

CHAPTER XV

ON BROTHERLY TERMS

I THINK I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid
and self-contain'd,
I stand and look at them long and long.
They do not sweat and whine about their condition,
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins,
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,
Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the mania
of owning things,
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thou-
sands of years ago,
Not one is respectable or unhappy over the whole earth.

— Walt Whitman.

“The Devil would have counselled neutrality, but Christ has put His sword into our hand.” These words were spoken by Sir W. Robertson Nicoll in calling on Mr. Lloyd George to address a large gathering of Nonconformists in London. The sentence has a familiar ring about it. Kaiser, Czar, and Emperor, have, at moments during this war, been under the same delusion. And ever since the first war, some warrior or medicine man, in want of an excuse, has said the same thing of his deity or totem. Yet, after hundreds and hundreds of years of “Christ putting His sword into our hands,” war abates not one jot, nor do the nations realize that “all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.”

The meeting began with references to God and

Christ, but before Mr. Lloyd George got half way through his speech he delivered an attack on the Beatitudes as if they were tariff-reform texts. "Now there are men who maintain that war is not justifiable under any conditions," he said. "May I just say one or two words about that? It is not the creed, as your chairman reminded us, of the Puritan Fathers." No one will quarrel with that. The speaker was quite right; it was not the creed of the Puritan Fathers. It was the creed of Jesus. But Mr. Lloyd George went further, and said, "I maintain it is not the principle of the Christian faith." Is that true? Would it be right to say that men who maintain that war is not justifiable under any conditions are not Christians? How far does Mr. Lloyd George's reasoning carry us in that direction? How can such men be Christians? Christians not only make war, whether "justifiable" or not, but this Christian State as a rule spends nearly half its revenue on the weapons of war.

When Mr. Lloyd George confessed to that great gathering of Nonconformists that he, "never read a saying of the Master's which would condemn a man for striking a blow for right, justice, or the protection of the weak," he revealed a peculiar misconception of the Master's teaching. It was an amazing confession to make, but he is a man of great courage, and he made it. Strange as it may appear, the Nonconformist audience agreed, for the newspaper tells us his statement was greeted with "Hear, hear." The revelations may explain to some extent why there are so many empty pews in the churches.

What particular precept the Christian faith is based upon seems to depend on the circumstances

in which you are placed when it is convenient to think about it. Passive resistance, for instance, at a time like this would be party folly. When it is a question of an education rate, imposed by a Conservative Government, then, presumably, the creed of the Puritan Fathers must not be applied. The difficulties of the argument lie in attempting to apply a precept of Jesus to a political party; or, what for the time being is the same thing, the State. It always has been difficult to make the precepts of Jesus meet the exigency of the State. His precepts were for the individual; nations and states concerned him scarcely at all. To quote from a chapter in Matthew, presumably overlooked by Mr. Lloyd George, will be enough to prove how absurd it is to attempt to apply the precepts of Jesus to the State:

“But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you:

“That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth the rain on the just and on the unjust.”

Not practicable? Then is it not time for us to leave Jesus out of our party speeches, and have done with cant? What prompted Emerson to say, “God will not have His work made manifest by cowards”? Perhaps it was speeches of the sort delivered at the City Temple. For if the precepts of Jesus guided statesmen and the Nonconformists, the meeting

should have resolved itself into prayer for all who despitefully used them. But the meeting not being convened for that purpose, such a suggestion would have been most inappropriate.

“O ye of little faith!”

Moreover, is there in these days any faith at all in the precepts of Jesus? Nationally, none whatever. The State is fast absorbing the man; and that is bad for Jesus. It is, however, a pity Mr. Lloyd George, when he was discussing with the Mohammedan gentleman referred to in his speech, did not borrow a copy of the Koran and turn to the 17th chapter, where it is set down, “Woe be unto you, for that which ye impiously utter concerning God! since whoever is in heaven and on earth is subject unto him.” But the Scriptures have troubled many statesmen, long before this war began. Cromwell not always found the texts fitting in with his actions; and, no doubt, it was a sore point with him that Jesus was so persistently literal. Perhaps the same difficulty presented itself to Mr. Lloyd George. He “never read a saying of the Master’s which would condemn a man for striking a blow for right, justice, or the protection of the weak.” That may be, but it is not the point. The point is, he never read a saying of the Master’s that counselled him to strike a blow for right, justice, or the protection of the weak. Mr. Lloyd George might have read, “*Fear not them which kill the body.*”

