now the band plays softly a valedictory tune.

The hearses wait day and night, day and night.

The unemployed are getting bored. They tear the clothes off the women with the banners and seven short screams stumble out of deflowerment. The screams run like children to strong dead faces.

Newspaper sellers enter the street of standing men, calling: "Official organ of the Communist Party!" There is a crisp white blossoming as every man unfolds a Daily Worker.

At night the unemployed drift back to their hovels and the drivers of the hearses light fires in the streets to keep themselves warm. They dream cruelties as they peer through the black smoke of their fires at the ghostly sowers of discord, who do nothing but stand and smoke.

The men stand silently, and the smoke from their cigarettes rises in straight lines to heights which the eye cannot follow, like graphs of inflexible spirits.

A factory siren begins to whine and a red glow appears in the sky.

A few prostitutes sidle into the street and solicit the men. The men are silent. The prostitutes come close, holding up their blurry faces to be kissed; but the men, lengthening their vision, watch the blue smoke out of sight.

The disappointed prostitutes drown the whine of the siren in cackling screams. A policeman stands listening in a neighbouring street. The men smoke. The clamour dies. The siren whines interminably.

The glow in the sky widens then begins to contract.

A Jew penetrates the ring of hearse-drivers' fires and offers to bury every corpse free. His hands endorse a big procession,
bands, unlimited flowers. Yawning, the men strike him with their limber black jacks.

And now it becomes necessary to smoke unceasingly. The end of one cigarette lights another. The band is silent. Every man smokes.

An enormous van comes nosing up to a barrier of hearse, to unload cheap cigarettes.

A bitter wind lashes the street. The men’s clothes press against their lean bodies.

Fat flies crawl on cheap wallpaper and unmade beds.

The wind blows a stench of corpses through the neighbouring streets. People run, holding handkerchiefs to their faces. With the horses rearing and plunging, the hearses are turned and driven away. Only the van remains, plying cigarettes.

The men stand, and one echoes Vanzetti with a tired shout. “This is our career and our triumph!” But it is lost on the wind.

The wind rush out of the city, across mountains and plains and turbulent seas into the forests and wastelands of the world. Vultures, buzzards and crows lift their heads.

On the boundaries of the city the leaves of smoky trees involuntarily reveal their pale backs. Paper is fluttering in the streets.

But the wind subsides. The trees become still, the litter lies quiet on the streets and somewhere, out of sight, a dog barks.

Now a black cloud gathers at the edge of the world and moves, under a lemon sky, towards the city.

It is evening, and the tenements stare with yellow eyes at the smoking, emaciated men.

From a long way off comes the sound of the beating of winds. The sound opens wide like a gigantic yawn, and thousands of black birds are sailing over the men’s heads. The street turns dark and icy cold in the shadow of an upper world beaked and brutal.
Black birds alight on the roof gutters and glare down at the street.
They drop silently from window sill to window sill.
Shadows from the upper air swarm on the street and the men’s faces.
The tenements become factories full of chittering machinery.
And the men stand, grinning hideously and gently with weariness.
In the night the birds fly heavily away, casting slow-moving shadows into the light of street lamps.
Day comes, and the men are smoking desolately. The smoke wavers and blows into their eyes.
The protest is over, and they are garlanded in bitter smoke.
When darkness returns the shining white bones of the skeletons of women cast cold museum light in many rooms, and the smoke of the men’s cigarettes rises serenely. Snow begins to fall.
Now the street is empty, lying quiet under the snow, and the men are sleeping in a dosshouse. The sound of their breathing is, remotely, the whirring of wings and wailing and valedictory songs. Every man holds in his hand a Daily Worker.
An enormous cigarette van lumbers through the night, disturbing the sleepers. They grip their Daily Workers desperately, regaining their peace as the noise fades.
Far away, but coming nearer, is the sound of women’s voices singing the International.

*It’s Dogged as Does It*

It is understood that Mr. W. E. O’Reilly, the British Minister to Venezuela, is leaving Caracas on leave and is likely soon to relinquish his post, which he has held for five years. Mr. O’Reilly has had trouble with the Venezuelan authorities about his dog.
—*Times*, March 14th, 1932.
Shakespeare was consecrated a national saint almost during his lifetime; and the feelings of generations of people have been barely "on this side idolatry." It may reveal itself in different ways: the eighteenth century sacrificed its idol of correctness on his altar; the romantics regarded him as an inspired book of life and would cheerfully have written a series of novels out of the material he put into one character. The modern bibliographical school of critics worships more devoutly than any: the authenticity of the least word he wrote is thought worthy of minute study. His supremacy remains justly unquestioned. Ben Jonson's saying that he was for all time remains still true, as hosts of scholars, actors, critics are there to witness, to say nothing of a whole army of silent readers. He has become a national institution; his works, like the Bible, have passed out of the hands of the scholarly few and are the common heritage of all. There is no reason in one sense why that dictum of Jonson's should not remain valid: we have by no means drained the last drops of goodness out of Shakespeare and future generations will not exhaust his possibilities.

