of Mr. Ford is not when the man gets into the car, but when he enthusiastically falls out of the car. It is when he finds somewhere, in remote and rural corners that he could not normally have reached, that perfect poise and combination of hedge and tree and meadow in the presence of which any modern machine seems suddenly to look an absurdity; yes, even an antiquated absurdity. Probably that happy man, having found the place of his true home, will proceed joyfully to break up the car with a large hammer, putting its iron fragments for the first time to some real use, as kitchen utensils or garden tools. That is using a scientific instrument in the proper way; for it is using it as an instrument. The man has used modern machinery to escape from modern society; and the reason and rectitude of such a course commends itself instantly to the mind. It is not so with the weaker brethren who are not content to trust Mr. Ford's car, but also trust Mr. Ford's creed. If accepting the car means accepting the philosophy I have just criticized, the notion that some men are born to make cars, or rather small bits of cars, then it will be far more worthy of a philosopher to say frankly that men never needed to have cars at all. It is only because the man had been sent into exile in a railway-train that he has to be brought back home in a motor-car. It is only because all machinery has been used to put things wrong that some machinery may now rightly be used to put things right. But I conclude upon the whole that it may so be used; and my reason is that which I considered on a previous page under the heading of "The Chance of Recovery." I pointed out that our ideal is so sane and simple, so much in accord with the ancient and general instincts of men, that when once it is given a chance anywhere it will improve that chance by its own inner vitality because there is some reaction towards health whenever disease is removed. The man who has used his car to find his farm will be more interested in the farm than in the car; certainly more interested than in the shop where he once bought the car. Nor will Mr. Ford always woo him back to that shop, even by telling him tenderly that he is not fitted to be a lord of land, a rider of horses, or a ruler of cattle; since his deficient intellect and degraded anthropological type fit him only for mean and mechanical operations. If anyone will try saying this (tenderly, of course) to any considerable number of large farmers, who have lived for some time on their own farms with their own families, he will discover the defects of the approach.

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V A NOTE ON EMIGRATION

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I THE NEED OF A NEW SPIRIT

Before closing these notes, with some words on the colonial aspect of democratic distribution, it will be well to make some acknowledgment of the recent suggestion of so distinguished a man as Mr. John Galsworthy. Mr. Galsworthy is a man for whom I have the very warmest regard; for a human being who really tries to be fair is something very like a monster and miracle in the long history of this merry race

of ours. Sometimes, indeed, I get a little exasperated at being so persistently excused. I can imagine few things more annoying, to a free-born and properly constituted Christian, than the thought that if he did choose to wait for Mr. Galsworthy behind a wall, knock him down with a brick, jump on him with heavy boots, and so on, Mr. Galsworthy would still faintly gasp that it was only the fault of the System; that the System made bricks and the System heaved bricks and the System went about wearing heavy boots, and so on. As a human being, I should feel a longing for a little human justice, after all that inhuman mercy.

But these feelings do not interfere with the other feelings I have, of something like enthusiasm, for something that can only be called beautiful in the fair-mindedness of a study like "The White Monkey." It is when this attitude of detachment is applied not to the judgment of individuals but of men in bulk, that the detachment begins to savour of something unnatural. And in Mr. Galsworthy's last political pronouncement the detachment amounts to despair. At any rate, it amounts to despair about this earth, this England, about which I am certainly not going to despair yet. But I think it might be well if I took this opportunity of stating what I, for one, at least feel about the different claims here involved.

It may be debated whether it is a good or a bad thing for England that England has an Empire. It may be debated, at least as a matter of true definition, whether England has an Empire at all. But upon one point all Englishmen ought to stand firm, as a matter of history, of philosophy, and of logic. And that is that it has been, and is, a question of our owning an Empire and not of an Empire owning us.

There is sense in being separated from Americans on the principles of George Washington, and sense in being attached to Americans on the principles of George the Third. But there is no sense in being out-voted and swamped by Americans in the name of the Anglo-Saxon race. The Colonies were by origin English. They owe us that much; if it be only the trivial circumstance, so little valued by modern thought, that without their maker they could never have existed at all. If they choose to remain English, we thank them very sincerely for the compliment. If they choose not to remain English, but to turn into something else, we think they are within their rights. But anyhow England shall remain English. They shall not first turn themselves into something else, and then turn us into themselves. It may have been wrong to be an Empire, but it does not rob us of our right to be a nation.

But there is another sense in which those of our school would use the motto of "England First." It is in the sense that our first step should be to discover how far the best ethical and economic system can be fitted into England, before we treat it as an export and cart it away to the ends of the earth. The scientific or commercial character, who is sure he has found an explosive that will blow up the solar system or a bullet that will kill the man in the moon, always makes a great parade of saying that he offers it first to his own country, and only afterwards to a foreign country. Personally, I cannot conceive how a man can bring himself in any case to offer such a thing to a foreign country. But then I am not a great scientific and commercial genius. Anyhow, such as our little notion of normal ownership is,

we certainly do not propose to offer it to any foreign country,
or even to any colony, before we offer it to our own country.
And we do think it highly urgent and practical to find out first how much
of it can really be carried out in our own country. Nobody supposes
that the whole English population could live on the English land.
But everybody ought to realize that immeasurably more people could
live on it than do live on it; and that if such a policy did
establish such a peasantry, there would be a recognizable narrowing
of the margin of men left over for the town and the colonies.
But we would suggest that these ought really to be left over,
and dealt with as seems most desirable, after the main experiment
has been made where it matters most. And what most of us would
complain of in the emigrationists of the ordinary sort is that they
seem to think first of the colony and then of what must be left
behind in the country; instead of thinking first of the country
and then of what must overflow into the colony.

People talk about an optimist being in a hurry; but it seems to me
that a pessimist like Mr. Galsworthy is very much in a hurry.
He has not tried the obvious reform on England, and, finding
it fail, gone into exile to try it elsewhere. He is trying
the obvious reform everywhere except where it is most obvious.
And in this I think he has a subconscious affinity to people
much less reasonable and respectable than himself.
The pessimists have a curious way of urging us to counsels of despair
as the only solution of a problem they have not troubled to solve.
They declare solemnly that some unnatural thing would become
necessary if certain conditions existed; and then somehow assume
from that that they exist. They never think of attempting to prove
that they exist, before they prove what follows from their existence.
This is exactly the sort of plunging and premature pessimism,
for instance, that people exhibit about Birth Control.
Their desire is towards destruction; their hope is for despair;
they eagerly anticipate the darkest and most doubtful predictions.
They run with eager feet before and beyond the lingering and
inconveniently slow statistics; like as the hart pants for the
water-brooks they thirst to drink of Styx and Lethe before their hour;
even the facts they show fall far short of the faith that they see
shining beyond them; for faith is the substance of things hoped for,
the evidence of things not seen.

