Presidents and Problems

All good Americans wish to fight the representatives they have chosen. All good Englishmen wish to forget the representatives they have chosen. This difference, deep and perhaps ineradicable in the temperaments of the two peoples, explains a thousand things in their literature and their laws. The American national poet praised his people for their readiness 'to rise against the never-ending audacity of elected persons.' The English national anthem is content to say heartily, but almost hastily, 'Confound their politics,' and then more cheerfully, as if changing the subject, 'God Save the King.' For this is especially the secret of the monarch or chief magistrate in the two countries. They arm the President with the powers of a King, that he may be a nuisance in politics. We deprive the King even of the powers of a President, lest he should remind us of a politician. We desire to forget the never-ending audacity of elected persons; and with us therefore it really never does end. That is the practical objection to our own habit of changing the subject, instead of changing the ministry. The King, as the Irish wit observed, is not a subject; but in that sense the English crowned head is not a King. He is a popular figure intended to remind us of the England that politicians do not remember; the England of horses and ships and gardens and good fellowship. The Americans have no such purely social symbol; and it is rather the root than the result of this that their social luxury, and especially their sport, are a little lacking in humanity and humour. It is the American, much more than the Englishman, who takes his pleasures sadly, not to say savagely.

The genuine popularity of constitutional monarchs, in parliamentary countries, can be explained by any practical example. Let us suppose that great social reform, The Compulsory Haircutting Act, has just begun to be enforced. The Compulsory Haircutting Act, as every good citizen knows, is a statute which permits any person to grow his hair to any length, in any wild or wonderful shape, so long as he is registered with a hairdresser who charges a shilling. But it imposes a universal close-shave (like that which is found so hygienic during a curative detention at Dartmoor) on all who are registered only with a barber who charges threepence. Thus, while the ornamental classes can continue to ornament the street with Piccadilly weepers or chin-beards if they choose, the working classes demonstrate the care with which the State protects them by going about in a fresher, cooler, and cleaner condition; a condition which has the further advantage of revealing at a glance that outline of the criminal skull, which is so common among them. The Compulsory Haircutting Act is thus in every way a compact and convenient example of all our current laws about education, sport, liquor and liberty in general. Well, the law has passed and the masses, insensible to its scientific value, are still murmuring against it. The ignorant peasant maiden

is averse to so extreme a fashion of bobbing her hair; and does not see how she can even be a flapper with nothing to flap. Her father, his mind already poisoned by Bolshevists, begins to wonder who the devil does these things, and why. In proportion as he knows the world of to-day, he guesses that the real origin may be quite obscure, or the real motive quite corrupt. The pressure may have come from anybody who has gained power or money anyhow. It may come from the foreign millionaire who owns all the expensive hairdressing saloons; it may come from some swindler in the cutlery trade who has contracted to sell a million bad razors. Hence the poor man looks about him with suspicion in the street; knowing that the lowest sneak or the loudest snob he sees may be directing the government of his country. Anybody may have to do with politics; and this sort of thing is politics. Suddenly he catches sight of a crowd, stops, and begins wildly to cheer a carriage that is passing. The carriage contains the one person who has certainly not originated any great scientific reform. He is the only person in the commonwealth who is not allowed to cut off other people's hair, or to take away other people's liberties. He at least is kept out of politics; and men hold him up as they did an unspotted victim to appease the wrath of the gods. He is their King, and the only man they know is not their ruler. We need not be surprised that he is popular, knowing how they are ruled.

The popularity of a President in America is exactly the opposite. The American Republic is the last mediaeval monarchy. It is intended that the President shall rule, and take all the risks of ruling. If the hair is cut he is the haircutter, the magistrate that bears not the razor in vain. All the popular Presidents, Jackson and Lincoln and Roosevelt, have acted as democratic despots, but emphatically not as constitutional monarchs. In short, the names have become curiously interchanged; and as a historical reality it is the President who ought to be called a King.

