

CHAPTER X.

EVIL CANNOT BE SUPPRESSED BY THE PHYSICAL FORCE OF THE GOVERNMENT--THE MORAL PROGRESS OF HUMANITY IS BROUGHT ABOUT NOT ONLY BY INDIVIDUAL RECOGNITION OF TRUTH, BUT ALSO THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PUBLIC OPINION.

Christianity Destroys the State--But Which is Most Necessary:

Christianity or the State?--There are Some who Assert the Necessity of a State Organization, and Others who Deny it, both Arguing from same First Principles--Neither Contention can be Proved by Abstract Argument--The Question must be Decided by the Stage in the Development of Conscience of Each Man, which will either Prevent or Allow him to Support a Government Organization--Recognition of the Futility and Immorality of Supporting a State Organization Contrary to Christian Principles will Decide the Question for Every Man, in Spite of any Action on Part of the State--Argument of those who Defend the Government, that it is a Form of Social Life, Needed to Protect the Good from the Wicked, till all Nations and all Members of each Nation have Become Christians--The Most Wicked are Always those in Power--The whole History of Humanity is the History of the Forcible Appropriation of Power by the Wicked and their Oppression of the Good--The Recognition by Governments of the Necessity of Opposing Evil by Force is Equivalent to Suicide on their Part--The Abolition of State-violence cannot Increase the Sum Total of Acts of Violence--The Suppression of the Use of Force is not only Possible, but is even Taking Place before Our Eyes--But it will Never be Suppressed by the Violence of Government, but through Men who have Attained Power by

Evidence Recognizing its Emptiness and Becoming Better and Less Capable of Using Force--Individual Men and also Whole Nations Pass Through this Process--By this Means Christianity is Diffused Through Consciousness of Men, not only in Spite of Use of Violence by Government, but even Through its Action, and therefore the Suppression is not to be Dreaded, but is Brought About by the National Progress of Life--Objection of those who Defend State Organization that Universal Adoption of Christianity is hardly Likely to be Realized at any Time--The General Adoption of the Truths of Christianity is being Brought About not only by the Gradual and Inward Means, that is, by Knowledge of the Truth, Prophetic Insight, and Recognition of the Emptiness of Power, and Renunciation of it by Individuals, but also by Another External Means, the Acceptance of a New Truth by Whole Masses of Men on a Lower Level of Development Through Simple Confidence in their Leaders--When a Certain Stage in the Diffusion of a Truth has been Reached, a Public Opinion is Created which Impels a Whole Mass of Men, formerly Antagonistic to the New Truth, to Accept it--And therefore all Men may Quickly be Brought to Renounce the use of Violence when once a Christian Public Opinion is Established--The Conviction of Force being Necessary Hinders the Establishment of a Christian Public Opinion--The Use of Violence Leads Men to Distrust the Spiritual Force which is the Only Force by which they Advance--Neither Nations nor Individuals have been really Subjugated by Force, but only by Public Opinion, which no Force can Resist--Savage Nations and Savage Men can only be Subdued by the Diffusion of a Christian Standard among them, while actually Christian Nations in order to Subdue them do all they can to Destroy a Christian

Standard--These Fruitless Attempts to Civilize Savages Cannot be Adduced as Proofs that Men Cannot be Subdued by Christianity--Violence by Corrupting Public Opinion, only Hinders the Social Organization from being What it Ought to Be--And by the Use of Violence being Suppressed, a Christian Public Opinion would be Established--Whatever might be the Result of the Suppression of Use of Force, this Unknown Future could not be Worse than the Present Condition, and so there is no Need to Dread it--To Attain Knowledge of the Unknown, and to Move Toward it, is the Essence of Life.

Christianity in its true sense puts an end to government. So it was understood at its very commencement; it was for that cause that Christ was crucified. So it has always been understood by people who were not under the necessity of justifying a Christian government. Only from the time that the heads of government assumed an external and nominal Christianity, men began to invent all the impossible, cunningly devised theories by means of which Christianity can be reconciled with government. But no honest and serious-minded man of our day can help seeing the incompatibility of true Christianity--the doctrine of meekness, forgiveness of injuries, and love--with government, with its pomp, acts of violence, executions, and wars. The profession of true Christianity not only excludes the possibility of recognizing government, but even destroys its very foundations.

But if it is so, and we are right in saying that Christianity is incompatible with government, then the question naturally presents itself: which is more necessary to the good of humanity, in which way is men's happiness best to be secured, by maintaining the organization of government or by destroying it and replacing it by Christianity?

Some people maintain that government is more necessary for humanity, that the destruction of the state organization would involve the destruction of all that humanity has gained, that the state has been and still is the only form in which humanity can develop. The evil which we see among peoples living under a government organization they attribute not to that type of society, but to its abuses, which, they say, can be corrected without destroying it, and thus humanity, without discarding the state organization, can develop and attain a high degree of happiness. And men of this way of thinking bring forward in support of their views arguments which they think irrefutable drawn from history, philosophy, and even religion. But there are men who hold on the contrary that, as there was a time when humanity lived without government, such an organization is temporary, and that a time must come when men need a new organization, and that that time has come now. And men of this way of thinking also bring forward in support of their views arguments which they think irrefutable from philosophy, history, and religion.

