

the most part of raw material and food, say 70 millions), the amount is only increased to 36 millions, being just equal to one-fiftieth of the total income.

Although, however, this is meeting the Imperialist on his own ground, it must in candour be added that it does not do him justice, and that to arrive at the facts the investigation must be of a different character. The truth is that the volume of our exports, to which so much importance is attached, affords no adequate guide to the proportion of national income derived from external sources; for, in the first place, foreign countries are largely indebted to us in respect of investments made with them upon which they pay interest; and, in the next place, we are the great ocean carriers, and obtain a substantial revenue from the freights of the goods we carry, and neither of these items finds any place in our table of exports. More accurate data for the investigation, therefore, will be, not exports but imports (those imports, the growth of which, strangely enough, is often regarded as alarming). The total amount of these—again taking the highest figures hitherto recorded—is 543 millions, of which, however, we re-export 70 millions, leaving 473 millions; and if from this we deduct the amount of our exports of home produce (that is, goods we send away in part return for what we receive), 290 millions, we have a net balance of 183 millions, thus indicating that only about one-tenth of the total national income is traceable to external sources. Of this 183 millions, 63 millions represents interest on foreign investments, and is not therefore due to current external trade, which latter can only

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be credited with the balance of 120 millions; so that, although this shows a much higher percentage than is disclosed by a mere examination of exports, it indicates that the net proportion of national income derived from external trade is merely one-fifteenth of the total. Of course, however, the precise fraction is not of importance; it is sufficient to know that the amount is comparatively small.

But here, possibly, the interpellation will be made that the whole of our imports, less only our re-exports, constitutes income from external sources; and that, after deducting the proportion which represents interest, there still remains 410 millions derived from external trade, and without such trade our income would be less by that amount. Even if this were true, it would merely show that less than one-fourth of our income is traceable to this particular source, and that for more than three-fourths we have to look at home. But, although the 410 millions is, no doubt, represented by foreign goods, it is not true that our income would be less by that amount if we had no external trade; for in the absence of such trade we should, as has already been pointed out, either possess the commodities we now export, or if (as would no doubt be the case) we partly ceased to produce them in consequence of the absence of foreign demand, we should then instead necessarily occupy ourselves in producing other commodities for home consumption to fill the vacuum due to the corresponding absence of foreign supply. Of course we should produce at greater cost, and in fact be in the same position as if living under an absolutely effective

system of "Protection"; but whilst this would be a grave disadvantage, it is obvious that the proportion of our income which is now embodied in foreign merchandize would not be wiped out, but would to a great extent merely change its form, that is to say would be embodied in the additional home produce. There would be no diminution in our productive powers (although they would in some directions be exercised under less favourable conditions); these are not affected by markets, but depend upon land capital and labour; and it is only the particular manner in which they shall be employed that is determined or affected by demand. If all external trade ceased, the necessity for production would not be in the slightest degree diminished (rather it would be increased), but industry would to some extent be diverted into other channels in order to directly meet those wants which are now indirectly met by the exchange of some of the products of present industry for the products of other nations. In short, *cæteris paribus*, there would be no corresponding variation in the volume of wealth produced, but it would partly take a different form—industrial activity would in some directions be smaller, but in other directions greater. Although we derive the equivalent of upwards of 400 millions from external trade, we have to earn it; and we are primarily indebted for it, not to the customer, but to the labourer.

Of course it is not to be denied that if foreign nations were suddenly and extensively to close their ports, this would be most disastrous; for it would dislocate a considerable part of our commercial