But it is not only true that the President could correctly be called a King. It is also true that the King might correctly be called a President. We could hardly find a more exact description of him than to call him a President. What is expected in modern times of a modern constitutional monarch is emphatically that he should preside. We expect him to take the throne exactly as if he were taking the chair. The chairman does not move the motion or resolution, far less vote it; he is not supposed even to favour it. He is expected to please everybody by favouring nobody. The primary essentials of a President or Chairman are that he should be treated with ceremonial respect, that he should be popular in his personality and yet impersonal in his opinions, and that he should actually be a link between all the other persons by being different from all of them. This is exactly what is demanded of the constitutional monarch in modern times. It is exactly the opposite to the American position; in which the President does not preside at all. He moves; and the thing he moves may truly be called a motion; for the national

idea is perpetual motion. Technically it is called a message; and might often actually be called a menace. Thus we may truly say that the King presides and the President reigns. Some would prefer to say that the President rules; and some Senators and members of Congress would prefer to say that he rebels. But there is no doubt that he moves; he does not take the chair or even the stool, but rather the stump.

Some people seem to suppose that the fall of President Wilson was a denial of this almost despotic ideal in America. As a matter of fact it was the strongest possible assertion of it. The idea is that the President shall take responsibility and risk; and responsibility means being blamed, and risk means the risk of being blamed. The theory is that things are done by the President; and if things go wrong, or are alleged to go wrong, it is the fault of the President. This does not invalidate, but rather ratifies the comparison with true monarchs such as the mediaeval monarchs. Constitutional princes are seldom deposed; but despots were often deposed. In the simpler races of sunnier lands, such as Turkey, they were commonly assassinated. Even in our own history a King often received the same respectful tribute to the responsibility and reality of his office. But King John was attacked because he was strong, not because he was weak. Richard the Second lost the crown because the crown was a trophy, not because it was a trifle. And President Wilson was deposed because he had used a power which is such, in its nature, that a man must use it at the risk of deposition. As a matter of fact, of course, it is easy to exaggerate Mr. Wilson's real unpopularity, and still more easy to exaggerate Mr. Wilson's real failure. There are a great many people in America who justify and applaud him; and what is yet more interesting, who justify him not on pacifist and idealistic, but on patriotic and even military grounds. It is especially insisted by some that his demonstration, which seemed futile as a threat against Mexico, was a very far-sighted preparation for the threat against Prussia. But in so far as the democracy did disagree with him, it was but the occasional and inevitable result of the theory by which the despot has to anticipate the democracy.

Thus the American King and the English President are the very opposite of each other; yet they are both the varied and very national indications of the same contemporary truth. It is the great weariness and contempt that have fallen upon common politics in both countries. It may be answered, with some show of truth, that the new American President represents a return to common politics; and that in that sense he marks a real rebuke to the last President and his more uncommon politics. And it is true that many who put Mr. Harding in power regard him as the symbol of something which they call normalcy; which may roughly be translated into English by the word normality. And by this they do mean, more or less, the return to the vague capitalist conservatism of the nineteenth century. They might call Mr. Harding a Victorian if they had ever lived

under Victoria. Perhaps these people do entertain the extraordinary notion that the nineteenth century was normal. But there are very few who think so, and even they will not think so long. The blunder is the beginning of nearly all our present troubles. The nineteenth century was the very reverse of normal. It suffered a most unnatural strain in the combination of political equality in theory with extreme economic inequality in practice. Capitalism was not a normalcy but an abnormalcy. Property is normal, and is more normal in proportion as it is universal. Slavery may be normal and even natural, in the sense that a bad habit may be second nature. But Capitalism was never anything so human as a habit; we may say it was never anything so good as a bad habit. It was never a custom; for men never grew accustomed to it. It was never even conservative; for before it was even created wise men had realised that it could not be conserved. It was from the first a problem; and those who will not even admit the Capitalist problem deserve to get the Bolshevist solution. All things considered, I cannot say anything worse of them than that.

The recent Presidential election preserved some trace of the old Party System of America; but its tradition has very nearly faded like that of the Party System of England. It is easy for an Englishman to confess that he never quite understood the American Party System. It would perhaps be more courageous in him, and more informing, to confess that he never really understood the British Party System. The planks in the two American platforms may easily be exhibited as very disconnected and ramshackle; but our own party was as much of a patchwork, and indeed I think even more so. Everybody knows that the two American factions were called 'Democrat' and 'Republican.' It does not at all cover the case to identify the former with Liberals and the latter with Conservatives. The Democrats are the party of the South and have some true tradition from the Southern aristocracy and the defence of Secession and State Rights. The Republicans rose in the North as the party of Lincoln, largely condemning slavery. But the Republicans are also the party of Tariffs, and are at least accused of being the party of Trusts. The Democrats are the party of Free Trade; and in the great movement of twenty years ago the party of Free Silver. The Democrats are also the party of the Irish; and the stones they throw at Trusts are retorted by stones thrown at Tammany. It is easy to see all these things as curiously sporadic and bewildering; but I am inclined to think that they are as a whole more coherent and rational than our own old division of Liberals and Conservatives. There is even more doubt nowadays about what is the connecting link between the different items in the old British party programmes. I have never been able to understand why being in favour of Protection should have anything to do with being opposed to Home Rule; especially as most of the people who were to receive Home Rule were themselves in favour of Protection. I could never see what giving people cheap bread had to do with forbidding them cheap beer; or why the party which sympathises with Ireland cannot sympathise with Poland. I cannot see why

