

**The Salvaging Of Civilisation**

**By**

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## The Salvaging of Civilization

I

### THE PROBABLE FUTURE OF MANKIND[A]

§ 1

The present outlook of human affairs is one that admits of broad generalizations and that seems to require broad generalizations. We are in one of those phases of experience which become cardinal in history. A series of immense and tragic events have shattered the self-complacency and challenged the will and intelligence of mankind. That easy general forward movement of human affairs which for several generations had seemed to justify the persuasion of a necessary and invincible progress, progress towards greater powers, greater happiness, and a continual enlargement of life, has been checked violently and perhaps arrested altogether. The spectacular catastrophe of the Great War has revealed an accumulation of destructive forces in our outwardly prosperous society, of which few of us had dreamt; and it has also revealed a profound incapacity to deal with and restrain these forces. The two years of want, confusion, and indecision that have followed the Great War in

Europe and Asia, and the uncertainties that have disturbed life even in the comparatively untouched American world, seem to many watchful minds even more ominous to our social order than the war itself. What is happening to our race? they ask. Did the prosperities and confident hopes with which the twentieth century opened, mark nothing more than a culmination of fortuitous good luck? Has the cycle of prosperity and progress closed? To what will this staggering and blundering, the hatreds and mischievous adventures of the present time, bring us? Is the world in the opening of long centuries of confusion and disaster such as ended the Western Roman Empire in Europe or the Han prosperity in China? And if so, will the debacle extend to America? Or is the American (and Pacific?) system still sufficiently removed and still sufficiently autonomous to maintain a progressive movement of its own if the Old World collapse?

Some sort of answer to these questions, vast and vague though they are, we must each one of us have before we can take an intelligent interest or cast an effective vote in foreign affairs. Even though a man formulate no definite answer, he must still have an implicit persuasion before he can act in these matters. If he have no clear conclusions openly arrived at, then he must act upon subconscious conclusions instinctively arrived at. Far better is it that he should bring them into the open light of thought.

The suppression of war is generally regarded as central to the complex of contemporary problems. But war is not a new thing in human

experience, and for scores of centuries mankind has managed to get along in spite of its frequent recurrence. Most states and empires have been intermittently at war throughout their periods of stability and prosperity. But their warfare was not the warfare of the present time. The thing that has brought the rush of progressive development of the past century and a half to a sudden shock of arrest is not the old and familiar warfare, but warfare strangely changed and exaggerated by novel conditions. It is this change in conditions, therefore, and not war itself, which is the reality we have to analyse in its bearing upon our social and political ideas. In 1914 the European Great Powers resorted to war, as they had resorted to war on many previous occasions, to decide certain open issues. This war flamed out with an unexpected rapidity until all the world was involved; and it developed a horror, a monstrosity of destructiveness, and, above all, an inconclusiveness quite unlike any preceding war. That unlikeness was the essence of the matter. Whatever justifications could be found for its use in the past, it became clear to many minds that under the new conditions war was no longer a possible method of international dealing. The thing lay upon the surface. The idea of a League of Nations sustaining a Supreme World Court to supersede the arbitrament of war, did not so much arise at any particular point as break out simultaneously wherever there were intelligent men.

Now what was this change in conditions that had confronted mankind with the perplexing necessity of abandoning war? For perplexing it certainly is. War has been a ruling and constructive idea in all human societies

up to the present time; few will be found to deny it. Political institutions have very largely developed in relation to the idea of war; defence and aggression have shaped the outer form of every state in the world, just as co-operation sustained by compulsion has shaped its inner organization. And if abruptly man determines to give up the waging of war, he may find that this determination involves the most extensive and penetrating modifications of political and social conceptions that do not at the first glance betray any direct connection with belligerent activities at all.

It is to the general problem arising out of this consideration, that this and the three following essays will be addressed; the question: What else has to go if war is to go out of human life? and the problem of what has to be done if it is to be banished and barred out for ever from the future experiences of our race. For let us face the truth in this matter; the abolition of war is no casting of ancient, barbaric, and now obsolete traditions, no easy and natural progressive step; the abolition of war, if it can be brought about, will be a reversal not only of the general method of human life hitherto but of the general method of nature, the method, that is, of conflict and survival. It will be a new phase in the history of life, and not simply an incident in the history of man. These brief essays will attempt to present something like the true dimensions of the task before mankind if war is indeed to be superseded, and to show that the project of abolishing war by the occasional meeting of some Council of a League of Nations or the like, is, in itself, about as likely to succeed as a proposal to abolish

thirst, hunger, and death by a short legislative act.

Let us first examine the change in the conditions of human life that has altered war from a normal aspect of the conflict for existence of human societies into a terror and a threat for the entire species. The change is essentially a change in the amount of power available for human purposes, and more particularly in the amount of material power that can be controlled by one individual. Human society up to a couple of centuries ago was essentially a man-power and horse-power system. There was in addition a certain limited use of water power and wind power, but that was not on a scale to affect the general truth of the proposition. The first intimation of the great change began seven centuries ago with the appearance of explosives. In the thirteenth century the Mongols made a very effective military use of the Chinese discovery of gunpowder. They conquered most of the known world, and their introduction of a low-grade explosive in warfare rapidly destroyed the immunity of castles and walled cities, abolished knighthood, and utterly wrecked and devastated the irrigation system of Mesopotamia, which had been a populous and civilized region since before the beginnings of history. But the restricted metallurgical knowledge of the time set definite limits to the size and range of cannon. It was only with the nineteenth century that the large scale production of cast steel and the growth of chemical knowledge made the military use of a variety of explosives practicable. The systematic extension of human power began in the eighteenth century with the utilization of steam and coal. That opened a crescendo of invention and discovery which thrust rapidly increasing

quantities of material energy into men's hands. Even now that crescendo may not have reached its climax.

