In order to do so it has been convenient to coin two expressions, and to employ them with a certain defined intention. They are firstly: The Normal Social Life, and secondly: The Great State. Throughout this essay these expressions will be used in accordance with the definitions presently to be given, and the fact that they are so used will be emphasised by the employment of capitals. It will be possible for anyone to argue that what is here defined as the Normal Social Life is not the normal social life, and that the Great State is indeed no state at all. That will be an argument outside the range delimited by these definitions.

Now what is intended by the Normal Social Life here is a type of human association and employment, of extreme prevalence and antiquity, which appears to have been the lot of the enormous majority of human beings as far back as history or tradition or the vestiges of material that supply our conceptions of the neolithic period can carry us. It has never been the lot of all humanity at any time, to-day it is perhaps less predominant than it has ever been, yet even to-day it is probably the lot of the greater moiety of mankind.

Essentially this type of association presents a localised community, a community of which the greater proportion of the individuals are engaged more or less directly in the cultivation of the land. With this there is also associated the grazing or herding over wider or more restricted areas, belonging either collectively or discretely to the community, of sheep, cattle, goats, or swine, and almost always the domestic fowl is

commensal with man in this life. The cultivated land at least is usually assigned, temporarily or inalienably, as property to specific individuals, and the individuals are grouped in generally monogamic families of which the father is the head. Essentially the social unit is the Family, and even where, as in Mohammedan countries, there is no legal or customary restriction upon polygamy, monogamy still prevails as the ordinary way of living. Unmarried women are not esteemed, and children are desired. According to the dangers or securities of the region, the nature of the cultivation and the temperament of the people, this community is scattered either widely in separate steadings or drawn together into villages. At one extreme, over large areas of thin pasture this agricultural community may verge on the nomadic; at another, in proximity to consuming markets, it may present the concentration of intensive culture. There may be an adjacent Wild supplying wood, and perhaps controlled by a simple forestry. The law that holds this community together is largely traditional and customary and almost always as its primordial bond there is some sort of temple and some sort of priest. Typically, the temple is devoted to a local god or a localised saint, and its position indicates the central point of the locality, its assembly place and its market. Associated with the agriculture there are usually a few imperfectly specialised tradesmen, a smith, a garment-maker perhaps, a basket-maker or potter, who group about the church or temple. The community may maintain itself in a state of complete isolation, but more usually there are tracks or roads to the centres of adjacent communities, and a certain drift of travel, a certain trade in non-essential things. In the fundamentals of life this

normal community is independent and self-subsisting, and where it is not beginning to be modified by the novel forces of the new times it produces its own food and drink, its own clothing, and largely intermarries within its limits.

This in general terms is what is here intended by the phrase the Normal Social Life. It is still the substantial part of the rural life of all Europe and most Asia and Africa, and it has been the life of the great majority of human beings for immemorial years. It is the root life. It rests upon the soil, and from that soil below and its reaction to the seasons and the moods of the sky overhead have grown most of the traditions, institutions, sentiments, beliefs, superstitions, and fundamental songs and stories of mankind.

But since the very dawn of history at least this Normal Social Life has never been the whole complete life of mankind. Quite apart from the marginal life of the savage hunter, there have been a number of forces and influences within men and women and without, that have produced abnormal and surplus ways of living, supplemental, additional, and even antagonistic to this normal scheme.

And first as to the forces within men and women. Long as it has lasted, almost universal as it has been, the human being has never yet achieved a perfect adaptation to the needs of the Normal Social Life. He has attained nothing of that frictionless fitting to the needs of association one finds in the bee or the ant. Curiosity, deep stirrings

to wander, the still more ancient inheritance of the hunter, a recurrent distaste for labour, and resentment against the necessary subjugations of family life have always been a straining force within the agricultural community. The increase of population during periods of prosperity has led at the touch of bad seasons and adversity to the desperate reliefs of war and the invasion of alien localities. And the nomadic and adventurous spirit of man found reliefs and opportunities more particularly along the shores of great rivers and inland seas. Trade and travel began, at first only a trade in adventitious things, in metals and rare objects and luxuries and slaves. With trade came writing and money; the inventions of debt and rent, usury and tribute. History finds already in its beginnings a thin network of trading and slaving flung over the world of the Normal Social Life, a network whose strands are the early roads, whose knots are the first towns and the first courts.

Indeed, all recorded history is in a sense the history of these surplus and supplemental activities of mankind. The Normal Social Life flowed on in its immemorial fashion, using no letters, needing no records, leaving no history. Then, a little minority, bulking disproportionately in the record, come the trader, the sailor, the slave, the landlord and the tax-compeller, the townsman and the king.

All written history is the story of a minority and their peculiar and abnormal affairs. Save in so far as it notes great natural catastrophes and tells of the spreading or retrocession of human life through changes

of climate and physical conditions it resolves itself into an account of a series of attacks and modifications and supplements made by excessive and superfluous forces engendered within the community upon the Normal Social Life. The very invention of writing is a part of those modifying developments. The Normal Social Life is essentially illiterate and traditional. The Normal Social Life is as mute as the standing crops; it is as seasonal and cyclic as nature herself, and reaches towards the future only an intimation of continual repetitions.

Now this human over-life may take either beneficent or maleficent or neutral aspects towards the general life of humanity. It may present itself as law and pacification, as a positive addition and superstructure to the Normal Social Life, as roads and markets and cities, as courts and unifying monarchies, as helpful and directing religious organisations, as literature and art and science and philosophy, reflecting back upon the individual in the Normal Social Life from which it arose, a gilding and refreshment of new and wider interests and added pleasures and resources. One may define certain phases in the history of various countries when this was the state of affairs, when a countryside of prosperous communities with a healthy family life and a wide distribution of property, animated by roads and towns and unified by a generally intelligible religious belief, lived in a transitory but satisfactory harmony under a sympathetic government. I take it that this is the condition to which the minds of such original and vigorous reactionary thinkers as Mr. G.K. Chesterton and Mr. Hilaire Belloc for example turn, as being the most desirable state of mankind.