If I do not compare the critic in question with the doctors
of this dismal perversion, still less do I compare him with
those whose motives are merely self-protective and plutocratic.
But it must also be said that many rush to the expedient
of emigration, just as many rush to the expedient of Birth Control,
for the perfectly simple reason that it is the easiest way in which
the capitalists can escape from their own blunder of capitalism.
They lured men into the town with the promise of greater pleasures;
they ruined them there and left them with only one pleasure;
they found the increase it produced at first convenient for
labour and then inconvenient for supply; and now they are ready
to round off their experiment in a highly appropriate manner,
by telling them that they must have no families, or that their
families must go to the modern equivalent of Botany Bay.
It is not in that spirit that we envisage an element of colonization;
and so long as it is treated in that spirit we refuse to consider it.
I put first the statement that real colonial settlement must be not
only stable but sacred. I say the new home must be not only a home

but a shrine. And that is why I say it must be first established in England, in the home of our fathers and the shrine of our saints, to be a light and an ensign to our children.

I have explained that I cannot content myself with leaving my own nationality out of my own normal ideal; or leaving England as the mere tool-house or coal-cellar of other countries like Canada or Australia--or, for that matter, Argentina. I should like England also to have a much more rural type of redistribution; nor do I think it impossible. But when this is allowed for, nobody in his five wits would dream of denying that there is a real scope and even necessity for emigration and colonial settlement. Only, when we come to that, I have to draw a line rather sharply and explain something else, which is by no means inconsistent with my love of England, but I fear is not so likely to make me loved by Englishmen. I do not believe, as the newspapers and national histories always tell me to believe, that we have "the secret" of this sort of successful colonization and need nothing else to achieve this sort of democratic social construction. I ask for nothing better than that a man should be English in England. But I think he will have to be something more than English (or at any rate something more than "British") if he is to create a solid social equality outside England. For something is needed for that solid social creation which our colonial tradition has not given. My reasons for holding this highly unpopular opinion I will attempt to suggest; but the fact that they are rather difficult to suggest is itself an evidence of their unfamiliarity and of that narrowness which is neither national nor international, but only imperial.

I should very much like to be present at a conversation between Mr. Saklatvala and Dean Inge. I have a great deal of respect for the real sincerity of the Dean of St. Paul's, but his subconscious prejudices are of a strange sort. I cannot help having a feeling that he might have a certain sympathy with a Socialist so long as he was not a Christian Socialist. I do not indeed pretend to any respect for the ordinary sort of broad-mindedness which is ready to embrace a Buddhist but draws the line at a Bolshevist. I think its significance is very simple. It means welcoming alien religions when they make us feel comfortable, and persecuting them when they make us feel uncomfortable. But the particular reason I have at the moment for entertaining this association of ideas is one that concerns a larger matter. It concerns, indeed, what is commonly called the British Empire, which we were once taught to reverence largely because it was large. And one of my complaints against that common and rather vulgar sort of imperialism is that it did not really secure even the advantages of largeness. As I have said, I am a nationalist; Eng-land is good enough for me. I would defend England against the whole European continent. With even greater joy would I defend England against the whole British Empire. With a romantic rapture would I defend England against Mr. Ramsay MacDonald when he had become King of Scotland; lighting again the watch fires of Newark and Carlisle and sounding the old tocsins of the Border. With equal energy would I defend England against Mr. Tim Healy as King of Ireland, if ever the gross and growing prosperity of that helpless and decaying Celtic stock became positively offensive. With the greatest ecstasy of all would I defend England against Mr. Lloyd George as King of Wales. It will be seen, therefore, that there is nothing broad-minded about my patriotism; most modern nationality is not narrow enough for me.

But putting aside my own local affections, and looking at the matter in what is called a larger way, I note once more that our Imperialism does not get any of the good that could be got out of being large. And I was reminded of Dean Inge, because he suggested some time ago that the Irish and the French Canadians were increasing in numbers, not because they held the Catholic view of the family, but because they were a backward and apparently almost barbaric stock which naturally (I suppose he meant) increased with the blind luxuriance of a jungle. I have already remarked on the amusing trick of having it both ways which is illustrated in this remark. So long as savages are dying out, we say they are dying out because they are savages. When they are inconveniently increasing, we say they are increasing because they are savages. And from this it is but a simple logical step to say that the countrymen of Sir Wilfred Laurier or Senator Yeats are savages because they are increasing.

But what strikes me most about the situation is this: that this spirit will always miss what is really to be learnt by covering any large and varied area. If French Canada is really a part of the British Empire, it would seem that the Empire might at least have served as a sort of interpreter between the British and the French. The Imperial statesman, if he had really been a statesman, ought to have been able to say, "It is always difficult to understand another nation or another religion; but I am more fortunately placed than most people. I know a little more than can be known by self-contained and isolated states like Sweden or Spain. I have more sympathy with the Catholic faith or the French blood because I have French Catholics in my own Empire."

Now it seems to me that the Imperial statesman never has said this; never has even been able to say it; never has even tried or pretended to be able to say it. He has been far narrower than a nationalist like myself, engaged in desperately defending Offa's Dyke against a horde of Welsh politicians. I doubt if there was ever a politician who knew a word more of the French language, let alone a word more of the Latin Mass, because he had to govern a whole population that drew its traditions from Rome and Gaul. I will suggest in a moment how this enormous international narrowness affects the question of a peasantry and the extension of the natural ownership of land. But for the moment it is important to make the point clear about the nature of that narrowness.

And that is why some light might be thrown on it in that tender, that intimate, that heart-to-heart talk between Mr. Saklatvala and the Dean of St. Paul's. Mr. Saklatvala is a sort of parody or extreme and extravagant exhibition of the point; that we really know nothing at all about the moral and philosophical elements that make up the Empire. It is quite obvious, of course, that he does not represent Battersea. But have we any way of knowing to what extent he represents India? It seems to me not impossible that the more impersonal and indefinite doctrines of Asia do form a soil for Bolshevism. Most of the eastern philosophy differs from the western theology in refusing to draw the line anywhere; and it would be a highly probable perversion of that instinct to refuse to draw the line between meum and tuum. I do not think the Indian gentleman is any judge of whether we in the West want to have a hedge round our fields or a wall round our gardens. And as I happen to hold that the very highest human thought and art consists almost entirely in drawing the line somewhere, though not in drawing it anywhere, I am completely confident that in this the western tendency is right and the eastern tendency is wrong. But, in any case, it seems to me that a rather sharp lesson to us is indicated in these two parallel cases of the Indian

who grows into a Bolshevist in our dominions without our being able to influence his growth, and the French Canadian who remains a peasant in our dominions without our getting any sort of advantage out of his stability.