We need not rehearse here the familiar story of the abolition of distance that ensued; how the radiogram and the telegram have made every event of importance a simultaneous event for the minds of everyone in the world, how journeys which formerly took months or weeks now take days or hours, nor how printing and paper have made possible a universally informed community, and so forth. Nor will we describe the effect of these things upon warfare. The point that concerns us here is this, that before this age of discovery communities had fought and struggled with each other much as naughty children might do in a crowded nursery, within the measure of their strength. They had hurt and impoverished each other, but they had rarely destroyed each other completely. Their squabbles may have been distressing, but they were tolerable. It is even possible to regard these former wars as healthy, hardening and invigorating conflicts. But into this nursery has come Science, and has put into the fists of these children razor blades with poison on them, bombs of frightful explosive, corrosive fluids and the like. The comparatively harmless conflicts of these infants are suddenly fraught with quite terrific possibilities, and it is only a question of sooner or later before the nursery becomes a heap of corpses or is blown to smithereens. A real nursery invaded by a reckless person distributing such gifts, would be promptly saved by the intervention of the nurse; but humanity has no nurse but its own poor wisdom. And whether that poor wisdom can rise to the pitch of effectual intervention is the most

fundamental problem in mundane affairs at the present time.

The deadly gifts continue. There was a steady increase in the frightfulness and destructiveness of belligerence from 1914 up to the beginning of 1918, when shortage of material and energy checked the process; and since the armistice there has been an industrious development of military science. The next well-organized war, we are assured, will be far more swift and extensive in its destruction--more particularly of the civilian population. Armies will advance no longer along roads but extended in line, with heavy tank transport which will plough up the entire surface of the land they traverse; aerial bombing, with bombs each capable of destroying a small town, will be practicable a thousand miles beyond the military front, and the seas will be swept clear of shipping by mines and submarine activities. There will be no distinction between combatants and non-combatants, because every able-bodied citizen, male or female, is a potential producer of food and munitions; and probably the safest, and certainly the best supplied shelters in the universal cataclysm, will be the carefully buried, sandbagged, and camouflaged general-headquarters of the contending armies. There military gentlemen of limited outlook and high professional training will, in comparative security, achieve destruction beyond their understanding. The hard logic of war which gives victory always to the most energetic and destructive combatant, will turn warfare more and more from mere operations for loot or conquest or predominance into operations for the conclusive destruction of the antagonists. A relentless thrust towards strenuousness is a

characteristic of belligerent conditions. War is war, and vehemence is in its nature. You must hit always as hard as you can. Offensive and counter-offensive methods continue to prevail over merely defensive ones. The victor in the next great war will be bombed from the air, starved, and depleted almost as much as the loser. His victory will be no easy one; it will be a triumph of the exhausted and dying over the dead.

It has been argued that such highly organized and long prepared warfare as the world saw in 1914-18 is not likely to recur again for a considerable time because of the shock inflicted by it upon social stability. There may be spasmodic wars with improvised and scanty supplies, these superficially more hopeful critics admit, but there remain no communities now so stable and so sure of their people as to prepare and wage again a fully elaborated scientific war. But this view implies no happier outlook for mankind. It amounts to this, that so long as men remain disordered and impoverished they will not rise again to the full height of scientific war. But manifestly this will only be for so long as they remain disordered and impoverished. When they recover they will recover to repeat again their former disaster with whatever modern improvements and intensifications the ingenuity of the intervening time may have devised. This new phase of disorder, conflict, and social unravelling upon which we have entered, this phase of decline due to the enhanced and increasing powers for waste and destruction in mankind, is bound, therefore, to continue so long as the divisions based upon ancient ideas of conflict remain; and if for a time

the decadence seems to be arrested, it will only be to accumulate under the influence of those ideas a fresh war-storm sufficiently destructive and disorganizing to restore the decadent process.

Unless mankind can readjust its political and social ideas to this essential new fact of its enormously enlarged powers, unless it can eliminate or control its pugnacity, no other prospect seems open to us but decadence, at least to such a level of barbarism as to lose and forget again all the scientific and industrial achievements of our present age. Then, with its powers shrunken to their former puny scale, our race may recover some sort of balance between the injuries and advantages of conflict. Or, since our decadent species may have less vitality and vigour than it had in its primitive phases, it may dwindle and fade out altogether before some emboldened animal antagonist, or through some world-wide disease brought to it perhaps by rats and dogs and insects and what not, who may be destined to be heirs to the rusting and mouldering ruins of the cities and ports and ways and bridges of to-day.

Only one alternative to some such retrogression seems possible, and that is the conscious, systematic reconstruction of human society to avert it. The world has been brought into one community, and the human mind and will may be able to recognize and adapt itself to this fact--in time. Men, as a race, may succeed in turning their backs upon the method of warfare and the methods of conflict and in embarking upon an immense world-wide effort of co-operation and mutual toleration and salvage.