But the general effect of history is to present these phases as phases of exceptional good luck, and to show the surplus forces of humanity as on the whole antagonistic to any such equilibrium with the Normal Social Life. To open the book of history haphazard is, most commonly, to open it at a page where the surplus forces appear to be in more or less destructive conflict with the Normal Social Life. One opens at the depopulation of Italy by the aggressive great estates of the Roman Empire, at the impoverishment of the French peasantry by a too centralised monarchy before the revolution, or at the huge degenerative growth of the great industrial towns of western Europe in the nineteenth century. Or again one opens at destructive wars. One sees these surplus forces over and above the Normal Social Life working towards unstable concentrations of population, to centralisation of government, to migrations and conflicts upon a large scale; one discovers the process developing into a phase of social fragmentation and destruction and then, unless the whole country has been wasted down to its very soil, the Normal Social Life returns as the heath and furze and grass return after the burning of a common. But it never returns in precisely its old form. The surplus forces have always produced some traceable change; the rhythm is a little altered. As between the Gallic peasant before the Roman conquest, the peasant of the Gallic province, the Carlovingian peasant, the French peasant of the thirteenth, the seventeenth, and the twentieth centuries, there is, in spite of a general uniformity of life, of a common atmosphere of cows, hens, dung, toil, ploughing, economy, and domestic intimacy, an effect of accumulating generalising

influences and of wider relevancies. And the oscillations of empires and kingdoms, religious movements, wars, invasions, settlements leave upon the mind an impression that the surplus life of mankind, the less-localised life of mankind, that life of mankind which is not directly connected with the soil but which has become more or less detached from and independent of it, is becoming proportionately more important in relation to the Normal Social Life. It is as if a different way of living was emerging from the Normal Social Life and freeing itself from its traditions and limitations.

And this is more particularly the effect upon the mind of a review of the history of the past two hundred years. The little speculative activities of the alchemist and natural philosopher, the little economic experiments of the acquisitive and enterprising landed proprietor, favoured by unprecedented periods of security and freedom, have passed into a new phase of extraordinary productivity. They had added preposterously and continue to add on a gigantic scale and without any evident limits to the continuation of their additions, to the resources of humanity. To the strength of horses and men and slaves has been added the power of machines and the possibility of economies that were once incredible The Normal Social Life has been overshadowed as it has never been overshadowed before by the concentrations and achievements of the surplus life. Vast new possibilities open to the race; the traditional life of mankind, its traditional systems of association, are challenged and threatened; and all the social thought, all the political activity of our time turns in reality upon the conflict of this ancient system

whose essentials we have here defined and termed the Normal Social Life with the still vague and formless impulses that seem destined either to involve it and the race in a final destruction or to replace it by some new and probably more elaborate method of human association.

Because there is the following difference between the action of the surplus forces as we see them to-day and as they appeared before the outbreak of physical science and mechanism. Then it seemed clearly necessary that whatever social and political organisation developed, it must needs; rest ultimately on the tiller of the soil, the agricultural holding, and the Normal Social Life. But now even in agriculture huge wholesale methods have appeared. They are declared to be destructive; but it is quite conceivable that they may be made ultimately as recuperative as that small agriculture which has hitherto been the inevitable social basis. If that is so, then the new ways of living may not simply impose themselves in a growing proportion upon the Normal Social Life, but they may even oust it and replace it altogether. Or they may oust it and fail to replace it. In the newer countries the Normal Social Life does not appear to establish itself at all rapidly. No real peasantry appears in either America or Australia; and in the older countries, unless there is the most elaborate legislative and fiscal protection, the peasant population wanes before the large farm, the estate, and overseas production.

Now most of the political and social discussion of the last hundred years may be regarded and rephrased as an attempt to apprehend this

defensive struggle of the Normal Social Life against waxing novelty and innovation and to give a direction and guidance to all of us who participate. And it is very largely a matter of temperament and free choice still, just where we shall decide to place ourselves. Let us consider some of the key words of contemporary thought, such as Liberalism, Individualism, Socialism, in the light of this broad generalisation we have made; and then we shall find it easier to explain our intention in employing as a second technicality the phrase of The Great State as an opposite to the Normal Social Life, which we have already defined.

Sec. 2

The Normal Social Life has been defined as one based on agriculture, traditional and essentially unchanging. It has needed no toleration and displayed no toleration for novelty and strangeness. Its beliefs have been on such a nature as to justify and sustain itself, and it has had an intrinsic hostility to any other beliefs. The God of its community has been a jealous god even when he was only a tribal and local god. Only very occasionally in history until the coming of the modern period do we find any human community relaxing from this ancient and more normal state of entire intolerance towards ideas or practices other than its own. When toleration and a receptive attitude towards alien ideas was manifested in the Old World, it was at some trading centre or political centre; new ideas and new religions came by water along the

trade routes. And such toleration as there was rarely extended to active teaching and propaganda. Even in liberal Athens the hemlock was in the last resort at the service of the ancient gods and the ancient morals against the sceptical critic.

But with the steady development of innovating forces in human affairs there has actually grown up a cult of receptivity, a readiness for new ideas, a faith in the probable truth of novelties. Liberalism--I do not, of course, refer in any way to the political party which makes this profession--is essentially anti-traditionalism; its tendency is to commit for trial any institution or belief that is brought before it. It is the accuser and antagonist of all the fixed and ancient values and imperatives and prohibitions of the Normal Social Life. And growing up in relation to Liberalism and sustained by it is the great body of scientific knowledge, which professes at least to be absolutely undogmatic and perpetually on its trial and under assay and re-examination.

Now a very large part of the advanced thought of the past century is no more than the confused negation of the broad beliefs and institutions which have been the heritage and social basis of humanity for immemorial years. This is as true of the extremest Individualism as of the extremest Socialism. The former denies that element of legal and customary control which has always subdued the individual to the needs of the Normal Social Life, and the latter that qualified independence of distributed property which is the basis of family autonomy. Both are

movements against the ancient life, and nothing is more absurd than the misrepresentation which presents either as a conservative force. They are two divergent schools with a common disposition to reject the old and turn towards the new. The Individualist professes a faith for which he has no rational evidence, that the mere abandonment of traditions and controls must ultimately produce a new and beautiful social order; while the Socialist, with an equal liberalism, regards the outlook with a kind of hopeful dread, and insists upon an elaborate readjustment, a new and untried scheme of social organisation to replace the shattered and weakening Normal Social Life.

