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SOCIAL GROUPS
IN MODERN ENGLAND

No. 73



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SOCIAL GROUPS IN MODERN ENGLAND

by

HENRY A. MESS, B.A., PH.D.



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PREFACE

THE basis of this book is a number of articles which appeared in *The Listener* ; they have been re-written and amplified, and a considerable amount of new matter has been added. The book was in the Press when war broke out ; it was necessary to alter a phrase here and there, and one or two of the illustrations used obviously belong to the uneasy period before the war rather than to the months since war became an actuality. But in no case is the argument affected, nor does the author see reason to modify the qualified optimism of the last chapter.

Professor H. Goitein very kindly advised on the Note appended to the second chapter.

HENRY A. MESS.

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SOCIAL GROUPS IN MODERN ENGLAND

CHAPTER I

MAN IS A SOCIAL ANIMAL

I WONDER whether the reader has stood one day in early summer looking at a rose bush covered with greenfly. And, if so, whether he or she waited a minute before fetching syringe and soapy water, and thought a little about the lives of those scores of tiny creatures feeding so busily. It is always strange and fascinating to watch lives of quite another kind than our own ; these are lives that are different from ours in a thousand ways. And one way in which they are unlike is that they are solitary lives. True, there are a great number of them, and they are living very close together. None the less they are solitary lives. So far as we can tell, there is no awareness of one another as living creatures of their own kind. Another greenfly is just a lump, sometimes getting in the way ; not a brother greenfly with whom to co-operate or to quarrel. We, on the

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other hand, are keenly aware of the existence of others of our kind ; we know that there are creatures like ourselves—loving, hating, rejoicing, grieving, trying with more or less success to get what they want just as we try to get what we want. We can read their thoughts, imperfectly of course ; and we know that they read our thoughts, more or less. We have means of communication with them and they with us ; we love them and we hate them. We help them and we hinder them. We take them into account continually. We are social creatures.

That division between social and solitary runs right through the animal world. If we turned away from our rose bush with its greenfly to look at a beehive or an ants' nest, we should be looking at creatures whose life is social in the extreme. Bees and ants—not all kinds, but the kinds we know best—are intensely aware of their fellows in the hive or in the nest ; their lives are based upon co-operation, upon an elaborate and amazing division of functions. Life is meaningless, impossible to a single bee, a single ant ; the individual which loses its way, and cannot find the hive or nest again, will quickly perish.

And one might run through the whole animal kingdom, classing its members as social or non-social. Beavers are social animals, otters are not ; dogs are social animals, cats are not ; rabbits are more sociable than hares. Of course, the line is not sharp, it is a matter of degree. In any species some

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individuals will be more sociable than others. And in most species emergencies will bring solitary animals into temporary relationships ; they may combine to rear a family, or in face of a common danger. But, roughly speaking, animals may be classed as social or solitary. And man is a social animal. Not one of the most social creatures, not so tied up with his kind as bee or ant. And tied to his fellows in a different way ; not so much by instinct, which works pretty rigidly, but by a mixture of instinct and of reason, which is much more flexible. The social life and the social relationships of ants and of bees do not change very much with changing circumstances or with the passing of centuries. The social life of human beings is continually changing, and changing very much.

It is a different kind of social life, therefore, from that of ant or bee. But it is social life. Men are bound to their fellow men so closely that no human being can be independent of others all his life, and most human beings cannot live out of contact with their fellows for any considerable length of time without suffering and without deteriorating.

In the first place, our earliest days must of necessity be spent with others of our kind. We do not hatch out able to fend for ourselves, as caterpillars do. We are dependent for food and for protection on our parents, and we are dependent upon them for much else. And even when we are sufficiently mature to live alone, so far as physical necessities are

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concerned, we should not be human beings in the fullest sense of the word if we did live out of contact with other human beings. This is not a matter of theory ; it has been demonstrated a good many times. There are, for instance, quite a number of true stories of children who have been brought up by wild animals, and they are always undeveloped mentally, as one might expect, and incapable of normal development. And there is the well-authenticated case of a boy who was found in a wood near Nuremburg in 1828. He was about sixteen years of age when he was found ; it appeared that he had been taken as a baby to a peasant's hut ; he was allowed to grow up in a solitary room ; a man brought him food at intervals, and sometimes cleaned him and changed his clothes. That was the only contact he had had with his fellow men. Now this boy, to whom the name of Caspar Hauser was given, was not a human being in the full sense of the word. He could articulate a few words, but he could not speak any language. And, in spite of later care, he never developed into a normal man. He died early, and when his body was dissected it was found that he had a small brain, not abnormal and not diseased, but just undeveloped. The raw material of humanity had been in him, but the raw material failed to develop into normal humanity, because social life was lacking, and social life is essential to the proper development of man, and to his mental health. We all know that men and

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women who live too much alone get queer. A great deal has been said and written in recent years about the bad effects of solitary confinement on prisoners. Most men and women are unable to endure solitude for any considerable length of time without discomfort and degeneration.

Perhaps it should be added that it is very doubtful also if man is fitted by his nature to live in such huge crowds as he often lives in to-day ; that also is unnatural and a strain upon him.

Primitive man, so far as we can tell, seems to have lived in small groups of perhaps fifty to a hundred individuals. Such a group would consist of persons closely related by blood. It would be a comparatively simple grouping ; a man or woman would have frequent dealings of one kind or another with other members of the horde, and only few and occasional dealings with any one outside of it. Out of such groups have grown, by development, by specialization, by expansion and division, sometimes by amalgamation or by conquest, our complicated modern societies. In these modern societies we are not members of one group, but of many groups : overlapping groups, interlocking groups, sometimes conflicting groups. An Englishman, for instance, is aware of much which he has in common with other Englishmen, and of many differences between himself and members of other nations. Yes ; but there will be respects in which he is closer to some men and some women of other nationalities

than he is to men and women of his own nationality. He may be a professional man and a member of the middle class, in which case his way of life and his outlook will have much in common with those of middle class professional men in France or in Holland, and will be different in many respects from those of a manual worker in this or any other country. Or again, an Englishman who is a Roman Catholic will in some very important respects feel more at home with Polish or Argentine Roman Catholics than with a Protestant Englishman. So it would seem that there is no obvious inclusive group to which we belong. We belong to many groups ; and sometimes and in some respects we may find ourselves in the same camp, whilst at other times and in other respects we may be in different and perhaps opposing camps.

Membership of these groups moulds men and women. You and I would be very different if we had been born into another nation, into another social class, into another religion. And much of the interest of our lives is bound up in our memberships ; we give to the groups our interest and our loyalty ; we care about our nation, about our church, about our social class. How are we influenced, how much do we care ? Which group has the strongest hold on us, sets its mark most clearly on our lives, engages most our affection and our loyalty ? Those are questions which I want the reader to ask himself about himself, and to ask himself about others. It

is one of the main purposes of this book to give some help in answering them.

Let us think together of the social groups to which we belong. There is, first of all, the family; almost all of us belong, or have belonged at some time, to a family. The typical family consists of father, mother, and several children; it is the almost indispensable unit of human society. And next, there is something for which we have not got a convenient name in English; the Germans call it *Grosse Familie*, the Big Family. We know what it is; we say sometimes, "What will the family think?" Or we say, when there is a birth or a death or an engagement, "We must let the family know." It is that wider circle which includes, as well as parents and children, grandparents, and uncles and aunts and cousins, all those who are near relatives by blood or by marriage.

Family is the narrow blood group; there is also that wider blood group which we call race. To what race do you belong? It is possible that you have a yellow skin and slanting eye-slits; if so, accept my very friendly greeting to a Mongol reader. But the odds are that you have a whitish skin and level eye-slits; you belong to one of the Caucasian races. But to which? Ah! that is a very difficult question to answer, and it is very likely that you cannot answer it. Determining race is a tricky matter and needs expert knowledge; and every European nation is of mixed race. Perhaps we had

better leave that question alone for the present, and get on with some easier question. To what nation do you belong ? English ? Welsh ? Scottish ? Irish ? Or perhaps to some foreign nation ?

Another question—of what State are you a citizen ? This is by no means the same question as the last : nationality and citizenship do not always coincide. Englishmen and Scots belong to different nations ; but they are citizens of the same State, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. On the other hand, an Irishman may be a citizen of Eire ; or he may live in Northern Ireland, outside the borders of that State.

By the way, what country do you live in ? That seems an absurdly easy question to answer. But it is by no means easy to find a definition of a country. Is Ireland one country or two countries ?

Well, you may say—rather impatiently—I am an Englishman and I live in England. Just so. And what language do you speak ? English, you say, still more impatiently. Quite so ; you are a lucky man to have everything so straightforward. But let us question some of our other friends. Here is a Welshman ; what language does he speak ? Welsh ? English ? Or both ? His case is not so simple. Or let us question some of our foreign friends. Here are three Swiss ; what language do they speak ? They do not speak Swiss ; there is no such language. The first lives in Geneva and speaks French ; the second lives in Zürich and speaks German ; the third

lives in Lugano and speaks Italian. Yet they are not Frenchman, German, Italian ; they are consciously and emphatically Swiss.

Clearly there are complications here which need study. We shall have to examine carefully the nature and the interrelationships of race, nationality, citizenship, country, and language group.

There is a further complication, that of Empire. Men of many races and of many religions, men of Western civilization and primitive savages in the forests of Asia and Africa, are fellow subjects of the King-Emperor and live within the British Commonwealth of Nations. How much does that bond mean to them and to us ?

We have travelled far from the narrow and intimate group of the family to the vast, far-flung and loose grouping of the Empire. Let us return to consider groupings on an intermediate scale. We have most of us belonged in childhood to a play group, consisting of brothers and sisters and neighbours' children. We are members of that ill-defined but very important group, the neighbourhood. And there are other more clearly defined groups based on locality. There is the village or the town we live in. And the county. How much do these mean to us ? Are we proud of them ? Do we take an interest in their welfare ?

These groupings are local groupings. Let us turn now to groupings of another kind. There are educational groups, those who went to the same school or

college ; and sometimes these groups are closely knit and self-conscious, sometimes not. And then there is religion, binding men together and keeping men apart. A man may be a Christian, a member of a particular denomination, a member of a particular local congregation. These groupings may be of importance. Or they may mean very little.

Another very important grouping, or rather set of groupings, is that arising out of occupation. We are joiners, coal miners, school teachers, parsons, and so on. Inevitably we are linked closely with those who earn their livelihood as we do. Probably we belong to a trade union or to a professional association ; and in any case we meet our fellow workers from time to time, talk " shop " with them, and take action relating to our common interests.

And then there are our politics : we are Conservatives or Liberals or members of the Labour Party. How much do we care ? Do we work hard for the cause ? Or do we let others do the work and just vote at election time ? Perhaps we do not even do that ; we may be uninterested in party politics, and think that political parties are Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Clearly political groupings may mean much to a man or may mean very little.

Another grouping very important is that of social class. It may be that we disapprove of social distinctions, think them silly or snobbish ; but they exist, and it is useless to shut our eyes to them.

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The groups we have listed are the most important of those to which we are likely to belong. But there are many other groups, and to some these other groups may mean a great deal. It may be a regiment, for instance ; that is a group which often has a very strong hold on its members and ex-members. Or it may be some society like the Freemasons, existing partly for social intercourse and partly for mutual help. Or it may be a cricket club or a tennis club. Or it may be a propagandist body, a group of keen and devoted men and women who think they have a message to give to the world. There are countless groups of one sort or another to which men give, and from which they get ; and this giving and getting is a large part of the business of life and in large measure makes us what we are.

For, if you try to think of a man apart from the groups of which he is a member, you have only a ghost of a man to think about. Take your own case ; think to what an extent you have been shaped by your family, your school, your church, your political party ; they have poured their life into you. Think how you bear the deep impress of your nation. Your occupation has set its stamp on you, and those who share it with you have helped to shape you. Group life has moulded your life ; not the life of one group only, but the force and power of the various groups of which you have been a member. If any of these groups had been different, you would have been a very different man or woman.

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Or look at it the other way round. Think how much of your interest, how much of your energy flows into the life of the various groups with which you are associated. Think of your family : how you work for it, how you care for it, how much of the meaning of your life is bound up in it. Think of your nation : we know how men and women identify their interests with those of their nation, how they feel themselves exalted by its power and its triumphs, feel humiliated by its weakness and defeat. Think of your church : are you, I wonder, a lukewarm adherent or do you identify yourself passionately with it ? Your trade union : are you just a member, carried by it ; or are you one of those who help to carry it ?

And so we can go on making the examination. It is worth doing carefully and at leisure. Perhaps the results may surprise us. We may find that we owe more in some quarter than we had ever dreamed. We may realize with a start how thin the bonds have worn by which we are tied to some group of men and women who once counted for much in our lives. Certainly such a self-examination should help us to know a great deal more about ourselves and about society.

CHAPTER II

THE FAMILY

IN the list of social groups which we drew up in our first chapter family came first. Family comes first in time for almost all of us ; it is the group of which we earliest become aware. Later on we extend the number of groups of which we are members, and the groups which we get to know are bigger. But our first introduction is to one little intimate group, and a great deal in the rest of our life takes colour from that fact.

As we have already said, if human beings were capable of taking care of themselves from birth, there would pretty certainly be no such thing among men as the family. And even if children could do without their parents at three years old, which, allowing for the different lengths of lives, is much the condition of kittens or puppies, there still might not have been the family as we know it. It is the long immaturity of the human young, together with the human powers of expression and of memory, which knit parents and children together so closely and so permanently. And this dependence on the older generation tends to become longer. We push

later and later the end of school days and the beginning of earning. In the majority of cases in this country to-day, well over a fifth of a lifetime, more like a quarter of a lifetime, has passed before the youngster can stand on his or her feet. In the case of the professional classes, parents are lucky if sons or daughters are earning a livelihood at twenty-two. Now this, of course, is artificial. So far as the later years of dependence are concerned, it is not Nature which has made them a necessity, it is we who have chosen to have it so. The early ties are essentially biological ; but before these early ties are worn out, there have arisen psychological ties—likings, memories, customs, steady choice—of a more lasting nature. Thus there is in the normal human family a strength and a consciousness and a permanence which we do not find in animal families, strong and tender though the relationship sometimes is in them. Family, then, is the first of human groupings : a small group, an intimate group, a group of which the bonds are very strong and lasting. And because that is so, because of the quality of the first set of relationships which we experience, our whole life and all our relationships tend to be influenced by it. We get from this particular set of social relationships a pattern which we are likely to apply to other relationships.

It is within the circle of the family that we learn a number of important, elementary, necessary lessons. We learn about individuality : that I am I, and that

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you are you ; that we are like one another and different from one another ; that what I like, you probably like also, and what I do not like you probably do not like, but that sometimes tastes differ ; that we cannot have all we want ; and that sometimes if one gets what he wants, another must go without it ; that we must be prepared for give and take. In short, we learn not only individuality but also sociality ; that we are separate, and yet we are bound up with one another. We get within the circle of the family, and at a very early age, lessons in the art of living together. We have lessons in obedience, in courtesy, in co-operation, in mutual adjustment. A child learns in the nursery the beginnings of such conceptions as rights, duties, loyalties. And later he or she will carry those conceptions into wider fields of relationships.

And that being so, it is important for human life that these first experiences of relationship, these first lessons in the art of living together, are received in a group of this particular kind, a group in which the dominant note is friendliness. The first society of which we have any experience is a friendly society ; the child waking to consciousness knows himself welcome and cared for ; the powers that govern his life are wise and kind powers. Of course, it is not always sunshine in the nursery ; the very small child has its fears and its disappointments and its angers, as we all have all our days. But the dominant notes are love and trust and helpfulness.

That matters immensely when later on we enter the wider world. Family life has given us a pattern in our minds, a pattern of what human life might be in other relationships. If you think of the great ideals which have influenced social conduct, you will see that they owe much to this pattern idea. Men in many ages and in many lands have thought and spoken of the Fatherhood of God, and have drawn as necessary corollary the Brotherhood of Man. Or take another group of relationships: how naturally we use family terms when speaking of our country and of our countrymen; we talk of mother country, of fatherland, of *patrie* and of patriotism. And if we push our inquiries a little further, we shall find men and women applying the terms of family life to quite a number of other relationships. If you belong to a friendly society, you will be addressed by your fellow members as Brother. And in American universities the student societies are known as fraternities and sororities. All these are terms obtained from family life. But supposing Nature had not so made us that fathers and mothers are tender to their children, and the young depend for long years upon that tenderness, we should have had to find other terms to express our feelings in such relationships as those mentioned above. And it is quite possible that we should not feel as we do.

Consider another function of the family. It is within the circle of the family that we first begin to receive the social heritage which is waiting for each

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one of us. By social heritage is meant that which is handed down to us from the previous generations of mankind : a vast accumulation of knowledge, a tradition of how to do things, all sorts of customs and attitudes and feelings towards persons and things. Social heritage is one of the distinguishing features of human life as compared with animal life. Animals may learn a little, but not much, from their predecessors. We learn a great deal and teach a great deal. And the lessons begin in the nursery.

Consider what we learn from our parents in the first years of life before there is any question of formal schooling. We learn the lesson of cleanliness, control of bodily functions ; we learn the use of language, a tremendous achievement ; we learn to avoid some of the common dangers, how to use fire, how to cross a road without getting run over. We are taught manners. We get our first crude notions of religion. We have our first lessons in social structure : what the policeman is for, what the tram conductor does with our pennies, and so on. We get an introduction to the material wonders of our civilization : taps and clocks and "wireless" and so on. The family are the first teachers, and the teaching they give is of great importance. It probably makes a big difference in the intellectual development of a child whether its parents can answer its questions intelligently or not. It certainly makes an immense difference to a child's character throughout life what kind of attitude to human life and to

human relationships it learns—you might say, it catches—from its parents.

And then the family gives us some of our earliest links with the great world of men. The little circle of the immediate family is bound up with that larger circle for which, as we said, we English lack a convenient name—the *Grosse Familie*, the Big Family. Uncles and aunts appear out of the wide world and disappear again ; it is clear from their behaviour and from that of our parents that we are in some special way bound to them. Cousins belong to our family, but they only half belong. And one day the small boy learns the astonishing fact that his grandfather was once a small boy and had a grandfather, and the equally astonishing fact that he too may some day be a grandfather. And thus we learn something of the tissues of society, and of the manner in which we are bound to one another by ties of blood, and how the present generation is linked with past and future generations.

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Family life has arisen naturally out of the facts of sex and of the long immaturity of the human young ; indeed it is, as we have said, to be found in creatures below man. But family life is also in part the creation of human thought and of human ordinances. It is a social institution, and the forms of it have varied very much at different times and in different societies. Amongst us and in our own time family life has changed a good deal and is still changing.

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To make this clear let us consider a few contrasts between the family of to-day and the family of fifty, eighty, or a hundred years ago.