Volumes may be written in defense of the former view (and volumes indeed have long ago been written and more will still be written on that side), but much also can be written against it (and much also, and most brilliantly, has been written--though more recently --on this side).

And it cannot be proved, as the champions of the state maintain, that the destruction of government involves a social chaos, mutual spoliation and murder, the destruction of all social institutions, and the return of mankind to barbarism. Nor can it be proved as the opponents of government maintain that men have already become so wise and good that they will not spoil or murder one another, but will prefer peaceful associations to hostilities; that of their own accord, unaided by the state, they will make all the arrangements that they need, and that therefore government, far from being any aid, under show of guarding men exerts a pernicious and brutalizing influence over them. It is impossible to prove either of these contentions by abstract reasoning. Still less possible is it to prove them by experiment, since the whole matter turns on the question, ought we to try the experiment? The question whether or not the time has come to make an end of government would be unanswerable, except that there exists another living means of settling it beyond dispute.

We may dispute upon the question whether the nestlings are ready

to do without the mother-hen and to come out of the eggs, or whether they are not yet advanced enough. But the young birds will decide the question without any regard for our arguments when they find themselves cramped for space in the eggs. Then they will begin to try them with their beaks and come out of them of their own accord.

It is the same with the question whether the time has come to do away with the governmental type of society and to replace it by a new type. If a man, through the growth of a higher conscience, can no longer comply with the demands of government, he finds himself cramped by it and at the same time no longer needs its protection. When this comes to pass, the question whether men are ready to discard the governmental type is solved. And the conclusion will be as final for them as for the young birds hatched out of the eggs. Just as no power in the world can put them back into the shells, so can no power in the world bring men again under the governmental type of society when once they have outgrown it.

"It may well be that government was necessary and is still necessary for all the advantages which you attribute to it," says the man who has mastered the Christian theory of life. "I only know that on the one hand, government is no longer necessary for ME, and on the other hand, I can no longer carry out the measures that are necessary to the existence of a government. Settle for

yourselves what you need for your life. I cannot prove the need or the harm of governments in general. I know only what I need and do not need, what I can do and what I cannot. I know that I do not need to divide myself off from other nations, and therefore I cannot admit that I belong exclusively to any state or nation, or that I owe allegiance to any government. I know that I do not need all the government institutions organized within the state, and therefore I cannot deprive people who need my labor to give it in the form of taxes to institutions which I do not need, which for all I know may be pernicious. I know that I have no need of the administration or of courts of justice founded upon force, and therefore I can take no part in either. I know that I do not need to attack and slaughter other nations or to defend myself from them with arms, and therefore I can take no part in wars or preparations for wars. It may well be that there are people who cannot help regarding all this as necessary and indispensable. I cannot dispute the question with them, I can only speak for myself; but I can say with absolute certainty that I do not need it, and that I cannot do it. And I do not need this and I cannot do it, not because such is my own, my personal will, but because such is the will of him who sent me into life, and gave me an indubitable law for my conduct through life."

Whatever arguments may be advanced in support of the contention that the suppression of government authority would be injurious and would lead to great calamities, men who have once outgrown the

governmental form of society cannot go back to it again. And all the reasoning in the world cannot make the man who has outgrown the governmental form of society take part in actions disallowed by his conscience, any more than the full-grown bird can be made to return into the egg-shell.

"But even it be so," say the champions of the existing order of things, "still the suppression of government violence can only be possible and desirable when all men have become Christians. So long as among people nominally Christians there are unchristian wicked men, who for the gratification of their own lusts are ready to do harm to others, the suppression of government authority, far from being a blessing to others, would only increase their miseries. The suppression of the governmental type of society is not only undesirable so long as there is only a minority of true Christians; it would not even be desirable if the whole of a nation were Christians, but among and around them were still unchristian men of other nations. For these unchristian men would rob, outrage, and kill the Christians with impunity and would make their lives miserable. All that would result, would be that the bad would oppress and outrage the good with impunity. And therefore the authority of government must not be suppressed till all the wicked and rapacious people in the world are extinct. And since this will either never be, or at least cannot be for a long time to come, in spite of the efforts of individual Christians to be independent of government authority, it ought to be maintained

in the interests of the majority. The champions of government assert that without it the wicked will oppress and outrage the good, and that the power of the government enables the good to resist the wicked."

But in this assertion the champions of the existing order of things take for granted the proposition they want to prove. When they say that except for the government the bad would oppress the good, they take it for granted that the good are those who at the present time are in possession of power, and the bad are those who are in subjection to it. But this is just what wants proving. It would only be true if the custom of our society were what is, or rather is supposed to be, the custom in China; that is, that the good always rule, and that directly those at the head of government cease to be better than those they rule over, the citizens are bound to remove them. This is supposed to be the custom in China. In reality it is not so and can never be so. For to remove the heads of a government ruling by force, it is not the right alone, but the power to do so that is needed. So that even in China this is only an imaginary custom. And in our Christian world we do not even suppose such a custom, and we have nothing on which to build up the supposition that it is the good or the superior who are in power; in reality it is those who have seized power and who keep it for their own and their retainers' benefit.