Liberals did not liberate public-houses or Conservatives conserve crofters. I do not understand the principle upon which the causes were selected on both sides; and I incline to think that it was with the impartial object of distributing nonsense equally on both sides. Heaven knows there is enough nonsense in American politics too; towering and tropical nonsense like a cyclone or an earthquake. But when all is said, I incline to think that there was more spiritual and atmospheric cohesion in the different parts of the American party than in those of the English party; and I think this unity was all the more real because it was more difficult to define. The Republican party originally stood for the triumph of the North, and the North stood for the nineteenth century; that is for the characteristic commercial expansion of the nineteenth century; for a firm faith in the profit and progress of its great and growing cities, its division of labour, its industrial science, and its evolutionary reform. The Democratic party stood more loosely for all the elements that doubted whether this development was democratic or was desirable; all that looked back to Jeffersonian idealism and the serene abstractions of the eighteenth century, or forward to Bryanite idealism and some simplified Utopia founded on grain rather than gold. Along with this went, not at all unnaturally, the last and lingering sentiment of the Southern squires, who remembered a more rural civilisation that seemed by comparison romantic. Along with this went, quite logically, the passions and the pathos of the Irish, themselves a rural civilisation, whose basis is a religion or what the nineteenth century tended to call a superstition. Above all, it was perfectly natural that this tone of thought should favour local liberties, and even a revolt on behalf of local liberties, and should distrust the huge machine of centralised power called the Union. In short, something very near the truth was said by a suicidally silly Republican orator, who was running Blaine for the Presidency, when he denounced the Democratic party as supported by 'Rome, rum, and rebellion.' They seem to me to be three excellent things in their place; and that is why I suspect that I should have belonged to the Democratic party, if I had been born in America when there was a Democratic party. But I fancy that by this time even this general distinction has become very dim. If I had been an American twenty years ago, in the time of the great Free Silver campaign, I should certainly never have hesitated for an instant about my sympathies or my side. My feelings would have been exactly those that are nobly expressed by Mr. Vachell Lindsay, in a poem bearing the characteristic title of 'Bryan, Bryan, Bryan, Bryan.' And, by the way, nobody can begin to sympathise with America whose soul does not to some extent begin to swing and dance to the drums and gongs of Mr. Vachell Lindsay's great orchestra; which has the note of his whole nation in this: that a refined person can revile it a hundred times over as violent and brazen and barbarous and absurd, but not as insincere; there is something in it, and that something is the soul of many million men. But the poet himself, in the political poem referred to, speaks of Bryan's fall over Free Silver as 'defeat of my boyhood, defeat of my dream'; and it is only too probable that the cause has fallen as well

as the candidate. The William Jennings Bryan of later years is not the man whom I should have seen in my youth, with the visionary eyes of Mr. Vachell Lindsay. He has become a commonplace Pacifist, which is in its nature the very opposite of a revolutionist; for if men will fight rather than sacrifice humanity on a golden cross, it cannot be wrong for them to resist its being sacrificed to an iron cross. I came into very indirect contact with Mr. Bryan when I was in America, in a fashion that made me realise how hard it has become to recover the illusions of a Bryanite. I believe that my lecture agent was anxious to arrange a debate, and I threw out a sort of loose challenge to the effect that woman's suffrage had weakened the position of woman; and while I was away in the wilds of Oklahoma my lecture agent (a man of blood-curdling courage and enterprise) asked Mr. Bryan to debate with me. Now Mr. Bryan is one of the greatest orators of modern history, and there is no conceivable reason why he should trouble to debate with a wandering lecturer. But as a matter of fact he expressed himself in the most magnanimous and courteous terms about my personal position, but said (as I understood) that it would be improper to debate on female suffrage as it was already a part of the political system. And when I heard that, I could not help a sigh; for I recognised something that I knew only too well on the front benches of my own beloved land. The great and glorious demagogue had degenerated into a statesman. I had never expected for a moment that the great orator could be bothered to debate with me at all; but it had never occurred to me, as a general moral principle, that two educated men were for ever forbidden to talk sense about a particular topic, because a lot of other people had already voted on it. What is the matter with that attitude is the loss of the freedom of the mind. There can be no liberty of thought unless it is ready to unsettle what has recently been settled, as well as what has long been settled. We are perpetually being told in the papers that what is wanted is a strong man who will do things. What is wanted is a strong man who will undo things; and that will be a real test of strength.