Both these movements, and, indeed, all movements that are not movements for the subjugation of innovation and the restoration of tradition, are vague in the prospect they contemplate. They produce no definite forecasts of the quality of the future towards which they so confidently indicate the way. But this is less true of modern socialism than of its antithesis, and it becomes less and less true as socialism, under an enormous torrent of criticism, slowly washes itself clean from the mass of partial statement, hasty misstatement, sheer error and presumption that obscured its first emergence.

But it is well to be very clear upon one point at this stage, and that is, that this present time is not a battle-ground between individualism and socialism; it is a battle-ground between the Normal Social Life on the one hand and a complex of forces on the other which seek a form of replacement and seem partially to find it in these and other doctrines.

Nearly all contemporary thinkers who are not too muddled to be assignable fall into one of three classes, of which the third we shall distinguish is the largest and most various and divergent. It will be convenient to say a little of each of these classes before proceeding to a more particular account of the third. Our analysis will cut across many accepted classifications, but there will be ample justification for this rearrangement. All of them may be dealt with quite justly as accepting the general account of the historical process which is here given.

Then first we must distinguish a series of writers and thinkers which one may call--the word conservative being already politically assigned--the Conservators.

These are people who really do consider the Normal Social Life as the only proper and desirable life for the great mass of humanity, and they are fully prepared to subordinate all exceptional and surplus lives to the moral standards and limitations that arise naturally out of the Normal Social Life. They desire a state in which property is widely distributed, a community of independent families protected by law and an intelligent democratic statecraft from the economic aggressions of large accumulations and linked by a common religion. Their attitude to the forces of change is necessarily a hostile attitude. They are disposed to regard innovations in transit and machinery as undesirable, and even mischievous disturbances of a wholesome equilibrium. They are at least

unfriendly to any organisation of scientific research, and scornful of the pretensions of science. Criticisms of the methods of logic, scepticism of the more widely diffused human beliefs, they would classify as insanity. Two able English writers, Mr. G.K. Chesterton and Mr. Belloc, have given the clearest expression to this system of ideals, and stated an admirable case for it. They present a conception of vinous, loudly singing, earthy, toiling, custom-ruled, wholesome, and insanitary men; they are pagan in the sense that their hearts are with the villagers and not with the townsmen, Christian in the spirit of the parish priest. There are no other Conservators so clear-headed and consistent. But their teaching is merely the logical expression of an enormous amount of conservative feeling. Vast multitudes of less lucid minds share their hostility to novelty and research; hate, dread, and are eager to despise science, and glow responsive to the warm, familiar expressions of primordial feelings and immemorial prejudices The rural conservative, the liberal of the allotments and small-holdings type, Mr. Roosevelt--in his Western-farmer, philoprogenitive phase as distinguished from the phase of his more imperialist moments--all present themselves as essentially Conservators as seekers after and preservers of the Normal Social Life.

So, too, do Socialists of the William Morris type. The mind of William Morris was profoundly reactionary He hated the whole trend of later nineteenth-century modernism with the hatred natural to a man of considerable scholarship and intense aesthetic sensibilities. His mind turned, exactly as Mr. Belloc's turns, to the finished and enriched

Normal Social Life of western Europe in the middle ages, but, unlike Mr. Belloc, he believed that, given private ownership of land and the ordinary materials of life, there must necessarily be an aggregatory process, usury, expropriation, the development of an exploiting wealthy class. He believed profit was the devil. His "News from Nowhere" pictures a communism that amounted in fact to little more than a system of private ownership of farms and trades without money or any buying and selling, in an atmosphere of geniality, generosity, and mutual helpfulness. Mr. Belloc, with a harder grip upon the realities of life, would have the widest distribution of proprietorship, with an alert democratic government continually legislating against the protean reappearances of usury and accumulation and attacking, breaking up, and redistributing any large unanticipated bodies of wealth that appeared. But both men are equally set towards the Normal Social Life, and equally enemies of the New. The so-called "socialist" land legislation of New Zealand again is a tentative towards the realisation of the same school of ideas: great estates are to be automatically broken up, property is to be kept disseminated; a vast amount of political speaking and writing in America and throughout the world enforces one's impression of the widespread influence of Conservator ideals.

Of course, it is inevitable that phases of prosperity for the Normal Social Life will lead to phases of over-population and scarcity, there will be occasional famines and occasional pestilences and plethoras of vitality leading to the blood-letting of war. I suppose Mr. Chesterton and Mr. Belloc at least have the courage of their opinions, and are

prepared to say that such things always have been and always must be; they are part of the jolly rhythms of the human lot under the sun, and are to be taken with the harvest home and love-making and the peaceful ending of honoured lives as an integral part of the unending drama of mankind.

Sec. 3

Now opposed to the Conservators are all those who do not regard contemporary humanity as a final thing nor the Normal Social Life as the inevitable basis of human continuity. They believe in secular change, in Progress, in a future for our species differing continually more from its past. On the whole, they are prepared for the gradual disentanglement of men from the Normal Social Life altogether, and they look for new ways of living and new methods of human association with a certain adventurous hopefulness.

Now, this second large class does not so much admit of subdivision into two as present a great variety of intermediaries between two extremes. I propose to give distinctive names to these extremes, with the very clear proviso that they are not antagonised, and that the great multitude of this second, anti-conservator class, this liberal, more novel class modern conditions have produced falls between them, and is neither the one nor the other, but partaking in various degrees of both. On the one hand, then, we have that type of mind which is irritated by and

distrustful of all collective proceedings which is profoundly distrustful of churches and states, which is expressed essentially by Individualism. The Individualist appears to regard the extensive disintegrations of the Normal Social Life that are going on to-day with an extreme hopefulness. Whatever is ugly or harsh in modern industrialism or in the novel social development of our time he seems to consider as a necessary aspect of a process of selection and survival, whose tendencies are on the whole inevitably satisfactory. The future welfare of man he believes in effect may be trusted to the spontaneous and planless activities of people of goodwill, and nothing but state intervention can effectively impede its attainment. And curiously close to this extreme optimistic school in its moral quality and logical consequences, though contrasting widely in the sinister gloom of its spirit, is the socialism of Karl Marx. He declared the contemporary world to be a great process of financial aggrandisement and general expropriation, of increasing power for the few and of increasing hardship and misery for the many, a process that would go on until at last a crisis of unendurable tension would be reached and the social revolution ensue. The world had, in fact, to be worse before it could hope to be better. He contemplated a continually exacerbated Class War, with a millennium of extraordinary vagueness beyond as the reward of the victorious workers. His common quality with the Individualist lies in his repudiation of and antagonism to plans and arrangements, in his belief in the overriding power of Law. Their common influence is the discouragement of collective understandings upon the basis of the existing state. Both converge in practice upon laissez faire. I would

therefore lump them together under the term of Planless Progressives, and I would contrast with them those types which believe supremely in systematised purpose.