The good cannot seize power, nor retain it; to do this men must love power. And love of power is inconsistent with goodness; but quite consistent with the very opposite qualities--pride, cunning, cruelty.

Without the aggrandizement of self and the abasement of others, without hypocrisies and deceptions, without prisons, fortresses, executions, and murders, no power can come into existence or be maintained.

"If the power of government is suppressed the more wicked will oppress the less wicked," say the champions of state authority. But when the Egyptians conquered the Jews, the Romans conquered the Greeks, and the Barbarians conquered the Romans, is it possible that all the conquerors were always better than those they conquered? And the same with the transitions of power within a state from one personage to another: has the power always passed from a worse person to a better one? When Louis XVI. was removed and Robespierre came to power, and afterward Napoleon--who ruled then, a better man or a worse? And when were better men in power, when the Versaillist party or when the Commune was in power? When Charles I. was ruler, or when Cromwell? And when Peter III. was Tzar, or when he was killed and Catherine was Tzaritsa in one-half of Russia and Pougachef ruled the other? Which was bad then, and which was good? All men who happen to be in authority assert that their authority is necessary to keep the bad from oppressing the

good, assuming that they themselves are the good PAR EXCELLENCE, who protect other good people from the bad.

But ruling means using force, and using force means doing to him to whom force is used, what he does not like and what he who uses the force would certainly not like done to himself. Consequently ruling means doing to others what we would not they should do unto us, that is, doing wrong.

To submit means to prefer suffering to using force. And to prefer suffering to using force means to be good, or at least less wicked than those who do unto others what they would not like themselves.

And therefore, in all probability, not the better but the worse have always ruled and are ruling now. There may be bad men among those who are ruled, but it cannot be that those who are better have generally ruled those who are worse.

It might be possible to suppose this with the inexact heathen definition of good; but with the clear Christian definition of good and evil, it is impossible to imagine it.

If the more or less good, and the more or less bad cannot be distinguished in the heathen world, the Christian conception of good and evil has so clearly defined the characteristics of the

good and the wicked, that it is impossible to confound them. According to Christ's teaching the good are those who are meek and long-suffering, do not resist evil by force, forgive injuries, and love their enemies; those are wicked who exalt themselves, oppress, strive, and use force. Therefore by Christ's teaching there can be no doubt whether the good are to be found among rulers or ruled, and whether the wicked are among the ruled or the rulers. Indeed it is absurd even to speak of Christians ruling.

Non-Christians, that is those who find the aim of their lives in earthly happiness, must always rule Christians, the aim of whose lives is the renunciation of such earthly happiness.

This difference has always existed and has become more and more defined as the Christian religion has been more widely diffused and more correctly understood.

The more widely true Christianity was diffused and the more it penetrated men's conscience, the more impossible it was for Christians to be rulers, and the easier it became for non-Christians to rule them.

"To get rid of governmental violence in a society in which all are not true Christians, will only result in the wicked dominating the good and oppressing them with impunity," say the champions of the existing order of things. But it has never been, and cannot be

otherwise. So it has always been from the beginning of the world, and so it is still. THE WICKED WILL ALWAYS DOMINATE THE GOOD, AND WILL ALWAYS OPPRESS THEM. Cain overpowered Abel, the cunning Jacob oppressed the guileless Esau and was in his turn deceived by Laban, Caiaphas and Pilate oppressed Christ, the Roman emperors oppressed Seneca, Epictetus, and the good Romans who lived in their times. John IV. with his favorites, the syphilitic drunken Peter with his buffoons, the vicious Catherine with her paramours, ruled and oppressed the industrious religious Russians of their times.

William is ruling over the Germans, Stambouloff over the Bulgarians, the Russian officials over the Russian people. The Germans have dominated the Italians, now they dominate the Hungarians and Slavonians; the Turks have dominated and still dominate the Slavonians and Greeks; the English dominate the Hindoos, the Mongolians dominate the Chinese.

So that whether governmental violence is suppressed or not, the position of good men, in being oppressed by the wicked, will be unchanged.

To terrify men with the prospect of the wicked dominating the good is impossible, for that is just what has always been, and is now, and cannot but be.

The whole history of pagan times is nothing but a recital of the incidents and means by which the more wicked gained possession of power over the less wicked, and retained it by cruelties and deceptions, ruling over the good under the pretense of guarding the right and protecting the good from the wicked. All the revolutions in history are only examples of the more wicked seizing power and oppressing the good. In declaring that if their authority did not exist the more wicked would oppress the good, the ruling authorities only show their disinclination to let other oppressors come to power who would like to snatch it from them.

But in asserting this they only accuse themselves, say that their power, i. e., violence, is needed to defend men from other possible oppressors in the present or the future [see footnote].

[Footnote: I may quote in this connection the amazingly naive and comic declaration of the Russian authorities, the oppressors of other nationalities--the Poles, the Germans of the Baltic provinces, and the Jews. The Russian Government has oppressed its subjects for centuries, and has never troubled itself about the Little Russians of Poland, or the Letts of the Baltic provinces, or the Russian peasants, exploited by everyone. And now it has all of a sudden become the champion of the oppressed--the very oppressed whom it is itself oppressing.]