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machinery, cause a loss of fixed capital, and for the time being throw many workmen out of employment. When particular industries have once been established on a large scale, any grave general diminution in the demand for their products is inevitably attended with calamity. Indeed, this is proportionately true as regards merely temporary fluctuations, and a prolonged winter or a wet summer will severely handicap certain trades. Similarly, improvements in production, whereby existing processes are superseded, result in a definite loss during the transition state; scientific discoveries may mean ruin to those who have embarked their capital in enterprises thereby rendered obsolete; and as this reacts upon the community, the nation suffers, and progress has its price. The injury, however, which it would thus be possible for other nations to inflict upon us would not, it must be admitted, be attended with the material compensation and ultimate benefit which rewards the expansion of knowledge; and an extensive boycotting of our goods could not, under existing conditions, be regarded with equanimity, especially as the consequent diminution of our imports (which mainly consist of food and raw material) would make it more arduous to supply our wants. But the indubitable fact is that it would not pay foreign nations peremptorily and permanently to close their markets, any more than it would pay us to take a similar course; the policy would be a suicidal one. If our existing industries are on a scale which calls for foreign markets, the same is true of theirs: if they are to continue to export (as they are all

anxious to do, and to an increasing extent) they must continue to import ; if they send us merchandise, they must take ours ; and if they attempted, from whatever motive, seriously to embarrass our external trade, the attempt would recoil upon themselves. Moreover, unless they united and presented a solid front, they would leave us almost unscathed ; for the ramifications of exchange are such that isolated action is of little avail ; and, indeed, it is probable goods directly boycotted would ultimately reach the same country by circuitous routes, at greater cost to the purchasers. However this may be, so long as we are able to freely import we may rest assured that we shall continue to export ; and we need not fear the loss of foreign markets if we desire to retain them and are able to supply them ; whilst any gradual variation in demand, such as occurs at home and under normal conditions, must continue to be met, by that gradual adaptation to altered conditions which is constantly taking place. And in no case can negative considerations carry weight. The positive advantages of international trade have yet to be briefly indicated ; but although other countries could, if anxious to do so and willing to pay the price, inflict an injury upon us by abruptly closing their ports, the fact that they wisely refrain from taking such a course is no actual addition to the positive advantages, whatever they may be ; and to regard it as such would be somewhat suggestive of the ingenious logic of the child who credited pins with saving lives by not being swallowed.

That external trade is, however, attended with

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considerable benefit is unquestionable, and, indeed, has indirectly already been shown; so that there has certainly been no desire to minimise its real significance, by pointing out how comparatively small is that portion of the national income which is directly traceable to this source. And, curiously enough, the actual nature of the benefit seems to be largely ignored by those who look only to what they term our commercial supremacy; in grasping at the intangible they fail to grasp the tangible. At any rate their chief concern is to outstrip foreign nations, as though we could only progress by keeping others back; their constant anxiety is to increase exports, whilst the correlative increase of imports is regarded as ominous and detrimental to our own industries. And yet, as has been seen, it is only through the medium of these imports that the benefit is conveyed; whatever advantage we derive is embodied in them. The national gain from external trade may be summed up in a sentence: it consists in conferring upon all the countries which exchange their produce a very large portion of the natural advantages possessed by each; in other words, it enables them to obtain commodities they could not themselves produce, and to obtain other commodities they could only produce at greater cost. Climatic conditions, the fertility of land, mineral deposits, vegetable growth, animal life, all vary with latitude and longitude; and by labour being devoted at any given spot to the production in abundance of those commodities for which there are special facilities, and by exporting some of such commodities in exchange for other commodities

similarly produced, a greater return is obtained to labour, and wants are supplied at less cost than they would otherwise be. But these benefits must be reciprocal; and it is because the Imperialist ignores or inadequately realises this, that he is jealous of the growth of foreign industry.

Note. Commercial prosperity, then, is not to be gauged mainly by external trade; this only accounts for a comparatively small portion of the national income. Nor does empire promote trade; its ratio as between foreign and Imperial arenas is not in favour of the latter, and remains substantially the same despite territorial expansion. And the explanation is found in the fact that material wealth is due to labour, and not to markets; and that markets are merely the expression of human wants, and not of national sentiments.