So long as men give an interpretation of Jesus which fits their own desires, and do not accept his precepts literally, there will be wars, injustice, wrong, and weak people. The way to end all the misery,

according to Jesus, is, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His Justice." This no state can do. It is for each individual to seek the Kingdom; and he alone can seek it, no one can seek it for him. Striking blows can bring no relief; blows only serve to perpetuate the strife. Surely the history of the world proves that. What did all the blows struck by Israel serve? Why, Jesus scarcely referred to them. Count the national blows struck in our own land since we came from Schleswig to Ebbsfleet, or since the repulse at Abermenai, and what have all the wars, and all the blows struck in all the wars, done for mankind? Think of the wrong, injustice, and the oppression, practised in every reign since Agricola, and then measure how much nearer we are to the ideal. Wars breed wars. Blows cause anger, bitter memories, *revanche*. After two thousand years of wars in every clime under the sun, man still suffers all the afflictions known to his race since

"Kaiumers

Had not a foe, save one, a hideous demon."

Some one has said history does not repeat itself; nevertheless, the histories of long ago present oppressions and agitations, injustices and wrongs, wars and settlements, with a likeness which reminds us strongly of those we see now in Europe. Any one who will take up Thucydides again, and read through those wonderful pages, will lay the book down with the sense of having read something by a modern author recounting twentieth century events; the treaties, speeches, and wars of the days of Alcibiades seem not to have been so long ago. Glance at an old map of Greece, and the Archipelego, and then place be-

side it a map of modern Greece, then reflect on the causes of the ancient wars, and think of the blows struck for right and justice! "Let a ruler base his government upon virtuous principles, and he will be like the pole star, which remains steadfast in its place, while all the host of stars turn towards it," was said by "the greatest personage of the largest empire." Those words were spoken five hundred years before the birth of Jesus; but in China since the time of Confucius there have been wars enough to bring about a great millennium, if all the blows on one side were really struck for right and justice. And what have all the wars done for China? Think of the tramping feet which have passed across this hemisphere in all the thousands of years, and count a blow for every soldier, and what enduring good has been done? Count a tear for every blow, and a drop of blood for every soldier, and all the rivers of blood and tears have not washed away the wrongs that men have suffered for.

The weapons of war are changed, but the heart and soul of men and women remain the same in woe, and pain, and longing for love and rest. The plaint of long ago was sung in the same sad key we hear to-day. The soldier, the soldier's wife, and the soldier's child, are rewarded, by those who send them all their misery, not much better than they were in the days of the House of Chow. The ballads of the Shi-king tell us that much:

"Alone the russet pear-tree grows,
 With fruit upon it fair to see.
 Kings' service knows not speedy close;
 Day in, day out, 'tis long to me.
 The year is fast receding, O;

My woman's heart is bleeding, O;
My soldier rest is needing, O.”

There was, however, something deeper, something finer, in the feeling in their soldiers' songs than we get from most of the war poets of these days. The yearning for a higher vocation which this little ballad throws out is worthy of imitation :

“ What plant is now not sallow?
What day its march can spare?
What mortal but must toil and moil
Here, there, and everywhere?

What plant is now not sombre?
What mortal undistraught?
Poor troopers, we alone of men
Are less than human thought.

Not unicorns, not tigers,
Why haunt we the wild waste?
Poor troopers, night nor morn can we
The sweets of leisure taste.

Leave to the long-tailed foxes
To haunt the sombre grass.
Along the king's highway should we
In our light waggons pass.”

It was weary work then to be torn from the highway of life, and toil and moil in the service of dynasts who were “ served by the field ” but digged not in it. It is weary work now, and dynasts of all kinds seem to have no end. Yes, hope of wars ending vanishes when one reads of meetings such as that held at the City Temple. And Nonconformity will suffer much, for men will say, “ What is there then in

the idea of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man?" Men will ask themselves whether a religion that can only offer war such as that now waged on the Continent, for the solution of wrongs and oppressions, is a religion worth maintaining any longer.