In Victorian days marriage was usually early and families were usually big. To-day marriage is usually a good deal later and families are usually small. In the seventies of last century there was one child born each year for every three married women under the age of forty-five ; this meant that at any time the great majority of married women were expecting a baby or nursing a baby. In 1930 there was one baby born for every eight married women ; childbearing had ceased to be a continuous process. Obviously this has meant a great release of energies for other purposes. In Victorian days the woman was usually much less educated than her husband, and daughters received an education much inferior to that of sons. Women had no votes and were supposed to be incapable of taking an intelligent interest in politics. To-day the women are nearly as well educated as the men, and there is comparatively little left of the old male sense of superiority. The Victorian family was an authoritarian family ; the man was lord over his wife and children. This was so both by custom and by law. A wife had few legal rights. When Queen Victoria came to the throne a husband could lock his wife up in a room ; he could refuse her permission to see her own children. He could deprive her of any right of guardianship over the children in case of his death. He could control and

dispose of any property which she might acquire, whether by earning or by gift or by legacy. He could bequeath all his property to strangers, leaving his widow and children destitute. In all these respects the legal position has now been changed. And not only has the law changed, the attitudes and atmosphere of family life have changed also. Husbands and wives live on more nearly equal terms ; and few parents exercise to-day such a strict discipline as was customary two or three generations ago.

The economic obligations of family life are recognized by the law. A husband is under obligation to support his wife and children. The Poor Law recognizes and enforces a responsibility of grandparents to contribute to the maintenance of grandchildren, should they become destitute ; and of children to contribute to the maintenance of their parents in similar case. And there are other legal recognitions of the solidarity and mutual responsibilities of members of a family. The extension of the statutory social services has operated in a double way ; it has laid greater obligations on parents but it has also provided the part or the whole of the means to meet them. Thus, when Queen Victoria came to the throne there was no obligation on a parent to send a child to school, and the child could and often did go to work at a very early age. If a man wanted his child to receive education, he had to pay for it. To-day the child must be kept at school till fourteen or fifteen ; but the schooling is

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free. In the same way standards of hygiene have risen, and much more is expected of the parent than formerly ; but also the State provides, or helps to provide, more.

In another important respect the legal position has changed. When Queen Victoria came to the throne the only means of obtaining a divorce was by Act of Parliament, a method only available to the rich and influential. To-day divorce can be obtained comparatively easily, even by poor persons. And together with an increase in legal facilities there has come a change in public opinion ; there is no longer the same stigma as formerly attaching to divorce and divorcees.

One of the marked changes of recent times has been the decay in importance of the greater family. Cousins and aunts do not mean as much in our lives as they did in the lives of previous generations, and relatives further distant scarcely count at all. There are fewer of those partly delightful and partly terrifying family gatherings which some of us knew in childhood. There are not to-day such solemn conclaves of uncles and aunts and "in-laws" as that described by George Eliot in *The Mill on the Floss*. John Galsworthy pictured the decay of the family in his *Forsyte Saga* : in 1886 all the Forsytes turned up at an At Home to celebrate the engagement of one of the younger generation ; in 1920 only one Forsyte attended the funeral of old Timothy. The greater family has decayed largely because of the

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increased opportunities for becoming members of other groups based on choice rather than on kinship. It has decayed in spite of the increased opportunities afforded by modern methods of communication. We could see more of distant relatives ; twenty miles are a small obstacle to-day, or even a hundred miles. We could talk with them on the telephone even if we could not go to see them. But do we ? For the most part, we do not. The fact of the matter is that because of the spread of education, because of more leisure and wider interests, because of easy transport and communication, the ties of blood count far less to-day than formerly, and intellectual sympathies and common tastes count far more.

And yet there is a deep constraint in common blood and in common memories ; it can be felt at a funeral, that meeting-place of relatives who meet at no other time. After all, these men and women are made of the very stuff that we are made of ; we can see something of a common ancestor in the shape of a head, the turn of a feature, some trick of bearing. And we know things about them, and they about us, that no outsider can know. Even to-day the wider family means a good deal. And with all its changes in form the smaller family, the family of parents and children, is very strongly knit. It is true that most of us to-day spend a smaller proportion of our time in the family circle than was the case with preceding generations ; it is true that the family is less authoritatively governed ; it is true that legal

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dissolution of marriage is more easy than formerly, and that many avail themselves of the facility : yet it may well be that the bonds are in most cases stronger and more lasting because there is less of authority and more of equal companionship, less constraint and more choice. Though the relative importance of some other relationships has increased, the family remains as one of the most stable and powerful of human groupings.

NOTE

Some of the principal changes in the law during the last hundred years affecting family ties and family responsibilities.

The possibilities of dissolving the bonds between members of a family have been increased by several Acts of Parliament. Prior to 1857 marriage could be dissolved only by Act of Parliament ; the Matrimonial Causes Act of that year made it possible to obtain divorce in certain circumstances by action in the High Court. The chief ground of divorce was adultery, but whilst a husband could obtain a divorce on the sole ground of adultery, a wife had to prove cruelty or desertion in addition. The sexes were placed on a basis of virtual equality by the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1923. The Matrimonial Causes Act of 1938 has extended the grounds of divorce to include incurable insanity. It has also extended the grounds on which a marriage may be declared null, that is to say that it never was a true marriage. The new grounds are wilful refusal to consummate the marriage ; or that one party to the marriage suffered at the time of marriage from venereal disease, or was subject to recurrent fits of insanity or of epilepsy, or (if a woman) was pregnant by some third person, and in each case that the condition was unknown to the other party to the marriage.

The Summary Jurisdiction (Married Women) Act of 1895

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facilitated legal separation without dissolution of marriage, making it possible to obtain an order in the police court without heavy expense. Later Acts, especially that of 1925, extended the grounds and simplified procedure. The main grounds on which a wife can obtain legal separation are assault, desertion, persistent cruelty to herself or to the children, habitual drunkenness, neglect to provide maintenance. A husband can obtain legal separation from his wife if she is persistently cruel to the children, or if she is a habitual drunkard, or (with more difficulty) if she deserts him.

The Adoption of Children Act of 1926 makes it possible for parents to transfer all their ordinary parental rights and duties to some other person, to whom the child then stands in the position of a child born in marriage. The child retains, however, its rights of inheritance from its natural parents. This Act, it will be observed, facilitates entrance to a family as well as exit from a family. The Legitimacy Act of 1926 is also concerned with admission to the legal family; children born out of wedlock are now legitimized if their parents marry subsequently, provided that neither parent was married to a third person at the time of birth of the child.

Several Acts of Parliament of recent years, of which the best known is the Deceased Wife's Sister Marriage Act of 1907, have widened the range of persons between whom a valid marriage can take place. The effect, roughly, is to allow the marriage of brothers-in-law with sisters-in-law, and of those who stand to each other in the relationship of uncle or aunt and niece or nephew by marriage but not by blood.

The authority of a husband over his wife has been diminished mainly by changes in custom and in public opinion. Legal recognition of the change is to be found in several decisions, as, for instance the *Queen v. Jackson*, 1891, which declared that a husband had no right to subject his wife to what was virtually imprisonment at home. But it should be noted that as late as 1932, in the case of *Place v. Searle*, a man was mulcted in damages for enticing a wife away from her husband's roof.

A number of Acts of Parliament have diminished inequalities in the status and powers of husband and wife in respect of guardianship of their children. Under earlier law the father had rights of guardianship to the complete exclusion of the mother except by his authorization. It required an Act of Parliament in 1839 to take away from husbands the absolute right to prevent their wives from having access

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to their children. The Guardianship of Infants Act of 1886 provided that the mother should be one of the guardians of a child in the event of the father's death. The Guardianship of Infants Act of 1925 expressly declares the equality of rights and powers of the two parents ; in any case of dispute the court is to regard the welfare of the child as the overriding consideration.

Duties of parents towards their children received some recognition under common law and in earlier Acts of Parliament, but they were given more precision by the very important Children's Act of 1908, which stated the responsibility of parents for the maintenance, care, and protection of their children up to the age of sixteen. The Children and Young Persons Act of 1933 added further detailed prescriptions as to care.

The law with regard to inheritance underwent drastic revision in 1925-26, and the Administration of Estates Act abolished the ancient preference of the male line over the female line in cases of intestacy. Another important change was made by the Inheritance (Family Provision) Act of 1938 ; until that year it was possible for a husband or wife to make such a will as to leave totally unprovided the surviving members of the family ; the Act quoted directs that in such cases the court shall have power to allocate reasonable provision out of the estate.

The Poor Law has long placed upon relatives the duty of contributing towards the cost of maintaining destitute persons relieved under it, except in the case of the destitution of able-bodied unemployed persons. There are mutual obligations of spouses, and of parents and children. Grandparents can be compelled to contribute to the maintenance of grandchildren, but there is no reciprocal obligation. Nor is there any obligation on brothers or sisters in respect of each other. These legal obligations cannot be enforced by the destitute persons, but only by way of recovery of cost by the local authority which has granted relief. There has been no substantial alteration in these Poor Law obligations for centuries past. But since 1931 the State has expressed in other legislation its sense of obligation on the family to contribute to the maintenance of unemployed members of it. The range of persons involved and the method of enforcement are both different from those of the Poor Law. By an Order under the National Economy Act of 1931, and subsequently by regulations under the Unemployment Act of 1934, allowances are made to unemployed persons, the amounts of which

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are fixed after consideration of the needs and means of the household to which they belong. This means that in certain circumstances other members of the household are virtually compelled to contribute to the maintenance of the unemployed person. But since the Unemployment Assistance Board, unlike the Poor Law authorities, has no powers of legal recovery, the relatives can avoid the obligation by quitting the household.

CHAPTER III

PLAYMATES AND NEIGHBOURS

IN the last chapter we discussed the first little society of which we become members—the family. In this chapter we are going to consider some groups which are based not on kinship but on neighbourhood.

The first of these is the play group. The little boy or girl begins to make contacts outside the family. There are the children next door and the children across the road, with their fathers and mothers in the background. The little child gets its experience of its second human group, the play group. It is not quite so intimate, not quite so strong in its claims upon him or her as the family is, but still it is a very strong influence. And in this little group of neighbours and playmates the child learns fresh lessons in the art of living together.

Fresh lessons, because the play group is different in many ways from the family. It has not the same unity ; there is no ultimate authority. In the family the word of the parents is the final word ; they set their stamp upon its ways and thoughts. And if father and mother are wise, they speak with one

voice ; any differences of opinion they may have are unperceived by the child. But in the play group the child is made aware of clashes of ideals. Good and bad, right and wrong, are not so simple as might be supposed from the experience of the home. People do not all think alike and act alike. The child has perhaps been given to understand that on Sundays grown-ups go to church and children go to Sunday school. But the children who live across the road do not go to Sunday school ; they go to the country in their father's car. And talk brings to light other conflicting ideas and practices. An exciting thing called an election is going to take place. The child's father and mother are going to vote—let us say—Labour. The child tells his playmate. But the playmate's father, it appears, is not going to vote Labour ; indeed, he has said some very rude things about Labour. And so the children learn, vaguely and inaccurately, about the conflicting political views of grown-ups. And sometimes the differences of the grown-ups cause differences among the children, and sharp words and blows and tears. And so the children go on learning, at second hand as it were, about the divisions there are among us. They get to know that some streets are considered to be inferior to other streets, and they may be told by their parents not to play with some children because they are not nice children ; they have caught their first glimpse of class divisions. Perhaps they learn in the same way something of racial animosities.

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So the experiences of the play group teach us all a great deal about the world we live in ; we encounter deep differences and disharmonies which we have not met at home ; the seeds of many prejudices are sown in us. And here, too, in this little world just outside the home, the child is likely to have its first taste of real cruelty and wickedness and hatred, meets perhaps a bully or a thief. Let us hope that the child is fortunate and only encounters evil in a mild form.

Another thing which happens in the play group is that leaders are tested out. At home, authority is a settled thing ; there are parents, not to be resisted in any serious matter ; there are brothers and sisters who are either older or younger than oneself and whose place is therefore determined. But out among playmates there is no natural, no inevitable authority. It is open to any one to assume leadership ; and if he has leadership in him, well and good ; and if there is some one stronger in the group, that stronger one will assert himself. In the play group children of the same age are tested and graded.

And then, because opinions are found to differ, and because of the struggle for leadership, the play group may fall into opposed parties. And from that also the child will learn something which will cling to him all his days, the habit of loyalty to one's group within the larger group.

This continual canvassing of ideas and scrutiny of

differences which goes on in the play group leads to the formation of very strong sentiments, that is to say, persistent ways of thinking and feeling on certain matters. And these sentiments formed in early childhood are very resistant to thought and reason, and often they remain with us a whole lifetime. Altogether our participation in the play group is one of the great experiences of our lives.

The play group is a simple group, formed for the most part spontaneously by reason of neighbourhood and the urges of a child's nature. It requires little in the way of organization ; it is only among elder children that the gang begins to have definite structure. The play group has one great necessity : somewhere to play and something to play with. Usually these are available. But in our great cities the children may be deprived of any suitable playground, and indeed a child may never find a play group. Where this is so, it suffers a serious loss.

Let us now turn our attention away from children, and think what neighbourhood means to men and women. We are all influenced by our neighbours, but it is not always easy to say exactly who our neighbours are. In a big city the family next door may not be our neighbours in any real sense ; and in the backwoods of Australia or of Canada the people of the farm fifty miles away may be our neighbours. It is not physical propinquity but

degree of mental interaction which is the test. In a big English town, and especially in working-class districts, those who live in the same street sometimes form a well marked little society, with a well marked public opinion. Louis Golding's novel *Magnolia Street* describes such a society. Or again, a village is a close knit little society, every one knowing every one else.

To live in a small intimate local group has both advantages and disadvantages. To count for something among his neighbours is a great encouragement to a man to be his best. In the big city the individual is lost in the crowd, and there is little public interest in how good or bad a job a man makes of his life. On the other hand a man or woman can be free from the intrusive and oppressive curiosity which sometimes makes a village or a small town a horrible place to live in. Perhaps the best place to live in from this point of view is the town of moderate size, big enough to give some protection, so that a man need not live in the limelight all the time, and yet small enough to let him stand out as an individual and be recognized and realized by others.

Neighbourhood sets its mark upon a man. Each district—village, town, county—has its own character. Life is different where you live from what it is elsewhere, different in a hundred little ways not always easy to seize. One town is never quite like another town ; Bristol, Plymouth, and Southampton are very different, though they are all ports. So, too,

each county has its own flavour. Sussex differs from Buckinghamshire, though they both have chalk hills and abundance of beeches ; Somerset is not like Dorset ; you can feel a difference between Norfolk and Suffolk. It is not merely that the scenery is different, and that the buildings are different ; the people are different—different in speech, different in customs, different in disposition. These differences soak into our consciousness ; our affections attach themselves to the distinctive features of our own neighbourhood and our own people ; we develop a strong sentiment of belonging to them.

These local sentiments are important in a number of practical matters. Commercial travellers know, for instance, that they must study the very different tastes of their customers in different parts of the country. Social workers, who have to raise money for philanthropic schemes, know that it can often be raised more easily if an appeal is made to local pride. Regiments are recruited to a considerable extent upon a county basis. If a change in local government boundaries is being considered, Parliament and the Ministry of Health know quite well that account must be taken of local sentiments ; boundaries cannot always be drawn just where administrative convenience might suggest. And those who have had anything to do with migration from one part of the country to another know how difficult it is for men and women who have grown up in one district to adapt themselves to the ways of another district.

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Let me suggest to the reader that he examine his feelings about his own village or town, and about his own county. How do you think of them? Do they mean much to you? Does your heart warm when you hear the dialect of your own county? I am sure that it does with many of you. Perhaps you are a Lancashireman living somewhere in the Midlands; and if so, I am sure you glow when you hear an accent which tells you that its owner comes from Bolton or Oldham. Or perhaps you are one of those Durham boys or girls who have come to London in these last few years; if so, are you not hungry to hear people talk as they do in Bishop Auckland or in Chester-le-Street and not in the way the Londoners talk?

It is interesting to notice how often people have a picture in their minds, which stands to them for a whole town or city. If any one says London to me, I think at once of the great dome of St. Paul's standing up above buildings and river. I think a Novocastrian will always have in mind that view of his city which he gets from the bridges, with the Castle and the Cathedral standing on the cliff. A Wallsend man told me once that when he thought of his town, there came before his mind's eye that great shed in which the *Mauretania* was built.

And what is true of towns and cities is true, perhaps even more true, of country districts; they each have their character and their distinctive scenery—and the sight of them and the memory of them are

deeply entangled with memories of our childhood. Unless we have been very unhappy, tragically unhappy, no other scenery can ever be to us quite what the scenery is which we knew when we were children. And we feel ourselves specially bound and belonging to those who share with us those experiences of a neighbourhood.

Towns and counties differ very much in their hold upon their inhabitants. Some seem to impress themselves more than others. In some counties there is more pride than in others. And the same is true of cities. There are towns whose inhabitants seem to have a collective inferiority complex ; no one who lives in them seems to have any pride in them. They are not necessarily the worst towns in the country ; nor are those towns whose citizens are immensely proud of themselves necessarily the best towns. Local patriotism is a strange mixture. A good deal of it is mere silliness and self-deception, boasting how wonderful one's own town is and how much better than neighbouring towns ; and often it is an excuse for doing very little that needs doing, and for obstructing those who would like to do something. But the better side of local patriotism is a very fine thing indeed. One of the most moving speeches I ever heard was made in a small northern industrial town by one of the tradesmen who had served for many years on the borough council and had taken an active part in the town's affairs. He did not boast about the town ;

he did not deny its many shortcomings—the foulness of its slums and the poorness of its health record and much else that was bad ; but his speech was full of a passionate love of his town and a passionate aspiration to see it better. Such a local patriotism, a creative and redemptive love of one's town, is a very precious thing.

Quick and cheap transport, and all the new means of communication, have done a great deal to diminish the importance of mere propinquity and to destroy the peculiar characteristics of town and districts. It is isolation which preserves old customs and local dialects and local peculiarities. To-day there are comparatively few places in England which are really isolated ; one may push up into a fold of the Cheviots and find a dozen cars lined up, or get to the far end of a Cleveland valley and find an ice-cream tricycle standing there ; remote farmers and cottagers have wireless sets and can listen to a variety programme from London, or to an educational talk. Food for the body and for the mind are standardized and uniform to-day. Or relatively so ; it is easy to exaggerate the extent to which local colour has been destroyed ; but certainly the effect has been to make the impress of a particular neighbourhood on its people less definite than it used to be.

Quick transport has also done a good deal to weaken the community life in many towns. It has operated in two ways. First of all, it has smudged the boundaries of towns ; often it has interwoven a

number of neighbouring towns. Formerly a man lived in a town, worked in the town, his wife shopped in the town, his children went to school in the town. To-day a man may easily live in one town and work in another town ; his wife will go off in car or in motor bus to do her shopping in a second town ; his children may go to school in yet another town. All this is very disintegrating to the community life of the town. Another effect of quick transport has been to increase the segregation of the classes. This is especially noticeable in some of the smaller industrial towns. Thirty or forty years ago the owners of factories would live in such towns, close to their works—one can often see their houses standing empty to-day, or turned into cottage hospitals or libraries—and these business men and their families would take their part in the lives of the towns. To-day they live out in the country and come in the fifteen or twenty miles by car. The towns are poorer for the absence of these men ; they are left with an almost entirely working-class population, who have to struggle along as best they can without the help and leadership which they ought to get from those who are better off and better educated. Local government suffers ; it is increasingly difficult to get men of suitable standing and experience for borough and urban district councils. And social service suffers ; families which used to be prominent in good works are no longer in the town. Such towns as these are not true and whole communities ; some of the

elements necessary for a full and good social life are missing.