The weakness of the use of violence lies in the fact that all the arguments brought forward by oppressors in their own defense can with even better reason be advanced against them. They plead the danger of violence--most often imagined in the future--but they are all the while continuing to practice actual violence themselves. "You say that men used to pillage and murder in the past, and that you are afraid that they will pillage and murder one another if your power were no more. That may happen--or it may not happen. But the fact that you ruin thousands of men in prisons, fortresses, galleys, and exile, break up millions of families and ruin millions of men, physically as well as morally, in the army, that fact is not an imaginary but a real act of violence, which, according to your own argument, one ought to oppose by violence. And so you are yourselves these wicked men against whom, according to your own argument, it is absolutely necessary to use violence," the oppressed are sure to say to their oppressors. And non-Christian men always do say, and think and act on this reasoning. If the oppressed are more wicked than their oppressors, they attack them and try to overthrow them; and in favorable circumstances they succeed in overthrowing them, or what is more common, they rise into the ranks of the oppressors and assist in their acts of violence.

So that the very violence which the champions of government hold up as a terror--pretending that except for its oppressive power

the wicked would oppress the good--has really always existed and will exist in human society. And therefore the suppression of state violence cannot in any case be the cause of increased oppression of the good by the wicked.

If state violence ceased, there would be acts of violence perhaps on the part of different people, other than those who had done deeds of violence before. But the total amount of violence could not in any case be increased by the mere fact of power passing from one set of men to another.

"State violence can only cease when there are no more wicked men in society," say the champions of the existing order of things, assuming in this of course that since there will always be wicked men, it can never cease. And that would be right enough if it were the case, as they assume, that the oppressors are always the best of men, and that the sole means of saving men from evil is by violence. Then, indeed, violence could never cease. But since this is not the case, but quite the contrary, that it is not the better oppress the worse, but the worse oppress the better, and since violence will never put an end to evil, and there is, moreover, another means of putting an end to it, the assertion that violence will never cease is incorrect. The use of violence grows less and less and evidently must disappear. But this will not come to pass, as some champions of the existing order imagine, through the oppressed becoming better and better under the

influence of government (on the contrary, its influence causes their continual degradation), but through the fact that all men are constantly growing better and better of themselves, so that even the most wicked, who are in power, will become less and less wicked, till at last they are so good as to be incapable of using violence.

The progressive movement of humanity does not proceed from the better elements in society seizing power and making those who are subject to them better, by forcible means, as both conservatives and revolutionists imagine. It proceeds first and principally from the fact that all men in general are advancing steadily and undeviatingly toward a more and more conscious assimilation of the Christian theory of life; and secondly, from the fact that, even apart from conscious spiritual life, men are unconsciously brought into a more Christian attitude to life by the very process of one set of men grasping the power, and again being replaced by others.

The worse elements of society, gaining possession of power, under the sobering influence which always accompanies power, grow less and less cruel, and become incapable of using cruel forms of violence.

Consequently others are able to seize their place, and the same process of softening and, so to say, unconscious Christianizing goes on with them. It is something like the process of ebullition. The majority of men, having the non-Christian view of life, always strive for power and struggle to obtain it. In this struggle the most cruel, the coarsest,

the least Christian elements of society overpower the most gentle, well-disposed, and Christian, and rise by means of their violence to the upper ranks of society. And in them is Christ's prophecy fulfilled: "Woe to you that are rich! woe unto you that are full! woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you!" For the men who are in possession of power and all that results from it--glory and wealth--and have attained the various aims they set before themselves, recognize the vanity of it all and return to the position from which they came. Charles V., John IV., Alexander I., recognizing the emptiness and the evil of power, renounced it because they were incapable of using violence for their own benefit as they had done.

But they are not the solitary examples of this recognition of the emptiness and evil of power. Everyone who gains a position of power he has striven for, every general, every minister, every millionaire, every petty official who has gained the place he has coveted for ten years, every rich peasant who has laid by some hundred rubles, passes through this unconscious process of softening.

And not only individual men, but societies of men, whole nations, pass through this process.

The seductions of power, and all the wealth, honor, and luxury it gives, seem a sufficient aim for men's efforts only so long as they are unattained. Directly a man reaches them he sees all

their vanity, and they gradually lose all their power of attraction. They are like clouds which have form and beauty only from the distance; directly one ascends into them, all their splendor vanishes.

Men who are in possession of power and wealth, sometimes even those who have gained for themselves their power and wealth, but more often their heirs, cease to be so eager for power, and so cruel in their efforts to obtain it.

Having learnt by experience, under the operation of Christian influence, the vanity of all that is gained by violence, men sometimes in one, sometimes in several generations lose the vices which are generated by the passion for power and wealth. They become less cruel and so cannot maintain their position, and are expelled from power by others less Christian and more wicked. Thus they return to a rank of society lower in position, but higher in morality, raising thereby the average level of Christian consciousness in men. But directly after them again the worst, coarsest, least Christian elements of society rise to the top, and are subjected to the same process as their predecessors, and again in a generation or so, seeing the vanity of what is gained by violence, and having imbibed Christianity, they come down again among the oppressed, and their place is again filled by new oppressors, less brutal than former oppressors, though more so than those they oppress. So that, although power remains

externally the same as it was, with every change of the men in power there is a constant increase of the number of men who have been brought by experience to the necessity of assimilating the Christian conception of life, and with every change--though it is the coarsest, crudest, and least Christian who come into possession of power, they are less coarse and cruel and more Christian than their predecessors when they gained possession of power.

