

He spelt it "Grey" by a mere misprint, and the whole tale was complete: first blunder, second blunder, and final condemnation.

That is a little tale of journalism as it is; if you call it egotistic and ask what is the use of it I think I could tell you. You might remember it when next some ordinary young workman is going to be hanged by the neck on circumstantial evidence.

THE SENTIMENTAL SCOT

Of all the great nations of Christendom, the Scotch are by far the most romantic. I have just enough Scotch experience and just enough Scotch blood to know this in the only way in which a thing can really be known; that is, when the outer world and the inner world are at one. I know it is always said that the Scotch are practical, prosaic, and puritan; that they have an eye to business. I like that phrase "an eye" to business.

Polyphemus had an eye for business; it was in the middle of his forehead. It served him admirably for the only two duties which are demanded in a modern financier and captain of industry: the two duties of counting sheep and of eating men. But when that one eye was put out he was done for. But the Scotch are not one-eyed practical men, though their best friends must admit that they are occasionally business-like.

They are, quite fundamentally, romantic and sentimental, and this is proved by the very economic argument that is used to prove their harshness and hunger for the material. The mass of Scots have accepted the industrial civilisation, with its factory chimneys and its famine prices, with its steam and smoke and steel—and strikes. The mass of the Irish have not accepted it. The mass of the Irish have clung to agriculture with claws of iron; and have succeeded in keeping it. That is because the Irish, though far inferior to the Scotch in art and literature, are hugely superior to them in practical politics. You do need to be very romantic to accept the industrial civilisation. It does really require all the old Gaelic glamour to make men think that Glasgow is a grand place. Yet the miracle is achieved; and while I was in Glasgow I shared the illusion. I have never had the faintest illusion about Leeds or Birmingham. The industrial dream suited the Scots. Here was a really romantic vista, suited to a romantic people; a vision of higher and higher chimneys taking hold upon the heavens, of fiercer and fiercer fires in which adamant could evaporate like dew. Here were taller and taller engines that began already to shriek and gesticulate like giants. Here were thunderbolts of communication which already flashed to and fro like thoughts. It was unreasonable to expect the rapt, dreamy, romantic Scot to stand still in such a whirl of wizardry to ask whether he, the ordinary Scot, would be any the richer.

He, the ordinary Scot, is very much the poorer. Glasgow is not a rich city. It is a particularly poor city ruled by a few particularly rich men. It is not, perhaps, quite so poor a city as Liverpool, London,

Manchester, Birmingham, or Bolton. It is vastly poorer than Rome, Rouen, Munich, or Cologne. A certain civic vitality notable in Glasgow may, perhaps, be due to the fact that the high poetic patriotism of the Scots has there been reinforced by the cutting common sense and independence of the Irish. In any case, I think there can be no doubt of the main historical fact. The Scotch were tempted by the enormous but unequal opportunities of industrialism, because the Scotch are romantic. The Irish refused those enormous and unequal opportunities, because the Irish are clear-sighted. They would not need very clear sight by this time to see that in England and Scotland the temptation has been a betrayal. The industrial system has failed.

I was coming the other day along a great valley road that strikes out of the westland counties about Glasgow, more or less towards the east and the widening of the Forth. It may, for all I know (I amused myself with the fancy), be the way along which Wallace came with his crude army, when he gave battle before Stirling Brig; and, in the midst of mediaeval diplomacies, made a new nation possible. Anyhow, the romantic quality of Scotland rolled all about me, as much in the last reek of Glasgow as in the first rain upon the hills. The tall factory chimneys seemed trying to be taller than the mountain peaks; as if this landscape were full (as its history has been full) of the very madness of ambition. The wageslavery we live in is a wicked thing. But there is nothing in which the Scotch are more piercing and poetical, I might say more perfect, than in their Scotch wickedness. It is what makes the Master of Ballantrae the most thrilling of all fictitious villains. It is what