Anyhow, we could have believed, in the time of the Free Silver fight, that the Democratic party was democratic with a small d. In Mr. Wilson it was transfigured, his friends would say into a higher and his foes into a hazier thing. And the Republican reaction against him, even where it has been healthy, has also been hazy. In fact, it has been not so much the victory of a political party as a relapse into repose after certain political passions; and in that sense there is a truth in the strange phrase about normalcy; in the sense that there is nothing more normal than going to sleep. But an even larger truth is this; it is most likely that America is no longer concentrated on these faction fights at all, but is considering certain large problems upon which those factions hardly troubled to take sides. They are too large even to be classified as foreign policy distinct from domestic policy. They are so large as to be inside as well as outside the state. From an English standpoint the most obvious example is the Irish; for the Irish problem is not a British problem, but also an American problem. And this is true

even of the great external enigma of Japan. The Japanese question may be a part of foreign policy for America, but it is a part of domestic policy for California. And the same is true of that other intense and intelligent Eastern people, the genius and limitations of which have troubled the world so much longer. What the Japs are in California, the Jews are in America. That is, they are a piece of foreign policy that has become imbedded in domestic policy; something which is found inside but still has to be regarded from the outside. On these great international matters I doubt if Americans got much guidance from their party system; especially as most of these questions have grown very recently and rapidly to enormous size. Men are left free to judge of them with fresh minds. And that is the truth in the statement that the Washington Conference has opened the gates of a new world.

On the relations to England and Ireland I will not attempt to dwell adequately here. I have already noted that my first interview was with an Irishman, and my first impression from that interview a vivid sense of the importance of Ireland in Anglo-American relations; and I have said something of the Irish problem, prematurely and out of its proper order, under the stress of that sense of urgency. Here I will only add two remarks about the two countries respectively. A great many British journalists have recently imagined that they were pouring oil upon the troubled waters, when they were rather pouring out oil to smooth the downward path; and to turn the broad road to destruction into a butter-slide. They seem to have no notion of what to do, except to say what they imagine the very stupidest of their readers would be pleased to hear, and conceal whatever the most intelligent of their readers would probably like to know. They therefore informed the public that 'the majority of Americans' had abandoned all sympathy with Ireland, because of its alleged sympathy with Germany; and that this majority of Americans was now ardently in sympathy with its English brothers across the sea. Now to begin with, such critics have no notion of what they are saying when they talk about the majority of Americans. To anybody who has happened to look in, let us say, on the city of Omaha, Nebraska, the remark will have something enormous and overwhelming about it. It is like saying that the majority of the inhabitants of China would agree with the Chinese Ambassador in a preference for dining at the Savoy rather than the Ritz. There are millions and millions of people living in those great central plains of the North American Continent of whom it would be nearer the truth to say that they have never heard of England, or of Ireland either, than to say that their first emotional movement is a desire to come to the rescue of either of them. It is perfectly true that the more monomaniac sort of Sinn Feiner might sometimes irritate this innocent and isolated American spirit by being pro-Irish. It is equally true that a traditional Bostonian or Virginian might irritate it by being pro-English. The only difference is that large numbers of pure Irishmen are scattered in those far places, and large numbers of pure Englishmen are not. But it is truest of all to say that neither

England nor Ireland so much as crosses the mind of most of them once in six months. Painting up large notices of 'Watch Us Grow,' making money by farming with machinery, together with an occasional hold-up with six-shooters and photographs of a beautiful murderess or divorcée, fill up the round of their good and happy lives, and fleet the time carelessly as in the golden age.