The purposeful and systematic types, in common with the Individualist and Marxist, regard the Normal Social Life, for all the many thousands of years behind it, as a phase, and as a phase which is now passing, in human experience; and they are prepared for a future society that may be ultimately different right down to its essential relationships from the human past. But they also believe that the forces that have been assailing and disintegrating the Normal Social Life, which have been, on the one hand, producing great accumulations of wealth, private freedom, and ill-defined, irresponsible and socially dangerous power, and, on the other, labour hordes, for the most part urban, without any property or outlook except continuous toil and anxiety, which in England have substituted a dischargeable agricultural labourer for the independent peasant almost completely, and in America seem to be arresting any general development of the Normal Social Life at all, are forces of wide and indefinite possibility that need to be controlled by a collective effort implying a collective design, deflected from merely injurious consequences and organised for a new human welfare upon new lines. They agree with that class of thinking I have distinguished as the Conservators in their recognition of vast contemporary disorders and their denial of the essential beneficence of change. But while the former seem to regard all novelty and innovation as a mere inundation to be met, banked back, defeated and survived, these more hopeful and

adventurous minds would rather regard contemporary change as amounting on the whole to the tumultuous and almost catastrophic opening-up of possible new channels, the violent opportunity of vast, deep, new ways to great unprecedented human ends, ends that are neither feared nor evaded.

Now while the Conservators are continually talking of the "eternal facts" of human life and human nature and falling back upon a conception of permanence that is continually less true as our perspectives extend, these others are full of the conception of adaptation, of deliberate change in relationship and institution to meet changing needs. I would suggest for them, therefore, as opposed to the Conservators and contrasted with the Planless Progressives, the name of Constructors. They are the extreme right, as it were, while the Planless Progressives are the extreme left of Anti-Conservator thought.

I believe that these distinctions I have made cover practically every clear form of contemporary thinking, and are a better and more helpful classification than any now current. But, of course, nearly every individual nowadays is at least a little confused, and will be found to wobble in the course even of a brief discussion between one attitude and the other. This is a separation of opinions rather than of persons. And particularly that word Socialism has become so vague and incoherent that for a man to call himself a socialist nowadays is to give no indication whatever whether he is a Conservator like William Morris, a non-Constructor like Karl Marx, or a Constructor of any of half a dozen

different schools. On the whole, however, modern socialism tends to fall towards the Constructor wing. So, too, do those various movements in England and Germany and France called variously nationalist and imperialist, and so do the American civic and social reformers. Under the same heading must come such attempts to give the vague impulses of Syndicalism a concrete definition as the "Guild Socialism" of Mr. Orage. All these movements are agreed that the world is progressive towards a novel and unprecedented social order, not necessarily and fatally better, and that it needs organised and even institutional guidance thither, however much they differ as to the form that order should assume.

For the greater portion of a century socialism has been before the world, and it is not perhaps premature to attempt a word or so of analysis of that great movement in the new terms we are here employing. The origins of the socialist idea were complex and multifarious never at any time has it succeeded in separating out a statement of itself that was at once simple, complete and acceptable to any large proportion of those who call themselves socialists. But always it has pointed to two or three definite things. The first of these is that unlimited freedoms of private property, with increasing facilities of exchange, combination, and aggrandisement, become more and more dangerous to human liberty by the expropriation and reduction to private wages slavery of larger and larger proportions of the population. Every school of socialism states this in some more or less complete form, however divergent the remedial methods suggested by the different schools. And,

next, every school of socialism accepts the concentration of management and property as necessary, and declines to contemplate what is the typical Conservator remedy, its re-fragmentation. Accordingly it sets up not only against the large private owner, but against owners generally, the idea of a public proprietor, the State, which shall hold in the collective interest. But where the earlier socialisms stopped short, and where to this day socialism is vague, divided, and unprepared, is upon the psychological problems involved in that new and largely unprecedented form of proprietorship, and upon the still more subtle problems of its attainment. These are vast, and profoundly, widely, and multitudinously difficult problems, and it was natural and inevitable that the earlier socialists in the first enthusiasm of their idea should minimise these difficulties, pretend in the fullness of their faith that partial answers to objections were complete answers, and display the common weaknesses of honest propaganda the whole world over. Socialism is now old enough to know better. Few modern socialists present their faith as a complete panacea, and most are now setting to work in earnest upon these long-shirked preliminary problems of human interaction through which the vital problem of a collective head and brain can alone be approached.

A considerable proportion of the socialist movement remains, as it has been from the first, vaguely democratic. It points to collective ownership with no indication of the administrative scheme it contemplates to realise that intention. Necessarily it remains a formless claim without hands to take hold of the thing it desires.

Indeed in a large number of cases it is scarcely more than a resentful consciousness in the expropriated masses of social disintegration. It spends its force very largely in mere revenges upon property as such, attacks simply destructive by reason of the absence of any definite ulterior scheme. It is an ill-equipped and planless belligerent who must destroy whatever he captures because he can neither use nor take away. A council of democratic socialists in possession of London would be as capable of an orderly and sustained administration as the Anabaptists in Munster. But the discomforts and disorders of our present planless system do tend steadily to the development of this crude socialistic spirit in the mass of the proletariat; merely vindictive attacks upon property, sabotage, and the general strike are the logical and inevitable consequences of an uncontrolled concentration of property in a few hands, and such things must and will go on, the deep undertow in the deliquescence of the Normal Social Life, until a new justice, a new scheme of compensations and satisfactions is attained, or the Normal Social Life re-emerges.