Power selects and attracts the worst elements of society, transforms them, improves and softens them, and returns them to society.

"Such is the process by means of which Christianity, in spite of the hindrances to human progress resulting from the violence of power, gains more and more hold of men. Christianity penetrates to the consciousness of men, not only in spite of the violence of power, but also by means of it.

And therefore the assertion of the champions of the state, that if the power of government were suppressed the wicked would oppress the good, not only fails to show that that is to be dreaded, since it is just what happens now, but proves, on the contrary, that it is governmental power which enables the wicked to oppress the good, and is the evil most desirable to suppress, and that it is being gradually suppressed in the natural course of things.

"But if it be true that governmental power will disappear when those in power become so Christian that they renounce power of their own accord, and there are no men found willing to take their place, and even if this process is already going on," say the champions of the existing order, "when will that come to pass? If, after eighteen hundred years, there are still so many eager for power, and so few anxious to obey, there seems no likelihood of its happening very soon--or indeed of its ever happening at all.

"Even if there are, as there have always been, some men who prefer renouncing power to enjoying it, the mass of men in reserve, who prefer dominion to subjection, is so great that it is difficult to imagine a time when the number will be exhausted.

"Before this Christianizing process could so affect all men one after another that they would pass from the heathen to the Christian conception of life, and would voluntarily abandon power and wealth, it would be necessary that all the coarse, half-savage men, completely incapable of appreciating Christianity or acting upon it, of whom there are always a great many in every Christian society, should be converted to Christianity. More than this, all the savage and absolutely non-Christian peoples, who are so numerous outside the Christian world, must also be converted. And therefore, even if we admit that this Christianizing process will

some day affect everyone, still, judging by the amount of progress it has made in eighteen hundred years, it will be many times eighteen centuries before it will do so. And it is therefore impossible and unprofitable to think at present of anything so impracticable as the suppression of authority. We ought only to try to put authority into the best hands."

And this criticism would be perfectly just, if the transition from one conception of life to another were only accomplished by the single process of all men, separately and successively, realizing, each for himself, the emptiness of power, and reaching Christian truth by the inner spiritual path. That process goes on unceasingly, and men are passing over to Christianity one after another by this inner way.

But there is also another external means by which men reach Christianity and by which the transition is less gradual.

This transition from one organization of life to another is not accomplished by degrees like the sand running through the hourglass grain after grain. It is more like the water filling a vessel floating on water. At first the water only runs in slowly on one side, but as the vessel grows heavier it suddenly begins to sink, and almost instantaneously fills with water.

It is just the same with the transitions of mankind from one

conception--and so from one organization of life--to another. At first only gradually and slowly, one after another, men attain to the new truth by the inner spiritual way, and follow it out in life. But when a certain point in the diffusion of the truth has been reached, it is suddenly assimilated by everyone, not by the inner way, but, as it were, involuntarily.

That is why the champions of the existing order are wrong in arguing that, since only a small section of mankind has passed over to Christianity in eighteen centuries, it must be many times eighteen centuries before all the remainder do the same. For in that argument they do not take into account any other means, besides the inward spiritual one, by which men assimilate a new truth and pass from one order of life to another.

Men do not only assimilate a truth through recognizing it by prophetic insight, or by experience of life. When the truth has become sufficiently widely diffused, men at a lower stage of development accept it all at once simply through confidence in those who have reached it by the inner spiritual way, and are applying it to life.

Every new truth, by which the order of human life is changed and humanity is advanced, is at first accepted by only a very small number of men who understand it through inner spiritual intuition. The remainder of mankind who accepted on trust the preceding truth

on which the existing order is based, are always opposed to the diffusion of the new truth.

But seeing that, to begin with, men do not stand still, but are steadily advancing to a greater recognition of the truth and a closer adaptation of their life to it, and secondly, all men in varying degrees according to their age, their education, and their race are capable of understanding the new truths, at first those who are nearest to the men who have attained the new truth by spiritual intuition, slowly and one by one, but afterward more and more quickly, pass over to the new truth. Thus the number of men who accept the new truth becomes greater and greater, and the truth becomes more and more comprehensible.

And thus more confidence is aroused in the remainder, who are at a less advanced stage of capacity for understanding the truth. And it becomes easier for them to grasp it, and an increasing number accept it.

And so the movement goes on more and more quickly, and on an ever-increasing scale, like a snowball, till at last a public opinion in harmony with the new truth is created, and then the whole mass of men is carried over all at once by its momentum to the new truth and establishes a new social order in accordance with it.

Those men who accept a new truth when it has gained a certain

degree of acceptance, always pass over all at once in masses. They are like the ballast with which every ship is always loaded, at once to keep it upright and enable it to sail properly. If there were no ballast, the ship would not be low enough in the water, and would shift its position at the slightest change in its conditions. This ballast, which strikes one at first as superfluous and even as hindering the progress of the vessel, is really indispensable to its good navigation.

