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Ph. II. Thesis

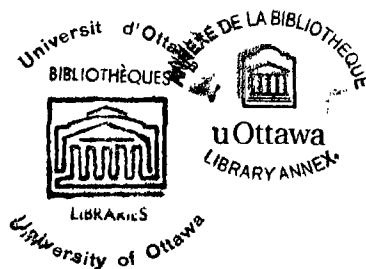
CHESTERTON'S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC VIEWS
AS EXPRESSED IN HIS WORKS.

by

FLYING OFFICER J.W. CURLEY, R.C.A.F.

1942

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CHESTERTON'S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC VIEWS AS EXPRESSED IN
HIS WORKS.

Outline of Thesis.

PART ONE

1. POLITICAL BELIEFS.

A. THE RIGHTS OF MAN ARE BUILT ON CHRISTIANITY.

- (a) All modern virtues, most modern heresies, originally Christian.
- (b) Christianity the first religion to attack slavery, denial of liberty. All humanitarian creeds are based on the fundamental theological assumption of ~~the~~ "the God in man."

References: THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND CONVERSION, ALL I SURVEY, HERETICS, ORTHODOXY, THE THING, AMERICAN CRITICISM(Norman Foerster) AUTOBIOGRAPHY, THE EVERLASTING MAN.

B. THE PROBLEM OF EVIL, ITS ORIGIN, NATURE AND IMPLICATIONS.

- (a) The doctrine of the Fall.--"In so far as I am man I am the chief of creatures. In so far as I am a man I am the chief of sinners.(ORTHODOXY).
- (b) All men subject to ordinary human limitations
- (c) Derivation of doctrine of equality of men
 - (1) By their greatness all men equal.---All of the image of God.
 - (2) By their weakness all men equal---None can escape the fundamental problem of life.

References: ORTHODOXY, HERETICS, AUTOBIOGRAPHY, THE THING, THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS; COME TO THINK OF IT.

C. PRIDE AND LIMITED LIBERTY MAN'S GREATEST WEAKNESSES.

- (a) (1) Prone to error as result of pride. Satan.
 - (2) More likely to fall when elevated. Special dangers of the rich.
- (b) True liberty not sheer unlimited revolt.(against Nietzsche).
 - (2) Special joy of man limited: Man's pleasure is to possess conditions and be possessed by them.

References:THE DEFENDANT, AUTOBIOGRAPHY, ALARUMS AND DISCURSIONS, THE MAN WHO WAS THURSDAY, ORTHODOXY, HERETICS, ALL IS GRIST, THE NAPOLEON OF NOTTINGHILL, WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD.

D. DEMOCRACY THE BEST POLITICAL SYSTEM TO FULFIL THE
FUNDAMENTAL NECESSITIES OF SOCIETY.

- (a) The two essential aspects of human nature which society must observe are:
 - (1) Man's divine right to liberty and fair government.
 - (2) Man's human weakness.
- (b) Chesterton's notion of democracy and how this democracy fulfils these needs.
- (c) Democracy insists on the fundamental rights of man
 - (1) Government by the people
 - (2) Recognizes human weakness
 - (3) (i) aims to make the average man govern
 - (ii) Government by experts not satisfactory.
- (d) Democracy protects man's rights and equality.
 - (1) By private property.
 - (2) By the home.
- (e) Democracy alone satisfies the varied needs of human nature.
 - (1) modern attacks---morality regarded as dull.
 - (2) Chesterton defends morality as romantic.
 - (3) Defense of home and property, liberty and equality only rationalizations of an ultimate religious attitude of mind. (French Revolution).

References: HERETICS, BERNARD SHAW, WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD, AS I WAS SAYING, ORTHODOXY, TREMENDOUS TRIFLES, ALL I SURVEY, THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS, THE POET AND THE LUNATICS, MANALIVE, THE DEFENDANT, THE NEW JERUSALEM.

E. DEMOCRACY EXISTS ONLY THEORETICALLY.

- (a) Modern government not truly representative.
 - (1) It costs too much for the poor man to be elected.
 - (2) People have no real voice in their own government.
 - (3) Imperialism is anti-democratic.
 - (4) As evidenced in the growth of dictatorship. *(due to corruption of parliam)*
- (b) Chesterton conceived the modern form of democracy as arising with the French Revolution.
- (c) Democracy's growth was stifled by capitalism and industrialism.

References: A MISCELLANY OF MEN, AUTOBIOGRAPHY, THE NAPOLEON OF NOTTING HILL, AS I WAS SAYING, WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD, COME TO THINK OF IT, THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS, BROWNING, COBBETT, ALL I SURVEY, "The Secret People".

F. REASONS FOR OUR SLOTH IN BUILDING UP TRUE DEMOCRACY.

Results of political conditions described in (E): Unhappiness and insecurity.

- (a) Our hindrances to reform: capitalism and the state of mind induced by the evolutionary theory. (Darwinian).
 - (1) Effect of Darwinian theory on human conditions
 - (i) urges man to adapt himself to his conditions instead of building social system on the rights of man.
 - "Thinking backwards": Taking the means as the end increases our evils. Chesterton's view.
 - (2) Survival of the fittest equated with inevitable progress.
 - "You can't put the clock back."--Principles abandoned--Capitalism for its own ends avails itself of the use of "evolutionary" philosophy.--Progress not proved. Scientific materialism has evolved a people who can be oppressed.---Capitalism forces life into a framework of employment and destroys the independence of the home and private property.---Machines improved, but has man? Chesterton's viewpoint:
 - (i) Effects of capitalism on family life.
 - (ii) Modern finance denial of private property and the family.
 - (iii) His conclusion justified to-day.
 - (iv) Capitalism destruction of peasant type.
 - (vi) Capitalism makes factory instead of home centre of life.

References: AS I WAS SAYING, TREMENDOUS TRIFLES, WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD, ORTHODOXY, GENERALLY SPEAKING, THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS, ON DICKENS, COME TO THINK OF IT, EUGENICS AND OTHER MODERN EVILS, FANCIES VERSUS FADS, COBBETT, THE SUPERSTITION OF DIVORCE.

PART TWO.

ECONOMIC VIEWS.

A. ~~EX~~ CRITICISM OF THE THEORY OF PROGRESS.

- (a) Man has produced the present system. He has free will. It is not a question of whether present states are inevitable but whether they are right or wrong.
- (b) The aim of society is to produce happiness. If industrialism cannot do so another system should be tried.
- (c) Great example of history. The French Revolution. Old system discarded, new established.
- (d) If Capitalism has destroyed the home and private property, restore these. Do not advocate their abolishment as the socialists do. (Against socialism as advocated by Shaw and by Wells.)
- (e) Revolution needed for reform--the mediæval state founded on private property and the family was a better and saner attempt than ours. Trade and capitalism have destroyed the guild and the peasant. We must re-institute the old principles. There must be a fixed ideal and a sudden revolution for it, not a vague futuristic dream with a slow evolution to it. (Against both compromise and Darwinism).

References: Essays. ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD, AS I WAS SAYING, TREMENDOUS TRIFLES, THE OUTLINE OF SANITY, HERETICS, COBBETT, ALL I SURVEY, EVERLASTING MAN, GEORGE BERNARD SHAW.

B. DISTRIBUTISM.

Chesterton adopted Distributism as an alternate economic scheme. ---Like socialism it is a denial of capitalism; unlike socialism it is not an heir to capitalism. It observes the fundamental needs of human nature. Its main aim: To secure the restoration of liberty by the distribution of ownership.

- (a) Origin--and Sketch of Sources of Distributism. Real founder Hilaire Belloc. Idea not new. It is implicit in Catholicism and explicit in Pope Leo's Encyclical "Rerum Novarum". Belloc did invent the thing as a system of practical economics and as an alternative to Capitalism and its offspring Communism
- (b) Principles of Distributism. Family is the unit of the state. The state exists to defend the family. Property defended. The accumulation of wealth in a few hands, is the negation of the idea of property, and leads, equally with Socialism, to slavery. The family needs property in order to defend itself and be free. Hence Distributism, a wider distribution of ownership.
- (c) G.K.'s WEEKLY. This paper the organ of Distributism. History of---Contributions to the Cause.
- (d) The Distributist League. Founding of. Chesterton president. Objects of League.
 - (1) To reform present state of political corruption.
 - (2) To secure restoration of those liberties of the subject abrogated during and since the War.
 - (3) To prevent the establishment of the Servile State in Great Britain.
 - (4) To work for the establishment of the Distributist State in Great Britain.
 - (5) To organize the collection and distribution of information on these points.
- (e) Manifesto of Distributism.
 - (1) Economic
 - (2) Property
 - (3) Machinery
 - (4) Money
 - (5) Guilds
 - (6) The State
 - (7) Agriculture and Self Sufficiency
 - (8) The Fiscal Question

C. SUMMARY OF CHESTERTON'S THESIS, THAT SMALL PROPERTY BE REVIVED AS SET FORTH IN HIS OUTLINE OF SANITY.

- 1. Some General Ideas.
- 2. Some Aspects of Big Business
- 3. Some Aspects of the Land
- 4. Some Aspects of Machinery
- 5. A Note on Immigration
- 6. A Brief Summary.

Reference: THE OUTLINE OF SANITY.

D. CHESTERTON'S ATTACKS ON EXISTING AND PROPOSED POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS, as found in

- (a) His poems
- (b) His Novels,
- (c) His Biography.

References: COLLECTED POEMS OF G.K. CHESTERTON, AUTOBIOGRAPHY, THE NAPOLEON OF NOTTING HILL, EMMANUEL BURDEN(Belloc) THE BALL AND THE CROSS, THE CLUB OF QUEER TRADES, MANALIVE, THE RETURN OF DON QUIXOTE, THE POET AND THE LUNATICS, ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI, CHAUCER, COBBETT, DICKENS.

5. CRITICISM OF CHESTERTON'S VIEWS. (a) ADVERSE, (b) FAVORABLE.

- (a) (1) His back to the land movement over-estimates the happiness to be gained from such a course.
 - (i) Question of its popularity
 - (ii) The limitations of the movement due to lack of land.
 - (iii) Manufacture still necessary to support the population of a country like England.
- (2) Industrialism too has contributed to man's happiness.
- (3) Socialization of some industries necessary. Total industrialization of the state not the aim of all socialists.
- (4) Capitalists not so inhumane as pictured. Examples of benevolence.
- (5) His opinion of Woman Suffrage. WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD. Against votes for women. Men better suited for public life. Home life, the life for woman. Chesterton emphasizes the good points of women and exaggerates the weak qualities of men.
- ((6) Objection to Distributism---chiefly tactical.
- (b) All objections are of detail rather than principle. No political system inevitable unless we make it so. To think of history in terms of inescapable movements is to deny the human will.
 - (1) Chesterton fears powers in the hands of an oligarchy. The history of to-day confirms his good judgment. Nazism. Fascism. Communism.
 - (2) His defence of democratic liberty based on a more realistic knowledge of human weakness. (Religion---The Fall).
 - (3) Chesterton loves men in the concrete. He understands the point of view of the individual person. Humanity too abstract for him. "The most important thing about a workman is that he is a man." It is easy to love humanity; it is difficult to love your neighbor.
 - (4) His discussion of social problems begin with the individual. He demands small political units in which the individual is not lost. He defends the individual against any kind of generalizations, whether it takes the form of capitalism with its laws, or science and its compulsory sanitations.
 - (5) Chesterton holds the home sacred. The wife is queen of the home. He argues against divorce on the ground that it will become common and threaten the vow of marriage. The trend of our time seems to bear out his contention. The trail of the serpent is over all.

References: WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD, THE SUPERSTITION OF DIVORCE, RESTORATION OF PROPERTY (Belloc), DICKENS, AS I WAS SAYING, ORTHODOXY, USES OF DIVERSITY, G.K.'s WEEKLY, GILBERT CHESTERTON IN ENGLISH LETTERS (Belloc). A TRAVERS LE DESASTRE (Jacques Maritain).

CHESTERTON'S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC VIEWS AS EXPRESSED
IN HIS WORKS.

FOREWORD

Chesterton, like his great contemporaries Shaw and Wells, held preconceived notions on political and economic questions. He has written very little on pure politics and economics. Most of his attention is devoted to supporting truths which he thinks he has already discovered.

To place the emphasis on the confirmation rather than on the discovery of truth may be an unscientific attitude; but it is an attitude worthy of study, one whose legitimacy rests on the light it throws on the subjects under disquisition. The chief value of Chesterton's contribution to politics and economics, lies in his two-fold originality---in deduction and in presentation.

Chesterton's method of argument is a cunning, sound, and most effective kind of parallelism. Becoming convinced of Orthodoxy, he became its most brilliant lay-defender with his trenchant and wily attack. By comparing the ideal opposed to Christianity with another aspect of Christianity he illustrated convincingly the breadth, virility and subtleness of the old philosophy in contrast with the new. If Nietzsche scorned the meekness of Christianity, Chesterton stressed its fierceness. Why insist on the "meek and mild" character of Christianity, when the masses were groaning under the oppression of modern Capitalism? Why dwell on the virtue of sacrifice and voluntary renouncement when most people had nothing left to sacrifice and nothing worth renouncing? By exhorting people to wait patiently for their reward in another world when they could not even obtain their due in this, was simply playing into the hands of the adver-

saries of Orthodoxy who stigmatized Christians as the supporters of the rich and labelled their religion an opiate. "I know that the most modern manufacturer has been recently occupied in trying to produce an abnormally large needle. I know that the most recent biologists have been anxious to discover a very small camel. But if we diminish the camel to his smallest, or open the eye of the needle to its largest---if, in short, we assume the words of Christ to have meant the very least that they could mean, His words must at the very least mean this---that rich men are not very likely to be morally trustworthy." (ORTHODOXY). This method of argument was not only sane in itself, but it divulged the sanity of Orthodoxy; it not only gave courage to the people who were ready to abandon Christianity as a useless experiment; but, it filled the hearts of the modern reformers with fear for the success of their proposed ideals. Christianity was not only a suffering religion, it was a fighting religion; Christianity was not dope but dynamite; "Christianity had not been tried and found wanting; it had been found difficult and left untried." (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD).

To take another example, Chesterton pictures Nietzsche and Tolstoy "sitting at the cross-roads", the first willing to take all the roads, the second, refusing to take any. To these great thinkers, Chesterton opposed the simple figure of St. Joan. She did not hesitate. "She chose a path and went down it like a thunderbolt." She had in her "all that was true either in Tolstoy or Nietzsche," pleasure in plain things and reverence for the poor, on the one side; pride and yearning for strength and courage, on the other. "Joan had all that; and with this differ-

ence that she did not praise fighting, but fought..... Tolstoy only praised the peasant, she was the peasant. Nietzsche only praised the warrior; she was the warrior. She beat them both at their own antagonistic ideals; she was more gentle than the one, more violent than the other. Yet she was a perfectly practical person who did something, while they are wild speculators who do nothing."(ORTHODOXY). This passage aptly illustrates the Chestertonian swing of argument. Its élan alone, had the author not dressed the thought in epigrammatic style, would have generated intense mental stimulation in his readers.

But Chesterton's manner of presentation transcends even his method of strategy in discussion. His style and argument are both brilliant. "Because one man is a biped, fifty men are not a centipede" (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD) is a crushing criticism of big business in one little sentence. Paradox, Chesterton's favorite form of statement, abounds in his social and philosophical treatises and derives from the very roots of his philosophy. Man himself is a paradox, "a beast whose superiority to other beasts consists in his having fallen"; while his happiness results from his power to accept contradictions. For example: "The ordinary man has always believed in fate and yet in free will, and that children were indeed of the kingdom of heaven but nevertheless ought to be obedient to the kingdom of earth." He startlingly asserts there is no contradiction between wit and seriousness. "To be witty one must at least think; to be solemn one proceeds merely to use long words" (The Uses of Diversity). And, again, "Pride is the downward drag of all things into easy solemnity.....Seriousness is not a virtue....It is really a natural trend or lapse

into taking one's self gravely because it is the easiest thing to do. It is much easier to write a good TIMES leading article than a good joke for PUNCH. For solemnity flows out of men naturally; but laughter is a leap. It is easy to be heavy; hard to be light. "Satan fell by the force of gravity." (ORTHODOXY). To be added to this is Chesterton's unsurpassed use of imagery in prose. With delightful felicity his images suggest others and an ordered and highly complex structure grows phoenix-like from his original simile. To wit:

In the midst of this little cluster or huddle of low houses rises something of which the spire or tower may be seen for miles. Relatively to the roofs beneath it, the tower is as much an exception as the Eiffel Tower.....For the first Gothic arch was really a thing more original than the first flying ship...its balance of fighting gravitations and flying buttresses was a fine calculation in medieval mathematics. But it is not bare and metallic like the Eiffel Tower and the Zeppelin. Its stones are hurled at heaven in an arc as by the kick of a catapult; but that simple curve has not the mere cruelty of an engine of war. (COBBETT).

All that has been said may help to explain why Chesterton is the best read of all modern thinkers. Why is he the least studied? may well be asked. There is no great originality in believing in the Christian tradition, or in the sacred character of marriage, or in family life, or, in small property, or, in citizenship, or, in patriotism, but there is unbounded originality in defending such beliefs with new arguments adapted to the restless mind of modern democracy. It is the very triumph of originality not to invent, or discover what is perhaps already known, but to make old things read as if they were new, from the novelty of aspect in which they are placed. This faculty of investing with associations, of applying to particular purposes, of deducing consequences, of impressing the im-

agination, is creative. Other writers may have said the same things, nearly the same things, yet with study, we will find in Chesterton's mental history timely evidence of the ever-living power of thoughts not themselves new, the drama of personal conviction, extraordinary richness and copiousness of illustration, and an actuality and point in formal disquisition.

PART ONE

CHESTERTON'S POLITICAL BELIEFS.

CHAPTER ONE.

Christianity is the Fundamental Basis of Human Rights.

Throughout his writings, Chesterton assumes, as a fundamental axiom, that all modern virtues were originally Christian. He not only enunciates but reiterates the complementary corollary, that all truths alienated from the parent stock either decay or degenerate into heresy. He demonstrates conclusively that even the perfectibility of human nature, the basic principle of Humanism, is a deduction from the idea of man created in God's image. "All this talk about the divinity and dignity of the human body is stolen from theology.....It dates from the Garden of Eden and the idea that God created man in His own image." (ALL IS GRIST). It is no exaggeration to say that Chesterton's perpetual argument was: the rights of man are built on Christianity.

To him, Christendom was in the literal sense a continent containing everything, even the things in revolt against itself. "The modern world," he writes in THE THING, "with all its modern movement, is living on its Catholic capital. It is using and using up, the truths that remain to it out of the old treasury of Christendom; including of course, many truths known to pagan antiquity but crystallized in Christendom.....For these are the two marks of modern moral ideals. First, that they were borrowed or snatched out of ancient or medieval hands. Second, that they wither very quickly in modern hands."

The truths so removed from the parent stock grow into a sort of obsessions commonly designated heresies. "Thus a Calvinist is a Catholic obsessed with the Catholic idea of the sovereignty of God; A Quaker^{is} a Catholic obsessed with the Catholic idea of gentle simplicity and truth..... Bolshevism and every shade of any such theory of brotherhood is based upon one unfathomably mystical Catholic dogma; the equality of men." (THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND CONVERSION). And Chesterton, explaining his own conversion, goes on to say that the orthodox Christian seeing the world with one balance of ideas and a number of other ideas that have left it and lost their balance is not deluded by the fact that there is something in everything, but is fortified by the truth that there is everything in something. Or to turn to his ALL I SURVEY:

For one very simple thing was true both of Love and Liberty: the gods of the Romantics and the Republicans. They were both simply fragments of Christian mysticism, and even of Christian theology, torn out of their proper places, flung loosely about and finally hurled forward into an age of hard materialism, which instantly destroyed them.....One of them was a hazy human exaggeration of the sacramental idea of marriage. The other was a hazy human exaggeration of the brotherhood of man in God.....

But the Romantics of the nineteenth century held it (Love) up in a kind of indeterminate pre-eminence; a dizzy and toppling idolatry; trying at once to make it as sacred as they thought good and as free as they found convenient....

Now, oddly enough, it was the same with Liberty as with Love. It was the same with the democratic ideal of political freedom for all. And Democracy is being criticized just now for exactly the same reason that Romance is being criticized. It is that all the sense there ever was in either of them rested on a religious idea. The nineteenth century took away the religious idea and left a sense that rapidly turned into nonsense.(Romanticism and Youth).

It might be concluded from the foregoing that only in his later writings did Chesterton emphasize the

religious idea as the basic in human morality and rights; but, at the very beginning of his journalistic career, he startled the modern thinkers of the day with a series of charges against the real body of doctrines which they were promulgating. Chesterton branded as heretics, Kipling, Shaw, Wells, and other moderns because they neglected religion, or, "our theory about ultimate things," and instituted in its stead protracted discussions on details in art, politics and literature. "No longer is there any discussion about the nature of man. General theories are everywhere contemned; the doctrine of the Rights of man is dismissed with the doctrine of the Fall of man."(HERETICS).

The man, who had proclaimed such a seemingly daring revolt as voiced in HERETICS was duly challenged to exhibit his own orthodoxy. Chesterton obliged with ORTHODOXY, a series of essays "concerned only to discuss that the central Christian theology (sufficiently summarized in the Apostles' Creed) is the best root of energy and sound ethics." Here he tells, how he, in his own way, discovered Christianity, and even preached "an obviously unattractive idea, such as original sin," accepting it, "for only with original sin can we at once pity the beggar and distrust the king."(ORTHODOXY).

No clearer exposition, of both the man's belief regarding the origin of human rights, and his method of defence of this belief, can be found than that contained in the essay "Is Humanism a Religion"(THE THING). This essay is simply a Chestertonian commentary on certain remarks made by Norman Foerster in his book AMERICAN CRITICISM on the present position of Walt Whitman, who had been held as "the founder of the new world of democracy." Foerster wrote:

Our present science lends little support to an inherent 'dignity of man' or to his perfectibility.' It is wholly possible that the science of the future will lead us away from democracy towards some form of aristocracy. The millennial expectations that Whitman built upon science and democracy, we are now well aware, rested upon insecure foundations....The perfection of nature, the natural goodness of man, 'the great pride of man in himself' offset with an emotional humanitarianism---these are the materials of a structure only slightly coloured with modernity. His politics, his ethics, his religion belong to the past, even the facile 'religiousness' which he hoped would suffuse and complete the work of science and democracy....In the essentials of his prophecy, Whitman, we must conclude, has been falsified by the event.

Chesterton admits that this commentary is fair and moderate but hastens to add what he calls the monumental remark of H.L. Mencken:

They (certain liberal thinkers) have come to realize that the morons whom they sweated to save do not want to be saved, and are not worth saving.

This, if any, is the New Spirit, but Whitman who had been held as "the founder of the new world of democracy" had said,

I will make unconquerable cities, with their arms about each others necks, by the love of comrades, by the lifelong love of comrades.

To Chesterton it is clear that Whitman's wild picture of "the hump-backed and half-witted negro decorated with a nimbus of light," is simply a very old and orthodox picture. For all Catholics it is a fundamental dogma of the Faith that all human beings, without any exception whatever, were especially made, were shaped and pointed like shining arrows, for the end of hitting the mark of Beatitude; but he concludes that Whitman, like Shelley and Rousseau and other heretics before him, "had really snatched from the old Catholic tradition one particular transcendental idea; the idea that there is a spiritual dignity in man as man and a universal duty to love man as man," took it for

granted that this spiritual idea was self-evident and indestructible only to have some modern materialist, like Mr. Mencken explode it. Humanism failed because alienated from religion it had become a mood and the mood as a mood had evaporated. Convinced of the traditional view of Christianity, Chesterton knew that "the shafts of Beatitude" were feathered with free will; and, that free will entailed tragic possibilities. He distrusted all "spiritual ~~A~~ experiments outside the central spiritual tradition", for the simple reason that they did not last and only stood for "one generation, one fashion or one clique." "I do not think that they have the secret of continuity; certainly not of corporate continuity. For an antiquated, doddering old democrat like myself may be excused from attaching some slight importance to that last question; that of covering the common life of mankind."

"Obstinate Orthodoxy" further exemplifies the man's position on moods and morals. This essay, an answer to an implied enquiry that Chesterton "thought it extraordinary that a man should be ordinary", runs in part:

I am ordinary in the correct sense of the term; which means the acceptance of an order; a Creator and the Creation, the common sense of gratitude for Creation.

After disposing of enquirers views as a scientific eugenist and surrealist in art with consummate adriotness, Chesterton continues:

It is quite as certain as ever it was, that life is a gift of God immensely valuable and immensely valued....I will venture to say, therefore, that I have remained rooted in certain relations and traditions, not because I am a sentimentalist, or even a romanticist; but because I am a realist. And I realize that morals must not change with moods. ("Obstinate Orthodoxy").

In truth, Chesterton perpetually insists that man's

origin is the basic determinant of human dignity.

If you remove the religious idea that God created Man in His own image there is no more sense in saying every human being is lovely than in saying that every hippopotamus is lovelyIf man comes out of chaos, by blind evolution or merely groping growth, there is no more sense in calling his body noble than in calling any lump of fungus or cactus noble. If it is noble it is so by some patent of nobility; and nobility is conferred by a King."("On Dress and Decorum").

No clearer nor more outright statement respecting the origin of man's rights occurs anywhere in Chesterton's works than these words near the close of his last book AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

A whole generation has been taught to talk nonsense at the top of its voice about having "a right to life" and "a right to experience" and "a right to happiness." The lucid thinkers who talk like this generally wind up their assertion of all these extraordinary rights by saying that there is no such thing as right and wrong. It is a little difficult, in that case, to speculate on where their rights came from; but I, at least, leaned more and more to the old philosophy which said that their real rights came from where the dandelion came from; and that they will never value either without recognising its source.

By the Incarnation God Himself became small and took on human shape, making man's very weakness sacred, Chesterton writes. Christianity was therefore the first religion to attack slavery which is a denial of liberty, "the God in Man." The humanitarian political creeds of the moderns are all based on this fundamental theological assumption, and there is no reason for the principles of communism or of democracy without it. The rights of man are inherent in Christianity.

How the Incarnation revolutionized the pagan world is explained at length in THE EVERLASTING MAN. The Babe of Bethlehem established a permanent Christian brotherhood,

giving hospitality to shepherd and to kings at a time when the vitalizing power of Christian democracy was yet unknown. Christianity's stand was for the rights of the individual irrespective of his social status. The fraternal element of life was alien to Palestine; the mood of the time was one which encouraged slavery. "Christ as much as Aristotle lived in a world that took slavery for granted." But the exalted social ideals of Christian progress instituted by Christ transcended the social limitations of His time whilst Aristotle's philosophy of life revealed for the most part the thought of a man conditioned by a definite environment. Christ was divine and His program of life offered the solution for social as well as for religious problems for all nations and for every age. Hence He did not make his philosophical views dependent on the customs of His own age, for He had come to deliver men from the tyranny of these customs.

He never made His morality dependent on the existence of the Roman Empire or even on the existence of the world. 'Heaven and earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away.' (THE EVERLASTING MAN).

Truly, through the Incarnation, Chesterton concludes, Christ restored to the human race friendship with God; for, this clear and striking manifestation of God's love for men transforms their lives by making them see in their neighbor a brother of Christ. It is the real cornerstone of human dignity, the seal of human liberties and rights.

PART ONE

Chapter Two.

**THE PROBLEM OF EVIL, ITS ORIGIN, NATURE
AND IMPLICATIONS.**

Chesterton's theory of evil, like his concept of the individual rights of man, and his doctrine of the social equality of men, is interminably bound up with his orthodoxy. Man is created in God's image; yet, the world is obviously full of evil. To this riddle Chesterton found the doctrine of the Fall the only satisfactory answer. "In so far as I am man, I am the chief of creatures. In so far as I am a man, I am the chief of sinners." (ORTHODOXY). All men are gods, but all men are also subject to ordinary human limitations. In consequence, the common inescapable things of life are the most important, the fact of birth, of death, and of common emotions; and no man is so great that he can transcend them. "The things on which men agree are so immeasurably more important than the things on which they disagree, that the latter for all practical purposes, disappear." (HERETICS). The doctrine of the equality of man follows from this. By their greatness all men are equal, for all are the image of God; by their weakness all men are equal, for no one can escape the fundamental problems of life.

Finding "materialism and scepticism, crabbed, barren, servile, and without any light of liberty or of hope," Chesterton tells us he began to examine the general Christian theology. He found it corresponded to many of the experiences of life; that even its paradoxes corresponded to the paradoxes of life. He recalls in AUTOBIOGRAPHY how Father Waggett, an Anglo-Catholic once said to him as they stood together on the Mount of Olives in view of Gethsemane

and Acel dama, "Well, anyhow, it must be obvious to anybody that the doctrine of the Fall is the only cheerful view of human life." To himself Chesterton says it was obvious; but he adds, that to most of the sects to which he had belonged Father Waggett's words would be the most puzzling of paradoxes. Chesterton felt "that the old theological theory seemed more or less to fit into experience, while the new and negative theories did not fit into anything, least of all into each other." (AUTOBIOGRAPHY). About this time he published HERETICS in which he assailed contemporary writers for their lack of fundamental philosophy, "feeling that they erred through an ultimate or religious error." HERETICS led to the writing of ORTHODOXY, an outline of his own reasons for believing in the Christian theory, as summarized in the Apostle's Creed.

God created the world and placed man in it, that is the first doctrine of orthodoxy. Life is a gift not a right, "a kind of eccentric privilege" for which we owe infinite gratitude. But orthodoxy insists on the doctrine of original sin and corruption of human nature. Man's deserts are nothing after the Fall, and humility is his only course. This does not seem a fruitful source of human happiness; yet it is a paradox that belief in our own worthlessness makes us all the more joyful at what we are given. Moreover, by destroying the idea of human desert, original sin frees us from the limitation of reward according only to merit. "With the removal of all question of merit or payment," Chesterton writes in HERETICS, "the soul is suddenly released for incredible voyages. The mercy of God is so much greater than human desert could be, that we are given "palaces of pearls and silver under the

oath and seal of the omnipotent." Hence Christianity alone has the irrational virtues of faith and hope which are gay and exuberant, the right antidote for our present ills.

But insistence on God's goodness only will make man too optimistic. This is the weakness of pantheism, that if God conceived to be good, the world and man must be good too, however much apparent evil there may be. Orthodox theology guards against this by the separation of the world from God. God created the world separate from himself as an artist fashions a work of art. "All creation is separation and in making the world God set it free." Thus you can believe God is good without denying evil in man, and be "at peace with the universe yet be at war with the world." Above all, we can love the world as a patriot loves his country, because it is something small and finite; we can love it unceasingly, as a man loves a woman in misfortune or happiness. Now love is the greatest force for reform. The man who loves anything desires to make it better, for its evil offends him more than it would the indifference of the pessimist. Love, then, a sort of world patriotism, is to be a critical force which prevents too complete an optimism. "If there arose a man who loved Pimlico, then Pimlico would rise into ivory towers and golden pinnacles." (ORTHODOXY). In the same way the true patriot will show his love for the world by keeping a jealous eye on its evils. There is nothing at all complacent or jingoistic in Chesterton's attitude, and he never attempts to whitewash abuses. Evil, in fact, is an essential part of his scheme. The doctrine of free will gives us the power of choice in good and evil; and the romance of life is in making that choice. Existence is an adventure

and a crusade against evil, without which everything is grey. Christianity, by giving man the freedom to gain his own salvation, says:

Drink for the trumpets are blowing for battle and this is the stirrup cup. Drink, for the whole world is red as this wine and with the crimson of the love and wrath of God. (HERETICS).

These doctrines therefore satisfy the first needs of man by proving the goodness and wonder of life and yet insisting on the need for criticism, "the need for a first loyalty to things and then a ruinous reform of things." (ORTHODOXY). Having cleared the way for our appreciation of the world and our attitude to it, orthodoxy provides the necessary ideal by which to regulate our actions. It is symbolized by the Trinity, which implies complexity, "the conception of a sort of liberty and variety existing even in the inmost chamber of the world." The ideal of life laid down by orthodoxy is one in which all the human faculties are exercised. In an age which is too spiritual, the Church insists on the value of the flesh and denies the Manichean heresy through the mouth of Aquinas, "the great and horrible heresy that there can be such a thing as a spiritual religion." Nowadays the Church with equal vigor defends spiritual values at a time when they are ignored. Man contains these conflicting extremes and rationalism would abolish one or the other for the sake of consistency, explaining all action in terms of matter or spirit. But orthodoxy would preserve all, believing that they are all equally necessary to a complete and happy life. If there is an apparent contradiction between body and mind, for example, we must accept it in the certainty of fuller happiness.

The ordinary man....if he saw two truths that seemed to contradict each other would take the two truths and the contradiction along with them. His spiritual sight is stereoscopic like his physical sight; he sees two different pictures at once and yet sees all the better for that.
(ORTHODOXY).

This mystical acceptance of contradiction must be extended to all the qualities of human nature, to love and hate, pride and humility, courage and meekness. All are natural to man and must be allowed expression. "It is exactly this balance of apparent contradictions that has been the whole buoyancy of the healthy man."

All these contradictory qualities are in themselves virtues and yet tend to destroy each other. The function of the Church, therefore, is to provide a sort of chart assigning a particular province to everyone within the limits of which it may function freely.

Christianity demands not that joy and anger shall neutralize each other, but a fiercer delight and a fiercer anger. We want not a compromise but both things at the top of their energy: love and wrath, both burning.(ORTHODOXY).

Every virtue is encouraged, but its sphere of action rigidly defined "to prevent either of these good things from ousting the other." For example, we must love the sinner unto seventy times seven but hate the sin beyond all forgiveness; we must be infinitely proud that we are made in God's image, and aggressive in defense of our doctrine; but, we must be infinitely humble in that we are only men, and never aware of human weakness. "The Church says there you can swagger, there you can grovel." Such an order prevents any one virtue from driving out all the rest and so preserves them all. Within the framework of orthodoxy there is freedom for all the good things of life.