Yet this saying has a limitation. Future ages will no doubt read Shakespeare with equal pleasure, but they can no longer profitably try to follow him in literary expression. If Shakespeare were to be transplanted into modern life, the result would be disastrous and pitiful: the notion that Shakespeare was an accident in the Elizabethan age, to be uprooted at will, is absurd. He is of the earth, bound down like everyone else by environment. People ask why another Shakespeare is an apparent impossibility. The answer is, because Shakespeare died in 1616: three centuries make an enormous difference to environment, enough difference to make another Shakespeare an impossibility. Surely we are wasting our time looking for one! We do not need another; we have decided that the one we have will suffice us till the end of time. What we do want, is something new, something equally great, in a form of expression that will suit this modern world: but we shall never get it while we spend our time looking for a new Shakespeare and following dutifully in the footsteps of the old one.
The vital differences between the two ages are signified in such vague words as individualism and socialism, nationalism and internationalism. The Elizabethan age was the hey-day of the individual. To us the fulsome compliment and inapplicable allegory that the Elizabethans used in talking of their queen are absurdities. But to the Elizabethan the compliment had some meaning. Elizabeth was England in a very real sense. She and Philip of Spain and other contemporary monarchs attained to real arbitrary individual power: the destiny of nations lay in their hands; it was the great individuals of the realm who served the queen, in a world where the hope of distant fabulous wealth was a continual encouragement to individual enterprise. No body of men, no pressure from a social class, could turn Elizabeth from her individual decision. It was only after her death, when greatness of personality seems to have died out for a space, that men realised that the abstract idea was a force equally powerful; and banding themselves under the name of liberty or religion they curbed for ever the powers of the sovereign. To-day a statesman has his hands tied behind him, not only by countless men and institutions, but the complexity of the machine he claims to manage.

The conception of the individual is at the root of Shakespearean tragedy. The Renaissance attitude is simply "What a piece of work is man! How infinite in faculties!" The men of his tragedies contain in themselves all the possibilities of the age: within the compass of their minds moves a whole world of thought. The breakdown of drama after the disappearance of the Elizabethan age was inevitable; it descended into a mawkish sentimentality or satiric drama of manners, from which it has never recovered. The long dismal history of English drama is not of importance here; the absurd thing is that we are still attempting to write drama in forms which were evolved for totally different societies and were worn-out generations ago; we are still attempting to symbolise in individual characters modern far-reaching social ideas which cannot be expressed in so restricted an atmosphere. Consequently modern dramatists have failed to express the complexity of civilisation: those who do attempt to embody a social theory on the stage, either simplify the idea beyond recognition or produce an economic treatise instead of a play. The mood common to the great majority of modern plays is destructive and cynical: but most intelligent people know that modern life is corrupt to the heart, and wish to
see signs of energy and enthusiasm in putting it right. The most living feeling of modern life, the young new fresh faith of people who welcome gladly the opening of a truly social age, is almost without artistic expression.

The only community in Western civilisation which at the moment inspires great enthusiasm is Russia. This country is young and full of faith in itself: it knows what it wants and is determined to get it: it is naturally anathema to the apathetic old. The Russians have seen that the individual is only going to be of use to this world if he will work in or through a community, an idea no less exciting to them for entailing sacrifice. They are not afraid. But pitiful shrieks of apprehension go up from those whose idea of beauty consists of thatched roofs and muddy lanes and who are thus appalled at the suggestion of a mechanised world. Russian films, on the other hand, show that where machinery is gladly accepted as a further power over environment it has a new and expressive beauty of its own. In Russian films there is a real sign of artistic greatness, which one would expect; for, like Shakespeare, they draw vital strength from the idealism of their time. In choosing the film as the medium of this new art, the Russians have done wisely: for it is obvious that the film is the right means of expressing social idealism. It solves the problem of suggesting a vast background, which has so much exercised the minds of dramatists. It solves the problem of linking the individual actor with the symbolic scheme of the film-maker. By means of photographic art the individual actor can be linked to other inanimate symbols such as landscape and machinery: he can be filled with the whole idea of the film and yet not obtrude his personality between the audience and the film-maker. The human individualistic touch is almost inevitable on the stage and is apt to frustrate the full expression of ideas of wide social importance. Thirdly the film has a new and particular beauty of its own: if film-makers will keep away from second-hand imitations of the stage. The advent of the talkies was mainly responsible for trashy imitations of the stage, and attempts to mix the two arts have been only too frequent. There is even a tendency on the stage at the moment to imitate the films: the panoramic background has an irresistible fascination for dramatists and causes them to chop their plays into numbers of little scenes and make the cast almost as big as the audience. But the attempt is doomed to failure: the revolving stage will never turn round as fast as the projector. That the
film and the stage are entirely different ought to be more widely recognised; it is still sometimes supposed that the film is but a debased version of stage-craft useful for suburbs and provincial towns: and the stage has such a creditable list of literary ancestors, that it may be a long time before it is accepted that the film is really the most suitable medium for the future.