I do not profess to know very much about the French Canadians; but I know enough to know that most of the people who talk at large about the Empire know even less than I do. And the point about them is that they generally do not even try to know any more. The very vague picture that they always call up, of colonists doing wonders in all the corners of the world, never does, in fact, include the sort of thing that French Canadians can do, or might possibly show other people how to do. There is about all this fashionable fancy of colonization a very dangerous sort of hypocrisy. People tried to use the Over-seas Dominion as Eldorado while still using it as Botany Bay. They sent away people that they wanted to get rid of, and then added insult to injury by representing that the ends of the earth would be delighted to have them. And they called up a sort of fancy portrait of a person whose virtues and even vices were entirely suitable for founding an Empire, though apparently quite unsuitable for founding a family. The very language they used was misleading. They talked of such people as settlers; but the very last thing they ever expected them to do was to settle. They expected of them a sort of indistinct individualistic breaking of new ground, for which the world is less and less really concerned to-day. They sent an inconvenient nephew to hunt wild bisons in the streets of Toronto; just as they had sent any number of irrepressible Irish exiles to war with wild Redskins in the streets of New York. They incessantly repeated that what the world wants is pioneers, and had never even heard that what the world wants is peasants. There was a certain amount of sincere and natural sentiment about the wandering exile inheriting our traditions. There was really no pretence that he was engaged in founding his own traditions. All the ideas that go with a secure social standing were absent from the very discussion; no one thought of the continuity, the customs, the religion, or the folklore of the future colonist. Above all, nobody ever conceived him as having any strong sense of private property. There was in the vague idea of his gaining something for the Empire always, if anything, the idea of his gaining what belonged to somebody else. I am not now discussing how wrong it was or whether it could in some cases be right; I am pointing out that nobody ever entertained the notion of the other sort of right; the special right of every man to his own. I doubt whether a word could be quoted emphasizing it even from the healthiest adventure story or the jolliest Jingo song. I quite appreciate all there is in such songs or stories that is really healthy or jolly. I am only pointing out that we have badly neglected something; and are now suffering from the neglect. And the worst aspect of the neglect was that we learnt nothing whatever from the peoples that were actually inside the Empire which we wished to glorify: nothing whatever from the Irish; nothing whatever from the French Canadian; nothing whatever even from the poor Hindoos. We have now reached a crisis in which we particularly require these neglected talents; and we do not even know how to set about learning them. And the explanation of this blunder, as of most blunders, is in the weakness which is called pride: in other words, it is in the tone taken by people like the Dean of St. Paul's.

Now there will be needed a large element of emigration in the solution of re-creating a peasantry in the modern world. I shall have more to say about the elements of the idea in the next section. But I believe that any scheme of the sort will have to be based on a totally different and indeed diametrically opposite spirit and principle to that which is commonly applied to emigration in England to-day. I think we need a new sort of inspiration, a new sort of appeal, a new sort of ordinary language even, before that solution will even help to solve anything.
What we need is the ideal of Property, not merely of Progress-- especially progress over other people's property.
Utopia needs more frontiers, not less. And it is because we were weak in the ethics of property on the edges of Empire that our own society will not defend property as men defend a right.
The Bolshevist is the sequel and punishment of the Buccaneer.

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II THE RELIGION OF SMALL PROPERTY

We hear a great deal nowadays about the disadvantages of decorum, especially from those who are always telling us that women in the last generation were helpless and impotent, and then proceed to prove it by describing the tremendous and towering tyranny of Mrs. Grundy. Rather in the same way, they insist that Victorian women were especially soft and submissive. And it is rather unfortunate for them that, even in order to say so, they have to introduce the name of Queen Victoria.
But it is more especially in connection with the indecorous in art and literature that the question arises, and it is now the fashion to argue as if there were no psychological basis for reticence at all. That is where the argument should end; but fortunately these thinkers do not know how to get to the end of an argument. I have heard it argued that there is no more harm in describing the violation of one Commandment than of another; but this is obviously a fallacy. There is at least a case in psychology for saying that certain images move the imagination to the weakening of the character. There is no case for saying that the mere contemplation of a kit of burglar's tools would inflame us all with a desire to break into houses. There is no possibility of pretending that the mere sight of means to murder our maiden aunt with a poker does really make the ill deed done.
But what strikes me as most curious about the controversy is this: that while our fiction and journalism is largely breaking down the prohibitions for which there really was a logical case, in the consideration of human nature, they still very largely feel the pressure of prohibitions for which there was never any case at all. And the most curious thing about the criticism we hear directed against the Victorian Age is that it is never directed against the most arbitrary conventions of that age. One of these, which I remember very vividly in my youth, was the convention that there is something embarrassing or unfair about a man mentioning his religion. There was something of the same feeling about his mentioning his money. Now these things cannot possibly be defended by the same psychological argument as the other. Nobody is moved to madness by the mere sight of a church spire, or finds uncontrollable emotions possess him at the thought of an archdeacon's hat. Yet there is still enough of that really irrational Victorian convention lingering in our life and literature to make it necessary to offer a defence, if not an apology, whenever an argument depends upon this fundamental fact in life.

Now when I remark that we want a type of colonization rather represented by the French Canadians, there are probably still a number of sly critics who would point the finger of detection at me and cry, as if they had caught me in something very naughty, "You believe in the French Canadians because they are Catholics"; which is in one sense not only true, but very nearly the whole truth. But in another sense it is not true at all; if it means that I exercise no independent judgment in perceiving that this is really what we do want. Now when this difficulty and misunderstanding arises, there is only one practical way of meeting it in the present state of public information, or lack of information. It is to call what is generally described as an impartial witness; though it is quite probable that he is far less impartial than I am. What is really important about him is that, if he were partial, he would be partial on the other side.

The dear old Daily News, of the days of my youth, on which I wrote happily for many years and had so many good and admirable friends, cannot be accused as yet as being an organ of the Jesuits. It was, and is, as every one knows, the organ of the Nonconformists. Dr. Clifford brandished his teapot there when he was selling it in order to demonstrate, by one symbolical act, that he had long been a teetotaller and was now a Passive Resister. We may be pardoned for smiling at this aspect of the matter; but there are many other aspects which are real and worthy of all possible respect. The tradition of the old Puritan ideal does really descend to this paper; and multitudes of honest and hard-thinking Radicals read it in my youth and read it still.

I therefore think that the following remarks which appeared recently in the Daily News, in an article by Mr. Hugh Martin, writing from Toronto, are rather remarkable. He begins by saying that the Anglo-Saxon has got too proud to bend his back; but the curious thing is that he goes on to suggest, almost in so many words, that the backs of the French Canadians are actually strengthened, not only by being bent over rustic spades, but even by being bent before superstitious altars. I am very anxious not to do my impartial witness an unfair damage in the matter; so I may be excused if I quote his own words at some little length. After saying that the Anglo-Saxons are drawn away to the United States, or at any rate to the industrial cities, he remarks that the French are of course very numerous in Quebec and elsewhere, but that it is not here that the notable development is taking place, and that Montreal, being a large city, is showing signs of the slackening to be seen in other large cities.

"Now look at the other picture. The race that is going ahead is the French race. . . . In Quebec, where there are nearly 2,000,000 Canadians of French origin in a population of 2,350,000, that might have been expected. But as a matter of fact it is not in Quebec that the French are making good most conspicuously . . . nor in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick is the comparative success of the French stock most marked. They are doing splendidly on the land and raising prodigious families. A family of twelve is quite common, and I could name several cases where there have been twenty, who all lived. The day may come when they will equal or outnumber the Scotch, but that is some way ahead. If you want to see what French stock can still achieve, you should go to the northern part of this province of Ontario.