One special problem of neighbourhood, created in recent years by the possibilities of rapid transport, has been the bringing into existence of what we sometimes call new communities, those huge estates of small houses which city councils have been busy building. They illustrate well the fact that living close to other people does not make us necessarily or immediately their neighbours. These aggregations of four or five hundred, a thousand, in one case twenty thousand, new houses filled with families brought together from different old parts of a town or city have often proved to be very miserable places to live in, at least at first. It is only slowly that mere neighbourhood is transformed into real community : that clubs of all kinds spring up, people get to know one another, common interests are formed, a public opinion begins to emerge. City councils are beginning to understand that it is not enough to build a number of new houses ; steps must be taken to organize the social life of their inhabitants.

In conclusion, the broad effect of quick transport, and of the new means of diffusing information and ideas, has been to lessen the influence of mere neighbourhood. It was said in the last chapter that ties of blood count less than formerly, and that intellectual sympathies count more. The same is true of neighbourhood ; living within a hundred yards of another man means less to-day than it used to do. Living

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in the same town means less in the way of community of interests and ideas than it used to do. Other bonds, bonds of intellectual likeness and of common tastes, mean relatively more ; and thanks to modern science you can share experiences with men and women twenty miles away almost as easily as with men and women who live next door. Neighbourhood, like the tie of blood, is only a foundation on which a superstructure of common interests *may* be built. Commonly it *is* built ; and, when all is said, neighbourhood is still a very powerful influence in men's lives. "Where was he born and reared ?" is a question we naturally ask about any man in whom we are interested, and it is a question which we must ask if we want to understand him.

CHAPTER IV

SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

SOMEWHERE about the age of five the child enters into yet another group and yet another set of experiences ; the boy becomes a schoolboy, the girl becomes a schoolgirl. Here is a new world with new relationships to be mastered.

Let us consider what education is. The word is used somewhat ambiguously. Sometimes it is used in a sense which seems to include the greater part of human experience. It is said that a holiday on a farm is an education for a child, or that a visit to the Zoo is educational. And in a wide sense such experiences may undoubtedly be considered educational. But, strictly speaking, education—or at least formal education—is something less wide and more precise. It is the deliberate and planned direction of influences on the young, and the deliberate transmission to them of part of our social heritage, that is to say of what we have learned from the generations before us. But, of course, it is impossible to draw a sharp line between formal and informal.

What does education do for us ? Education

develops the individual, and it prepares him for a place in society. These two ends are not identical ; it is quite possible and quite common for one of them to be sacrificed to the other. The result of one kind of education may be to produce a high proportion of men and women of strong individualities who do not fit easily into society. The result of another kind of education may be to produce men and women who do fit in easily, only too easily, because they have been discouraged from thinking for themselves, and have been trained to accept tamely all the conventions of society and all the imperfections of the present order. Both of these extreme types represent failures of education. At least, it seems so to me. We do want men and women to have their own distinctive individualities ; we also want them to be able to adapt themselves to the society in which they have to live. The two things need not be incompatible ; or, shall we say, they should not be incompatible for most men in most times ; they are complementary to each other, and one of the important tasks of teacher and of statesman is to harmonize them to the greatest possible extent.

What can education do to develop the individual ? It can train him to control his body, and to make of it a fit instrument for the purposes of his life. It can help him to develop his powers of observation, to perceive clearly and sensitively ; both the teaching of science and the teaching of art help in their dif-

ferent ways to make us observant. Education also supplies the growing child with the knowledge of a number of facts ; and more important still, it teaches the use of what we call the " tools of the mind "—such as reading, writing, calculation, the techniques of the various arts and sciences, and such important techniques as how to use a library intelligently, how to keep notes, how to find out for oneself what one wants to know. Among the " tools of the mind " is the power to reason accurately and acutely, to be able to follow an argument through without being sidetracked and without falling victim to a fallacy.

Already in the nursery and in the play group the child has begun to form and to follow ideals, and the process continues at school. Inculcation of loyalty to ideals which are thought desirable is made partly by direct and formal teaching or exhortation, the Scripture lesson, the sermon in the school chapel, the addresses of the headmaster and of visitors on special occasions ; and far more by what we call atmosphere, the way in which teachers and elder children behave, their obvious approval or disapproval of certain things.

The playing of team games, which is regarded as of great importance in nearly all schools, has had a very big influence on social behaviour in this country. It was said in the second chapter that family life supplied a pattern which was then applied to many other relationships ; in the same way the pattern of a team game is applied to other relationships, for

instance to business and to politics. Business men will condemn sharp practice as "not playing the game." An attempt to make party capital out of national danger will be denounced as "not cricket." And so on.

In all these ways education develops the individual; it brings into healthy activity powers which would otherwise be unused or perverted. But also and inevitably even the best education cramps and represses to some extent; because the choice of channels for the child's energies, and the choice of objects for the child's attention, are made by others who can only be partially aware of the child's powers and needs, and who have usually got to provide a more or less standardized treatment for a number of children. In the worst cases education deadens the minds of the young instead of stimulating them, or distorts them by imposing bad ideals upon them. The tramp's view of education in Mr. H. G. Wells's fantasy, *The Wonderful Visit*, was that at the village school the children were "pithed," part of their brain was destroyed; they lived on, but they had no initiative left and no power of criticism. Of course Mr. Wells is poking fun at us, and we must not take him too seriously. But there is quite enough truth in what his tramp says to make those of us who are teachers wince a bit. It is possible for education to cramp a human being instead of liberating his powers.

If the first great function of education is to aid the individual in his development, the second great

function is to prepare the individual for a place in society. Education does this partly by the teaching of history and geography and literature, which make us realize in some measure how men are bound together and what relationships there are between individuals and groups and between different groups. The boy or girl learns about nations, how they have come into being, how their citizens have traded with one another and fought one another ; he learns about the rise and fall of civilizations, about the struggles of Church and State, of class with class ; learns something of the age-long effort to win freedom and to keep it ; learns of other and strange ways of life and thought. All this may be presented dully and mechanically, as mere strings of dates and facts, or it may be presented in such a way as to stir the imagination and to make the child think about and realize the structure of society and the forces at work in it. But however it may be taught, some sense will come to the growing child of the great web of human relationships. The teaching of history, for instance, whether it be done well or ill, does much to shape our outlook, to make us citizens with a true and broad outlook on our own and other nations, or to make us citizens with a narrow and false view of the world we live in. School teaching is perhaps the biggest of a number of forces which build up in us national sentiments, making us look at the world as Englishmen or Frenchmen or Germans, as the case may be.

And then, too, school life and college life prepare the individual for a place in society because school and college are themselves small societies, miniatures of the great world outside. They continue the lessons of the family and the play group, they educate in social relationships by giving opportunity for practising social relationships. It is here that the boy or girl learns to take part in government; there are the affairs of the cricket club and the photographic society to be managed, constitutions have to be drafted and amended, committee meetings have to be arranged and conducted according to rule. Very likely the boy or girl gets a first experience of bearing office, comes home with the news that he is now vice-captain of the second eleven, or writes to say that she has been elected secretary of the school debating society. And so the child is introduced easily by actual experience into the technique of government, which is so important a part of the art of living in society.

One of the outstanding features of English social life is that there are different forms of education for children of different social classes. This may be seen at its extreme in the schooling which the children of labourers usually receive and in the schooling which is normal for children of the upper classes. The child of the labourer goes to a school provided by the local authority and is taught in it from the age of five until it has reached the age of fourteen.

His formal education then ceases. Nine-tenths of English children attend the public elementary schools, and about two-thirds of them have no further education. The son of an upper-class family goes to a preparatory school, and later on to a public school, and probably after that to one of the older universities. Those who receive such an education are much less than one in four hundred of all children.

There are many intermediate varieties of education. Quite a number of boys and girls pass from public elementary schools with scholarships to secondary schools ; a few children from the public elementary schools, about one in two hundred of them, get as far as a university. Many middle-class children attend private schools, both elementary and secondary, and after that they may or may not pass on to one of the older or newer universities. Large numbers of children of the middle classes, and many from the working classes, are scholars at municipal secondary schools. Later on they may go to one of the universities, or they may go to technical colleges or commercial colleges, or they may attend evening classes.

Now, if the education of any man or woman is being discussed there are three types of question which are commonly asked about it. First of all, how long did it last and how many of the three stages—elementary, secondary, university—did it include ? Secondly, what was the social standing of the schools and college ? Thirdly, what was his

personal achievement : was he high up in his school, did he win prizes or scholarships, what was his examination record, what was his athletic record, did he take a prominent part in the social life of the school or college, was he a prefect or captain of one of the teams or officer of one of the societies ?

The second of these points, the social standing of the school, is of fundamental importance in England, and there can be no understanding of English life until it is realized. There are many differences in equipment and in technique between schools of various kinds, but the greatest of all differences is that they cater for different classes in society. In this respect England stands in sharp contrast to the United States of America or to the Scandinavian countries, where with few exceptions all children attend the State schools. In such countries State education is regarded as the nation's provision for the nation's children. In England it has been, and in considerable measure it still is, a truer account to say that the public elementary schools are regarded as the provision made by the governing classes for the education of the children of the poor. It is true that an increasing number of middle class parents send their children to a public elementary school, but it is still done against a good deal of disapproval from other members of their class, and it is nearly always economic pressure which is the main motive for doing so.

It is difficult to over-emphasize the significance

of this division of English education along lines of social class. It explains many of the obvious defects of the public elementary schools. The governing classes have provided them, not for their own children but for children of those whom they have regarded as being of an inferior class, and almost inevitably a certain meanness and drabness have attached to the whole provision. The majority of public elementary schools have been dreary and undistinguished buildings. The internal decorations and furniture have been drab. The classes have been far too large, so that an element of mechanical discipline has been inevitable. Money has been grudged for the little extras which mean so much in school life. There have seldom been playing fields attached to them. Partly because of the dullness of the buildings, partly because of the lack of imagination in naming them, and partly because the children leave so young, there is a lack of tradition at most public elementary schools, and consequently it is rare for boys and girls to have and to keep a strong affection for and pride in their particular school. Let it be added that many of the newer schools show great improvement.

Let us now turn our attention to the schools of a different character, the public schools, with their very distinctive atmosphere. The children, with few exceptions, come from homes of one social class ; they do not meet children of another social class ; and so without positive emphasis, by

mere segregation, the fact of social class is stamped upon their consciousness, the marks of social class are stamped on their behaviour. The prestige and the tradition of the school soak into their consciousness. The fact that it is a school for sons of the upper classes, the governing classes, communicates a powerful sense of confidence and of capacity for leadership. Few, if any, of the boys have parents whose occupations are servile ; a large number have parents who hold important positions. The boys are continually being reminded of the old boys of the school who have played an important part in the life of the country. The presumption is that they will themselves in due course occupy positions of responsibility and discharge them well. Such an expectation tends to realize itself. The clever and ambitious boy in the municipal secondary school may be conscious of his powers, but he is not surrounded in the same way by a great cloud of witnesses, and he has to struggle against the doubt lurking in his mind whether he will indeed emerge from the ruck of undistinguished careers.

In what sense, then, can we speak of educational groups, and what are these groups in contemporary England ?

In the first place, those who are at the same school at the same time do constitute a well marked group, the members of which have constant and intimate relations and are subjected to the same influences ; and there is organization for expressing and regulating

the life of the group, organization which is partly imposed upon it by authority but is partly its own creation. Membership of such a group is inevitably a strong formative force in the life of each one belonging to it.

In the second place, all those who have passed through a school or college form a group. It is a group of more tenuous character, less organized, and counting for less in the lives of its members ; but still it is a reality, and in the case of some schools and colleges it is of considerable force. Lord Baldwin has illustrated this nakedly and naïvely :

When the call came for me to form a government one of my first thoughts was that it should be a government of which Harrow should not be ashamed. I remembered how in previous governments there had been four or perhaps five Harrovians, and I determined to have six. To make a cabinet is like making a jigsaw puzzle fit, and I managed to make my six fit by keeping the post of chancellor of the exchequer for myself.¹

And lastly, there is a bond of common interest and of common feeling between those who have had the same kind of education, though not necessarily at the same school or college. There is a mutual recognition, a mutual approval, of those who have been to public school or to university, especially to one of the older universities. Whether

¹ Lord Baldwin, *On England*.

at factory or office than at home, and most of our energy will go into our occupation. It would be strange if work and workmates did not become very big forces in shaping our lives.

We have to deal now with a subject which is more difficult, more complicated, than those we have previously considered. Doubtless there is a great deal of variety in family life, in the life of neighbours, in school life, but there are about all these a number of broad constant features for all of us. The relations of parents and children, of brothers and sisters, are in essentials much the same whether the father is a merchant prince, an artist, or a bricklayer. The way in which small children mix with one another, and learn from one another, is much the same everywhere. But the effects of occupation upon a merchant, an artist, and a bricklayer are very different indeed. There is far greater diversity here ; it is not so easy to generalize. The most that can be done is to suggest ways of looking at occupation and to suggest questions which need answering.

To begin with, it is true, is it not, that work and workmates set their marks upon our lives ? Sometimes men will talk and think as if they only worked to get the money to keep a home and to enjoy evenings and holidays. But I do not think that is true of most of us ; it ought not to be true of any of us. It is unfortunately the case that there is a great deal of work which is monotonous and featureless ; but even so our working hours are not

just a preliminary to living in the few hours which are left ; they are a large part of our lives, not merely in time but in interest and in shaping our characters. Often they shape our bodies too. Occupations set their marks upon men ; it is often possible to make a good guess at what a man is just by looking at him or hearing him talk. Some occupations seem to mould men's features ; this is notably the case with those who have much to do with horses ; and in the same way there is a typical actor's face and clergyman's face. There is a typical clergyman's voice. We say of a woman that she is school-ma'amish. I was asking once about a prominent social worker, and I was told that " he looks like a bank clerk." Now what does a bank clerk look like ? Bank clerks, like the rest of us, are tall and short, lean and fat, fair and dark, good-looking or otherwise, of all shapes and sizes and appearances. And yet the phrase does mean something. It did give me some idea of the kind of man I was going to meet : probably a man rather prim, precise in language, soberly dressed, scrupulously polite, cautious, not of flamboyant type. And what is true of bank clerks is true of you and me ; in more or less degree our occupation has set its stamp upon us, and we carry about in our persons something which we have in common with others who do the same kind of work.

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it is clearly physical, like the cauliflower ear of the old prize-fighter or the peculiar walk of the sailor. Often it is some set of the features. Sometimes it is the bearing: confident or timid, patronizing or deferential or aloof. Often it is not so palpable, but there is an attitude and a disposition: lawyers tend to be cautious, not to say secretive; clergy have a professional geniality; we all know the bedside manner of the doctor. And it goes a good deal deeper than manner. Two men of similar temperament going into two different professions are likely to become different in character. Every occupation, every profession, has its peculiar virtues, its peculiar vices, which those who follow it are likely to exhibit. Let me put it in another way. A distinguished doctor wrote a number of years ago a book which he called *Diseases of Occupation*. In it he showed how almost every occupation has its own special danger to health. Coal miners, for instance, are liable to suffer from two well-known diseases: nystagmus, which is an affection of the eyes; and bursitis, which is a kind of paralysis of the wrist. Men and women employed in the pottery industry have to be very careful about lead poisoning. Those who work in dyes have to be careful about inflammations of the skin. Workers in certain kinds of hides have to be on the watch against anthrax. And so on. Well, just in the same way one could draw up a list of moral diseases of occupation, the peculiar temptations of various walks of life; there are some

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occupations in which the opportunities to fall into drinking habits are many ; and there are occupations where there are plenty of chances of petty pilfering for the morally lax ; whilst other occupations seem to foster snobbishness. And, vice versa, certain occupations tend to develop certain virtues. There is the devotion to duty of the doctor, the amazing persistent goodwill of the clergyman, the fidelity to truth of the scientist, the strong loyalty to one another of those who daily face peril, as fisher folk and coal miners do. For good and for evil, in matters physical and in matters mental and spiritual, occupation presses men in certain directions.

And because those who work in the same way become alike, we who are in another occupation recognize them as an occupational group. And they recognize it too. It is difficult to work alongside a man day after day without feeling some kind of bond with him. You and he do the same kind of thing, you and he have the same kind of special skill and special knowledge, you and he talk the same "shop." Let half a dozen dentists meet together, and the odds are heavy that they will find themselves talking about things which interest them and which do not interest other people, things they understand and other people don't understand : new appliances and new techniques, where they buy their drugs, difficulties with clients, relations with doctors, questions of registration and of unfair competition, and so on. And so it is with butchers and with coal miners, with

accountants and with weavers, with shipowners and with agricultural labourers. And these common interests create a group outlook and a group loyalty.

Interest in one's work, pride in being able to do it, and a belief in its value to the community, are of great importance in building up a man's personality and especially in fortifying his self-respect. And fortunately they are widespread even under modern conditions of big-scale machine industry. At least, that is my impression, based on hundreds of conversations with men and women in a great variety of occupations. But it is a matter on which it is unwise to be dogmatic; conditions are so diverse that it is hard to make any general statement to which there are not numerous exceptions. Some of us are so fortunate as to find much of our work of fascinating interest, though few, I think, escape from a considerable proportion of routine. At the other extreme there are men and women—a great many, I am afraid—whose work is extremely dull. That is a great misfortune. I write feelingly, because as a young man I had several years of deadly dull work in a City office, and I shall never forget the wilderness of days through which I dragged. It is not easy to see how monotony of work is to be avoided in modern civilization unless we are prepared to forgo many of the advantages which machinery has brought us. The view is commonly taken, by trade unionists as well as by employers, that some loss of interest in work must be compensated by the increasing

length and interest of a man's leisure time. I cannot say that I see an alternative to that at present ; but I acquiesce in it reluctantly. It seems doubtful whether any increase in leisure or improvement in leisure time facilities can really compensate a man for having his interest in his job taken away from him. Certainly everything possible should be done to minimize the monotony.

Most men and women find themselves somewhere between the two extremes of continual interest and unredeemed dullness. They do take some pride and pleasure in their work. There is a satisfaction in balancing a ledger, in hewing coal skilfully, in slinging a sett of bales or barrels properly, in taking part in a notable enterprise, the building of a *Queen Mary* or a Sydney Harbour Bridge. Almost all of us feel a pride in being able to do well something that most people could not do at all.