An excellent example of the great qualities of Russian film-work, is "Earth." To see it was not merely to be delighted with the beauty of photography and with magnificent acting, but to be inspired with a quite new enthusiasm. That the Russian films are part of their propagandist schemes, is no argument against them: it is because the actors and the film-maker give the impression of being vitally concerned with a great national movement that such a film towers above all the aimless depression and grumbling satire of modern drama. This spirit of faith has succeeded in welding into harmony age-old conceptions of earth and man, and new ideals of social law. The primeval bond between earth and man is vitally expressed in the far-seeing glance of the farmer over his cornfields, and in the acceptance of death as part of the continual process of transformation, in the soil: the old man lying down amid the fruits of the harvest, with a sense of fulfilment, and Vassily going to his grave with the flowers and leaves brushing his face as he passes. Nor is the bond broken by the innovation of communal farming: machinery is only a new link between men and the soil. The actors keep the balance between the idea and the human appeal: pathos is never emphasised so much that our pity chokes all other emotion. There is humour in this film, sprung from an age-old harmony with the earth: no satire, no wit, no bitterness, but joie de vivre, symbolised in Vassily's dance in the moonlight. There is spirit, a gusto, a great happiness in it. Nor is this enjoyment founded on ignorance: it faces and transforms the tragic side of life: Vassily is shot down in the white dust of the road, at the height of his joy. But sacrifice is transformed into nobility: it does not remain a mere slaughter to appease imaginary gods of honour and patriotism.

The Russian film has a message that modern youth wants desperately to hear: it is idealistic, energetic, as youth always is, and if it mingle a large share of common-sense with its idealism, who will blame it? Young people to-day are willing to sacrifice themselves, to give health, wealth and even life itself, if necessary: but they first
A Descent to Realities

It seems to me that the debate on Mr. Murry's essay, "The Isolation of Russia," would be more valuable if the realities of the present situation were properly explained. Both Mr. Boothroyd and Mr. Strachey approached those realities but did not quite reach them.

First, with reference to the Communist Party itself. I judge from the fact of Mr. Boothroyd's essay that there are two types of English Communist: the intellectual successors to Marx (as exemplified by Mr. Boothroyd) and the working-class Communist, with whom I am well-acquainted, who sees perfectly clearly by reason of his own poverty and the poverty of his fellows in contrast with the wealth of others, that the economic system is wrong; and that, since those who have wealth have power and will not peacefully relinquish their supreme position in capitalistic society, the only course left is to overthrow the present system, if need be by forcible and bloody revolution. The activities of this type of Communist can be seen behind the Glasgow, Manchester and London demonstrations and the seamen's demonstrations in all the ports.

Secondly, Mr. Murry is mistaken if he believes that the British working man any longer sets supreme store by "the sovereignty of the human personality." During and since the war he has discovered that his political and economic situation has resulted in a pure travesty of personal liberty, and he is sensible of the fact that only in real liberty, of the theoretically British kind, can the sovereignty of the human personality exist. There are many working men saying to-day (nor do I mean the avowed Communist), as they have said to me, "Let the state take over everything, and do away with money and make me work as it thinks fit. If it'll keep me and the family—all right, I'll not
object to Communism. What's the use of this freedom they talk about, with the cupboard empty at home and no way of filling it?"

There is a broad psychological change taking place in the attitude to liberty of the working man and it is an important factor in any consideration of England’s political future.

Thirdly, the British working man is becoming more international, less insular and local, in his attitude to present-day affairs. Imagine Tyneside, with its shipbuilding industry almost killed by the reduction of armaments. It was always, for practical reasons, a militant area. “Build battleships and let’s be ready for war!” was the cry. There are men to-day, who have themselves been paid off from the Elswick yards by the loss of Admiralty contracts, who are looking farther ahead and are saying, “Building battleships may be all right for us but they’ll just put our kids in the same hole we are in now. Let’s stand the racket and find a proper remedy.” There is still the multitude which cries for battleships but the body of opinion against them is very surely increasing.

It seems therefore, that to accept the proletariat as fundamentally unchanged is a mistake. Actually at the present moment there is no strong support for Communism in England, but the working class is reacting in its attitude against the existing state. The recent election spells nothing. The swing of the pendulum in favour of the National Government was due to the fact that the Labour Party had given no evidence of a method in its belated return to the offer of “Socialism in our time,” that the working class felt itself deserted by its leaders, and that all it could ask for was “stability”—a magic word which won it away from its sympathies.