They may have the vigour to abandon their age-long attempt to live in separate sovereign states, and to grapple with and master the now quite destructive force that traditional hostility has become, and bring their affairs together under one law and one peace. These new vast powers over nature which have been given to them, and which will certainly be their destruction if their purposes remain divergent and conflicting, will then be the means by which they may set up a new order of as yet scarcely imaginable interest and happiness and achievement. But is our race capable of such an effort, such a complete reversal of its instinctive and traditional impulses? Can we find premonitions of any such bold and revolutionary adaptations as these, in the mental and political life of to-day? How far are we, reader and writer, for example, working for these large new securities? Do we even keep them steadfastly in our minds? How is it with the people around us? Are not we and they and all the race still just as much adrift in the current of circumstances as we were before 1914? Without a great effort on our part (or on someone's part) that current which swirled our kind into a sunshine of hope and opportunity for a while will carry our race on surely and inexorably to fresh wars, to shortages, hunger, miseries, and social debacles, at last either to complete extinction or to a degradation beyond our present understanding.

§2

The urgent need for a great creative effort has become apparent in the affairs of mankind. It is manifest that unless some unity of purpose can be achieved in the world, unless the ever more violent and disastrous incidence of war can be averted, unless some common control can be imposed on the headlong waste of man's limited inheritance of coal, oil, and moral energy that is now going on, the history of humanity must presently culminate in some sort of disaster, repeating and exaggerating the disaster of the great war, producing chaotic social conditions, and going on thereafter in a degenerative process towards extinction. So much all reasonable men seem now prepared to admit. But upon the question of how and in what form a unity of purpose and a common control of human affairs is to be established, there is still a great and lamentable diversity of opinion and, as a consequence, an enfeeblement and wasteful dispersal of will. At present nothing has been produced but the manifestly quite inadequate League of Nations at Geneva, and a number of generally very vague movements for a world law, world disarmament, and the like, among the intellectuals of the various civilized countries of the world.

The common failings of all these initiatives are a sort of genteel timidity and a defective sense of the scale of the enterprise before us. A neglect of the importance of scale is one of the gravest faults of contemporary education. Because a world-wide political organ is needed, it does not follow that a so-called League of Nations without

representative sanctions, military forces, or authority of any kind, a League from which large sections of the world are excluded altogether, is any contribution to that need. People have a way of saying it is better than nothing. But it may be worse than nothing. It may create a feeling of disillusionment about world-unifying efforts. If a mad elephant were loose in one's garden, it would be an excellent thing to give one's gardener a gun. But it would have to be an adequate gun, an elephant gun. To give him a small rook-rifle and tell him it was better than nothing, and encourage him to face the elephant with that in his hand, would be the directest way of getting rid not of the elephant but of the gardener.

It is, if people will but think steadfastly, inconceivable that there should be any world control without a merger of sovereignty, but the framers of these early tentatives towards world unity have lacked the courage of frankness in this respect. They have been afraid of outbreaks of bawling patriotism, and they have tried to believe, and to make others believe, that they contemplate nothing more than a league of nations, when in reality they contemplate a subordination of nations and administrations to one common law and rule. The elementary necessity of giving the council of any world-peace organization which is to be more than a sentimental international gesture, not only a complete knowledge but an effective control of all the military resources and organizations in the world, appalled them. They did not even ask for such a control. The frowning solidity of existing things was too much for them. They wanted to change them, but when it came to laying hands on them--No!

They decided to leave them alone. They wanted a new world--and it is to contain just the same things as the old.

But are these intellectuals right in their estimate of the common man? Is he such a shallow and vehement fool as they seem to believe? Is he so patriotic as they make out? If mankind is to be saved from destruction there must be a world control; a world control means a world government, it is only another name for it, and manifestly that government must have a navy that will supersede the British navy, artillery that will supersede the French artillery, air forces superseding all existing air forces, and so forth. For many flags there must be one sovereign flag; orbis terrarum. Unless a world control amounts to that it will be ridiculous, just as a judge supported by two or three unarmed policemen, a newspaper reporter and the court chaplain, proposing to enforce his decisions in a court packed with the heavily armed friends of the plaintiff and defendant would be ridiculous. But the common man is supposed to be so blindly and incurably set upon his British navy or his French army, or whatever his pet national instrument of violence may be, that it is held to be impossible to supersede these beloved and adored forces. If that is so, then a world law is impossible, and the wisest course before us is to snatch such small happiness as we may hope to do and leave the mad elephant to work its will in the garden.

But is it so? If the mass of common men are incurably patriotic and belligerent why is there a note of querulous exhortation in nearly all patriotic literature? Why, for instance, is Mr. Rudyard Kipling's

"History of England" so full of goading and scolding? And very significant indeed to any student of the human outlook was the world-response to President Wilson's advocacy of the League of Nations idea, in its first phase in 1918, before the weakening off and disillusionment of the Versailles Conference. Just for a little while it seemed that President Wilson stood for a new order of things in the world, that he had the wisdom and will and power to break the net of hatreds and nationalisms and diplomacies in which the Old World was entangled. And while he seemed to be capable of that, while he promised most in the way of change and national control, then it was that he found his utmost support in every country in the world. In the latter half of 1918 there was scarcely a country anywhere in which one could not have found men ready to die for President Wilson. A great hopefulness was manifest in the world. It faded, it faded very rapidly again. But that brief wave of enthusiasm, which set minds astir with the same great idea of one peace of justice throughout the earth in China and Bokhara and the Indian bazaars, in Iceland and Basutoland and Ireland and Morocco, was indeed a fact perhaps more memorable in history even than the great war itself. It displayed a possibility of the simultaneous operation of the same general ideas throughout the world quite beyond any previous experience. It demonstrated that the generality of men are as capable of being cosmopolitan and pacifist as they are of being patriotic and belligerent. Both moods are extensions and exaltations beyond the everyday life, which itself is neither one thing nor the other. And both are transitory moods, responses to external suggestion.