It is doing pioneer work. It is bending its back as men did in the old days. It is multiplying and staying on the soil. It is content to be happy without being rich.

"Though I am not a religious man myself, I must confess I think religion has a good deal to do with it. These French Canadians are more Catholic than the Pope. You might call a good many of them desperately ignorant and desperately superstitious. They seem to me to be a century behind the times and a century nearer happiness."

These seem to me, I repeat, to be rather remarkable words; remarkable if they appeared anywhere, arresting and astonishing when they appear in the traditional paper of the Manchester Radicals and the nineteenth-century Nonconformists. The words are splendidly straightforward and unaffected in their literary form; they have a clear ring of sincerity and experience, and they are all the more convincing because they are written by somebody who does not share my own desperate ignorance and desperate superstition. But he proceeds to suggest a reason, and incidentally to make his own independence in the matter quite clear.

"Apart from the fact that their women bear an incredible number of children, you have this other consequence of their submission to the priest, that a social organism is created, which is of incalculable value in the backwoods. The church, the school, the cure, hold each little group together as a unit. Do not think for a moment that I believe a general spread of Catholicism would turn us back into a pioneer people. One might just as reasonably recommend a return to early Scottish Protestantism. I merely record the fact that the simplicity of these people is proving their salvation and is one of the most hopeful things in Canada to-day."

Of course, there are a good many things of an incidental kind that a person with my views might comment on in that passage. I might go off at a gallop on the highly interesting comparison with early Scottish Protestantism. Very early Scottish Protestantism, like very early English Protestantism, consisted chiefly of loot. But if we take it as referring to the perfectly pure and sincere enthusiasm of many Covenanters or early Calvinists, we come upon the contrast that is the point of the whole matter. Early Puritanism was pure Puritanism; but the purer it is the more early it seems. We cannot imagine it as a good thing and also a modern thing. It might have been one of the most honest things in Scotland then. But nobody would be found calling it one of the most hopeful things in Canada to-day. If John Knox appeared to-morrow in the pulpit of St. Giles, he would be a stickit minister. He would be regarded as a raving savage because of his ignorance of German metaphysics. That comparison does not meet the extraordinary case of the thing that is older than Knox and yet also newer than Knox. Or again, I might point out that the common connotation of "submission to the priest" is misleading, even if it is true. It is like talking of the Charge of the Light Brigade as the submission to Lord Raglan. It is still more like talking about the storming of Jerusalem as the submission to the Count of Bouillon. In one sense it is quite true; in another it is very untrue. But I have not the smallest desire here to disturb the impartiality of my witness. I have not the smallest intention of using any of the tortures of the Inquisition to make him admit anything that he did not wish

to admit. The admission as it stands seems to me very remarkable; not so much because it is a tribute to Frenchmen as colonists as because it is a tribute to colonists as pious and devout people. But what concerns me most of all in the general discussion of my own theme is the insistence on stability. They are staying on the soil; they are a social organism; they are held together as a unit. That is the new note which I think is needed in all talk of colonization, before it can again be any part of the hope of the world.

A recent description of the Happy Factory, as it exists in America or will exist in Utopia, rose from height to height of ideality until it ended with a sort of hush, as of the ultimate opening of the heavens, and these words about the workman, "He turns out for his homeward journey like a member of the Stock Exchange." Any attempt to imagine humanity in its final perfection always has about it something faintly unreal, as being too good for this world; but the visionary light that breaks from the cloud, in that last phrase, accentuates clearly the contrast which is to be drawn between such a condition and that of the labour of common men. Adam left Eden as a gardener; but he will set out for his homeward journey like a member of the Stock Exchange. St. Joseph was a carpenter; but he will be raised again as a stockbroker. Giotto was a shepherd; for he was not yet worthy to be a stockbroker. Shakespeare was an actor; but he dreamed day and night of being a stockbroker. Burns was a ploughman; but if he sang at the plough, how much more appropriately he would have sung in the Stock Exchange. It is assumed in this kind of argument that all humanity has consciously or unconsciously hoped for this consummation; and that if men were not brokers, it was because they were not able to broke. But this remarkable passage in Sir Ernest Benn's exposition has another application besides the obvious one. A stockbroker in one sense really is a very poetical figure. In one sense he is as poetical as Shakespeare, and his ideal poet, since he does give to airy nothing a local habitation and a name. He does deal to a great extent in what economists (in their poetical way) describe as imaginaries. When he exchanges two thousand Patagonian Pumpkins for one thousand shares in Alaskan Whale Blubber, he does not demand the sensual satisfaction of eating the pumpkin or need to behold the whale with the gross eye of flesh. It is quite possible that there are no pumpkins; and if there is somewhere such a thing as a whale, it is very unlikely to obtrude itself upon the conversation in the Stock Exchange. Now what is the matter with the financial world is that it is a great deal too full of imagination, in the sense of fiction. And when we react against it, we naturally in the first place react into realism. When the stockbroker homeward plods his weary way and leaves the world to darkness and Sir Ernest Benn, we are disposed to insist that it is indeed he who has the darkness and we who have the daylight. He has not only the darkness but the dreams, and all the unreal leviathans and unearthly pumpkins pass before him like a mere scroll of symbols in the dreams of the Old Testament. But when the small proprietor grows pumpkins, they really are pumpkins, and sometimes quite a large pumpkin for quite a small proprietor. If he should ever have occasion to grow whales (which seems improbable) they would either be real whales or they would be of no use to him. We naturally grow a little impatient, under these conditions, when people who call themselves practical scoff at the small proprietor as if he were a minor poet. Nevertheless, there is another side to the case, and there is a sense in which the small

proprietor had better be a minor poet, or at least a mystic.
Nay, there is even a sort of queer paradoxical sense in which
the stockbroker is a man of business.

It is to that other side of small property, as exemplified in
the French Canadians, and an article on them in the Daily News,
that I devoted my last remarks. The really practical point in that
highly interesting statement is, that in this case, being progressive
is actually identified with being what is called static.
In this case, by a strange paradox, a pioneer is really d settler.
In this case, by a still stranger paradox, a settler is a person who
really settles. It will be noted that the success of the experiment
is actually founded on a certain power of striking root; which we
might almost call rapid tradition, as others talk of rapid transit.
And indeed the ground under the pioneer's feet can only be made solid
by being made sacred. It is only religion that can thus rapidly
give a sort of accumulated power of culture and legend to something
that is crude or incomplete. It sounds like a joke to say that
baptizing a baby makes the baby venerable; it suggests the old joke
of the baby with spectacles who died an enfeebled old dotard at five.
Yet it is profoundly true that something is added that is not only
something to be venerated, but something partly to be venerated for
its antiquity--that is, for the unfathomable depth of its humanity.
In a sense a new world can be baptized as a new baby is baptized,
and become a part of an ancient order not merely on the map
but in the mind. Instead of crude people merely extending
their crudity, and calling that colonization, it would be possible
for people to cultivate the soil as they cultivate the soul.
But for this it is necessary to have a respect for the soil as
well as for the soul; and even a reverence for it, as having some
associations with holy things. But for that purpose we need some
sense of carrying holy things with us and taking them home with us;
not merely the feeling that holiness may exist as a hope.
In the most exalted phrase, we need a real presence. In the most
popular phrase, we need something that is always on the spot.