The changing attitude of the working man to existing society might well develop into the negation of the existing state, but he will demand a new method of revolution more suited to his needs. Unlike the Russian, he has no land to supply him with the necessary food, and he believes that any dislocation of Britain by a revolution would result only in his own death. England, above all nations, depends for its life upon the workability of its economic system. The working man knows it; that is the reason he has shown so remarkable a faith in “gradual improvement by constitutional means.” The change in attitude is therefore important, and particularly since the advent of the National Government, when it learned that cabinets could be un-
constitutional, that the House of Commons could suit the “mandate” to Party demands, and that his magic vote really stood for very little in the government of the country.

THOMAS R. LITTLE

The Celtic Psyche

WHEN I read A. E.’s new book, Song and its Fountains (Macmillan, 5s.), it afflicted me with an acute nostalgia, as for a certain old garden, far away in a secluded and lovely river-valley in Ireland; a garden in which as a child I had spent long summer days, days in which there was as yet for me no distinction between the temporal and the eternal, when the world was first unfolding itself to my senses—an enchantment of sun in the green branches, and of bees and butterflies and sweet-smelling stocks and little avenues of bushes laden with raspberries. And all these were aglow in my imagination with a rich reality that yet seemed no more than a bright veil, thinly concealing that other world of which I had heard so much that I think I should not have been greatly alarmed had I suddenly found walking by my side some gay winged creature, angel or fairy.

Alas for those happiest of days and for that old garden! They were days of innocence, and maybe of wisdom beyond any I have known since or shall know again. But they were not to endure. Soon for me, as for most mortals, the world beyond the garden allured, and the way out was by a gate through which there could be no returning. And when at moments I have looked back, as when reading A.E.’s book I did indeed look back with longing, there, over against the gate I saw the flashing two-edged sword.

But A.E. I think, like many others, perhaps even the majority of my fellow-countrymen, have never forsaken the garden. “I think it was because in that first contact of soul and body I could remember beauty was born, that later in life I accepted ideas, philosophies and causes for the beauty they suggested, and I have always shrunk from any activity in which I could not see that magic thing.” And in a retrospective meditation he “regained memory of the greatest of all wonders in my boyhood, when I lay on the hill of Kilmasheogue and Earth revealed
itself to me as a living being, and rock and clay were made transparent so that I saw lovelier and lordlier beings than I had known before, and was made partner in memory of mighty things, happenings in ages long sunken behind time. Though the walls about the psyche have thickened with age and there are many heavinesses piled about it, I still know that the golden age is all about us and that we can, if we will, dispel that opacity and have vision once more of the ancient Beauty.”

Those immortal, mild, proud shadows, the ancestral gods and heroes of the Gael, of whom Yeats has said that “all we know comes from you, and that you come from Eden on flying feet”—plainly, they still have power in pagan Ireland. They are still the oracles who ordain men’s actions and speak wisdom to their minds. And I am not the only Adelphian who has strayed far into the outer wilderness, but who can feel, in reading those passages, momentarily beglamoured by the old enchantments. Indeed the first of the passages I have quoted explains why it is that, after prolonged study of those “ideas, philosophies and causes” which the Adelphi has lately advocated, I find in myself some reluctance to dedicate such powers as I have to their dissemination. Ethical beauty they have, but in the Celt the nostalgia for the old enchantments remains. And this troubles me because I had begun to think it might be my lot to be to my countrymen the evangel of the new gospel.

I surmise their reluctances from my own. When I talk to one of them, though he may be a scholar learned in philosophy, and able to instruct me on the Hegelian dialectic, he has but the coldest academic interest in Marx, and the implications of historical materialism do not move him. He seems convinced that his destiny is not to be discovered by patient questioning of objective reality, which appears to him no reality at all, but merely the illusory shadow of the real world of psyche. If he is driven to political action, it is not by economic necessity—that dull task-master of the Saxon’s earth-bound spirit—but by Vision: the vision of poet or seer who, in a tempest of beautiful impassioned words, out of some “Mount of Transfiguration” speaks to him with the voice of the ancestral daemons.

And so—well—Eamon de Valera is President! Those who would understand how such odd phenomenon can happen, will find the explanation implicit in every page of this new book by A.E.

JOHN W. COULTER


Pacificism and Propaganda

In the last few years we have had a number of books and films purporting to show us the horror and vileness of war. As for the horror they have most certainly succeeded. But I very much doubt whether anybody has ever seriously doubted the horror of war. To say that because it is terrible it is therefore vile is typical of a kind of dishonest reasoning only too common in political thought. Tradition tells us that war is noble, and, here at least, tradition is right. In neglecting this, most pacifist propaganda has been fruitless. We are shown the most frightful war scenes on the screen, but the puny moral of the story fails to deceive those of honesty and humanity who know and are ready to admit the grandeur of human suffering and sacrifice for cause or duty. And every real artist who depicts war succeeds in showing that grandeur whatever his conscious intentions may have been.