It is to that first wave of popular feeling for a world law transcending and moving counter to all contemporary diplomacies, and not to the timid legalism of the framers of the first schemes for a League of Nations that we must look, if we are to hope at all for the establishment of a new order in human affairs. It is upon the spirit of that transitory response to the transitory greatness of President Wilson that we have to seize; we have to lay hold of that, to recall it and confirm it and enlarge and strengthen it, to make it a flux of patriotisms and a creator of new loyalties and devotions, and out of the dead dust of our present institutions to build up for it and animate with it the body of a true world state.

We have already stated the clear necessity, if mankind is not to perish by the hypertrophy of warfare, for the establishment of an armed and strong world law. Here in this spirit that has already gleamed upon the world is the possible force to create and sustain such a world law. What is it that intervenes between the universal human need and its satisfaction? Why, since there are overwhelming reasons for it and a widespread disposition for it, is there no world-wide creative effort afoot now in which men and women by the million are participating--and participating with all their hearts? Why is it that, except for the weak gestures of the Geneva League of Nations and a little writing of books and articles, a little pamphleteering, some scattered committee activities on the part of people chiefly of the busybody class, an occasional speech and a diminishing volume of talk and allusion, no

attempts are apparent to stay the plain drift of human society towards new conflicts and the sluices of final disaster?

The answer to that Why, probes deep into the question of human motives.

It must be because we are all creatures of our immediate surroundings, because our minds and energies are chiefly occupied by the affairs of every day, because we are all chiefly living our own lives, and very few of us, except by a kind of unconscious contribution, the life of mankind. In moments of mental activity, in the study or in contemplation, we may rise to a sense of the dangers and needs of human destiny, but it is only a few minds and characters of prophetic quality that, without elaborate artificial assistance, seem able to keep hold upon and guide their lives by such relatively gigantic considerations. The generality of men and women, so far as their natural disposition goes, are scarcely more capable of apprehending and consciously serving the human future than a van full of well-fed rabbits would be of grasping the fact that their van was running smoothly and steadily down an inclined plane into the sea. It is only as the result of considerable educational effort and against considerable resistance that our minds are brought to a broader view. In every age for many thousands of years men of exceptional vision have spent their lives in passionate efforts to bring us ordinary men into some relation of response and service to the greater issues of life. It is these pioneers of vision who have given the world its religions and its philosophical cults, its loyalties and observances; and who have imposed ideas of greatness and duty on

their fellows. In every age the ordinary man has submitted reluctantly to such teachings, has made his peculiar compromises with them, has reduced them as far as possible to formula and formality, and got back as rapidly as possible to the eating and drinking and desire, the personal spites and rivalries and glories which constitute his reality. The mass of men to-day do not seem to care, nor want to care, whither the political and social institutions to which they are accustomed are taking them. Such considerations overstrain us. And it is only by the extremest effort of those who are capable of a sense of racial danger and duty that the collective energies of men can ever be gathered together and organized and orientated towards the common good. To nearly all men and women, unless they are in the vein for it, such discussion as this in these essays does not appeal as being right or wrong; it does not really interest them, rather it worries them; and for the most part they would be glad to disregard it as completely as a lecture on wheels and gravitation and the physiological consequences of prolonged submergence would be disregarded by those rabbits in the van.

But man is a creature very different in his nature from a rabbit, and if he is less instinctively social, he is much more consciously social. Chief among his differences must be the presence of those tendencies which we call conscience, that haunting craving to be really right and to do the really right thing which is the basis of the moral and perhaps also of most of the religious life. In this lies our hope for mankind. Man hates to be put right, and yet also he wants to be right. He is a creature divided against himself, seeking both to preserve and to

overcome his egotism. It is upon the presence of the latter strand in man's complex make-up that we must rest our hopes of a developing will for the world state which will gradually gather together and direct into a massive constructive effort the now quite dispersed chaotic and traditional activities of men.

As we have examined this problem it has become clear that the task of bringing about that consolidated world state which is necessary to prevent the decline and decay of mankind is not primarily one for the diplomatists and lawyers and politicians at all. It is an educational one. It is a moral based on an intellectual reconstruction. The task immediately before mankind is to find release from the contentious loyalties and hostilities of the past which make collective world-wide action impossible at the present time, in a world-wide common vision of the history and destinies of the race. On that as a basis, and on that alone, can a world control be organized and maintained. The effort demanded from mankind, therefore, is primarily and essentially a bold reconstruction of the outlook upon life of hundreds of millions of minds. The idea of a world commonweal has to be established as the criterion of political institutions, and also as the criterion of general conduct in hundreds of millions of brains. It has to dominate education everywhere in the world. When that end is achieved, then the world state will be achieved, and it can be achieved in no other way. And unless that world state can be achieved, it would seem that the outlook before mankind is a continuance of disorder and of more and more destructive and wasteful conflicts, a steady process of violence,

decadence, and misery towards extinction, or towards modifications of our type altogether beyond our present understanding and sympathy.