Fabian socialism was the first systematic attempt to meet the fatal absence of administrative schemes in the earlier socialisms. It can scarcely be regarded now as anything but an interesting failure, but a failure that has all the educational value of a first reconnaissance into unexplored territory. Starting from that attack on aggregating property, which is the common starting-point of all socialist projects, the Fabians, appalled at the obvious difficulties of honest confiscation and an open transfer from private to public hands,

conceived the extraordinary idea of filching property for the state. A small body of people of extreme astuteness were to bring about the municipalisation and nationalisation first of this great system of property and then of that, in a manner so artful that the millionaires were to wake up one morning at last, and behold, they would find themselves poor men! For a decade or more Mr. Pease, Mr. Bernard Shaw, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb, Mrs. Besant, Dr. Lawson Dodd, and their associates of the London Fabian Society, did pit their wits and ability, or at any rate the wits and ability of their leisure moments, against the embattled capitalists of England and the world, in this complicated and delicate enterprise, without any apparent diminution of the larger accumulations of wealth. But in addition they developed another side of Fabianism, still more subtle, which professed to be a kind of restoration in kind of property to the proletariat and in this direction they were more successful. A dexterous use, they decided, was to be made of the Poor Law, the public health authority, the education authority, and building regulations and so forth, to create, so to speak, a communism of the lower levels. The mass of people whom the forces of change had expropriated were to be given a certain minimum of food, shelter, education, and sanitation, and this, the socialists were assured, could be used as the thin end of the wedge towards a complete communism. The minimum, once established, could obviously be raised continually until either everybody had what they needed, or the resources of society gave out and set a limit to the process.

This second method of attack brought the Fabian movement into

co-operation with a large amount of benevolent and constructive influence outside the socialist ranks altogether. Few wealthy people really grudge the poor a share of the necessities of life, and most are quite willing to assist in projects for such a distribution. But while these schemes naturally involved a very great amount of regulation and regimentation of the affairs of the poor, the Fabian Society fell away more and more from its associated proposals for the socialisation of the rich. The Fabian project changed steadily in character until at last it ceased to be in any sense antagonistic to wealth as such. If the lion did not exactly lie down with the lamb, at any rate the man with the gun and the alleged social mad dog returned very peaceably together. The Fabian hunt was up.

Great financiers contributed generously to a School of Economics that had been founded with moneys left to the Fabian Society by earlier enthusiasts for socialist propaganda and education. It remained for Mr. Belloc to point the moral of the whole development with a phrase, to note that Fabianism no longer aimed at the socialisation of the whole community, but only at the socialisation of the poor. The first really complete project for a new social order to replace the Normal Social Life was before the world, and this project was the compulsory regimentation of the workers and the complete state control of labour under a new plutocracy. Our present chaos was to be organised into a Servile State.

Sec. 4

Now to many of us who found the general spirit of the socialist movement at least hopeful and attractive and sympathetic, this would be an almost tragic conclusion, did we believe that Fabianism was anything more than the first experiment in planning--and one almost inevitably shallow and presumptuous--of the long series that may be necessary before a clear light breaks upon the road humanity must follow. But we decline to be forced by this one intellectual fiasco towards the laissez faire of the Individualist and the Marxist, or to accept the Normal Social Life with its atmosphere of hens and cows and dung, its incessant toil, its servitude of women, and its endless repetitions as the only tolerable life conceivable for the bulk of mankind--as the ultimate life, that is, of mankind. With less arrogance and confidence, but it may be with a firmer faith, we declare that we believe a more spacious social order than any that exists or ever has existed, a Peace of the World in which there is an almost universal freedom, health, happiness, and well-being and which contains the seeds of a still greater future, is possible to mankind. We propose to begin again with the recognition of those same difficulties the Fabians first realised. But we do not propose to organise a society, form a group for the control of the two chief political parties, bring about "socialism" in twenty-five years, or do anything beyond contributing in our place and measure to that constructive discussion whose real magnitude we now begin to realise.

We have faith in a possible future, but it is a faith that makes the

quality of that future entirely dependent upon the strength and clearness of purpose that this present time can produce. We do not believe the greater social state is inevitable.

Yet there is, we hold, a certain qualified inevitability about this greater social state because we believe any social state not affording a general contentment, a general freedom, and a general and increasing fullness of life, must sooner or later collapse and disintegrate again, and revert more or less completely to the Normal Social Life, and because we believe the Normal Social Life is itself thick-sown with the seeds of fresh beginnings. The Normal Social Life has never at any time been absolutely permanent, always it has carried within itself the germs of enterprise and adventure and exchanges that finally attack its stability. The superimposed social order of to-day, such as it is, with its huge development of expropriated labour, and the schemes of the later Fabians to fix this state of affairs in an organised form and render it plausibly tolerable, seem also doomed to accumulate catastrophic tensions. Bureaucratic schemes for establishing the regular lifelong subordination of a labouring class, enlivened though they may be by frequent inspection, disciplinary treatment during seasons of unemployment, compulsory temperance, free medical attendance, and a cheap and shallow elementary education fail to satisfy the restless cravings in the heart of man. They are cravings that even the baffling methods of the most ingeniously worked Conciliation Boards cannot permanently restrain. The drift of any Servile State must be towards a class revolt, paralysing sabotage and a general strike. The more rigid

and complete the Servile State becomes, the more thorough will be its ultimate failure. Its fate is decay or explosion. From its débris we shall either revert to the Normal Social Life and begin again the long struggle towards that ampler, happier, juster arrangement of human affairs which we of this book, at any rate, believe to be possible, or we shall pass into the twilight of mankind.

This greater social life we put, then, as the only real alternative to the Normal Social Life from which man is continually escaping. For it we do not propose to use the expressions the "socialist state" or "socialism," because we believe those terms have now by constant confused use become so battered and bent and discoloured by irrelevant associations as to be rather misleading than expressive. We propose to use the term The Great State to express this ideal of a social system no longer localised, no longer immediately tied to and conditioned by the cultivation of the land, world-wide in its interests and outlook and catholic in its tolerance and sympathy, a system of great individual freedom with a universal understanding among its citizens of a collective thought and purpose.