A common pride in a shared skill is a great binding force. Another binding force, felt very strongly in some professions, is a common sense of vocation. Clergymen, teachers, artists, social workers, are usually in their profession because they have felt drawn to it, sometimes irresistibly drawn to it, and because they realize the service which they can do in it. Of course it is easier to have a sense of vocation where the occupation involves direct service ; the doctor sees his patient in sickness and in health, the school teacher sees the boy or girl and watches the growth in knowledge, and in many other occupa-

tions there is direct contact. It is much harder to realize one's contribution to the welfare of one's fellows if one is making the thirtieth part of a boot in a corner of the factory and never sees a customer. Even then men and women usually have some sense of the importance of their occupation. We know the kind of thing men say. "Where would you Londoners be without us bus drivers?" says one man. "Try to do without accountants," says another man, "and the country would be in a nice muddle before very long." "I wonder how many people think of us," says a navvy, "when they turn their taps on; if we didn't sweat our guts out building reservoirs, they wouldn't get any water." And we all think our contribution important.

Possibly some one who reads this book will say that he hates his work, that he thinks it absolutely useless, and that the only thing he cares about is the pay. If you do feel like that I am sorry for you. But are you quite sure that you are not deceiving yourself? Because this is one of those matters about which men often think that they ought to feel in a certain way, and therefore they will not let themselves recognize how they really do feel.

No one can think or write about occupation and its effect upon personality without remembering that we have among us a large number of men who have been deprived of occupation. The unemployed suffer not only in loss of wages, but also in having had taken away from them the interest of work, the

pride of work, and the sense of having a useful part to play in the work of the world. Many of them have found makeshift ways of filling the gap ; they have learned crafts, cultivated allotments, built clubs, made parks and open air swimming baths. In doing so they have enriched the life of their neighbourhoods, and we owe them a debt of gratitude. But also, in doing so, they have saved themselves from the most destructive effects of unemployment.

Those who share a common occupation do not merely feel a stronger or weaker bond of sympathy ; in most cases they organize themselves for various purposes. There are material interests attaching to their job. How long have they got to work each day ? How much pay are they going to get ? How safe is the job to be ? How can they prevent unwanted and perhaps unqualified persons from entry to the occupation ? All these questions are natural and legitimate. And because men in the same occupations are faced with the same problems, they talk them over together. They do a great deal more than talk. The organization based on occupation—trade unions, employers' associations, professional associations—are very powerful and play a big part in the life of the community. No statesman, no administrator, none of us, can afford to be ignorant or indifferent about them. It matters to you and to me what the Miners' Federation and the Mining

Association are thinking, and what they are going to do in the next year or so. The Electrical Trades Union, or any other of a score of powerful unions, might make things very uncomfortable for us. The British Medical Association and the Bar Council are bodies whose activities concern not only doctors and lawyers, but all of us.

It is interesting and instructive to make a list of all the societies and institutions connected with one's occupation. In many cases the list would start something like this : trade union or professional association, trade journal, benevolent fund, convalescent home, orphanage, possibly a Whitley Council, possibly a technical institute. In many cases the list would be longer, there might be a trading scheme or a housing scheme, there might be athletic clubs and annual sports. On thinking it over, we probably find that organizations connected with occupation touch our lives at a good many points.

But we must beware of over-simplification. What has been written has referred sometimes to occupations and sometimes to industries. They are, of course, by no means the same thing. A man's occupation may be that of blacksmith ; and if so, he may work in any one of a score of industries. He may be a blacksmith in a shipyard, or a blacksmith in a railway shop, or a blacksmith in a works turning out machine tools. With whom has he most in common—with the other man, who is not a blacksmith, in the same industry, or with blacksmiths in

other industries ? He will have something in common with both, so that his employment makes him a member of two groups. Trade unionists are familiar with this as it affects organization ; it is the question of craft union or industrial union. Then again, in any industry there will be many matters in which there will be a cleavage of interest and opinion between workers and employers ; and there are some who think that cleavage to be the most significant and most important division in society. But the cleavage is not the whole of the story. It is true that there is a great gulf between masters and men, and that feelings may be far from cordial. Yet it is true at the same time that they have powerful links : they have a common knowledge of an industry, they use the same trade terms which no outsider can understand, they feel a common thrill of pride when a great ship takes the water or in the quality of the goods they produce. They have a good deal in common in the way of economic interests : in bad times they may combine to put pressure on the government to do something for the industry, as a joint deputation from the cotton industry recently did. So that in addition to workers' groups and employers' groups, there is also an industrial group comprising both. And this complexity of groupings reflects itself in a complexity of organizations : craft unions, industrial unions, employers' associations, joint industrial councils, and in elaborate machinery for dealing with disputes.

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These groups differ very much in coherence and importance, and in their effects upon the lives of those who belong to them. What is clear is that employment, and the bonds and antagonisms to which it gives rise, play a big part in shaping the lives of men. I suppose I should be a considerably different man by now if I had spent my life in other occupations than those in which I have actually been engaged. And you ?

CHAPTER VI

SOCIAL CLASS

SOCIAL class is more easy to recognize than to define. We all experience the fact of it. A middle-class man, let us say a bank manager, is giving a dinner party ; who will be invited to it ? We cannot say for certain ; but if we were invited, the kind of person we should expect to meet would be perhaps a doctor and his wife, perhaps a solicitor and his wife, perhaps a business man and his wife. We should not expect to meet a duke and a duchess, nor probably a millionaire shipowner and his wife ; they belong to a class above the bank manager and above us. Nor should we expect to meet a tram conductor or a railway porter with their wives ; they belong to a class below. We will consider a little later just what "above" and "below" mean ; for the moment we will accept the terms in common use. We may be mildly surprised to find a foreign guest, a Belgian or a Swede ; we should be much more surprised, and possibly annoyed, if we found that the office messenger and his wife had been invited ; we have nothing against them as man and woman, but they do not belong to our class. Not a bad way, this, of

getting the boundaries of a social class, at least in contemporary England ; it might be said that persons belong to the same social class when they can easily and normally exchange hospitality. We may supplement this by the test of probability or improbability of intermarriage. It is not likely that our host's daughter will marry a viscount or a postman. It would be rather surprising to hear of her engagement to a French business man ; it would be far more surprising, and it would give rise to considerable misgivings, to hear of her marriage to a ticket collector.

So this is another way of marking the boundaries of social class. It may be said that persons belong to the same social class within a nation when intermarriage is normally possible. Of course, men and women sometimes marry above or below their station, but that is exceptional, and the phrase itself—marrying *above* or *below*—indicates our class consciousness. Why this “above” and “below” ? Here we have one of the distinctive marks of social class : it is a hierarchy, there is a sense of deference given or received. The county family are supposed to be better—socially better, not morally better and not necessarily financially better off—than the shopkeeper's family. The professional man and his family are supposed to be “better than” or above the artisan and his family. Society is stratified ; there is one layer above another layer. We speak of upper class, middle class, lower class. And not

only do we speak, we feel like that. The middle class look up to the aristocracy, the working classes look up to the middle class. They *do* ; it may be irrational, it may be snobbish, they may *say* that they do not, there may be a genuine touch of contempt mixed in with their deference ; but the fact remains that the deference of one social class to another social class is felt, is given. Examine yourself in the matter. You may be by conviction a strong believer in equality, you may resent and want to destroy every kind of privilege, but you will be a quite exceptional person if you can meet some one of a very different class from your own without some consciousness of class, some reaction to it. It may be irrational, it may be regrettable ; but it is a fact.

But what is it that constitutes social class ? What settles the social class to which a man or woman belongs ? Is it occupation ? Is it dress ? Is it education ? Is it manners ? Is it birth ? All of these are important ; no one of them is decisive. Clearly, income has a good deal to do with social class ; on average those whom we call the lower classes have smaller incomes than those we call middle class ; on average members of the middle class have lower incomes than those we call upper class. But there is a good deal of overlapping. There may be a rich tradesman whom no one would consider to be a gentleman. There may be a man or woman, poor as a church mouse, who clearly is a gentleman or lady, as the case may be. Getting a big income does

not necessarily carry a man and his wife into a higher social class ; and being without a big income does not necessarily decide that a man or woman is in a lower social class.

Is it occupation which decides social class ? Occupation is certainly closely connected with social class. Certain occupations are regarded as middle-class occupations, certain occupations are regarded as working-class occupations ; and usually one can infer the social class from the occupation. But there is no universal rule. Just as a man or woman may lose income without being degraded in social class, so a man or woman may do humble work and still be recognized as belonging to a superior social class. Those Russian and other aristocratic exiles who are serving in tea shops, helping in dressmakers' establishments, driving taxis, and so on, still remain aristocrats, are recognized as aristocrats, and think of themselves as such, aristocrats at least in breeding and tradition. And it is by no means rare for men and women to be felt by those among whom they work to belong to another social class than that of the great body of their workmates.

It is not true, therefore, that a man's occupation determines his social class. Indeed the truth is rather the other way round ; normally, social class determines occupation. When the barrister is thinking what to do with his son, when that son is thinking how he shall earn his livelihood, they do not consider the whole range of occupations. They do not

think, for instance, of navvying, though he may be a hefty young fellow who would make a good navvy, and would enjoy an open air life with plenty of exercise much more than working in an office or practising like his father in a stuffy court. They do not think of his driving a lorry, or becoming a labourer in the local brickworks. These and many other occupations, useful and honourable, do not enter their thoughts. Boys from a lower social class will take those jobs, will grow up expecting to take jobs like that.

Is it clothing which marks social class? Dress is certainly important in this connection, though not so much so as formerly. Such habits as changing or not changing for dinner mark gradations in social class. When I was a boy there was a ribald rhyme which asserted :

“ If you don't wear a collar and a tie,
You won't go to heaven when you die ” ;

which was bad theology but by no means bad sociology, for in those days the wearing or not wearing of a collar did mark a boundary between different social classes. And taste in clothing and quality of clothes are still among the things by which we rank a man or woman. But obviously style and quality of dress are marks of social class, rather than determinants of social class. And a man or woman who is sure of his or her social position need not worry overmuch about dress ; it is those who are

not quite sure of their position who have to be careful.

One might make a long list of indications of social class : size of house, kind of neighbourhood, whether servants are kept, and so on, no one decisive in itself. What is of more importance than any single item is the general distribution of expenditure. Two men with approximately the same incomes will use them in very different ways. One may be a clerk, struggling to retain middle-class status on a very insufficient income ; the other may be an artisan, earning good money and sensibly content to retain working-class habits. The former will probably spend a greater proportion of his income on rent than the latter does ; and though he may not spend more, he will probably spend differently on dress ; it is possible that he will stint to send his children to some other school than the public elementary school ; it is quite likely that he will be saving less than the artisan. The two men may be said to belong to the same income group, but they belong to groups with different patterns of expenditure, and it is the latter fact which bears more directly upon the question of social class.

Education is clearly important, very important. As we have said already, in this country a particular kind of education is usually given to children of parents in a particular social class, and this education both expresses and confirms the social standing of the children and of their parents. On the whole we

may say of education, as of occupation, that social class determines the kind of education rather than that the kind of education determines social class. But we are getting nearer the heart of the matter.

Is it manners? "Manners makyth man" is the motto of a famous public school; and in a wide sense it is true. And different social classes have different manners; we talk about "the manners of an aristocrat," "working-class manners," and so on. Manners are an indication of social class and a product of social class. It should be made clear what is meant by manners. It is not necessarily being polite or rude, kind or unkind. Those qualities and defects are widely distributed; a peer of the realm may be very rude and a working man may be very polite. It is something more superficial than that, an ease of intercourse and certain conventions of intercourse. There may be said to be three elements in good manners. First of all, there are customs based on obvious convenience or delicacy of feeling, such as covering and averting the mouth when coughing, abstaining from spitting, not eating noisily, and so on. With regard to these, *on the whole* manners are more pleasant in the higher ranks of the social scale. Secondly, there are a number of social conventions—that is to say, accepted ways of doing or not doing things—such as the convention which demands a black tie with a dinner jacket; certain things are done, certain things are not done, and there's an end of it. There are a large number of

such conventions in the life of each social class ; not to know such conventions is damning ; to some extent they are taught deliberately, but for the most part they are absorbed by growing up in a family of that social class, going to a school of that social class, mixing with persons of that social class. And thirdly, there is the impalpable element in good manners, the tact which makes social intercourse easy and pleasant. And certainly members of the upper classes have usually good manners in that sense of the word, and they are often artists in social intercourse.

To what extent is social class dependent upon birth and ancestry ? Family obviously counts heavily ; we say that a man comes of good family. The word " gentleman " embodies the same idea ; originally it was some one belonging to a *gens*, which is Latin for a family group, not any family group but one of the well-known governing groups. Sometimes it is said that a man or woman " comes of an old family." Of course, we all come of old families, of a great number of old families, as old as the emergence of man on this earth. But that is not what the expression means. It means that the family of this man or woman, reckoned in the male line of descent, has had a substantial and recognized position in the community for many generations past. That means, amongst other things, that a strong tradition has been handed down, a code of behaviour, an attitude to life, an acceptance of

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deference as a matter of course. A tradition of that kind is a very powerful force indeed. Certainly, social class is primarily attributed to families rather than to individuals ; children enter the social class of their parents. A man may climb above the social class of his family or fall below it, but something of his origin will stick to him all his days.

We should now be able to see more clearly what social class is. It is a grouping of persons who have a common way of life, handed down from generation to generation by group tradition and especially by family tradition. This common way of life normally includes receiving a certain kind of education ; following one of a restricted group of occupations ; having an income within a certain range, and corresponding habits of spending ; and being distinguished by a certain kind of manners. The members of such a group are conscious of their likeness to one another, and of their difference from the members of another social class. To be a full member of a social class you must feel yourself to belong to it, and you must be generally recognized by others as belonging to it. Members of each social class have a sense of deference due to members of those social classes which are ranked superior, and of deference due from members of those social classes which are ranked inferior. And this deference is usually accorded.

It may be said impatiently that this is merely an elaboration of the well-known fact that some

are rich and some are poor. But so simple an explanation does not cover the cases cited above : the exiled aristocrat serving in a teashop, the millionaire who is not quite a gentleman, the man who works his passage on a cattle boat and is recognized as being a "toff." This is not to deny that economic position is at the core of social status, at least in this country to-day ; I am going to argue that it is ; but the relationship between economic status and social class is not always simple or immediate or easy to trace.

Clearly, social class has an economic basis ; certain ways of life are only made possible by the possession of a good deal of money. To send a boy to a public school costs a large sum over a long period of years ; to make him a barrister is expensive. If a man cannot spend freely, his daughter is not likely to mix with and to marry into the aristocracy. It is possible to get miracles in cheap clothing nowadays, but it still costs a great deal to dress fashionably. The way of life which ultimately determines social class rests upon an economic foundation ; and if the economic foundation shifts, social status will shift also. But not at once, and probably not in a single generation ; there is a time-lag between change in economic fortune and change in social class. Men and women do not go up and down in the social scale promptly and accurately, as their wages or their bank balances vary. They may lose much, not only of money but of that which goes with money, and still

keep their social class. They may gain much, both money and what money can buy, without finding themselves safely established in a higher social class.

But money counts ; and membership of a social class cannot be retained indefinitely without an income appropriate to that social class. Commonly the third generation, certainly the fourth generation, marks the complete adaptation of new economic circumstances and new social class. Aristocrats in exile may pass on a pride, a breeding, a tradition to their children, possibly to their grandchildren ; but the tradition will wear thinner and thinner unless there is a reversal of fortune. The day will come when it will be wisdom to accept completely and unreservedly the new social rank. One sometimes sees lives spoilt because men and women cling to a social status which can no longer be maintained. Where there is a rise in fortune, there is a time-lag also ; money will not buy for the man who has prospered the manners and the education and the tradition of a superior social class ; but money will buy some of these for his children, and the new way of life will be taken as a matter of course by the grandchildren.

What is the length of the time-lag ? That depends upon a number of things. It depends, first of all, upon the adaptability of the persons concerned. Some men and women can acquire new ways of living much more easily than others ; there are

those who have risen in the social scale of whom it will be said that no one could guess from what kind of a home they came ; there are others who display all their lives the marks of their social origin, and who are very self-conscious about it. Obviously, these latter are less easily absorbed into a new social class. And from the other side, that of the established members of a social class, entrance may be made more or less easy for new-comers. In some countries and in some ages social classes have been defined and stabilized by law ; there has been a privileged aristocracy, and there has been little and difficult mobility between it and the commoners. We have considerable remnants of such legal privilege in this country ; there is a peerage with hereditary legislative functions. Property laws, especially the laws of inheritance, have been such as to strengthen and to perpetuate the economic status of the great families ; our landed families, for instance, would have found it much harder to maintain their continuity as such if there had not been primogeniture and entail. But there has not been in this country, as there has been in some countries, an absolutely sharp line of demarcation between nobility and commoners, all the children of a nobleman being ranked as noble. The younger children of peers are commoners ; and since in addition new creations are freely made, there is no sharp division. But the feudal tradition remains strong in England, far stronger than most people recognize. It owes its continued strength in

large measure to the fact that the feudal aristocracy came to terms in the last century with the new plutocracy, often intermarrying with it, deriving from it fresh economic strength and communicating to it something of its own prestige and its own patterns of conduct.

A very difficult question remains to be considered. What is the psychology of deference? Granted that there are distinct ways of life, related ultimately to economic status, why do we reckon them as higher or lower; why do we give or receive a special kind of respect? There are richer and poorer classes obviously; but we do not respect men and women just because they are rich, and despise them because they are poor. Or do we? I think we incline to do so. And I think the reason why we do so is that we recognize that to have money is to have power; and we do worship power and those who embody it. And we know that the upper classes are still to a very large extent the governing classes, and we recognize and salute them as such. And it is true also that in many cases the men and women of the upper social classes have used their money and their advantages well; they have many qualities which we genuinely admire.

But why is deference given where there is no particular merit? And especially, what is there in a mere title to turn men's heads? There are large numbers who will give to a man or woman of no outstanding ability or marked usefulness, perhaps

not particularly wealthy, but possessed of a title, a deference which they do not accord to an untitled millionaire, or to a Cabinet Minister, and certainly not to a great scientist or to a great artist. Why, why? It is a question which is very interesting, and very difficult to answer. I can only suggest clues. I think that in the main it is an attitude which has come down to us from feudal times when the peerage was an institution far more closely bound up with functions necessary to the life of the community than is the case to-day. I think that lords and ladies, like film stars, are walking embodiments of many persons' day-dreams. I think that folk tales and fairy tales have a considerable influence in this matter; in them princes and lords are magical beings, and our childhood imaginations are impressed. And I think it possible that if we could push far enough back we might find that reverence for nobility is linked on to primitive beliefs about the supernatural origins and powers of kings and their companions.

Class distinctions are certainly becoming less marked. Fifty years ago the daughter of a tradesman would not be accepted at a school for young ladies, and a tradesman would not be allowed to buy tickets to a concert organized for a middle-class audience. Public opinion has changed and is changing. Every reduction of economic inequality, everything which diffuses more widely material comfort, every improvement in popular education, tends to

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make class distinction of less importance. But consciousness of social class is still a real and powerful force in England. Indeed there are few countries left in western civilization in which social class and class distinctions are so marked and so important.