THE RATIONALE OF TRADE

A further stage of our investigation is now reached. Although, if empire fails to promote trade, the case for Commercial Imperialism is gone, this does not render less pertinent the question whether the promotion of trade is an object worthy of the admiration it commands. That commercial prosperity is synonymous with national prosperity appears to be taken for granted; and this, though perhaps never actually postulated, presumably lies at the root of the Imperialist contention. An inquiry, therefore, into the rationale of trade should not be unprofitable.

According to the prevailing opinion, the status of

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a community is mainly determined by the material wealth it possesses. We may preach to the individual that riches are but dross, and he in turn may occasionally proclaim that "who steals my purse steals trash"; but the doctrine is rarely reduced to practice by the individual and never by the nation. That it is not to be literally acted upon is obvious, for material things are not only useful but indispensable to life; the mischief is that there is no recognition of its inward significance, and that riches are regarded as the *summum bonum*. Judged by Commercialism, we could imagine that the one object of existence is to "make money," and that the community which possesses the greatest amount of tangible assets or letters of credit, is the most to be envied. To the attainment of this end everything is subordinated; and progress is gauged by the result. If the output of merchandise is enlarged, and the "balance of trade" is in our favour, all is going well: but scant attention is given to the process of enlargement, to the sacrifice it may entail, to its physical cost and suffering, or to the actual use made of the riches which are thus obtained.

John Ruskin struck a truer note and established a healthier standard, when he told us that there is no wealth but life—life, including all its powers of love, of joy and of admiration—and that that country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings.¹ Commercial Imperialism would do well to recall his teaching, if indeed it has ever heard of it; to disprove it, if possible, and if not, humbly to accept it and abandon its own false

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¹ *Unto This Last*. London: George Allen, 1900, p. 156.

standard ; and also to bear in mind the old precept of him to whom this mammonish age renders little practical reverence, although it does him lip homage, namely that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And that which is true of the man is true of the nation ; if it pays little or no regard to its vital welfare and neglects its soul, it is not healthy, however " wealthy " it may be in the material sense of the term.

What should be the ultimate object of trade ? Its present *de facto* object seems to be to secure riches, irrespective of methods (or rather by such methods as are most likely to achieve this one result) irrespective of vital expenditure, and irrespective of final utility. But the one legitimate purpose of trade (including in the term, production, distribution, and exchange) is to satisfy the healthy wants of the community, and to satisfy them by healthy means ; and in so far as it falls short of this standard, it indicates misdirected or wasted labour, and is antagonistic to national prosperity. Yet trade as now organised does not satisfy the healthy wants of the community, and its processes are very largely unhealthy ; it frequently rewards those who work the least with a superabundance, and those who work the most with an insufficiency : it fosters and gratifies the morbid appetites of some, and fails to gratify the natural appetites of others ; to many it denies altogether the opportunity of employment, whilst at the same time it supports in voluntary idleness a parasitic class ; and it pays little regard to final utility, and often results in disutility. Hence, in

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many ways it falls short of the true standard ; and to this extent it is not conducive to national well-being. Despite the boast that we are the richest country in the world, the amount of poverty that prevails is appalling. If it is true that there are several millions who are on the verge of starvation, if it is true that there are large numbers who do actually starve, if it is true that many of the methods of production are gravely injurious to health, and so far from promoting life tend to death—and all these things are true—then our system stands condemned, and a mere increase of trade under such a system, instead of being a sign of prosperity, is an indication of adversity, and points to the acquisition, not of “wealth” but of “illth.”

The root fallacy of the position, from the national point of view, is found in the fact that industry is dominated by the one idea of private profit—“profit” in the commercial sense being, not the gain to the community arising from the production and distribution of useful things, but the gain to the trader arising from the sale of anything, whether useful, useless, or disuseful, at more than it cost him. Of course there is a partial gain to the community, or the community would speedily cease to be ; the capitalist cannot appropriate the whole, since capital is of no avail without labour, and to secure this some portion of the produce must be ceded to the labourer. And of course, also, much of the production results in utilities ; since every one demands necessaries in the first instance. But these results, so far as they obtain, are really incidental to the system instead of fundamental, as

they should be. Industry is organised, not by the community with a single eye to the benefit of the community, but by the owners of the instruments of production with a single eye to their own benefit; and the comforting theory is that, if the units all pursue their own interests, the interests of the body-politic will be best promoted. This would not be true even if all the units started on equal terms; the extent of its falsity under a *régime* where they start on gravely unequal terms is demonstrated by the results which stare us in the face, and to which reference has already been made.