It is the same with the mass of mankind, who not individually, but always in a mass, under the influence of a new social idea pass all at once from one organization of life to another. This mass always hinders, by its inertia, frequent and rapid revolutions in the social order which have not been sufficiently proved by human experience. And it delays every truth a long while till it has stood the test of prolonged struggles, and has thoroughly permeated the consciousness of humanity.

And that is why it is a mistake to say that because only a very small minority of men has assimilated Christianity in eighteen centuries, it must take many times as many centuries for all mankind to assimilate it, and that since that time is so far off we who live in the present need not even think about it. It is a mistake, because the men at a lower stage of culture, the men and the nations who are represented as the obstacle to the realization of the Christian order of life, are the very people who always

pass over in masses all at once to any truth that has once been recognized by public opinion.

And therefore the transformation of human life, through which men in power will renounce it, and there will be none anxious to take their place, will not come only by all men consciously and separately assimilating the Christian conception of life. It will come when a Christian public opinion has arisen, so definite and easily comprehensible as to reach the whole of the inert mass, which is not able to attain truth by its own intuition, and therefore is always under the sway of public opinion.

Public opinion arises spontaneously and spreads for hundreds and thousands of years, but it has the power of working on men by infection, and with great rapidity gains a hold on great numbers of men.

"But," say the champions of the existing order, "even if it is true that public opinion, when it has attained a certain degree of definiteness and precision, can convert the inert mass of men outside the Christian world--the non-Christian races--as well as the coarse and depraved who are living in its midst, what proofs have we that this Christian public opinion has arisen and is able to replace force and render it unnecessary.

"We must not give up force, by which the existing order is

maintained, and by relying on the vague and impalpable influence of public opinion expose Christians to the risk of being pillaged, murdered, and outraged in every way by the savages inside and outside of civilized society.

"Since, even supported by the use of force, we can hardly control the non-Christian elements which are always ready to pour down on us and to destroy all that has been gained by civilization, is it likely that public opinion could take the place of force and render us secure? And besides, how are we to find the moment when public opinion has become strong enough to be able to replace the use of force? To reject the use of force and trust to public opinion to defend us would be as insane as to remove all weapons of defense in a menagerie, and then to let loose all the lions and tigers, relying on the fact that the animals seemed peaceable when kept in their cages and held in check by red-hot irons. And therefore people in power, who have been put in positions of authority by fate or by God, have not the right to run the risk, ruining all that has been gained by civilization, just because they want to try an experiment to see whether public opinion is or is not able to replace the protection given by authority."

A French writer, forgotten now, Alphonse Karr, said somewhere, trying to show the impossibility of doing away with the death penalty: "Que messieurs les assassins commencent par nous donner l'exemple." Often have I heard this BON MOT repeated by men who

thought that these words were a witty and convincing argument against the abolition of capital punishment. And yet all the erroneousness of the argument of those who consider that governments cannot give up the use of force till all people are capable of doing the same, could not be more clearly expressed than it is in that epigram.

"Let the murderers," say the champions of state violence, "set us the example by giving up murder and then we will give it up." But the murderers say just the same, only with much more right. They say: "Let those who have undertaken to teach us and guide us set us the example of giving up legal murder, and then we will imitate them." And they say this, not as a jest, but seriously, because it is the actual state of the case.

"We cannot give up the use of violence, because we are surrounded by violent ruffians." Nothing in our days hinders the progress of humanity and the establishment of the organization corresponding to its present development more than this false reasoning. Those in authority are convinced that men are only guided and only progress through the use of force, and therefore they confidently make use of it to support the existing organization. The existing order is maintained, not by force, but by public opinion, the action of which is disturbed by the use of force. So that the effect of using force is to disturb and to weaken the very thing it tries to maintain.

Violence, even in the most favorable case, when it is not used simply for some personal aims of those in power, always punishes under the one inelastic formula of the law what has long before been condemned by public opinion. But there is this difference, that while public opinion censures and condemns all the acts opposed to the moral law, including the most varied cases in its reprobation, the law which rests on violence only condemns and punishes a certain very limited range of acts, and by so doing seems to justify all other acts of the same kind which do not come under its scope.

Public opinion ever since the time of Moses has regarded covetousness, profligacy, and cruelty as wrong, and censured them accordingly. And it condemns every kind of manifestation of covetousness, not only the appropriation of the property of others by force or fraud or trickery, but even the cruel abuse of wealth; it condemns every form of profligacy, whether with concubine, slave, divorced woman, or even one's own wife; it condemns every kind of cruelty, whether shown in blows, in ill-treatment, or in murder, not only of men, but even of animals. The law resting on force only punishes certain forms of covetousness, such as robbery and swindling, certain forms of profligacy and cruelty, such as conjugal infidelity, murder, and wounding. And in this way it seems to countenance all the manifestations of covetousness, profligacy, and cruelty which do not come under its narrow

definition.