Now, the difficulties that lie in the way of humanity in its complex and toilsome journey through the coming centuries towards this Great State are fundamentally difficulties of adaptation and adjustment. To no conceivable social state is man inherently fitted: he is a creature of jealousy and suspicion, unstable, restless, acquisitive, aggressive, intractable, and of a most subtle and nimble dishonesty. Moreover, he is

imaginative, adventurous, and inventive. His nature and instincts are as much in conflict with the necessary restrictions and subjugation of the Normal Social Life as they are likely to be with any other social net that necessity may weave about him. But the Normal Social Life has this advantage that it has a vast accumulated moral tradition and a minutely worked-out material method. All the fundamental institutions have arisen in relation to it and are adapted to its conditions. To revert to it after any phase of social chaos and distress is and will continue for many years to be the path of least resistance for perplexed humanity.

This conception of the Great State, on the other hand, is still altogether unsubstantial. It is a project as dream-like to-day as electric lighting, electric traction, or aviation would have been in the year 1850. In 1850 a man reasonably conversant with the physical science of his time could have declared with a very considerable confidence that, given a certain measure of persistence and social security, these things were more likely to be attained than not in the course of the next century. But such a prophecy was conditional on the preliminary accumulation of a considerable amount of knowledge, on many experiments and failures. Had the world of 1850, by some wave of impulse, placed all its resources in the hands of the ablest scientific man alive, and asked him to produce a practicable paying electric vehicle before 1852, at best he would have produced some clumsy, curious toy, more probably he would have failed altogether; and, similarly, if the whole population of the world came to the present writer and promised meekly to do whatever it was told, we should find ourselves still very largely at a loss in

our project for a millennium. Yet just as nearly every man at work upon Voltaic electricity in 1850 knew that he was preparing for electric traction, so do I know quite certainly, in spite of a whole row of unsolved problems before me, that I am working towards the Great State.

Let me briefly recapitulate the main problems which have to be attacked in the attempt to realise the outline of the Great State. At the base of the whole order there must be some method of agricultural production, and if the agricultural labourer and cottager and the ancient life of the small householder on the holding, a life laborious, prolific, illiterate, limited, and in immediate contact with the land used, is to recede and disappear it must recede and disappear before methods upon a much larger scale, employing wholesale machinery and involving great economies. It is alleged by modern writers that the permanent residence of the cultivator in close relation to his ground is a legacy from the days of cumbrous and expensive transit, that the great proportion of farm work is seasonal, and that a migration to and fro between rural and urban conditions would be entirely practicable in a largely planned community. The agricultural population could move out of town into an open-air life as the spring approached, and return for spending, pleasure, and education as the days shortened. Already something of this sort occurs under extremely unfavourable conditions in the movement of the fruit and hop pickers from the east end of London into Kent, but that is a mere hint of the extended picnic which a broadly planned cultivation might afford. A fully developed civilisation, employing machines in the hands of highly skilled men, will minimise toil to the

very utmost, no man will shove where a machine can shove, or carry where a machine can carry; but there will remain, more particularly in the summer, a vast amount of hand operations, invigorating and even attractive to the urban population Given short hours, good pay, and all the jolly amusement in the evening camp that a free, happy, and intelligent people will develop for themselves, and there will be little difficulty about this particular class of work to differentiate it from any other sort of necessary labour.

One passes, therefore, with no definite transition from the root problem of agricultural production in the Great State to the wider problem of labour in general.

A glance at the countryside conjures up a picture of extensive tracts being cultivated on a wholesale scale, of skilled men directing great ploughing, sowing, and reaping plants, steering cattle and sheep about carefully designed enclosures, constructing channels and guiding sewage towards its proper destination on the fields, and then of added crowds of genial people coming out to spray trees and plants, pick and sort and pack fruits. But who are these people? Why are they in particular doing this for the community? Is our Great State still to have a majority of people glad to do commonplace work for mediocre wages, and will there be other individuals who will ride by on the roads, sympathetically, no doubt, but with a secret sense of superiority? So one opens the general problem of the organisation for labour.

I am careful here to write "for labour" and not "of Labour," because it is entirely against the spirit of the Great State that any section of the people should be set aside as a class to do most of the monotonous, laborious, and uneventful things for the community. That is practically the present arrangement, and that, with a quickened sense of the need of breaking people in to such a life, is the ideal of the bureaucratic Servile State to which, in common with the Conservators, we are bitterly opposed. And here I know I am at my most difficult, most speculative, and most revolutionary point. We who look to the Great State as the present aim of human progress believe a state may solve its economic problem without any section whatever of the community being condemned to lifelong labour. And contemporary events, the phenomena of recent strikes, the phenomena of sabotage, carry out the suggestion that in a community where nearly everyone reads extensively travels about, sees the charm and variety in the lives of prosperous and leisurely people, no class is going to submit permanently to modern labour conditions without extreme resistance, even after the most elaborate Labour Conciliation schemes and social minima are established Things are altogether too stimulating to the imagination nowadays. Of all impossible social dreams that belief in tranquillised and submissive and virtuous Labour is the wildest of all. No sort of modern men will stand it. They will as a class do any vivid and disastrous thing rather than stand it. Even the illiterate peasant will only endure lifelong toil under the stimulus of private ownership and with the consolations of religion; and the typical modern worker has neither the one nor the other. For a time, indeed, for a generation or so even, a labour mass

may be fooled or coerced, but in the end it will break out against its subjection, even if it breaks out to a general social catastrophe.

We have, in fact, to invent for the Great State, if we are to suppose any Great State at all, an economic method without any specific labour class. If we cannot do so, we had better throw ourselves in with the Conservators forthwith, for they are right and we are absurd. Adhesion to the conception of the Great State involves adhesion to the belief that the amount of regular labour, skilled and unskilled, required to produce everything necessary for everyone living in its highly elaborate civilisation may, under modern conditions, with the help of scientific economy and power-producing machinery, be reduced to so small a number of working hours per head in proportion to the average life of the citizen, as to be met as regards the greater moiety of it by the payment of wages over and above the gratuitous share of each individual in the general output; and as regards the residue, a residue of rough, disagreeable, and monotonous operations, by some form of conscription, which will demand a year or so, let us say, of each person's life for the public service. If we reflect that in the contemporary state there is already food, shelter, and clothing of a sort for everyone, in spite of the fact that enormous numbers of people do no productive work at all because they are too well off, that great numbers are out of work, great numbers by bad nutrition and training incapable of work, and that an enormous amount of the work actually done is the overlapping production of competitive trade and work upon such politically necessary but socially useless things as Dreadnoughts, it becomes clear that the

absolutely unavoidable labour in a modern community and its ratio to the available vitality must be of very small account indeed. But all this has still to be worked out even in the most general terms. An intelligent science of economics should afford standards and technicalities and systematised facts upon which to base an estimate. The point was raised a quarter of a century ago by Morris in his "News from Nowhere," and indeed it was already discussed by More in his "Utopia." Our contemporary economics is, however, still a foolish, pretentious pseudo-science, a festering mass of assumptions about buying and selling and wages-paying, and one would as soon consult Bradshaw or the works of Dumas as our orthodox professors of economics for any light upon this fundamental matter.