It must not be imagined that this struggle reflects the true mind of the people. It should be remembered that a great change was taking place in the minds of workers in all lands. Great bodies of men were no longer content to let politicians do all their thinking for them; they were reading literature unknown to their fathers. Their outlook on life was changing, and some fairer vision for those who labour and are heavy laden was touching their souls with hope. Now the lesson of this awful war, with its crushing burden of taxation, the desolated homes, will eat deeply into their minds, and turn them — where? Back again to the belief in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man? May not many turn to Swinburne and say with him:

"Though before Thee the throned Cytharean
Be fallen, and hidden her head,
Yet thy kingdom shall pass, Galilean,
Thy dead shall go down to the dead."

When our religious and political leaders bow down before the god of battles, and approve such statements as "Christ has put His sword into our hands," what chance is there for the Galilean? None whatever. Why hold the Kaiser up to scorn and ridicule for uttering nonsense about the *vieux Gott boche*, as our witty French reviewers say? The chairman of the City Temple meeting might have been full-

blooded about it, and have revived the spirit of 1525. Thomas Muntzer put it this way:

“Arise! Fight the battle of the Lord! On! on! on! Now is the time; the wicked tremble when they hear you. Be pitiless! Heed not the groans of the impious! Rouse up the towns and villages. Above all rouse up the miners of the mountains. On! on! on! while the fire is burning! On, while the hot ground is yet reeking with the slaughter! Give the fire no time to go out; the sword no time to cool. Kill the proud ones; while one of them lives you will not be free from the fear of man! While they reign over you it is no use to talk of God.”

Thomas Muntzer called himself a servant of God against the wicked. Recite the proclamation of Muntzer to a Brotherhood meeting and the men would scorn to accept it as coming from a man who, at any time since Calvary, called himself a Christian. Yet there was a conflict of ideas in the Middle Ages, and there were men who preferred pestilence to war. Martin Luther, for instance:

“War is one of the greatest plagues that can afflict humanity; it destroys religion, it destroys states, it destroys families. Any scourge, in fact, is preferable to it. Famine and pestilence become as nothing in comparison with it. Pestilence is the least evil of the three, and 'twas therefore David chose it, willing rather to fall into the hands of God than into those of pitiless man.”

It destroys religion, and it destroys states. What will there be left after the next Treaty of Peace is signed? Perhaps some Winwood Reade will come along, and tell us this war has done more for the progress of mankind than all the other wars lumped together. Might not such a man say, this war

proves beyond all else that Nietzsche was right when he said, "A good war halloweth every cause," and that, "The only Christian died on the cross?" What if another Marx should rise and cry, "Workers of Europe! this war has taught you what can be done by war. Take the lesson home to yourselves. Rise! against your religious and political dynasts. Only the devil will counsel neutrality. Christ has put His sword into our hands!" A syndicalist more energetic than Sorel might appear and teach the wealth-producers the efficacy of organized force to overthrow organized capital. It would not be difficult for a man who knows something of the history of states, to present evidence which would impress men and women who have toiled and moiled to get a bit of a home together from the savings of starvation wages, that, generation after generation they in the main provide for munitions of war, and give their best flesh and bone to the Moloch of Nobel, Krupp, Schneider, and Vickers, to win justice for states,—without any State ever giving a passing thought to their claim to individual justice.

What contempt could be poured by a new Lassalle on the catchwords of statesmen: Prestige! Balance of Power! Triple Entente! State honour! State justice! How easily he would convince his audience that all these terms are the gibberish of State sorcery:

"Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg, and owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble;
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble."

Suppose it were shown that, since the revolution of 1689, the debt of this country incurred by wars,

which at the end of this war might stand at not far short of £2,500,000,000, all spent in upholding prestige, honour, and justice, had not brought justice to a single individual; would not the workers begin to think it high time for Government to shape its policy along the less expensive lines of peace, and give its undivided attention to removing all the injustice and misery which afflict the people in times of good trade, in times of bad trade, in times of war, and in times of peace? This war we are told will win for the oppressed of Russia the freedom they have dreamed of ever since a Romanoff ruled over the Slav race; that is to be one of the blessings of the war. But no one has predicted freedom from economic slavery for the workers of Britain. The menace of Prussian militarism is to be driven away from France; but no statesman here says the menace of privilege is to be driven away from the homes of our people. We are to wipe out the stain of Prussian cruelty in Belgium; but when shall we wipe out the stain of British landlordism? Blood in gallons, and money in millions, must be spent in protecting the rights of small nations; but Government makes no suggestion for safeguarding the rights of Englishmen. Any cause but that of man! Any duty but the nearest! Might not some new Vogt or Büchner, in regarding the ruins of the Christian era, say, “Well, if this is the best the faith of the Puritan Fathers can do for mankind, let Satan have a try.”