That is, we want something that is always on the spot, and not only
beyond the horizon. The pioneer instinct is beginning to fail,
as a well-known traveller recently complained, but I doubt whether
he could tell us the reason. It is even possible that he will
not understand it, in one radiant burst of joyful comprehension,
if I tell him that I am all in favour of a wild-goose chase, so long
as he really believes that the wild goose is the bird of paradise;
but that it is necessary to hunt it with the hounds of heaven.
If it be barely possible that this does not seem quite clear to him,
I will explain that the traveller must possess something as well
as pursue something, or he will not even know what to pursue.
It is not enough always to follow the gleam: it is necessary
sometimes to rest in the glow; to feel something sacred in the glow
of the camp fire as well as the gleam of the polar star.
And that same mysterious and to some divided voice, which alone tells
that we have here no abiding city, is the only voice which within
the limits of this world can build up cities that abide.

As I said at the beginning of this section, it is futile to pretend
that such a faith is not a fundamental of the true change.
But its practical relation to the reconstruction of property
is that, unless we understand this spirit, we cannot now relieve
congestion with colonization. People will prefer the mere

nomadism of the town to the mere nomadism of the wilderness. They will not tolerate emigration if it merely means being moved on by the politicians as they have been moved on by the policemen. They will prefer bread and circuses to locusts and wild honey, so long as the forerunner does not know for what God he prepares the way.

But even if we put aside for the moment the strictly spiritual ideals involved in the change, we must admit that there are secular ideals involved which must be positive and not merely comparative, like the ideal of progress. We are sometimes taunted with setting against all other Utopias what is in truth the most impossible Utopia; with describing a Merry Peasant who cannot exist except on the stage, with depending on a China Shepherdess who never was seen except on the mantelpiece. If we are indeed presenting impossible portraits of an ideal humanity, we are not alone in that. Not only the Socialists but also the Capitalists parade before us their imaginary and ideal figures, and the Capitalists if possible more than the Socialists. For once that we read of the last Earthly Paradise of Mr. Wells, where men and women move gracefully in simple garments and keep their tempers in a way in which we in this world sometimes find difficult (even when we are the authors of Utopian novels), for once that we see the ideal figure of that vision, we see ten times a day the ideal figure of the commercial advertisers. We are told to "Be Like This Man," or to imitate an aggressive person pointing his finger at us in a very rude manner for one who regards himself as a pattern to the young. Yet it is entirely an ideal portrait; it is very unlikely (we are glad to say) that any of us will develop a chin or a finger of that obtrusive type. But we do not blame either the Capitalists or the Socialists for setting up a type or talismanic figure to fix the imagination. We do not wonder at their presenting the perfect person for our admiration; we only wonder at the person they admire. And it is quite true that, in our movement as much as any other, there must be a certain amount of this romantic picture-making. Men have never done anything in the world without it; but ours is much more of a reality as well as a romance than the dreams of the other romantics. There cannot be a nation of millionaires, and there has never yet been a nation of Utopian comrades; but there have been any number of nations of tolerably contented peasants. In this connection, however, the point is that if we do not directly demand the religion of small property, we must at least demand the poetry of small property. It is a thing about which it is definitely and even urgently practical to be poetical. And it is those who blame us for being poetical who do not really see the practical problem.

For the practical problem is the goal. The pioneer notion has weakened like the progressive notion, and for the same reason. People could go on talking about progress so long as they were not merely thinking about progress. Progressives really had in their minds some notion of a purpose in progress; and even the most practical pioneer had some vague and shadowy idea of what he wanted. The Progressives trusted the tendency of their time, because they did believe, or at least had believed, in a body of democratic doctrines which they supposed to be in process of establishment. And the pioneers and empire-builders were filled with hope and courage because, to do them justice, most of them did at least in some dim way believe that the flag they carried stood for law and liberty, and a higher civilization. They were therefore

in search of something and not merely in search of searching.
They subconsciously conceived an end of travel and not endless travelling;
they were not only breaking through a jungle but building a city.
They knew more or less the style of architecture in which it
would be built, and they honestly believed it was the best
style of architecture in the world. The spirit of adventure
has failed because it has been left to adventurers.
Adventure for adventure's sake became like art for art's sake.
Those who had lost all sense of aim lost all sense of art and even
of accident. The time has come in every department, but especially
in our department, to make once again vivid and solid the aim of
political progress or colonial adventure. Even if we picture the goal
of the pilgrimage as a sort of peasant paradise, it will be far
more practical than setting out on a pilgrimage which has no goal.
But it is yet more practical to insist that we do not want to insist
only on what are called the qualities of a pioneer; that we do
not want to describe merely the virtues that achieve adventures.
We want men to think, not merely of a place which they would be interested
to find, but of a place where they would be contented to stay.
Those who wish merely to arouse again the social hopes of the nineteenth
century must offer not an endless hope, but the hope of an end.
Those who wish to continue the building of the old colonial idea
must leave off telling us that the Church of Empire is founded
entirely on the rolling stone. For it is a sin against the reason
to tell men that to travel hopefully is better than to arrive;
and when once they believe it, they travel hopefully no longer.

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VI A SUMMARY

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A SUMMARY

I once debated with a learned man who had a curious fancy
for arranging the correspondence in mathematical patterns;
first a thousand words each and then a hundred words each--and then
altering them all to another pattern. I accepted as I would always
accept a challenge, especially an apparent appeal for fairness,
but I was tempted to tell him how utterly unworkable this mechanical
method is for a living thing like argument. Obviously a man
might need a thousand words to reply to ten words. Suppose I
began the philosophic dialogue by saying, "You strangle babies."
He would naturally reply, "Nonsense--I never strangled any babies."
And even in that obvious ejaculation he has already used twice
as many words as I have. It is impossible to have real debate
without digression. Every definition will look like a digression.
Suppose somebody puts to me some journalistic statement, say,
"Spanish Jesuits denounced in Parliament." I cannot deal with it
without explaining to the journalist where I differ from him
about the atmosphere and implication of each term in turn.
I cannot answer quickly if I am just discovering slowly that the man
suffers from a series of extraordinary delusions: as (1) that Parliament
is a popular representative assembly; (2) that Spain is an effete
and decadent country; or (3) that a Spanish Jesuit is a sort
of soft-footed court chaplain; whereas it was a Spanish Jesuit
who anticipated the whole democratic theory of our day, and actually
hurled it as a defiance against the divine right of kings.