The outer ring of Christianity is a rigid guard of ethical abnegations and professional priests: but inside that inhuman guard you will find the old human life dancing like children and drinking wine like men: for Christianity is the only frame for Pagan freedom. (ORTHODOXY).

On this is based the orthodox definition of heresy, which is one Christian virtue escaping from its proper sphere and swallowing up all the rest. "What is to prevent any humanist wanting chastity without humility, and another, humility without chastity, and another, truth or beauty without either?" Chesterton asks in *THE THING*. "The problem of an enduring ethic and culture consists in finding an arrangement of the pieces by which they remain related." Calvinism, for example, is one theological truth, the power of God, which has been allowed to drive out the doctrine of free will or of mercy. The result is the heresy of Predestination. Communism, again, is an exaggerated idea of the equality and brotherhood of men which has, in turn, driven out everything else. The Manichean heresy was an exaggeration of the spirit and so a denial of the flesh. Most of the current philosophies are Christian virtues grown into heresies; and Chesterton's book *HERETICS* is an examination of Kipling, Wells, George Moore and various other contemporaries from that point of view.

Chesterton's later writings on the problem of evil parallel those just examined. A comparison of his remarks on the theory of progress in *ORTHODOXY*, published in 1908, with his discourse on a similar topic in *THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS* (1935) will illustrate their extreme likeness. In *ORTHODOXY* Chesterton says he is startled by the swiftness with which the popular systems turn oppressive. The perfect theory of progress must be always vigilant "for every

privilege being abused, for every working right becoming a wrong." He is entirely on the side of the revolutionists because they are really right to be always suspecting human institutions; they are right not to put their trust in princes nor in any child of man." The advocate of the people becomes the antagonist of the people; the newspaper founded to tell the truth exists to prevent the truth being told. Here Chesterton felt he was really on the side of the revolutionary only to catch his breath and remember he was once again on the side of orthodoxy.

Christianity spoke again and said, 'I have always maintained that men were naturally backsliders; that human virtue tended of its own nature to rust or to rot; I have always said that human beings as such go wrong, especially happy human beings, especially proud and prosperous human beings. This eternal revolution, this suspicion sustained through centuries, you (being a vague modern) call the doctrine of progress. If you were a philosopher you would call it, as I do, the doctrine of original sin. You may call it the cosmic advance as much as you like; I call it what it is---the Fall.(ORTHODOXY).

In THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS ("When the World Turned back") Chesterton remarks that during the first forty years of his own life, everybody believed in the theory of progress, "the way the world is going." "Then came the astounding judgments; the strange sign of Apocalypse. First the Great War; then the paradox of Fascism in Italy; then the parody of Fascism in Germany." ~~xxxx-These things have produced an enormous reversal of thought~~ These things have produced an enormous reversal of thought, which has nothing to do with thinking any of these movements right or wrong. What any thinking man now knows is the whole world is now moving "in precisely the contrary course from that which had been called progress for centuries." But the fact is:

The world is what the saints and the prophets saw it was; it is not merely getting better or merely getting worse; there is one thing that the world does; it wobbles. Left to itself, it does not get anywhere; though if helped by real reformers of the right religion and philosophy, it may get better in many respects, and sometimes for considerable periods. But in itself it is not a progress; it is not even a process; it is the fashion of this world that passeth away. Life in itself is not a ladder; it is a see-saw.

Now that is fundamentally what the Church has always said; and for about four hundred years has been more and more despised for saying. The Church never said that wrongs could not or should not be righted; or that commonwealths could not or should not be made happier; or that it was not worth while to help them in secular and material things; or that it is not a good thing if manners become milder, or comforts more common, or cruelties more rare. But she did say that we must not count on the certainty even of comforts becoming more common or cruelties more rare; as if this were an inevitable social trend towards a sinless humanity; instead of being as it was a mood of man, and perhaps a better mood, possibly to be followed by a worse one. We must not hate humanity; or despise humanity or refuse to help humanity; but we must not trust humanity; in the sense of trusting a trend in human nature which cannot turn back to bad things. "Put not your trust in princes; nor in any child of man." That is the precise point of this very particular sort of politics. Be a Royalist if you like (as there is a vast amount to be said, and a vast amount being said, just now, for more personal and responsible rule;) try a Monarchy if you think it will be better; but do not trust a Monarchy, in the sense of expecting that a monarch will be anything but a man. Be a democrat if you like (and I shall always think it the most generous and the most fundamentally Christian ideal is politics); express your sense of human dignity in manhood suffrage or any other form of equality; but put not your trust in manhood suffrage or in any child of man. There is one little defect about Man, the image of God, the wonder of the world and the paragon of animals; that he is not to be trusted. If you identify him with some ideal, which you choose to think is his inmost nature or his only goal, the day will come when he will suddenly seem to you a traitor.

Never failing to champion this doctrine of the origin of evil Chesterton attacks Wells's defense of the

Darwinian theory of evolution. Wells had scoffed at the French peasants' belief in the Fall, and their ignorance of evolution, quite tauntingly demanding, "Where is the Garden of Eden?" Chesterton assures Mr. Wells that these peasants hold ~~the~~ philosophy of the Fall, in the form of a simple story, which is either historic or symbolic, but certainly not as important as the truth it symbolizes. In comparison with that truth the theory of evolution palls with insignificance. He says, Man is a strange and solitary being among the other beings of God's creation; and compares man's original position in the scheme of life with a statue resting on a garden pedestal. But the statue crashed to the ground. This analogy emphasizes two theological truths: first, the statue was stamped with an image, deliberately and from the outside; in this case the image of God, and secondly, the image was damaged or defaced. The story has the two fixed points, that man was uplifted at first and fell; and to answer it by saying, "Where is the garden of Eden?" is like answering a philosophical Buddhist by saying, "When were you last a donkey?"

The Fall is a view of life. It is not only the only enlightening, but the only encouraging view of life. It holds, as against the only real alternative philosophies, those of the Buddhist or the Pessimist or the Promethian, that we have misused a good world, and not merely been entrapped into a bad one. It refers evil back to the wrong use of the will, and thus declares that it can eventually be righted by the right use of the will. Every other creed except that one is some form of surrender to fate. A man who holds this view of life will find it giving light on a thousand things; on which mere evolutionary ethics have not a word to say. For instance, on the colossal contrast between the completeness of man's machines and the continued corruption of his motives; on the fact that no social progress really seems to leave self behind; on the fact that the first and not the last men of any school or revolution are generally the best and purest; as William Penn was better than a Quaker millionaire or Washington better than an American oil magnate; on that proverb that says: "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance," which is only what the theologians say of every other virtue, and is itself only a way of stating the truth of original sin; on those extremes of good and evil by which man exceeds all ~~the~~ animals by the measure of heaven and hell; on that sublime sense of loss that is in the very sound of all great poetry, and nowhere more than in the poetry

of pagans and sceptics: "We look before and after, and pine for what is not"; which cries against all prigs and progressives out of the very depths and abysses of the broken heart of man, that happiness is not only a hope, but also in some strange manner a memory; and that we are all kings in exile.(THE THING).

To one holding this view of life Mr. Wells's query respecting the site of a garden is a shocking bathos. Such incongruity is unparalleled, "for there is no similarity between our muddled moral affairs and events that were divine if they were mysterious, and scriptures that are sacred even if they are symbolical." But, continues Chesterton, something of a parallel could be made out of modern myths which men like Wells believe in, for example, the myth of Magna Carta:

Now many historians will maintain that Magna Carta was really nothing to speak of; that it was largely a piece of feudal privilege. But suppose one of the historians who holds this view began to argue with us excitedly about the fabulous nature of our ordinary fancy picture of Magna Carta. Suppose he produced maps and documents to prove that Magna Carta was not signed at Runnymede, but somewhere else; as I believe some scholars do maintain. Suppose he criticized the false heraldry and fancy-dress costume of the ordinary sort of waxwork historical picture of the event. We should think he was rather unduly excited about a detail of medieval history. But with what a shock of astonishment would we realize at last that man actually thought that all modern attempts at democracy must be abandoned, that all representative government must be wrong, that all parliaments would have to be dissolved and all political rights destroyed, if once it were admitted that King John did not sign that special document in that little island in the Thames! What should we think of him, if he really thought we had no reasons for liking law or liberty, except the authenticity of that beloved royal signature? That is very much how I feel when I find that Mr. Wells really imagines that the luminous and profound philosophy of the Fall only means that Eden was somewhere in Mesopotamia.(THE THING.)

"Men who wish to get down to fundamentals perceive that there is a fundamental problem of evil" Chesterton writes in "On Original Sin"(COME TO THINK OF IT). His controversy here is with Mr. Aldous Huxley who, unlike Mr. Wells, admits Original Sin declaring that "the latest scientific view is more like the old Catholic view" but adding "the scientific view of man necessitates

a sort of original sin, of it be only the residuum of his animal ancestry." Chesterton answers that sin is not merely the dregs of a bestial existence; but that it is something more subtle and spiritual, and is in some way connected with the very supremacy of the human spirit

The worst things in man are only possible to man. At least we must confine their existence to men, unless we are prepared to admit the existence of demons. There is thus another truth in the original conception of original sin, since even in sinning man originated something. His body may have come from animals, and his soul may be torn in pieces by all sorts of doctrinal disputes and quarrels among men. But, roughly speaking, it is quite clear that he did not manufacture out of the old mud or blood of material origins, with whatever mixture or more mysterious elements, a special and mortal poison. That poison is his own recipe; it is not merely decaying animal matter. That poison is most poisonous where there are fine scientific intellects or artistic imaginations to mix it. It is just as likely to be at its best--that is, at its worst--at the end of a civilization as at the beginning. Of this sort are all the hideous corruptions of culture; the pride, the perversions, the intellectual cruelties, the horrors of emotional exhaustion. You cannot explain that monstrous fruit by saying that our ancestors were arboreal; save, indeed, as an allegory of the Tree of Knowledge. The poison can take the form of every sort of culture---as, for instance, bacteria-culture. But the poison itself has always been there. Indeed it is as old as any memory of man. Wherefore, we have to posit of it that it also was of the human source and fountain-head, that it was in the beginning, or, as the old theology affirms, original.

I suggest, therefore, with great respect, that it is not even now a case of having to admit that the old religion had come very near to the truths of the most modern science. It is rather a case of the most modern science having come very near to the truths of the old religion---but not quite near enough.

To conclude: Chesterton's conviction, the very outcome of his orthodox faith, was, that evil^{is} in its nature spiritual, the legacy of the whole human race, and as positive as virtue. The Fall affected man's whole being. Hence Society must be cognizant of the effects of Original Sin, and especially two: man's weakness due to pride, and his limited liberty.

PART ONE

Chapter Three.

PRIDE AND LIMITED LIBERTY MAN'S GREATEST WEAKNESSES

Though he singles out pride and limited liberty as man's greatest failings, nowhere in Chesterton's writings do we find a specific extended discussion on either ill; but, rather we discover these topics in varied forms constituting a constant undertow in the whole sea of his works. Pride in its infinite variety was the bane of his age, as it has been of all ages; for, man's intellect had been "darkened by the Fall." As for human liberty, the cravings of man must be satisfied but only in consonance with his human dignity and the end for which he was created; for, man's will had been "weakened by the Fall." Chesterton sets humility against pride; and demands certain rights and property as a basis for human liberty. He reproved his contemporaries, especially Shaw, for their neglect of the common things of life and their worship of power and efficiency. He continually preaches humility and gratitude becoming almost over-sympathetic with the poor, and somewhat impatient with the rich.

PART ONE: PRIDE

Chesterton might have prefaced most of his essays with the scriptural admonition: "Pride is hateful before God and men. It is the beginning of all sin; he that holdeth it shall be filled with maledictions, and it shall ruin him in the end;"(Ecclus.X7,15), but his arguments never begin with Revelation, they always lead, if not to, certainly towards it. His own greatest virtue was humility. In THE DEFENDANT, he gives the following definition of this much abused virtue:

Humility is the luxurious art of reducing ourselves to a point, not to a small thing or a large one, but to a thing of no size at all, so that to it all the cosmic things are what they really are---of immeasurable stature.

The one great and continuous lesson in HERETICS is humility. Through lack of true humility, Shaw, Wells, Moore, Dickinson, in fact, nearly all modern philosophers, worshipped the great and strange, and ignored the formidable importance of small and familiar things. Pride, man's weakness, was the source of most modern fetishes and these in turn, a new source of pride.

In his early life Chesterton noted "that both the happy hedonists and the unhappy pessimists were stiffened by the opposite principle of pride. The pessimist was proud of his pessimism, because he thought nothing was good enough for him; the optimist was proud of his optimism, because he thought nothing was bad enough to prevent him from getting good out of it." (AUTOBIOGRAPHY). His criticism of these fanatics was that as extremists they evaluated life either as no good or as over good, and failed to realize that they should have "a great deal of gratitude for a very little good." For him, this paradoxical principle was the clue to humility, the antidote for pride. "It was the chief idea of my life;" he writes in AUTOBIOGRAPHY, "I will not say the doctrine I have always taught, but the doctrine I should always have liked to teach. That is, the idea of taking things with gratitude, and not taking things for granted..... I felt more and more disposed to seek out those who specialized in humility, though for them it was the door of heaven and for me the door of earth." By the "door of earth" he

meant it was his way of seeing truth clearly and it became his way of clearly bringing truths home to his hearers or readers.

It is typical of him to conjure the vision of after-life by awaking familiar scenes. To teach the value of true humility, the tremendous importance of common things is first emphasized. Commenting on a line of Vaughan:

"Oh, holy hope and high humility."

he says that the adjective "high" is "one of the gravest definitions of moral science." We must always look up not only to God, but to men also, "seeing more and more all that is towering and mysterious in the dignity and the destiny of the lonely house of Adam." The writer had just been climbing a high hill; the higher he climbed, the wider his view. All the rich and populous lowlands lay before him. The valley seemed to have raised itself with its fields, trees, towns and villages to meet his eye. In the ascent, he imagined that he was going to "look down at the stars," but on reaching the top he was really "looking up at the cities." "So it may be hoped, until we die you and I will always look up rather than down at the labours and the habitations of our race; we will lift up our eyes to the valleys from whence our help.....It is good for our souls to behold from our crumbling turrets the tall plains of equality."(ALARUMS AND DISCURSIONS). This is a plea for democratic principles; but, the great religious thought, that unless we realize we are nothing, and that the world around us is everything, we shall never enter the kingdom of heaven, is all prevailing.

In all his early essays Chesterton inveighed pessimism, "the curse and fashion of the age," and pride and its

attendant train of evils came under attack:

I have found that every man is disposed to call the green leaf of the tree a little less green than it is. (THE DEFENDANT. 1901).

False optimism, too, was then prevalent. It was a time of philosophical anarchy. Looking back on the period, ---the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth,-- he writes,

I had an overpowering impulse to record or draw horrible ideas and images; plunging deeper and deeper into a blind spiritual suicide.
(AUTOBIOGRAPHY 1936).

Chesterton felt the vital need of revolt and reform. "I was vaguely trying to found a new optimism, not on a maximum but a minimum of good....I already knew too much to pretend to get rid of evil," he explains relative to his writing THE MAN WHO WAS THURSDAY (1907).

The fundamental cause of this anarchy, Chesterton concluded, was pride, the belief that man has the right to criticize the universe, if it is not to his liking. "What we call bad civilization, is a good civilization not good enough for us." (THE DEFENDANT). Man is born into the world by no agency of his own, and he feels he can criticize it "as if he were house hunting, as if he were being shown over a new suite of apartments." (ORTHODOXY). This is the great spiritual sin; for, it not only prevents us from making the best of inevitable and inescapable facts, but limits our existence by making us feel superior to many valuable planes of life. In "The Moods of Mr. George Moore" HERETICS, we find some analysis of its results. Chesterton after noting the Roman Catholic Church has done her best in singling out the conception of the sinfulness of pride says, "Pride is a weakness in the character; it dries up laughter, it dries up wonder, it dries up chivalry and energy," then he contrasts R.L. Stevenson and Mr. George Moore. Stevenson is vain;

Moore, proud. But

Vanity is a much wiser and more vigorous thing than pride. Vanity is social---it is almost a kind of comradeship; pride is solitary and uncivilized. Vanity is active; it desires the applause of infinite multitudes; pride is passive, desiring only the applause of one person, which it already has. Vanity is humorous, and can enjoy the joke even of itself; pride is dull, and cannot even smile.....

Stevenson had found that the secret of life lies in laughter and humility. Self is the gorgon. Vanity sees it in the mirror of other men and lives. Pride studies it for itself and is turned to stone. (HERETICS).

This new outburst of pride could be traced to evolution. Indeed, evolution had become identified with inevitable human progress; and had been used to establish the doctrine of human perfectibility. Shaw, in his plays, presaged the superman; H.G. Wells in his novels foretold a race of giants. Chesterton attacks both writers as enemies of reform, predicating that in respect to reform their optimism is as paralyzing as the darkest pessimism; for, with the former reform was superfluous; with the latter, useless. Moreover, Chesterton states that Shaw having discovered that man is not progressive took refuge in the theory of the superman. Shaw doubting whether humanity can be combined with progress, "decides to throw over humanity with all its limitations and go in for progress for its own sake." Mr. Shaw wants a new kind of man. But

Mr. Shaw cannot understand that the thing which is valuable and lovable in our eyes is man---the old beer-drinking, creed-making, fighting, failing, sensual, respectable man. And the things that have been founded on this creature immortally remain; the things that have been founded on the fancy of the Superman have died with the dying civilizations which alone have given them birth. When Christ at a symbolic moment was establishing His great society, He chose for its corner-stone neither the brilliant Paul nor the mystic John, but a shuffler, a snob, a coward---in a word, a man. And upon this rock He has built His Church, and the gates of Hell have not prevailed against it.

All the empires and the kingdoms have failed, because of this inherent and continual weakness, that they were founded by strong men and upon strong men. But this one thing, the historic Christian Church, was founded on a weak man, and for that reason it is indestructible. For no chain is stronger than its weakest link.
(HERETICS).

Humility is extolled and pride scorned in nearly every essay in HERETICS but especially in those on Shaw, Wells, Moore, and Dickinson. The commentaries on Carlyle both in the essay on Dickinson, and "The Eternal Revolution" in ORTHODOXY, are of special interest. The weakness in Carlyle's case for aristocracy, says Chesterton, lies in that philosopher's strong and most popular phrase:

Carlyle said that men were mostly fools. Christianity, with a surer and more reverent realism, says that they are all fools. The doctrine is sometimes called the doctrine of Original Sin. It may also be described as the doctrine of the equality of men. But the essential point of it is merely this, that whatever primary and far-reaching dangers affect any man, affect all men. All men can be criminals, if tempted; all men can be heroes, if inspired. There are no wise few. No oligarchy is infallible. Proud oligarchs like Poland and Venice have fared badly. Religious armies have been the most successful, but these have been the most humbleBut every generous person will agree that the one kind of pride which is wholly damnable is the pride of the man who has something to be proud of. (HERETICS).

"Will those who have the best opportunities make the best leaders?" he asks in ORTHODOXY. But the best opportunities have always been open to the rich. Was such complete confidence in them justifiable? Christianity had always maintained that danger was not in man's environment but in man. Yet environment played a part, and the Christian Church admonishes us that the most dangerous environment is the commodious environment. Chesterton infers from Christ's words comparing the difficulty of the rich man getting to heaven with that of the camel passing through the eye of the needle, that Christ meant the rich were

not very likely to be morally trustworthy. Christ's words then are an ultimatum to the modern world; for, "the modern world is based on the assumption not that the rich are necessary (which is tenable), but that the rich are trustworthy, which (for a Christian) is not tenable." The proud rich are spiritually, politically, and financially corrupt.

It is quite certainly un-Christian to trust the rich, to regard the rich as more morally safe than the poor....In any Utopia, I must be prepared for the moral fall of any man in any position at any moment; especially for my fall from this position at this moment.

At this point, Chesterton again attacks Carlyle's principle: "the man should rule who feels he can rule," by declaring that the Christian comment on government must be: "that the man should rule who does not think he can rule." Christianity and democracy are at one in properly estimating man's weakness, and the proud man is not prized.

But Chesterton does not condemn all pride. "The pride which does not hurt the character," he continues, "is the pride in things which reflect no credit on the person at all." It does a man no harm to be proud of his country, and little harm to be proud of his remote forbears. "It does him more harm to be proud of having made money, because in that he has a little more reason for pride." To be proud of the intellect does him more harm than to be proud of money; and to be proud of goodness does still more harm. "The man who is proud of what is really creditable to him is the Pharisee, the man whom Christ Himself could not forbear to strike."

Chapter 3. PART TWO: LIMITED LIBERTY.

Pride chiefly concerns the intellect; liberty the will. Chesterton had studied current philosophies only to discover that the freethinkers who set out to establish philosophical freedom had merely succeeded in exhausting themselves in skeptical bankruptcy. "Their mental ruin had been wrought by wild reason, not by wild imagination." (ORTHODOXY). But another school of thought had arisen which hoped to renew "the pagan health of the world" through a new doctrine of the will. "They see," writes Chesterton, "that reason destroys; but Will, they say, creates. The supreme point is not why a man demands a thing, but the fact that he does demand it." (ORTHODOXY). This doctrine, he alleges, finds its origin in the Nietzschean philosophy and leads inevitably to egoism.

In ORTHODOXY Chesterton deals summarily with Nietzsche whose teaching consists primarily of revolt and the praise of the will. Nietzsche, he says, praises revolt for its own sake and denies all limitation. But to do anything at all is to impose a form of limitation; for, every definite action is an exclusion of all other actions. Complete denial of limitation is a contradiction in terms. Further, he argues, that the identification of revolt with the will is false; for, all action is the result of the will, both revolt and non-revolt. The will distinguishes itself when it produces any distinguished action: revolt against the morality is not the exclusive action of the will. Praise of revolt for its own sake is paralysis. If you are in revolt against everything, you cannot revolt in favor of anything.

Chesterton takes great pains to explain in ALL IS GRIST that liberty is limited. It is remarkable that the

the essay on "The Romance of Childhood" (ALL IS GRIST) is contained verbatim in "Nationalism and Notting Hill" (AUTOBIOGRAPHY). The only natural explanation of this unusual repetition is that, since Chesterton had always wished to impress deeply his notion of liberty, he himself acknowledged this as his best. A proof of his anxiousness and earnestness is clearly expressed in both essays in these words:

The point is not very easy to explain; indeed I have spent the greater part of my life in an unsuccessful attempt to explain it. Upon the cart-loads of ill-constructed books in which I have completely failed to do so, I have no desire to dwell. But perhaps, as a general definition, this might be useful; or, if not as a definition, at least as a suggestion. From the first vaguely, and of late more clearly, I have felt that the world is conceiving liberty as something that merely works outwards. And I have always conceived it as something that works inwards.

This was his pointed contradiction to the common assumption in the romantic description of the dawn of life. A description which may be summed up thus: The childlike spirit is an imaginative spirit. Imagination is usually associated with a love of liberty, that is, with a desire for change and adventure. The boy begins by following his hero through the pages of his fairy-tales, climbing magic mountains, and crossing mysterious oceans. He ends by escaping from home or school and running away to sea. This is the origin of great discoveries and of the foundation of vast empires; it is the origin too of failure and disappointment. Chesterton did not share this poetical desire to grow wings and fly to radiant shores where orange trees bloom. For him, there was romance enough in his own country, adventure enough in his own home, escape was the admission of defeat.

The ordinary poetic description of the first dreams of life is a description of mere longing for larger and larger horizons. The imagination is supposed to work towards the infinite; though in that sense the infinite is the opposite of the imagination. For the imagination deals with an image. And an image is in its nature a thing that has an outline and therefore a limit. Now I will maintain, paradoxical as it may seem, that the child does not desire merely to fall out of the window, or even to fly through the air or to be drowned in the sea. When he wishes to go to other places, they are still places; even if nobody has been there before. But in truth the case is much stronger than that. It is plain on the face of the facts that the child is positively in love with limits. He uses his imagination to invent imaginary limits. The nurse and the governess have never told him that it is his moral duty to step on alternate paving-stones. He deliberately deprives this world of half its paving-stones in order to exult in a challenge that he has offered to himself. I played that kind of game with myself all over the mats and boards and carpets of the house; and, at the risk of being detained during His Majesty's pleasure, I will admit that I often play it still. In that sense I have constantly tried to cut down the actual space at my disposal; to divide and sub-divide, into these happy prisons, the house in which I was quite free to run wild. And I believe that there is in this psychological freak a truth without which the whole modern world is missing its main opportunity. If we look at the favorite nursery romances, or at least if we have the patience to look at them twice, we shall find that they all really support this view: even when they have largely been accepted as supporting the opposite view. The charm of Robinson Crusoe is not in the fact that he could find his way to a remote island; but in the fact that he could not find any way of getting away from it. It is that fact which gives an intensive interest and excitement to all the things that he had with him on the island; the axe and the parrot and the guns and the little hoard of grain. The tale of Treasure Island is not the record of a vague desire to go on a sea voyage for one's health. It ends where it began; and it began with Stevenson drawing a map of the island, with all its bays and capes cut out as clearly as fretwork. And the eternal interest of the Noah's Ark, considered as a toy, consists in its complete suggestion of compactness and isolation; of creatures so comically remote and fantastic being all locked up in one box; as if Noah had been told to pack up the sun and moon with his luggage. In other words, it is exactly the same game that I have played myself, by piling all the things I wanted on a sofa, and imagining that the carpet around me was the surrounding sea.

This game of self-limitation is one of the secret pleasures of life. As it says in the little manuals about such sports, the game is

played in several forms. One very good way of playing it is to look at the nearest book-case, and wonder whether you would find sufficient entertainment in that chance collection, even if you had no other books. But always it is dominated by this principle of division and restriction; which begins with the game played by the child with the paving-stones. But I dwell upon it here because it must be understood as something real and rooted, so far as I am concerned, in order that the other views I have offered about these things may make any sort of sense. If anybody chooses to say that I have founded all my social philosophy on the antics of a baby, I am quite satisfied to bow and smile.

It is really relevant to insist that I do not know at what exact stage of my childhood or my youth the idea consolidated as a sort of local patriotism. A child has by the light of nature (or perhaps some better light) an idea of fortifying and defending things; of saying that he is the king of the castle, but of being rather glad than otherwise that it is such a small castle. But as it is my whole thesis that there is something very real behind all these first movements of the mind, I do not think I was ever surprised to find that this instinct corresponded to an idea. Only, by a rather curious coincidence in my life, it had only just developed as a private idea, when I found it clinched and supported by a public idea. If I have since gone back to public ideas, or to the outside of my existence, I have tried to explain that the most important part of it had long been in the inside of my life; perhaps a long time before I found it there. (AUTOBIOGRAPHY).

The foregoing passage lays bare the roots of Chesterton's social, political, and even religious beliefs. In AUTOBIOGRAPHY, this passage serves as an introduction to "Nationalism and Notting Hill" in which Chesterton does not give an advertising review of his book THE NAPOLEON OF NOTTING HILL, except to say: "I have never taken my books seriously, but I take my opinions quite seriously. I do not mention my fortunately forgotten romance....." but he does go on to explain his position respecting the great political movements of the day, Imperialism and Socialism, and his attitude to the Boer War. In ALL IS GRIST, the passage ends with a plea in

in favor of small property. We can only be happy within limits. Our universe is a room, or a house, or an island. I have no great hopes, he says, that my own private Utopia of subdivision and self-limitation, is likely to be rapidly established in the real world; but I do know that great historic changes always begin at exactly the opposite end to the end the world is pursuing, and that human search so long turned outwards, will turn inwards very soon.

The "Ethics of Elfland" (ORTHODOXY) demand not only that every joy must be paid for, but that the payment itself is an essential condition of joy. The mysterious restrictions imposed upon all the heroes of fairy-tales entail such discipline. An incomprehensible happiness rests upon an incomprehensible condition. "A box is opened, and all the evils fly out. A flower is plucked, and human lives are forfeited. An apple is eaten and the hope of God is gone." Such, it seemed, Chesterton goes on to explain, was the joy of man, either in elfland or on earth; the happiness depended on not doing something which you could at any moment do and which, very often, it was not obvious why you should not do. This is why he could not join the young men of his time in revolting against moral laws, even when he did not understand them. He realized instinctively that such rules are in the nature of things. Man was too imperfect and the world too wonderful to make unrestricted freedom possible. "To complain that I could only be married once was like complaining that I had only been born once.....The aesthetes eulogized lovely things, weeping over thistledown and adoring burnished beetles;

but it never occurred to them to pay for their pleasure in any sort of symbolic sacrifice. "Men (I felt) might fast forty days for the sake of hearing a blackbird sing. Men might go through fire to find a cowslip."(ORTHODOXY).

It is a dogma of modern psychology that every child must fully exercise his freedom. Most human defects, say our psychologists, can be attributed to the artificial "repression" of natural instincts. Chesterton always teaches that the child is not an anarchist, and will soon become bored with the infinite. If you do not give him limits, he will invent them. His own nursery games are a prelude to his school games. He does not wish to lose himself in the world, he wishes to carry the whole world in his pocket. He manufactures a pocket edition of the universe, a few stones, plants and beetles, and gathers together the simplest tools of man, a knife or a piece of string. He is always getting ready for an imaginary journey and enjoys his preparations so much that he forgets to start.

This love of limitation which leads us to accept religious and social laws develops in us the instinct of property. The child treasures his possessions. He need not be told to keep them, he must be told, on certain occasions, to share them or give them away, and such teaching is not always readily accepted. This same feeling, which prompts him to bring the whole world within his compass, to reduce the scale of the map in proportion to his own size, to cultivate a corner of his father's garden, to make things small so that they should be more lovely and more lovable, stimulates his possessive tendencies. He

will weave a romance around the poorest toys and pour over his belongings the golden light of imagination. Things are not beautiful or precious themselves, they are ten times more beautiful and more precious because he has lived with them, because he belongs to them, and because they belong to him.

Chesterton then would build his freedom on old ideals and accuses the modern world of turning to new ideals before trying the old. "Men have not got tired of Christianity; they have never found enough Christianity to get tired of. Men have ^{never} wearied of political justice; they have wearied of waiting for it." ("Enemies of Property" WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD). Choosing what is perhaps the oldest ideal; the ideal house, the happy family, the holy family of history, he continues:

Now if we take this house or home as a test, we may very generally lay the simple spiritual foundations on the idea. God is that which can make something out of nothing. Man (it may truly be said) is that which can make something out of anything. In other words, while the joy of God must be unlimited creation, the special joy of man is limited creation, the combination of creation within limits. Man's pleasure, therefore, is to possess conditions, but also to be partly possessed by them; to be half-controlled by the flute he plays or by the field he digs. The excitement is to get the utmost out of given conditions; the conditions will stretch, but not indefinitely. A man can write an immortal sonnet on an old envelope, or hack a hero out of a lump of rock. But hacking a sonnet out of rock would be a laborious business, and making a hero out of an envelope is almost out of the sphere of practical politics. This fruitful strife with limitations when it concerns some airy entertainment of an educated class, goes by the name of Art. But the mass of men have neither time nor aptitude for the invention of invisible or abstract beauty. For the mass of men the idea of artistic creation can only be expressed by an idea unpopular in present discussions----the idea of property.

The average man cannot cut clay into the shape of a man; but he can cut earth into the shape of a garden; and though he arranges it with red geraniums and blue potatoes in alternate straight lines, he is still an artist; because he has chosen. The average man cannot paint the sunset whose colours he admires; but he can paint his own house with what colour he chooses; and though he paints it pea green with pink spots, he is still an artist; because that is his choice. Property is merely the art of democracy. It means that every man should have something that he can shape in his own image as he is shaped in the image of Heaven. But because he is not God, but only a graven image of God, his self expression must deal with limits; properly with limits that are strict and even small.

To conclude, these two are the aspects of freedom which are the foundation of Chesterton's political and economic creed: the freedom to move within limits; and, the freedom to own the small space enclosed within these limits and everything it contains. Small-holding should be the man's ideal as it is the child's ideal. A boy will not ask for more room than he can possibly dispose of, but he will insist that nobody else intrudes. Once "king of the castle" he will not wish to run away from it, as long as he is left free to deal with it as he likes. The two essential conditions of man's happiness are restricted possessions and unrestricted liberties concerning these possessions. Freedom and property are interdependent; freedom is the first condition of Christian citizenship; property is the first condition of freedom.

PART ONE

Chapter Four.

DEMOCRACY THE BEST POLITICAL SYSTEM TO FULFIL THE
FUNDAMENTAL NEEDS OF SOCIETY.

If we admit that there are two essential aspects of human nature which society must observe: first man's divine right to liberty and fair government; secondly, man's human weakness, which makes him equal with his fellows, liable to err if exalted above them, and only capable of loving and controlling anything adequately if it is of a limited size, the question arises, what political system is most adequate in fulfilling these fundamental necessities? Chesterton answers, true democracy is the only satisfactory form of government. His theory of democracy is a powerful plea against the spirit of modern government. But, if he shocks the orthodox democrat by informing him that all existing democratic forms are ludicrous, he also grieves deeply all anti-democratic advocates with his firm set plan founded on man's divine rights. Neither aristocracy with its privileged few, nor socialism with its promised many, can have much in common with an institution which promulgates the doctrine of widespread ownership as fundamental for society; and, which defends the cause of the free family, and of the man master of himself in his own home.

In HERETICS, Chesterton defines democracy. It is not philanthropy, he insists, nor altruism, nor social reform, nor is it based on pity for the common man. But, it is founded on reverence for the common man. It champions

man, not because man is miserable, but because man is sublime.

The thing which is really required for the proper working of democracy is not merely the democratic system, or even the democratic philosophy, but the democratic emotion.....It is a certain instinctive attitude which feels the things in which all men agree to be unspeakably important and all the things in which they differ (such as mere brains) to be almost unimportant.