The Christianity of 1866 and 1870 produced the Büchners and the Vogts. And what did they desire for their fellows? Freedom! They saw what they thought to be the failure of Christianity to bring happiness and abundance to those who produce. May

not the latter-day Vogts be saying, "If this chaos of bloodshed, poverty, and grime, is all that Christian civilization after two thousand years of endeavour can do, then let us not only dismantle Rheims, but demolish every architectural and rubrical device that ever symbolized the Cross!" How deep the thought of German humanists sunk into the minds of British workingmen, during that period when our socialists of the Marxian school were introduced to the writings of Continental atheists, only those who have closely watched these tendencies can say. It may, however, be safely imputed that speeches such as those delivered by Sir W. Robertson Nicoll and Mr. Lloyd George, have done more to turn thousands of workers to the writings of men like Vogt, with their biting sarcasm, than all the persuasive eloquence of the Ingersolls and Bradlaughs.

"Theism or belief in a personal God leads, as all history clearly shows, to Monarchism and priestly rule; Pantheism or belief in an all-pervading God leads, where it is in the ascendancy, to contempt of the senses, denial of the Ego, to absorption in God, and to a state of stagnation. Atheism or Philosophical Monism alone leads to freedom, to intelligence, to progress, to due recognition of man — in a word, to Humanism."

Büchner has his thousands of adherents in our land to-day. And what has the creed of our Puritan Fathers done to offer a just alternative to Humanism? Will this war help the descendants of the Puritan Fathers to stem the rising tide of atheistical culture and the desire for a Marxian revolution? Has Christianity, as the pound-a-week man sees it, pointed to freedom, to intelligence, to due recognition of

man? Will the worship of the god of battles woo men to the precepts of the Galilean? Not likely. Never has war drawn a single soul to the cause of Jesus.

“’Tis time new hopes should animate the world, new light
Should dawn from new revealings to a race
Weighed down so long, forgotten so long.”

What new hope of justice has Christianity given to the race weighed down so long? A new hope was born at Nazareth, but ever since that time Christianity has seemed to do everything in its power to prevent that hope touching the soul of men. It was a new hope: “Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” No one ever gave to the race of man so great a hope as that. An All-Father who knoweth the needs of all His children, is the biggest conception of God ever presented to man. From it, justice to all His creatures flows spontaneously. It is without limit of race, colour, or creed. It is fundamental, universal, and eternal. What has been done by Christianity to make that conception a real basis for existence? No Christian should dare scoff at atheistic or humanistic aspiration until he can translate the Galilean’s conception of God into a leading to freedom, intelligence, progress, and due recognition of man. The tendency to God indicated by Browning in *Paracelsus*, is what man is yearning to understand:

“But in completed man begins anew
A tendency to God.

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I never fashioned out a fancied good
Distinct from man’s: a service to be done,

A glory to be ministered unto
With powers put forth at man's expense, withdrawn
From labouring in his behalf; a strength
Denied that might avail him. I cared not
Lest his success ran counter to success
Elsewhere; for God is glorified in man."

We have time day after day to recount the horrors of war's excesses, the atrocities of German soldiers, the starvation of whole provinces, the terrible plight of refugees; the world is appalled at the avalanche of woe. No one remains neutral; waves of universal sympathy reach higher and higher; from all parts of the globe willing hands send food, raiment, and money to procure shelter for the stricken. But who remains neutral in the fight against poverty, drink, and the myriad atrocities of our economic system which are perpetrated year in and year out and seldom rouse the affluent out of their pernicious apathy? What devil has counselled the neutrality of the churches, and held them from turning the whole of their attention to a solution of economic problems? When will Christ put His sword into the hands of all the clergy to exterminate poverty? Without searching the police-court news, or taking the trouble to consult the police-courts, any one who has lived in any street of any British town could write a story of atrocities that would satisfy the cravings for horror of any number of folk who now revel in the exertions of Britain to chastise the Huns in Belgium.