Each of these explanations would have to be a digression, and each would be necessary. Now in this book I am well aware that there are many digressions that may not at first sight seem to be necessary. For I have had to construct it out of what was originally a sort of controversial causerie; and it has proved impossible to cut down the causerie and only leave the controversy. Moreover, no man can controvert with many foes without going into many subjects, as every one knows who has been heckled. And on this occasion I was, I am happy to say, being heckled by many foes who were also friends. I was discharging the double function of writing essays and of talking over the tea-table, or preferably over the tavern table. To turn this sort of mixture of a gossip and a gospel into anything like a grammar of Distributism has been quite impossible. But I fancy that, even considered as a string of essays, it appears more inconsequent than it really is; and many may read the essays without quite seeing the string. I have decided, therefore, to add this last essay merely in order to sum up the intention of the whole; even if the summary be only a recapitulation. I have had a reason for many of my digressions, which may not appear until the whole is seen in some sort of perspective; and where the digression has no such justification, but was due to a desire to answer a friend or (what is even worse) a disposition towards idle and unseemly mirth, I can only apologize sincerely to the scientific reader and promise to do my best to make this final summary as dull as possible.

If we proceed as at present in a proper orderly fashion, the very idea of property will vanish. It is not revolutionary violence that will destroy it. It is rather the desperate and reckless habit of not having a revolution. The world will be occupied, or rather is already occupied, by two powers which are now one power. I speak, of course, of that part of the world that is covered by our system, and that part of the history of the world which will last very much longer than our time. Sooner or later, no doubt, men would rediscover so natural a pleasure as property. But it might be discovered after ages, like those ages filled with pagan slavery. It might be discovered after a long decline of our whole civilization. Barbarians might rediscover it and imagine it was a new thing.

Anyhow, the prospect is a progress towards the complete combination of two combinations. They are both powers that believe only in combination; and have never understood or even heard that there is any dignity in division. They have never had the imagination to understand the idea of Genesis and the great myths: that Creation itself was division. The beginning of the world was the division of heaven and earth; the beginning of humanity was the division of man and woman. But these flat and platitudinous minds can never see the difference between the creative cleavage of Adam and Eve and the destructive cleavage of Cain and Abel. Anyhow, these powers or minds are now both in the same mood; and it is a mood of disliking all division, and therefore all distribution. They believe in unity, in unanimity, in harmony. One of these powers is State Socialism and the other is Big Business. They are already one spirit; they will soon be one body. For, disbelieving in division, they cannot remain divided; believing only in combination, they will themselves combine. At present one of them calls it Solidarity and the other calls it Consolidation. It would seem that we have only to wait while both monsters are taught to say Consolidarity. But, whatever it is called, there will be no doubt about the character of the world which they will have made between them. It is becoming more and more fixed and familiar.

It will be a world of organization, or syndication, of standardization. People will be able to get hats, houses, holidays, and patent medicines of a recognized and universal pattern; they will be fed, clothed, educated, and examined by a wide and elaborate system; but if you were to ask them at any given moment whether the agency which housed or hatted them was still merely mercantile or had become municipal, they probably would not know, and they possibly would not care.

Many believe that humanity will be happy in this new peace; that classes can be reconciled and souls set at rest. I do not think things will be quite so bad as that. But I admit that there are many things which may make possible such a catastrophe of contentment. Men in large numbers have submitted to slavery; men submit naturally to government, and perhaps even especially to despotic government. But I take it as obvious to any intelligent person that this government will be something more than despotic. It is the very essence of the Trust that it has the power, not only to extinguish military rivalry or mob rebellion as has the State, but also the power to crush any new custom or costume or craft or private enterprise that it does not choose to like. Militarism can only prevent people from fighting; but monopoly can prevent them from buying or selling anything except the article (generally the inferior article) having the trade mark of the monopoly. If anything can be inferred from history and human nature, it is absolutely certain that the despotism will grow more and more despotic, and that the article will grow more and more inferior. There is no conceivable argument from psychology, by which it can be pretended that people preserving such a power, generation after generation, would not abuse it more and more, or neglect everything else more and more. We know what far less rigid rule has become, even when founded by spirited and intelligent rulers. We can darkly guess the effect of larger powers in the hands of lesser men. And if the name of Caesar came at last to stand for all that we call Byzantine, exactly what degree of dullness are we to anticipate when the name of Harrod shall sound even duller than it does? If China passed into a proverb at last for stiffness and monotony after being nourished for centuries by Confucius, what will be the condition of the brains that have been nourished for centuries by Callisthenes?

I leave out there the particular case of my own country, where we are threatened not with a long decline, but rather with an unpleasantly rapid collapse. But taking monopolist capitalism in a country where it is still in the vulgar sense successful, as in the United States, we only see more clearly, and on a more colossal scale, the long and descending perspectives that point down to Byzantium or Pekin. It is perfectly obvious that the whole business is a machine for manufacturing tenth-rate things, and keeping people ignorant of first-rate things. Most civilized systems have declined from a height; but this starts on a low level and in a flat place; and what it would be like when it had really crushed all its critics and rivals and made its monopoly watertight for two hundred years, the most morbid imagination will find it hard to imagine. But whatever the last stage of the story, no sane man any longer doubts that we are seeing the first stages of it. There is no longer any difference in tone and type between collectivist and ordinary commercial order; commerce has its officialism and communism has its organization. Private things are already public in the worst sense of the word; that is, they are impersonal and dehumanized.

Public things are already private in the worst sense of the word;
that is, they are mysterious and secretive and largely corrupt.
The new sort of Business Government will combine everything
that is bad in all the plans for a better world. There will
be no eccentricity; no humour; no noble disdain of the world.
There will be nothing but a loathsome thing called Social Service;
which means slavery without loyalty. This Service will be one
of the ideals. I forgot to mention that there will be ideals.
All the wealthiest men in the movement have made it quite clear
that they are in possession of a number of these little comforts.
People always have ideals when they can no longer have ideas.

The philanthropists in question will probably be surprised
to learn that some of us regard this prospect very much as we
should regard the theory that we are to be evolved back into apes.
We therefore consider whether it is even yet conceivable to restore
that long-forgotten thing called Self-Government: that is,
the power of the citizen in some degree to direct his own life
and construct his own environment; to eat what he likes, to wear what
he chooses, and to have (what the Trust must of necessity deny him)
a range of choice. In these notes upon the notion, I have been
concerned to ask whether it is possible to escape from this enormous
evil of simplification or centralization, and what I have said
is best summed up under two heads or in two parallel statements.
They may seem to some to contradict each other, but they really
confirm each other.