Industry thus organised is accompanied by two evils, wrong production and mal-distribution; it results in an insufficiency of necessaries on the one hand, and a plethora of luxuries on the other; the healthy wants of some remain unsatisfied, because the unhealthy wants of others are gratified. There is something rotten in the State when large numbers live from hand to mouth, with intervals of starvation or semi-starvation, and yet as much can be expended in a fashionable entertainment as would keep a hundred families in comfort for a year. And this rottenness is the natural outcome of our commercial system, with its false theories, its false aims, and its false criteria. Concerned only with accumulating riches, without regard to their cost, their nature, or their destiny, it results in a waste of energy and in the atrophy of the workers. What commodities are produced is immaterial so long as they command a "profit"; they may be shoddy or disserviceable—razors that will not cut, or bowie knives that will—they may be incapable of supplying any legitimate

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craving, or may minister to an illegitimate craving. And how the commodities are produced is equally immaterial ; it may be in a poisonous atmosphere, it may be by deathly processes, and it may be by draining the vitality of the labourer, nourishing him worse than cattle are nourished (for they cost money to replace, and he does not), and regarding him, not as a man to whose sustenance production is subservient, but as a machine which is merely subservient to production. Goods thus begotten are not wealth ;

“Wives and mithers maist despairin’ ca’ them lives o’ men” ; and a nation which accumulates much of its so-called wealth in this way is not rich, but unutterably poor. It is not concerned with true wealth, namely, well-being ; it is promoting, not life, but death. Material wealth consists in useful and pleasurable things, things possessing the capacity to satisfy a good human want ; and to fulfil its purpose it must be distributed so as to give a maximum satisfaction of the legitimate wants of all. “The final outcome and consummation of all wealth is in the producing as many as possible full-breathed, bright-eyed, and happy-hearted human creatures.”¹ This is the philosophy of Ruskin, and it has never yet been successfully impugned.²

But Commercial Imperialism has not the faintest conception of this philosophy ; it is only concerned with perpetuating the present object and methods of production ; so far from ever having realised their

¹ *Unto This Last*, pp. 64-5.

² For a scholarly exposition, analytical and critical, of Ruskin’s teachings see Mr. J. A. Hobson’s book, *John Ruskin, Social Reformer*. London : James Nisbet & Co. 1899.

inherent viciousness, it regards them as eminently moral. It does not pay regard to the real nature of wealth, to its utilities or its due appropriation; it looks only to production and sale and not to consumption or use. Its one aim is to secure "new markets" with enhanced "profits"; its theory of trade is, not the placing of useful merchandise where it is most needed and with a view to nourish life, but the placing of any merchandise anywhere (and whether at the bottom of the sea does not matter, if it is adequately "insured") with a view to "make money." Hence it combines with its quest for additional "outlets" a demand for "cheap labour"; its measure of cheapness being, not a diminished expenditure of energy or vital force, but an increased exploitation of this vitality. And so the process goes on in sinister circle. Starting with a fundamentally vicious conception of the object of production and exchange, it proceeds by fundamentally vicious means to acquire additional territory in the belief that that object is thereby promoted; and having acquired the territory, it comes back to its vicious system of production and exchange, and thus it works round and round in the same immoral groove.