### § 3

In framing an estimate of the human future two leading facts are dominant. The first is the plain necessity for a political reorganization of the world as a unity, to save our race from the social disintegration and complete physical destruction which war, under modern conditions, must ultimately entail, and the second is the manifest absence of any sufficient will in the general mass of mankind at the present time to make such a reorganization possible. There appear to be the factors of such a will in men, but they are for the most part unawakened, or they are unorganized and ineffective. And there is a very curious incapacity to grasp the reality of the human situation, a real resistance to seeing things as they are--for man is an effort-shirking animal--which greatly impedes the development of such a will. Failing the operation of such a sufficient will, human affairs are being directed by use and wont, by tradition and accidental deflections. Mankind, after the tragic concussion of the great war, seems now to be drifting again towards new and probably more disastrous concussions.

The catastrophe of the Great War did more or less completely awaken a certain limited number of intelligent people to the need of some general control replacing this ancient traditional driftage of events. But they shrank from the great implications of such a world control. The only practicable way to achieve a general control in the face of existing governments, institutions and prejudices, interested obstruction and the common disregard, is by extending this awakening to great masses of

people. This means an unprecedented educational effort, an appeal to men's intelligence and men's imagination such as the world has never seen before. Is it possible to rationalize the at present chaotic will of mankind? That possibility, if it is a possibility, is the most important thing in contemporary human affairs.

We are asking here for an immense thing, for a change of ideas, a vast enlargement of ideas, and for something very like a change of heart in hundreds of millions of human beings. But then we are dealing with the fate of the entire species. We are discussing the prevention of wars, disorders, shortages, famines and miseries for centuries ahead. The initial capital we have to go upon is as yet no more than the aroused understanding and conscience of a few thousands, at most of a few score thousands of people. Can so little a leaven leaven so great a lump? Is a response to this appeal latent in the masses of mankind? Is there anything in history to justify hope for so gigantic a mental turnover in our race?

A consideration of the spread of Christianity in the first four centuries A.D. or of the spread of Islam in the seventh century will, we believe, support a reasonable hope that such a change in the minds of men, whatever else it may be, is a practicable change, that it can be done and that it may even probably be done. Consider our two instances. The propagandas of those two great religions changed and changed for ever the political and social outlook over vast areas of the world's surface. Yet while the stir for world unity begins now simultaneously in

many countries and many groups of people, those two propagandas each radiated from a single centre and were in the first instance the teachings of single individuals; and while to-day we can deal with great reading populations and can reach them by press and printed matter, by a universal distribution of books, by great lecturing organizations and the like, those earlier great changes in human thought were achieved mainly by word of mouth and by crumbed manuscripts, painfully copied and passed slowly from hand to hand. So far it is only the trader who has made any effectual use of the vast facilities the modern world has produced for conveying a statement simultaneously to great numbers of people at a distance. The world of thought still hesitates to use the means of power that now exist for it. History and political philosophy in the modern world are like bashful dons at a dinner party; they crumble their bread and talk in undertones and clever allusions to their nearest neighbour, abashed at the thought of addressing the whole table. But in a world where Mars can reach out in a single night and smite a city a thousand miles away, we cannot suffer wisdom to hesitate in an inaudible gentility. The knowledge and vision that is good enough for the best of us is good enough for all. This gospel of human brotherhood and a common law and rule for all mankind, the attempt to meet this urgent necessity of a common control of human affairs, which indeed is no new religion but only an attempt to realize practically the common teaching of all the established religions of the world, has to speak with dominating voice everywhere between the poles and round about the world.

And it must become part of the universal education. It must speak through the school and university. It is too often forgotten, in America, perhaps, even more than in Europe, that education exists for the community, and for the individual only so far as it makes him a sufficient member of the community. The chief end of education is to subjugate and sublimate for the collective purposes of our kind the savage egotism we inherit. Every school, every college, teaches directly and still more by implication, relationship to a community and devotion to a community. In too many cases that community we let our schools and colleges teach to our children is an extremely narrow one; it is the community of a sect, of a class, or of an intolerant, greedy and unrighteous nationalism. Schools have increased greatly in numbers throughout the world during the last century, but there has been little or no growth in the conception of education in schools. Education has been extended, but it has not been developed. If man is to be saved from self-destruction by the organization of a world community, there must be a broadening of the reference of the teaching in the schools of all the world to that community of the world. World-wide educational development and reform are the necessary preparations for and the necessary accompaniments of a political reconstruction of the world. The two are the right and left hands of the same thing. Neither can effect much without the other.

Now it is manifest that this reorganization of the world's affairs and of the world's education which we hold to be imperatively dictated by the change in warfare, communications and other conditions of human

life brought about by scientific discovery during the last hundred years, carries with it a practical repudiation of the claims of every existing sovereign government in the world to be final and sovereign, to be anything more than provisional and replaceable. There is the difficulty that has checked hundreds of men after their first step towards this work for a universal peace. It involves, it cannot but involve, a revision of their habitual allegiances. At best existing governments are to be regarded as local trustees and caretakers for the coming human commonweal.