First, I say that this is a thing that could be done by people.
It is not a thing that can be done to people. That is where it
differs from nearly all Socialist schemes as it does from
plutocratic philanthropy. I do not say that I, regarding this
prospect with hatred and contempt, can save them from it.
I say that they can save me from it, and themselves from it,
if they also regard it with hatred and contempt. But it must be
done in the spirit of a religion, of a revolution, and (I will add)
of a renunciation. They must want to do it as they want to drive
invaders out of a country or to stop the spread of a plague.
And in this respect our critics have a curious way of arguing in
a circle. They ask why we trouble to denounce what we cannot destroy;
and offer an ideal we cannot attain. They say we are merely
throwing away dirty water before we can get clean; or rather
that we are merely analysing the animalculae in the dirty water,
while we do not even venture to throw it away. Why do we make men
discontented with conditions with which they must be content?
Why revile an intolerable slavery that must be tolerated?
But when we in turn ask why our ideal is impossible or why
the evil is indestructible, they answer in effect, "Because you
cannot persuade people to want it destroyed." Possibly; but,
on their own showing, they cannot blame us because we try.
They cannot say that people do not hate plutocracy enough to kill it;
and then blame us for asking them to look at it enough to hate it.
If they will not attack it until they hate it, then we are doing
the most practical thing we can do, in showing it to be hateful.
A moral movement must begin somewhere; but I do most positively
postulate that there must be a moral movement. This is not a
financial flutter or a police regulation or a private bill or a
detail of book-keeping. It is a mighty effort of the will of man,
like the throwing off of any other great evil, or it is nothing.
I say that if men will fight for this they may win; I have nowhere

suggested that there is any way of winning without fighting.

Under this heading I have considered in their place, for instance,
the possibility of an organized boycott of big shops.
Undoubtedly it would be some sacrifice to boycott big shops;
it would be some trouble to seek out small shops.
But it would be about a hundredth part of the sacrifice and trouble
that has often been shown by masses of men making some patriotic
or religious protest--when they really wanted to protest.
Under the same general rule, I have remarked that a real life
on the land, men not only dwelling on the land but living off it,
would be an adventure involving both stubbornness and abnegation.
But it would not be half so ascetic as the sort of adventure which it
is a commonplace to attribute to colonists and empire-builders;
it is nothing to what has been normally shown by millions
of soldiers and monks. Only it is true that monks have a faith,
that soldiers have a flag, and that even empire-builders were
presumably under the impression that they could assist the Empire.
But it does not seem to me quite inconceivable, in the varieties
of religious experience, that men might take as much notice
of earth as monks do of heaven; that people might really believe
in the spades that create as well as in the swords that destroy;
and that the English who have colonized everywhere else might begin
to colonize England.

Having thus admitted, or rather insisted, that this thing cannot be
done unless people do really think it worth doing, I then proceeded to
suggest that, even in these different departments, there are more people
who think it worth doing than is noticed by the people who do not think
it worth noticing. Thus, even in the crowds that throng the big shops,
you do in fact hear a vast amount of grumbling at the big shops--
not so much because they are big as because they are bad.
But these real criticisms are disconnected, while the unreal
puffs and praises are connected, like any other conspiracy.
When the millionaire owning the stores is criticized, it is by
his customers. When he is handsomely complimented, it is by himself.
But when he is cursed, it is in the inner chamber; when he is praised
(by himself) it is proclaimed from the house-tops. That is what is
meant by publicity--a voice loud enough to drown any remarks made
by the public.

In the case of the land, as in the case of the shops,
I went on to point out that there is, if not a moral agitation,
at least the materials of a moral agitation. Just as a discontent
with the shops lingers even among those who are shopping,
so a desire for the land lingers even in those who are hardly
allowed to walk on the ground. I gave the instance of the slum
population of Limehouse, who were forcibly lifted into high flats,
bitterly lamenting the loss of the funny little farmyards they
had constructed for themselves in the corners of their slum.
It seems absurd to say of a country that none of its people could
be countrymen, when even its cockneys try to be countrymen.
I also noted that, in the case of the country, there is now
a general discontent, in landlords as well as tenants.
Everything seems to point to a simpler life of one man one field,
free as far as possible of the complications of rent and labour,
especially when the rent is so often unpaid or unprofitable,
and the labourers are so often on strike or on the dole.
Here again there may often be a million individuals feeling like this;

but the million has not become a mob; for a mob is a moral thing.
But I will never be so unpatriotic as to suggest that the English
could never conduct an agrarian war in England as the Irish did
in Ireland. Generally, therefore, under this first principle,
the thing would most certainly have to be preached rather like a Crusade;
but it is quite untrue and unhistorical to say, as a rule,
that when once the Crusade is preached, there are no Crusaders.

And my second general principle, which may seem contradictory but
is confirmatory, is this. I think the thing would have to be done
step by step and with patience and partial concessions. I think this,
not because I have any faith whatever in the silly cult of slowness
that is sometimes called evolution, but because of the peculiar
circumstances of the case. First, mobs may loot and burn and rob
the rich man, very much to his spiritual edification and benefit.
They may not unnaturally do it, almost absentmindedly, when they are
thinking of something else, such as a dislike of Jews or Huguenots.
But it would never do for us to give very violent shocks to the sentiment
of property, even where it is very ill-placed or ill-proportioned;
for that happens to be the very sentiment we are trying to revive. As a
matter of psychology, it would be foolish to insult even an unfeminine
feminist in order to awaken a delicate chivalry towards females.
It would be unwise to use a sacred image as a club with which to
thump an Iconoclast and teach him not to touch the holy images.
Where the old-fashioned feeling of property is still honest, I think
it should be dealt with by degrees and with some consideration.
Where the sense of property does not exist at all, as in millionaires,
it might well be regarded rather differently; there it would become a
question of whether property procured in certain ways is property at all.
As for the case of cornering and making monopolies in restraint
of trade, that falls under the first of my two principles.
It is simply a question of whether we have the moral courage
to punish what is certainly immoral. There is no more doubt
about these operations of high finance than there is about piracy
on the high seas. It is merely a case of a country being so
disorderly and ill-governed that it becomes infested with pirates.
I have, therefore, in this book treated of Trusts and Anti-Trust Law
as a matter, not merely for the popular protest of a boycott or
a strike, but for the direct action of the State against criminals.
But when the criminals are stronger than the State, any attempt
to punish them will be certainly called a rebellion and may rightly
be called a Crusade.

Recurring to the second principle, however, there is another and less
abstract reason for recognizing that the goal must be reached by stages.
I have here had to consider several things that may bring us
a stage nearer to Distributism, even if they are in themselves
not very satisfactory to ardent or austere Distributists.
I took the examples of a Ford car, which may be made by mass
production but is used for individual adventure; for, after all,
a private car is more private than a train or a tram. I also took
the example of a general supply of electricity, which might lead
to many little workshops having a chance for the first time. I do not
claim that all Distributists would agree with me in my decision here;
but on the whole I am inclined to decide that we should use these things
to break up the hopeless block of concentrated capital and management,
even if we urge their abandonment when they have done their work.
We are concerned to produce a particular sort of men, the sort
of men who will not worship machines even if they use machines.

But it is essential to insist at every stage that we hold ourselves free not only to cease worshipping machines, but to cease using them. It was in this connection that I criticized certain remarks of Mr. Ford and the whole of that idea of standardization which he may be said to represent. But everywhere I recognize a difference between the methods we may use to produce a saner society and the things which that saner society might itself be sane enough to do. For instance, a people who had really found out what fun it is to make things would never want to make most of them with a machine. Sculptors do not want to turn a statue out with a lathe or painters to print off a picture as a pattern, and a craftsman who was really capable of making pots or pans would be no readier to condescend to what is called manufacturing them. It is odd, by the way, that the very word "manufacture" means the opposite of what it is supposed to mean. It is itself a testimony to a better time when it did not mean the work of a modern factory. In the strict meaning of words, a sculptor does manufacture a statue, and a factory worker does not manufacture a screw.