The belief in the fundamental equality of man must be so real that it results in a genuine respect, even a deep love for all men. That was the creed and stirring emotion of great democrats like St. Francis of Assissi, Walt Whitman, and William Cobbett-- to mention only three who had a marked influence on Chesterton. "Mr. Shaw cannot understand that the thing which is valuable in our eyes is man," but the common man was Chesterton's norm, "the old beer-drinking, creed-making, fighting, failing, sensual, respectable man" (ON BERNARD SHAW). The prophets of progress would make man fit their world. Chesterton pleads that the world was made for man. He spurns the philosophy of the superman, of Nietzsche, Ibsen, Shaw, and Wells who, when they find the great common man cannot adapt himself to their program of progress, demand not a new program but a new man.

Chesterton's conception of democracy is intimately bound up with his love for men and he loves men regardless of their class or rank. Certainly, he is indulgent towards the poor, and severe towards the rich. This is not the result of class-consciousness but natural sympathy. His sympathies are very like those of Dickens: he loves man for his human qualities, that is, for the qualities which he shares with the vast majority of his fellow-men. In WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD, he imagines that he is

looking through the window at the first passer-by. The Liberals may have swept the country, but he may not be a Liberal; the Bible may be read in every school, but he may not believe in the Bible. You would not lay any bet on his politics or his religion; but you would bet "that he believes in wearing clothes, that he believes that courage is a fine thing or that parents have authority over their children." There is a common fund of traditions which you will observe in any tavern. "That is the real English law.....The first man you see from the window, he is the King of England."

Chesterton loves his fellow man in the Christian spirit, and concerns himself chiefly with the man in the street. He is no advocate of a vague brotherhood of men, vigorously contending, it is easy to love humanity; it is hard to love your next door neighbor. "We make our friends; we make our enemies; but God makes your next door neighbour....He is the most terrible of beasts. That is why the old religions and the old scriptural language showed so sharp a wisdom when they spoke, not of one's duty towards humanity, but one's duty towards one's neighbour." (HERETICS). His key to social problems is, begin with the individual, "the actual man or woman in the street who is cold." He abhors mass psychology. To him, the term "workers" is anathema. "The most important thing about a workman is that he is a man." (AS I WAS SAYING). To generalize about society is impossible; for, society is a mass of individual problems and the only solution is to leave it as much liberty as possible to solve these problems for itself: This, to Chesterton, is the democratic way of life.

The aim of true democracy, therefore, is to induce people to govern themselves. Those who think they can govern are most likely the ones least fitted to do so, because pride may be their ruling passion. "The one especially and peculiarly un-Christian idea is the idea of Carlyle---the idea that the man should rule who feels that he can rule." (ORTHODOXY). Carlyle's notion is the very anthesis of democracy which strives to exalt the virtues of the common man who is least affected by pride, and consequently sin. "Democracy means getting the people to vote who would never have the cheek to govern and the precise people who ought to govern are the people who have not the cheek to do it." (TREMENDOUS TRIFLES). Democracy, therefore, insists in the first place, on the rights of man---government by the people for the people, but it recognizes human weakness and denies the rule of the despot on the grounds of original sin.

Chesterton complained that democracy was not only being abused but unfairly abused: "Men are blaming universal suffrage merely because they are not enlightened enough to blame original sin." (ALL I SURVEY). He proceeds to describe a simple test for deciding whether political evils are due to original sin; which is, "to do what none or a very few of these modern malcontents are doing; to state any sort of moral claim for any sort of political system." The cause of man's failures lies in fallen man; even democracy, though less likely to become corrupt than oligarchy, is still by no means secure. "Be a democrat if you like, (and I shall always think it the most generous and the most fundamentally Christian in politics), express your sense of human dignity in manhood suffrage or any other form of equality, but put

not your trust in manhood suffrage or any child of man."
(THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS).

And Chesterton therefore attacks specialization in all its forms; "for specialization is a denial of the average, science means specialization and specialization means oligarchy." (HERETICS). The despot is the specialist in government who may be quite sincere and honest but is none the less likely to err. As a specialist he is different from those he governs and so cannot represent them. Neither can he understand them completely or pay proper respect to their individual strengths and weaknesses, while as a specialist he will inevitably lose his sense of proportion. The specialist, too, loses sight of everything outside his subject, and familiarity with it often breeds contempt, or at least insufficient reverence for it. Chesterton gives a concrete illustration of this contention in an essay defending the jury system against the single legal adjudicator which concludes:

Our civilization has decided, and very justly decided, that determining the guilt or innocence of men is a thing too important to be trusted to trained men. It wishes for light upon that awful matter, it asks men who know no more law than I know, but who can feel the things that I felt in the jury box. When it wants a liberty catalogued, or the solar system discovered, or any trifle of that kind, it uses up its specialists. But when it wishes anything done which is really serious, it collects twelve of the ordinary men standing round. The same thing was done, if I remember right, by the Founder of Christianity.

He dwells on the same point in ORTHODOXY: "The essential things in men are the things they hold separately." It does not matter so much whether you play the organ, discover the North pole, or attempt any other feat in which better-trained men excel. But it matters

tremendously to the country whether you can bring up your family and exercise your political rights: "The most important things must be left to ordinary men themselves----the mating of the sexes, the rearing of the young, the laws of the State"; those are the things which nobody can do for you. And realizing as he does that not only autocratic countries, but so-called democratic ones are trying through state control to replace the democratic ideal by a kind of herd instinct and to substitute the spirit of the city by the "Spirit of the hive." Chesterton writes, "I cannot believe that any human being is fundamentally happier for being finally lost in a crowd...I think every man must desire more or less to figure as a figure and not merely as a moving landscape made of figures." For, among the many features which men have in common is a desire for self-expression, for doing things in their own way. The "image of God" is not a pattern, like the pattern of a wallpaper, it is stranger than any creature in the Creation, and it is this very strangeness which brings it closer to the Creator.

It can be seen that democracy protects man's rights and his equality. What of his freedom? This is hedged by two institutions which are the stronghold of democratic ideas, private property and the home. The right to own private property derives from the nature of man. Property according to Chesterton is necessary for man because it gives him an opportunity to express himself, to create, to bring to fulfillment what the poet somewhere calls "the bit of fiat in my soul." But the mass of men, democracy's chief concern, have neither the capacity nor the leisure for the study and creation of abstract beauty. The average man cannot be a sculptor, or an architect, or a painter;

but he can be the owner of a home with its plot of ground or a farm where he may carve and plan and paint to his heart's content.

The average man cannot paint the sunset whose colours he admires; but he can paint his own houseProperty is merely the art of democracy. It means that every man should have something that he can shape in his own image, as he is shaped in the image of heaven. (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD).

Private property means that every man should have something to shape to his own liking; it is "the art of democracy", but it must be a small property. A man can love a small property as he can never love a large one; he may like to own it for the status or the wealth it brings him; but he can be personally interested only in a small piece of property, something which he is capable of working, organizing directly himself. He will deal with it as an artist deals with his materials, and have the true joy of struggle and creation. "The man standing in his own kitchen garden with Fairyland opening at the gate is the man with large ideas. His mind creates distance." (HERETICS). Liberty is "the power to be oneself," that is, to exercise all our faculties to the fullest extent; and we can only express ourselves by what we actually do. The really free man, therefore, possesses unlimited powers over something small. He paints one picture instead of possessing many; he lives one limited life instead of describing many, like the dramatist Phineas Salt in THE POET AND THE LUNATICS; he moulds and shapes his kitchen garden instead of owning large acres for other people to work. The small property owner will love the very boundaries of his estate as an artist loves his colors and his canvas, for they are materials of creation. "A man with the true poetry of

possession wishes to see the garden wall where his garden meets Smith's garden." (HERETICS). All true love is a love of limits.

Likewise, the home is a sphere of purely voluntary action, in which^a man is not only a citizen, but a king. Man must conform to the laws of society, in public; he may enjoy a minimum of state interference at home. In the essay on St. Thomas More (THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS) Chesterton writes that Thomas More in his private life was the type of a truth not as well understood to-day:

the truth that the real habitation of Liberty is the home. Modern novels and newspapers and problem plays have been piled up in one huge rubbish-heap to hide this simple fact; yet it is a fact that can be proved quite simply. Public life must be rather more regimented than private life; just as a man cannot wander about in the traffic of Piccadilly exactly as he could wander about in his own garden. Where there is traffic there will be regulation of traffic; and that is quite as true, or even more true, where it is what^{we} should call illicit traffic; where the most modern governments organize sterilization to-day and may organize infanticide to-morrow. Those who hold the modern superstition that the State can do no wrong will be bound to accept such a thing as right. If individuals have any hope of protecting their freedom, they must protect their family life. At the worst there will be rather more personal adaptation in a household than in a concentration camp; at the best there will be rather less routine in a family than in a factory. In any tolerably healthy home the rules are at least partly affected by things that cannot possibly affect fixed laws; for instance, the thing we call a sense of humour.(THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS).

And earlier he writes:

For a plain, hard-working man the home is not the one tame place in the world of adventure. It is the one wild place in the world of rules and set tasks. The home is the one place where he can put the carpet on the ceiling or the slates on the floor if he wants to. (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD).

It is the only place man can picnic. The only place where he can establish laws to fit the individual case; where he can establish a Court of Beacon as in MANALIVE. Here,

too, there is unlimited power over a small area. Communism in the state is wrong; but Communism in the home is right:

For the only truly and legitimately Communist institution is the home. "With all my worldly goods I thee endow" is the only satisfactory Bolshevik proclamation that has ever been made about property. (ALL I SURVEY).

Monogamy, on which the home is based is just a further example of the definition of freedom. To love fully is to give everything one has, therefore to love more than one woman completely is not within the limits of human power. Marriage offers a richer and more satisfactory relationship than free love. How can love be free or a lover wish to be free?

It is in the nature of love to bind itself and the institution of marriage merely paid the average man the compliment of taking him at his word. Modern sages offer to the lover....the largest liberties and the fullest irresponsibilitythey give him every liberty except the liberty to sell his liberty, which is the only one he wants...One sun is splendid, six suns would only be vulgar...The poetry of love is in following the single woman...the poetry of religion in worshipping the single star. (TREMENDOUS TRIFLES).

Understood this way, marriage becomes more valuable than romantic love. It rests on a store of common memories, on long years of collaboration, on joys and sorrows shared together, on the preservation and growth of a common ideal, of a common religion. In the eyes of popular wisdom, it may be explained by the saying that "two is company, three is none," and in the eyes of mysticism by the words, "one flesh one soul." Intellectually a man may call himself a citizen of the world, but his nature is so limited that, if he wishes to feel any kinship with others, he is bound to narrow his circle to his own country, to his own town, to his own friends, to his own home. The feeling increases in proportion with these limitations. The religion of mankind is often a hard religion. It is more wholesome

to love one man---or one woman---than to attempt, however sincerely, to love all men.

To conclude: Chesterton's argument is: Democracy of all political systems, alone satisfies the varied needs of human nature. His day saw a considerable movement against it, and a widespread distaste for these ordinary values. The popular philosophers and novelists, not to mention the politicians and "soap-box" orators, were wittingly or unwittingly, undermining the home, property and consequently morality. Sir Henry Wootton in *Dorian Gray* considered morality as dull and cramping. "Joy had been killed by beer and the seven deadly virtues," and the world was dying of "a sort of creeping common sense. Marriage was a bad habit and monogamy a sign of shallowness or lethargy. Therefore, in *ORTHODOXY*, Chesterton counter attacks this trend by showing that morality and the generally accepted institutions are in fact the most romantic things.

For the purpose of the wildest romance, results must be real: results must be irrevocable. Christian marriage is the great example of a real and irrevocable result; and that is why it is the chief subject and centre of all our romantic writing.

Christianity does not fetter the will or crush out the Dionysiac element of man's character. It is itself a product of revolt, and demands a constant battle against original sin for its preservation.

Civilization itself is the most romantic of rebellions. We live in an armed camp making war on a chaotic world. Morality is the most dark and daring of conspiracies. (THE DEFENDANT).

Chesterton's defence of the home and property are deductions based on the dominant features of his philosophy, viz. the value of Christian tradition, and of the exercise of free will. The laws of a democratic

society are the most satisfactory and provide the greatest happiness; but they are the product of the laws of God, and a type of the nature of the world, which is to be fruitful and be free. "The man who makes an orchard where there has been a field;" the man who founds a family "is imposing his will upon the world in the manner of the character given him by the will of God: he is asserting that his soul is his own.....he is worshipping the fruitfulness of the world....by participation in a great creative process: even in the everlasting creation of the world."(THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS

It was Chesterton's belief that democracy rose in its modern form with the French Revolution. He was educated as a unitarian, and was steeped from childhood in the traditions of English radicalism. He became a lover of man before becoming a lover of God, and his democratic instincts were fully developed before his conversion to Orthodoxy. From that moment, Christianity, and the French Revolution were the two pillars of his philosophy, the Rights of Man appeared to him as the civic expression of his religious creed; liberty, equality, and fraternity answered the call of faith, hope and charity. He never wavered from this position. He went even further; he considered the French Revolution as the fulfillment of the democratic development of medievalism, the revival of the ideal of the old guilds and Communes, crushed by monarchy and aristocracy. It was as if mankind had picked up, in the eighteenth century, the threads broken in the sixteenth, during the devastating storm of the Reformation and the religious wars which followed it.

Clearly Chesterton's whole view of the question is interminably bound up with his conception of the course of

European history. In his *THE NEW JERUSALEM* we find an epitomy of this historical perspective "The labour problem is the attempt to have the democracy of Paris without the slavery of Rome." The Roman Republic developed a fine conception of citizenship and law because it rested on slave labor. With the advent of Christianity and the gospel of human brotherhood came an ideal utterly incompatible with slavery. The long struggle for social freedom was begun. It nearly succeeded in the gradual emancipation of the serfs and the establishment of the Communes and corporations, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. But the Reformation, with its rivalries of centralized states, and its augmented power of national princes supported by a privileged aristocracy, checked it. The French Revolution, based on Roman traditions, was a violent attempt both to realize the old ideal of Christian brotherhood and to apply the doctrine of the Rights of Man to political institutions. It was wrecked, in turn, not so much by the defeat of Napoleon as by the advent of industrialism and the rising of a new aristocracy whose power rested on money. The popular agitation of the nineteenth century, and especially its outcome, the labor movement, aimed at restoring "the democracy of Paris without the slavery of Rome."

As a democrat, Chesterton considered that the dignity and freedom of the citizen, on the basis established by the French Revolution, were still of greater importance than his material welfare, and that the conquest of the second, however necessary, could not justify the sacrifice of the first. As a Christian, he declared that Charity was at the basis of all Christian civilization, and that even under the most ideal conditions, her beneficent influence could not be dispensed with. The conventional charity

as it was understood and practised by the upper classes, might perhaps be spared, but the old Caritas would still burn in the heart of every man and woman. A society based on hygiene and strict justice and organized on purely scientific principles might be impossible to live in, and the rule of an aristocracy of experts might become quite as intolerable as the rule of an aristocracy of wealthy people. Saint Paul places Charity above all virtues: "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing." Chesterton strove all his life to defend this long-suffering, unfailing, humble virtue which had been degraded by her worshippers and scorned by her friends. He believed that the struggle, which he witnessed was merely an episode in the long history of Christian civilization, and that no permanent result could be achieved against the fundamental principles of Christianity. These principles were at the root of the French Revolution and of the Socialist agitation of 1848. If they were ignored by the modern materialist, whether Marxist or Conservative, the results of the movement would be worse than the evil which it had set out to cure. The best intentions could not redeem a bad philosophy.

Chesterton's political convictions, therefore, were the outcome of his orthodox faith; his individualism was based on moral foundations. He made no distinction between public and private morality, politics and philosophy. To him, true equality was a mystical fact, only divinely revealed, "that all men are equal only in the sight of God," and so those who had no God could only make a hideous mess with this very secret instrument of reform. Man could not be free until he was just. How could the mass of men

evolve justice, which is the perfect balance of conflicting rights, every right being perfect in itself, especially to the owner of the right; so perfect, in fact, that it perpetually obscured the vision of any other right? But Chesterton had the answer: Nothing can ever bring about true freedom except stark, undiluted, and omnipotent Christianity which has failed only where it has not been tried.

PART ONE

Chapter Five.

TRUE DEMOCRACY EXISTS ONLY THEORETICALLY.

Clearly, Chesterton's theory of democracy is based on high ideals of liberty and equality. In practice true democracy does not exist to-day. It arose in its modern form with the French Revolution, but has been driven out by capitalism, which sprung up with industrialism at the same period. In fact, the modern government does not truly represent the common people, for it is not drawn from their ranks. It costs too much for a poor man to be elected, yet his class should be represented. As a young political campaigner, Chesterton, not fully realizing how the rich clique controlled politics, kept wondering like this:

Why is the candidate nearly always the worst
duffer on the platform?

Good speakers were on the platform, men like Belloc or John Simon but

All the time, as often as not, the man we were sending up specially to speak, in the supreme court of Parliament could not speak at all. He was some solid and dressy tailor's dummy, with a single eye-glass or waxed moustaches, who repeated exactly the same dull formula at every separate meeting....I know that what runs modern politics is money; and that the superiority of the fool in the frockcoat over Belloc and Simon simply consisted in the fact the he was richer than they were. (NATIONALISM AND NOTTING HILL).

Neither have the people any real say in their own government, because elections are generally fought over irrelevant issues such as the foreign policy. The political parties offer two or three choices of policy for which a man must vote but not what he will vote about" (A MISCELLANY OF MEN). Government policy, too, is chiefly concerned with imperialism. This was especially true at the beginning of the century. But imperialism is a

denial of the deepest democratic principles. It denies the equality of man by imposing our standards on another nation, yet learning nothing of theirs. As in THE NAPOLEON OF NOTTING HILL, the ex-president of the recently appropriated Nicaragua points out that "the great cosmopolitan civilization which shall include all the talents of all the absorbed peoples" which means in practice that we teach our colonies to speak English but do not ourselves learn to lasso wild horses. Furthermore, imperialism is a denial of true liberty, which consists in the power over small things. A man cannot love anything so large as an empire, and the true patriot who really loves his country objects to any addition to it. "Great empires are necessarily prosaic, for it is beyond human power to act a great poem upon so great a scale." (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD). Therefore imperialism by suppressing patriotism induces pacifism, which is simply a denial that anything is worth fighting for. "As soon as you love a thing the whole world becomes your foe."

Chesterton, plainly saw that pacifism was only a species of indifference. Because to err is human, we must battle for the right. "Hitler and Mussolini are not likely to ruin all their plans because a quaker does not propose to interfere with them" (AS I WAS SAYING). It is as a true lover of England, and not for merely sentimental reasons, Chesterton delivered his philippics against imperialism. It was madness to confuse patriotism with imperialism; more madness still to confound patriotism and religion. Therefore he attacked Kipling who would identify patriotism with imperialism. He became a pro-Boer and affirmed that patriotism and imperialism were

not only not the same thing but very nearly opposite things. Before the First Great War, he tells us how he considered that "to the Germans, imperialism and patriotism were the same thing." (AUTOBIOGRAPHY). At the very moment of completing his AUTOBIOGRAPHY, a time when men thought imperialism or at least patriotism a substitute for religion, he wrote: "My present prejudice would be satisfied by saying that the last decay of Protestantism took the form of Prussianism." In a word, Chesterton foresaw in imperialism the desecration of democracy; for, imperialism not only pandered to the pride of man, but dissipated man's limited liberty.

A still further proof of the lack of democracy is evinced in the rise of dictatorships. Whilst denouncing dictators, Chesterton alleges that their existence is due to revolts against abuses of stale and corrupt systems. He likens the Fascist revolution to the French Revolution. At the end of the eighteenth century every rational person saw the need of reforms. The despots of Europe knew the mind of the people. The aristocrats in England knew it equally well; and, they compromised with the American democracy and began to talk about reforming English representation. France became a republic. In our day, a similar need for reform has recurred:

That is exactly what has happened again, before our very eyes, and still we could not see it. Parliament has in practice become a mass of nonsense, just as Versailles with its dead etiquette and heraldry, had become a mass of nonsense. It may be that it might have been purged and saved; it may be that Parliamentarians may be purged and saved. What I complain of is that Parliamentarians are not making the smallest attempt to purge and save it. They are content to brag of all the liberties we have lost, and of all the votes that we never want to use, and of all the utterly unpolular laws passed in the interests of the people. They never talk about the abuses that have really

rotted away the reputation of representative government; the capitalist backing even of collectivist professions; the secret fund that is no longer a secret. Meanwhile, all over Europe we hear the same story: that Parliament is simply government by professional politicians, and that the professional politicians are profoundly corrupt. (COME TO THINK OF IT).

So convinced is Chesterton of the need of reform that to him the only question on which reasonable men may disagree, is the nature of reform. He, himself, had championed the Liberal Party; for, he had believed its ideals were equal citizenship and personal freedom; "they are my own political ideals to this day." But

Then the breach came, on which I need not insist except by saying that I became quite convinced of two facts. First, that representative government had ceased to be representative. Second, that Parliament was in fact gravely menaced by political corruption. Politicians did not represent the populace, even the most noisy and vulgar of the populace. Politicians did not deserve the dignified name of demagogues. They deserved no name except perhaps the name of bagmen; they were travelling for private firms. If they represented anything it was the vested interests, vulgar but not even popular.

For this reason, when the Fascists' revolt appeared in Italy, I could not be entirely hostile to it; for I knew the hypocritical plutocracy against which it rebelled. But neither could I be entirely friendly to it; for I believed in the civic equality in which the politicians pretended to believe. (THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS).

And he charges, the party system itself has become corrupt and anti-democratic; and, the truth about it is, that it does not exist. That is, the public theory of the thing is different from the practical reality. There are no two real parties ruling alternately, but one real group "the Front Benches", ruling all the time,

And under the condition of our party politics, a party is supported not so much by fighting as by funds. They are called, heavens knows why, in a most extraordinary metaphor, "the sinews of war." They are provided by the sale of peerages to rich men and all sorts of ignominious methods.....And the very constitution of the modern

party politics is such that a government has to placate such supporters, and profess to represent their ideals or prejudices or whatever we happen to think them. In short, the whole thing was and is a plutocracy. (AUTOBIOGRAPHY).

Parliament has come to mean only a secret government of the rich: democracy is doomed because plutocracy is flourishing. Nowhere clearer than through Cobbett's eyes does Chesterton make us see this decay of democracy and the rise of plutocracy. Cobbett, he says, really believed in popular principles, though he did not call them democratic principles.

He knew that the real revolutionary song had been about fields and furrows, and not about wheels and rails. He knew that the Revolution (French) had begun with bread. He was not in the least impressed by its ending in smoke.

When the Liberals championed industrialism; the Tories posed as the agricultural party;

If only a party of squires and not of peasants. But it was no longer a real war, like the war between Parliament and the King, in which Parliament had finally triumphed. The new Whigs and Tories were only two different shades of the same colour, like the dark blue of the Tory University and the light blue of the Whig University. They were at most only two different types of the same oligarchy.

Cobbett, Chesterton concludes, saw that the Whigs and Tories only offered two slightly different reasons for not giving the common man what he wanted. Pitt, the Tory, and Peel, the Radical,

did indeed fight democracy abroad and persecute it at home. But they did not defend aristocracy, far less monarchy. What they did was to establish plutocracy; and mainly a parvenu plutocracy. And if it be a glory to have created the modern industrial state, they can claim a very great share of it.

To the foregoing excerpts from Cobbett let us add Chesterton's remark: Let us exhort the increasing number

of intellectuals who are advising us of the failure of democracy as if it were the only calamity, to announce at once the real disaster, the success of plutocracy.

I mean it has been the only sort of success it could be; for Plutocracy has no philosophy or morals or even meaning; it can only be a material success, that is, a base success. Plutocracy can only mean the success of plutocrats in being plutocrats. But this they enjoyed until a short time ago, when an economic judgment shook them like an earthquake. With Democracy the case is exactly the reverse. We may say, with some truth, that Democracy has failed; but we shall only mean that Democracy has failed to exist. It is nonsense to say that the complicated but centralized Capitalist States of the last hundred years have suffered from an extravagant sense of the equality of men or the simplicity of manhood. At most we might say that the civic theory has provided a sort of legal fiction, behind which a rich man could rule a civilisation where he could once rule a city; or a usurer throw his net over six nations, where he once threw it over a village. But there is no stronger proof of the fact that it emphatically is plutocracy, and most emphatically is not democracy, that has caused popular institutions to become unpopular than this example of the pull of the Pacifists upon the Liberal Government just before the Great War. It is only necessary to ask exactly how much such extreme Pacifists counted in the Party Fund, and how much they counted in the Party.(AUTOBIOGRAPHY).

Democracy, like Christianity, has not failed; it has not been given a trial. Chesterton saw in the French Revolution a move towards true democracy; for,

The great dominant idea of the whole of that period, the period before, during, and after the Revolution, is the idea that man would by his nature live in an Eden of dignity, liberty and love, and that artificial and decrepit systems are keeping him out of that Eden.(BROWNING).

But the Napoleonic wars brought the final and complete triumph of the plutocrats. Chesterton lauds the "Rural Rides" of Cobbett, who pictures the results of the new mastery in Hampshire. "The small gentry to about the third rank upwards are all gone, nearly to a man, and the small farmers along with them....The big, in order to save

themselves from being swallowed up quickly, make use of their voices to get, through place, pension or sinecure, something back from the taxers.--But the small gentry have no resource. While war lasted, 'glorious war', there was a resource; but now, alas, not only is there no war but no hope of war....If Pitt and his followers had said, 'Let us go to work to induce the owners and occupiers of the land to convey their estates and capital into our hands,' and if the Government had corresponded with them in their views, the effect could not have been more complete than it thus far has been." (COBBETT). Chesterton justly sums up the situation in *THE SECRET PEOPLE*:

The squire seemed struck in the saddle; he was foolish as if in pain.
He leaned on a staggering lawyer, he clutched at a cringing Jew.
He was stricken, it may be, after all, he was stricken at Waterloo.

In a word, Chesterton sees Napoleon as by no means a model Christian, challenging the force of money-power. He sees Napoleon fighting a Christian society and being conquered by an anti-Christian one; for, usury was the enemy of the Christian faith.

According to Chesterton the twin evils of capitalism and industrialism have so enslaved men that even their sense of the ideals of true democracy is now lost. Reforms are necessary; but, confusion, arising from lack of ideals, can only beget paralysis. Millions, he writes, have accepted democracy not knowing why: millions will reject it without knowing why. Democracy is being unfairly abused, because it is misunderstood, yet it is a simple concept. Applied to a small group it means the functioning of the natural claim to rule themselves, "government by consent." But small groups and simple cases are out of the question

in modern times. "In other words, the trouble with democracy is not democracy, but certain artificial anti-democratic things that have thrust themselves into the modern world to thwart and destroy democracy."

Modernity is not democracy; machinery is not democracy; the surrender of everything to trade and commerce is not democracy. Capitalism is not democracy; and is admittedly, by trend and savour, rather against democracy. But all these modern things forced themselves into the world at about the time, or shortly after the time, when great idealists like Rousseau and Jefferson happened to have been thinking about the democratic ideal of democracy. It is tenable that the ideal was too idealistic to succeed. It is not tenable that the ideal that failed was the same as the realities that did succeed.....Democracy has had everything against it in practice, and that very fact may be something against it in theory. It may be argued that it has human life against it. But, at any rate, it is quite certain that it has modern life against it. The industrial and scientific world of the last hundred years has been much more unsuitable a setting for the experiment of self-government than would have been found in old conditions of agrarian or even nomadic life. Feudal manorial life was not a democracy; but it could have been much more easily turned into a democracy. Later peasant life, as in France or Switzerland, actually has been quite easily turned into a democracy. But it is horribly hard to turn what is called modern industrial democracy into a democracy. (ALL I SURVEY).

Men conclude, Chesterton continues, that the ideal of democracy does not fit in with the modern spirit; and, therefore, resolve to jettison the ideal instead of the modern spirit, which itself soon becomes ancient. A well-known pacifist declares, "The voice of the people is commonly the voice of Satan." And, Chesterton replies, "these Liberals never really did believe in popular government; but, I still believe democracy is the most human sort of government, if it could be once more attempted in a more human time."

Unfortunately, humanitarianism has been the mark of an inhuman time. And by inhumanity, I do not

mean merely cruelty; I mean the condition in which even cruelty ceases to be human. I mean the condition in which the rich man, instead of hanging six or seven of his enemies because he hates them, merely beggars and starves to death six or seven thousand people whom he does not hate, and has never seen, because they live at the other side of the world. ("Industrialism")

There is nothing straightforward about industrialism and "into this most ⁱⁿ direct of all systems we have tried to fit the most direct of all ideas." Democracy simple to excess was applied to a society complex to excess. "It is not so very surprising that such a vision has faded in such an environment."

PART ONE

Chapter Six.

REASONS FOR OUR SLOTH IN BUILDING UP TRUE DEMOCRACY.

The depressing political conditions just described are a fertile source of unhappiness and insecurity. The main obstacles to the reform of these conditions, according to Chesterton's analysis, are capitalism, and the state of mind induced by the theory of evolution. Our greatest stumbling block, he assures us, is the Darwinian hypothesis of the survival of the fittest. According to Darwin, life may have evolved and various species survived by adapting themselves to their environment. The effect of the popularization of such a theory was rather to encourage man to adapt himself to his environment than to urge him to subdue it to himself. Darwin had accomplished a great deal in biological speculation on the variation of the species, but the Victorian evolutionists in their hasty generalizations not only undermined Darwinism but mankind.

They were always going to the country, appealing to the public, expecting an immediate decision of the whole commonwealth, even on the most specialist speculations, as if they were the most spiritual elements of right and wrong. Thus they identified Free Trade with Freedom; insisting on it with an ethical simplicity wholly inapplicable to an economic science. And so they identified Natural Selection with Nature; with a dogmatic finality wholly inapplicable to a biological science. The Darwinian Theory was the Dawn; and any other shade of fact or fancy was only part of the opposing darkness. (AS I WAS SAYING).

They had closed down speculation in the true Darwinian sense; they had opened up the belief that "man need not trouble to alter conditions; conditions will soon alter man." The "right environment" was all that man or rather the child needed. "It is," writes Chesterton, "a troublesome thing, environment, for it sometimes works positively and sometimes negatively, and more often between the two." (TREMENDOUS TRIFLES). Or as he put it concretely: "To be

born among pine-trees might mean loving pine-trees. It might mean loathing pine-trees. It might quite seriously mean never having seen a pine-tree." (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD).

The result of the Darwinian theory, in its popularized form, is that we begin at the wrong end. Instead of building our social system on the rights of man, we adopt a system like the present and try to adapt man to it. This Chesterton calls the huge modern heresy of altering the human soul to fit its conditions, instead of altering human conditions to fit the human soul.

We need not debate about the mere words evolution or progress: personally I prefer to call it reform. For reform implies form. It implies that we are trying to shape the world in a particular image; to make it something that we see already in our minds. Evolution is a metaphor from mere automatic unrolling. Progress is a metaphor from merely walking along a road---very likely a wrong road. But reform is a metaphor for reasonable and determined men; it means that we see a certain thing out of shape and we mean to put it into shape. And we know what shape.

Now here comes in the whole collapse and huge blunder of our age. We have mixed up two different things, two opposite things. Progress should mean that we are always changing the world to suit the vision. Progress does mean (just now) that we are always changing the vision....We are not altering the real to suit the ideal. We are altering the ideal: it is easier. (ORTHODOXY).

We have put trade in the place of truth. "Trade, which is in its nature a secondary or dependent thing, has been treated as a primary and independent thing; as an absolute." (THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS). Modern conditions are made an absolute end, and human dignity is fitted to that end, whereas, human dignity is an end to be served by the state.

Thus people say, "Home life is not suited to the business life of to-day." Which is as if they said, "Hats are not suited to the sort of hats now in fashion." Then they might go around cutting off people's heads to meet the shortage or shrinkage of hats; and calling it the Hat Problem. (GENERALLY SPEAKING).

Chesterton labels this "thinking backwards," and alleges that our sense of values is inverted. "All the despair about the poor, and the cold and repugnant pity for them has been largely due to the vague sense that they have literally relapsed into the state of the lower animals." (O^o DICKENS). The poor should depend neither on the caprice of the millionaire nor on the shepherding of the state officials. They must be helped because they possess the same rights as ordinary human beings, not because they are suffering grievous wrongs. Moreover, this "thinking backwards" makes reform hopeless; through increasing ills, class distinctions are becoming more and more pronounced, owing not only to the evils arising out of industrialism and capitalism but to the nature of the reforms advocated for their amelioration. The well-to-do speak of the 'lower classes'; the sociologists, of the 'workers'. These 'workers' are spoken of as a "vast grey horde of people, apparently all alike, like ants.

And this de-humanizing way of dealing with people who do most of the practical work on which we depend, merely because they unfortunately have to do it for a wage, is really quite as irritating to anybody with any real popular sympathies as the ignorant contempt of the classes that are established and ought to be educated. And both fail upon the simple point that the most important thing about a workman is that he is a man; a particular sort of biped; and that two of him are not a quadruped nor fifty of him a centipede. (AS I WAS SAYING).

So the poor are doubly oppressed with reforms. In summing up his whole case for ideals as a true basis for reform Chesterton tells how "certain doctors and other persons permitted by modern law to dictate to their shabbier fellow-citizens" decreed that little girls, "whose parents were poor," should have their hair cut short. The law did not interfere with the unhealthy habits common among rich little girls. "The poor were pressed down from

above into such stinking and suffocating underworlds of squalor that poor people must not have hair because in their case it must mean lice in their hair." (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD). Therefore, the doctors propose to abolish the hair. Did it not occur to them that the lice might be abolished? They are thinking backwards and forgetting that the Sabbath was made for man.