But besides corrupting public opinion, the use of force leads men to the fatal conviction that they progress, not through the spiritual impulse which impels them to the attainment of truth and its realization in life, and which constitutes the only source of every progressive movement of humanity, but by means of violence, the very force which, far from leading men to truth, always carries them further away from it. This is a fatal error, because it leads men to neglect the chief force underlying their life--their spiritual activity--and to turn all their attention and energy to the use of violence, which is superficial, sluggish, and most generally pernicious in its action.

They make the same mistake as men who, trying to set a steam engine in motion, should turn its wheels round with their hands, not suspecting that the underlying cause of its movement was the expansion of the steam, and not the motion of the wheels. By turning the wheels by hand and by levers they could only produce a semblance of movement, and meantime they would be wrenching the wheels and so preventing their being fit for real movement.

That is just what people are doing who think to make men advance by means of external force.

They say that the Christian life cannot be established without the use of violence, because there are savage races outside the pale

of Christian societies in Africa and in Asia (there are some who even represent the Chinese as a danger to civilization), and that in the midst of Christian societies there are savage, corrupt, and, according to the new theory of heredity, congenital criminals. And violence, they say, is necessary to keep savages and criminals from annihilating our civilization.

But these savages within and without Christian society, who are such a terror to us, have never been subjugated by violence, and are not subjugated by it now. Nations have never subjugated other nations by violence alone. If a nation which subjugated another was on a lower level of civilization, it has never happened that it succeeded in introducing its organization of life by violence. On the contrary, it was always forced to adopt the organization of life existing in the conquered nation. If ever any of the nations conquered by force have been really subjugated, or even nearly so, it has always been by the action of public opinion, and never by violence, which only tends to drive a people to further rebellion.

When whole nations have been subjugated by a new religion, and have become Christian or Mohammedan, such a conversion has never been brought about because the authorities made it obligatory (on the contrary, violence has much oftener acted in the opposite direction), but because public opinion made such a change inevitable. Nations, on the contrary, who have been driven by force to accept the faith of their conquerors have always remained

antagonistic to it.

It is just the same with the savage elements existing in the midst of our civilized societies. Neither the increased nor the diminished severity of punishment, nor the modifications of prisons, nor the increase of police will increase or diminish the number of criminals. Their number will only be diminished by the change of the moral standard of society. No severities could put an end to duels and vendettas in certain districts. In spite of the number of Tcherkesses executed for robbery, they continue to be robbers from their youth up, for no maiden will marry a Tcherkess youth till he has given proof of his bravery by carrying off a horse, or at least a sheep. If men cease to fight duels, and the Tcherkesses cease to be robbers, it will not be from fear of punishment (indeed, that invests the crime with additional charm for youth), but through a change in the moral standard of public opinion. It is the same with all other crimes. Force can never suppress what is sanctioned by public opinion. On the contrary, public opinion need only be in direct opposition to force to neutralize the whole effect of the use of force. It has always been so and always will be in every case of martyrdom.

What would happen if force were not used against hostile nations and the criminal elements of society we do not know. But we do know by prolonged experience that neither enemies nor criminals have been successfully suppressed by force.

And indeed how could nations be subjugated by violence who are led by their whole education, their traditions, and even their religion to see the loftiest virtue in warring with their oppressors and fighting for freedom? And how are we to suppress by force acts committed in the midst of our society which are regarded as crimes by the government and as daring exploits by the people?

To exterminate such nations and such criminals by violence is possible, and indeed is done, but to subdue them is impossible.

The sole guide which directs men and nations has always been and is the unseen, intangible, underlying force, the resultant of all the spiritual forces of a certain people, or of all humanity, which finds its outward expression in public opinion.

The use of violence only weakens this force, hinders it and corrupts it, and tries to replace it by another which far from being conducive to the progress of humanity, is detrimental to it.

To bring under the sway of Christianity all the savage nations outside the pale of the Christian world--all the Zulus, Mandchoos, and Chinese, whom many regard as savages--and the savages who live in our midst, there is only ONE MEANS. That means is the propagation among these nations of the Christian ideal of society,

which can only be realized by a Christian life, Christian actions, and Christian examples. And meanwhile, though this is the ONE ONLY MEANS of gaining a hold over the people who have remained non-Christian, the men of our day set to work in the directly opposite fashion to attain this result.

To bring under the sway of Christianity savage nations who do not attack us and whom we have therefore no excuse for oppressing, we ought before all things to leave them in peace, and in case we need or wish to enter into closer relations with them, we ought only to influence them by Christian manners and Christian teaching, setting them the example of the Christian virtues of patience, meekness, endurance, purity, brotherhood, and love. Instead of that we begin by establishing among them new markets for our commerce, with the sole aim of our own profit; then we appropriate their lands, i. e., rob them; then we sell them spirits, tobacco, and opium, i. e., corrupt them; then we establish our morals among them, teach them the use of violence and new methods of destruction, i. e., we teach them nothing but the animal law of strife, below which man cannot sink, and we do all we can to conceal from them all that is Christian in us. After this we send some dozens of missionaries prating to them of the hypocritical absurdities of the Church, and then quote the failure of our efforts to turn the heathen to Christianity as an incontrovertible proof of the impossibility of applying the truths of Christianity in practical life.