If they are not that, then they are necessarily obstructive and antagonistic. But few rulers, few governments, few officials, will have the greatness of mind to recognize and admit this plain reality. By a kind of necessity they force upon their subjects and publics a conflict of loyalties. The feeble driftage of human affairs from one base or greedy arrangement or cowardly evasion to another, since the Armistice of 1918, is very largely due to the obstinate determination of those who are in positions of authority and responsibility to ignore the plain teachings of the great war and its sequelæ. They are resisting adjustments; their minds are fighting against the sacrifices of pride and authority that a full recognition of their subordination to the world commonweal will involve. They are prepared, it would seem, to fight against the work of human salvation basely and persistently, whenever their accustomed importance is threatened.

Even in the schools and in the world of thought the established thing

will make its unrighteous fight for life. The dull and the dishonest in high places will suppress these greater ideas when they can, and ignore when they dare not suppress. It seems too much to hope for that there should be any willingness on the part of any established authority to admit its obsolescence and prepare the way for its merger in a world authority. It is not creative minds that produce revolutions, but the obstinate conservatism of established authority. It is the blank refusal to accept the idea of an orderly evolution towards new things that gives a revolutionary quality to every constructive proposal. The huge task of political and educational reconstruction which is needed to arrest the present drift of human affairs towards catastrophe, must be achieved, if it is to be achieved at all, mainly by voluntary and unofficial effort; and for the most part in the teeth of official opposition.

There are one or two existing states to which men have looked for some open recognition of their duty to mankind as a whole, and of the necessarily provisional nature of their contemporary constitutions. The United States of America constitute a political system, profoundly different in its origin and in its spirit, from any old-world state; it was felt that here at least might be an evolutionary state; and in the palmy days of President Wilson it did seem for a brief interval as if the New World was indeed coming to the rescue of the old, as if America was to play the rôle of a propagandist continent, bringing its ideas of equality and freedom, and extending the spirit of its union to all the nations of the earth. From that expectation, the world opinion is now in a state of excessive and unreasonable recoil. President Wilson fell away

from his first intimations of that world-wide federal embrace; his mind and will were submerged by the clamour of contending patriotisms and the subtle expedients of old-world diplomacy in Paris; but American accessibility to the idea of a federalized world neither began with him nor will it end with his failure. America is still a hopeful laboratory of world-unifying thought. A long string of arbitration treaties stands to the credit of America, and a series of developing Pan-American projects, pointing clearly to at least a continental synthesis within a measurable time. There has been, and there still is, a better understanding of, and a greater receptivity to, ideas of international synthesis in America than in any European state.

And the British Empire, which according to many of its liberal apologists is already a league of nations linked together in a mutually advantageous peace, to that too men have looked for some movement of adaptation to this greater synthesis which is the world's pre-eminent need. But so far the British Empire has failed to respond to such expectations. The war has left it strained and bruised and with its affairs very much in the grip of the military class, the most illiterate and dangerous class in the community. They have done, perhaps, irreparable mischief to the peace of the empire in Ireland, India and Egypt, and they have made the claim of the British system to be an exemplary unification of dissimilar peoples seem now to many people incurably absurd. It is a great misfortune for mankind that the British Empire, which played so sturdy and central a part in the great war, could at its close achieve no splendid and helpful gesture towards a

generous reconstruction.

Since the armistice there has been an extraordinary opportunity for the British monarchy to have displayed a sense of the new occasions before the world, and to have led the way towards the efforts and renunciations of an international renaissance. It could have taken up a lead that the President of the United States had initiated and relinquished; it could have used its peculiar position to make an unexampled appeal to the whole world. It could have created a new epoch in history. The Prince of Wales has been touring the world-wide dominions of which, some day, he is to be the crowned head. He has received addresses, visited sights, been entertained, shaken hands with scores of thousands of people and submitted himself to the eager, yet unpenetrating gaze of vast multitudes. His smallest acts have been observed with premeditated admiration, his lightest words recorded. He is not now a boy; he saw something of the great war, even if his exalted position denied him any large share of its severer hardships and dangers; he cannot be blind to the general posture of the world's affairs. Here, surely, was a chance of saying something that would be heard from end to end of the earth, something kingly and great-minded. Here was the occasion for a fine restatement of the obligations and duties of empire. But from first to last the prince has said nothing to quicken the imaginations of the multitude of his future subjects to the gigantic possibilities of these times, nothing to reassure the foreign observer that the British Empire embodies anything more than the colossal national egotism and impenetrable self-satisfaction of the British peoples. "Here we are,"

said the old order in those demonstrations, "and here we mean to stick. Just as we have been, so we remain. British!--we are Bourbons." These smiling tours of the Prince of Wales in these years of shortage, stress, and insecurity, constitute a propaganda of inanity unparalleled in the world's history.

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Nor do we find in the nominal rulers and official representatives of other countries any clear admission of the necessity for a great and fundamental change in the scope and spirit of government. These official and ruling people, more than any other people, are under the sway of that life of use and wont which dominates us all. They are often trained to their positions, or they have won their way to their positions of authority through a career of political activities which amounts to a training. And that training is not a training in enterprise and change; it is a training in sticking tight and getting back to precedent. We can expect nothing from them. We shall be lucky if the resistance of the administrative side of existing states to the conception of a world commonwealth is merely passive. There is little or no prospect of any existing governing system, unless it be such a federal system as Switzerland or the United States, passing directly and without extensive internal changes into combination with other sovereign powers as part of a sovereign world system. At some point the independent states will as systems resist, and unless an overwhelming world conscience for the world state has been brought into being and

surrounds them with an understanding watchfulness, and invades the consciences of their supporters and so weakens their resisting power, they will resist violently and disastrously. But it will be an incoherent resistance because the very nature of the sovereign states of to-day is incoherence. There can be no world-wide combination of sovereign states to resist the world state, because that would be to create the world state in the attempt to defeat it.