But putting aside all this vast and distant democracy, which is the real 'majority of Americans,' and confining ourselves to that older culture on the eastern coast which the critics probably had in mind, we shall find the case more comforting but not to be covered with cheap and false comfort. Now it is perfectly true that any Englishman coming to this eastern coast, as I did, finds himself not only most warmly welcomed as a guest, but most cordially complimented as an Englishman. Men recall with pride the branches of their family that belong to England or the English counties where they were rooted; and there are enthusiasms for English literature and history which are as spontaneous as patriotism itself. Something of this may be put down to a certain promptitude and flexibility in all American kindness, which is never sufficiently stodgy to be called good nature. The Englishman does sometimes wonder whether if he had been a Russian, his hosts would not have remembered remote Russian aunts and uncles and disinterred a Muscovite great-grandmother; or whether if he had come from Iceland, they would not have known as much about Icelandic sagas and been as sympathetic about the absence of Icelandic snakes. But with a fair review of the proportions of the case he will dismiss this conjecture, and come to the conclusion that a number of educated Americans are very warmly and sincerely sympathetic with England.

What I began to feel, with a certain creeping chill, was that they were only too sympathetic with England. The word sympathetic has sometimes rather a double sense. The impression I received was that all these chivalrous Southerners and men mellow with Bostonian memories were rallying to England. They were on the defensive; and it was poor old England that they were defending. Their attitude implied that somebody or something was leaving her undefended, or finding her indefensible. The burden of that hearty chorus was that England was not so black as she was painted; it seemed clear that somewhere or other she was being painted pretty black. But there was something else that made me uncomfortable; it was not only the sense of being somewhat boisterously forgiven; it was also something involving questions of power as well as morality. Then it seemed to me that a new sensation turned me hot and cold; and I felt something I have never before felt in a foreign land. Never had my father or my grandfather known that sensation; never during the great and complex and perhaps perilous expansion of our power and commerce in the last hundred years had an Englishman heard exactly that note in a human voice. England was being pitied. I, as an Englishman, was not only being pardoned but pitied. My country was beginning

to be an object of compassion, like Poland or Spain. My first emotion, full of the mood and movement of a hundred years, was one of furious anger. But the anger has given place to anxiety; and the anxiety is not yet at an end.

It is not my business here to expound my view of English politics, still less of European politics or the politics of the world; but to put down a few impressions of American travel. On many points of European politics the impression will be purely negative; I am sure that most Americans have no notion of the position of France or the position of Poland. But if English readers want the truth, I am sure this is the truth about their notion of the position of England. They are wondering, or those who are watching are wondering, whether the term of her success is come and she is going down the dark road after Prussia. Many are sorry if this is so; some are glad if it is so; but all are seriously considering the probability of its being so. And herein lay especially the horrible folly of our Black-and-Tan terrorism over the Irish people. I have noted that the newspapers told us that America had been chilled in its Irish sympathies by Irish detachment during the war. It is the painful truth that any advantage we might have had from this we ourselves immediately proceeded to destroy. Ireland might have put herself wrong with America by her attitude about Belgium, if England had not instantly proceeded to put herself more wrong by her attitude towards Ireland. It is quite true that two blacks do not make a white; but you cannot send a black to reproach people with tolerating blackness; and this is quite as true when one is a Black Brunswicker and the other a Black-and-Tan. It is true that since then England has made surprisingly sweeping concessions; concessions so large as to increase the amazement that the refusal should have been so long. But unfortunately the combination of the two rather clinches the conception of our decline. If the concession had come before the terror, it would have looked like an attempt to emancipate, and would probably have succeeded. Coming so abruptly after the terror, it looked only like an attempt to tyrannise, and an attempt that failed. It was partly an inheritance from a stupid tradition, which tried to combine what it called firmness with what it called conciliation; as if when we made up our minds to soothe a man with a five-pound note, we always took care to undo our own action by giving him a kick as well. The English politician has often done that; though there is nothing to be said of such a fool, except that he has wasted a fiver. But in this case he gave the kick first, received a kicking in return, and then gave up the money; and it was hard for the bystanders to say anything except that he had been badly beaten. The combination and sequence of events seems almost as if it were arranged to suggest the dark and ominous parallel. The first action looked only too like the invasion of Belgium, and the second like the evacuation of Belgium. So that vast and silent crowd in the West looked at the British Empire, as men look at a great tower that has begun to lean. Thus it was that while I found real pleasure, I could not find unrelieved consolation in the sincere compliments paid to my country by so many cultivated Americans; their

memories of homely corners of historic counties from which their fathers came, of the cathedral that dwarfs the town, or the inn at the turning of the road. There was something in their voices and the look in their eyes which from the first disturbed me. So I have heard good Englishmen, who died afterwards the death of soldiers, cry aloud in 1914, 'It seems impossible, of those jolly Bavarians!' or, 'I will never believe it, when I think of the time I had at Heidelberg!'