It must not be concluded that Chesterton denied that the new reforms might improve the material situation of the poor. He did deny that it could improve their moral situation, their freedom to exercise their rights as free citizens. He states their predicament amusingly in *AS I WAS SAYING*, by using high sounding terminology, ("the voice of the rough and simple masses of the poor";) "The sociology of capitalistic industrialism began with an identification with individualism; but its ultimate organization has corresponded to a complete loss of individuality." The French Revolution did not wage war in defense of a class or herd, but in defence of the rights of the individual against an oppressive state. Materialists, especially the determinists, urged that no progress could be achieved if physical conditions were not altered, and that progress must go on its way; Chesterton urged that alterations would be worse than useless if the people were led from one state of subjection to another. If the means used for achieving reform jeopardized its results, the reform was vain and must be abolished.

But the whole evolutionary idea supports the modern false standard of values by equating the survival of the fittest with inevitable progress. The phrase "You can't

put the clock back" has become cant.

It is astonishing to note how often, when we address a man with anything resembling an idea, he answers with some recognized metaphor, supposed to be appropriate to the case. If you say to him, 'I myself prefer the principle of the Guild to the principle of the Trust,' he will not answer you by talking about principles. He can be counted on to say, 'You can't put the clock back,' with all the regularity of a ticking clock.(COME TO THINK OF IT).

The real question, of course, does not concern time or clocks but whether certain abstract principles, which may or may not have been observed in the past, ought to be observed in the future. The fashionable metaphor does not give the modern man a chance to think even had he the time. "But we are subconsciously dominated by the notion that there is no turning back," (EUGENICS AND OTHER EVILS). This is the growing popular belief. Yet, if you asked the evolutionist to tell whether a certain new movement is a forward step or a retrograde step, how could he answer, if his ethics are always changing with his evolution. "He cannot tell whether he ought to evolve into the higher morality or the larger morality, unless he has some principle of pity or liberty that does not evolve at all." (COME TO THINK OF IT). But capitalism naturally avails itself of the theory of progress to persuade people that industrialism on its modern plan is indeed inevitable, and to break up all means of resisting it.

The theory of progress, continues Chesterton, may be argued; but it must be proved. It is necessary to show that certain social stages are superior to previous social stages on their own merits; and in many cases it may be possible to prove it. In some cases it is certainly possible to disprove it. "It is the most profound popular impression that scientific materialism at the end of its hundred years is found to have been used chiefly for the

oppression of the people. Of this, the most evident example is that evolution itself can be offered as something able to evolve a people who can be oppressed."(FANCIES VERSUS FADS). Capitalism has done its best to force life into a fixed framework of employment and to destroy the independence of the home and private property.

There has certainly been a rush of discovery, a rapid series of inventions; and, in one sense, the activity is marvellous and the rapidity might well look like magic. But it has been a rapidity in things going stale; a rush downhill to the flat and dreary world of the prosaic; a haste of marvellous things to lose their marvellous character; a deluge of wonders to destroy wonder. This may be the improvement of machinery, but it cannot possibly be the improvement of man. And since it is not the improvement of man, it cannot possibly be progress. Man is the creature that progress professes to improve; it is not a race against wheels, or a wrestling match of engines against engines. Improvement implies all that is commonly called education; and education implies enlargement; and especially enlargement of the imagination. (AS I WAS SAYING).

It must be emphasized that Chesterton's reaction is not against material science or mechanical inventions; but, as he says, "my doubts about modern materialistic machinery are doubts about its ultimate utility in practice."

On this utility in practice, Chesterton, leaves no doubt in the reader's mind regarding modern industry and the home. Man has in himself, he says, the power of love, a promise of paternity, a thirst for some loyalty that shall unify life and in the ordinary course of events he asks himself, 'How far do the existing conditions of those assisting in shops fit in with my evident and epic destiny in the matter of love and marriage?' This is his answer:

But here as I have said, comes in the quiet and crushing power of modern materialism. It prevents him rising in rebellion, as he would otherwise do. By perpetually talking about environment and visible things, by perpetually talking about economics and physical necessity, by painting and keeping repainted a perpetual picture of iron machinery and

merciless engines, of rails and steel, and of towers of stone, modern materialism at last produces this tremendous impression on the human imagination, this impression in which the truth is stated upside down. At last the result is achieved. The man does not say as he ought to have said, 'Should married men endure being modern shop assistants?' The man says, 'Should shop assistants marry?' (TREMENDOUS TRIFLES).

Of the effects of capitalism on the family life Chesterton cherishes no illusions. In one of his last essays "Three Foes of the Family"--he speaks out clearly and boldly:

It cannot be too often repeated that what destroyed the Family in the modern world was Capitalism. No doubt it might have been Communism, if Communism had ever had a chance, outside that semi-Mongolian wilderness where it actually flourishes. But, so far as we are concerned, what has broken up households and encouraged divorces, and treated the old domestic virtues with more and more open contempt, is the epoch and power of Capitalism. It is Capitalism that has forced a moral feud and a commercial competition between the sexes; that has destroyed the influence of the parent in favour of the influence of the employer; that has driven men from their homes to look for jobs; that has forced them to live near their factories or their firms instead of near their families; and, above all, that has encouraged, for commercial reasons, a parade of publicity and garish novelty, which is in its nature the death of all that was called dignity and modesty by our mothers and fathers. (THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS).

Cobbett a self-educated man might surely have been a self-made man; but, he saw his chance was worthless, and that most men were unfairly equipped for the struggle of life, Chesterton relates in his life of Cobbett. Why does Chesterton think that Cobbett's judgment "that the poor were really and truly helpless," was a correct and unbiassed judgment?

It comes back to the fundamental truth of the modern state. Our commercialism does not punish the vices of the poor, but the virtues of the poor. It hampers the human character at its best and not merely at its worst; and makes impossible even the merits that it vainly recommends.

Capitalism has prevented the poor man from saving more than it has prevented him from spending. It has restrained him from respectable marriage more than from casual immorality. It may be that Socialism threatens to destroy domesticity; but it is capitalism that destroys it. This is doubtless what is meant by saying that capitalism is the more practical of the two.

The whole method of modern finance is a denial of private property, says Chesterton, for it is based not on the possession but on the sale of things. Speaking of conditions of even one hundred years previous Chesterton writes:

Already, for a long time, men had been buying and selling as they liked, and trading and travelling as they liked. And already the result stood up solid and enormous, in the thing called Capitalism: that is the dispossession of the populace of all forms of real productive property; all instruments of production in the hands of the few; all the millions merely the servants of the few, working for a wage, always an insecure wage, generally a mean and inhuman wage. (THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS).

Everything at present is thought of in relation to trade. In all normal civilizations the trader existed and must exist. "But in all normal civilizations the trader was the exception; certainly he was never the rule; and most certainly he was never the ruler. The predominance which he has gained in the modern world is the cause of all the disasters in the modern world." (THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS).

Chesterton's solution of the Gordian knot of markets would be to increase the number of persons who would live in a way of self-existence. Traders there always have been and traders there always will be; but prosperity should not depend on either trade or trader.

All the collapse of the commercial system in our own time has been due to that fallacy of forcing things on a market where there was no market; of continually increasing the power of supply without increasing the power of demand; or briefly, of always considering the man who sells the potato and never considering the man who eats it. And just as we need much more of the subsistence farm, or the worker who simply produces

for his own consumption, so we need much more of what may be called in moral matters the subsistence family; that is, the private family that can be really excited about its own private life; the household that is interested in itself. It is all nonsense to say that such a thing is impossible. (AS I WAS SAYING).

If nothing solid can be built on social values certainly nothing solid can be founded on the utterly unphilosophical philosophy of blind buying and selling from which it is but a short step to the "ghastly abstractions and wild unrealities" of speculation, through which capitalism has destroyed the self-supporting peasant type. Writing of Cobbett, Chesterton says: "He believed that the whole financial network of national debts and paper money would eventually drag England to destruction. He may have been wrong; though in fact it is far easier now than it was then to maintain that he was right." (COBBETT).

Believing that the whole method of modern finance is a denial of private property, Chesterton held no brief for monopolistic enterprise and modern finance but fought for the preservation of home life and free social intercourse threatened alike by Capitalism and Communism. His main reproach against the Communists was, that, after protesting against the abuses of a system, which proclaimed itself individualistic, and which prevented the citizen from exercising his rights by concentrating capital, they themselves built up an organization, which deprived the citizen of individual freedom and made him the servant of the state.

For Communism is the child and heir of Capitalism; and the son would still greatly resemble his father even if he had really killed him. Even if we had what is called the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, there would be the same mechanical monotony in dealing with the mob of Dictators as in dealing with the mob of wage-slaves. There would be, in practice, exactly the same sense of

swarms of human beings who were hardly human, swarms coming out of a hive, whether to store or to sting.(AS I WAS SAYING).

Similarly, Capitalism has attacked the home in its attempt to make the factory the centre of life. Originally it encouraged large families that there might be surplus labor; now since machines replace men it encourages birth control. This weakens the family. Capitalism advocates free love and divorce because these weaken the family bond; Chesterton attacks divorce because it ruins the home, the last refuge of liberty. (THE SUPERSTITION OF DIVORCE). "If there be any class loyalty or domestic discipline by which the poor can help the poor, these emancipators will certainly strive to loosen that bond or lift that discipline in the most liberal fashion." Capitalism even welcomes eugenics in the hope of producing a more industrialized race.

Chesterton's conclusions are well justified to-day. Democracy based on ideals is still a dream. The struggle for emancipation begun in 1789 and resumed in 1848 had ended in enslavement. The old democracy had proclaimed the rights of man against the autocracy of the dynasts; the new democracy had deliberately sacrificed them on the altar of state or race worship.

PART TWO.
ECONOMIC BELIEFS.

Chapter One

CRITICISM OF THE THEORY OF PROGRESS.

The advocates of the theory of progress, proclaim that capitalism and industrialism are inevitable: "modern machinery is here to stay, and you can't put the clock back." Chesterton answers: "a clock being a piece of human construction, can be restored by the human finger to any hour." As a matter of fact the past is full of such restoration. All revolution, all renaissance, is restoration. "The originality of Michael Angelo and Shakespeare began with the digging up of old verses and manuscripts;..... the great medieval revival was a memory of the Roman Empire.....; never was the past more venerated by men than it was by the French revolutionists....Man must always plant his fruit trees in a graveyard. "(WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD).

But most people object to this reply. They do not share, nor do they want to share, the lofty ideals of the past in politics, religion, or art. The achievements of man in the field of knowledge and technique is their hope and glory. Material progress alone is their goal. They boast and boast decrease in infant mortality, increase in production, facilities in transportation and communication, and efficiency. Chesterton idealizes politics, religion, art and literature. Are not the majority entitled to what they advocate, if it brings greater comfort and happiness?

The discussion turns on the ~~maning~~ meaning of happiness. If

human happiness means only material comfort and the spirit of the hive, there is a slight possibility that modern progress may bring this about. Unhappily people are still convinced, in spite of recent experiences, that, quite apart from its search for knowledge, science has by itself a morally beneficent influence on human nature. They cling to the old idea that modern discoveries are the allies of man in his "fight against nature" and that human happiness depends on progress. They forget that

the harnessing of science to hellish engines of destruction has not grown better, because a great deal of blood has flowed under the bridges since old Huxley idealized the social use of science;

and, that

in spite of the creation of new industries, technical discoveries have thrown, and are still throwing, millions of men out of employment. (AS I WAS SAYING).

They are apt to confuse pure science with applied science, the machine with the knowledge that allowed its creation. The progress of industrialization is infinite, just as the field of man's knowledge of nature is infinite; but, this may or may not bring human happiness. It is only a process which can be used for good or evil; and, which has been used in recent years for a great deal of evil. In a word, science, which has prompted development, cannot teach us how to use it: science is only a means to an end.

The danger of applying scientific principles to the conduct of human affairs lurks in their constant change due to the progress of research. Often before such principles are understood and adopted by the majority, they have lost a great deal of their scientific character. For example, the theory of determinism, led Taine and a number of others to explain national characteristics through the

influence of surroundings. On this theory as applied to history Chesterton's commentary is:

Thus Spaniards (it was said) are passionate because their country is hot; Scandinavians adventurous because their country is cold; Englishmen naval because they are islanders; Switzers free because they are mountaineers. It is all very nice in its way. Only unfortunately I am quite certain that I could make up quite as long a list exactly contrary in its argument, point-blank against the influence of their geographical environment. Thus Spaniards have discovered more continents than Scandinavians, because their hot climate discouraged them from exertion. Thus Dutchmen have fought for their freedom quite as bravely as the Switzers because the Dutch have no mountains. Thus pagan Greece and Rome and many Mediterranean peoples have specially hated the sea, because they had the nicest sea to deal with, the easiest sea to manage. I could extend the list forever. But however long it was, two examples would certainly stand up in it as pre-eminent and unquestionable. The first is that the Swiss, who live under staggering precipices and spires of eternal snow, have produced no art or literature at all, and are by far the most mundane, sensible, and business-like people in Europe. The other is that the people of Belgium who live in a country like a carpet, have, by an inner energy, desired to exalt their towers till they struck the stars. (TREMENDOUS TRIFLES).

Social reformers invoke the principle of determinism to advocate clemency for criminals. The criminals call upon it, in turn, to excuse and justify their crimes. Educationists adopt it demanding more patience with abnormal children. Perfectly normal children have used it to reproach their mothers for giving them birth. Likewise, the theory of natural selection and the survival of the fittest, whilst stimulating individual energy and private initiative, has become the gospel of the worst forms of capitalist exploitation. To reap the good such principles produce without reaping the evil, Chesterton says, we must have recourse to Christian charity which is devoid of scientific foundations.

To the suggestion that "capitalism and industrialism are inevitable," Chesterton asseverates that man has free

will and that he has produced the present system by his own efforts. The question is not whether certain states are inevitable; but, whether they are right or wrong.

People say that a new institution "has come to stay." They also say, "Uncle Humphrey has come to stay." Certain uncles outstay their welcome and are very persistent visitors. Their summary ejection, even a polite hint to leave, might ^{not} prove disastrous. There is no reason why they should stay forever. The same applies to a law, a machine, to any human thing.

As long as a man can call his soul his own, he will be perfectly free to unmake things as he has made them. A brave man may see a god in a tree or a cloud, only a coward can see a god in an engine....Society being a piece of human construction can be reconstructed upon any plan that has ever existed. (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD).

The aim of society is human happiness, and if industrialism does not produce happiness, then it can be scrapped and a different system tried.

Chesterton said that personally he did not consider machinery hostile to happiness; but, if it were, it would not be more,

inevitable that all ploughing should be done by machinery, than it is inevitable that a shop should do a roaring trade in Ludgate Hill by selling instruments of Chinese torture....If we can make men happier it does not matter if we make them poorer; it does not matter if we make them less progressive.(THE OUTLINE OF SANITY).

The prejudice of progress is at once weaker and stronger than the prejudice of the animal nature of man. Its weakness inheres in its lack of any scientific basis; its strength, in its widespread acknowledgment as a fact. It puts in abeyance the doctrine of original sin, setting Utopia against Eden. It is anti-traditional. To the evil of the pride of race and nation, it adds the evil of the pride

of generation. It wastes human energy; the tyrant progress forever urges us on. Yet

nobody has any business to use the word 'progress' unless he has a definite creed and a cast-iron code of morals....For progress by its very name indicates a direction; and the moment we are in the least doubtful about the direction, we become in the same degree doubtful about progress....But it is precisely about the direction that we disagree. We disagree about everything; autocracy and democracy, capitalism and socialism, free love and marriage; we have no common religion, no common philosophy, no common goal; and if we still preserve certain conventional notions about honesty, decency, and courtesy, it is merely as the disguised inheritance of a past which we despise and do our best to destroy. (HERETICS).

Chesterton applies the test of common sense to the idea, that our present civilization is superior to past civilizations, the notion that "the modern man is the heir of all ages, that he has got the good out of these successive human experiments." He asks, what is the idea which such a statement can convey to the mind?

Does it really mean that the modern man possesses all the courage of the cave-dweller who killed a mammoth with a stone knife; the artistic appreciation of the Athenian, who witnessed Sophocles' tragedies; the civil virtues of the Roman citizen, the self-sacrifice of the Christian saint, the patriotism of the French revolutionist? Is it really true that you and I are two starry towers built up of all the most towering visions of the past? Have we really fulfilled all the great historic ideals one after another? The only possible answer is to ask the reader to look at the modern man, as I have just looked at the modern man---in the looking glass. (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD).

Chesterton continues, that we are always told of the boldness with which modern man attacks "a hoary tyranny or an antiquated superstition;" but, such attacks, he writes, need no courage. Only cowardice could prompt the ruin of undefended relics. We are genuinely afraid of the past, especially of the good in the past,

The brain breaks down under the unbearable virtue of mankind. There have been so many flaming faiths that we cannot hold; so many harsh heroisms that we cannot imitate; so many great efforts.... which seem to us at once sublime and pathetic. The future is a refuge from the fierce competition of our forefathers...Men invent new ideals because they dare not attempt old ideals. They look forward with enthusiasm, because they are afraid to look back. (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD).

For an inspirational example of reform, he, himself, frequently refers us to the French Revolution. The French, disliking their system, abolished it, turned back in their steps and built a new system on first principles. If the slums lead to dirty hair let us abolish the slums, not cut off the hair. If capitalism leads to the destruction of the home and small property, we must build a new society around these instead of abolishing them altogether to prevent their abuse, as the socialists would do.

And unlike the socialists, Chesterton did not shrink from the prospect even of revolution, if violent measures became necessary to obtain reforms. The struggle between labor and capital and even between the governing classes and the people, was only part of the problem. ~~Unlike the socialists, Chesterton did not shrink from the prospect of a revolution if violent measures were necessary for reforms. The struggle between labor and capital and even between the governing classes and the people was only part of the problem.~~ Though social, economic and political disasters impended, man's natural rights and dignity must never be sacrificed. But man's natural rights rested on the natural moral law; and, his dignity on the spiritual dimension of his being. One could not have reasons for affirming democracy and at the same time deny the truths of philosophy and religion. Believing in this principle man must do battle for the right.

This revolutionary attitude derives from his high enthusiasm for ideals. There is no inconsistency in Chesterton's advocacy of revolution and his love of

tradition. He was convinced that the noblest and truest ideals have been propounded in the past by a more Christian England but abandoned by later generations on account of their difficulty. To him, the medieval state was a better and saner attempt than that of his day to solve social problems because it was founded more firmly on private property and the family. He saw clearly that trade and capitalism had destroyed the guild and the peasant; for "the principle of medieval trade was admittedly comradeship and justice, while the principle of modern trade is avowedly competition and greed." (COBBETT). Yet, the idea of the guild still lingered in popular tradition, the festivities of Christmas, or the immemorial rites of the inn. But

The modern world seems to have no notion of preserving different things side by side, of allowing its proper and proportionate place to each, of saving the whole varied heritage of culture. It has no notion except that of simplifying something by destroying nearly everything. (ALL I SURVEY).

Revolution as Chesterton sees it would mean embracing the ideals of the past at once. In an essay "About Political Creeds" (AS I WAS SAYING) after tabulating his political beliefs and radical tendencies, he humorously sums himself up: "in short, I am a disreputable demagogic sort of person, holding that most reforms are too slow rather than too fast. In "The Wind and the Trees" (TREMENDOUS TRIFLES), Chesterton scoffs at the idea of a reform on economic principles. The Marxian politicians in England were merely trying to induce the world to do what it always does.

The truth is, of course, that there will be a social revolution the moment the thing has ceased to be purely economic. You can never have a revolution in order to establish a democracy. You must have a democracy in order to have a revolution. (TREMENDOUS TRIFLES).

Revolution gives you a clean slate with which to start over again from first principles. It is "the only quite clean and complete road to anything...most thoroughly bad processes are slow and sleepy."

Chesterton's formula for reform: First a fixed ideal, then a sudden revolution to it, stands in provocative antithesis to the crawling inevitable evolutionary formula derived from the survival of the fittest. He set himself to lay low the Darwinian barrier by the challenge that even we assume the theory, we know man differs from animal in that he can change his environment to suit himself. There is nothing deterministic in man's history. "The question for brave men is not whether a certain thing is increasing. The question is whether we are increasing it." (ALL THINGS CONSIDERED). Nor does he reject totally the Darwinian hypothesis but analyses the case for it in these words:

There may be a broken trail of stones and bones faintly suggesting the development of the human body, but we know nothing whatever about the human mind, how it grew, whether it grew, or what it is...To believe otherwise is to assume that where there is a body, there must be a mind, and to presume that mind and body must develop or 'evolve' on parallel lines. In such scientific generalizations the wish is father to the thought, as it is supposed to be in the theological generalizations, with this difference that, in the first case, our senses and our reason are our only guides. (THE EVERLASTING MAN).

No doubt ^{Chesterton} ^ does much to discredit the scientific value of the Darwinian theory, yet he considers it in a certain sense reasonable.

For instance, the Darwinian theory of Natural Selection was a hypothesis; and it is still only a hypothesis. Popular science insists on repeating that it is a hypothesis that has been

confirmed; with the result that responsible science is more and more treating it as a hypothesis that has been abandoned. But it can be quite rightly treated as a reasonable hypothesis, by anybody who believes in it, if he can support it with other things in which he believes; or preferably things in which everybody believes. (AS I WAS SAYING).

His readers must always bear in mind that Chesterton is concerned not with the fact that evolution contradicts the literal interpretation of the story of creation, but with the attempts made by certain writers, especially Shaw and Wells, to trace the origin of man to a type of superior animal and to describe his development as the integration of successive experiments leading him to a superior stage of civilization. He asks Shaw: "Why should we worry about the superman", since the ape never worried about us, "we cannot be expected to have any regard for a great creature if he does not conform to our standards." (GEORGE BERNARD SHAW). After accusing Mr. Wells of vague relativism, Chesterton suggests: "If the superman is more manly than men are, of course, they will ultimately deify him, even if they happen to kill him first. But if he is simply more supermanly, they may be quite indifferent to him as they would be to another seemingly aimless monstrosity." (HERETICS). This theory, understood in the Shavian or Wellsian sense, implies that no essential difference exists between humanity and the rest of nature; and that progress achieved through the animal scale is pursued throughout history. It can not obviously fix a definite goal to human efforts; but, it fosters the belief that mankind cannot resist its own impulse and that this impulse is bound to produce good. Unless such conceptions lose their grip on the popular imagination, Chesterton

claims that true democracy can never be established. For him, the human intellect is too great to be explained by anything but by the creation of God. There is no place for the doctrine of the Fall and man's free will in the Darwinian theory of evolution; hence, it is to the philosophic and social aspects of this theory that he primarily takes objection.

PART TWO.

Chapter Two.

DISTRIBUTISM.

(a) Origin---and Sketch of Sources.

To support his criticism of the "inevitable" present system, Chesterton recommends an alternative scheme of society, which, he assures us, is practicable because it observes the fundamental needs of human nature. This is Distributism. Like Socialism, it is a denial of capitalism. Unlike socialism, it is not an heir to capitalism; for, socialism adopts all the capitalistic standards and pushes them to their logical conclusion to avoid abuse. Capitalism has taken private property out of the hands of the many and has given it to the few, socialism proposes to take it from these few and abolish it all together. Capitalism has subordinated the home to industrialism; socialism would make the whole state a factory. Socialism is therefore, the supreme case of thinking backwards. Distributism is forward-looking, aiming to restore liberty through the distribution of ownership.

ORIGIN OF DISTRIBUTISM: Distributism began in England, about the opening of the century. We owe the movement, which is almost exclusively English, to Hilaire Belloc. Belloc, however, did not invent the idea, which is implicit in Catholicism and explicit in Pope Leo's great Encyclical RERUM NOVARUM, the Magna Charta of all Christian social activities. But he did invent the thing as a system of practical economics and as an alternative to Capitalism and its offspring Communism.

If the movement did not owe its origin to Chesterton, to him in great part it owed its momentum. Bellow and Chesterton met during the days of the Boer War. Both men were attracted to each other by common opinions, beliefs, and sympathies. Both loved war for a true cause; both hated the Boer War. Belloc was a Catholic; Chesterton, a near Catholic. Since the one man was fixed and the other fluid, it was natural that Belloc should give the strength of Roman iron to Chesterton's vivid Gothic romance. Belloc brought Chesterton into touch with Catholic economics; he showed Chesterton how to defend the home and property. Chesterton straightway championed with new vigor what he always instinctively felt was right.

It was in the 1890's when the Fabian society was in the ascendant that Belloc entered the lists of economic disputation. Shaw was then complacently saying, "of course, we are all Socialists now," and even H.G. Wells had come down to earth from his ethereal visions of the "great rosy dawn" to take part in the councils of the Fabian Society. But two men stood against the current, and Shaw christened the pair "Chesterbelloc."

Into the economic controversies of the first decade of this century with their almost universal acceptance of the socialist cure for capitalism, Belloc and Chesterton suddenly blew a new but discordant note. They were just as strongly opposed to capitalism as any socialist, just as convinced that it was doomed to disappear, and the sooner the better; but they pronounced the socialist cure worse than the capitalistic disease. They said the socialist cure was not only not desirable but that it was extremely liable to turn into something different from its

intention. They were able to show easily that their own proposal was in harmony with both the equality of men, and the dignity of man; that it had worked in the past; that socialism or collectivism had never existed; and that what would come from the attempts to create socialism was an age-old form of economy which ever loomed when society had lost one quality---a taste for freedom.

Briefly, to sum up their position for the sake of indicating the contents of their relevant books, they demonstrated that capitalism, by concentrating the ownership of property---or the means of production---in the hands of a few on the one hand, coupled with political freedom for the majority on the other, juxtaposed elements of instability. Such a state, they declared, in unison with the socialists, was doomed to a short duration. For such a condition there were only three remedies: "To solve capitalism you must get rid of restricted ownership, or of freedom, or of both." Getting rid of "both" was collectivism, in which all means of production are placed in the hands of the political officers of the community, to be held in trust for the advantage of all. Getting rid of freedom meant returning to the servile state; confirming owners in their property while at the same time giving security to the proletariat by having them exchange their freedom for status: for fixed rights in return for compulsory labor.

Belloc and Chesterton rejected both these cures, as undesirable, especially the second which was destined to

revert conditions to the ancient servile or slave state from which our civilization sprang. Their own choice consisted in "getting rid of restricted ownership," which meant spreading ownership in the means of production so widely that ownership and the resulting freedom become the dominant note in society instead of a rare and special privilege: they urged the Distributist State.

Their views, expounded with masterly analysis and rhetoric first appeared in the NEW AGE (edited by Orage) in the early 1900's and threw consternation into the ranks of the socialists. Shaw rushed out to slay the new monster Chesterbelloc. Wells sprang to the defense of the Fabians. Belloc and Chesterton must be shown to be tools of the capitalists, dangerous reactionaries, sentimental medievalists, ignorant fools, and the likes. But, in spite of all opposition, Distributism has proved to be a solid adversary for socialism, and a genuine alternative for all Marxian doctrines. With the end of capitalism brought near by the Great War and its aftermath, and with the rise of Marxian Communism, and its counter checks Fascism and Nazism, for the first time since the beginnings of capitalism in the sixteenth century, men's minds have become awakened to the urgency both of taking a balanced view of our economic predicament, and of searching for a solution based on sound history and sound moral analysis. In this change of atmosphere an increasing number turned to the work of Belloc and Chesterton.

Though Belloc first clearly formulated the Distributist position, it was Chesterton who produced the first book in the Distributist corpus. WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD,

published in 1910, is not a book on economics, but it is a prelude to a sane economics. In it, Chesterton launches a polemic against the whole tone of Victorian and post-Victorian society in handling social relations. The book does not deal with particular problems and solutions, but it provides the proper prerequisite emotional catharsis for the inception of a truly democratic state.

In 1912, Belloc published *THE SERVILE STATE*, the central Distributist document. This tract, one of the most powerful ever written, traces the growth of Western economics from slavery through capitalism and posits the alternatives of either a return to slavery, or a return to freedom through property.

During the Great War, both Belloc and Chesterton devoted themselves to war work. Occasionally their magazine *THE NEW WITNESS* (first called *THE EYE WITNESS*) contained short articles on Distributism. In *ECONOMICS FOR HELEN*, the next contribution to the cause in book form, Belloc places the Distributist doctrines in the perspective of economics as he had placed them in the perspective of history in *THE SERVILE STATE*.

Chesterton's major contribution to economic discussion appeared in 1926, in book form, under the title *THE OUTLINE OF SANITY*. This work is a reprint of articles from his magazine, *G.K.'s Weekly*. These present solid economic doctrine clothed in arresting Chestertonian style. *COBBETT*, a life of William Cobbett (1925) may be included in the source-books of Distributism. Chesterton's admiration for Cobbett was perhaps even not surpassed by his admiration

for Dickens. Dickens loved the poor; Cobbett hated capitalist industrialism. Out of these characteristics grew Chesterton's affinity for these men.

To conclude, the four books, Belloc's *SERVILE STATE*, and *ECONOMICS FOR HELEN* and Chesterton's *WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD* and *THE OUTLINE OF SANITY* supply the doctrines of Distributism. Special reference must be made to Belloc's booklet *THE RESTORATION OF PROPERTY* in which a political program for the distribution of property is sketched, as well as to G.K.'s *WEEKLY* (founded in 1925), the official organ of Distributism. Both these contain programs and concrete proposals for attaining the Distributist State.

(b). THE PRINCIPLES OF DISTRIBUTISM.

Both Belloc and Chesterton not only opposed socialism, but set out to discover economic plans to guarantee man's freedom. These men kept pointing out the potential dangers of socialism and refuting its errors. Belloc consistently propounded economic principles to secure their objective; whilst Chesterton, by trenchantly depicting the tragic conditions arising out of capitalism, and arousing a consciousness of lack of economic freedom, accentuated the cause. The movement grew slowly and steadily but with the publication of *THE SERVILE STATE* the whole endeavor crystallized into Distributism.

It is superfluous to state that the principles of Distributism are implicitly implied in Catholicism since they are explicitly expressed in the Encyclical, *RERUM NOVARUM*. The spirit of Pope Leo's exhortation for the urgent amelioration of the "misery and wretchedness pressing so heavily and unjustly at this moment on the vast majority of the working classes," Chesterton, through Belloc, caught

up, and for more than thirty years tried to instill it into the minds and hearts of the English people. The Pope deplored the passing of the Guilds; Belloc strove to restore them. "Public institutions and the very laws have set aside the ancient religion," declared the Encyclical. Did not Chesterton in "a cartload of books", denounce divorce, eugenics, prohibition, conventional charity, as moral evils, advocated, initiated, and maintained by skeptics and agnostics who entertained the hope that the removal of physical evil would usher in an era of happiness? Belloc's labors to eliminate "the greed of unchecked competition" and "rapacious usury" have been life-long. His works, from THE SERVILE STATE to the CRISIS OF CIVILIZATION, are redolent with the spirit of the Encyclical of the immortal Leo. When Belloc attacks (THE CRISIS OF CIVILIZATION) the replacement of status by contract as the aftermath of the Reformation and the sine qua non, not the cause, of the economic evils "which threaten the total collapse of society and with it the corresponding loss of all the arts and sciences---the end of civilization," we hearken these words:

To this must be added the custom of working by contract, and the concentration of so many branches of trade in the hands of a few individuals; so that the small number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the labouring poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself. (RERUM NOVARUM).

The Encyclical refuted the socialist solution, which insisted on the transfer of private property from its lawful possessors to the state, by simply pointing out that the transfer of all property rights to the state entailed as well the transfer of man's rights. The new ensuing slavery would be even worse than the old; Social-

ism would become a greater evil than capitalism. Furthermore, on the individual basis, Pope Leo proved that property was the natural right of man; and a fortiori on the social basis, that property was, the natural and original right of the family. Lastly he asseverated that without religion no practical solution of the impending social, economic, or political disasters was possible.

Distributism is the set of economic doctrines based upon the principles of that Encyclical. With the publication of Belloc's *SERVILE STATE* Distributism was born. In this book, Belloc proved that capitalism and socialism are similar tyrannies, the second a child of the first; and that England was not drifting, but being driven rapidly in a high-powered machine towards slavery. He showed too that the family is the unit of the state, and that without property----that is, ownership of the means of existence ---a family is not free. (*SERVILE STATE* 1912).

A clear statement of the later problems of capitalism and of Distributist principles for their solution appears in *G.K.'s WEEKLY* (Oct.1, 1936). Belloc writes:

Industrial Capitalism has infected christendom with evils now proving unendurable. Men will no longer tolerate them, and in the attempt to escape them, may rush upon chaos or sink into servitude. Under industrial capitalism life has been rendered, for the bulk of men, mechanical and inhuman. Wealth is produced by those who may not enjoy the fruit of their labour; there is no bond of loyalty to superiors nor satisfaction with the work. The few who control the means of production and the still more important machinery of finance have no object but profit to be obtained at the expense of those who create the goods necessary to mankind. The less the worker receives of what he himself has made, the more "prosperous" must industrial capitalism be.

Even as a mere economic system such conditions must fail, continues Belloc; for, production would decrease since it was to the interest of the free producer to

produce as little as possible. The system, too, was ruining its own market; for, cheap labor lessened purchasing power. Hence economic deadlock was inevitable.

A graver crisis still impended: "through industrial capitalism the bulk of free men had lost their freedom." But the life and livelihood of the workmen were exposed to exploitation. The modern wage slave worked under the threat of economic insecurity just as the ancient slave toiled under the threat of physical torture. Yet modern men subject to such constraint and insecurity were politically free.

The laws still presumed that their labour was but the fulfilment of a contract, wherein the destitute met as equals those who could withhold or grant food, clothing and shelter. The falsehood was absurd.....Under the strain of conditions so evil, presumptions so false, and relations so unnatural, the industrial capitalist system began to prove itself as impossible in morals as it was in economics. An obvious solution appeared: the solution of slavery.