#### § 4

In the three preceding essays an attempt has been made to state the pass at which mankind has arrived, the dangers and mischiefs that threaten our race, and the need there is and the opportunities there are for a strenuous attempt to end the age-long bickerings of nations and empires and establish one community of law and effort throughout the whole world. Stress has been laid chiefly upon the monstrous evils and disasters a continuation of our present divisions, our nationalisms and imperialisms and the like, will certainly entail. These considerations of evil however are only the negative argument for this creative effort; they have been thrust forward because war, disorder, insufficiency, and the ill health, the partings, deprivations, boredom and unhappiness that arise out of these things are well within our experience and entirely credible; the positive argument for a world order demands at once more faith and imagination.

Given a world law and world security, a release from the net of bickering frontiers, world-wide freedom of movement, and world-wide fellowship, a thousand good things that are now beyond hope or dreaming would come into the ordinary life. The whole world would be our habitation, and the energies of men, released from their preoccupation with contention, would go more and more abundantly into the accumulation and application of scientific knowledge, that is to say into the increase of mental and bodily health, of human power, of interest and happiness. Even to-day the most delightful possibilities

stand waiting, inaccessible to nearly all of us because of the general insecurity, distrust and anger. Flying, in a world safely united in peace, could take us now to the ends of the earth smoothly, securely through the sweet upper air, in five or six days. In two or three years there could again be abundance of food and pleasant clothing for everyone throughout the whole world. Men could be destroying their slums and pestilential habitations and rebuilding spacious and beautiful cities. Given only peace and confidence and union we could double our yearly production of all that makes life desirable and still double our leisure for thought and growth. We could live in a universal palace and make the whole globe our garden and playground.

But these are not considerations that sway people to effort. Fear and hate, not hope and desire, have been hitherto the effective spurs for men. The most popular religions are those which hold out the widest hopes of damnation. Our lives are lives of use and wont, we distrust the promise of delightful experience and achievements beyond our accustomed ways; it offends our self-satisfaction even to regard them as possibilities; we do not like the implied cheapening of familiar things. We are all ready to sneer at "Utopias," as elderly invalids sneer at the buoyant hopes of youth and do their best to think them sure of frustration. The aged and disillusioned profess a keen appreciation of the bath chair and the homely spoonful of medicine, and pity a crudity that misses the fine quality of those ripe established things. Most people are quite ready to dismiss the promise of a full free life for all mankind with a sneer. That would rob the world of romance, they say,

the romance of passport offices, custom houses, shortages of food, endless petty deprivations, slums, pestilence, under-educated stunted children, youths dying in heaps in muddy trenches, an almost universal lack of vitality, and all the picturesque eventfulness of contemporary conditions. So that we have not dwelt here upon the life-giving aspect of a possible world state, but only on its life-saving aspects. We have not argued that our present life of use and wont could be replaced by an infinitely better way of living. We have rather pointed out that if things continue to drift as they are doing, the present life of use and wont will become intolerably insecure. It is the thought of the large bombing aeroplane and not the hope of swift travelling across the sky that will move the generality of men, if they are to be moved at all, towards a world peace.

But whether the lever that moves them is desire or fear the majority of men, unless the species is to perish, must be brought within a measurable time to an understanding of, and a will for, a single world government. And since at first existing institutions, established traditions, educational organizations and the like, will all be passively if not actively resistant to the spread of this saving idea, and much more so to any attempts to realize this saving idea, there remains nothing for us to look to, at the present time, for the first organization of this immense effort of mental reversal, but the zeal and devotion and self-sacrifice of convinced individuals. The world state must begin; it can only begin, as a propagandist cult, or as a group of propagandist cults, to which men and women must give themselves and

their energies, regardless of the consequences to themselves. Laying the foundations of a world state upon a site already occupied by a muddle of buildings is an undertaking which will almost necessarily bring its votaries into conflict with established authority and current sentiment; they will have to face the possibility of lives of conflict, misunderstanding, much thankless exertion; they must count on little honour and considerable active dislike; and they will have to find what consolation they can in the interest of the conflict itself and in the thought of a world, made at last by such efforts as theirs, peaceful and secure and vigorous, a world they can never hope to see. So stated it seems a bad bargain that the worker for the world state is invited to make, yet the world has never lacked people prepared to make such a bargain and they will not fail it now. There are worse things than conflict without manifest victory and effort without apparent reward. To the finer kind of mind it is infinitely more tragic and distressing to find that existence bears a foolish aimless face. Many people, tormented by the discontent of conscience, and wanting, more than they can ever want any satisfaction, some satisfying rule of life, some criterion of conduct, will find in this cult of the world state just that sustaining reality they need. And their number will grow. Because it is a practical and reasonable shape for a life, arising naturally out of a proper understanding of history and physical science, and embodying in a unifying plan the teaching of all the great religions of the world. It comes to us not to destroy but to fulfil.