makes the Master of Lovat the most thrilling of all historical villains. It is poetry. It is an intensity which is on the edge of madness or (what is worse) magic. Well, the Scotch have managed to apply something of this fierce romanticism even to the lowest of all lordships and serfdoms; the proletarian inequality of today. You do meet now and then, in Scotland, the man you never meet anywhere else but in novels; I mean the self-made man; the hard, insatiable man, merciless to himself as well as to others. It is not "enterprise"; it is kleptomania. He is quite mad, and a much more obvious public pest than any other kind of kleptomaniac; but though he is a cheat, he is not an illusion. He does exist; I have met quite two of him. Him alone among modern merchants we do not weakly flatter when we call him a bandit. Something of the irresponsibility of the true dark ages really clings about him. Our scientific civilisation is not a civilisation; it is a smoke nuisance. Like smoke it is choking us; like smoke it will pass away. Only of one or two Scotsmen, in my experience, was it true that where there is smoke there is fire.

But there are other kinds of fire; and better. The one great advantage of this strange national temper is that, from the beginning of all chronicles, it has provided resistance as well as cruelty. In Scotland nearly everything has always been in revolt—especially loyalty. If these people are capable of making Glasgow, they are also capable of wrecking it; and the thought of my many good friends in that city makes me really doubtful about which would figure in human memories as the more huge calamity of the two. In Scotland there are many rich men so

weak as to call themselves strong. But there are not so many poor men weak enough to believe them.

As I came out of Glasgow I saw men standing about the road. They had little lanterns tied to the fronts of their caps, like the fairies who used to dance in the old fairy pantomimes. They were not, however, strictly speaking, fairies. They might have been called gnomes, since they worked in the chasms of those purple and chaotic hills. They worked in the mines from whence comes the fuel of our fires. Just at the moment when I saw them, moreover, they were not dancing; nor were they working. They were doing nothing. Which, in my opinion (and I trust yours), was the finest thing they could do.

THE SECTARIAN OF SOCIETY

A fixed creed is absolutely indispensable to freedom. For while men are and should be various, there must be some communication between them if they are to get any pleasure out of their variety. And an intellectual formula is the only thing that can create a communication that does not depend on mere blood, class, or capricious sympathy. If we all start with the agreement that the sun and moon exist, we can talk about our different visions of them. The strong-eyed man can boast that he sees the sun as a perfect circle. The shortsighted man may say (or if he is

an impressionist, boast) that he sees the moon as a silver blur. The colour-blind man may rejoice in the fairy-trick which enables him to live under a green sun and a blue moon. But if once it be held that there is nothing but a silver blur in one man's eye or a bright circle (like a monocle) in the other man's, then neither is free, for each is shut up in the cell of a separate universe.

But, indeed, an even worse fate, practically considered, follows from the denim of the original intellectual formula. Not only does the individual become narrow, but he spreads narrowness across the world like a cloud; he causes narrowness to increase and multiply like a weed. For what happens is this: that all the shortsighted people come together and build a city called Myopia, where they take short-sightedness for granted and paint short-sighted pictures and pursue very short-sighted policies. Meanwhile all the men who can stare at the sun get together on Salisbury Plain and do nothing but stare at the sun; and all the men who see a blue moon band themselves together and assert the blue moon, not once in a blue moon, but incessantly. So that instead of a small and varied group, you have enormous monotonous groups. Instead of the liberty of dogma, you have the tyranny of taste.

Allegory apart, instances of what I mean will occur to every one; perhaps the most obvious is Socialism. Socialism means the ownership by the organ of government (whatever it is) of all things necessary to production. If a man claims to be a Socialist in that sense he can be any kind of man he likes in any other sense—a bookie, a Mahatma,

a man about town, an archbishop, a Margate nigger. Without recalling at the moment clear-headed Socialists in all of these capacities, it is obvious that a clear-headed Socialist (that is, a Socialist with a creed) can be a soldier, like Mr. Blatchford, or a Don, like Mr. Ball, or a Bathchairman like Mr. Meeke, or a clergyman like Mr. Conrad Noel, or an artistic tradesman like the late Mr. William Morris.