But, anyhow, a world in which there were many independent men would probably be a world in which there were more individual craftsmen. When we have created anything like such a world, we may trust it to feel more than the modern world does the danger of machinery deadening creation, and the value of what it deadens. And I suggested that such a world might very well make special provision about machines, as we all do about weapons; admitting them for particular purposes, but keeping watch on them in particular ways.

But all that belongs to the later stage of improvement, when the commonwealth of free men already exists; I do not think it inconsistent with using any instruments that are innocent in themselves in order to help such citizens to find a footing. I have also noted that just as I do not think machinery an immoral instrument in itself, so I do not think State action an immoral instrument in itself. The State might do a great deal in the first stages, especially by education in the new and necessary crafts and labours, by subsidy or tariff to protect distributive experiments and by special laws, such as the taxation of contracts. All these are covered by what I call the second principle, that we may use intermediate or imperfect instruments; but it goes along with the first principle, that we must be perfect not only in our patience, but in our passion and our enduring indignation.

Lastly, there are the ordinary and obvious problems like that of population, and in that connection I fully concede that the process may sooner or later involve an element of emigration. But I think the emigration must be undertaken by those who understand the new England, and not by those who want to escape from it or from the necessity of it. Men must realize the new meaning of the old phrase, "the sacredness of private property." There must be a spirit that will make the colonist feel at home and not abroad. And there, I admit, there is a difficulty; for I confess I know only one thing that will thus give to a new soil the sanctity of something already old and full of mystical affections. And that thing is a shrine--the real presence of a sacramental religion.

Thus, unavoidably, I end on the note of another controversy--a controversy that I have no idea of pursuing here. But I should not be honest if I did not mention it, and whatever be the case

in that connection it is impossible to deny that there is a doctrine
behind the whole of our political position. It is not necessarily
the doctrine of the religious authority which I myself receive;
but it cannot be denied that it must in a sense be religious.
That is to say, it must at least have some reference to an ultimate
view of the universe and especially of the nature of man.
Those who are thus ready to see property atrophied would ultimately
be ready to see arms and legs amputated. They really believe
that these could become extinct organs like the appendix.
In other words, there is indeed a fundamental difference between
my own view and that vision of man as a merely intermediate
and changing thing--a Link, if not a Missing Link. The creature,
it is claimed, once went on four legs and now goes on two legs.
The obvious inference would be that the next stage of evolution
will be for a man to stand on one leg. And this will be of very
great value to the capitalist or bureaucratic powers that are now
to take charge of him. It will mean, for one thing, that only half
the number of boots need be supplied to the working classes.
It will mean that all wages will be of a one-legged sort.
But I would testify at the end, as at the beginning, that I believe
in Man standing on two legs and requiring two boots, and that I
desire them to be his own boots. You may call it conservative
to want this. You may call it revolutionary to attempt to get it.
But if that is conservative, I am conservative; if that is revolutionary,
I am revolutionary--but too democratic to be evolutionary, anyhow.

The thing behind Bolshevism and many other modern things is a new doubt.
It is not merely a doubt about God; it is rather specially a doubt
about Man. The old morality, the Christian religion, the Catholic Church,
differed from all this new mentality because it really believed
in the rights of men. That is, it believed that ordinary men
were clothed with powers and privileges and a kind of authority.
Thus the ordinary man had a right to deal with dead matter,
up to a given point; that is the right of property. Thus the
ordinary man had a right to rule the other animals within reason;
that is the objection to vegetarianism and many other things.
The ordinary man had a right to judge about his own health, and what
risks he would take with the ordinary things of his environment;
that is the objection to Prohibition and many other things.
The ordinary man had a right to judge of his children's health,
and generally to bring up children to the best of his ability;
that is the objection to many interpretations of modern State education.
Now in these primary things in which the old religion trusted a man,
the new philosophy utterly distrusts a man. It insists that he must be a
very rare sort of man to have any rights in these matters; and when he is
the rare sort, he has the right to rule others even more than himself.
It is this profound scepticism about the common man that is the common
point in the most contradictory elements of modern thought.
That is why Mr. Bernard Shaw wants to evolve a new animal that shall
live longer and grow wiser than man. That is why Mr. Sidney Webb
wants to herd the men that exist like sheep, or animals much more
foolish than man. They are not rebelling against an abnormal tyranny;
they are rebelling against what they think is a normal tyranny--
the tyranny of the normal. They are not in revolt against the King.
They are in revolt against the Citizen. The old revolutionist,
when he stood on the roof (like the revolutionist in The Dynamiter)
and looked over the city, used to say to himself, "Think how the
princes and nobles revel in their palaces; think how the captains
and cohorts ride the streets and trample on the people."

But the new revolutionist is not brooding on that. He is saying, "Think of all those stupid men in vulgar villas or ignorant slums. Think how badly they teach their children; think how they do the wrong thing to the dog and offend the feelings of the parrot." In short, these sages, rightly or wrongly, cannot trust the normal man to rule in the home, and most certainly do not want him to rule in the State. They do not really want to give him any political power. They are willing to give him a vote, because they have long discovered that it need not give him any power. They are not willing to give him a house, or a wife, or a child, or a dog, or a cow, or a piece of land, because these things really do give him power.

Now we wish it to be understood that our policy is to give him power by giving him these things. We wish to insist that this is the real moral division underlying all our disputes, and perhaps the only one really worth disputing. We are far from denying, especially at this time, that there is much to be said on the other side. We alone, perhaps, are likely to insist in the full sense that the average respectable citizen ought to have something to rule. We alone, to the same extent and for the same reason, have the right to call ourselves democratic. A republic used to be called a nation of kings, and in our republic the kings really have kingdoms. All modern governments, Prussian or Russian, all modern movements, Capitalist or Socialist, are taking away that kingdom from the king. Because they dislike the independence of that kingdom, they are against property. Because they dislike the loyalty of that kingdom, they are against marriage.

It is therefore with a somewhat sad amusement that I note the soaring visions that accompany the sinking wages. I observe that the social prophets are still offering the homeless something much higher and purer than a home, and promising a supernormal superiority to people who are not allowed to be normal. I am quite content to dream of the old drudgery of democracy, by which as much as possible of a human life should be given to every human being; while the brilliant author of The First Men in the Moon will doubtless be soon deriding us in a romance called The Last Men on the Earth. And indeed I do believe that when they lose the pride of personal ownership they will lose something that belongs to their erect posture and to their footing and poise upon the planet. Meanwhile I sit amid droves of overdriven clerks and underpaid workmen in a tube or a tram; I read of the great conception of Men Like Gods and I wonder when men will be like men.

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THE END