Communism, Belloc admits, presents the quicker but cruder solution. Its very principles prescribe vengeance against oppressors; its very practices liquidate masters. Collective control is its deluding slogan.

"You shall not possess," says the Communist, "your hammer or your saw, nor a specified share in any larger instrument; but as the possession of these means of production is vested in the name of you all, why, that is just the same as though you were dealing with those instruments at your own free will." Communism could and did add "Anyhow, you cannot help yourselves, the units of production must get larger and larger. The old fashioned tools cannot withstand the superior power of large machines. The old-fashioned shop, whether for sale of goods or for craft work, must inevitably be absorbed into larger and larger units. Since you are inevitably controlled by these monopolies, at least let the control be in the name of all and not to the advantage of a privileged few." The Dupe believed both these lies: the political lie that the State and the citizen are one: the philosophic lie that the evils he knew so well are imposed by fate. Accepting such falsehoods from habit he accepts slavery to the State.

England, writes Belloc, has taken the other road to slavery. The control of the privileged few is to be bolstered up, and the labor of the exploited many is to be conscripted, "by providing universal security through the power of the state." The postulates upon which both systems rest, Belloc declares, are identical.

(c) G.K.'s WEEKLY.

Relentlessly, during the first decade of this century, with tongue and pen, Belloc and the Chestertons (G.K. and brother Cecil) agitated for ~~both~~ ^{both} the reform of parliament and capitalism. Belloc, as a member of the House of Commons railed for four years against political corruption, "telling the bitter truth to men either too dishonest to want to hear it, or too stupid or too ignorant to understand. When he resigned his seat in 1910 he and the two Chestertons were convinced that the prime need of the moment was a fight for clean government. So they determined to start a weekly newspaper." (From G.K. CHESTERTON by W.R. Titterton).

This is the origin of the EYE WITNESS, a weekly, founded in 1910 by Belloc and Cecil Chesterton. Although the aim of the paper was "clean government and the distribution of property," it did not announce what it intended to do, but started off doing it. When Belloc under pressure of work arising from historical research resigned the editorship in 1912, Cecil Chesterton succeeded him. At this time an explicit statement of the aim of this weekly was given by Belloc who said its chief ~~xi~~ value lay in providing a place where certain truths of advantage or of necessity to the public could be told, and that it aimed particularly at narrowing the difference

between the comments on public affairs which were spoken and those which were printed.

The EYE WITNESS went bankrupt following the loss of the Marconi case. THE NEW WITNESS, which took its place, started to perform the same functions. When the NEW WITNESS expired in 1925, its spirit descended upon G.K.'s WEEKLY.

The EYE WITNESS and the NEW WITNESS were distributist papers, but they only implied the principles of that philosophy, as their effort was hardened and sharpened to the particular purpose of clean government. The two great achievements of these papers were the exposure of the Marconi Scandal and the Sale of Honours. But when G.K. on Cecil's death took over the editorship of the NEW WITNESS, he instituted a policy of direct distributist doctrine.

G.K. Chesterton perceived that Distributism was nothing if it was merely a theory: it must be a way of life. Week after week in a long article he hammered home its principles. His leaders took the principles for granted in their political attack. Every now and then Belloc obliged with an article on practical economics or perhaps a chapter of his MRS. MARKHAM'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND. All the general articles followed the same trend. Distributism was to become a driving force; but, the NEW WITNESS found itself in financial difficulties. Its career was ended.

Phoenix-like G.K.'s WEEKLY arose from the ruins of the NEW WITNESS. Extracts from the leading article in the first number of this weekly will indicate the nature of

the distributist attack:

It is all very well to repeat distractedly, "What are we coming to with all this Bolshevism?" It is as relevant to add, "What are we coming to even without Bolshevism?" The answer is: Monopoly. It is certainly not private enterprise. The American Trust is not private enterprise. It would be truer to call the Spanish Inquisition private judgment. Monopoly is neither private nor enterprising. It exists to prevent private enterprise. And that is the present goal of our progress, if there were not a Bolshevik in the world. This paper exists to demand that we fight Bolshevism with something better than plutocracy. But anyhow we must get something better than silence about plutocracy.....

Aristocracy became powerful, much too powerful, because it did not consist of individuals but had a name like a nation. Democracy will never become powerful unless every family is a great family. Perhaps it would have been better if the French Revolution had extended and not extinguished heraldry; if stormers of the Bastille, having undoubtedly borne arms, had borne armorial bearings.

Anyhow the State will always defeat the individual; if the citizen is to rule he must be more than an individual. But do we want him to rule? Bolshevism does not; and Bolshevism is not alone in that. It is absolutely certain that democracy will not be democratic unless it is domestic.....

In short, these sages, rightly or wrongly, cannot trust the normal man to rule in the home; and certainly do not want him to rule in the State. They do not really want to give him any political power. They are willing to give him a vote; because they have long discovered that it need not give him any power. They are not willing to give him a house, or a wife, or a child, or a dog, or a cow, or a piece of land; because these things really do give him power.

Now we wish it to be understood at the start that our policy is to give him these things.... We alone.....have the right to call ourselves democratic. A republic used to be called a nation of kings; and in our republic the kings really have kingdoms. All modern governments, Prussian or Russian, all modern movements, Capitalist or Socialist are taking away that kingdom from that king.....

It is a sad conclusion of the modern scientific advance that it leaves us with a choice between the impossible and the intolerable. For if we go back, it hardly seems worth while to go forward. There is nothing in front but a flat wilderness of standardisation, either by Bolshevism or Big Business. And it is strange that we at least have seen sanity, if only in a vision, while they go forward chained eternally to enlargement without liberty and without hope.

Until Chesterton's death in 1936, the tone of G.K's WEEKLY maintained this tenor.

But progress was slow. People could not realize that they were living in such a mad world as Chesterton saw. The Distributists, with their little paper and league, spouting against Prussianism, Bolshevism and plutocracy were branded as "a bunch of crackpots." Despite lack of funds, and overwhelming criticism, the contributors to the cause kept up the good fight. Even after a decade of unabated effort, a skeptical world remained little changed in attitude. This difference could be noted; that, whereas ten years before distributist contributors were accused of being alarmists, they were now running the risk of being platitudinous.

No better summary of the achievements of G.K's WEEKLY in ten years of struggle can be found than Chesterton's own in his foreword to a miscellany of the first five hundred issues of the paper.

This book is published to celebrate the 500th issue of the weekly paper which bears a similar title. This is really a triumph of survival under singular circumstances; it is also a triumph of a singular kind. The paper has lived through what is called the slump, and actually improved its position in the very middle of the slump. Unlike many papers filled with sincere criticism of Capitalism and Big Business, it has never been financed by any big capitalist, or by anyone worth calling a capitalist at all. Unlike many brilliant weekly papers starting with independent ~~ideas~~ intellectual ideas, it has succeeded in remaining independent if only in the sense of isolated; and not been driven to the modern expedient of amalgamation. I am not so silly as to say these things with any intention of superiority over journalistic organisations in many ways necessarily superior; I say it because two facts happen to be specially important to our own spiritual and social faith. Perhaps the shortest way of defining what we are always denouncing, as abnormal in this country and century, is to say that only the capitalists have any capital. And

it was our whole point from the first that the rise of Trusts was in itself the collapse of Trade; that what was called Rationalisation was really only the first announcement of ruin; that enterprises of every kind collapsed in each other's arms; and that it was not so much the power as the weakness of combines that was a warning to the world. We have therefore a reason of our own for rejoicing, without reflecting upon others, over the fact that our own paper has remained a small property; being a small thing, but our own.

It is my privilege to say a preliminary word about this very real triumph; I need not say that it is no sense my triumph; as I shall explain later, it was almost accidental and perhaps unlucky that it had to be so very closely connected with my name. It is the triumph of a group of men who have worked much harder, under difficulties much heavier, and whose loyalty and self-sacrifice I seriously believe to be unique in the history of journalism. This collection contains work by men of the first literary rank, like Mr. Walter de la Mare and Mr. Maurice Baring, whom I should like to assure of my most earnest gratitude; but it also contains work by men who have devoted almost entirely to this cause the talents and the knowledge that they might have used to achieve as worthy a worldly distinction for themselves. I have almost a feeling of remorse in having wasted, in a worldly sense, the time of men so capable of practical achievement; but, much as I value our friendship, I know very well that they have not been working for me, but for an ideal which, unlike a good many current ideals, is also an idea. That idea bears the somewhat clumsy name of Distributism; and of the idea itself I shall say more in a moment. What I wish to record first is the testimony to that idea, in the almost heroic sacrifices made for it, by men who could have worked so much more successfully elsewhere. We have had the services of a young writer on scientific subjects, whose criticisms of great leading scientists like Professor Haldane are everywhere quoted in controversy; and who had indeed the privilege of reminding that great but absent-minded naturalist of the existence of the cuckoo. We have been helped by a writer who might have figured in any of the great newspapers as a specialist on Poland; if the great newspapers had ever heard of Poland; and enjoyed the genius of a satirist who might certainly have put a punch into PUNCH. Differing in a hundred ways, they have been held together by their loyalty to this ideal of personal liberty as expressed in private property; and while many good and intelligent people may condemn our creed, they have not to condemn any modification of our creed. I am proud to have been associated with such men, and no less proud of having done my best to help them to defend such an ideal; I do not apologise to the public for having chosen to expend my energies, or even theirs, upon so necessary and urgent a social need; I only apologise to them for the mere chapter of accidents

which has scrawled across their much more valuable script my own somewhat absurd monogram.

For in truth I writhe (a difficult feat for me) as I take up my pen to write this prefatory note on a selection from G.K.'s WEEKLY; for the very title recalls to me the blackest hour of humiliation. I remember through what agonies of reluctance and disgust I passed before I was persuaded, by my best friends and business advisers, to surmount this unfortunate sheet with my own initials. Some may not understand this; some may not believe it. It is not only the truth, or the most important truth, that an enlightened age cannot believe. Anyhow, that enlightened age faithfully followed the sort of light that is known as the spotlight; and I have the misfortune to feel that this particular process of advertisers putting a man in the spotlight is rather like the process of gangsters putting him on the spot. To write my initials round my hat, or in a ring of electric lights like a halo round my head, or to blazon them on an enormous flag flying from my highest chimney-pot, or to arrange them in red letters, composed of red lamps, over my front-door ---all this would surely be in perfect harmony with the business principles of publicity and salesmanship preached so energetically in recent times, and recommended to us earnestly by the richest and therefore most successful men in the world. To reprint all my favorable press-notices as large as placards, and plaster them all over the front of my own house; to print on my visiting card that I am Master of Paradox (whatever that may be); to walk about preceded by energetic youths distributing leaflets with my portrait---all this were only to follow humbly and respectfully the advice of all those great commercial experts whose counsels have brought the world to its present state of universal prosperity and repose. But somehow I could never at any time bring myself to like this particular sort of vainglory, though I am probably capable of enjoying glory that is quite as vain. I do not mix up my tastes in the matter with any pretensions to virtue; I daresay there is more vanity than modesty in my dislike of this special manner of making an ass of myself. The only point here is that I did vividly feel a faint touch of such vulgarity in using my own initials for the paper; and it was a long time before I could overcome my horror of the idea. What decided me was one most extraordinary fact; for which alone I have troubled the reader with this egotistical opening.

I had assumed that the paper would be called THE DISTRIBUTIST, or DISTRIBUTISM, or something of the sort. But those with whom I was in negotiation about the whole notion of such a paper, surprised me by saying what was, as I thought about it, a more and more astonishing thing. So far as I know, I have never really written a paradox in my life; but the hard-headed and practical men of affairs, who

were willing to consider the possibility of such an enterprise, certainly proceeded to utter a most horrid paradox. They actually did tell me, in cold blood, in broad daylight, that there were a great many people who had heard of me, who had not heard of DISTRIBUTISM.

This ghastly, this blasting view of the intellectual condition of modern England did at least prove one thing; that it must be made to hear of Distributism, as soon as possible, somehow. If it could only be done by using the name of some buffoon who was known in the newspapers, as other buffoons are known to the police, it was clear that the buffoon must not complain. And I believe, as I must say in all fairness, that my business advisers were probably right; that there is a very large number of normal citizens who have heard in some vague way that I am funny for some reason, very much larger than the number of people who have even heard of the truth that would make them free. Therefore, though in profound grief and shame, I consented to the title as the only way of disseminating the truth. And now let us forget all these trifles, and everything except the truth.

The truth is this; and it is extremely, even excruciatingly simple. Either Private Property is good for Man or it is bad for Man. If it is bad, let us all immediately become honest and courageous Communists; and be glad to have joined the movement while the support of it still calls for some little courage and honesty. But if it is good for Man it is good for Everyman. Of its own nature, private property is a private good for the private citizen; or else it is less than nothing, for it is not even itself. There is a case for Capitalism; a case for Landlordism; a case for complete Despotism; there are arguments for all the various processes by which property is placed in specially trustworthy hands, or administered from recognised centres, or made part of a smoother and stricter machinery of social life; there are arguments for Trusts, for Squires, for big employers. But they are all arguments against Private Property. They are all more or less philosophical reasons why a man, as such, should not be an owner, as such; why the tenant should not own his house; why the workman should not own his farm. All Capitalist arguments are Communist arguments. The moment Private Property becomes a privilege, it ceases to be private property. It becomes a public institution, granting special privileges to special persons; at the best aristocracy, at the worst plutocracy; but always oligarchy. It was obvious that all these things were illogical compromises between Communism which denies private property and Distributism which asserts it. They are compromises made by men who are at least subconsciously ashamed of private property; and would like to limit it to a few people, including themselves. But we are not ashamed of private property; for we would give it to everybody else.

Now the startling and outstanding fact was this: that there was no journalistic organ in all England dedicated to defending this plain principle; which

had in consequence disappeared entirely from the public mind. There is still no other organ dedicated to it; though many more journalists allude to it, or even approve it, in particular passages; largely as a consequence of the long dedication of this paper to this idea. But I am only concerned here with the causes of the foundation of the enterprise; and its (probably unfortunate) connection with my own name. I looked round the whole world of literature and politics that I knew; and I could see nobody else who could at the moment do it; though I could see a hundred who would have done it better. My brother Cecil would have done it a thousand times better; but he was dead (if the Pacifists will excuse me) on the field of honour. My friend Belloc would have done it a thousand times better; but he was occupied with the sort of studies that really consume a man's time; the ransacking of libraries of fact to refute the learned and their falsehoods. There was nothing left but to use such trivial advantages as I had; the buffoonery or the newspaper notoriety to get some hearing for the truth. It is an ironical situation, that must often have happened in the complexity of human life. I was not the best person to do it; it is very arguable that I was the worst person; anyhow, I was never for an instant under any illusion that I was the best person. I was only the only person.

The enterprise emerges to-day, in days when even survival is success. It survives in spite of all these handicaps; the handicap of its name, or indeed of any possible name (for there is only a choice between some such personal title and some polysyllabic incubus like "Distributism"); the handicap of a lack of capital, nowadays inevitable arising from a lack of capitalists; the handicap of the slump, in which far more famous papers have been annihilated or amalgamated or both; the handicap of talking to the English people in a language that has become strange to them; and the handicap of its highly uneditorial editor. Against all these things, and perhaps especially the last but one, the men whom I have the honour to call my friends have contended successfully; and this book commemorates their success. Two facts are stamped very vividly over all the journalism and the conversation of this country. One is that it consists very largely of clichés or catchwords, used because they mean nothing. The other is the fact that they do in reality mean something; they are almost always memories, though now meaningless memories, of a more human and historical England. I shall illustrate both in one instance, if I say most seriously that the men about me have very truly done yeoman service, to assist the resurrection of the forgotten race of yeomen.

The next year Chesterton died. His paper under the editorship of Belloc still lives on. (April 1942). Its title G.K.'s WEEKLY survived him whom it grieved for about one year. Then the double title G.K.'s WEEKLY AND

THE WEEKLY REVIEW appeared. To-day the paper, known as THE WEEKLY REVIEW, still continues the work of its founder.

(d) THE DISTRIBUTIST LEAGUE.

G.K.'s WEEKLY was always on the verge of bankruptcy. W.R. Titterton, as manager, suggested that an appeal should be made to the readers to contribute towards a fighting fund, and, as a final means of saving the paper, that a league should be founded.

The best draft of a constitution for such a league came from one of the readers, one Captain Went, "who wanted the League for the sake of the League, and wanted it called the Cobbett Club." (G.K. CHESTERTON by W.R. Titterton). But, adds Titterton,

I'm sure he knows best what he wanted; and I think I know best what I wanted. The paper was there, and the League was not yet. I knew what the paper was doing; it was convincing Englishmen that there was an alternative to Combine-Capitalism and its offspring, Communism. It had nothing like the political influence of the WITNESSES, but in the realm of economic philosophy its influence was far greater. It was out of the question to let it die. Let alone that it would have broken the heart of G.K.C. I thought that a League to preach Distributism would help the paper. So I asked G.K.C. to found a League.

In September 1926, the Distributist League was organized on the basis of the plan proposed by Captain Went, whose specimen scheme entitled: SUGGESTIONS FOR A REVIVED NEW WITNESS LEAGUE, was as follows. Titterton's remarks are in brackets.

Title. The name, New Witness League, was not a good one. It gave to outsiders no clue to our aims, and was in fact misleading. (The paper was definitely distributionist, and the League was not.) It also had the serious disadvantage of linking the fate of the League too closely with that of the paper, so that when the paper died the League died.

with it.....Apart from this reason, G.K's WEEKLY LEAGUE sounds too like an unfriendly description of the society to be tolerable. I would therefore suggest the COBBETT LEAGUE, or the COBBETT CLUB, which would at any rate give some clue to our objects.....

(We found the choice of a title difficult. G.K.C. said that, good as the title COBBETT CLUB was, he was afraid that the public would mix up Cobbett and Cobden, a gentleman whose views were not noticeably distributist; while they might fancy that our club was more like the Carlton Club than the Jacobin Club. Thereupon I suggested ~~that~~ the LEAGUE OF LITTLE PEOPLE. G.K.C. chuckled at that, and remarked in a slow judicial voice: "As a description of our members generally and as a hint at our objects, I find the title admirable, but"(and then he rumbled) "I do not quite see myself as the President of the League of Little People." I am not sure that the DISTRIBUTIST LEAGUE was chosen as the title of our society at the first meeting: I am sure that we never thought it a particularly good title. But it has become historic, and we shall probably stick to it now.)

OBJECTS.---(1) To reform the present state of political corruption.

(This was a tall order. It was the sole object of the CLEAN GOVERNMENT LEAGUE and the main purpose of its successor the NEW WITNESS LEAGUE.)

(2) To secure the restoration of those liberties of the subject abrogated during and since the War....

(Our League had a good cut at that, and if those liberties have not been restored public opinion has been influenced, and perhaps the filching of other liberties has been prevented, or at least retarded.)

(3) To prevent the establishment of the Servile State in Great Britain.

(4) To work for the establishment of the Distributist State in Great Britain.

(5) To organize the collection and distribution of information on these points.

(Under these three heads there was work enough for any league to undertake, and you will find as we go on that a good deal has been undertaken and something has been accomplished.)

When the constitution of the Distributist League was agreed upon, its prime object was stated thus: To secure the restoration of liberty by the distribution of ownership. The League was simply to be an instrument for translating the policy of G.K's WEEKLY into practical terms. The preservation and restoration of property was to be attempted on two fronts, Land Settlement and the defence of the Independent Trader, formerly labelled Small Shop Keeper.

To attain this end qualified organizers adequately supplied with literature were to be sent to any place asking for assistance. Hope for even partial success lay in the unity of aspiration and action which might be inspired in the local groups. The League was to be absolutely independent of all political and religious organizations so that in this detached position it might bring together those whom these had sundered. Every citizen had natural rights and the League believed in a common justice in which these rights could be secured. It offered the only alternative to the twin evils of capitalism and communism. It stood for the natural liberty of the family and the individual against unwarranted interferences from big business or the State.

The League demanded that the law shall favor ownership, and penalise monopoly and all tendencies towards undue aggrandisement. It advocated the bringing together of idle men, and acres in an effort to restore in England a few peasantry---the necessary basis of a sound commonwealth. It advocated the fostering of craftsmanship and small workshops of every kind in order to build up the nucleus of a better social order, thereby lessening the risk of disaster should the present industrial system collapse under internal or external strain. It demanded the restriction of the use of machinery whenever it reduces the worker to a "sub-human condition of intellectual irresponsibility," whenever it is injurious to health, or whenever it conflicts with the principle of small ownership.

In short, the Distributist League sought to transform Great Britain from a servile proletarian state into a free proprietary state in which as many people as possible

should own their own homes, farms, workshops and tools, and in which no one should be so absolutely propertyless as to be liable to exploitation by others.

Here are excerpts from the press reports of the first meeting of the League:

"Mr. Chesterton disclaimed any intention of making a defence of his 'funny little paper.' The people who ran it believed in the very simple social idea that a man felt happier, more dignified, and more like the image of God, when the hat he is wearing is his own hat; and not only his hat, but his house, the ground he trod on, and various things. There might be people who preferred to have their hats leased out to them every week, or wear their neighbours' hats in rotation to express the idea of comradeship, or possibly to crowd under one very large hat to represent an even larger cosmic conception; but most of them felt that something was added to the dignity of men when they put on their own hats." (Laughter)...

"Returning to the League, Mr. Chesterton said that their next step should be to establish everywhere an organization for discussion and debate; and, though they had no thought of running candidates for Parliament, they could support the candidates who favoured their ideal---and there were in all the existing parties supporters even enthusiastic supporters.

"Their paper could go on a little longer owing to generous assistance; but he was not going on with it if it involved economic injustice to anyone.....

"Mr. Hilaire Belloc said that they wanted to create an England where fifty years hence the number of people possessed of property in stocks and shares would be in larger proportion than now. In one country---Denmark---they had distribution working almost at a maximum; and another where it was advancing very rapidly was Ireland. He agreed that 'distributism' did not call up a very clear outline of the idea. He did not think he had invented the word 'Distributism', but if he had, he asked pardon of God and man. In fact, this thing that they called distributism was a human need; they were merely giving water to thirsty people. But the difficulty was that few knew that the water existed. People thought, 'Everybody has a master.' But they rejoice to say: 'I am my own master now.' "

Did the League succeed? Mr. Titterton asks and answers the question.

What is the League like to-day, exactly ten years later? Well, some of the original members (me, for

instance) are doing precious little, and many Leaguers feel a bit fagged and disheartened. But surely they have no need to lose heart. It is natural that they should feel fagged. After ten years of campaigning no body of soldiers looks and feels as gay and full of zest as it did when it marched off with bugles blowing between the waving of flags. Even if they have not had to battle, as we had, against tremendous odds.

The Socialists had a far easier job. Like all the rest of their world, they believed in progress; like all the rest of their world, they believed in the big thing, only the big thing was to be the State; like all the rest of the world, they accepted wage-slavery, only the wages must be paid by the State. They accepted the capitalist system, and merely wanted the State to take it over. But we believed in something quite different, we proposed something quite different. We believed that what they called progress was in fact, original sin, which had to be continually resisted; that every human society tended naturally towards dissolution, that ours was dissolving, and that the dissolution could be checked. We did not believe in capitalism, we saw that it was slavery; and we saw that Socialism would merely complete man's enslavement. We proposed that Britain realizing that she was on the edge of an abyss, should turn away from it and seek another path. Instead of big things, we wanted the little thing. We wanted property, ownership, in a million hands---or rather in a million families. For we insisted on the elementary truth that the family is the unit of the State, and that it was the family that must own. Why? Because, unless ownership was widely distributed in a State, the citizens could not be free. Freedom! Yes, that was the worst of it. We emphasized that old-fashioned idea of freedom which almost everywhere, except in the Catholic Church, had been given up as negligible.

So that the odds against us were terrific. And at the beginning we were laughed at, because Socialism was regarded as inevitable even by its supposed enemies. We are not laughed at now. As G.K.C. said a year or two back: "We are all Distributists now," in the same sense that they were all Socialists in Sir William Harcourt's time. The opponents of Socialism said then: "It's a beautiful dream, but it's impossible." And it was because people said it was impossible that it happened. They say the same thing of Distributism now. They have heard about Distributism. Its name has crept into the text-books. It is seen as an alternative where formerly it was seldom seen, and then viewed as a joke. The wild British Fascists and the tame Social Credit Reformers live on Distributist economics and ethics (you can't separate the two). And the young Liberals, one day after G.K.C.'s death put forward a scheme which was Distributist.

(e) MANIFESTO OF DISTRIBUTISM.

Strange as it may seem, the Communist manifesto may have inspired the Distributist. However, realizing that much of the strength of the movement derives from its possession of a creed, Mr. A.J. Penty was requested to specifically outline the policy of Distributism. This he did in G.K.'s WEEKLY (April and May 1937). The following outline contains the substance of the manifesto presented by Mr. Penty.

(1) Economic. Both Distributists and Socialists agree in their condemnation of the present system of society, but they disagree in their diagnoses of the root source of the evil. Socialists expect to build a perfect society on the present industrial system; the Distributists propose to rebuild society from its basis in agriculture. Distributists are convinced that industrialism is not only unstable, but that it will prove as great a tyranny under public as under private ownership. The smallholder must, therefore, be got back either into industry or on to the land. Revolutionary as the proposal was, the Distributists undertook the responsibility of all it might involve.

(2) Property. Socialism and later Communism proposed to abolish private ownership of property; Distributism aims to maintain and to restore private property; for, without it, economic freedom, individual initiative, and the sense of personal responsibility are impossible.

From the maldistribution, not the ownership of property, declare the Distributists, flows evils which are a consequence of the existence of laws favoring large ownership at the expense of small, and the absence of laws forbidding the misuse of money and machinery. The un-

restricted use of machinery and the manipulation of money, they affirm, dispossess the many and enrich the few. Unless such practices are curbed, redistribution of property is impossible, nay useless. Therefore, the control of money and machinery is the key to the solution of most of our problems.

Hence Distributists endeavor to revive certain things of permanent value belonging to the past; for, private property is an organic part of the old world. Thus, their efforts clash with all modern economic trends founded on the idea of progress alone. Distributism is not opposed to progress or what is new; the future as well as the past holds good things and bad. But the policy of choosing what has proven of worth from the past and taking only what can be reconciled to it from the present is a deliberate reversal of economic tendencies.

The Distributist too, can point out that the Communists finding pure communism did not work, are returning to a system of private property. (see Communist Constitution 1936).

(3) Machinery. Communists and Socialists originally advocated the nationalization of land, capital, and the means of production and exchange as a means of adjusting society to the circumstances of machine production. But nationalization of everything has proven to be the sole purpose of their activity: means have become an end in themselves. The problem of machinery was not forgotten, but ignored and until recently even denied. Taking the unrestricted use of machinery for granted, the efforts of both socialism and communism consist in reconstructing society in accord with the machine. Therefore, private property must go, if it is inconsistent with the unrestricted use of machinery.

The Distributist regarded machinery merely as a means to an end. If it militates against the widespread distribution of private property, if it conflicts with the permanent interests of life, machinery will have to be drastically curtailed.

They believe that in the last resort a man ought to be able to fend for himself, and they are opposed to the extensive use of machinery because it prevents him; the specialization it involves by depriving men of manual dexterity undermines their personal independence and self-respect. They also insist that the interests of society, religion, human values, art and culture come first, and that the use of machinery should be prohibited wherever it runs counter to them. Science, machinery, mechanization, chemistry, are useful and good up to a certain point, but become cruel tyrannies when they are allowed to develop to such dimensions as to threaten the existence of all other forms of activity. If machinery was restricted in this way it would no doubt do the things it is supposed to be doing: reduce drudgery, and add to the comforts and amenities of life. Unrestricted, in the service of power and avarice, it is proving itself to be an agent of destruction, for the wholesale destruction of man, his works, and the extinction of human culture. (G.K.'s WEEKLY, April 6, 1937.)

The realization of such an ideal seems hopeless; for, everybody sees that goods are produced more cheaply by machinery than by hand. But do they see the increased cost of distribution through unrestricted use of machinery, as a corollary of the decreased cost of production? What little there may be saved is wasted in other ways: higher rents---(increased cost of building); additional personal expenditures (due to greater competition and a more complex society). The employment of machinery instead of raising the standard of living tends to-day to raise prices by intensifying competition.

Though failing to observe the source of such reactions, most people realize that the cost of living tends to rise. They associate the higher cost of living with the manipulation of money instead of the unrestricted use of machinery.

Distributists do not overlook the part played by money; but, emphasize the part played by machinery. Are we really better off materially due to the increasing use of machinery? It is arguable. Certainly, we are poorer spiritually; for, machinery has introduced a tension of anxiety into the life of the industrial worker. Misused machinery tends to dehumanize the factory hand and fill him with the spirit of revenge. In short, mass production, according to the Distributist, is the corner-stone of the Marxian theory.

Nor is it very far removed from the question of practical politics.

The public are at last awakening to the existence of a problem of machinery, to the fact that, unrestricted, it has become an instrument of power rather than of wealth, that it is mechanizing life, creating unemployment, and, by undermining purchasing power, threatening to bring industry to a standstill; and that by enormously increasing the competition for markets and raw material, and the destructive power of armaments, it threatens the existence of civilization. But they do not yet realize that civilization is in peril, apart from war and economic stagnation, by the disintegrating effect of machinery on the social fabric. The artist knows it, the philosopher knows it, but the majority are still unaware of the peril. (G.K.'s WEEKLY, April 16, 1937).

(4) Money. Money is a common measure of value. Since many do not want to use it as such, but only to make more money, a problem primarily moral arises. The technical question enters into the problem too. The professional economist emphasizes the technical and, to the exclusion of the moral; the Distributist stresses the moral issue; but, recognizes the technical aspect.

The way to make money a common measure of value, according to the Distributists, is to fix prices, wages and rents at a just level. Such fixation would enable the

small man to acquire property; for, the capitalists could not then undersell him. This procedure is not only a solution of the money problem; but, it is also the first step towards a general restoration of property.

From the fixation of prices and wages derives the organization of guilds to maintain it. The guilds, in turn, if co-extensive with society, will eliminate usury and credit. Thus, the key to the problems of property, usury and credit is seen to be found in the fixation of prices, wages, and rents at a just level.

From the moral viewpoint the difference between usury and interest is a difference of kind; the former is wrong, the latter is not. But from the technical viewpoint the difference is only one of degree; the distinction being based on the time element. The simple arithmetical fact that compound interest mounts in time to an incredible amount convinces us of its disruptive potentialities: bankruptcy and financial breakdowns are its inevitable accompaniment.

Back of this destructive process lies the popular heresy that the most useful purpose of money is to make more money. Misguided by such a belief people will continue to increase the means of production but will refuse to correspondingly increase consumption by spending money on the crafts, arts, and amenities of life, which are the ends that production exists to serve.

As a consequence, the balance between demand and supply, production and consumption, has got permanently upset: our economic life has got corked up, so to say, at both ends, and there results a kind of economic constipation to relieve which recourse is had to war. The reason why we are driven to spend so much on armaments,

is, in last analysis, because we refuse to spend on arts. If the labour which machinery displaces is not absorbed in the arts, it will finally be absorbed in armaments. (G.K.'s WEEKLY, April 23, 1937).

The falsity of the theory that the most successful purpose of money is to make more money is witnessed in the great movements of the past. In the Middle Ages every little town built a cathedral. To-day with all our progress and increased production "we never think we can afford to do anything properly, much less magnificently." We are powerless to spend wisely: we tend to the extremes of either meanness or extravagance in our public or private expenditure. Nor is the charge true that the cost of the architectural monuments of the Middle Ages kept the people in poverty. Economic historians are agreed that the working man was never so well off as in the fifteenth century, when such expenditure was lavish. "No, the trouble is not lack of means, but a meanness of spirit that possesses the modern world, particularly England." Fear of poverty is now an obsession both of rich men and rich communities. This meanness of spirit is reflected in a theory and system of economics which justifies this meanness. Money lies idle until a profitable investment presents itself. By a strange nemesis the most profitable investment often proves to be armaments. Meanness of spirit has begotten a system which compels investment involving peril or destruction.

To sum up: Modern man by concentrating on the art of making money has neglected the art of spending it. Economic deadlock is the result. This explains why industrialism moves towards war. To escape this impasse "we must learn to spend wisely, which involves, among other things, some knowledge of the arts and the dissemination of culture."

(5) Guilds. Distributists advocate the organization of regulative guilds as the proper agencies for the control of money and machinery. As professional societies enforce a discipline among their members, similarly this kind of guild would regulate the affairs of each industry; but, with this difference that not only a standard of professional conduct but also a measure of economic quality be upheld and promoted.

Such guilds would insist that all who engaged in any industry, in whatever capacity, whether as masters, wage-earners, or co-operators, should conform to the regulations of the guild, which could concern itself with such things as the maintenance of fixed and just prices, the regulation of machinery, volume of production, apprenticeship, size of the unit of production, the upholding of a standard of quality in workmanship, the prevention of adulteration, mutual aid, and other matters appertaining to the conduct of industry and the personal welfare of its members. (G.K.'s WEEKLY, April 23, 1937).

These regulative guilds, are identical in principle with the medieval guilds. Through the enforcement of standards of moral conduct, and, of workmanship, over industry, the introduction of these guilds would operate to transfer control from the hands of the financier to those of the craftsman and technician. No technical difficulty hinders their institution: the principles to be applied are simply the enforcement of moral standards.

(6) The State. Distributists believe that personal and human ties, rather than the impersonal activity of the state, are the bond of a perfect society. But, due to the existence of many people who pursue their own interests regardless of those of the community no society is perfect. Therefore the state must keep such selfish men in subjection, and protect itself against other states where such "men

of prey" find themselves in power: there is no other way of preserving justice and maintaining order.

Distributists claim that, through the degeneration of the aim of law, all manner of social evils have sprung up. The state invoked to repress these arrogates to itself functions alien to its nature.