CHAPTER VII

RELIGION AND THE CHURCHES

AMONG those who read this book there will certainly be many different attitudes to religion. To some readers religion will seem the most important thing in the world, that which gives meaning and worth to human life, that which alone can save the human race from disaster and direct it into safe and happy ways. To other readers religion will seem a worn-out superstition, a comforting of oneself with illusions, a habit which belongs to the childhood of the human race, and which ought now to be discarded. Some may think still worse of religion than that; they may look upon the Churches as a conspiracy to keep the people in bondage. Others, again, will be mildly interested in religion, certainly not hostile, but not letting it occupy a dominant place in their lives. And there will be those who are just indifferent. What all of us know, if we think at all, is that religion divides men as well as unites men; that there are in this country a number of rival Churches competing for men's loyalty, and that there is sometimes friction between them.

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In this chapter, as elsewhere in this book, we are concerned to describe and to aid to understand rather than to praise or to blame or otherwise to be partisan. Obviously, at the outset we must consider, though it must be done briefly and inadequately, what religion is. There have been hundreds of definitions of religion. Here is one of them : " Religion is the serious and social attitude of individuals or communities towards the power or powers which they conceive as having ultimate control over their interests and destinies." A well-developed religion contains two main elements : an attitude of the individual to this strange, beautiful, sometimes terrifying world in which he finds himself ; and a code of behaviour towards other men.

One thing which is quite clear is that the religion of an individual or of a group is to a very large extent of social origin ; the particular form of our religion comes to most of us from our parents and those around us. We have only to look at the geographical distribution of religions to see that. The odds are fairly heavy that the child born in Ceylon will become a Buddhist, that the child born in Algeria will become a Mohammedan. If you were born in Sweden the odds are that you are a Lutheran, if in Italy that you are a Roman Catholic. And in Great Britain we see Presbyterianism strong in Scotland, Methodism strong in Cornwall ; and there are other well-known local strengths and local weaknesses of the different Churches. Custom, sentiment,

tradition, education, organization, sometimes political action, all come into play to perpetuate a particular form of religion. It must not be supposed that there are only social forces at work ; we know that some men do change their religion after careful thought, and that many men scrutinize the religion which has been handed down to them before they accept it for themselves. Mystical experience deepens and confirms personal religion, reason purifies it and removes many superstitions ; and contact with those of other religions and other ways of life lessens the power of mere custom and stimulates to fresh thought.

In both its aspects, as attitude to the power or powers behind the universe, and as attitude to one's fellow men, religion is clearly of great importance to society. It matters very much whether men get from it an optimistic or a pessimistic bearing towards life. And it has mattered immensely that all the higher religions have taught that men should be kind to one another, and that Christianity in particular has demanded positive and active goodwill embracing everybody. And in Christianity, as in most higher religions, the two elements are not kept distinct but are blended, one reinforcing the other ; the code of social behaviour is identified with the will of God, and attitude to God and attitude to men are closely related : *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

Of course, it may be said that whilst this may be so in theory, actually in this and other countries

where Christianity has been the official religion for a good deal more than a thousand years, individuals and groups have often been, are still, selfish and cruel to one another, and that the Christian Church itself has none too clean a record. Much can be said both for and against that view ; the story of the attitude of Christians and of the Christian Church to social questions is too long and too complicated to be discussed here. What can usefully be said in a word or two is that the authority of religion is very commonly placed behind the accepted outlook and practices of a community. Where the outlook and the practices are on the whole good, this reinforcement of them makes for the good of the community. But the authority of religion may be put behind bad practices ; and it is a matter of common historical knowledge that many cruelties and injustices have been excused, if not committed, in the name of religion and often by official exponents of religion. But it is also true that a live religion acts as a ferment ; it does not merely approve the morality of its day and place, it proposes an advance on current morality and in time it wins acceptance for it. This winning of advance is usually the work of a minority, of men and women of prophetic outlook, who press home the logic of a creed to unsuspected and often unwelcome conclusions.

Most of us, whatever our outlook on religion may be, will agree that it has been a matter of importance for Europe, and for this country, that

they have been Christian, in name at least, for over a thousand years. I say "in name at least," because obviously it is very difficult to gauge how deep religion goes, what is its real power over the minds of men. But clearly a Christian community does differ from a non-Christian community ; it differs in some matters which are easily seen and about which there is no dispute. To take an obvious example, Christianity does not allow polygamy, which another great religion, Mohammedanism, does allow. This might have become a Mohammedan country, there was quite a possibility of it in the eighth century ; many readers will remember a famous passage of Gibbon about it.

And just as there are differences in outlook and practice between Christian communities and non-Christian communities, so also there are differences between communities according to the particular form of the Christian religion which is prevalent. Sunday, for instance, has been very differently observed in Presbyterian Scotland and in England ; and differently again in the Lutheran countries, and in Roman Catholic countries. And we shall note other differences in outlook and practice later in this chapter.

Before we examine in some detail the characteristics of the different Churches in this country, it may be well to consider a grouping which most foreign observers would make ; they would say that it was distinctive of Great Britain, and of the Dominions,

and of the United States that they were dominated by the Puritan tradition. As it is very difficult for us to see ourselves, it is useful to quote the words of one shrewd and friendly writer about this country, Wilhelm Dibelius :

Whether Puritanism has been a blessing or a curse to English culture it is not easy to say. Certainly it has lent the Britons a religious force of incomparable intensity, which is not the possession of a few religiously gifted spirits, but practically of an entire nation. . . . Puritanism has enriched the British people with a lofty conception of uprightness and decency in questions of mine and thine, a highly developed sexual morality, and a deep religiousness that victoriously survives all its Pharisaism. . . .

With equal force could one call Puritanism the bane of English culture. Except where it broke against stronger forces, it has clothed English life in a universal matter-of-factness and joylessness which insists on looking at every issue, no matter how remote, from some religious or ethical angle ; presents the same blank face to scientific problems and artistic ideas ; and is in constant danger of withering up into a dreary worship of Mammon under the most superficial of ethical overlays. And Puritanism again and again fosters an aggressive Mission to other nations, reconciling as it does a total want of

understanding of every civilization but its own with a harsh spirit of domination, upon which the Puritan then hastens to set the stamp of "the will of God."

Finally, and most important—Puritanism is the parent of English cant.¹

I wonder what impression this passage makes upon the reader. Is it a true and fair description of us? These words were written by a German, but French writers and writers of other nationalities have written much the same about us. At least it is useful to know how we appear to our neighbours.

The Christian Churches in this country fall into three great groups: the Church of England, the Free Churches, the Roman Catholics. But besides these formal divisions there are certain distinctions of belief and practice which to a certain extent cut across them. Thus, there is the cleavage between fundamentalists and modernists; the fundamentalists holding to a belief in the literal truth of the whole Bible, and holding to traditional doctrines, whilst the modernist doctrines and interpretation of the Bible have been modified by the newer literary criticism and by modern science. Fundamentalists and modernists are to be found in the Church of England and in some of the Free Churches. Then again, the Church of England contains both Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics, with considerably different

¹ Wilhelm Dibelius, *England*, p. 400.

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views of the sacraments and of the office of priest ; and this same cleavage is found, though more faintly, in the Free Churches, the Presbyterians, for instance, being more sacerdotal in outlook than the Congregationalists. And another division of the Churches is into those which recognize one another's claims and status, and can co-operate freely and easily with each other, and those which are exclusive in their claims and find it difficult or impossible to co-operate. The Roman Catholics, the strict Baptists, the Plymouth Brethren, and in rather less degree the extreme Anglo-Catholics, together with a number of small sects, consider those outside their membership as being in grave error, and they regard with disfavour joint worship or co-operation in propaganda. Members of the other denominations, whilst they naturally think their own doctrines and practices preferable, do not regard the differences between themselves and other Christians as being in respect of essentials. They can worship together on occasion without difficulty, their lay members pass from one denomination to another without serious difficulty, and even their pastors find it possible in some cases to get transfer from the ministry of one denomination to that of another denomination.

The Church of England is the official Church of the English nation. It has the immense prestige of establishment ; it has the disadvantages also, for it is not master in its own house, as the Parliamentary debate on the proposed revised Prayer Book showed

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a few years ago. It has the advantage of possessing ancient and lovely buildings. There is also the advantage of great endowments, though rather of particular local churches than of the Church as a whole. Because it is the Established Church it assumes a formal responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the whole population of the country, as no other religious body does. Thus the Congregationalists or the Methodists do not feel obliged, though they may think it a desirable ideal, to cover the whole country with their organizations; and in point of fact the Free Churches are very patchily distributed. But the whole of England is divided into parishes, each with its parish priest of the Established Church, and the priest is under obligation to perform certain services, such as marrying or baptizing or burying, for any person who has not committed a flagrant breach of morality or of Church Law.

The formulated doctrines of the Church of England are capable of very different interpretations, and this has favoured comprehensiveness. But as the differences remain unreconciled, there is often pretty severe internal tension. But however much Anglo-Catholic and Evangelical, fundamentalist and modernist, may differ among themselves, they do obviously feel a common membership of their Church and a loyalty to it, over-riding their differences. The Church of England is rather like the Swiss nation: one might argue theoretically that

the elements in the Swiss nation are so diverse that they must fly apart ; but they do not. Similarly, one might argue in the abstract that the different parties in the Church of England would be unable to work together in one organization ; but they do.

The Free Churches, the oldest of which date back to the reign of Elizabeth, stress liberty rather than discipline, the self-expression of small groups, and freedom from control by the State. In considerable degree the Free Churches have been the creation of the small middle class ; and often spiritual revolt has been mixed with social revolt ; they have expressed the rebellion of the little tradesman and his stratum against the gentry. Originally their buildings were humble and plain, but often with a certain dignity attaching to them because they made no pretence to be other than useful, and because they embodied a good deal of sacrifice. Perhaps the reader knows the kind of chapel indicated ; the little brick box in a village, built with the hard-spared shillings of the village grocer and the pence of the labourers. In the late nineteenth century, as the middle classes prospered, more elaborate buildings were erected, but it is the older buildings which more truly embody the spirit of Nonconformity. From the point of view of organization the weakness of Nonconformity has been its readiness to split, often on very trivial issues. This tendency is now being reversed, as the recent creation of one Methodist Church illustrates.

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The Roman Catholics, who were few in numbers during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, began to increase considerably in the early nineteenth century, and were helped by that reaction against Protestantism which also expressed itself in the Oxford Movement in the Church of England. Their numbers were also increased by extensive Irish immigration. The Roman Catholic Church has the prestige of a vast membership spread over many countries, and of unquestioned continuity. The definite and authoritarian nature of its teaching and discipline are attractive to many minds and temperaments, as they are repellent to others. The rapid building of churches and schools is proof of the vitality of Roman Catholicism in this country. The Roman Catholic attitude to life differs a great deal from that of the Church of England, still more from that of the Free Churches. The Roman Catholics do not share the widespread Protestant antagonism to the drink trade or the Protestant horror of gambling, which, of course, does not mean to say that Roman Catholics approve of drunkenness or of heavy gambling. On the other hand the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church to matters of sexual conduct is rigid and conservative ; it forbids divorce (though it sometimes nullifies marriages) and it opposes strenuously the practice of birth control and any proposals of sterilization, practices which the other Churches are prepared to consider and probably to allow, subject to safeguards. This distinctive attitude

is clearly of great practical importance ; the controversy with regard to birth control has already affected co-operation in philanthropic effort and has entered into local and national politics.

Roman Catholics aim at having their children educated in their own schools, staffed entirely by those of their own faith ; in this respect they resemble the Anglicans, but they are more successful than the Anglicans in attaining their own ends. They discourage marriage between their own folk and those of other faiths or of no faith, but a good many such marriages do occur. Since Roman Catholics are to a considerable extent segregated in education, since they commonly intermarry, since their views on sexual ethics and other important matters are so distinctive, and since they avoid co-operation with other Christians in worship or religious propaganda, it naturally follows that they form a group closely knit together and sharply separated from other religious groups.

It is a commonplace that the power of organized religion has declined a great deal in this and other countries during the last fifty years or so. The new literary criticism of the Bible, the study of comparative religion, the discoveries of modern science, have seemed to many to render suspect or untenable the traditional beliefs. Social changes have affected organized religion adversely ; the organization of our Churches is still based upon the supposition of a close knit local community, such as used to be found

when the greater part of the population lived in village or country town or well defined suburb. But cheap transport has to a large extent destroyed that kind of community, and certainly the automobile has been no friend to Church attendance. For these and other reasons religious observances are neglected to-day by the majority of the population. It is doubtful whether more than one quarter of the adults of this country are attached, even loosely, to one or other of the denominations. The proportion of children is much higher, and nearly all children receive some Christian teaching at school. The decline in observance is very noticeable with regard to such matters as the study of the Bible, the observance of Sunday attendance at public worship, Church membership, family prayers, and the saying of grace at meals. We are now well into the second generation of non-observance, so that the force of tradition is definitely passing to be against organized religion, as formerly it was on its side. There is a great deal of diffused rationalism, a great deal of rather vague liberal Christianity, and an immense amount of ignorance, indifference, and slackness. There is, however, little active opposition to organized religion, as the statistics of baptisms and marriages show, and certainly there is little of the bitter anti-clericalism and militant atheism which are found in many countries.

The decline of organized religion has been noticed and commented upon many times. It has been less

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noticed that there has been going on quietly for some years past a considerable intensive revival and consolidation. The membership of the Churches is smaller to-day than formerly, but the remnant is Christian from conviction and not from convention. There is a great deal less Bible reading, but it is probably more intelligent Bible reading. Thought is being clarified ; those who preach and teach religion to-day are not ignorant of the new knowledge, they hold their views after taking it into consideration ; doctrines have been revised in the light of it, and some measure of reorganization is taking place. There is certainly and obviously a decay of organized religion going on ; there is also, though not so apparently, a regeneration of it taking place also.

It is fairly easy to mark, sometimes to measure, the outward things of religion, Church membership, and so on ; it is much more difficult to estimate the hold which Christianity has upon the minds of men. To what extent does it influence those millions who neither support the Churches nor oppose them ? It is clear that there is a good deal of diffused Christianity ; that the minds of men are influenced indirectly as well as directly, by the Churches ; and that the Christian attitude to life continues, for a time at least, on the momentum and tradition of the past. But the present position is obviously unstable ; organized religion must either revive or decay still further. It is surely desirable that men should make

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up their minds and should act accordingly. The reader may well ask himself or herself what he or she wishes to see. Does he want this to be a Christian country ? Or would he like to see some other religion prevalent ? Or would he like to see religion disappear from it ?

CHAPTER VIII

POLITICAL PARTIES

IN a modern community government affects the lives of all of us in a thousand ways. It is a good exercise, and one which may be commended to the reader, to try to observe during a single day the points at which government touches us. We wake in the room of a house built under State supervision, perhaps State subsidized. We wash ourselves in water which may be corporation supplied, and the price of which will be subject to some State regulation. We breakfast off bread and milk and tea ; do we think of wheat subsidies, and the Milk Marketing Board, and customs duties ? We go to our work by omnibus, licensed of course. The conditions of our work may be elaborately regulated ; perhaps they come under the Factory Act, perhaps we are under Trade Board rules. We need not proceed. It is clear that from birth, indeed before birth, to the disposal of our dead bodies, government is busy with us. The government may make our fortunes by putting on a tariff or by taking off a tariff ; it may land all of us in utter ruin if it follows the wrong foreign policy.

And what is the wrong foreign policy ? Ah, now we begin to tread on hot cinders ! The wrong foreign policy, my dear reader, is the one of which you disapprove and which your neighbour down the road believes in. A wrong-headed man ! And he is not wrong about foreign policy only ; he is wrong about raising the school age, and about the Means Test, and many other things. It is a good thing his party got turned out at the last election. Or was it the other way round ; was it your party which was turned out ? Well, here we are in party politics ; you do not disagree with him on one question only, you disagree with him on a whole chain of questions. And he belongs to a group of men and women thinking much as he does, while you belong to a group of men and women thinking more or less as you do. And your group and his group, and some other groups, are continually struggling to get control of the machinery of government.

That is only natural. It would be strange if men did not want to get their hands on those powerful levers which can set such mighty machinery in motion. Political power is not the only kind of power ; there are things which no State can do, there are other kinds of power which the State is forced to recognize ; but political power is clearly one of the greatest and most comprehensive forms of power. If you and your friends have control of the government you will have considerable power in such matters as economic behaviour, religious

organization, education, the formation of public opinion. Naturally, those who think more or less alike organize themselves to attain their ends ; organization counts tremendously in politics as in many other spheres. Of course, joining with others has its disadvantages as well as its advantages. You do not think exactly the same as the fellow members of your party ; but if you are to accomplish anything you must be prepared to sink your differences, at the least to conceal them. And this lands you in many awkward places.

But it would be a poor and false view of party which saw in it nothing but unwilling compromise for a balance of advantages. Political parties perform very useful positive functions in sorting out issues and helping people to think. The average man or woman would be very much bewildered if he or she had to face the thousand and one difficulties of community life with no lead given and no simplifications of the issues. We have got to have political ideas and political purposes ; and though we may not be fools, yet we have not, most of us, the knowledge or the time to think our way through all the complicated issues of the day. A political party supplies us with a ready-made creed and policy. It is rather like a ready-made suit of clothes—it does not fit us perfectly—but it is a great deal better than having no clothes. There are thousands of persons who are capable of forming an intelligent opinion of a policy, when it is submitted to their judgment, for every one

who is capable of thinking out a policy for himself. And political parties perform another useful function in public life : a large number of policies, roughly alike but differing a good deal in detail, get sorted out inside the councils of the parties ; so that the nation is presented with a fairly simple choice between two or three types of thought, two or three programmes, instead of having to choose among hundreds of more or less different creeds and programmes.

What decides a man's party allegiance ? Why is one man a Conservative, a second man a member of the Labour Party, a third man a Liberal ? Why do you belong to the right party while that misguided neighbour of yours belongs to the wrong party ? The facts are the same for him and for you, but you and he come to very different conclusions about them.

It is not at all easy to say why individuals hold the party views they do ; sometimes we can see, or we think we can see, an explanation ; but in a large number of cases we cannot do so. It is true, of course, that the facts on which men have to form their political judgments are many and very complex, that the degree of access to information differs much, that men are at widely different levels of intellect and moral outlook, that they differ in background and in temperament and in material interests. It would be strange if they did agree in their judgments and in their desires.

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One thing is certain : that deep-seated emotions, of which men are often unconscious, play a big part. Many of our political views are what the psychologists call "rationalizations" ; that is to say, our minds supply reasons for doing what our emotions urge us to do. That is a fair deduction from the extraordinary way in which men and women with the same kind of mental equipment do differ on politics. Sir Norman Angell has pointed out that the educated seem to be just as subject to prejudice as the uneducated. Certainly you will find economists in every political party, political scientists in every political party, sociologists and historians differing about party politics just as the men in the street do. Intellectual ability and intellectual training do not decide a man's party politics, though doubtless they affect the quality of his thinking inside the party. Nor is it a matter of goodness or badness, or of religious creed ; you do not find all the Christians supporting one particular party, though you sometimes hear it argued that they ought to do so. But the plain fact is that there are devout and intelligent Christians in all the main political parties.