Moreover, we believe that there is a real disposition to work in human beings, and that in a well-equipped community, in which no one was under an unavoidable urgency to work, the greater proportion of productive operations could be made sufficiently attractive to make them desirable occupations. As for the irreducible residue of undesirable toil, I owe to my friend the late Professor William James this suggestion of a general conscription and a period of public service for everyone, a suggestion which greatly occupied his thoughts during the last years of his life. He was profoundly convinced of the high educational and disciplinary value of universal compulsory military service, and of the need of something more than a sentimental ideal of duty in public life. He would have had the whole population taught in the schools and prepared for this year (or whatever period it had to be) of patient and

heroic labour, the men for the mines, the fisheries, the sanitary services, railway routine, the women for hospital, and perhaps educational work, and so forth. He believed such a service would permeate the whole state with a sense of civic obligation....

But behind all these conceivable triumphs of scientific adjustment and direction lies the infinitely greater difficulty on our way to the Great State, the difficulty of direction. What sort of people are going to distribute the work of the community, decide what is or is not to be done, determine wages, initiate enterprises; and under what sort of criticism, checks, and controls are they going to do this delicate and extensive work? With this we open the whole problem of government, administration and officialdom.

The Marxist and the democratic socialist generally shirk this riddle altogether; the Fabian conception of a bureaucracy, official to the extent of being a distinct class and cult, exists only as a starting-point for healthy repudiations. Whatever else may be worked out in the subtler answers our later time prepares, nothing can be clearer than that the necessary machinery of government must be elaborately organised to prevent the development of a managing caste in permanent conspiracy, tacit or expressed, against the normal man. Quite apart from the danger of unsympathetic and fatally irritating government there can be little or no doubt that the method of making men officials for life is quite the worst way of getting official duties done. Officialdom is a species of incompetence. This rather priggish, teachable, and

well-behaved sort of boy, who is attracted by the prospect of assured income and a pension to win his way into the Civil Service, and who then by varied assiduities rises to a sort of timidly vindictive importance, is the last person to whom we would willingly entrust the vital interests of a nation. We want people who know about life at large, who will come to the public service seasoned by experience, not people who have specialised and acquired that sort of knowledge which is called, in much the same spirit of qualification as one speaks of German Silver, Expert Knowledge. It is clear our public servants and officials must be so only for their periods of service. They must be taught by life, and not "trained" by pedagogues. In every continuing job there is a time when one is crude and blundering, a time, the best time, when one is full of the freshness and happiness of doing well, and a time when routine has largely replaced the stimulus of novelty. The Great State will, I feel convinced, regard changes in occupation as a proper circumstance in the life of every citizen; it will value a certain amateurishness in its service, and prefer it to the trite omniscience of the stale official. On that score of the necessity or versatility, if on no other score, I am flatly antagonistic to the conceptions of "Guild Socialism" which have arisen recently out of the impact of Mr. Penty and Syndicalism upon the uneasy intelligence of Mr. Orage.

And since the Fabian socialists have created a widespread belief that in their projected state every man will be necessarily a public servant or a public pupil because the state will be the only employer and the only educator, it is necessary to point out that the Great State presupposes

neither the one nor the other. It is a form of liberty and not a form of enslavement. We agree with the older forms of socialism in supposing an initial proprietary independence in every citizen. The citizen is a shareholder in the state. Above that and after that, he works if he chooses. But if he likes to live on his minimum and do nothing--though such a type of character is scarcely conceivable--he can. His earning is his own surplus. Above the basal economics of the Great State we assume with confidence there will be a huge surplus of free spending upon extra-collective ends. Public organisations, for example, may distribute impartially and possibly even print and make ink and paper for the newspapers in the Great State, but they will certainly not own them. Only doctrine-driven men have ever ventured to think they would. Nor will the state control writers and artists, for example, nor the stage--though it may build and own theatres--the tailor, the dressmaker, the restaurant cook, an enormous multitude of other busy workers-for-preferences. In the Great State of the future, as in the life of the more prosperous classes of to-day, the greater proportion of occupations and activities will be private and free.

I would like to underline in the most emphatic way that it is possible to have this Great State, essentially socialistic, owning and running the land and all the great public services, sustaining everybody in absolute freedom at a certain minimum of comfort and well-being, and still leaving most of the interests, amusements, and adornments of the individual life, and all sorts of collective concerns, social and political discussion, religious worship, philosophy, and the like to the

free personal initiatives of entirely unofficial people.

This still leaves the problem of systematic knowledge and research, and all the associated problems of aesthetic, moral, and intellectual initiative to be worked out in detail; but at least it dispels the nightmare of a collective mind organised as a branch of the civil service, with authors, critics, artists, scientific investigators appointed in a phrensy of wire-pulling--as nowadays the British state appoints its bishops for the care of its collective soul.

Let me now indicate how these general views affect the problem of family organisation and the problem of women's freedom. In the Normal Social Life the position of women is easily defined. They are subordinated but important. The citizenship rests with the man, and the woman's relation to the community as a whole is through a man. But within that limitation her functions as mother, wife, and home-maker are cardinal. It is one of the entirely unforeseen consequences that have arisen from the decay of the Normal Social Life and its autonomous home that great numbers of women while still subordinate have become profoundly unimportant They have ceased to a very large extent to bear children, they have dropped most of their home-making arts, they no longer nurse nor educate such children as they have, and they have taken on no new functions that compensate for these dwindling activities of the domestic interior. That subjugation which is a vital condition to the Normal Social Life does not seem to be necessary to the Great State. It may or it may not be necessary. And here we enter upon the most difficult of all our

problems. The whole spirit of the Great State is against any avoidable subjugation; but the whole spirit of that science which will animate the Great State forbids us to ignore woman's functional and temperamental differences. A new status has still to be invented for women, a Feminine Citizenship differing in certain respects from the normal masculine citizenship. Its conditions remain to be worked out. We have indeed to work out an entire new system of relations between men and women, that will be free from servitude, aggression, provocation, or parasitism. The public Endowment of Motherhood as such may perhaps be the first broad suggestion of the quality of this new status. A new type of family, a mutual alliance in the place of a subjugation, is perhaps the most startling of all the conceptions which confront us directly we turn ourselves definitely towards the Great State.