Man is not only a reasonable animal, he is also a daring one. And those who are not touched by the sight of courage are a seedy lot of vilifiers and blackmailers of life. I am absolutely convinced that healthy youth is touched by war films in exactly the opposite direction to what is intended. “See how beastly war is, and you will take care it never comes again,” says the film, and the boy comes out into the daylight seeing only the cheapness of peace.

The first effective pacifist film I have seen is Kameradschaft, and it shows not the horrors of war, but the horrors of peace. In a mine disaster, it shows former enemies uniting in the face of another enemy, coal gas. Warfare is there, but it is not man to man, but man to thing. In this warfare man is instinctively and inevitably on the side of man.

The sea is dangerous, and as a result has inculcated a spirit of international solidarity in the face of danger such as is, I think, unknown elsewhere. At enormous cost, and in defiance of an economic system, a liner will heave to and stand by a fishing smack, or steam two hundred miles off its course to the assistance of the smallest collier—and this regardless of whether it is for Dago, Dutchman, Nigger or Chink (sailors still use a pretty crude ethnology). It may be that ships have sometimes failed in their duties to one another, but I have never heard of a case, and one thing is quite certain, that it would universally be regarded as shameful.

It is to be hoped that Kameradschaft will prove to be typical of a new
type of propaganda based, not on the vilification of war, but on the
sublimation of war—the turning of the martial spirit against those
forces that threaten the future of mankind. Man is beset by difficulties
enough, and the fact that you cannot shoot them down with a rifle does
not mean that war-heroism is not required. It is. It always will be.

G. S.

Voluntary Parenthood

EVERY lover of justice will be grateful to you for publishing Mr.
Claud Mullins’ learned and convincing plea for a rational inquiry
into the law on abortion.

If this subject is approached in the spirit of fair-minded humanity
which pervades Mr. Mullins’ article I think we shall be driven to the
conclusion that there is no case for legal restriction in this matter
except to prevent:

(a) Abortions being carried out by unskilful people.
(b) The exploitation of abortion for monetary gain.

With the spread of contraception knowledge unwilling pregnancies
will be very rare although there will probably always be a small margin
of failure.

When unwilling pregnancies do occur it is not wisest to consider
each case on its merits with regard to the welfare of the woman, and
to the prospects of satisfactory life for the child if one should be born.
And of this matter I think the woman must be the ultimate judge.
Let everything be done to instruct her and persuade her to a right
course, but there is nothing to be gained by invoking the heavy arm
of the law to deny her the option of clinical abortion.

This is the only attitude consistent with the principle of voluntary
parenthood on which so many of us place such great hopes for the
future welfare of the race.

A. CRAIG

Many readers of Mr. Trotter’s Hunterian Oration will be led to comment on the style and if they do, they will probably use words which describe it as a fine literary performance. Comparatively few will notice that though it can justly be described as literary it could also and in the same degree be described as scientific. It is true that the rhythmic element in Mr. Trotter’s writing can hardly be described as science, but on the whole his prose is a forcible illustration of the essential unity of literary and scientific expression. Its scientific merit is not based on knowledge, nor its literary excellence on a sense of ornament; both are based on one thing more than all else, a very careful and conscientious rule of thought. So rare is this quality that Mr. Trotter’s sentences cannot be examined too closely. It is the common thing in science to state one’s case as though a different statement must be false. It is rare for a scientist to be able so to construct his sentences that he *offers* his idea to truth instead of *claiming* truth for his idea. Yet this element, which we might call scientific generosity, is essential to any first-rate philosophic mind. There are people who think there is no place for ethics in scientific technique, but Mr. Trotter’s language would be impossible to anyone who had not first overmastered the powerful instincts of self-display and self-defence. When people see truth clearly it is largely because they are not standing in the way themselves; it is the result of unselfishness of mind.

I cannot go into any further analysis of Mr. Trotter’s writing, as the space available is better filled by quoting an entire passage from the *Commemoration of Great Men*.

“It is unfortunately very much easier to recognise a man’s greatness
after he is dead and when we are freed from the distraction of the actual presence which unhappily tends so often to be odd, angular, and even quarrelsome. It is also an old story that the reception of new ideas tends always to be grudging or hostile. The text is a favourite one, and is apt to become the theme of exhortations which, in addition to having the dreariness of their kind, are pointless because they constitute a frontal attack on an ingrained quality of the mind.

"Apart from the happy few, whose work has already great prestige or lies in fields that are being actively expanded at the moment, discoverers of new truth always find their ideas resisted. The consideration of this process is often obscured by two assumptions: first, it is supposed that the most harmful resistance comes from obvious and noisy prejudice and that the more dangerous resistance of inertia and quasi-rational negation is unimportant; and secondly, it is supposed that workers in science are of course free from any resistive tendency but a rational conservatism. Each of these assumptions is an almost complete delusion.