No objection to state action can be made, say they, if proper agencies for such ends do not exist. But the state must devote itself to the organization of self-governing bodies rather than to the inauguration of state enterprises, "because it is fatally easy for the state to degenerate into an intolerable tyranny when it is in the hands of people who identify the state with 'the good' ". Therefore, Distributism is opposed to totalitarianism.

Moreover, the state functions by means of bureaucracy. The longer bureaucracies live, and the larger they grow, the more regulations they accumulate. Thus overwhelmed with red tape, unitary or totalitarian states must end in paralysis. "The only reasonable arrangement," in the eyes of Distributists, "is that of a plurality of powers, which preserves liberty by ensuring that the excesses of one power are corrected by the others."

(7) Agriculture and Self-Sufficiency. Another article in the creed of Distributism is: "a society is only in a stable or healthy condition when its manufactures rest on a foundation of agriculture and home produced raw material, and its commerce on a foundation of native manufactures." Unattainable as this ideal of self-subsistence may seem, by endeavoring to achieve it, the

opposite principle may be averted. "The more a thing is found to be self-sufficient, the better it is; because what one needs, another is clearly wanting." However, with respect to agriculture, the principle needs to be qualified, a country producing exactly the amount of food it requires faces famine in event of crop failure. It is better that some countries should produce more food than they require, and others less, so that the machinery of exchange may be kept in existence and expanded in times of emergency. "But no country should produce less than about eighty per cent of the food it requires."

The Distributists contend that England, by depending upon other countries for between sixty and sixty-five per cent of its food, places herself in jeopardy. All other countries abandoned free trade when they found it threatened their agriculture. But the British Government sacrificed agriculture for the temporary benefit of her industries and holders of foreign securities. During the Great War, Britain was threatened with starvation. But despite this, agriculture has since been allowed to decline. "The immediate interests of food importers, shippers, bankers, and holders of foreign securities are suffered to come before those of the nation."

Such folly, Distributists say, must end in famine, perhaps, military defeat and loss of national independence. Free trade has led to the existence of powerful vested interests that function only at the expense of national life. By false propaganda, these interests persuade the public that England can produce but a small percentage of the food she consumes; whereas, leading authorities are agreed that she can produce as much as eighty per cent.

Still another Distributist dogma is that in the last analysis all national prosperity rests on agriculture. The full shock of the adverse effect of the destruction of agriculture in England during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, they say, was almost entirely absorbed by increase in manufactures. England was the first to use steam machinery, and this for a long time kept us in the forefront in regard to world markets. But that advantage no longer exists since industrialism has spread all over the world. England's agriculture must increase in proportion as her manufactures dwindle. So the Distributist regards any revival of trade without a corresponding revival in agriculture as an artificial and a temporary improvement.

The chief concern of the Distributists therefore, is the revival of agriculture and the re-establishment of a peasantry. Prices fixed at a just level is a prime requisite for this venture: "to urge men with small capital to settle on the land, is to urge them to commit economic suicide." Only men with large capital can withstand our fluctuating price system, which free trade, internal and external has brought into existence.

{ (8) The Fiscal Question. With the question of agriculture is closely associated the issue between free trade and protection. Through expediency, England abandoned free trade in practice; but, clung to it in theory, looking forward to the day when universal free trade will be established. This position is indefensible, say the Distributists. "When two or more nations are joined together for free trade, the one which has a superiority of productive power and national resources tends to impoverish those that suffer from an inferiority." Therefore, it

suits only one country to adopt such a policy.

Distributists object even more to the free trade theory than to the free trade practice, recognizing in it the principle of social disintegration. Free trade in England, they contend, means not only free imports but all that the policy of laissez faire involves. A fixed and just price system combined with control of exports is the very antithesis of such a policy.

Protection, on the other hand, stands for external protection but internal free trade. It is a half truth; whereas, free trade is an untruth. Distributists are more tolerant to the lesser of the two evils.

Free trade, Distributists charge, is synonymous with international competition. Free traders boast theirs is a policy of peace; Distributists retaliate that Distributism is a policy of peace. The most exclusive of all nations, China, they cite was the most pacific but free trading England interfered.

It stands to reason that nations which pursue policies of national self-sufficiency will have less reason to quarrel with one another than those which follow international policies; while nations with normal and mixed economies will better understand each other than nations of specialists.

All civilization, as distinguished from agriculture, owes its existence to the introduction of money; modern civilization to the introduction of machinery. It follows that money and machinery are the two central creative forces in society. By controlling them we control society. Left to themselves they become destructive.

(G.K.'s WEEKLY April 30, 1937)

PART TWO.

Chapter Three.

SUMMARY OF CHESTERTON'S THESIS, THAT SMALL PROPERTY BE
REVIVED AS SET FORTH IN HIS OUTLINE OF SANITY.

Part.1. Some General Ideas. In THE OUTLINE OF SANITY, Chesterton presents his brief for private property. His case consists in inculcating that private property, the sine qua non of liberty, is in imminent peril of annihilation; and, that the policy of distributism offers a way of life, which will restore and maintain the freedom-preserving institution of ownership.

The enemies of private ownership are big business, communism and socialism. The communist openly advocates the dissolution of all private property; the socialist candidly proposes the remedy of state ownership; the big business man simply crushes the small owner. "The practical tendency of all trade and business to-day is towards big commercial combinations, often more imperial, more impersonal, more international than many a communist commonwealth."

Big business, the sequela of capitalism, Chesterton defines as: "That economic condition in which there is a class of capitalists, roughly recognizable and relatively small, in whose possession so much of the capital is concentrated as to necessitate a very large majority of the citizens serving those capitalists for a wage." In a word, wage-slavery has become a corollary of capitalism. Therefore this form of capitalism and freedom are incompatible.

Socialism too, is a vague term, but it is defined here as: "A system which makes the corporate unity of

society responsible for all its economic processes, or all those affecting life and essential living. If anything important is sold the government has sold it; if anything important is given the government has given it; if anything important is even tolerated, the government has tolerated it." Socialism, thus explained is the very antithesis of anarchy. Yet, it means the suppression of liberty; for, the socialist government, like the Bolshevik, can not be expected to provide an opposition, "opposition and rebellion are rooted in property and liberty."

Centralization, by dispossessing men of property, robs them of their freedom. Decentralization is the antidote. Chesterton and his group advocate a policy of small distributed property (land or business). The plan is called Distributism.

Both socialists and capitalists objected to Distributism. Bernard Shaw said the scheme was impossible. His argument ran, "If property were all divided up tomorrow.....small properties will not stay small." The capitalist press suavely commented that the revival of small "property was akin to excavation of fossil remains, it produced vestiges to show that big business was an inevitable evolution." The Distributist was caught between the two fires.

In reply to Shaw's notion of private property being antiquated and "only a mystic could revel in such a fantastic scheme," Chesterton wrote. "If the notion of property is antiquated I hold the old mystical dogma that what man has done, man can do. As to the idea of 'impossible reaction' implied in declaring that small property is

antiquated , it seems to involve a still more mystical dogma than mine, namely, 'that man cannot possibly do a thing because he has done it.' "

In answer to the capitalistic assumption of the evolution of big business, Chesterton wrote,

Nine times out of ten, an industrial civilization of the modern capitalist type does not arise, wherever else it may arise, in places where there has hitherto been a distributive civilization like that of a peasantry. Capitalism is a monster that grows in deserts. Industrial servitude has almost everywhere arisen in those empty spaces where the older civilization was thin or absent. Thus it grew up easily in the North of England rather than the South; precisely because the North had been comparatively empty and barbarous through all the ages when the South had a civilization of guilds and peasantries. Thus it grew up easily in the American continent rather than the European; precisely because it had nothing to supplant in America but a few savages, while in Europe it had to supplant the culture of multitudinous farms. Everywhere it has been but one stride from the mud-hut to the manufacturing town.

Chesterton emphasizes the duration and likelihood of continued stability of private property in France by remarking that the French peasant is not likely to abandon the system which has so often proven the most stable type in stress of war; and, that even before the Revolution (1789), which made his property more private and more absolute, not less, he was definitely a proprietor. The sanity of the peasant has preserved him from becoming a victim to the evolutionary disease of bigness.

The fallacy of the theory that those, who start reasonably equal, cannot remain so, is founded on a society in which there exists a small amount of small property which becomes an easy prey to big business. It does not follow that if there were a large amount of small property it would be so devoured; "when there is once

established a widely scattered ownership, there is a public opinion that is stronger than any law; and very often (what in modern times is even more remarkable) a law that is really an expression of public opinion.....The truth is there is no economic tendency whatever towards the disappearance of small property, until that property becomes so small as to cease to act as property at all." Moreover, the argument of the evolution of big property does not apply in England because it presupposes that people in this country did begin as equals and rapidly reached inequality. Nothing can be farther from the truth. "England became a capitalist country through being an oligarchy."

The foregoing "praenotanda" which runs under the caption "The Beginning of the Quarrel" ends with these words:

There is nothing in front but a flat wilderness of standardization either by Bolshevism or Big Business. But it is strange that some of us should have seen sanity, if only in a vision, while the rest go forward chained eternally to enlargement without liberty and progress without hope.

In England the capitalist plays into the hands of the socialist by declaring business is bad, and that the workers, must go on working "in the interest of the public." This is the peril of the hour. If this be true, the logical way to settle the dispute between labor and capital is to ask the government "to take over the control of all business, disregarding both the liberty of the employees and the property of the employers." Capitalism begs socialism.

Capitalism rests on two ideas: "that the rich can hire

the poor and that the poor want to be hired;" it can easily be seen that both labor and capital bargain and that neither capital or labor think primarily of "the whole public interest." If the capitalist cannot pay, capitalism is bankrupt; if the worker must work "in the public interest", this is a socialist not a capitalist principle. Therefore capitalism has come to an end. "Everybody has now abandoned the argument on which the whole of the old capitalism was based: the argument that if men were left to bargain individually the public would benefit automatically." A new basis of bargaining must be found. Unwittingly some fall back upon the communistic basis. The old capitalistic basis cannot be reinstated.

This impasse arises, not out of conditions peculiar to industrial England, but is due to the fact that

Capitalism is a contradiction.....Capitalism is contradictory as soon as it is complete: because it is dealing with the mass of men in two opposite ways at once. When most men are wage-earners, it is more and more difficult for most men to be customers. For the capitalist is always trying to cut down what his servant demands, and in doing so is cutting down what his customer can spend. As soon as his business is in any difficulties, as at present in the coal business, he tries to reduce what he has to spend on wages, and in doing so reduces what others have to spend on coal. He is wanting the same man to be rich and poor at the same time. This contradiction in capitalism does not appear in the earlier stages, because there are still populations not reduced to the common proletarian condition. But as soon as the wealthy as a whole are employing the wage-earners as a whole, this contradiction stares them in the face like an ironic doom and judgment.

How can we escape from the vicious circle of sinking wages and decreasing demand?

Distributism is Chesterton's choice of a solution. But no detailed program can be laid down,

We are not choosing between a possible peasantry and a successful commerce. We are choosing between a peasantry that might succeed and a commerce that has already failed. We are not seeking to lure men away from a thriving business to a sort of holiday in Arcadia or the peasant type of Utopia. We are trying to make suggestions about starting anew after a business has gone bankrupt. We can see no possible reason for supposing that English trade will regain its nineteenth-century pre-dominance, except, ~~mere~~ Victorian sentimentalism and that particular sort of lying which the newspapers call "optimism." They taunt us for trying to bring back the conditions of the Middle Ages; as if we were trying to bring back the bows or the body-armour of the Middle Ages.....The commercial system implied the security of our commercial routes; and that implied the superiority of our national navy. Everybody who faces facts knows that aviation has altered the whole theory of naval security. The whole huge horrible problem of a big population on a small island dependent on insecure imports is a problem quite as much for Capitalists and Collectivists as for Distributists.I think it is not unlikely that in any case a simpler social life will return; even if it return by the road of ruin. I think the soul will find simplicity again, if it be in the Dark Ages. But we are Christians and concerned with the body as well as the soul: we are Englishmen and we do not desire, if we can help it, that the English people should be merely the People of the Ruins. And we do most earnestly desire a serious consideration of whether the transition cannot be made in the light of reason and tradition; whether we cannot yet do deliberately and well what nemesis will do wastefully and without pity; whether we cannot build a bridge from these slippery downward slopes to freer and firmer land beyond, without consenting yet that our most noble nation must descend into that valley of humiliation in which nations disappear from history.

England's hope of recovery lies in the institution of a real social reform, which naturally divides itself into two distinct stages. First the mad race to monopoly must be halted and a return to a more normal society instituted. Secondly, this more normal society must be inspired with something ideal in a real sense, that is, something not merely Utopian. These two processes are mutual. The checking of monopoly will remove the bane of private property. "As each group or family finds again

the real experience of private property, it will become an influence, a mission.....It is a question of ^apopular movement, that never depends on mere numbers." This explains why Distributists have chosen peasantry as a working model.

Peasantry is not a machine, like the ideal state which is conceived on a set pattern and must operate according to set laws. "You do not make laws for a peasantry. You make a peasantry and the peasantry make the laws." Laws, of course, are necessary to establish and protect a peasantry, but the character of a peasantry does not depend on laws. Peasants are attached to their holdings. The peasantry of Europe did not dispose of their holdings because there was any law against their doing so. "Peasants could not buy because peasants would not sell. This form of moderate quality is not merely a legal formula; it is a moral and psychological fact." But socialists building Utopias will not concede men capable of normal behaviour and they, therefore, formulate elaborate laws of economic control which betray regimentation.

England's chance for recovery depends on the set up of something that will run by itself: a society rather than a social scheme. Chesterton writes:

So if I am told at the start: "You do not think Socialism or reformed Capitalism will save England; do you really think Distributism will save England?" I answer, "No, I think Englishmen will save England, if they begin to have half a chance.

Socialism cannot give the Englishman a chance; for, the Socialist state is exceedingly like the capitalist state. Critics of communism and socialism fail to

realize that Capitalism has destroyed liberty and individuality. Is private enterprise not now as distant as Utopia? Is not private property regarded as an impossibility? This is a real issue to be threshed out with serious critics, that is, men who see our present plight. As for the people who talk as if property and private enterprise were now principles in operation, they are hopeless as far as the debate of the question is concerned.

The world the Distributist wants differs much more from the present than the present from the socialistic. Distributism is revolutionary. Capitalism, in fact, has done everything socialism threatens to do. The clerk to-day has no more freedom, or chance for initiative, than he would have had in the social state.

From the moment he wakes up to the moment he goes to sleep again, his life is run in grooves made for him by other people, and often other people he will never even know. He lives in a house that he does not own, that he did not make, that he does not want. He moves everywhere in ruts; he always goes up to his work on rails. He has forgotten what his fathers, the hunters and the pilgrims and the wandering minstrels, meant by finding their way to a place. He thinks in terms of wages; that is, he has forgotten the real meaning of wealth. His highest ambition is concerned with getting this or that subordinate post in a business that is already a bureaucracy. There is a certain amount of competition for that post inside that business; but so there would be inside any bureaucracy. This is a point that the apologists of monopoly often miss. They sometimes plead that even in such a system there may be a competition among servants; presumably a competition in servility. But so there might be after Nationalization, when they were all Government servants. The whole objection to State Socialism vanishes, if that is the answer to the objection. If every shop were as thoroughly nationalized as a police station, it would not prevent the pleasing virtues of jealousy, intrigue, and selfish ambition from blooming and blossoming among them, as they sometimes do even among policemen.

There may be such a thing as ideal Distributism,

but, Distributists do not expect to resurrect Eden. Indeed, there is such a thing as ideal communism, but the ideal capitalist is a plain socialist. The capitalist builds everything on a plan, and his plan has all the marks of a socialistic plan: perfection, simplicity, order, unity, standardization. In a word, everything is allowed for, but liberty.

The Distributist does not offer perfection; he aims at proportion.

We do not propose that in a healthy society all land should be held in the same way; or that all property should be owned on the same conditions; or that all citizens should have the same relation to the city. It is our whole point that the central power needs lesser powers to balance and check it, and that these must be of many kinds: some individual, some communal, some official, and so on. Some of them will probably abuse their privilege; but we prefer the risk to that of the State or of the Trust, which abuses its omnipotence.

Part 11. Some Aspects of Big Business.

"Large organization", writes Chesterton, "is loose organization." He recalls that twice he was forbidden by the editor of a paper to publish an article in which he said that widely advertised stores and large shops were really worse than little shops. The big newspaper could not attack the big shop; both were monuments of monopoly. The monopolist shop like everything monopolist was beneficial and convenient to the monopolist. Such a shop could be operated cheaply and the wealth accumulated could be used to buy up small businesses and to advertise worse goods. If goods were not satisfactory or poorly put up purchasers might complain, but complaints would only lead to the dismissal of some poor, innocent, underpaid clerk. Large organization was in some instances, like the army,

necessary; but, it rather defeated than served a purpose in the case of the shop.

The big shop is an example of the general thesis that small property should be revived. "It concerns the psychology of all these things: of mere size, of mere wealth, of mere advertisement and arrogance." In a word, it furnishes a working model of how things are done to-day.

The bluff of big business rests on advertisement. No one notes the criminality of the big owner in "cornering" a commodity or resents the swindle of the big advertisement.

They (advertisers) are always telling us that the success of modern commerce depends on creating an atmosphere, on manufacturing a mentality, on assuming a point of view. In short, they insist that their commerce is not merely commercial, or even economic or political, but purely psychological. I hope they will go on saying it; for then some day everybody may suddenly see that it is true.

As already stated, the practical programme proposed for the restoration of property consists of two parts: the arrest of the growth of monopoly, and the presentation of a new ideal. Chesterton deals with the first here: "stopping the stampede towards monopoly, before the last traditions of property and liberty are lost." The boycott of big shops by the formation of a league for dealing only with little local shops and never with large centralized shops could prove a practical campaign. Let us not be bluffed into admitting that monopoly is inevitable.

Very little is left free in the modern world; but private buying and selling are still supposed to be free; and indeed are still free; if anyone has a will free enough to use his freedom. Children may be driven by force to a particular school. Men may be driven by force away from a public-house. All sorts of people, for all sorts of new and nonsensical reasons, may be driven by force to a prison. But nobody is yet driven by force to a particular shop.

Reformers are anxious to know what plan they will follow in checking monopoly and instituting a new reality. Chesterton says, his outline is an outline----something merely theoretical but as necessary to the reformer as a blue print to the contractor. Furthermore, Chesterton's outline "is deliberately drawn as a large limitation within which there are many varieties." His answer to the charge that he generalizes because there is no general plan is:

The truth is that I generalize because there are so many practical plans. I myself know four or five schemes that have been draw' up....Not all Distributists would agree with all of them; but all would agree that they are in the direction of Distributism. (1) The taxation of contracts so as to discourage the sale of small property to big proprietors and encourage the break-up of big property among small proprietors. (2) Something like the Napoleonic testamentary law and the destruction of primogeniture. (3) The establishment of free law for the poor, so that small property could always be defended against great. (4) The deliberate protection of certain experiments in small property, if necessary by tariffs and even local tariffs. (5) Subsidies to foster the starting of such experiments. (6) A league of voluntary dedication, and any number of other things of the same kind. But I have inserted this matter here in order to explain that this is a sketch of the first principles of Distributism and not of the last details, about which even Distributists might dispute. In such a statement, examples are given as examples, and not as exact and exhaustive lists of all the cases covered by the rule.

Realizing that to point out a definite road to successful reform should overtask a major prophet let alone a minor poet, Chesterton would adopt the method of first pointing out that "the monopolistic momentum was not irresistible; that even here and now much could be done to modify it, much by anybody, almost everything by everybody." This particular plutocratic pressure removed, the appetite and appreciation of natural property would revive. To such a society returning to sanity he would propound a

sane society that could balance property and control machinery.

To enlighten those who contend that the Distributist ideal is intrinsically impossible, Chesterton selects the small and familiar example of the law compelling employers to shut their shops for half a day once a week. Living in days of dangerous division of interests between the employer and the employed, we thus coerce the non-employer. The case of request, that the small shopkeeper be allowed to keep open shop on these half holidays, is Chesterton's case in point.

Some man of normal sense and popular instincts, who had strayed into Parliament by some mistake or other, actually pointed out this plain fact: that there was no need to protect the proletariat where there was no proletariat to protect; and the the lonely shopkeeper might, therefore, remain in his lonely shop. And the Minister in charge of the matter actually replied, with a ghastly innocence, that it was impossible; for, it would be unfair to the big shops.

Evidently this plea for the big shop disposes of the notion that its success is inevitable. Monopoly may be stopped.

If the little shops could trade on a general holiday their prestige and numbers would increase. If there were anything like a class of small shopkeepers, or a class of peasants, they would make their presence felt in legislation. This third class would end what is called class war.

This case illustrates the double action involved in such reform. If the little shops gain trade, automatically the big shops will lose it. The centripetal tendency is slowed down; simultaneously, the centrifugal is set up. Now, when there are a determinant number of small proprietors, "of men with the psychology and philosophy of small property---

You can make them understand, as you cannot make plutocrats or proletarians understand, why the machine must not exist save as a servant of man, why the things we produce ourselves are precious

like our own children, and why we can pay too dearly for the possession of luxury by the loss of liberty. If the bodies of men only begin to be detached from the servile settlements, they will begin to form the body of our public opinion.

Moreover, these small shops generally govern themselves through a voluntary organization, known as the Guild, which looks after holidays and many other things. The objection of the guild being medieval and dead lies prostrate in face of the doctor's guilds, modern and living. We will be at least as safe in the hands of the democratic guild as in the hands of the autocratic trust.

Twelve years previously, when Chesterton sounded a warning about trusts, people said, "There are no trusts in England." Now, these same people declare that trusts are unavoidable. The present peril is the peril of despair; but, there is no reason why we should surrender when the trusts can be outflanked by "saving one shop out of a hundred shops, and saving one croft out of a hundred crofts."

Not only can small shops be supported, but plutocracy can be attacked from many different sides. It can be threatened by competition, by ^{the} making of little laws, and by the making of sweeping laws. Cornering is as criminal as counterfeiting; for, it is a question wholly and solely of moral will, not of economic law. Dumping, as well as buying on the instalment plan, must be eliminated.

We shall never have a real civic sense until it is once more felt that the plot of three citizens against one citizen is a crime, as well as the plot of one citizen against three. In other words, private property ought to be protected against private crime, just as public order is protected against private judgment. But private property ought to be protected against much bigger things than burglars and pick-pockets. It needs protection against the plots of a whole plutocracy. It needs defence against the rich, who are now generally the rulers who ought to defend it.

So only eternal vigilance shall save us from the tyranny of the trusts.

Part III. Some Aspects of the Land.

The re-establishment of a peasantry in England is urgent. It will be a bulwark against Bolshevism which threatens the very ideal of property. As the absence of a peasantry spells peril, the presence of a peasantry means a change in the quality of society. A change in quality will automatically induce a change in quantity: the peasant once re-introduced will receive consideration; for, all will begin to see that a peasantry will create a conservative populace which industrialism has destroyed, and which the present industrial deadlock in great cities can never hope to re-form.

History shows that peasants have been creative and conservative. Artists have discovered with delight the handiwork of the peasants of Europe. The peasant holds on to his small property because he feels a sense of the dignity of ownership. This is understood when we say peasants are conservative in a negative sense, that is, in a defensive sense. But, it is a more remarkable, and an important fact, as well, that the peasants are conservative in a positive sense: they conserve their customs, arts, and crafts. It is the satisfaction of the possessive and creative instinct in the individual that makes the peasantry as a whole content and therefore conservative. The simple truth is men have a chance to become independent if they own their own land; but, the large landowners of England are not only not peasants but a hindrance to peasantry.

Reform must begin at once. Parliamentary processes

cannot be depended on. "We shall be about as near to Distributism as a labour politician is to socialism. It seems to me first necessary to revive the medieval or moral method, and call for volunteers", Chesterton urges.

Two kinds of volunteers are called for: peasants, 'actual or potential, who would take over the responsibility of small farms, for the sake of self-sufficiency, of real property, and of saving England in a desperate hour; and landlords, who would now give or sell cheaply their land to be cut up into a number of such farms." Sacrifice is written all over the scheme.

Instead of sounding the trumpet for the cause, many people trump up the case of the Limehouse slums. The charge that the slum dwellers prefer their old homes is a living challenge to the futility of reform. Could slum dwellers be turned loose on the land?

The question whether a slum dweller may or may not be a potential peasant suggests its larger application to all the dwellers of England. Chesterton maintains there is a large element that would like to return to the simpler sort of England. "It is probably not a majority, but I suspect that even now it is a very large minority." He bases his claim on the way "numberless suburbans talk about their gardens...on the profound and popular interest everywhere, in the breeding or training of any kind of animal....on the reluctance of the Limehouse slum-dwellers to leave their old backyards where they could pursue 'their hobbies of bird-fancying and poultry rearing.' "

If we have the potential peasants on the one hand, and the man who frequently cannot get the rent for his land on the other, nothing forbids the use of state power

to give at least initial impetus to the movement. The state can furnish a subsidy both for the agrarian reform and for the agricultural education. Indeed, a large voluntary fund might be subscribed to revive a peasantry. The communists will undoubtedly institute a plan for the confiscation of all property by the state, if the state cannot redeem itself by giving the landholder and the landless the assistance needed in a crisis.

By this immediately practicable action, not to be confused with an ultimate or complete condition, the Distributists propose to undo the evils of capitalism, and to prevent the evils of socialism or communism. To cure the present ills will establish immunity against the threatening ills. The self-subsisting or almost self-subsisting peasant will be isolated from the present mad economics of exchange which has infected the modern world.

The peasant lives not only a simple life, but a complete life. By thus restoring the integrity of the individual, we may hope to restore the integrity and unity of the nation.

It seems to me a very good thing, in theory as well as practice, that there should be a body of citizens primarily concerned in producing and consuming and not in exchanging. It seems to me a part of our ideal, and not merely a part of our compromise, that there should be in the community a sort of core not only of simplicity but of completeness. Exchange and variation can then be given their reasonable place; as they were in the old world of fairs and markets. But there would be somewhere in the centre of civilization a type that was truly independent; in the sense of producing and consuming within its own social circle. I do not say that such a complete human life stands for a complete humanity. I do not say that the State needs only the man who needs nothing from the State. But I do say that this man who supplies his own needs is very much needed. I say it

largely because of his absence from modern civilization, that modern civilization has lost unity. It is nobody's business to note the whole of a process, to see where things come from and where they go to.

In establishing real life on the land a social circle, in which this round of things will be evident, must be created. To accomplish this aim "we need men who know the end and the beginning and the rounding of our little life."

1V. Some Aspects of Machinery.

Chesterton ridicules the popular attitude to machines as fatalistic. Of "the phrase that such and such a modern institution has come to stay," he writes; "It is these half-metaphors that tend to make us all half-witted." His attack is launched again at the insidious endoctrinations of progress. And his criticism is, we have allowed ourselves to be cast in the mold of blind evolutionary fatalism. Instead of men saying we have made this machine, shall we smash it or make another, they stand non-plussed and overawed before it as if it were a species of dragon and say, "the gas engine has come, has it come to stay?"---

Before we begin any talk of the practical problem of machinery, it is necessary to leave off thinking like machines. It is necessary to begin at the beginning and consider the end. Now we do not necessarily wish to destroy a certain sort of mentality that begins by telling us that nobody can destroy machinery. Those who begin by saying that we cannot abolish the machine, that we must use the machine, are themselves refusing to use the mind.

The aim of human polity is human happiness. For those holding certain beliefs it is conditioned by the hope of a larger happiness, which it must not imperil. But happiness, the making glad of the heart of man, is the secular test and the only realistic test. So far from this test, by the talisman of the heart, being merely sentimental, it is the only test that is in the least practical. There is no law of logic or nature or anything else forcing us to prefer anything else. There is no obligation on us to be richer, or busier, or more efficient, or more productive, or more progressive, or in any way worldlier or wealthier, if it does not make us happier. Mankind has as much right to scrap its machinery and live on the land, if it really likes it better, as any man has to sell his old

bicycle and go for a walk, if he likes that better
But, anyhow, it is necessary to clear our
 minds at the start of any mere vague association
 or assumption to the effect that we must go by
 the quickest train or cannot help using the most
 productive instrument.

From which one surely cannot infer that the Distributists
 are advocating a revival of the machine-smashing Luddites.
 To postulate an ultimate aim or test gives proper
 perspective: man was made for happiness; the machine, for
 man. If machines promote happiness, maintain or increase
 them; if machines hinder happiness, decrease or destroy them.

In the light of this end, as a " preliminary to a
 possible spiritual revolution," Chesterton proposes the
 better distribution of ownership of such machines as are
 really found to be necessary. This is only an immediate
 plan. "My own preference, on the whole, would be that any
 such necessary machine should be owned by a small local
 guild, on principles of profit-sharing, or rather profit-
 dividing: but of real profit-sharing and real profit-
 dividing, not to be confounded with capitalist patronage."

— Chesterton here reiterates that decentralization is
 the prime move in his general two-fold policy. All may
 help to resist the tendency of the concentration of capital
 in the hands of the few, even they do not believe in
 Distributism. Even in an industrial state, one can work
 towards industrial distribution and away from the indus-
 trial monopoly: the town dweller can own his house; the
 shopkeeper, his shop; the worker, his tools.

That is why in beginning here the discussion of
 machinery I pointed out, first, that in the
 ultimate sense we are free to destroy machinery;
 and second, that in the immediate sense it is
 possible to divide the ownership of machinery.
 And I should say myself that even in a healthy
 state there would be some ownership of machinery
 to divide. But when we come to consider that
 larger test, we must say something about the
 definition of machinery, and even the ideal of
 machinery.

When society shall have been fundamentally changed according to the principles of philosophy and religion a great deal more can be said. "The best and shortest way of saying it is that instead of the machine being a giant to which man is a pygmy, we must at least reverse the proportions until man is a giant to whom the machine is a toy..... In an ideal state engineering would be the exception." Drawing a parallel with the case of armaments whom some would abolish altogether, Chesterton writes,

As I believe in the right of national self-defence, I would not abolish them altogether. But I think they may give us a hint of how exceptional things may be treated exceptionally. For the moment I will leave the progressive to laugh at my absurd notion of a limitation of machines, and go off to a meeting to demand the limitation of armaments.

The hope of the advocates of machinery was the leisure state; their only realization so far is unemployment. Machinery has merely achieved mass production, the limitation of the type of thing produced, standardization, and leisure without liberty. "The man may only work for an hour with machine-made tools, but he can only run away and play for twenty-three hours with machine-made toys." Even if the supporters of the leisure state could produce a system of distributed machinery making each man master of his machine, the whole problem of the craftsman as a creator would still remain to be solved. Chesterton argues:

that if the small man found his small mechanical plant helpful to the preservation of his small property, its claim would be very considerable. But it is necessary to make it clear, that if the holidays provided for the mechanic are provided as mechanically as at present, and with the merely mechanical alternative offered at present, I think that even the slavery of his labour would be light compared to the grinding slavery of his leisure.

But even centralization may help the cause of decentralization. Chesterton instances the cheapening of electricity due to central power plants helping the small distributist workshop. Since it is vital to create the experience of small property, the psychology of small property, the type of man who is to be a small proprietor; and, since combines may contribute to that end, the Distributist should be disposed to accept any help that science or machinery can give provided that the peasant ideal as the motive and goal be kept in mind.

Paradoxical, as it may seem, a product of mass production, and standardization, the Ford car offers "a complete contradiction to the fatalistic talk about inevitable combination and concentration." And if the man who owns a Ford uses it to find a farm, Chesterton thinks, that the chance of recovery is being fostered by Mr. Ford. But once the man has the farm he may junk the Ford. The Distributist must hold himself free not only to cease worshipping machines, but to cease using them.

The Distributist may even here be accused of being Jesuitical but Chesterton never fails to recognize a difference between the methods that may be used to produce a saner society and the things which that saner society might itself be sane enough to do. The danger of machinery deadening individual craftsmanship and creation and the value of what it deadens can only be truly realized in a world of many independent and many individual craftsmen. Machines might be limited in a freer world, that this freer world might become still freer. These are the later stages of improvement. But the question of the means

used in initial stages to bridge from the present to the tentative Distributist realm are the real point of criticism. These means, Chesterton holds, are innocent in themselves

I do not think machinery an immoral instrument in itself, so I do not think State action an immoral instrument in itself. The State might do a great deal in the first stages, especially by education in the new and necessary crafts and labours, by subsidy or tariff to protect distributive experiments and by special laws, such as taxation of contracts. All these are covered by what I call the second principle, that we may use intermediate or imperfect instruments; but it goes along with the first principle, that we must be perfect not only in our patience, but in our passion and our enduring indignation.

V. A Note on Immigration.

In his enthusiasm for a new England at home, Chesterton did not overlook the need of a new England abroad. Were the first properly constituted, the second would follow naturally from it. England could never accomodate its growing population. The capitalists might recommend the sin of birth control as an expedient to cover up the crimes of capitalism; or, they might get rid of the existing English by some imperial scheme of colonization that offered the poor exile no basis for founding his traditions. Not a thought was there, let alone provision, for what goes to secure social standing of the future colonist: continuity, customs, religion, folklore, or even private property. In short, imperialism is too narrow: "to create a solid social equality outside England, a man will have to be something more than English (or at any rate something more than 'British')." A new spirit is urgently needed, and this new spirit must first be imbued at home.

The Imperial statesman, if he had really been a statesman, ought to have been able to say, "It is always difficult to understand another nation or another religion: but I am more fortunately placed than most people. I know a little more than can be known by self-contained and isolated states like Sweden or Spain. I have more sympathy with the Catholic faith or the French blood because I have French Catholics in my own Empire."