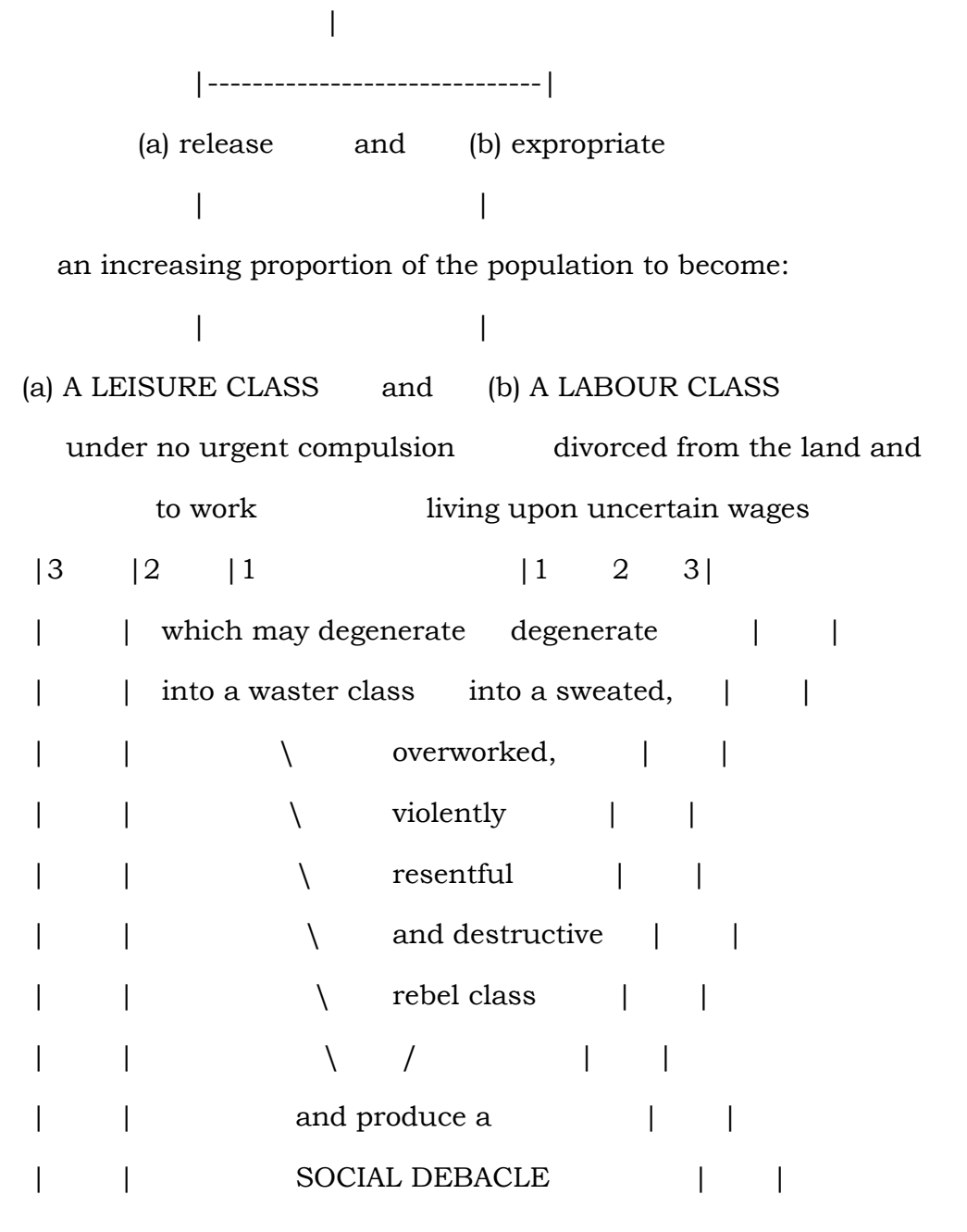
And as our conception of the Great State grows, so we shall begin to realise the nature of the problem of transition, the problem of what we may best do in the confusion of the present time to elucidate and render practicable this new phase of human organisation. Of one thing there can be no doubt, that whatever increases thought and knowledge moves towards our goal; and equally certain is it that nothing leads thither that tampers with the freedom of spirit, the independence of soul in common men and women. In many directions, therefore, the believer in the Great State will display a jealous watchfulness of contemporary developments rather than a premature constructiveness. We must watch wealth; but quite as necessary it is to watch the legislator, who mistakes propaganda for progress and class exasperation to satisfy class

vindictiveness for construction. Supremely important is it to keep discussion open, to tolerate no limitation on the freedom of speech, writing, art and book distribution, and to sustain the utmost liberty of criticism upon all contemporary institutions and processes.

This briefly is the programme of problems and effort to which my idea of the Great State, as the goal of contemporary progress, leads me.

The diagram on p. 131 shows compactly the gist of the preceding discussion; it gives the view of social development upon which I base all my political conceptions.

produces an increasing surplus of energy and opportunity, more particularly under modern conditions of scientific organisation and power production; and this through the operation of rent and of usury tends to



which may become a Governing Class (with waster elements) in an unprogressive Bureaucratic SERVILE STATE	<---------->	which may become the controlled regimented and disciplined Labour Class of an unprogressive Bureaucratic SERVILE STATE

which may become
the whole community
of the GREAT STATE
working under various
motives and inducements
but not constantly,
nor permanently
nor unwillingly

which may be
rendered needless
by a universal
compulsory year
or so of labour
service together
with a scientific
organisation
of production,
and so reabsorbed
by re-endowment
into the Leisure
Class of the
GREAT STATE