"The vociferous opposition met with by the ideas of Charles Darwin and of Lister probably did nothing to hinder the spread of these, and probably brought them within reach of a larger number of people capable of accepting them than would have been the case if the opposition had been well behaved. Again it was not noisy prejudice that caused the work of Mendel to lie dead for thirty years, but the sheer inability of contemporary opinion to distinguish between a new idea and nonsense. That this same inability may be shown even by the most eminent workers in science scarcely needs demonstration for anyone at all aware of the history of knowledge, but it may be illustrated by an anecdote which we owe to the third Lord Rayleigh and which is to be found in the delightful *Life* of that very great and wise man. J. J. Waterston was an engineer who interested himself in mathematical physics, and in 1845 wrote a paper on the molecular theory of gases which was ten or fifteen years in advance of his time and anticipated much of the work of physicists no less eminent than Joule, Clausius, and even Clerk Maxwell. The only contemporary judgment on this paper that survives is that of the referee of the Royal Society to whom it was submitted. He said: 'The paper is nothing but nonsense.' What Waterston might have accomplished if he had had the

*Life of Lord Rayleigh.* London, 1924, pp. 169 et seq.
recognition and encouragement upon which this genius seems to have been unusually dependent, is beyond conjecture. He did not get them. His work lay in utter oblivion for forty-five years until it was exhumed by the pious efforts of Rayleigh. He himself lived on disappointed and obscure for many years, and then was overtaken by a yet deeper obscurity, for as the result of some strange accident or a long gathering impulse of despair, he disappeared and left no sign.

"This little story must strike with a chill upon anyone impatient for the advance of knowledge, and especially upon such as are inclined to assume the use of the scientific method to be synonymous with the possession of the scientific mind. Experience fully proves that this assumption is unsound, for there is no limit to the narrowness of the field within which the scientific method may be limited while the rest of the mind is uninfluenced. Even if that assumption is not maintained there are several grounds on which has been defended the proposition that a man of science does well not to traffic very freely with new ideas. It is thought that the necessary concentration on a limited problem is apt to be attenuated by the use of any general intellectual activity. A proposition more worthy of serious attention is that which declares that scepticism and suspended judgment are the very essence of the scientific mind and scarcely to be depended on too much. The conception is no doubt true when its elements are exactly defined. Without such definition these venerable phrases may very easily become mere snares; this is because they are apt to be the expression not of the principles they profess to represent but of far more deeply ingrained and potent impulses.

"The mind delights in a static environment, and if there is any change to be itself the source of it. Change from without, interfering as it must with the sovereignty of the individual, seems in its very essence to be repulsive and an object of fear. A little self-examination tells us pretty easily how deeply rooted in the mind is the fear of the new, and how simple it is when fear is afoot to block the path of the new idea by unbelief and call it scepticism, and by misunderstanding and call it suspended judgment. The only way to the serene sanity which is the scientific mind—but how difficult consistently to follow—is to give to every fresh idea its one intense moment of cool but imaginative attention before venturing to mark it for rejection or suspense, as alas nine times out of ten we must do. In this traffic it is above all necessary not
to be heavy-handed with ideas. It is the function of notions in science to be useful, to be interesting, to be verifiable and to acquire value from any one of these qualities. Scientific notions have little to gain as science from being forced into relation with that formidable abstraction ‘general truth.’ Any such relation is only too apt to discourage the getting rid of the superseded and the absorption of the new which make up the very metabolism of the mind.

G. S.

ORGANIC SYMBOLISM. A lecture by Dr. Georg Groddeck to the British Sexological Society, 18th March, 1932.

In opening his lecture Dr. Groddeck warned his audience that what he was offering was not science but opinions. There is good reason why the rigidity of the sciences should be loosened so as to allow freer play for speculative thought, and accordingly Dr. Groddeck’s attitude and its frank avowal are to be welcomed. Its real value however depends on how those opinions are going to be handled, and the way in which he delivers his views makes it very doubtful whether after all he is not claiming them as science or at least as something tantamount to science, perhaps even as something superior to science. If his warning is an exhortation to caution it is valuable, but if subsequently he throws science overboard, it is questionable whether it has much value or even much meaning. At one point he suggested that what we really knew of fertilization and pregnancy amounted to nothing. “All that the doctors tell us,” he added, “is only talk.” Dr. Groddeck seeks to enlarge our minds; but he does not seem to realise that such a sweeping repudiation is not an enlargement of science, but a constriction of science.