Chesterton diagnoses the plight of the British Empire, though he does not want an empire but an England, by declaring "that we really know nothing at all about the moral and philosophical elements that make up the Empire." This, undoubtedly, is largely due to the largeness of the Empire, nevertheless, solid criteria must be invoked, to understand the lesson of the parallel, though contrary and inverse, cases: viz.--

The Indian who grows into a Bolshevik in our dominions without our being able to influence his growth, and the French Canadian who remains a peasant in our dominions without our getting any sort of advantage out of his stability.

Indeed, we tend rather to be hypnotized by the impersonal and indefinite doctrine of Asia than to be revitalized by the sane example of French-Canadian life.

Most of the eastern philosophy differs from the western theology in refusing to draw the line anywhere; and it would be a highly probable perversion of that instinct to refuse to draw the line between meum and tuum. I do not think the Indian gentleman is any judge of whether we in the West want to have a hedge round our fields or a wall round our gardens. And as I happen to hold that the very highest human thought and art consists almost entirely in drawing the line somewhere though not drawing it anywhere, I am completely confident that in this the western tendency is right and the eastern tendency is wrong.

On the other hand, Chesterton approves, ratifies and recommends the French Canadian type of colonization. The French race in Canada is exemplary of a successful colonial people. Chesterton believes their success is

due in a large part to their religion; and, to avoid "sly critics", quotes the opinion of a writer in THE DAILY NEWS.

That the Anglo-Saxon has got too proud to bend his back; but the curious thing is that he goes on to suggest, almost in so many words, that the backs of the French Canadians are actually strengthened, not only by being bent over rustic spades, but even by being bent before superstitious altars. I am very anxious not to do my impartial witness an unfair damage in the matter; so I may be excused if I quote his own words at some little length..... "But as a matter of fact it is not in Quebec that the French are making good most conspicuously.... nor in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick is the comparative success of the French stock most marked. They are doing splendidly on the land and raising prodigious families. A family of twelve is quite common, and I could name several cases where there have been twenty, who all lived. The day may come when they will equal or outnumber the Scotch, but that is some way ahead. If you want to see what French stock can still achieve, you should go to the northern part of this province of Ontario. It is doing pioneer work. It is bending its back as men did in the old days. It is multiplying and staying on the soil. It is content to be happy without being rich.

"Though I am not a religious man myself, I must confess I think religion has a good deal to do with it. These French Canadians are more Catholic than the Pope. You might call a good many of them desperately ignorant and desperately superstitious. They seem to me to be a century behind the times and a century nearer happiness.

"Apart from the fact that their women bear an incredible number of children, you have this other consequence of their submission to the priest, that a social organism is created, which is of incalculable value in the backwoods. The church, the school, the curé, hold each little group together as a unit. Do not think for a moment that I believe a general spread of Catholicism would turn us back into a pioneer people. One might just as reasonably recommend a return to early Scottish Protestantism. I merely record the fact that the simplicity of these people is proving their salvation and is one of the most hopeful things in Canada to-day."

The striking note for Chesterton is this writer's "insistence on stability." The French Canadians are staying on the soil; they are a social organism; they

are held together as a unit. That, says Chesterton, is the new note which I think is needed in all talk of colonization, before it can again be any part of the hope of the world.

It all devolves on men realizing the new meaning of the old phrase, "the sacredness of private property." The only spirit, that will make the colonist feel at home and not abroad, is the religious spirit.

Instead of crude people merely extending their crudity, and calling that colonization, it would be possible for people to cultivate the soil as they cultivate the soul. But for this it is necessary to have a respect for the soil as well as the soul; and even a reverence for it, as having some associations with holy things. But for that purpose we need some sense of carrying holy things with us and taking them home with us; not merely the feeling that holiness may exist as a hope. In the most exalted phrase, we need a real presence. In the most popular phrase, we need something that is always on the spot.

This final note acknowledges that "there is a doctrine behind the whole of our (the Distributist) position." But this is not necessarily Catholic doctrine, but whatever doctrine it is, it must have some reference to an ultimate view of the universe and especially of the nature of man.

The thing behind Bolshevism and many other modern things is a new doubt. It is not merely a doubt about God; it is rather specially a doubt about Man. The old morality, the Christian religion, the Catholic Church, differed from all this new mentality because it really believed in the rights of men. That is, it believed that ordinary men were clothed with powers and privileges and a kind of authority. Thus the ordinary man had a right to deal with dead matter, up to a given point; that is the right of property. Thus the ordinary man had a right to rule the other animals within reason; that is the objection to vegetarianism and many other things. The ordinary man had a right to judge about his own health, and what risks he would take with ordinary things of his environment; that is the objection to Prohibition and many other things. The ordinary man had a right to judge his

children's health, and generally to bring up children to the best of his ability; that is the objection to many interpretations of modern State education. Now in these primary things in which the old religion trusted a man, the new philosophy utterly distrusts a man. It insists that he must be a very rare sort of man to have any rights in these matters: and when he is the rare sort, he has the right to rule others even more than himself. It is this profound scepticism about the common man that is the common point in the most contradictory elements of modern thought. That is why Mr. Bernard Shaw wants to evolve a new animal that shall live longer and grow wiser than man. That is why Mr. Sidney Webb wants to herd the men that exist like sheep, or animals much more foolish than man. They are not rebelling against an abnormal tyranny; they are rebelling against what they think is a normal tyranny----the tyranny of the normal....In short, these sages, rightly or wrongly, cannot trust the normal man to rule in the home, and most certainly do not want him to rule in the State. They do not really want to give him any political power. They are willing to give him a vote, because they have long discovered that it need not give him any power. They are not willing to give him a house, or a wife, or a child, or a dog, or a cow, or a piece of land, because these things really do give him power.

Now we wish it to be understood that our policy is to give him power by giving him these things. We wish to insist that this is the real moral division underlying all our disputes, and perhaps the only one really worth disputing. We are far from denying, especially at this time, that there is much to be said on the other side. We alone, perhaps, are likely to insist in the full sense that the average respectable citizen ought to have something to rule. We alone, to the same extent and for the same reason, have the right to call ourselves democratic.

To conclude: Chesterton's general thesis is that small property should be revived; but, this revival shall be conditioned by a larger end than the mere material. The outline in brief is: Society will be self-supporting as much as possible and the peasant will produce for his own use as well as for sale. The paper abstractions of high finance, of stocks and shares, will ^{be} replaced by

realities which do not vanish at the slightest loss of confidence. Machinery will not be destroyed but limited to utilitarian purposes. The modern cult of speed, "going from nowhere to nowhere in the shortest possible time," will have no place. Industry will be managed by a system of guilds, which will give everyone a share in ownership; but, will limit his share. Big organizations owned by the few will be replaced by small organizations owned by the many, for "large organization is loose organization." The age of the small shop supplying personal customers will be inaugurated; and, people will no longer be forced to buy standardized goods. Similarly, local government will predominate, and the people will have a direct hand in governing themselves. Finally, education will be in the home rather than in the state or public school, so that individuality will be preserved to the fullest extent. Such a society would satisfy the human desire for possession and true liberty. It might make society poorer, but it would make it happier, which is the right true end of government. "If we can make men happier, it does not matter if we make them poorer: it does not matter if we make them less productive: it does not matter if we make them less progressive."

Distributism, then, is a system of widely distributed property in which the determinant mass of families ~~severally~~ severally own the means of production and wealth, that is, property in land or capital. Distributism aims at economic freedom; democracy, at political freedom. The

one without the other is as impossible as it would be futile. It is a natural corollary of true democracy: that man's freedom must be protected by ownership.

PART TWO.

Chapter Four.

CHESTERTON'S ATTACKS ON EXISTING AND PROPOSED POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS, AS FOUND IN (A) HIS POEMS: (b) HIS NOVELS: (c) HIS BIOGRAPHY.

(a) His Poems.

Critics during his lifetime, were continually insisting that Chesterton should retire from the clamor of controversy and devote some recollected hours to enriching the English language with more poetry of the type of "Lepanto" and "The Ballad of the White Horse." Little did they realize the essential connection between Chesterton the Crusader and Chesterton the Troubadour; for, the author's literary life was an incessant fight against the "philosophy" of the world. This is why he could write of battles as one engaged in them; whence arises that whiff of reality that made one critic (Charles Williams) exclaim of "The Ballad of the White Horse" that there has been no better fighting since Homer.

Chesterton's poems are always the voice of battle; they invariably deal with crises. But in reality it is only of one battle and of one crisis he writes, and that the present crisis of European civilization and the battle to save it. His poetry, by reason of this, becomes something more than just poetry. It is a proclamation, a manifesto, a challenge, a war-cry. One goes to it as he goes to Dante, or to Virgil, or to Homer, primarily to find the living soul, the aspirations, the hopes of a people, only secondarily to fill the section of his being that an arbitrary division of things has allotted to pure

poetry. Some of Chesterton's sharpest attacks on imperialism, socialism, industrialism, are found in his poems in THE NEW AGE, THE DAILY MAIL, THE LONDON WEEKLY ILLUSTRATED, THE EYE WITNESS. Our purpose here is not to give an exhaustive survey of this critical type of Chesterton's poetry but merely to show the force and the nature of this attack by a few selections. The "Ballade on Ephemeral Controversy" sums up this poet's whole attitude to his cause:

I am not as that poet that arrives,
Nor shall I pluck that laurel that persists
Through all perverted ages and revives:
Enough for me, that if with feet and fists
I fought these parasitic atheists,
I need not crawl and seek when all is done
My motley pennon trampled in the lists
It will not matter when the fight is won.

If scratch of mine amid a war of knives
Has caused one moment's pain to pessimists,
Poisoned one hour in Social Workers' lives,
I count such comfort more than amethysts
But less than claret, and at after trysts
We'll meet and drink such claret by the tun
Till you and I and all of us (What? Hists!)
It will not matter when the fight is won.

When men again want women for their wives,
And even woman owns that she exists,
When people ask for houses and not hives
When we have climbed the tortured ivy's twists
To where like statues stand above the mists
The strong incredible sanities in the sun,
This dazed and overdriven bard desists.
It will not matter when the fight is won.

ENVOI

Prince, let me place these handcuffs on your wrists
While common Christian people get some fun,
Then go and join your damned Theosophists.
It will not matter when the fight is won.

His satire is as varied in its scope as in its method. "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" needs no commentary to prove Chesterton's mastery of irony. The poem's calm lyric sweep camouflages its bitter undertow:

English fought and broke Napoleon's power, and their own rights, "and still we never spoke."

Weak as we be forever, could none condemn us then;
Men called us serfs and drudges, men knew that we were men.
In foam and flame at Trafalgar, and on Albuera plains,
We did and died like lions, to keep ourselves in chains.

It was the Napoleonic war which brought the final
and complete triumph of the money lender:

But the squire seemed struck in the saddle, he was
foolish as if in pain.
He leaned on a staggering lawyer, he clutched a cringing
Jew,
He was stricken; it may be, after all, he was stricken
at Waterloo.

Crushed by the burden of rates and taxes, raised to pay
the interest on a debt to fundholders who were themselves
in debt to the banks, the old landholders, one after another
gave up the struggle.

We only know the last sad squires ride slowly towards the sea
And a new people takes the land: and still it is not we.

The new rich masters with "their bright dead alien eyes"
are indifferent to the "labour and laughter" and the common
things of common man. Their cold, organized charity, called
humanitarianism is an insult to the poor:

And the load of loveless pity is worse than the ancient
wrongs,
Their doors are shut in the evenings; and they know no
songs.

Reformers are out of tune with the secret people;

We hear men speaking for us of new laws strong and sweet,
Yet is there no man speaketh as we speak

Perhaps, these silent English may rise in rebellion to win
democracy,

It may be we shall rise the last as Frenchmen rose the first
Our wrath come after Russia's wrath and our wrath be the worst

But there is a Providence:

It may be we are meant to mark with our riot and our rest
God's scorn for all men governing. It may be beer is best.

In "The Songs of Education" melody may fade but
philosophy linger on:

The people they left the land, the land,
But they went on working hard;
And the village green that had got mislaid
Turned up in the squire's backyard:
But twenty men of us all got work
On a bit of his motor car;
And we all became with the world's acclaim,
The marvellous mugs we are:

The old grudge against industrialism is here reiterated;
but, it is an amusing reiteration, which enhances the
doctrine of Distributism. And likewise:

Our principal exports, all labelled and packed,
At the ends of the earth are delivered intact,
Our soap or our salmon can travel in tins
Between the two poles and as like as two pins;
So that Lancashire merchants whenever they like
Can water the beer of a man in Klondike
Or poison the meat of a man in Bombay;
And that is the meaning of Empire Day.

And the "Song for the Crèche," bitter, but pleasing, strikes
with smart lash combine and monopoly alike:

For Mother is dancing up forty-eight floors,
For love of the Leeds International Stores,
And the flame of that faith might perhaps have grown cold,
With the care of a baby of seven weeks old.

For Mother is happy in greasing the wheel
For somebody else, who is cornering steel;
And though our one meeting was not very long,
She took the occasion to sing me this song:
"Oh hush thee, my baby, the time will soon come
When thy sleep will be broken with hooting and hum;
There are handles want turning and turning all day,
And knobs to be pressed in the usual way;
O, hush thee, my baby, take rest while I croon,
For progress comes early, and Freedom too soon."

Chesterton could speak out as violently as the
reddest of the reds. His satire smarts like Swift's. For
those who apparently subscribed to a Christian civilization
and yet, within it, wrought to all the ends that Christ
would have loathed, he had nothing but burning scorn. He

was against men being made into wheels and cogs, against them being treated as serfs and slaves; and, for any crusade against cruel selfishness and greed. He sang of those things with the song of a trumpet. He had no traffic with the lords in high places, save to turn upon them his blighting satire or his convincing humor. For besides having a great gift of righteous anger, Chesterton, when he set himself to it, could make any opponent look ridiculous. And, moreover, he could bring his attack doubly home by making it appeal to all: he wrote for the crowd instead of the clique; his criticism sprang not from disgust but from love.

(b) His Novels.

"I could not be a novelist, because I really like to see ideas or notions wrestling naked, as it were, and not dressed up in a masquerade as men and women." (AUTOBIOGRAPHY). Despite this, Chesterton did write novels; but, they are novels with a purpose: Chesterton, the novelist was Chesterton the Crusader, too.

THE NAPOLEON OF NOTTING HILL, Chesterton's first novel, a kind of allegorical romance appeared in 1904. Its first drew attention to this author, though half a dozen of his books, including the one on Browning, had already been published. Imperialism and nationalism is the problem of the book, which must be read with the picture of the Boer War as its background. Only those, who experienced living the jingo imperialism of the day, can really appreciate Chesterton's Crusade against it. For those who missed such contact, Belloc's EMMANUEL BURDEN, one of the greatest

satires in the English language, published about the time of Notting Hill, will supply the required setting.

This novel pictures a time when the great nations have gobbled up all the little ones. An efficient but dull world peace reigns. Government has lost its glamor, even the king is picked by rote. The reader is about to regard the book, whose purpose is to present suddenly to Imperialist England the idea that a small nation is something desirable for itself, as a joke, when the choice of kingship falls on Auberon Quin, a complete jokesmith. Quin conceives the idea of reviving medieval customs and draws up the Charter of the Cities as a diversion for hard-headed business men. But here the comedy becomes romance; for, Adam Wayne the provost of Notting Hill becomes serious. A new road is to be driven through his borough, when, in the name of Notting Hill, Wayne appeals to local patriotism and declares war on his fellow provosts. Notting Hill made its opponents take it and themselves seriously. In a word, Notting Hill was victorious.

To the Englishman for whom it was written, THE NAPOLEON OF NOTTING HILL not only contained paradoxes, the whole idea of the book was a paradox. To those grown accustomed to the idea of the greatness of the Empire came an Englishman telling them that the small nation had a positive value of its own, that the infinite variety of a world divided up into small states, each with its own proud loyalties, its own precious individuality was an ideal which could be set over against their own ideal of a cosmopolitan empire. This is obviously a dramatic treat-

ment of a main Chesterton doctrine, that the greatest happiness and freedom comes from the love of small things, that a city is more romantic than an empire. "So has the soul of Notting Hill gone forth," cries Adam Wayne, "and makes men realize what it is to live in a city." This was to be in a great part, Chesterton's message. He did not confine the patronage of his genius to small nations; he extended it to small institutions---to the small farmer who was disappearing with the forward march of mechanized agriculture; to the small shop-keeper who was being frozen out by the big chain-stores. That the joy of ownership, the right of a man to express himself in his work, instead of being a slave to others, should be extended to the greatest possible number of citizens was thenceforward an idea which dominated Chesterton's mind; and, it is in large part the meaning of the political philosophy on which he founded Distributism.

Is this ideal practical? is a very speculative question. Chesterton was quite aware of its difficulties, in the story, Notting Hill has no sooner become an independent city than it begins to turn into an empire; the same patriotism which hitherto had made its story an epic of freedom inspired it to play the tyrant in its turn; so the wheel goes round. Mr. Turnbull's toyshop sold almost everything else; it is a multiple store in germ, the more it flourishes the more it will extend, the more it extends the more it will lose its individuality.

"Imperialism denies democracy," says Chesterton. It denies the equality of man by imposing standards. In THE

NAPOLÉON OF NOTTING HILL, the ex-president of the recently appropriated Nicaragua points out that "the great cosmopolitan civilization which shall include all the talents of all the absorbed peoples means in practice that we teach the colonies to speak English but do not ourselves learn to lasso wild horses."

That true liberty is the power over small things is another Chestertonian axiom receiving ample illustration in this novel. A man cannot love anything so large as an empire; and, the true patriot who really loves his country, objects to any addition to it. "Great Empires are necessarily prosaic; for, it is beyond human power to act a great poem upon so great a scale." Imperialism then means a decline of patriotism and the growth of pacifism, which is simply a denial that anything is worth fighting for. "As soon as you love a thing, the whole world becomes your foe." But though the sword brings romance to Notting Hill; yet, the Barbarians of Berlin destroyed the romance of war. But as Chesterton elsewhere says, because it is human to err, we must do battle for the right. Pacifism is no solution; "Hitler and Mussolini are not likely to ruin all their plans because a quaker does not propose to interfere with them. (THE WELL AND THE SHALLOWS).

THE NAPOLÉON OF NOTTING HILL suggests many difficulties but solves none. The book concludes by opening a question which was in part at least a justification of Chesterton's political stand. Which was right? Quin, who invented Notting Hill for a joke, or Wayne, who did not see it was a joke and turned it into a reality. Which was right--- the cynic who sees everything as amusing, or the fanatic

who has no sense of humor at all? The answer is, that the two men are in reality only two lobes of the one brain, "laughter and love....two lobes of the same brain." It is only when the world goes wrong that the pure precipitation of cynic or fanatic is formed, the normal man, living in normal surroundings, is a blend of both. Laughter and love everywhere; in healthy people there is no war between them. So Chesterton defended himself, once for all, against a sulking world which would alternately accuse him of being too flippant or of taking things too seriously. If he did either, it was their fault, not his. The times were out of joint.

THE BALL AND THE CROSS is undisguisedly a defence of controversy---religious controversy. But it is primarily an allegory of the conflict between science and religion. Professor Lucifer symbolizes science; the monk Michael, religion. The former has a wonderful flying boat, the instruments of which are all ordinary tools evolved into completely new and unrecognizable shapes. "Now science has spoken," he says, "the bottom has fallen out of the universe." With the help of a rope he has succeeded in hoisting Michael out of his back garden into the flying boat, where the scene opens. Michael represents the religious point of view, in opposition to Lucifer's evolutionary progressiveness; he is completely engrossed in old ideas and traditions, passing his life in refuting heresies a thousand years old.

Michael is eventually thrown overboard but symbolically saves himself by clinging to the cross at the top of St. Paul's Cathedral. After demonstrating adequately by his

descent the Christian paradox that he who would save his life must be prepared to lose it, he reaches the ground and is put in an asylum by a hostile world. The story proceeds more realistically with the adventures of McIan, a catholic, and Turnbull, an atheist, who wish to fight a duel over their religions. But science in the person of Lucifer is attempting to crush out all interest in religion, and they are thwarted at every turn for fear their fanaticism should produce a religious revival. They are hounded from pillar to post, and perpetually escaping arrest in all parts of England and the Scilly isles, by motor car and yacht. They meet on the way many allegorical types, the pagan who worships cruelty, the Tolstoyan who hates force of any kind, yet callsⁱⁿ the police, and Durand, the Frenchman, who believes in the rights of man and is a symbol of civilization. They are eventually caught and shut up in a lunatic asylum, along with everyone else who has been witness of their adventures. Lucifer decides that the best way to stifle the popular interest which they have aroused is to persuade the world that the whole affair never happened, and, that the people who witnessed it are suffering hallucination. He has a law passed, in consequence, which makes everyone prove his sanity and by this means easily transfers all his enemies to the asylum. At the moment of Lucifer's triumph, however, Durand satisfied that the rights of man have been violated, sets fire to the building. And when all are about to be burned to death, Michael who is also within, walks unscathed through the flames and liberates them all but one.

The allegory seems to be of society enslaved by science and materialism, casting off its chains by revolution and

a belief in the rights of man; and finally saved from the destruction which accompanies revolt, by the intervention and guidance of the Church.

THE CLUB OF QUEER TRADES (1905) hardly ranks as an important book; but, it contains some fine fantasy. To become eligible for membership in this club one had to invent a new profession. This makes each character a hero. We are introduced to one person who organizes repartees, to another who represents a society for getting rid of unwelcome guests by the trick of going to the home of the unwanted, telling him a yarn and getting him to stay there. The book is a series of humorous suggestions for escape from an existence, toxic with the inertia produced by materialism.

But MANALIVE, written in 1912, supplements the aim of the CLUB OF QUEER TRADES; and, outstrips it by even more than Innocent Smith outdistances Professor Chadd. This book is an allegory. Innocent Smith combines the mischievousness of Puck with the innocence of Peter Pan. By his sheer irresponsibility and high spirits he cleanses the social atmosphere of its megrims. Two couples in Beacon House who have been hitherto too timid or too tired for the adventure of love now take sudden courage. Smith indeed is like the fierce and wholesome wind that came with him; and, he cleanses that dark house of its spiritual cobwebs. No sooner has everyone begun to like him, or at least to tolerate him as a harmless eccentric, than he engages himself to Mary Gray, one of the residents, and proposes to take her at once to his aunt's and procure a special marriage licence. The young heiress, Rosamund

Hunt, to whom Mary is some sort of companion, immediately telegraphs to Dr. Warner that Smith is a lunatic and is doing terrible things. A few moments afterwards she herself, carried away by a gust of impetuous sanity, betrothes herself to Michael Moon, an Irish journalist who has been hanging around her vaguely for years, and who is the only person in the story who really understands Innocent Smith. When Dr. Warner arrives, with Cyrus Pym, a renowned American criminologist and specialist in lunacy, he finds that Rosamund has turned Smith's advocate. They argue at some length, but Smith finally settles the matter by putting two revolver bullets through the doctor's silk hat. Michael Moon insists that Smith must be tried in private, by themselves, and invokes the authority of the High Court of Beacon, an institution he had himself invented, in a moment of levity, some days before. Accordingly Smith stands his trial on four charges urged against him by Dr. Cyrus Pym. Moon acts as counsel for defence. The prisoner is accused of murder, burglary, desertion, polygamy; and the trial is a very diverting performance. The prisoner is acquitted on all counts. He fired at the warden of his college in order to cure that gentleman of pessimism; he entered the house through the roof because it was his own house and it pleased him to enter it in that way; he ran away from his wife and children in order that he might come back with a renewed sense of their value; and as for the several elopements, they were all with the same girl for he made a practice of leaving his wife about, an apparently unattached maiden, so that he might experience the romantic excitement of wooing and winning her anew. Wherever he

went he left a trail of happiness behind him. Out of the mouth of his revolver he dealt not death but life. "His principle", explains his counsel, Michael Moon, "can be quite simply stated: he refuses to die while he is still alive. He seeks to remind himself, by every electric shock to the intellect, that he is still a man alive, walking on two legs about the world....This man's spiritual power has been precisely this, that he has distinguished between customs and creed."

If Chesterton had been asked what he meant Innocent Smith to represent, most likely he would have said, innocence and the fresh eyes of childhood investing with excitement and color the drab surroundings----or so they seemed hitherto----to half a dozen unsuccessful and disillusioned people. Chesterton wished to have the same effect on the world as Innocent Smith had on the boarding house. Only Smith, like Professor Chad, would express in actions what Chesterton expressed in words. Chesterton taught us that life was after all worth living if only we could see its values from a new angle----as Warden of Brakespeare did when he hung upside down from the gargoyle on the bridge. Chesterton was often accused of being a Socialist by people who had heard him denouncing the great fortunes of the very rich, until they learned to recognize his devotion to the idea of ownership, as that is expressed in the lives of the moderately poor. He made us see the value of old institutions, the cogency of old truths, by dint of travelling round the world, as it were, to rediscover them.

In THE RETURN OF DON QUIXOTE (1927), a theatrical

company stages a play centering around the Troubadours. Lord Seawood, a librarian, one of the main actors, refuses to resume modern clothes. In his enthusiasm, he founds a knightly order, the Lion League. He sends proclamations by bowmen to the great men of his day. All of these, even the cabinet ministers, become enthusiastic for the new cause. The ex-librarian is elected King-at-Arms of the whole country; medievalism is rehabilitated. The King-at-Arms in a noble oration eulogizes the nobility of the feudal king---"It was unfortunate to be rich and rouse royal envy. It was unfortunate to be powerful. It was unfortunate to be fortunate....There were good kings who waited upon beggars like servants....There were bad kings who would have spurned the beggars....Do you blame us if we have dreamed of a return to simpler things? Do you blame us if we sometimes fancy that a man might not do what all this machinery is doing, if once he were a man and no longer a machine? And what is marching against us to-day except machinery? What has Braintree to tell us to-day except that we are sentimentalists ignorant of science, of social science, of economic science, of hard and objective and logical science---of such science as dragged that old man like a leper from all he loved? Let us tell John Braintree that we are not ignorant of science. Let us tell John Braintree that we know too much about science already. Let us tell John Braintree to his teeth that we have had enough of science, enough of enlightenment, enough of education, enough of all his social order with its man-trap of machinery and its death-ray of knowledge. Take this message to John Braintree; all things come to an end

and these things are ended. For us there can be no end but the beginning. In the morning of the world, in the Assembly of the Knights, in the house among the greenwoods of Merry England, in Camelot of the Western Shires, I give the shield to the one man who has done the one deed of all our days worth doing; who has avenged one wrong upon at least one ruffian and saved a woman in distress."

There is your crusading Chesterton, casting his lure of the Middle Ages, denouncing the maniacal hunt for progress, shouting that human brains must revoke their tendencies or else go bankrupt. He wished the reconstruction of a society that once was; but the scattered elements of his social philosophy are but fragments of a promise of a resurrection.

Nor must the dedication of this book be overlooked:

The parable for social reformers, as you know, was planned and partly written long ago before the War; so that touching some things, from Fascism to nigger dances, it was quite an unintentional prophecy. It was your too generous confidence that dragged it from its dusty drawer; whether the world has any reason to thank you I doubt; but I have so many reasons for thanking you, and recognizing all that you have done for our cause, that I dedicate this book to you.

(To W.R. Titterton).

THE POET AND THE LUNATICS (1929) contains allegorical treatment of a variety of Chesterton's beliefs. The title implies his favorite antithesis between imagination that is sane, and reason that leads to madness.

Gabriel Gale, the hero, has all the right beliefs and is contrasted with a variety of heretical types, after the fashion of Father Brown, but the characters are more frankly allegories. Gale himself, for example, expresses humility by his trick of standing on his head; and like

St. Tiller, who was crucified in that position, he is rewarded with a vision of the world as it really is in all its strangeness, "with the stars like flowers and the clouds like hills, and all men hanging on the mercy of God." He has in the opening chapter a queer companion, James Hurrel, the business man, who induces all who come into contact with him to commit suicide. This is followed by "The Yellow Bird," a treatment of the doctrine of liberty and limitation. Mallow, the artist, finds his fullest expression in painting small things; beginning with a picture of the whole valley, he ascends to the garden and finally feels himself worthy to paint the creeper under the window. Ivanhov, on the contrary, hates all limitation and has a mania for destroying boundaries. He begins by setting the canary free from its cage, and it is killed by wild birds: he breaks the bowl in which the goldfish are contained, and they, too, die. Finally, after throwing open all the windows and breaking the creeper which Mallow loved, he blows up the house in an attempt to free himself from its restriction. Gale states the moral of the action, "liberty is the power of a thing to be itself. ...we are limited by our brains and bodies, and if we break out, we cease to be ourselves and perhaps to be anything."

To conclude: early critics used to begin their reviews of Chesterton's novels with "It is difficult to say what this novel means. It is doubtful whether Chesterton himself knows the meaning." Even from the foregoing brief survey, it is evident that Chesterton was only too well aware of the ideas his novels promulgated.

(c) His Biography.

Chesterton's first biography, BROWNING (1903), was purely literary, yet even into it, he managed to sandwich an idea or two of political hue. Browning, he writes, was born in the afterglow of the great Revolution. It (the French Revolution) had inspired a spirit of optimistic revolt among the young of the middle classes in England almost the antithesis of the pessimistic revolt against authority and tradition to-day.

The French Revolution was at root a thoroughly optimistic thing....The great dominant idea of the whole of that period, the period before, during, and long after the Revolution, is the idea that man would by his nature live in an Eden of dignity, liberty and love, and that artificial and decrepit systems are keeping him out of that Eden.

The great had dreamed of this emancipation for a century; but, the Jacobins transported "the dullest professions and the most prosaic classes of society" into ecstasies of hope of liberty.

In his ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI (1923) we pick up the next biographical threads of Chestertonian fundamentals in politics and economics. Chesterton describes the world of St. Francis in the setting of the Dark Ages. By the twelfth century, Christianity had cured the world of spiritual diseases by asceticism. "The good news brought by the gospel was the news of original sin," writes Chesterton; for, it revealed to the nature-worshipping pagan the enigma of human nature. It is an unquestionable historical fact, he continues, that man has ~~xxxx~~ been freed from slavery by the fear of hell. At the beginning of the

medieval movement,

The ancient social mould of slavery was already beginning to melt. Not only was the slave turning into the serf, who was practically free as regards his own farm and family life, but many lords were freeing slaves and serfs altogether. This was done under the pressure of the priests; but especially it was done in the spirit of a penance. In one sense, of course, any Catholic society must have an atmosphere of penance; but I am speaking of that rather sterner spirit of penance which had expiated the excesses of paganism.

In telling the story of St. Francis and the beggar,

Chesterton reflects:

It was a rude and simple society and there were no laws to punish a starving man for expressing his need for food, such as have been established in a more humanitarian age; and, the lack of any organised police permitted such persons to pester the wealthy without any great danger. But there was, I believe, in many places a local custom of the guild forbidding outsiders to interrupt a fair bargain; and it is possible that some such thing put the mendicant more than normally in the wrong.

But St. Francis, "on the quite natural assumption of the equality of men" doubted which of the two, ~~the~~ merchant or the beggar he should attend on first, "and having attended to the merchant, he turned to attend the beggar; he thought of them as two men." This "quite natural assumption of the equality of men" has nothing necessarily to do with the Franciscan love for men; but, it was an antecedent condition of the Franciscan brotherhood."

The thirteenth century was certainly a progressive period; perhaps the only really progressive period in human history. But it can truly be called progressive precisely because its progress was very orderly. It is really and truly an example of an epoch of reforms without revolutions. But the reforms were not only progressive but very practical; and they were very much to the advantage of highly practical institutions; the towns and the trading guilds and the manual

crafts. Now the solid men of town and guild in the time of Francis of Assisi were probably very solid indeed. They were much more economically equal, they were much more justly governed in their own economic environment, than the moderns who struggle madly between starvation and the monopolist prizes of capitalism; but it is likely enough that the majority of such citizens were as hard-headed as peasants.

In CHAUCER, (1934), a literary work, Chesterton accentuates his political and economic references to such a degree that he apologizes for Chapter Two in these words,

I fear that the reader will only pause to wonder, with not unjust irritation, why I sometimes seem to be writing about modern politics instead of about medieval history.

In chapter two Chesterton notes a fact "really peculiar" to England and not at all to Europe,

This was the particular break in the history of the Plantagenets. By this time England had ceased to be a King and his people, and had become a group of gentlemen and their servants. It is but a bitter consolation to call them the best gentlemen and the best servants. Everywhere else, whatever was lost by the Pope was gained by the King. Sometimes it happened even though the King were a Catholic King. The French King had already made a monopoly of the Papacy; the Spanish King was later to attempt to make a sort of monopoly of the Church; and even the English King did, for a brief and brazen hour of triumph, become Head of the Church. But whatever happened to the English King, this was not what happened to the English nation. There another and special force was already at work, and was destined to make the triumph of the King as brief as it was brazen. That fact was the evolution of the Aristocratic State, which begins far back in Chaucer's time and before; chiefly by an alliance between the Barons and the great merchants of the City of London.

Long before, Chesterton had written the same story in his poem, "The Secret People"

The fine French kings came over in a flutter of flags
and dames.
We liked their smiles and battles, but we never could
say their names.

The blood ran red to Bosworth and the high French
 lords went down;
 There was naught but a naked people under a naked
 crown.
 And the eyes of the King's Servants turned terribly
 every way,
 And the gold of the King's Servants roder higher
 every day.
 They burnt the homes of the shaven men, that had
 been quaint and kind,
 Till there was no bed in a monk's house, nor food
 that man could find.
 The inns of God where no man paid, that were the
 wall of the weak,
 The King's Servants ate them all. And still we did
 not speak.