But there are other things besides the parallel of Prussia or the problem of Ireland. The American press is much freer than our own; the American public is much more familiar with the discussion of corruption than our own; and it is much more conscious of the corruption of our politics than we are. Almost any man in America may speak of the Marconi Case; many a man in England does not even know what it means. Many imagine that it had something to do with the propriety of politicians speculating on the Stock Exchange. So that it means a great deal to Americans to say that one figure in that drama is ruling India and another is ruling Palestine. And this brings me to another problem, which is also dealt with much more openly in America than in England. I mention it here only because it is a perfect model of the misunderstandings in the modern world. If any one asks for an example of exactly how the important part of every story is left out, and even the part that is reported is not understood, he could hardly have a stronger case than the story of Henry Ford of Detroit.

When I was in Detroit I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Ford, and it really was a pleasure. He is a man quite capable of views which I think silly to the point of insanity; but he is not the vulgar benevolent boss. It must be admitted that he is a millionaire; but he cannot really be convicted of being a philanthropist. He is not a man who merely wants to run people; it is rather his views that run him, and perhaps run away with him. He has a distinguished and sensitive face; he really invented things himself, unlike most men who profit by inventions; he is something of an artist and not a little of a fighter. A man of that type is always capable of being wildly wrong, especially in the sectarian atmosphere of America; and Mr. Ford has been wrong before and may be wrong now. He is chiefly known in England for a project which I think very preposterous; that of the Peace Ship, which came to Europe during the war. But he is not known in England at all in connection with a much more important campaign, which he has conducted much more recently and with much more success; a campaign against the Jews like one of the Anti-Semitic campaigns of the Continent. Now any one who knows anything of America knows exactly what the Peace Ship would be like. It was a national combination of imagination and ignorance, which has at least some of the beauty of innocence. Men living in those huge, hedgeless inland plains know nothing about frontiers or the tragedy of a fight for freedom; they know nothing of alarum and armaments or the peril of a high civilisation poised like a precious statue within reach of a mailed fist. They are accustomed to a cosmopolitan

citizenship, in which men of all bloods mingle and in which men of all creeds are counted equal. Their highest moral boast is humanitarianism; their highest mental boast is enlightenment. In a word, they are the very last men in the world who would seem likely to pride themselves on a prejudice against the Jews. They have no religion in particular, except a sincere sentiment which they would call 'true Christianity,' and which specially forbids an attack on the Jews. They have a patriotism which prides itself on assimilating all types, including the Jews. Mr. Ford is a pure product of this pacific world, as was sufficiently proved by his pacifism. If a man of that sort has discovered that there is a Jewish problem, it is because there is a Jewish problem. It is certainly not because there is an Anti-Jewish prejudice. For if there had been any amount of such racial and religious prejudice, he would have been about the very last sort of man to have it. His particular part of the world would have been the very last place to produce it. We may well laugh at the Peace Ship, and its wild course and inevitable shipwreck; but remember that its very wildness was an attempt to sail as far as possible from the castle of Front-de-Boeuf. Everything that made him Anti-War should have prevented him from being Anti-Semite. We may mock him for being mad on peace; but we cannot say that he was so mad on peace that he made war on Israel.

It happened that, when I was in America, I had just published some studies on Palestine; and I was besieged by Rabbis lamenting my 'prejudice.' I pointed out that they would have got hold of the wrong word, even if they had not got hold of the wrong man. As a point of personal autobiography, I do not happen to be a man who dislikes Jews; though I believe that some men do. I have had Jews among my most intimate and faithful friends since my boyhood, and I hope to have them till I die. But even if I did have a dislike of Jews, it would be illogical to call that dislike a prejudice. Prejudice is a very lucid Latin word meaning the bias which a man has before he considers a case. I might be said to be prejudiced against a Hairy Ainu because of his name, for I have never been on terms of such intimacy with him as to correct my preconceptions. But if after moving about in the modern world and meeting Jews, knowing Jews, doing business with Jews, and reading and hearing about Jews, I came to the conclusion that I did not like Jews, my conclusion certainly would not be a prejudice. It would simply be an opinion; and one I should be perfectly entitled to hold; though as a matter of fact I do not hold it. No extravagance of hatred merely following on experience of Jews can properly be called a prejudice.