Dr. Groddeck illustrates symbolism by the pupil of the eye. Why is it, he asks, that in all languages the word for this part of the body is cognate with child? The answer is that the child born into the world knows only two things—itself and the part of the mother whence it has come. Thus, when a spoon is brought near it, it will see a hand, and, if a fork, fingers. And Dr. Groddeck insists that this symbolism is an identification not an analogy. The child sees a hand, sees fingers. Coming now to the eye, what does the child see? It sees itself reflected in its mother’s eye. The eye thus symbolises mother. It sees itself in its mother’s womb.
Dr. Groddeck's views are certainly interesting, and he speaks with great sincerity and often with a native wisdom. But he is so involved in his own train of speculation that he raises colossal questions by the way and treats them as though they did not exist. *In what sense* can a child be said to *know itself*? How can a child, that has never seen itself, recognise itself in the mirror of another's eye? If we are going to say that a child is born with knowledge, how are we going to distinguish that knowledge from instinct and even from existence itself? And if we don’t, however roughly, mark it off from other corporal qualities or functions, does the word retain any meaning at all? A child exists. But we have no right whatever to say: therefore a child *knows* that it exists. As a matter of fact a child can be greatly disconcerted by being assured that it does not exist. It is this assumption which Dr. Groddeck makes, and apparently makes tacitly. If we say that it is unscientific, he can of course answer: “Certainly, but it is an opinion.” If he does he brings us to a deadlock. We can only say it is not ours.

G. S.

*ESSAYS IN PERSUASION.* By J. M. Keynes (Macmillan) 10s. 6d. net.

The case of Mr. Keynes is surely a curious one. He presents the strange spectacle of the most generally influential publicist of our time, at least on economic questions, with hardly any effect at all on public action. It is almost as if he had willed not to be effective. Yet if that were so the paradox would not be so startling. Particularly in the realm of economics we are used to the theoretical mind that has no practical advice to offer, which does not even desire to venture into the harder world of facts and forces, where adaptations and concessions are required. But this is not Mr. Keynes' case. There is no one who has a more realistic approach to economics, and it is clear that he desires, as is right he should, to exert an influence on economic policy. Otherwise why should he complain of the little notice that has been taken during the last twelve years of his repeated warnings and advice? Here they are collected in this volume, and he calls them “the croakings of a Cassandra who could never influence the course of events in time.”

There are indeed two problems, but so closely related that they may at bottom be the same. Why is it that the most brilliant and most practical of economists should have failed to exert an appreciable influence upon affairs? Secondly, why is it that the thinker, whose
assumptions quâ economist are the same as those of socialism, should have taken up so negative and unconstructive an attitude towards the socialist movement, an attitude which blights his teaching and, still more, frustrates the full development of his own mind?

To be frank, I, in common with most of my generation, am only on this side idolatry in my admiration of him as an economic technician. In comparison with him we really do not need to take very seriously those economists, who, for the sake of the purity of economic theory, hold aloof from the facts of real life. Let them keep their academic purity, if they are so anxious to preserve it. Mr. Keynes has chosen a different path, and has again and again risked definite pronouncements and even prophecies on public policy and economics.

Page after page of this book reveal the remarkable and perhaps unparalleled degree to which he has been right. Into all the major controversies of the time he has, as he rightly claims, plunged unreservedly—the Treaty of Peace, the War Debts, the Policy of Deflation, and the Return to the Gold Standard. On all these questions he has been right, and if we had followed his advice we might have avoided some of the worst mistakes we have made. As it is, his gloomiest prognostications have been fulfilled; and now that we are in the middle of a temporary breakdown of capitalism, there is a tacit understanding among its defenders not to allow that he has been right all along.

But having been right on so many issues why has he failed to make his point of view prevail? The answer lies in the sphere of politics rather than economics. Anybody reading the Essays in Persuasion will be struck by the extraordinary inferiority of the political sections to the economic ones, and a close student of Mr. Keynes is driven to the view that his political ineffectiveness can only be explained by a profoundly inadequate conception of politics underlying his thought.

His political basis is that of a liberal rationalist, a basis which is completely abortive to any understanding of the realities of modern politics. It assumes that you have only to produce a sufficiently bright and attractive programme for the electorate to respond. As if an ill-informed, amorphous, and for the most part unpolitical electorate could respond to anything of the sort! No wonder Mr. Keynes, after wasting years attempting to revivify the Liberal Party, should have been disappointed in his brave hopes:

Our programme must deal not with the historic issues of
Liberalism, but with those matters—whether or not they have already become party questions—which are of living interest and urgent importance to-day. We must take risks of unpopularity and derision. Then our meetings will draw crowds and our body be infused with strength.

The truth is that the great masses of humanity, with which politics deals, act in accordance with their interests, even if rather blindly and vaguely. The subject-matter of politics is the conflict of these interests, and its task their reconciliation. To ignore the existence of classes in society and their diverging interests is merely to quarrel with one’s subject-matter. This is just what these liberals cannot swallow. Mr. Keynes cannot join the Labour Party because “it is a class party.” Are not all parties class parties? What obtuseness not to recognise the fact, and to see beneath it the all-important questions that must be faced. Since we can only operate in and through some class, which is the class with which the interest of the whole community is most identified? Which is the class that offers most hope of a settled, stable order within the community and, beyond that, most hope of a coherent and pacific world-order?