It is just the same with the so-called criminals living in our midst. To bring these people under the sway of Christianity there is one only means, that is, the Christian social ideal, which can only be realized among them by true Christian teaching and supported by a true example of the Christian life. And to preach this Christian truth and to support it by Christian example we set up among them prisons, guillotines, gallows, preparations for murder; we diffuse among the common herd idolatrous superstitions to stupefy them; we sell them spirits, tobacco, and opium to brutalize them; we even organize legalized prostitution; we give land to those who do not need it; we make a display of senseless luxury in the midst of suffering poverty; we destroy the possibility of anything like a Christian public opinion, and studiously try to suppress what Christian public opinion is existing. And then, after having ourselves assiduously corrupted men, we shut them up like wild beasts in places from which they cannot escape, and where they become still more brutalized, or else we kill them. And these very men whom we have corrupted and brutalized by every means, we bring forward as a proof that one cannot deal with criminals except by brute force.

We are just like ignorant doctors who put a man, recovering from illness by the force of nature, into the most unfavorable conditions of hygiene, and dose him with the most deleterious drugs, and then assert triumphantly that their hygiene and their

drugs saved his life, when the patient would have been well long before if they had left him alone.

Violence, which is held up as the means of supporting the Christian organization of life, not only fails to produce that effect, it even hinders the social organization of life from being what it might and ought to be. The social organization is as good as it is not as a result of force, but in spite of it.

And therefore the champions of the existing order are mistaken in arguing that since, even with the aid of force, the bad and non-Christian elements of humanity can hardly be kept from attacking us, the abolition of the use of force and the substitution of public opinion for it would leave humanity quite unprotected.

They are mistaken, because force does not protect humanity, but, on the contrary, deprives it of the only possible means of really protecting itself, that is, the establishment and diffusion of a Christian public opinion. Only by the suppression of violence will a Christian public opinion cease to be corrupted, and be enabled to be diffused without hindrance, and men will then turn their efforts in the spiritual direction by which alone they can advance.

"But how are we to cast off the visible tangible protection of an armed policeman, and trust to something so intangible as public

opinion? Does it yet exist? Moreover, the condition of things in which we are living now, we know, good or bad; we know its shortcomings and are used to it, we know what to do, and how to behave under present conditions. But what will happen when we give it up and trust ourselves to something invisible and intangible, and altogether unknown?"

The unknown world on which they are entering in renouncing their habitual ways of life appears itself as dreadful to them. It is all very well to dread the unknown when our habitual position is sound and secure. But our position is so far from being secure that we know, beyond all doubt, that we are standing on the brink of a precipice. If we must be afraid let us be afraid of what is really alarming, and not what we imagine as alarming.

Fearing to make the effort to detach ourselves from our perilous position because the future is not fully clear to us, we are like passengers in a foundering ship who, through being afraid to trust themselves to the boat which would carry them to the shore, shut themselves up in the cabin and refuse to come out of it; or like sheep, who, terrified by their barn being on fire, huddle in a corner and do not go out of the wide-open door.

We are standing on the threshold of the murderous war of social revolution, terrific in its miseries, beside which, as those who are preparing it tell us, the horrors of 1793 will be child's

play. And can we talk of the danger threatening us from the warriors of Dahomey, the Zulus, and such, who live so far away and are not dreaming of attacking us, and from some thousands of swindlers, thieves, and murderers, brutalized and corrupted by ourselves, whose number is in no way lessened by all our sentences, prisons, and executions?

Moreover this dread of the suppression of the visible protection of the policeman is essentially a sentiment of townspeople, that is, of people who are living in abnormal and artificial conditions. People living in natural conditions of life, not in towns, but in the midst of nature, and carrying on the struggle with nature, live without this protection and know how little force can protect us from the real dangers with which we are surrounded. There is something sickly in this dread, which is essentially dependent on the artificial conditions in which many of us live and have been brought up.

A doctor, a specialist in insanity, told a story that one summer day when he was leaving the asylum, the lunatics accompanied him to the street door. "Come for a walk in the town with me?" the doctor suggested to them. The lunatics agreed, and a small band followed the doctor. But the further they proceeded along the street where healthy people were freely moving about, the more timid they became, and they pressed closer and closer to the doctor, hindering him from walking. At last they all began to beg

him to take them back to the asylum, to their meaningless but customary way of life, to their keepers, to blows, strait waistcoats, and solitary cells.

This is just how men of to-day huddle in terror and draw back to their irrational manner of life, their factories, law courts, prisons, executions, and wars, when Christianity calls them to liberty, to the free, rational life of the future coming age.

People ask, "How will our security be guaranteed when the existing organization is suppressed? What precisely will the new organization be that is to replace it? So long as we do not know precisely how our life will be organized, we will not stir a step forward."

An explorer going to an unknown country might as well ask for a detailed map of the country before he would start.

If a man, before he passed from one stage to another, could know his future life in full detail, he would have nothing to live for.

It is the same with the life of humanity. If it had a programme of the life which awaited it before entering a new stage, it would be the surest sign that it was not living, nor advancing, but simply rotating in the same place.

The conditions of the new order of life cannot be known by us

because we have to create them by our own labors. That is all that life is, to learn the unknown, and to adapt our actions to this new knowledge.

That is the life of each individual man, and that is the life of human societies and of humanity.