Last night in the street below, two women fought like tigers, while a large crowd swayed and twisted about their drunken brawl. They were young women living in a street not far from the Abbey,

and not more than one hundred yards from the Houses of Parliament. They rolled about the muddy street, and the traffic was stopped while they clawed and smashed each other. The on-lookers were in many respects more interesting than the combatants: old women, half stupified with drink; little children, in rags; blear-eyed men, just tumbled out of the pub near by; and, besides, a motley lot of decent-looking people from the flats and houses who had run out on hearing the screams of the women and the shouts of their neighbours. No one seemed to care to interfere save one or two intimates, themselves drunk and quarrelsome. The language of the denizens, yelling at new-comers the story of the row, was vile; the comment passed on the histories of the brawlers was shockingly Rabelaisian. When the women tusselled out of the road, into the gutter, and then, with their breast-coverings in rags, on to the sidewalk, one bus-driver cried to another, “ What about the Prussian Hun, eh? ” Then a policeman came upon the scene, and after much difficulty dragged the women off to Rochester Row. A clergyman who watched the small crowd following the women and the constable pass into the gloom, was heard to say, “ Terrible neighbourhood this; not nearly enough policemen on the beat! ” And yet war never revealed an atrocity like Tufton Street; but the marvel of it is, not that it is so bad, rather that it is so good. It is a mystery how industrious, decent men and women, can be born and bred in that place, but they are; not many, still a few rise out of it with a desire for a fuller, sweeter existence.

“ War destroys religion,” Luther said. Yes, but

how often have the devotees themselves been to blame for the destruction of their religion? All the religions known from Katmandu to Tianahuaco that have lost their influence, have suffered because the simple original idea has been smothered in the embellishments and rituals of their priests. Would it be nearer the truth to say, more religions have been destroyed by priests than by wars? Who can say? Burnouf? Anyway, this must be admitted: priests have never been satisfied with the founder's original idea. It has been pointed out that wherever a religion is practised to-day, the closer it has remained to the original idea, the larger and more devout the number of its adherents. This cannot be wholly a matter of geography and population, for "Christianity has penetrated to the uttermost corners of the globe."

"I do not find your Jesus in your Christianity," said a Chinese scholar in a lecture on religion; "indeed you scarcely ever mention his name." Was the rebuke merited? What are we afraid of? Here, in a paper read by thousands of better-class artisans, are letters to the editor. One correspondent says, "There is nothing unique or even really new about this so-called Christian doctrine. Socrates propounded it four hundred and odd years B.C." Thousands of well-meaning people have the same notion; they never get beyond the idea that Jesus was a very respectable plagiarist. How often in speaking to gatherings of men, on religious and economic subjects, have the questions taken this line: "Why follow Jesus, when every religion has had its Jesus, and religion does nothing to alter the lot of the poor?" or this: "Wouldn't you advise working men to fol-

low Tolstoy rather than Jesus who knew nothing of modern conditions of industrialism?" Then think of the yearning which prompted this: "Isn't Kropotkin more practical for a pound-a-week man than Jesus?" These are only some of the most reasonable questions remembered in a long period of lecturing. Millions want to know what Jesus means to man. The thousands who tramp day after day, year after year, to the mills, factories, shops, and offices, of our great towns, want to know if there is a better system, one that will put an end to the awful war of toil and moil, and leave man to wage the only battle the Creator intended his creatures to wage, the battle against nature. Who will explain the true Jesus to these men? Who will show them the plan, the system, the order of existence which he said the All-Father meant for His children? It cannot be done during a war, but when the Treaty of Peace is signed will the churches, editors of religious papers, statesmen, and "leaders of thought," lapse again into the same old weary business of hiding Jesus behind a mask of superstition and cover Him with the canonicals of an archbishop? Society will need a new basis when this war is over. Each day tendencies are shaping into efforts. Already the Government works along the very socialistic lines it poured contempt upon a few years ago. Reversion is the dominant note of the period. Swift some teachers have been to point the moral of the change to many artizans. Statesmen go whither the currents take them. Mr. Blatchford says, "If the lives of all the citizens belong to the nation the property of all the citizens belongs to the nation." Will Mr. Lloyd George and Sir W. Robertson Nicoll