The activities of a cult which set itself to bring about the world state

would at first be propagandist, they would be intellectual and educational, and only as a sufficient mass of opinion and will had accumulated would they become to a predominant extent politically constructive. Such a cult must direct itself particularly to the teaching of the young. So far the propaganda for a world law, the League of Nations propaganda, since it has sought immediate political results, has been addressed almost entirely to adults; and as a consequence it has had to adapt itself as far as possible to their preconceptions about the history and outlook of their own nationality, and to the general absence as yet in the world of any vision of the welfare of mankind as one whole. It is because of this acceptance of current adult ideas about patriotism and nationality that the movement has adopted the unsatisfactory phrase, a League of Nations, when what is contemplated is much more than a league and a very considerable subordination of national sovereignty. And a large share in the current ineffectiveness of the League of Nations is evidently due to the fact that men interpret the phrase and the proposition of the League of Nations differently in accordance with the different fundamental historical ideas they possess, ideas that propaganda has hitherto left unassailed. The worker for the world state will look further and plough deeper. It is these fundamental ideas which are the vitally important objective of a world-unifying movement, and they can only be brought into that world-wide uniformity which is essential to the enduring peace of mankind, by teaching children throughout all the earth the common history of their kind, and so directing their attention to the common future of their descendants. The driving force that makes either war or peace is engendered where the

young are taught. The teacher, whether mother, priest, or schoolmaster, is the real maker of history; rulers, statesmen and soldiers do but work out the possibilities of co-operation or conflict the teacher creates. This is no rhetorical flourish; it is a sober fact. The politicians and masses of our time dance on the wires of their early education.

Teaching then is the initial and decisive factor in the future of mankind, and the first duty of everyone who has the ability and opportunity, is to teach, or to subserve the teaching of, the true history of mankind and of the possibilities of this vision of a single world state that history opens out to us. Men and women can help the spread of the saving doctrine in a thousand various ways; for it is not only in homes and schools that minds are shaped. They can print and publish books, endow schools and teaching, organize the distribution of literature, insist upon the proper instruction of children in world wide charity and fellowship, fight against every sort of suppression or restrictive control of right education, bring pressure through political and social channels upon every teaching organization to teach history aright, sustain missions and a new sort of missionary, the missionaries to all mankind of knowledge and the idea of one world civilization and one world community; they can promote and help the progress of historical and ethnological and political science, they can set their faces against every campaign of hate, racial suspicion, and patriotic falsehood, they can refuse, they are bound to refuse, obedience to any public authority which oppresses and embitters class against class, race against race, and people against people. A belligerent government as

such, they can refuse to obey; and they can refuse to help or suffer any military preparations that are not directed wholly and plainly to preserving the peace of the world. This is the plain duty of every honest man to-day, to judge his magistrate before he obeys him, and to render unto Cæsar nothing that he owes to God and mankind. And those who are awakened to the full significance of the vast creative effort now before mankind will set themselves particularly to revise the common moral judgment upon many acts and methods of living that obstruct the way of the world state. Blatant, aggressive patriotism and the incitements against foreign peoples that usually go with it, are just as criminal and far more injurious to our race than, for example, indecent provocations and open incitements to sexual vice; they produce a much beastlier and crueller state of mind, and they deserve at least an equal condemnation. Yet you will find even priests and clergymen to-day rousing the war passions of their flocks and preaching conflict from the very steps of the altar.

So far the movement towards a world state has lacked any driving power of passion. We have been passing through a phase of intellectual revision. The idea of a world unity and brotherhood has come back again into the world almost apologetically, deferentially, asking for the kind words of successful politicians and for a gesture of patronage from kings. Yet this demand for one world-empire of righteousness was inherent in the teachings of Buddha, it flashed for a little while behind the sword of Islam, it is the embodiment in earthly affairs of the spirit of Christ. It is a call to men for service as of right, it is

not an appeal to them that they may refuse, not a voice that they may disregard. It is too great a thing to hover for long thus deferentially on the outskirts of the active world it has come to save. To-day the world state says "Please listen; make way for me." To-morrow it will say: "Make way for me, little people." The day is not remote when disregarding "patriotic" men hectoring in the crowd will be twisted round perforce to the light they refuse to see. First comes the idea and then slowly the full comprehension of the idea, comes realization, and with that realization will come a kindling anger at the vulgarity, the meanness, the greed and baseness and utter stupidity that refuses to attend to this clear voice, this definite demand of our racial necessity. To-day we teach, but as understanding grows we must begin to act. We must put ourselves and our rulers and our fellow men on trial. We must ask: "What have you done, what are you doing to help or hinder the peace and order of mankind?" A time will come when a politician who has wilfully made war and promoted international dissension will be as sure of the dock and much surer of the noose than a private homicide. It is not reasonable that those who gamble with men's lives should not stake their own. The service of the world state calls for much more than passive resistance to belligerent authorities, for much more than exemplary martyrdoms. It calls for the greater effort of active interference with mischievous men. "I will believe in the League of Nations," one man has written, "when men will fight for it." For this League of Nations at Geneva, this little corner of Balfourian jobs and gentility, no man would dream of fighting, but for the great state of mankind, men will presently be very ready to fight and, as the thing may

go, either to kill or die. Things must come in their order; first the idea, then the kindling of imaginations, then the world wide battle. We who live in the bleak days after a great crisis, need be no more discouraged by the apparent indifference of the present time than are fields that are ploughed and sown by the wet days of February and the cold indifference of the winds of early March. The ploughing has been done, and the seed is in the ground, and the world state stirs in a multitude of germinating minds.