For let there be no mistake about the matter. Although Imperialism does not promote the welfare of the nation; although it does not even add to the entire volume of trade; it does promote the sordid interest of certain classes, and enables them to appropriate a larger share of the produce; and it breeds an army of officials and parasites who are all interested in its maintenance and extension. Even the work of destruction involved in the

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acquisition of new territory, for the time being "makes it good for trade" (to use the common expression) and by creating a largely increased demand for some commodities—commodities which are essentially "illth" and not wealth—and indirectly for other commodities, gives an impetus to production, calling for additional labour, and thus temporarily increasing wages; so that the very workmen are befooled into advocating an Imperial policy. And the men who are concerned with administration, the countless hangers-on, and all those who are seeking a profitable outlet for the employment of their superfluous wealth, favour the process, very often honestly believing it inherently beneficial because it proves advantageous to them, and thus failing to realise either its actual economic or ethical nature. Nor is it an insignificant fact that it is those industries in which the vices of the present system are most exemplified which are specially fostered by the process. It is the "parasitic trades," the trades which by "sweating" the workers and in other ways shortening their lives, are obtaining a supply of labour force not paid for, and by "deteriorating the physique, intelligence, and character of their operatives are drawing on the capital stock of the nation"—it is these trades which are among "the strongest competitors for the world's custom," and which, by reason of their being thus "subsidised," and as the result enabled to sell at a lower price, can most readily command markets and stimulate exports.¹ The captains of these parasitic

¹ See *Industrial Democracy*. By Mr and Mrs Sidney Webb. Vol. ii. pp. 751-58. London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1897.

industries, therefore, are peculiarly interested in any policy which is supposed to create additional outlets for merchandise, and Imperialism thus promotes the very worst methods of production, and tends to emphasise and perpetuate the evils of Commercialism.

New markets for our produce? "What," as has been said elsewhere,¹ "are new markets but an increased demand for commodities, and is not the fact staring us in the face that there exists a volume of unsupplied demand at home? What is the cry of the poor but a demand for commodities; to what is their physical privation due but to an insufficient supply of necessaries? There is a grim irony in our seeking to establish dominion over other nations in order to create a new class of consumers when we have millions at home only too anxious to increase—and properly increase—consumption if they got the chance." Let the Imperialist go to the "submerged tenth," to the myriads who are on the border line of starvation, to the men and women who are doomed to penury, or even to those who, if not suffering actual physical deprivation, can infuse but comparatively little joy into their lives, and he will find sufficient "demand" to satisfy him.

Aye! but there is no "profit" to be derived from these men and women, except by exploiting them; they have nothing but their labour to offer, and for that they are already paid whatever wage it will command. Besides, much of their labour would not be required if markets did not keep pace with population. What would be the use of employing

¹ *Patriotism and Ethics*, p. 205. London: Grant Richards. 1901.

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them to produce, if we could not find an outlet for the produce? They do at any rate get something now, but they would then get less; an enormous number fail to find employment as it is, and we should only add to that number if we imperilled our commercial supremacy. Indeed! And does not an increasing population demand an increasing production; does not the owner of every pair of hands also possess a mouth? Suppose, instead of fitfully employing those hands to fill some mouths to surfeit, leaving bare scraps for the actual producer, we give him the opportunity of regularly employing his hands in providing ample supplies for his own mouth; suppose, instead of producing for "profit," we tried the system of producing for "use," and instead of adhering to methods which result in superfluous wealth going to the wrong persons, we resorted to methods which resulted in sufficient wealth going to the right persons; would not that be eminently beneficial from the national point of view, however unsatisfactory it might be to the present monopolists? At present, only thirteen thirty-fourths of the nation's income reaches the pockets of the manual labour class, who form the bulk of the community and produce the bulk of the wealth; let labour be but equitably rewarded, and the problem of markets would settle itself. So long as there is a single individual with a single want unsatisfied, there is scope for the employment of labour; and if the wants of all can be satisfied with a given quantity of labour, the only result is that the necessity for increasing that quantity disappears. And should we reach the stage when our material

needs can be met by a smaller amount of work, thereby affording or increasing that leisure which can be devoted to meeting needs which are not material and enabling us to live a fuller life, would that be a result to be deplored?