Is it a matter of social class or of economic interests ? These of course do operate powerfully. There are those who would like to see our social classes ranged solidly against one another in political parties. But it certainly is not so yet. The Labour Party has had many middle-class, a few upper-class adherents. And certainly there are Conservative working men,

and many thousands of working men and women who sometimes vote Conservative. The election results show that very clearly. The Liberal Party always had supporters in all classes of society. Economic interests speak loudly: shipbuilding districts and exporting districts are more likely to be Free Trade in sentiment than districts which manufacture for the home markets. But it is not possible, I think, to show more than an influence of economic interests on politics, a very rough correspondence between them. Indeed, I think men and women vote quite surprisingly often against their own economic interests.

Tradition counts for something, especially family tradition, but less than formerly; fewer persons follow blindly the politics of their fathers. Indeed, quite often sons and daughters react strongly against their parents' views. I suppose that husbands and wives more often share a common political faith than not; and it must be difficult if they hold opposed views passionately.

In this country there is a strong tradition of and tendency towards a two-party system, though frequently there are in existence other parties. At the present time the two dominant parties are the Conservative Party and the Labour Party, complicated by the coalition of 1931 and by minor fissures. There is also the formerly powerful Liberal Party, now insignificant in representation. And there are extreme parties such as the Communists and the Fascists, but

they do not play a considerable part in English political life.

The Conservative Party, as its name implies, cherishes tradition and looks very carefully at any proposed new departure before it gives consent to it ; it is more hesitant to make drastic changes than the other parties ; it would be untrue to its name and to its peculiar quality if it were otherwise. It is conservative but it is not static, and as a matter of history it has fathered a good many important reforms. It is a party which appeals naturally to those who are temperamentally cautious and also to those who find themselves pretty comfortable with things as they are. It has among its members the majority of persons of the landed classes, and it preserves a good deal of the feudal tradition. This influences it in several ways : it has a leaning towards preserving an authoritarian form of society, hereditary legislators and well-marked class distinctions ; but also the feudal tradition carries with it a sense of social obligation, paternal rather than democratic, but very real and operative ; also, because of the strength of this feudal tradition, the doctrine of *laissez-faire* which dominated the nineteenth century has been relatively weak in it. There has been a good deal of mutual support in the past between the Conservative Party and the Established Church ; this was partly because the Conservative Party was in the main a supporter of established institutions against attack, and partly because the

strength of both lay in the same social classes ; just as the Nonconformists, smarting under what they considered to be unjust disabilities, tended on the whole to Liberalism. But, of course, there could be many qualifications of this statement ; one remembers Gladstone, loyal Churchman and great Liberal leader ; and latterly there have been a great many clergy, including some bishops, with views very distasteful to Conservatives. In foreign affairs the Conservative Party has had a vivid sense of Empire ; and it has always stood for strong armed forces. It would be a libel to say that the party as a whole has been militarist ; but it is sober truth to say that militarists feel more at home in the Conservative Party than elsewhere, and certainly pacifists are scarcely likely to be found in it.

The Liberal Party is in numbers a shadow of its former self. It would be idle to speculate whether it will recover or whether it will disappear. Certainly, no one with a sense of history is likely to deny that it has played a great part. And many will allow that Liberal doctrines are still powerful, though the Liberal Party is weak ; Liberal thought has permeated the other parties. Its main strength during the nineteenth century lay in the middle classes ; though it had also a number of landed families of Whig tradition, and it held for a time the working class leaders who were emerging. It has been sympathetic to the Puritan view of life, and prepared in some directions for a good deal of repressive legisla-

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tion. Its main outlook was pacific, averse to heavy armaments, and critical of Imperialism ; but it has had its Imperialists, and there has often been tension within its ranks on questions of foreign and Imperial policy. It was for many decades dominated by a *laissez-faire* outlook, but this outlook was passing rapidly towards the end of the nineteenth century, and the Liberal Governments of 1906 to 1914 laid the foundations of much of our abundant social legislation and social provision.

A characteristic note of Liberalism has been its passion for freedom. It has stood against privilege, against restrictions, and especially it has stood for freedom of speech. It endorses the attitude of Voltaire when he said, "I wholly disagree with what you say, and I will defend to the death your right to say it."

It has a peculiar attraction for men who like a middle position ; there is much that is tentative in its economic creed ; it neither endorses nor condemns socialism in the abstract ; it is prepared to make experiments, revising its opinions continually in the light of experience. Such an attitude seems weakness to many ; but there are others to whom it seems stronger and wiser than policies of greater rigidity.

The Labour Party rose to power with the rise of an educated and enfranchised working class ; and its first appeal is to the working classes ; but these, as its leaders would hasten to point out, are nine-

tenths of the nation. It has a place for members of other classes, but they must not expect any privilege, indeed they will have to earn confidence. The trade unions supply a large part of its numerical strength ; but the leadership has been shared by members of the intelligentsia—university lecturers and the like. It has a good deal of common ground with the Liberal Party, especially in its opposition to privilege ; it differs from the Liberal Party in having no tradition of *laissez-faire*.

I do not think there is found in it the same passion for personal liberty which was found in many of the old Radicals ; the trade union tradition requires a considerable subordination of the individual to the group, lays a greater stress on the need for discipline ; in other words the Labour Party is less individualist than the Liberal Party has been. The Labour Party claims continuously and strenuously a higher standard of life for the masses of the people, and it stresses State responsibility. It works towards socialism, though many of its adherents would say very slowly and hesitatingly. In foreign affairs it is suspicious of Imperialism ; and whilst the party as a whole is not pacifist, there is a strong pacifist wing. This is one of the great clefts within its ranks. There is also a certain amount of cleavage between those whose view of life is derived from Karl Marx and those whose views derive more or less from Christian Socialist sources. On the whole, the Labour Party in this country has been free from extreme bitterness,

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it has been willing to make compromises ; and when in office, it has paid a good deal of regard to the traditions of British political life.

Such are the chief political parties in this country. Let us now consider some of the typical attitudes to party. There are those to whom their party creed has the quality of a spiritual revelation ; it lifts them out of themselves and dedicates them to great impersonal ends ; and one feels a deep respect for such happy warriors, even when one does not share their political creed. In some, partisanship will pass over into fanaticism ; they will see members of opposed parties, not as mistaken men, but as sinister, cruel, dangerous, to be crushed by a holy crusade. Others regard party merely as an instrument ; they choose deliberately and coolly a party as most likely to serve their purposes ; and if it fails to do so, why then at some convenient time they will change their party. And there are those who play at politics just as they play games ; it is one long glorious cricket match with alternations of batting and fielding, and with a huge crowd to cheer them on ; but this attitude is less common than formerly. And there are the men with cross bench minds, seeing so clearly the arguments on each side that they find it hard to be good partisans ; a man of this kind must either keep his doubts to himself or stand out of party politics, in which case he may exercise a good deal of indirect power as a detached thinker. And then there are the cynics, to whom party politics

seem a vast hypocrisy, with the people fooled all the time ; there are a good many such, products of the abuses of party politics. And there are those who care nothing about politics, nothing whatever, and there are a good many of them.

Lastly, there are honest puzzled men and women who would like to form an intelligent opinion on political matters, but who find it extremely difficult to do so. The questions are so many and so involved, the news is so contradictory, the cries of the party politicians are so confusing. The democratic nations need to find more and better devices by which necessary information may be presented in a clear unbiased form, and issues be put before people simply and fairly.

CHAPTER IX

NATION AND STATE

MOST of those who read this book will be, like its author, English : members of the English nation, living in the country of England, with the English language as our mother tongue. But there may be some of its readers who live beyond the Cheviot Hills, and who are not English but Scots, members of another nation and living in another country. And in the north of Scotland there are men and women who are Scots certainly, but who are clearly of a different race from the majority of those living in the south of Scotland. We look at a man and conclude, probably rightly, from his features that he comes of Highland stock. Possibly he was brought up speaking Gaelic, and not English or Lowland Scottish. And then again there are the Welsh, living in the country of Wales, quite a number of whom would be indignant if you suggested that English was their mother tongue. But though English, Scots, and Welsh are members of three different nations, they are all citizens of the same State. A rather curious State, if you come to

think about it, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Is Ireland one country or two countries ? I think that most people would say that Ireland is one country. If so, it is a country divided between two States. Previous to 1923 it was a country united with three other countries under the rule of a single State.

Most of us will find, if we think a little, that we are not too clear in our minds as to what such terms as nationality, state, country, and race mean ; and how the groups corresponding to them are related. Let us try to get our minds clearer.

Let us first of all turn our attention to questions of race. A great deal is said and written about race, racial feelings and racial relations ; sometimes people speak or write about the English race or the French race or the German race. What is a race ?

Race is a biological term ; if you like, a zoological term : race is distinctive stock. There are well-marked physical differences between groups of men : differences of hair and skin, and of shape of head, and of colour of eyes, and of many other physical traits ; and pretty certainly there are differences of abilities and of temperaments also, though as to them we have very little precise knowledge. And so long as marriage is confined to members of groups with well-marked and distinctive traits, these distinctive traits will be preserved. Yellow men, white men, negroes will remain clearly distinguishable ; and so will Highlanders and Lowland Scots, and many other

racial groups. Where there is intermarriage between persons of different stocks, some of the offspring are likely to represent the original types, but also all sorts of intermediate types will occur ; and what exactly are the physical effects of intermarriage is a question on which the biologists are slowly accumulating knowledge. What we do know is that there has been a great deal of intermarriage between persons of different races from a very early period of human occupation of the earth ; so that to-day there are no pure races. Certainly no nation in Europe approaches racial purity. We commonly think of Norwegians as being fair-haired and blue-eyed, and so the majority of them are ; but there are many others, especially in western Norway, who are dark-haired, brown-eyed ; there is a mixture of races in Norway. There are many blonde Italians, though most Italians are dark ; Italians are of mixed race. Great Britain contains a population of very mixed race : fair, dark ; tall, short ; long-headed, round-headed ; much the same races as people France and Germany, except that round heads are comparatively scarce in England. Whenever France and Germany have been at war, in 1914 or 1870, or 1815 or earlier, men of what is called the Nordic race (tall, fair-haired, blue-eyed, long-headed) in both armies have fought men of what is called the Alpine race (stocky, round-headed, darkish men) in both armies. They fought nation against nation, not race against race.

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It is nonsense to speak of an English race, a French race, a German race, and so on ; such races do not exist. This does not mean that race is negligible ; the proportion of the various racial elements in any given community is pretty certainly important, and may explain peculiarities in the character of that community. But our scientific knowledge as to that is still very small, and a great deal of what is said and written about racial characteristics is little more than guesswork or prejudice. But this is true, that the more obvious physical differences, such as those between the skin of a negro and the skin of a white man, or between the eye slits of a Chinese and those of a European, *may* act as badges by which members of one community recognize the presence of members of another community. And if there is bad feeling between the communities, these physical traits may act as symbols, much as flags may do, to rouse slumbering emotions ; and in this case the traits themselves become objects of strong dislike. But I do not think that the feeling of dislike originates with the sight of the black skin, or slanting eye slits, or whatever the distinctive trait may be ; I think that the feeling originates otherwise and then attaches itself to the physical difference. If differences of race were necessarily a basis of strong dislikes and incompatibilities, every European nation would be disrupted. Dark-haired Englishmen would be set against fair-haired Englishmen ; blonde Piedmontese against the dark Piedmontese who are to be found

in the same Italian village. Not only would nations be divided, but so also would towns be ; and indeed families, for individuals of different racial types are often to be found within the same family. If you should think this an exaggeration, look round next time you are in a hall with a hundred persons in it ; you will see remarkable diversities of racial characteristics. Only we are so accustomed to them that we do not usually notice them. But there was a time in this country when the contacts of fair men and of dark men were felt as a colour problem ; there are traces of it in our folklore.

Let us next turn our attention to language and to language groups. To speak the same mother tongue is a strong bond between men, and not to do so is correspondingly a barrier. Language is powerful because it is our chief means of communication with one another, because by it we express ideas and feelings, because those who share the same language will be moulded to a large extent by the same literature, because the very sound of words and their delicate shades of meaning become dear to us. For these and other reasons language is an important factor in the formation of groups and in keeping groups distinct from other groups.

But we must not argue from community of language to community of race. A man is not necessarily of the same race as ourselves because he speaks English ; millions of negroes speak English as their mother tongue. Nor is community of language

necessarily a mark of common citizenship ; English is the language of the United States as well as of Great Britain : whilst a number of Canadians differ from their fellow Canadians in speaking French, not English. It is possible to have a language group spread over several nations : French is spoken in Canada, in Belgium, and in Switzerland, as well as in France. Equally, there may be two or more language groups represented within one nation ; French and Flemish are spoken in Belgium, Finnish and Swedish are spoken in Finland, and there are many more examples.

Let us next examine the term State. State is a political conception ; it has to do with government. A group of persons are said to be citizens of a State when they live in a clearly defined territory, and are all of them bound to observe certain rules of behaviour, which are drawn up and enforced by persons who have been given power, or who have seized power, for that purpose. It is a distinguishing mark of a State that there is no authority external and superior to itself. It is the chief organ of self-expression of a modern community, though by no means the only organ by which a community orders its life. It is the function of the State to maintain order, and that involves deciding the legitimate functions of the other organs of community life, such as Churches and universities and professional associations, and, if necessary, arbitrating between them. The supremacy of one such organ of self-expression

seems to be a necessity of modern life, but a wise community will expect its supreme organ, the State, to allow many functions to other bodies enjoying a high degree of autonomy. And wise men will be careful not to confuse the loyalty which they owe to the community with the loyalty they normally owe to the State ; the latter loyalty, while it has a high claim upon us, is lesser and derivative. Less still, and more derivative still, is the claim on our loyalty of the government of any particular time. We respect the State and the government because they are serving more or less well the community ; we respect the community because it consists of men and women with whom we are closely bound by many ties of common interest and common outlook. To confuse the two has been often and in many countries the trick of a clique which has seized power.

“Country” is a term which is used ambiguously, sometimes of persons and sometimes of lands. In such an expression as “the Prime Minister has the country behind him” it is clearly used of persons. When we say that the density of population in this country is 675 persons per square mile, it is clearly used of land. It is country in the second sense which we are now considering. Even so, it is by no means easy of definition. Most of us probably think of countries as large areas marked off by natural features from other areas. And that is true of some countries, of Italy, for instance. But in other cases there is no well-marked physical frontier. We speak of Canada

and the United States as being two separate countries, but the frontier between them for over a thousand miles is just a straight line drawn east and west.

However the boundaries may have been determined originally, whether by obvious physical features or by mere political arrangement, or, as is most common, by interplay and combination of the two, countries do come to have marked characters of their own. And these are perceived by the inhabitants, and strong sentiments are formed with regard to them. Men of letters play their part in deepening such sentiments and in securing their incorporation in patriotic sentiments. A country stamps itself upon the lives and feelings of its inhabitants ; and those who are thus moulded and influenced are commonly, though perhaps not invariably, a nation.

And now we are ready to discuss what a *nation* is. First of all, a string of negatives, let us say what it is not. A nation is not, strictly speaking, the same as a country, though usually the area of land occupied by a nation is called a country, and we often say "country" when we mean "nation." A nation must not be confused with a race : nearly always there are several races represented in a nation, and usually a race is found to be spread over a number of nations. Nor must nation be confounded with language group ; there are many cases of two or three languages being spoken within a nation, and there are many cases of a language being spoken

within a number of different nations. And we must not identify nation and State. Sometimes the members of a nation and the citizens of a State are co-incident groups ; but often it is not so.

All this is negative. Can we say positively what a nation is ? I think we can ; but we must not attempt to do so in terms of anything external or material. What makes a nation of a number of persons is a state of mind which they have in common, a number of strongly held ideas and strongly felt sentiments which are not found in that form or combination in any other group of persons. The members of a nation must feel their similarity among themselves and their dissimilarity from others so strongly that they are ready to make great sacrifices to maintain their way of life. Moreover, these similarities and dissimilarities must apply to a large part of life, not to one or two aspects of it only. Such a group normally desires and needs its own clearly defined territory, its own country ; and commonly it needs its own form of government. Either there must be a separate State, or at the least it must live under a local modification of the rule of a State, so that its peculiar requirements are met.

What makes a group of persons feel like this, so that we say of them, and they say of themselves, that they are a nation ? A very large number of factors may contribute. Those things which we have said to be non-essential are helpful, though not decisive. The well-defined territory is almost indispensable ;

no wandering or dispersed people can really be said to be a nation to-day. Nations, as we have said, are usually of mixed race ; but it certainly helps national consciousness if there is a predominance of one racial type, or if there has been for a long time the same intermixture of races, so that certain physical types are familiar. A common language helps immensely, and nearly all nationalist propaganda stresses the importance of the national speech and the national literature ; and it is an illustration of the same fact from the other side that where two languages are spoken there may be a great deal of internal tension, as Belgium is now experiencing. It certainly helps to deepen the sense of nationality if the group has its own State. Obviously to live under the same laws, to pursue the same domestic and foreign policy, to share the same ritual of government, emphasizes similarity within the group, dissimilarity from other groups. There are many other facts which may help or hinder. A common religion is undoubtedly helpful, though it is not necessary ; Germany has not found the division into Protestants and Roman Catholics a serious hindrance to unity, whereas in Ireland the same division has reinforced other barriers. A common history plays a big part in forming and deepening national sentiment : when a group of men, or a number of groups, have begun to act together, perhaps under the overwhelming pressure of a common danger, their common action, common thinking, common suffering, common

rejoicing, common memories may produce a strong sense of oneness, and this may deepen as time goes on. And then again, the sense of nationality, once established, is fostered more or less deliberately in each nation and for each generation ; and it is a very interesting study to compare the ways in which this is done in different countries.

How can it be decided whether any particular group of people really constitute a nation or not ? The answer is a curious one. Broadly speaking, a nation is a nation when it insists upon being a nation. Not very satisfactory, it will be said, not very helpful to the statesman who wants to see European frontiers drawn as wisely as possible. I am afraid it is not ; but the statesman must gauge as best he can the strength of the feeling. Of course, he is helped by other considerations, such as race and language and past history. The statesman has another difficulty. It might be ideal to have the world divided among a number of well-defined nations, each occupying its well-defined country and with its own State. But it cannot be done ; populations of like character are too broken and too mixed for that. However the frontiers may be drawn, there will be some groups cut off from their main group and living as minorities amidst a population of different culture. They are likely to be dissatisfied, but there is no way of satisfying them without making others dissatisfied. Of course, if these groups would lay less stress on their own peculiar features, and would lay more

stress upon what they have in common with other groups, the situation would be eased. And, as we have seen, it is quite possible for several nations, or parts of nations, to live under the rule of a single State, especially if the State makes special local arrangements to meet their needs. Along such lines a solution might be found. But it requires a different temper from that prevalent to-day.

It is not necessary to dwell at length upon the strength of the feelings associated with nationality. There can be little doubt that the nation-state is the most powerful of all human groupings to-day. Men will do more for it, suffer more for it, feel more exaltation about it, than for and about any other group to which they belong. The nation-state is stronger than Church, stronger than social class, stronger than family. For it millions of men will inflict horrible deaths and suffer horrible deaths, which they would not be willing to inflict or to suffer in any other cause.