accept that doctrine? Will the author of *The New Theology* accept it? In a hundred ways every week the Government is driven along the very path it once told the electors to avoid. Amazing revolution without agitation! What is the great force behind the Government to-day, rushing it into channels it abhorred only seven years ago? The exigencies of an Armageddon? The nation fighting for its existence? Whatever the cause of it, more lessons in the workableness of the proposals of British socialists have been given by this Government, since the end of July, than can be found in all the literature of Socialism from Saint-Simon down to Belfort Bax. The circumstances demand it? Yes, but it may be argued, what is good for the nation in war-time is also good for the individuals that comprise the nation when peace is proclaimed. What reply is to be made to that? Mr. Blatchford says, "To claim the blood of our young male citizens and to exempt the money of non-combatants is to demand that one section of the people shall sacrifice themselves to preserve the wealth and comfort of another section." Why Mr. Blatchford should imagine that this is to be particularly applied to this war is strange; for what else was the upshot of any war, during the past century? Were not all recent wars fought by the many to protect the privileges of the few? No matter how many splendid men of the privileged class are giving their lives away in Europe, the great mass of the soldiers of Britain are too poor to be citizens. Mr. Blatchford says:

"I hope the workers will refuse to be duped by fine phrases and vague promises. I hope they will compel right

honourable gentlemen to grant and make legal the full scale of separation allowance and pension before they enlist."

If all that Mr. Lloyd George claims this war will do for the British nation is not utter nonsense and sham, then Mr. Blatchford asks not for much. Mr. Lloyd George said:

"Cannot Britain, fighting one of the most chivalrous battles the world has ever seen, rely on her children to rally to the flag? That is the appeal I make to the young men of the Nonconformist churches. . . . Through it all I think I can see the hand of justice, more surely and gradual, consciously but certainly gripping the victory."

A fine vision! But if after all the wonderful sacrifice the hand of labour should find that it has only gripped again the sombre standard of poverty, what then? Mr. Blatchford sees something else away on the horizon where the dawn of peace must come:

"This is a great opportunity for the trade unions and for the workers. There are plenty of men for the army, and there is plenty of money to deal justly with the men who go to fight. If the people insist upon justice this war will have done more than anything else in our time to help the realization of a free and sane Socialism in this country."

So both Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Blatchford are after justice; but when they meet after the war to discuss the settlement for the workers of Britain, it will be found that their definitions of justice are poles apart. Then the big struggle may begin! Right honourable gentlemen may quote Mr. Asquith:

"The great loss of counterbalancing all the apparent gains of a reconstruction of society upon what are called socialistic lines will be that liberty will be slowly but surely

starved to death, and that with a superficial equality of fortunes and conditions, even if that could be attained, we should have the most sterilizing despotism that the world has ever seen."

That statement will not suit Mr. Blatchford; not by any means. "If the people will only insist upon justice," the one says; the other will say, "What is justice?" Who then will determine that question? No statesman has laid down an acceptable definition of justice. The Prime Minister was conscious seven years ago that the State had not even approached the ideal of justice. He described the position in these words:

"Any one who looks around with unprejudiced eyes at the structure of society as it actually is, and realizes, not only the enormous disparities in the distribution of material comfort and happiness, but the still more striking discrepancies between opportunity on the one side and talent and character on the other, will not only find it difficult to reconcile what he sees with even the rudest standard of ideal justice, but will be tempted to be amazed at the patience, even the inertness, with which the mass of mankind acquiesce in what they deem to be their lot. No wonder that constant contemplation of and reflection upon such a spectacle has driven and continues to drive some of the best and finest spirits of our race into moral and intellectual revolt."

The moral and intellectual revolt of the past will be a mere gust in comparison with the whirlwind coming, if something practical is not done very soon after the close of this war. It is not fair, not honest indeed, to ask men to lay down their lives for national justice unless you are determined to give those who live individual justice. The pound-a-week justice to

soldiers and sailors and their wives and children is not justice; it is only the merest business-like expedient for national safety. Justice is something else. What did Mr. Asquith imagine "the rudest standard for ideal justice" to be when he spoke at Ladybank in 1907? No one knows. Mr. Asquith has not put on record his definition of justice. Before we are overtaken by "the most sterilizing despotism that the world has ever seen," statesmen must find a definition of justice which will be compatible with the precepts of the founder of what is called the Christian faith; or else both state and religion may go down mingling with the debris of war.