Here he goes on to discuss the existing misunderstanding
 about medieval and modern ~~stake~~ ideas,

The modern world has immeasurably surpassed the
 medieval world in organization and the application
 of such ideas as it has; so that the general im-
 provement in certain kinds of humanity, certain
 kinds of instruction, and certain kinds of arbitra-
 tion and order, is not merely an idea, but a material
 fact. But that does not alter the moral fact; that
 when we compare medieval ideas with modern ideas,
 we often find that the modern ideas are comparatively
 hasty, superficial or unbalanced; or else that the
 ideas, as ideas, really do not exist at all. There
 could not be a better example than the comparison
 between the idea of Guilds with the fact of Capital-
 ism. The idea of Guilds was worked out very narrowly
 and imperfectly; and the fact of Capitalism may
 work out, at least in the opinion of some, more
 practically and prosperously. But there was an
 idea of Guilds; and there is not and never was any
 idea in Capitalism. Nobody knew where it came from;
 nobody especially wanted it to come. Nobody knew
 where it was going to; and at this moment it appears
 to be going straight to sheer strangling Monopoly
 and then to bankruptcy.

Nobody understands the modern world who does
 not realize this primary truth. The modern world
 began with the problem of the grocer and the
 grocer's assistant. It is in fact ending with a
 vast growth of grocer's assistants and no grocer.
 It must still be emphasized, obvious as it is, that
 the grocer's assistants have not grown into grocers.
 They have all remained assistants; only instead of
 assisting a humble grocer, with a soul to be
 saved, they are assisting the International Stores
 or the Universal Provision Department. In other
 words, the servants have not become the masters,
 and will never have the faintest chance of be-
 coming masters. They remain servants; only they
 are like those slaves that were held to public
 service in pagan antiquity; they have personal

servants over them, but only an impersonal master over all. Now, very broadly, one idea in the Guild is that the Grocer's assistant should grow into a grocer. For that purpose, it is obviously necessary to preserve a large number of equal and independent grocers. It is necessary to prevent these grocers from being bought out or sold up by the Stores or the Super-Grocer. With this object the Guild deliberately checked certain forms of competition, protected the weaker brethren; and, preserved the Types that seemed eternal in Chaucer's tales....In the modern doctor we can ~~even if we are medievalists, think~~ see and study the medieval idea. We shall not, even if we are medievalists, think it an infallible or impeccable idea. The Guild is capable of pedantry; it is sometimes capable of tyranny. The British Medical Council, which is the Council of a Guild, sometimes condemns men harshly for very pardonable breaches of professional law; it sometimes excludes outsiders from membership who might well have been members. But it does what a Guild was supposed to do. It keeps the doctors going; it keeps the doctors alive; and it does prevent one popular quack from eating all his brethren out of house and home. It sets limit to competition; it prevents the growth of monopoly. It does not allow a fashionable physician in Harley Street to destroy the livelihood of four general practitioners on Hoxton. It does not permit one professional man to buy up all the practices, as one grocer can buy up all the grocers' shops. And it does permit us to study, in a clear modern example, outside all the medieval controversies, religious and other, what is really to be said for and against this system of economic combination, and what it is that can really be criticized, and can really be valued in the idea of a Guild.

COBBETT(1926), is more than a biography; it is a miniature encyclopedia of the fundamentals of Distributism. Cobbett stands as a prophet in the eighteenth century; Chesterton, a crusader in the twentieth. Cobbett foresaw all that the school of distributist reformers saw.

What he saw was the perishing of the whole English power of self-support, the growth of cities that drain and dry up the country-side, the growth of dense dependent populations incapable of finding their own food, the toppling triumph of machines over men, the sprawling omnipotence of financiers over patriots, the herding of humanity in nomadic masses whose very homes are homeless, the terrible necessity of peace and the terrible probability of war, all the loading up of our little island like a sinking ship; the wealth that may mean famine

and the culture that may mean despair; the bread of Midas and the sword of Damocles. In a word, he saw what we see, but he saw it when it was not there. And some cannot see it---even when it is there.

Chesterton revived Cobbett not only because he admired him, but because he loved him. And this love lies in the likeness of the men. Cobbett "loved the past and lived in the real future," that is, he had an instinctive intelligence of the future---Cobbett "was inordinately fond of happiness. And happiness to him was concrete and not abstract; it was his own farm, his own family, his own children." Cobbett, writes Chesterton, began by being an optimist and ended by being a pessimist. (Chesterton, in his AUTOBIOGRAPHY, records the same change in his own life.) "In this change was also bound up the whole business of the modern economic problem; of the individualism that produced the proletarian peril; in short, the whole problem of modern England." Is the same not true of the biographer? Chesterton suggests "An Englishman Looks at the World" as a fitting title for Cobbett's first essays and "An Englishman Looks at England" for his later writings. The latter title captions well Chesterton's works.

He differed from many modern social reformers and from most modern philanthropists, in the fact that he was not merely concerned for their dignity, their good name, their honour, and even their glory. ...Cobbett, always so eccentric and paradoxical, did really desire peasants and workingmen to have a sense of honour. The agony of rage in which so much of his life was passed was due to the consciousness that this popular sense of honour was everywhere being broken down by a cruel and ignoble industrialism. His whole life was a resistance to the degradation of the poor; to their degradation in the literal sense of the loss of a step, of a standing, of a status. There lay on his mind, like a nightmare of machinery crush-

ing and ^{crushing} millions of bones, all the detailed destruction of the private property and domestic tradition of destitute families; all the selling up and breaking up of furniture, all the pawning of heirlooms and keepsakes; all that is meant by the awful sacrifice of the wedding-ring.

Were not the nineteenth century lamentations of Cobbett caught up and amplified by Chesterton in the twentieth?

Cobbett suggested that his paper, the REGISTER, wherein he fulminated against industrial capitalism and demanded drastic democratic reforms, be known as Two-Penny Trash; Chesterton suggested that G.K.'s WEEKLY, which fulfilled similar functions be called Six-Penny Slush. And though he dilates upon Cobbett's arresting method of writing, to wit:

He describes in that plain and almost naked narrative style that seems to lie like strong morning daylight upon every detail of the day; how he started out riding with his son at dawn; how some hitch occurred about the inn at which he had intended to breakfast, and he rode on hoping to reach another hostelry in reasonable time; how other hitches occurred which annoyed him, making him scold the boy for some small blunders about the strapping of a bag; and how he awoke at last to a sort of wonder as to why he should be so irritable with a child whom he loved so much. And then it dawned upon him that it was for the very simple reason that he had had no breakfast. He, who had fed well the night before and intended to feed well again, who was well clothed and well mounted, could not deny that a good appetite might gradually turn into a bad temper. And then, with one of his dramatic turns or gestures, he suddenly summons up before us all the army of Englishmen who had no hope of having any breakfast until they could somehow beg work from hard or indifferent men; who wandered about the world in a normal state of hunger and anger and blank despair about the future; who are exposed to every insult and impotent under every wrong; and who were expected by the politicians and the papers to be perfectly mild and moderate in their language, perfectly loyal and law-abiding in their sentiments, to invoke blessings on all who were more fortunate and respectfully touch their hats to anybody who had a little more money---

who knew better than Chesterton himself how to dramatize a psychological experience corresponding to a philosophical doctrine?

Cobbett was shouting in deafening tones to deaf ears a certain warning of danger; a danger he alone could see, or at least a danger in which no one else would believe. He believed that the whole financial network of national debts and paper money would eventually drag England to destruction. He may have been wrong; though in fact it is far easier now than it was then to maintain that he was right.....Will Cobbett had the inconceivable impudence to attack the Bank. Then he knew he was in collision with the colossal force of the whole modern world, like a man running with his head down at an express train. The whole world would leave such a lunatic run alone; and Cobbett was left to run entirely alone. All the books and pamphlets of the period, and indeed all the books and pamphlets ever since, have scoffed at him about this part of his political adventure..... He did object to England being a nation of shopkeepers. To-day, of course, England is most unmistakably not a nation of shopkeepers. I myself, in a moment of controversial exaggeration, described it as a nation of shopwalkers. But anyhow, it is obvious that the process which Cobbett condemned has not only gone far beyond anything that he described, but has gone far enough to destroy itself, as a thing covered by that description. If ownership be the test, it has been a process and a period of people losing things and not gaining them. It has been a process of people going into service, in the language of servants, into service if not into servitude. It has been a process of people losing even the little booth at the fair, that was thought so poor a substitute for the little farm in the fields. Somewhat sadly we can now toss away from us the taunt of our great enemy. By the best proof of all, the English are not a nation of shopkeepers. They have not kept their shops.

The great purpose of such writing is to awaken the reader to the startling realization that the Englishman's apathy to political and economic injustice in Cobbett's day is equalled, if not surpassed, by his lethargy to the aggravated injustice in Chesterton's.

CHARLES DICKENS, a critical study, from its intimate analysis of the very character and life of Dickens, partakes of the nature of a biography and may be included under this class. It has been truly said, "Go to Chesterton's views on Dickens if you want to understand Chesterton." Chesterton's study of Dickens commensurately reveals the character and aims of both writers. Chesterton loved Dickens because Dickens was the voice of an optimistic democracy: "he encouraged anybody to be anything." Dickens's method of social reform like Chesterton's concept of Christianity involved a kind of mystical contradiction: antagonistic emotions simultaneously in action.

The pessimistic reformer points out the good elements that oppression has destroyed; the optimistic reformer, with an even fiercer joy, points out the good elements that it has not destroyed. It is the case for the first reformer that slavery has made men slavish. It is the case for the second reformer that slavery has not made men slavish. The first describes how bad men are under bad conditions. The second describes how good men are under bad conditions. Of the first class of writers, is Gorky. Of the second class of writers is Dickens.

Dickens was a reforming optimist; for, he made it his business to insist upon what happiness there is in the lives of the unhappy; and, how little poverty could actually depress people like the "Cratchits". He described the happiness of men, thus endeavoring to alleviate their sorrow. In a word, Dickens' democracy bore the mark of the Christian spirit. Dickens said "cure poverty"; but, he said too, "Blessed are the poor". And Dickens succeeded in bringing about reforms in prisons, in schools, and in workhouses, because he described the sufferers as human and men resented the insults to their humanity.

If we are to save the oppressed, we must have two apparently antagonistic emotions in us at the same time. We must think the oppressed man intensely miserable, and, at the same time, intensely attractive and important. We must insist with the same violence upon his dignity. For if we relax by one inch the one assertion, men will say he does not need saving. And if we relax by one inch the other assertion, men will say he is not worth saving. The optimists will say that reform is needless. The pessimists will say that reform is hopeless. We must apply both simultaneously to the same oppressed man; we must say that he is a worm and a god; and we must thus lay ourselves open to the accusation (or the compliment) of transcendentalism. This is, indeed, the strongest argument for the religious concept of life.

Chesterton diagnoses the quality of Dickens's democracy as purely English. This makes him his fiercer devotee; for, in him he sees visions of reform based on equality and ideals, not on similarity or wild imperialism.

Dickens then had this English feeling of a grotesque democracy. By that is more properly meant a vastly varying democracy. The intoxicating variety of men---that was his vision and conception of human brotherhood. And certainly it is a great part of human brotherhood. In one sense things can only be equal if they are entirely different. Thus, for instance, people talk with a quite astonishing gravity about the inequality or equality of the sexes; as if there could possibly be any equality between a lock and key. Wherever there is no element of variety, wherever all the items literally have an identical aim, there is at once and of necessity inequality. A woman is only inferior to man in the matter of being not so manly; she is inferior in nothing else. Man is inferior to woman in so far as he is not a woman; there is no other reason. And the same applies in some degree to all genuine differences. It is a great mistake to suppose that love unites and unifies men. Love diversifies them because love is directed towards individuality. The thing that really unites men and makes them like to each other is hatred. Thus, for instance, the more we love Germany the more pleased we shall be that Germany should be something different from ourselves, should keep her own ritual and conviviality and we ours. But the more we hate Germany the more we shall copy German guns and German fortifications in order to be armed against Germany. The more modern nations detest each other the more meekly

they follow each other; for all competition is in its nature only a furious plagiarism. As competition means always similarity, it is equally true that similarity always means inequality.

Again, Chesterton saw Dickens possessing "a sudden and pugnacious belief in positive evil." This Dickensian belief is a sine qua non in Chestertonian politics and economics. Chesterton had said that the nineteenth century had ended by denying the devil; and, the twentieth begun by denying God. His notion was that the world must be made a battleground of good and evil in order to rescue it from the hopeless optimism that attempted to whitewash the evil. Dickens never tried to whitewash evil. "He painted his villains and lost characters more black than they really are." Moreover, it was not the aim of Dickens to show the effect of time and circumstances on a character; nor even the influence of a character on time and circumstances. "What was present to his imagination was character---a thing which is not only more important than intellect, but it is also much more entertaining.....It was of final importance to Dickens that poor men could amuse others and amuse him. Dickens found his rich and reeking personalities among the poor and he revealed "a certain grotesque greatness inside an obscure and even unattractive type. It reveals the great paradox of all spiritual things; that the inside is ~~larger~~ larger than the outside.

No man encouraged his characters so much as Dickens; for, he lived in the old atmosphere of democratic optimism---a confidence in the common man. This atmosphere was the atmosphere of the French Revolution and its main idea was

the idea of equality. Dickens's triumph is a religious triumph; it rests upon his perpetual assertion of the value of the human soul and of human daily life. He did not concern himself with the small things wherein men differ; but, delighted and confounded us with joyful and terrible matters in which we are at one. To think of men in this way, a religious way, is to think of them as all equally vulnerable. "For religion all men are equal, as well as pennies are equal, because the only value in any of them is that they bear the image of the King."

It is clear that Dickens's notion of democracy was Chesterton's too. Both loved equality; both hated pride. Pride for them was not only a sin to be condemned; but, a weakness to be commiserated. Dickens never pitied the poor; he never championed the poor. He was simply one of the poor. Chesterton detested pity for the poor.

Now, the practical weakness of the vast mass of modern pity for the poor and the oppressed is precisely that it is merely pity; the pity is pitiful, but not respectful. Men feel that the cruelty to the poor is a kind of cruelty to animals. They never feel that it is injustice to equals; nay, it is treachery to comrades. This dark, scientific pity, this brutal pity, has an elemental sincerity of its own; but it is entirely useless for all ends of social reform. Democracy swept Europe with the sabre when it was founded on the Rights of Man. It has done literally nothing at all since it has been founded only upon the wrongs of man, or more strictly speaking, its recent failures have been due to its not admitting the existence of any rights or wrongs, or indeed of any humanity. Evolution (the sinister enemy of revolution) does not especially deny the existence of God; what it does deny is the existence of man. And all the despair about the poor, and the cold and repugnant pity for them, has been largely due to the vague sense that they have literally relapsed into the state of the lower animals.

Dickens satirized the Gradgrinds, the economists, the men of Smiles and Self Help. For him there was nothing poorer than their wealth, nothing more selfish than their self-denial. Chesterton continually reminds the rich of their duties warning them of the ruin impending due to their lack of Christian charity. To both men human rights were sacred; to both, freedom was the greatest human blessing.

PART TWO.

Chapter Five.

CRITICISM OF CHESTERTON'S VIEWS.

(a) Adverse.

Distributism does not advocate that everyone should go back to the land. But does it not overestimate the popularity of such a course, as well as exaggerate the personal happiness to be gained from it? Men past forty find it difficult to adjust themselves to a new environment; whilst youth seems fascinated by bright city lights. Admitting that England could produce eighty per cent of its food---an optimistic outlook---some import of staple food would still be necessary, not to mention the large import of other foods and materials. To produce exports to exchange for these imports and to employ those for whom there is no room on the land, a considerable amount of manufacture should still be necessary. Distributism ignores this fact.

Nor must it be forgotten that industrialism has contributed much to man's happiness. Modern transportation and communication not only aid in the alleviation of human suffering, but add to social amenities. However deplorable the present material condition of the industrial worker may be, it is not so miserable as it was fifty years ago. The benefits derived from unemployment relief, old age pensions, and health insurance, cannot be entirely ignored. Neither can we assimilate the moral situation of a modern labourer, in a constitutional country, with that of a Roman slave. Should society be denounced because tramps are restricted in their hunting grounds? Could the lot of the "wandering beggars" have been so happy in

medieval days even though "it seems impossible that enclosing and gamekeeping can have been so omnipresent and efficient as in a society full of maps and policemen?"

Of course, state interference becomes more and more objectionable to the free citizen, even in constitutional countries; but, before declaring that such restrictions deprive him of his freedom, should we not compare his position with that of the subjects in totalitarian or communistic states in which every article of the social contract has been broken?

Again, in discussing socialism, Chesterton allows for no half-way measures, but sees only the total industrialization of the state. Nationalization in part might be beneficial; for example, England's proposed nationalization of her coal mines. Moreover, he paints the capitalists as deliberate oppressors of the poor, defrauding them of just wages. His argument is that it is invariably in the interests of capitalism to pay low wages; yet, it may be well maintained that the worker will buy more, if he is paid higher wages.

Chesterton argues that women should not be factory workers, nor school teachers, nor for that matter have public careers at all. He does not take into consideration that the care of the family is a full-time job, while teaching or the factory are not. To show that women are very fortunate in having the protection of marriage and are made for the home, he overestimates the lazy beer-drinking, thriftless side of masculine nature: his antithesis of the public house and the private house is more plausible than actually fair. Establishing such argument, he, of course, proceeds to say that woman having realized the fatuity of

the standards of men, have until the present deliberately chosen to stay at home. And he caps his conclusion by regarding the suffragette movement as a surrender to male values, and by picturing Miss Pankhurst as "prostrate and penitent."

From this it is clear that Chesterton will not favour votes for women. Politics, he says, is really a rather unpleasant business and it is best that one-half of humanity be kept free from them. Government rests ultimately on force and punishment so that "there is something to be said for keeping one half of humanity out of so harsh and dirty a business." (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD). This main argument of Chesterton's ignores the positive liberative side of government. His would be the best argument possible for oligarchy; for, despotism would free the other half of the community from the unhappy responsibility of government. This is hardly consistent with the defence of democracy.

Closely connected with the question of the position of woman in society is the question of divorce. Believing firmly in the family, Chesterton sees the danger of divorce and attacks it politically by perhaps over-emphasizing the danger of the breakdown of the home. (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD). But in THE SUPERSTITION OF DIVORCE he defends the irrevocability of the marriage vow with seemingly sentimental reasons. He says, "Even a bad marriage is both a noble and fruitful tragedy; like that of a man who falls fighting for his country or dies testifying for the truth." Chesterton, true to form, usually pictures the case of a mean villainous husband deserting his wife and children who continue to love him; and, cautiously avoids the opposite

kind of case, or the mutual kind of case. It may be objected that marriage was made for man: human happiness is of paramount importance.

To animadvert upon Distributism, it is over-exclusively English. No fault indeed is found with great patriots like Belloc and Chesterton; but, may not their nationalism (Englishry) produce misunderstanding? The first misunderstanding may arise out of the distributist use of the term capitalism. Outside Soviet Russia, the present economic and social systems are known as "capitalist"; they safeguard private ownership of productive capital by individuals and corporations while at the same time they include vast proletarian masses. Distributists attacking "capitalism" say that they do so to re-establish property for the masses. Allowing them their own definition of "capitalism" (i.e. proletarianism) they are right. But the commonly accepted meaning of capitalism is "the private ownership of productive property." Even socialists (and communists) may dupe the people into believing that socialism attacks not private property itself but only its abuses such as the great wealth of modern communities existing side by side with masses of poverty. They attack the great owners and millionaires leaving the small man pro tem. But the communist Commissar has simply outdone the capitalist trust magnate. Therefore, owing to the ambiguity of the term capitalism, there is a high common factor between communist propaganda and distributist doctrine. Furthermore, this misunderstanding is aggravated by a too sweeping denunciation of the present order. Should distributists adopt methods practised by the communists? Existing abuses may be emphasized, but, has capitalism ever specifically

tried to suppress either religion or private property? Finally, the fight to-day is between communism and capitalism. A third party, unless able to face both, can only assist one or the other.

Distributism proposes that the state should by taxation take money from the wealthy citizens and give it to the poorer citizens in hope of turning the latter into small owners. Taxation and subsidy is the plan set up by Belloc in his RESTORATION OF PROPERTY. Passing over a seeming inconsistency between the advocacy of subsidies and the condemnation of high taxes as inimical to property, it may be asked would the change make for social stability? If the root of the present social instability is the irresponsible proletarian mentality that prefers spending to saving, how will such a proletariat be raised to the high dignity of self respect and the arduous love of independence by mere statecraft?

Finally, we may charge Chesterton with violence: he is too ready to flay the rich, too ready to prescribe even revolution. For example, writing on "Birth Control", he says, "I should have much more sympathy with polygamy or with piracy---if it were the plundering of the rich." His hatred towards the rich is the rule rather than the exception. In England, this attitude may be harmless, but, it might incite revolt in a country like America.

(b) Favorable.

All the foregoing objections (in a) are of detail rather than principle. It cannot be too strongly insisted on, for instance, that the world is not going any particular way of its own accord; and that no political system is inevitable unless we make it so. There is a widespread tendency to think of history in terms of large inescapable movements, to ignore completely the human will. It is common, in consequence, to do insufficient justice to the liberties of the present system, to assume that capitalism must become more repressive, or that communism must of force evolve from it. The result is often a policy of aggravating the evils of the present in the hope of a hypothetical future. There is also a disquieting optimism in both communist and fascist extremes which is prepared to trust all power in the hands of an oligarchy. Chesterton's defense of democratic liberty is based on a more realistic knowledge of human weakness---the doctrine of the Fall---so that he not only avoids but condemns such errors ("heresies") as Socialism, Communism, Nazism, and Fascism. History today confirms his sound judgment.

Another admirable quality of Chesterton as a political thinker is his love of people. His love of justice made him first a Socialist and afterwards a Distributist. His indignation against capitalist exploitation remains always at white heat; and he sometimes forgets to follow his own advice given in CHARLES DICKENS; "when talking of the poor, emphasize at the one and the same time, their misery and their dignity." With his love of justice goes a love of liberty, so that he is the opponent of the well-intentioned humanitarians that would---for their own benefit, of

course,---regiment the poor. He shared with Dickens and the masses on Bank holidays "that positive pleasure in being in the presence of any other human being." He is forever making strange acquaintances, talking to his barber, or an out-of-work photographer, or children in a Flemish cottage. His love of the city is both the cause and result of his desire to be rubbing shoulders with his fellowmen. In consequence, he does understand the point of view of the individual person, and realizes the terrible over-simplification of those who deal with "humanity" at large and men in the mass. A phrase like "the workers" instead of the old-fashioned "workmen" produces a scathing description of "a vast grey horde of people apparently all exactly alike, like ants, who are always on the march somewhere, presumably to the Ninth or Tenth International" (AS I WAS SAYING). "The most important thing about a workman is that he is a man," he continues,---a statement which reminds us of his fundamental dogma of equality and human weakness: "In so far as I am man I am chief of creatures. In so far as I am^a man I am chief of sinners." (ORTHODOXY). You cannot generalize about society because it presents a mass of individual problems, and the only reasonable course is to leave to it as much liberty as possible to solve them for itself. It is easy to love humanity at large; but, a far more difficult task to love your next door neighbor, who is not a man but an environment. "He is the barking of a dog; he is the noise of a pianola: he has drains that are worse than yours, or roses that are better than yours." (THE USES OF DIVERSITY). In dealing with social problems, therefore, you must begin with the individual, "the actual man or woman in the street who is cold." Chesterton always insists, in consequence, on the need for the small political unit in

which the individual is not lost; and he invariably defends the liberty of the individual man against any kind of generalization, whether it takes the form of capitalism with its laws, or science and its compulsory sanitation.

Chesterton's attitude towards female suffrage has been subject to perhaps more scorn than it deserves. His chief work on the position of woman, WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD, written in 1910, discusses the advantages, or rather disadvantages, both of her right to vote and her public career. Chesterton assumed that these two questions were inextricably interwoven; and, that woman should be induced by home life rather than seduced by public life. As women have since not only been admitted to almost all public offices but have been granted the right to vote without precipitating any alarming increase in the demoralization of home life, it can now be affirmed that events have not justified Chesterton's assumption; and, that the question of public careers and votes for women are distinctly different.

To clarify Chesterton's position on the question of careers for women, we shall briefly review his argument as given in WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD. As in his examination of democracy, Chesterton begins by examining the psychology of woman to see what mode of life really suits her. Woman, he concludes, is hemispherically different from man. Man is by nature wasteful, content to do things for the mere enjoyment without producing anything. "There's an element of fine fruitlessness about male enjoyments." (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD). Woman is essentially thrifty; she loves to produce a result, to put everything to some use. For

example, a man argues with another man not to convince him but "to enjoy at once the sound of his own voice, the clearness of his own opinions and the sense of masculine society." A woman argues to prove her point and to crush her opponent. In man the gregarious instinct is stronger than in woman. Man loves comradeship and getting in crowds with other men. Woman, on the other hand, has a natural dignity which leads her to isolation. "Man prefers the public house; woman, the private house."

It follows from these qualities that public life is better suited to the masculine nature, while the home affords the fullest expression for woman. She is happiest then, and finds that it is indeed a much more romantic and exciting existence than a position in business. The home puts a woman in complete control of a small area and this encourages the essentially creative pleasures of thrift, the power to use things and produce a result. "Thrift is poetic because it is creative: Waste is unpoetic because it is waste." (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD). Again, family life furnishes infinite variety compared to business life. Instead of one commonplace job, pushing a pen, selling something, or "greasing a wheel, for somebody else who is cornering steel," the home offers a whole variety of interesting, creative employment, cooking, organizing, the care and education of children. It astounds Chesterton that "it can be a large career to tell other people's children about the rule of three, and a small career to tell one's own children about the universe." Furthermore, the life of the home is the life of the amateur, opposed to that of the specialist. Social pressure forces man to be a specialist to earn a living; marriage frees woman who retains the

ideal "of comprehensive capacity". She cooks, she teaches, she organizes, none of them as well as a specialist perhaps, but all of them adequately. She retains many-sidedness. The whole tendency of our economic system is to drive man into greater and greater specialization, so that he can hold his place in the struggle of competition. It is therefore absolutely necessary for the sanity and proportion of the race, to preserve the ideal of many-sidedness, to keep one-half at least unnarrowed. "Woman stands for the idea of sanity, she should not have one trade but twenty hobbies. Cleverness shall be left for men and wisdom for women." (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD). Chesterton accordingly objects to the education of girls by the same methods as boys, and prefers the old amateur training of the Victorian days, when a girl learned a little painting, a little needlework, and a little French.

Specialization has an unbalancing effect on man, Chesterton argues. And so much the more so on woman, lacking as she does the masculine flippancy. Woman's natural thriftiness renders her inevitably more conscientious, and she will become more subdued to what she works in than would a man in similar circumstances. She will take her work too seriously. "If woman are to be subjected to the dull rule of commerce, we must find some way of emancipating them from the wild rule of conscience!" (WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD).

This is Chesterton's well-argued case. No objection can be taken to Chesterton's high esteem of the wife's place in the home. The home and family to him are sacred. Woman must not enter the rough arena of politics or endure the drudgery of the factory. This is not restriction but protection.

Chesterton's defense of the marriage vow may be sentimental in part; yet, both the increasing number of divorces and the increasing facility of obtaining divorce vindicate his impassioned appeal to preserve the sacred institution which is the basis of the home, and to avoid a human innovation that may prove the shipwreck of society. Marriages ~~today~~ are to-day undertaken with one, sometimes both, of the contracting parties entertaining the mental reservation that the vow is only binding as long as it suits. Incompatibility, mental cruelty, and a thousand lame excuses are taken to justify divorce. Marriage has lost its sacredness. It is now merely a contract, not a sacrament. Unfortunately, there are unhappy marriages but separation not divorce is the sane, as well as the Christian solution for desperate cases.

To turn to the objections to Distributism: these are questions of political and practical strategy. The answer to such protests would be the success of the scheme; which, builded less on state-craft than on moral values. As to the connotation of capitalism Belloc always gives as well as demands definition of terms. His plan for the restoration of property is carefully worked out; and, property is protected from overtaxation by a sliding scale method. Chesterton's virility of attack is the stamina of the whole web of Distributism. A web which enmeshed many a disciple of the school of Webb. Without boasting, the distributists might say that they had prevented the whole intellectual world of England in the twentieth century from going socialist; and, they did it by leaving no doubt whatever that they hated Dives like the devil. There is not even a shadow of doubt regarding Chesterton's animus. It is conquest and conversion.

Unless our indignation with injustice exceeds the indignation of the Bolsheviks and Bohemians, we shall carry no conviction to men whose conviction of the curse of Capitalism is not only genuine as far as it goes, but right as far as it goes. Not a man of these men would have moved an inch out of the ranks of the Red Army if we had not made them feel---not conceded or confessed or admitted because we could not deny, but made them feel---that we were as redhot as any Red against the crimes of those rulers among the rich, who only do not break the laws because they make them. We cured them of the heresy that property is theft; but, only by facing the truth that a great deal of plutocracy is theft; because it is. (G.K.'s WEEKLY).

To conclude: Chesterton's attitude was far too decisive not to provoke a large measure of agreement or a large measure of opposition. It is true that he was generally right on main issues. What has been said of Carlyle's FRENCH REVOLUTION, Wells's OUTLINE OF HISTORY, Shaw's views on economics, may be said of Chesterton's defense of medievalism and private property. Every one of these writers has preconceived opinions, and devotes his attention chiefly to facts supporting them. Each has a tendency to ignore or minimize facts which might disprove them. Therefore, the appraisal of the value of the contribution of this type of work must be based on methods of exposition and its point of application. Of the value of Chesterton's political and economic work, the one most capable to speak has spoken:

Recognising this (the decadence of parliament and the menace of monopoly) as he did, Gilbert Chesterton turned more and more to the two living activities which should most occupy serious attention: social philosophy and religion.

In the former field, he grew more and more definite in his attitude. He defended the common man and his freedom; therefore he defended the institution of property and particularly defended and preached the doctrine that property to survive must be founded on so considerable a division of land and the instruments of production that widespread ownership should be the foundational institution of the state. He appreciated, of course,

as all must, the immense difficulty in re-establishing property in a society which has become as ours has, proletarian and controlled in every activity by an ever-narrowing plutocracy. He saw that the weapon to be used against this mortal state of affairs was perpetual influence by illustration and example upon the individual. It was his to change as far as might be the very lethargic mind of his fellow-citizens in these affairs. This political preoccupation of Gilbert Chesterton's was of special importance because it is the major temporal concern of our time..... It may be a forlorn hope but it is by far the most outstanding of public efforts in the ruined society of our day; and for all our (Distributists') isolation and presumable failure, posterity will note that a little body wherein he was so conspicuous, still defended the cause of the free family and of the man master of himself in his own home. But such a temporal object must, like all external worldly objects, depend upon an underlying internal spirit. Only a philosophy can produce political action and a philosophy is only vital when it is the soul of a religion.

Now here we come to the thing of chief value and of chief effect in Gilbert Chesterton's life and work: his religion.....From a man's religion (or accepted and certain philosophy) all his actions spring, whether he be conscious of that connection or no. In the case of Gilbert Chesterton, the whole of whose expression and action were the story of a life's religion, the connection was not only evident to himself but to all around, and even to the general public. That public of modern England, has been taught universally that religion is at once a private personal affair and of little external effect. Our public is more agreed upon religion, and less acquainted with its diverse and multitudinous actions, than any other in the modern world; but even so all those who know anything of him, even if it be but his name, are aware of that great accident (or design) whereby he advanced towards the Faith over many years and was ultimately in full communion with it. (GILBERT CHESTERTON IN ENGLISH LETTERS, by Belloc)

That, briefly, tells us what Chesterton did, or tried to do; and, whence his inspiration. His clear perception of modern tendencies was not altogether due to any peculiar prophetic gift; rather, he was not blinded by our everyday assumptions because his Orthodoxy enabled him to examine modern movements in the light of permanent values, and to evaluate critically the premises which familiarity has made most of us take for granted. Insistent on first principles, he arrived at the principles of Christianity; insistent on Christianity and especially on man's weakness

in intellect and will, he made startling deductions. For example, he said if the nineteenth century denied the devil, the twentieth would deny God; that, those, who disbelieve in the miracles of St. Francis, shall deny St. Francis; or again, in arguing against evolution, he humorously exaggerates "what fools we mortals be," by suggesting that by humanism we were not allowed to sit on a man; by vegetarianism we cannot sit on an animal; next, we shall not be allowed to sit on a chair. The logical conclusion, obviously has no bearing on the facts of the case; but, it is patently concerned with the facts behind the case. These apparently flippant conclusions are based on human folly, a folly that followed man's Fall.

To add another illustration, when Chesterton contends that machines shall make men slaves, he registers the picture both of man's proclivity to pride stimulated by scientific progress and of man's recklessness of his own inherent weakness due to original sin. Our own age is experiencing this slavery that may prove to become long-drawn-out. Let us hearken to the words of the greatest living thinker of our own day,

S'il est Vrai qu'une des causes majeures de nos catastrophes est la découverte que la puissance de la Machine, appliquée non plus à «maîtriser la nature» mais à maîtriser l'humanité même, la matière humaine, permet à quelques hommes décidés à un mépris absolu de toute loi morale et à une cruauté absolue, de se faire surhommes et de faire ce qu'ils veulent du reste du monde, il est peu probable que le travail de la conscience humaine, l'effort des énergies créatrices pour surmonter cette tragédie puisse arriver à soumettre cette fois la machine elle-même à l'homme---c'est-à-dire la convoitise humaine techniquement rendue capable de tout à une raison collective devenue plus forte que l'instinct---sans une période «d'essais et d'erreurs» plus terrible à notre espèce que l'âge des cavernes. (A TRAVERS ~~LES DESASTRES~~ LES DESASTRES by Jacques Maritain).

We are too near Chesterton's work and influence to judge it in scale. Undoubtedly, he was one of the most representative Englishmen of his day. Only future events will decide whether the culture and principles to which he devoted his life shall prevail. In a word, to-day, Chesterton's reputation rests not only on the survival of England but on the survival of a Christian England. Paradoxically, both survivals are synchronized in the present awful struggle against powers of darkness.