During the last century or so, and especially since 1914, nationalist feeling has become much stronger, more vehement, in most countries. The explanation of this growth is not altogether easy to find. One reason for it is probably that popular education and the new facilities for spreading ideas have made it easier than formerly to weld populations together into a common and heightened consciousness of common traits. A second reason is that there has been a great and continuous extension of the

scope and power of States ; and therefore it matters more than formerly to well-marked groups of men—nations or parts of nations or aspirants to nationhood—that they should be governed by those who understand and protect and foster their way of life ; and that has generally meant a stronger urge towards becoming a nation-state. Add to this that the modern State has been able and willing in many cases to embark on imperialist adventures which offered financial advantages, for a time at least, to some of its influential citizens, and created a sense of power, of vicarious possession, in its humbler citizens : this also has heightened consciousness of nation and of State. And then again, the growth of armaments and the fear of wars, wars far more destructive since the inventions of high explosives and the aeroplane, have consolidated national groups, causing the members of each one to cling together more closely in their terror of other national groups.

There is nothing inevitable about the nationalism of to-day. It did not always exist ; it need not exist always in future. Much of it is the natural and healthy outcome of a particular form of living together. But much of it is accidental, and much of it is artificial. Nations as we know them need not have arisen in the particular forms we know ; there was nothing inevitable about the emergence of a Swiss nation or of the United States of America. It was long doubtful whether the district of Lothian between the Firth of Forth and the Cheviots was to be part of

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Scotland or part of England, and it might have remained England if the issue of the battle of Carham in 1018 had been different. In any case, England and Scotland, but for a dynastic accident, might have remained separate and hostile States. Loyalties might have been very different. Therefore there is nothing unchangeable about present-day political arrangements and present-day loyalties. Much of the inflamed and unreasonable nationalism of to-day is the morbid product of deliberate propaganda, propaganda soaked in group selfishness. What has been made can be re-made ; and it is within the power of men to attain a healthy nationalism balanced by a healthy internationalism, a sane regard for one's own group and a sane regard for the similar needs of other groups.

CHAPTER X

THE NATURE OF SOCIAL GROUPS

OUR previous chapters have been devoted to describing the chief social groupings to be found in England to-day. There are many other social groups besides those described ; there are, for instance, the vast number of voluntary associations for all sorts of purposes, for recreation or propaganda or mutual protection against risks of various kinds. Many of these groups are important, and membership of one of them may be in the case of some individuals a dominating interest in life. But it is impossible to catalogue them, difficult even to classify them, and they stand in a somewhat different category from those social groups with which we have been occupied. They are different because they are not inclusive of all Englishmen, and membership of them is largely a matter of choice, whereas the social groups with which we have been dealing embrace, and for the most part embrace necessarily, the great majority of us.

We shall pass now from the consideration of particular groups to discuss in general terms the nature of group life.

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In the first place we may, if we like, describe as a social group all those men and women who have common traits which are, or may be, significant for social life. Merely to have traits in common does not necessarily constitute a social group ; the traits must be in fact, or at least potentially, the bases of common consciousness, of common interests, and usually of organization for common purposes. Whether the potentialities will be realized will depend upon circumstances ; traits which at one time, or in one place, may not give rise to any considerable common consciousness, still less to any organization, may at another time or in another place be the basis of strong common consciousness and of powerful organization. Thus racial differences may or may not be perceived, may or may not play a part in creating nations and States. In the same way common occupation or similarity of economic position may or may not give rise to common consciousness and to organization on the basis of similarity ; the likelihood is strong that they will do so. Sometimes there is consciousness, even strong consciousness, without much organization. This may be because the groups are too small to need elaborate organization, as in the case of families and the smaller neighbourhood groups. But it may happen also in the case of very large groups. Thus in the case of social classes there is, in this country at least, strong consciousness but not much organization on the mere basis of social class.

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Along these lines we may classify our groups into (a) those marked by similarity of traits only ; (b) those in which similarity of traits is perceived, but has not yet given rise to organization ; (c) those in which community of traits has produced consciousness and organization. Needless to say, the classes shade off into one another. Some sociologists would call the first two of these quasi-groups, "quasi" meaning potential or undeveloped.

Membership of groups ranges from sheer necessity to absolute option. Membership of a family is a natural necessity ; we are born into a family without being consulted about it ; and though we may quit the family later, and even break off all communication with it, yet its marks are upon us and we remain of it. A man cannot unget his son, as Sir Anthony Absolute threatened to do. Nor can a son effectively and entirely discard parents and brothers and sisters ; they remain his family, whatever he may do. Yet, as we have noted above, the physiological tie is only the basis of family, and its importance is largely that it gives opportunity for the formation of psychological ties of a more permanent nature. In that sense family is created by will and choice.

So, too, a man is born into a regional group ; and, unless he is moved at very tender years, its marks will be upon him all his life. A man is born an Englishman and a Yorkshireman ; true, he may change his locality and his citizenship later ; but he will bear the marks always of his origin. In most

cases he accepts and is proud of the group into which he was born. Similarly, our religion is usually imposed on us in childhood ; it is in more or less degree a matter of choice later on. Occupation is a matter more within our choice, especially if our parents are comfortably off. Politics, like religion, are usually inherited, but we are free to change. Social class is scarcely a matter of choice.

Citizenship is imposed on us, not by a necessity of Nature but by an institution and ordinance of our fellow men. Even so it is within our choice whether our citizenship is eager and active, or whether it is grudging. In many occupations membership of the occupational association is virtually compulsory, but again the quality of the membership is largely a matter of choice.

Sometimes membership of a social group is entirely voluntary. This is true of a large number of societies and associations for all sorts of purposes, recreational or propagandist or other, which are of importance in social structure. To a large extent it is true to-day of participation in religious and political group life.

A well established group of human beings, with common traits and common interests, whose members are conscious of what they have in common and who are organized upon that basis, may persist as a group with specific features though its membership changes with the passing of years. Because of

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this persistence it appears as if a nation or a Church or a profession, or any other well-marked group, had a life of its own and a character of its own, comparable to the life and character of an individual. We know how commonly such phrases as these are used : " a guilty nation," " the mind of France," " a conservative profession." What do such phrases mean ? Does " the mind of France " really mean the millions of minds of the millions of Frenchmen ? Is " a conservative profession " just another way of saying a profession most of whose members are conservative ? There are some persons who maintain this point of view ; they say that there is no such thing as a group mind ; there is no mind of the French nation, but only the forty million minds of the forty million individuals who compose that nation. At the other extreme there is the view that just as millions of separate living cells make up a single human body, which has a life of its own distinct from the life of any one of its constituent members, so the nation is an entity which is other than and greater than its constituent individuals, and has mind and purpose and interests which do not necessarily coincide with their minds and purposes and interests. Such a view of the nature of a group is most commonly held in respect of nation or State. It is the official view in Germany and Italy to-day ; it has its representatives in this country also, but the more common view in this country leans in the other direction.

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There is good reason to hold that both these extreme views are incorrect ; or at least, as commonly stated, misleading. There is a body of thought which may be conveniently called the mind of a group. It is the resultant of the thinking and feeling of the individuals who compose that group, but of their thinking and feeling influenced by their association for common purposes and by the tradition of common action in the past. But this body of thought and feeling is in the minds of the members of the group, and has no existence independent of them.

It is a matter of observation that membership of a group has marked effect upon individual action. Men and women who are part of an excited crowd will do things which they would not have done if they had been alone. For instance during the anti-German riots in the East End of London in 1915 normally respectable women looted shops and private houses, not always those of Germans, quite shamelessly. Members of a regiment are often capable of a courage and cheerfulness which as isolated men they could not display. Passengers on a long sea voyage develop an easiness of intercourse which may be very different from their manners on land. And as members of a nation, members will often consent to, perhaps take part in, courses of selfishness and deceit and savagery which would shock them profoundly in any other relationships. The same person may think and feel and act very differently,

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as member of a group in relation to the affairs of the group, and outside the group and its affairs.

An easily observed example of the influence of a group upon its members is the way in which universities and colleges set their mark upon those who pass through them. Generation after generation of students is moulded by its stay at Oxford or Cambridge. In less degree each constituent college has its distinctive character which it impresses upon its students, so that one who knows a university well can often make a shrewd guess at the college of any particular undergraduate or young graduate. The newer universities have their own less sharply defined atmospheres, and so have also such institutions as theological colleges. It is to be noted that the character or atmosphere of a college is in considerable measure independent of the lives of the members of it at any particular time, much as the course and character of a river is in a large measure independent of the water which happens to be flowing at any moment. The same is true of national life : there is a typically French outlook on life which has persisted over many generations of Frenchmen ; and that is what people mean, or at least a part of what they mean, when they talk about the mind of France or the soul of France.

Groups differ very much in size and duration and in range and depth of influence. In size they vary from a couple of persons, a young married pair for instance, up to the hundred and seventy millions of

Soviet Russia. In duration they vary from the voluntary society formed half an hour ago to the Chinese Empire, which has had a continuous existence of several thousand years. Sometimes they only touch a small part of a man's life, as a tennis club will do ; sometimes they will affect his life at many points as a State will do. Sometimes they affect a man's thoughts and feelings deeply, sometimes only lightly.

Professor McDougall has given us a classic exposition of the conditions necessary for a highly developed group life.

First of all, there must be continuity, either material or formal, and usually both. Material continuity means that the same human beings are brought into contact over a considerable period of time. Clearly there can be no group consciousness of any strength in a rapidly changing assembly of persons, let us say the travellers at a large railway terminus. But if the travellers meet day after day, and frequently make their journey in the same compartment, there may grow a rudimentary group consciousness and even some simple group action, such as petitioning the railway company to put on more smoking carriages. The more important groups, such as the family, the Church, the nation, have a great deal of this material continuity. Formal continuity means that whilst there may be a fairly rapid change of personnel, the rules and customs under which the members of the group live remain

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the same or are only changed gradually. Thus the undergraduates coming up to a university for the first time find regulations and routines waiting for them ; thus, a number of manual workers reaching a new industrial district may not know one another, but they do know trade union practices, and that helps them to form a group quickly.

The second condition of a strong group life, says Professor McDougall, is that members of the group shall have an idea of the group, shall recognize its existence and its distinctive nature, and their membership of it. A description of a group often helps immensely towards realization of the group by those who are members of it. When Karl Marx and his friends described the proletariat, those workers who have nothing to live on but the sale of their labour, they made easier (as they meant to do) the development of a group feeling among such men. Many sorts of devices are used to impress the existence of a group on the consciousness of its members : the wearing of ribbons, badges, distinctive dress ; the observance of special days ; the singing of special songs ; processions and displays. All of these help to heighten consciousness of the group.

In the third place consciousness of group is much stimulated by interaction with other groups, and especially by conflict. It is a disagreeable truth that dislike and fear of foreigners have played as great a part, probably a greater part, in building up patriotic sentiment, as love of one's fellow countrymen. On

a smaller scale, political parties obviously flourish on strife. More pleasantly, the sense of school or college is fostered by emulation with other schools and colleges. Civic life is often heightened in a town by rivalry with a neighbouring town. The outward and formal life of a religious denomination is often the stronger because there is keen rivalry with some other denomination.

Fourthly, as time passes, a group acquires traditions, and a number of sentiments grow up round it. Buildings acquire hallowed memories, leaders pass into a legend, a literature accumulates, customs and stories have links with childhood days. The existence of the group is no longer a naked fact, it is clothed in romantic associations ; it is the focus of a complex sentiment, often of immense power. Moreover, participation in the life of a group is in itself pleasurable to most men. Each comes to identify his interests with those of the group, and its interests with his. The schoolboy feels a glow of pleasure when his school team wins the match, though he may not be a member of the team. The citizen of a defeated nation feels a personal humiliation when his country loses territory or status.

These traditions and these sentiments take time to develop, so that a group which has been in existence many years is likely to have a stronger hold on its members than a new group. The older universities have this advantage over the newer universities, the Church of England over many of the Nonconformist

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denominations, and nations and governments of long standing over new nations and new governments. Amongst the difficulties against which the League of Nations has had to contend has been its newness and rawness ; it has of necessity lacked the history and the tradition which might bind men to it in reverence and affection. Also it has badly lacked symbols : well-known flag, its own song or hymn, yearly festival, impressive pageantry, devices to grip men's imaginations.

And fifthly, Professor McDougall laid it down that there must be organization if there is to be effective group life. Except in very simple groups, such as the family, there must be machinery for informing members on matters which concern the group, there must be machinery for discussion and formation of opinion, there must be machinery for taking decisions and for getting decisions carried out. Clubs of all kinds have their committee meetings, their annual reports, their standing regulations, their officers ; and without these they could scarcely keep together. And in the larger groups such as a nation or a great Church or a great profession, it is only when organization is reasonably efficient that there can be any real meaning in such phrases as the national mind, the national will, or the mind or will of any other kind of group.

Where the conditions exist for a well-defined group life, the members of the group will be to a

high degree like-minded. They need not be, probably will not be, like-minded with regard to matters not concerning closely the interests of the group ; members of a society for protecting animals may belong to any of the political parties, and on political matters they will think very differently, but they will be like-minded on the subject of animals. Even with regard to the special interests of a group, like-mindedness does not necessarily mean thinking the same. Indeed, a divergence of opinion, and a clash of wills, is a sign of life within the group. But underlying the differences there will be a deep unity of thought and feeling concerning the things which matter most to the group. The members of the different political parties have very different ideas as to what should be done for the good of England, but they all wish for the good of England : loyalty to the nation is stronger than their disagreements. Doctors have their differences and their jealousies like other people ; but as members of the medical profession they tend to look in much the same way at such questions as medical etiquette, the control of medical men by laymen, and the professional scale of salaries for the public services.

We are now in a position to be a little more precise as to what is meant by a "group mind." Let us consider, for instance, what is meant when we speak of the mind of the French nation. It is a body of thought and feeling which consists of part of the thoughts and feelings of each of the forty

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million or so individuals who compose the French nation, of that part of their thinking and feeling which has relation to the individual's life as a Frenchman, and has been influenced by all the special experiences of a Frenchman. French men and women, like the rest of us, think and feel in many different ways according to their temperament, education, and circumstances. Some are Christians while others are agnostics, some are employers while others are employed, some are townsmen while others are peasants, and there are many other groupings. But because they all speak the French tongue, because they have all been nourished on French literature and French history, because they are all subject to the same French institutions, because a sense of French nationality has been fostered in them, they do, over a wide range of subjects, think and feel much the same, and as none who are not French can think and feel. There is doubtless variation of thought and feeling within the group, even with regard to the affairs and interests of France and things French ; and men will range all the way from the man who would be described as French of the French to the exceptional man who would be considered very un-French in his way of thinking. But the main trend of thought and feeling will be in certain well recognized directions. And this existence of a number of similar minds, or rather of minds similar in these respects, produces the effect of one great mind. If you question Frenchmen you will get an

impressive similarity of response over a wide range of topics. And also, because of social tradition, that is to say the way in which institutions and customs and attitudes are passed down from generation to generation, there is not merely a similarity between Frenchmen of the present time but also between Frenchmen of different generations over many centuries. This uniformity and persistence of mental quality produces on us the effect of a single mind which does not die as individual men and women die. And that, I think, is what we mean when we use such an expression as "the soul of France." It is a great convenience of language to speak of the mind of the French nation, or the soul of France ; and there is no harm in doing so if we remember that the terms are only a kind of shorthand, a convenient abbreviation for the general trend of thought and feeling of members of the French nation with regard to matters in which their nationality is concerned.

Of course, in speaking of the French nation we have only taken one example ; it would have suited the purpose equally well to have spoken of the Danish nation or the Dutch nation, or to have taken such a group as the Methodist Church or the legal profession. Of all these, and of many other groups, we can employ with due caution such expressions as mind and will. And indeed, provided we understand very clearly what we mean by the expressions, we may attribute to groups most of the qualities

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which we attribute to individuals. A group can be intelligent or unintelligent, selfish or unselfish, hasty or cautious. There can be group pride, group humility, group aggressiveness, group forbearance, group repentance.

The mental life of an individual may be inconstant, confused, and difficult to interpret. Far more so is the mental life of a group. It is difficult to know how much weight is to be attached to the expressions of different individuals or different sections. Foreigners can easily mistake the thought of Paris for the thought of France. With regard to moral decisions, responsibility is usually widely diffused, and it is extremely difficult to allocate and to estimate it. A nation goes to war ; we say that the nation willed it ; but who really made the decision ? When we speak of the will of a group there is all the difference in the world between the will of a group consisting of intelligent and educated men, whose affairs are managed under genuinely democratic conditions, and the will of a group of ignorant men, despotically governed. To elucidate the meaning of group mind and group will, and to indicate the conditions favourable to the formation of true group decisions, are part of the tasks of political science and of political philosophy.

Groups of all kinds can easily become anti-social in attitude and act. In the case of families such behaviour often takes the form of nepotism, more

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or less conscious ; influence is used to secure for a member of the family an appointment or a concession which he or she might not obtain on mere personal merit. It is not difficult to perceive in English life the working of a similar bias amongst those who have received similar education at school or university. In the case of towns, lack of consideration for other towns may be displayed in such matters as the acquisition of water supplies. Trade unions and strongly organized professions may use their strength to be obstructive and extortionate. Those who know the field of philanthropic effort are well aware that voluntary societies are often possessive and inconsiderate of the interests of other societies. Churches can be petty in their dealings with other Churches. Social classes have often struggled hard to retain their privileges at the expense of the non-privileged. It is the continual temptation of political parties to sacrifice wider interests in order to score points over rival parties. That nations can be greedy and selfish is painfully obvious. Indeed, there is no form of group which is not liable to become selfish in its relations with other groups. This tendency to group selfishness is something against which members of a group should be on guard, whilst those outside the group must be prepared to resist and to control the anti-social behaviour to which it may lead.

Group selfishness is an insidious growth because it can arise so easily out of the very devotion which

the group excites in its members. It is easy to suppose that qualities displayed by members in relation to their groups, such qualities as loyalty and serviceableness and subordination of particular interests, are guarantees of similar qualities of the group in its dealings with outsiders. Yet this is clearly a fallacy. We must not argue from attitude *to* the group to attitude *of* the group. The fact that hundreds of men are loyal to their trade union is no proof that the trade union is observing its obligations. The willingness of thousands of men to die for their country is not conclusive proof that their country is pursuing a noble course, or even a just course. Unselfish behaviour towards the group is quite compatible with participation in group selfishness.

It is also unsafe to argue from group conduct to the general character of the individuals composing the group. Indeed, it is a matter of common observation that individuals may be considerably better or considerably worse than their conduct in a particular sphere of life would seem to indicate. Hard business men may be generous to their domestic staffs. Pedantic scholars may exhibit a sense of proportion outside their special studies. Men intolerant in their churchmanship may be accommodating in non-ecclesiastical matters. The outstanding example in contemporary civilization of distinctive behaviour in a distinctive sphere is that afforded by our international relations. Here the standards of veracity and of fidelity to obligations are notably lower than

in most other spheres of conduct. And the same men and women who behave with much decency, honesty, and kindness in most relationships of life do, as citizens of a State, consent to and participate in devilries in comparison with which the cannibalism of savages is an inoffensive foible. Yet we know that these men and women, whether they belong to our nation or to some other nation, are not devils ; they are for the most part ordinarily affectionate husbands and parents, reasonably honest merchants or manufacturers or workmen, fairly good citizens and fairly good neighbours.