There is only one answer to these questions, and when Mr. Keynes has found it out, he will never again say of the working class and its political faith:

How can I adopt a creed which, preferring the mud to the fish, exalts the boorish proletariat above the bourgeois and the intelligentsia who, with whatever faults, are the quality in life and surely carry the seeds of all human advancement.

He will then understand why his influence has been no more than intellectual. He will then see that to be effective it does not suffice to offer the choicest tit-bits of economic policy, however well conceived and elegantly presented they may be, but that the first and most essential thing is to establish a right relation to that group-interest through which, and through which alone, a policy may be achieved.

A. L. ROWSE

MORNING AND CLOUD. By E. B. C. Jones (Gollancz) 7s. 6d. net.

There are in English, and probably in all languages, many words which lead automatically to other words. Apart from those phrases which are recognised as such and find their places in the dictionary,
there are other combinations, not yet so commonly used as to be called stock phrases, but which are none the less sufficiently familiar to give the reader an easy passage. Their use creates a sort of verbal legato, which makes for swift sure reading, and so for racy story-telling; but it discourages reflection.

Miss Jones’ writing is just the opposite to this. Not that her sentences are rough: but she is to a remarkable degree conscientious to the meanings of her words. She never lets the sequence take charge. It is a difficult book to quote from as it is written in a very steady, even tone, and has no show passages. But the following description of a Yorkshire scene is typical:

The sides of the ghyll were too steep, or formed of shale too loose for the usual vegetation; they were bare, yellow-grey, dusty and dry, with only the poorest grass and an occasional hummock of heather. There was something individual in this bareness, and something rather frightening, which he could not trace to the solitude and bareness alone. It was as if the ghyll had an atmosphere entirely its own, and not quite independent of humankind. The loneliness of the dale had struck Cedric as perfectly natural; but the atmosphere in this narrow cleft of the moors was frightening in the way that man and man’s works are sometimes frightening: its desolation was that of something deserted, not of somewhere untouched. “Haunted” was too small a word for a place on such a scale; and yet, listening to the faint sound of water running and falling, Cedric felt, not the immense peace of a wide, gracious solitude, as when he had listened to the grasses an hour ago, but a silence like the emptiness of air after a cry.

Miss Jones is quietly caustic and creates an immediate atmosphere of culture. Since she is dealing with cultured people (her heroine is a young painter) that atmosphere is necessary, but sometimes it becomes a little too explicit and one has a slightly uneasy feeling that culture is being exploited. This refers only to a few passages in the book, and in no way spoils it; but Miss Jones should remember that the quality of her writing is such as to supply the cultured atmosphere with a hint. *Morning and Cloud* is a good novel: its people are real and their background vivid. It is a book that one remembers and which leaves a good taste in its wake.
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Kameradschaft is the work of G. W. Pabst, one of the finest film directors in Europe, and deals with a mining disaster in a French mine on the Ruhr frontier, in which German miners come to the rescue of their former enemies. It is based on the Courrières disaster of 1906 when 1,400 French miners lost their lives, but by changing the setting and date Pabst gives it a more urgent significance for the modern world. His theme is the comradeship of all men and the futility of all barriers, and how men only realise it in tragedy and afterwards forget it again. The dialogue is sometimes in French, sometimes in German. English titles have been superimposed which will be of great help to the non-linguist, but they have been added sparingly and discreetly and will not irritate the linguist.

Pabst says himself that his film is to be judged as a work of ethical rather than aesthetic importance, but as with the Soviet directors the urgency of his moral message inspires a real work of art. His technique is of course excellent. For cameraman and architect he had
Fritz Arno Wagner and Ernö Metzner, and their realistic work emphasises and supplements his objective approach. The sound, with its echoing voices, pathetic faltering feet, revolving wheels of an overturned truck, even the two languages, at first sharply opposed and distinct, then, following the story, tending to harmonise and combine, is very moving. There are no false romantics and very little impressionism. In this it resembles Pabst's *Westfront 1918*, and in the fact that the story is worked out between individuals and the mass, the individuals finally uniting and merging in the mass. But here, perhaps for the first time Pabst definitely shifts the balance from the individual to the mass, and emphasises with all the weight he can the contrast between man's natural feeling for comradeship and the barriers which the existing social system erects. It is a testimony of the film's effectiveness that when it was produced in Paris the audience cheered enthusiastically when the German rescuers arrived and booed and hooted when at the end the underground barrier between the French and German mines was replaced. It is also an indication of the part which the cinema is destined to play in the promotion of international understanding.

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