But some people call themselves Socialists, and will not be bound by what they call a narrow dogma; they say that Socialism means far, far more than this; all that is high, all that is free, all that is, etc., etc. Now mark their dreadful fate; for they become totally unfit to be tradesmen, or soldiers, or clergymen, or any other stricken human thing, but become a particular sort of person who is always the same. When once it has been discovered that Socialism does not mean a narrow economic formula, it is also discovered that Socialism does mean wearing one particular kind of clothes, reading one particular kind of books, hanging up one particular kind of pictures, and in the majority of cases even eating one particular kind of food. For men must recognise each other somehow. These men will not know each other by a principle, like fellow citizens. They cannot know each other by a smell, like dogs. So they have to fall back on general colouring; on the fact that a man of their sort will have a wife in pale green and Walter Crane's "Triumph of Labour" hanging in the hall.

There are, of course, many other instances; for modern society is almost made up of these large monochrome patches. Thus I, for one, regret

the supersession of the old Puritan unity, founded on theology, but embracing all types from Milton to the grocer, by that newer Puritan unity which is founded rather on certain social habits, certain common notions, both permissive and prohibitive, in connection with Particular social pleasures.

Thus I, for one, regret that (if you are going to have an aristocracy) it did not remain a logical one founded on the science of heraldry; a thing asserting and defending the quite defensible theory that physical genealogy is the test; instead of being, as it is now, a mere machine of Eton and Oxford for varnishing anybody rich enough with one monotonous varnish.

And it is supremely so in the case of religion. As long as you have a creed, which every one in a certain group believes or is supposed to believe, then that group will consist of the old recurring figures of religious history, who can be appealed to by the creed and judged by it; the saint, the hypocrite, the brawler, the weak brother. These people do each other good; or they all join together to do the hypocrite good, with heavy and repeated blows. But once break the bond of doctrine which alone holds these people together and each will gravitate to his own kind outside the group. The hypocrites will all get together and call each other saints; the saints will get lost in a desert and call themselves weak brethren; the weak brethren will get weaker and weaker in a general atmosphere of imbecility; and the brawler will go off looking for somebody else with whom to brawl.

This has very largely happened to modern English religion; I have been in many churches, chapels, and halls where a confident pride in having got beyond creeds was coupled with quite a paralysed incapacity to get beyond catchwords. But wherever the falsity appears it comes from neglect of the same truth: that men should agree on a principle, that they may differ on everything else; that God gave men a law that they might turn it into liberties.

There was hugely more sense in the old people who said that a wife and husband ought to have the same religion than there is in all the contemporary gushing about sister souls and kindred spirits and auras of identical colour. As a matter of fact, the more the sexes are in violent contrast the less likely they are to be in violent collision. The more incompatible their tempers are the better. Obviously a wife's soul cannot possibly be a sister soul. It is very seldom so much as a first cousin. There are very few marriages of identical taste and temperament; they are generally unhappy. But to have the same fundamental theory, to think the same thing a virtue, whether you practise or neglect it, to think the same thing a sin, whether you punish or pardon or laugh at it, in the last extremity to call the same thing duty and the same thing disgrace—this really is necessary to a tolerably happy marriage; and it is much better represented by a common religion than it is by affinities and auras. And what applies to the family applies to the nation. A nation with a root religion will be tolerant. A nation with no religion will be bigoted. Lastly, the worst effect of all is this:

that when men come together to profess a creed, they come courageously, though it is to hide in catacombs and caves. But when they come together in a clique they come sneakishly, eschewing all change or disagreement, though it is to dine to a brass band in a big London hotel. For birds of a feather flock together, but birds of the white feather most of all.

THE FOOL

For many years I had sought him, and at last I found him in a club. I had been told that he was everywhere; but I had almost begun to think that he was nowhere. I had been assured that there were millions of him; but before my late discovery I inclined to think that there were none of him. After my late discovery I am sure that there is one; and I incline to think that there are several, say, a few hundreds; but unfortunately most of them occupying important positions. When I say "him," I mean the entire idiot.

I have never been able to discover that "stupid public" of which so many literary men complain. The people one actually meets in trains or at tea parties seem to me quite bright and interesting; certainly quite enough so to call for the full exertion of one's own wits. And even when I have heard brilliant "conversationalists" conversing with other people, the conversation had much more equality and give and take than this age of