How speedily we are plunged into this calamity. Who in June, 1914, believed we should be calling for millions of men to enter the titanic struggle? A member of the Government on Sunday, August 2nd, said, "No one will ever make me believe we are going to war." Up to the last moment it was difficult to make some men believe we were in it. The time was short, but shorter notice may be given some day when an exasperated people decide "to take what Government will not give." When that cry so long struggling in the throats of patient, inert, acquiescent labour is at last heard in the land, when the shout for justice goes up from an enlightened people, will the political parties gather with the unanimity which amazed the world when war was declared on Germany? Will legislators unite to grant labour's demand? or unite to deny them the justice they deserve? Deserve! the justice which is theirs by right; by right, or Christendom is a sham, and the Devil has counselled cabinet and church to remain neutral to destroy them. The time is fast coming

when they must choose. What must they choose? Socialism or Individualism? The former we know, the latter has never had a chance; Christianity, so-called, killed it. Socialism aims at equality, Individualism at equal rights. Herein lies the colossal misconception of the ages; even Nietzsche in *Beyond Good and Evil*, throwing his javelin at the blunders of philosophers and religionists, is guilty of fundamental error in mistaking equality for equal rights.

Mr. Blatchford writes of a "free and sane Socialism," but the brand to be fought for may be the socialism which will ask that the "property of all citizens belongs to the nation." After the steps taken by the Government in the direction of Socialism the "great opportunity" will not be frittered away by asking for homeopathic doses. How far are we now away from state control of all the means of production, distribution, and exchange? Flint says Socialism, "denies to the individual any rights independent of Society and assigns to Society authority to do whatever it deems for its own good with the persons, faculties, and possessions of individuals."

It will be the socialism of Mr. Sidney Webb, if it be anything at all:

"The first step must be to rid our minds of the idea that there are any such things in social matters as abstract rights."

How far that will go beyond the "free and sane" socialism of Mr. Blatchford, may be guessed by those who have watched the experiments of the Government. But how will Mr. Webb's idea fit in with the

creed of the Puritan Fathers? Green tells us that the aim of the Puritan had been to set up a visible Kingdom of God upon earth, and that they regarded the State primarily as an instrument for securing, by moral and religious influences, the social and political ends of the Kingdom. This they failed to bring about, and it was one of the bitterest disappointments of Cromwell's declining years that Puritanism had missed its great opportunity. Think of a twentieth-century Puritan rising in the House of Commons and saying:

"I well remember I did a little touch upon the Eighty-fifth Psalm when I spake unto you in the beginning of this Parliament. Which expresseth well what we may say, as truly as it was said of old by the Penman of that Psalm! The first verse is an acknowledgment to God that 'He had been favourable unto His land,' and 'brought back the captivity of His people'; and then how that 'He had pardoned all their iniquities and covered all their sin, and taken away all His wrath'; and indeed of all these unspeakable mercies, blessings, and deliverances out of captivity, pardoning of national sins and national iniquities. Pardoning, as God pardoneth the man He justifieth! . . . And sometimes God pardoneth Nations also! . . . He hath given you strength to do what you have done! And if God should bless you in this work, and make this meeting happy on this account, you shall all be called the Blessed of the Lord. The generations to come will bless us. You shall be the 'repairers of breaches, and the restorers of paths to dwell in'! And if there be any higher work which mortals can attain unto in the world, beyond this, I acknowledge my ignorance of it."

The Eighty-fifth Psalm and the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah. What a strange place — the House of Commons! for Hebrew poetry.

"Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

"Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

"Yea, the Lord shall give that which is good; and our land shall yield her increase."

Strange sentiments these for St. Stephen's. May our modern Cromwells, when they gather at the Meeting to Celebrate the Peace, say, "legislators cannot attain to any higher work than repairing the breach and restoring paths to dwell in"? Will they say, to quote another passage from the same chapter which inspired the old Puritan Father:

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?"

Will our legislators succeed where Cromwell failed? Cromwell, if things had gone right with him, meant justice. Isaiah meant justice.

"Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

That is the fundamental of Justice which Jesus gave to the world. Cromwell's time was all too short to make a vast change. How short will the time be after this war, when the next great opportunity comes! Will it be gripped this time? Or shall some Milton years hence write:

"O shame to men! devil with devil damned
Firm concord holds, men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heavenly grace; and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife

Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy;
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides
That day and night for his destruction wait.”