Clearly we must seek for an explanation of these discrepancies of outlook and of conduct in the nature, structure, and history of the various social groups. The same men behave differently in different groupings because they are subjected to the pressure of different traditions, different ideals, different social institutions. Of some of the pressures men may be unaware ; they are an accustomed atmosphere which they breathe without knowing it. Of others they may be aware, but they see as yet no escape from them. Men may diverge more or less from the forms of conduct in their groups, but the latitude of divergence possible is seldom wide. Often there is a heavy time-lag with regard to social traditions and social institutions. These may embody the circumstances and the ideas of a past generation, and they may be no longer appropriate to the needs of the group, nor congruous with the general body of contem-

porary morality. Yet they may be hard to change. Social institutions, in particular, are often very tenacious of existence, because they only require passive acquiescence for continuance, whilst it usually requires positive and concerted action to change them or to end them.

Whilst it is true that men may live at very different moral levels in different spheres of their lives, and that the behaviour of groups of different kinds may be on very different moral levels, yet it does not follow that these differing moralities are entirely unrelated, entirely without mutual influence. Ideas have a way of seeping from one sphere of life to another sphere of life. It has been pointed out in earlier chapters that ideals of conduct derived from the pattern of family life and from the conventions of the play group have been applied to other spheres of human life and are powerfully operative. It is one of the stock devices of the reformer to point to the accepted morality of one sphere of human life and to show that conduct in some other sphere of human life falls below it. Sooner or later, discrepancies in moralities are realized, if only by a few. When sufficient members of a group feel sufficiently keenly that the traditions and the practices of their group are on a low moral plane, then there follows commonly a process of education and of agitation which may result in a changed code of conduct and in changed institutions. The pressure of the group upon its members is then in the new direction sup-

porting the new morality. Thus, some of the members of a town council may be uneasily aware of corruption in municipal business, and they will communicate their uneasiness to others. When a sufficient number of councillors feel as they do, not only will the atmosphere of the council be very different, but the reforming members will try to secure the adoption of new standing orders with regard to the opening of tenders, the sealing of contracts, canvassing for appointments, and so forth. If they succeed, the town council, by a corporate act, will have safeguarded itself against the weaknesses of its individual members. It is, of course, also possible for change to take place in the reverse direction, for the code and the institutions of a group to be adjusted to a lower morality.

Such changes as those just described are brought about by action within the group. But groups, like individuals, may also be changed for better or for worse by the actions and influence of outsiders. Groups of all kinds are subjected to the pressure of public opinion ; and many groups are subjected to some measure of control by the State or by some other regulative body, and these may not only regulate their external behaviour but may also regulate their internal structure. We may cite as illustrations the Companies Act, the Friendly Societies Act, and the Trade Union Act ; or we may recall the conditions of membership laid down by such bodies as the Football Association and the discipline

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exercised by them. Such pressure and controls may produce in a group, as in an individual, anything between mere outward conformity and a genuine and cordial acceptance of a new outlook.

Any application of ethical conceptions to group life should take into account the limitations of interest and of purpose of the group. A tennis club is not under any moral obligation to take action with regard to prison reform, nor is a shipping company under any moral obligation to concern itself with the housing of agricultural workers. Such duties as their members have with regard to these subjects are best discharged in other ways and through other groupings. But the tennis club and the shipping company are under moral obligation to act justly within their spheres of interests and of impacts. What those spheres are may not be easy to define, and it may be that the groups will conceive them too narrowly. A group does not divest itself of its moral responsibilities by disclaiming them, nor are they non-existent because they are not perceived. To illustrate concretely, there is a growing body of opinion that a mining company has not fulfilled all its social obligations if it leaves behind it a devastated countryside and a derelict population. Yet obligation in respect of these is not yet generally admitted, and it would certainly have been disclaimed during the last century.

It is also necessary to bear in mind the diffusion of responsibility in the case of groups. The fact

that responsibility is diffused does not mean that it ceases to exist ; it may mean that special devices should be sought to bring a realization of it to the members of the group and to enable them to discharge it. But since what is done by a group, if it really represents the mind of the group, is done as the result of processes of information and consultation and decision, there must often be delay and compromise. Groups may not, therefore, be able to act as promptly as individuals can do ; and they are seldom in a position to act as generously or as self-sacrificingly as an individual may do. Their agents are inevitably restricted in some degree by their sense of accountability to the group. Groups, therefore, acting corporately, cannot as a rule achieve such heights of disinterested action as are possible to individuals.

Finally, popular thinking about the ethics of group behaviour is frequently vitiated by one of several fallacies. The first of these is to consider groups as if they were individuals, and to apply to them without qualification the criteria applied to individual conduct. A second fallacy is to apply without qualification to each individual member of the group the judgment which is applied to the group as a whole. Thirdly, the applicability of ethical principles to group behaviour may be denied ; or at least it may be held to be so obscure as to offer no guidance in practical affairs. All of these views are defective, and arise from a defective understanding

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of the nature of group life. In view of the great importance of corporate relationships in modern society, it is much to be wished that more attention should be given to the difficult and neglected subject of the ethics of group behaviour.

CHAPTER XI

THE IDEA OF MANKIND AS INCLUSIVE GROUP

As membership of a social group becomes more sharply defined, more organized, it unites a number of men and women with one another more closely, but also it marks them off more sharply from those outside the group. It increases co-operation, but it increases also the possibilities of conflict. And this co-operation and this conflict may be between groups of the same kind, or between groups of a different kind. As an example of co-operation on a big scale between groups of the same kind we may think of the international postal service, in which all States in the civilized world work together with remarkably little friction, so that a letter posted in Honduras will be delivered in Persia, or a letter posted in Malay will reach Iceland. Or in the sphere of religion, there are such bodies as the Temperance Council of the Christian Churches in this country, or the International Missionary Council. Or again, with regard to occupational groups there is a great network of allied or federated trade unions and a

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similar network of employers' associations ; and there are a number of Joint Industrial Councils, Conciliation Boards, and other bodies on which workers' associations and employers' associations are both represented, much of it working very successfully, very smoothly.

Of course, there is also conflict between groups of similar nature, wars and threats of wars between States, bickerings between Churches, disputes between trade unions, divergent interests of great industries.

And in the same way groups which are different in nature may co-operate, may be in conflict. In many countries Church and State work in harmony, but history tells us of plenty of quarrels between Church and State. The State and the trade unions may co-operate ; in this country the State is making ever-increasing use of the trade unions in such matters as the work of Trade Boards, the drafting of new regulations for dangerous industries ; and in a great number of ways the State and the trade unions work together smoothly and efficiently. Yes, but also there may be grave conflict between them ; we all remember the General Strike of 1926.

And all of us are members not of one group only but of many groups, involved, whether we like it or not, in co-operation and in conflict with members of other groups. Our country may go to war ; our Church may be engaged in bitter struggle, perhaps over such a subject as education ; our trade union

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may declare a strike. And, what is perhaps one of the most perplexing and distressing things in life, different groups of which we are members may make claims upon us which are hard to reconcile. It may be that while our Church is telling us to love peace, our State is pursuing an aggressive policy which will lead the country into war. The dilemma is familiar, it is put here in its simplest form, but usually it comes to men in a more complicated form than that. There may be a conflict between family ties and public duty, or supposed public duty. Do you remember the dreadful stage direction in *King Henry VI.*, that Elizabethan play about the Wars of the Roses: "Enter a son who has killed his father and a father who has killed his son"? Or there may be a conflict between the claims on a man of his family and the teaching of his Church, as when a man can see his way to a livelihood only in some occupation which his Church holds to be harmful. Or a man may find that his political party is proposing a course of action which is against the interests of the district in which he grew up and which he loves. And there are many other ways in which we may be pulled in opposite directions by loyalties to conflicting groups, to both of which we belong.

Now, inevitably there frames itself in many minds at some such stage the question whether there does not exist, or might not be brought into existence, some inclusive group, bigger and broader than any of the groups we know. Because, if we could find

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such a group, then we should owe to it a peculiarly strong loyalty ; and though this would by no means solve for us all our problems of conflicting loyalties, yet it would give us some guidance in dealing with them.

Is there such an inclusive group ?

The answer given to this question by many readers would probably be Mankind, Humanity, the Human Race ; perhaps by those who are theologically minded, the Kingdom of God. I think that some such answer is right. They all make the assumption that men have important characteristics in common, which should give rise to a consciousness of likeness, and to a sense of mutual obligations. The theological answer is the widest ; it takes into account not only men, but all living beings whom the universe may hold. But it is not intended here to enter on questions of theology, and the discussion will be confined to the question—wide enough in all truth—whether we can regard the whole human population of the earth as a single group.

It must be realized at the outset that any such proposition involves tremendous assumptions ; and that we need to be on our guard against sentimentality. We must be careful not to confuse what some day may be with what now is ; and, still further, not to mistake for fact, or for practicable ideal, some golden dream of ours which has no foundation, some cobweb spun by our fancy out of our wishes.

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How is it that there has come to be in many minds an idea of Humanity as a single group? Behind it there lie long centuries of gropings of thought. It seems to be somewhat less than three thousand years ago that the idea took shape that all men form a single group, that all men have an essential nature in common, that all men have rights and duties in respect of all other men with whom they come into contact. Certainly, as early as the sixth century before Christ, such ideas are to be found in the prophecies of the second Isaiah. And in China and in India about this time, and a little later in Greece, there are teachings of similar nature. It is from such sources, especially from the Hebrew source, that the idea has come to us, and is now so familiar that many of us take it for granted.

But there are some, it must be remembered, who deny it; there are those who say that there is not one human race, but many human races; who deny that nations and States have any duties except to their own citizens; and who do not allow that there are principles of right and wrong binding on all men, everywhere and always. In short, they say that Humanity or Mankind is an empty term with no practical significance.

And if we take as a test, not what men say but what they do, there is much to strengthen this denial that Mankind can be considered as a group comparable to those which we have been discussing. If any large proportion of men felt an obligation to

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Mankind as a whole, or to individual men merely because they were men, past history and present happenings would be very different. The early European settlers in other continents showed for the most part little sense of kinship with the natives whom they found, and whom in some cases they exterminated. The slave traders of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had no strong sense of common humanity with the negroes whom they stole from their homes, shipped across the Atlantic, and sold off in the New World. And it is not difficult to find illustrations in the world of to-day of the lack of a sense of common humanity. Even if the idea of Mankind as an inclusive group can be formed and entertained, even if it be accepted in theory, it may be asked whether it has any practical consequences. Will men feel any loyalty to such a group? Is it possible to make the ordinary man realize such a group? Could such a group be organized?

Let us try to answer the questions in the light of something that was said in the last chapter about the conditions necessary for a highly developed group life, namely, there must be both material and formal continuity. By the former is meant that there must be sufficient and sufficiently continuous contact between men to make them a group. Is that condition fulfilled for men as a whole? Obviously, it has been getting nearer fulfilment, and by rapid strides of late. It is a commonplace that the world is being unified; modern science is conquering time and

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space. From London it is as easy to go to-day to Bucharest as it was in the eighteenth century to go to Edinburgh, even easier. We know far more about what happened in Spain and in China yesterday than a Shropshire man a hundred years ago would have known about what had happened the previous day in Dorset. Events in any part of the world may affect men living in any other part of the world. It is true in this sense to say that the greater part of the population of the world is closer knit to-day than was the population of this island at the time of the Norman Conquest. And whilst there is much less of what McDougall calls formal continuity, that is to say of well recognized and stable customs and rules of life, yet this is not entirely lacking. Practically the whole world has in common a number of major social institutions such as marriage, property, the State, though it is true that these differ widely in form in different parts of the world. A man traveling about the world finds much to surprise him, but also much that is familiar, in social arrangements.

It must be recognized, however, that the degree of contact and of assimilation has been very unequal on different planes of life. On the physical plane there has been great inter-penetration; there has been inter-penetration on the mental plane also, but to a much less extent. We meet, we trade, we hear of one another's doings, but do we understand one another? It is comparatively easy to travel into other people's countries, but can we travel into other people's minds

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and explore them? And do we like people any better because we come more into contact with them? It was the belief of many of the great Victorian statesmen and writers that the growth of trade between the nations would lead to friendship between them. It has not always proved to be so. Men all over the world are using the same kinds of machinery to-day, the same modes of travel. But do they think the same kind of thoughts, and cherish the same kind of ideals? Are they developing like-mindedness?

That is not so easy to assess. There has been a good deal of contact of ideas, cross-fertilization of minds. European political ideas have travelled to the East and have set up a great ferment. The East knows of our religion, and we have learned about the religions of the East, and that also has set up a ferment. Some tastes and amusements are now common to almost the whole world; it is probable that more persons have joined in laughter at Charlie Chaplin than have ever united in loyalty to any creed, religious or political. But that is unity on the surface of things; it is more doubtful whether any real unity has been achieved in things that matter. There is not much evidence of growing like-mindedness with regard to political or religious ideals.

To pass to another point, no large group can have an effective existence unless it is adequately organized; there must be the means of collecting and disseminating information, there must be machinery

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of discussion, there must be the means to take decisions and to ensure that they are carried out. Could the whole population of the world be organized ?

There is no reason to think that the difficulties are insuperable. Difficulties there are, of course, of numbers and distances and languages. But these difficulties are far less formidable to-day than they were a few generations ago. With modern means of communication it should not be more difficult to organize the life of the world to-day than it was to organize the life of this country ten centuries ago. And actually the social life of the world has been organized in some aspects of it with remarkable success. Reference has already been made to the international postal service ; it is possible to drop a letter in a post-box in Athens and to have it delivered in Valparaiso. It is possible to turn up a time-table and to find how to get by air liner to most parts of the world. It is possible to walk into an office in Geneva, or in London, and to get information about Labour conditions in any part of the civilized world. It is possible to study the statistics of disease and death, and to find them classified in the same way in every civilized country. It is possible to tune in one's wireless set to a large number of stations, each of which has its own wave length. All this did not just happen ; it had to be arranged. And there is no reason why organization should not go a good deal further. Certainly, before

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the whole population of the world can be regarded as one highly developed group, it must evolve an organ of government, and this organ of government must have more authority and command more loyalty than the League of Nations ever has done. It must be made impossible for nations to adhere when it suits them, and to resign when it no longer suits them, to accept decisions which they like, and to ignore those which they do not like. It may not be possible or desirable to have an elaborate unified government for the whole world ; but it is necessary, if the unity of mankind is to be more than a meaningless phrase, that where necessary any particular State shall bow to the decisions of a Council of all the States. We can more easily believe in such a possibility if we remember that there are already States in existence which include very different communities, whose citizens speak several languages, and are of diverse religions and of widely divergent races.

There is much else to encourage us. After all, this unity of mankind has not got to be created entirely by us and out of nothing ; in some aspects it exists already, has always existed since man first appeared. It does not seem to be established certainly whether the existing human races had one origin, or whether several races evolved independently ; but in any case it is agreed that all the races of mankind are divided by a great gulf from the nearest animals. And widely though men differ from one another, they have got a common mental and emotional

make-up. We have yet to discover the branch of the human race which does not believe that two and two make four ; or where mothers do not love their young ; or where men do not feel curiosity, show fear, and show resentment at injuries. In short, all men exhibit the same fundamental emotions and mental processes, though often curiously disguised and distorted. Shylock's great plea for the Jews is valid for all peoples : " Hath not a Jew eyes ? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, affections, passions ? . . . If you tickle us, do we not laugh ? If you poison us, do we not die ? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge ? " In short, Jews are essentially like other human beings. And there are no groups of human beings of whom the same cannot be said. Therefore, there is a unity of mankind already in existence, a unity of nature upon which we can build if we wish to do so.

But we do not always perceive clearly this unity under all the diversity which also marks the human race. We cannot understand one another without a great effort, and we have need to practise social imagination. Men and women sometimes speak of loving the human race. How can any one love a vast number of persons, most of whom he can never meet ? We cannot feel for the black man in a Rhodesian copper mine, or towards the Chinese shopkeeper, or even for thousands of our own countrymen, the same warm sense of fellowship which we have with our families and our neighbours.

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But what we can do is to train ourselves to remember, in any consideration of them or others, that their lives are just as vivid and just as important to them as our lives are to us, that they have thoughts and feelings which are fundamentally like ours, though often superficially different from ours ; and that the kind of treatment we should resent, they will probably resent. And we can be helped immensely by all those books, of which there are so many to-day, which seek to interpret the life of one nation to another nation, of one social class to another social class, of one religious group to another religious group. In such a way, by an effort of the mind and of the will, we can approximate to the scriptural injunction to love our neighbours as ourselves.

The unification of the world which physical science is bringing about, presses upon us a challenge to accomplish mental and spiritual unification also. The plain fact is that unless we do extend the unification to the spiritual plane, our very physical triumphs become a great danger to us. It would be better not to have any relations with foreign countries than to have the kind of relations which in some cases exist to-day. Observe what is taking place. Physical science has made it more easy for us to travel than formerly, more easy to send goods than formerly, more easy to communicate than formerly. But what are the nations doing ? They are making it harder to travel than formerly ; they are stiffening passport regulations and visa regulations, forbidding

emigration and immigration, restricting supplies of currencies to travellers. They are multiplying tariffs and quotas, so that we shall not move goods, though we could do so. They are censoring newspapers, forbidding the circulation of books, sometimes jamming broadcasts, so that we shall not communicate with one another. Indeed, what physical science is making possible, the statesman is often making impossible. And what does that mean? It means that mankind dare not use to the full the resources of physical science, because we are so far from unity in things of the mind and spirit. And it is a reasonably safe prophecy that this bringing to nothing the gifts of science will proceed much further; that, unless we make progress very soon and very quickly on the moral plane, our science and our physical achievements will decline.

But even if there should be a setback, even if our worst fears should be realized and this civilization should collapse, a similar situation would probably present itself again, perhaps after centuries. Physical science would again link up the earth; and once more men would be presented with a challenge to attain like-mindedness, to create the organization which a world society demands. There might again be failure, perhaps many failures; but it is difficult to think that the challenge would not at length be accepted.

My conclusion, therefore, is that mankind as an inclusive group is already partly a fact; men are

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one group in virtue of what is common in their natures. It is partly a fact, in so far as physical science has linked up the whole earth. It is far from being an accomplished fact in the matter of ideas and sympathies and organization. But such unity on the mental and spiritual planes is badly needed if the achievements of physical science are to be maintained, and this need constitutes a pressure which is likely ultimately to produce the intellectual and moral efforts necessary. It is helpful that the idea of a spiritual unity of mankind has emerged, has been with us for some thousands of years, and has won some measure of acceptance. The idea of a minimum of political unity for mankind has also emerged, much later ; and it, too, has won a certain amount of assent. Such ideas tend to realize themselves though often very slowly. How slowly ? How quickly ? That is a matter which is to a very considerable extent within the choice of men.

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