Now the point is that this new American Anti-Semitism springs from experience and nothing but experience. There is no prejudice for it to spring from. Or rather the prejudice is all the other way. All the traditions of that democracy, and very creditable traditions too, are in favour of toleration and a sort of idealistic indifference. The sympathies in which these nineteenth-century people were

reared were all against Front-de-Boeuf and in favour of Rebecca. They inherited a prejudice against Anti-Semitism; a prejudice of Anti-Anti-Semitism. These people of the plains have found the Jewish problem exactly as they might have struck oil; because it is there, and not even because they were looking for it. Their view of the problem, like their use of the oil, is not always satisfactory; and with parts of it I entirely disagree. But the point is that the thing which I call a problem, and others call a prejudice, has now appeared in broad daylight in a new country where there is no priestcraft, no feudalism, no ancient superstition to explain it. It has appeared because it is a problem; and those are the best friends of the Jews, including many of the Jews themselves, who are trying to find a solution. That is the meaning of the incident of Mr. Henry Ford of Detroit; and you will hardly hear an intelligible word about it in England.

The talk of prejudice against the Japs is not unlike the talk of prejudice against the Jews. Only in this case our indifference has really the excuse of ignorance. We used to lecture the Russians for oppressing the Jews, before we heard the word Bolshevist and began to lecture them for being oppressed by the Jews. In the same way we have long lectured the Californians for oppressing the Japs, without allowing for the possibility of their foreseeing that the oppression may soon be the other way. As in the other case, it may be a persecution but it is not a prejudice. The Californians know more about the Japanese than we do; and our own colonists when they are placed in the same position generally say the same thing. I will not attempt to deal adequately here with the vast international and diplomatic problems which arise with the name of the new power in the Far East. It is possible that Japan, having imitated European militarism, may imitate European pacifism. I cannot honestly pretend to know what the Japanese mean by the one any more than by the other. But when Englishmen, especially English Liberals like myself, take a superior and censorious attitude towards Americans and especially Californians, I am moved to make a final remark. When a considerable number of Englishmen talk of the grave contending claims of our friendship with Japan and our friendship with America, when they finally tend in a sort of summing up to dwell on the superior virtues of Japan, I may be permitted to make a single comment.

We are perpetually boring the world and each other with talk about the bonds that bind us to America. We are perpetually crying aloud that England and America are very much alike, especially England. We are always insisting that the two are identical in all the things in which they most obviously differ. We are always saying that both stand for democracy, when we should not consent to stand their democracy for half a day. We are always saying that at least we are all Anglo-Saxons, when we are descended from Romans and Normans and Britons and Danes, and they are descended from Irishmen and Italians and Slavs and Germans. We tell a people whose very existence is a revolt against the British

Crown that they are passionately devoted to the British Constitution. We tell a nation whose whole policy has been isolation and independence that with us she can bear safely the White Man's Burden of universal empire. We tell a continent crowded with Irishmen to thank God that the Saxon can always rule the Celt. We tell a populace whose very virtues are lawless that together we uphold the Reign of Law. We recognise our own law-abiding character in people who make laws that neither they nor anybody else can abide. We congratulate them on clinging to all they have cast away, and on imitating everything which they came into existence to insult. And when we have established all these nonsensical analogies with a nonexistent nation, we wait until there is a crisis in which we really are at one with America, and then we falter and threaten to fail her. In a battle where we really are of one blood, the blood of the great white race throughout the world, when we really have one language, the fundamental alphabet of Cadmus and the script of Rome, when we really do represent the same reign of law, the common conscience of Christendom and the morals of men baptized, when we really have an implicit faith and honour and type of freedom to summon up our souls as with trumpets--then many of us begin to weaken and waver and wonder whether there is not something very nice about little yellow men, whose heroic stories revolve round polygamy and suicide, and whose heroes wore two swords and worshipped the ancestors of the Mikado.