What a miserable business this Commercial Imperialism is! We spare no effort to secure new markets for our manufactures; we go on increasing our output at a real cost that is truly direful, paying little regard to comfort or health, making our cities more congested, expanding the area of our grimy towns, massing our people amidst nothing but bricks and mortar and often in sties where we should prudently abstain from stabling our horses, blocking out the genial sunshine, rooting up the grateful verdure, converting the lives of legions into one monotonous round with nothing to cheer them on their road to a weary and premature grave; and all that our commercial supremacy may be maintained, that our merchants' balances may be more inflated, that we may add to the number of our millionaires, and that we may pile up so-called wealth and be able to boast of our riches. That our means of subsistence are largely derived from our manufactures is true; that it would be difficult for us to produce all the food we require is possibly true; and that, if we could, it would involve a somewhat greater expenditure of labour is no doubt true. But, manufacturers though we are, this, at least, we can do—we can see to it that we manufacture under sane and wholesome conditions; we can see to it that an atmosphere impregnated with the smoke from the factory is not the only atmo-

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sphere the toiler has to breathe during his waking hours, or that he does not merely exchange it for a fetid atmosphere during his sleeping hours ; we can see to it that when his day's work is done he can inhale the pure air of heaven, and that his work is not so prolonged as to give him little chance of even inhaling that save through his bedroom casement ; we can see to it that he is not regarded as a machine, to be kept running as long as possible and at the lowest cost for fuel ; we can see to it that he has full opportunity for employment so as to satisfy his wants, and that industry is organized for the benefit of all and not for the preponderating gain of a few. In some of these directions there has been progress, but it has been very slow and very limited, whilst in other directions the evils have been increased. We want more Bournevilles, more Port Sunlights, more "Garden Cities" planted in our midst ; and, above all, we want gradually to revolutionise our methods of trade, which we shall never do until we completely revolutionise our conception of the object of trade. The crying need is, not increased production, but right production ; not more material wealth, but the equitable distribution of wealth ; not new markets, but new aims ; not the acquisition of additional territory, but the civilising of what we have got ; not the subjugation of the foreigner, but the subjugation of ourselves.¹

THE ARTIFICIAL REGULATION OF TRADE

Yet the latest device of our arch-Imperialist takes the form of a proposal which, if adopted, would

¹ See pp. 148-151.

render the lot of the workers more deplorable still, would intensify all the evils of the present system, and deprive us of no inconsiderable portion of the benefits derived from what social progress has been made during the last fifty years. The working man has at the present time the advantage of a cheap loaf; and although this is unfortunately not everything, it is something. If industry is increasingly carried on under onerous conditions, Free Trade has conferred upon the producers advantages which were denied to former generations; although monopoly characteristically manages to intercept some of the benefits. Grave though the total volume of poverty is, its ratio to population has materially declined;¹ and if the labourers have been increasingly withdrawn from the soil, they obtain more from the soil than their progenitors did. The evils from which we suffer are in greater evidence in Protectionist countries; the national wealth they produce is less per head, and the workers' share is less. By freely opening our ports, we have added to our natural advantages no inconsiderable portion of the natural advantages possessed by other nations.

But now a scheme is promulgated the effect of which would be to reverse all this. We are invited to retrace our steps, to resort to the system of our ancestors, impede imports and tax our food. And this—at least so the mandate originally ran, although the discovery has since been made that it is to save ourselves from ruin—in the interests of our Colonies, and in the cause, forsooth! of Imperial unity. Canada

¹ A reaction has, however, set in, as part of the price of reckless Imperialism. See footnote, p. 81.

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and Australia, which possess vast tracts of fertile land compared with which the whole area of the British Isles is insignificant, are (in conjunction with our own ground-landlords) to levy tribute upon the grimy toilers of our towns, that the Empire may be consolidated and the hated foreigner defied. Since trade does not follow the flag—as Mr Chamberlain appears to have tardily discovered—it is to be made to follow the flag; the latter is to be gilded, and then perchance traitorous trade, which is always attracted by gold, will be loyal to the Union Jack. Our Colonies are to be bribed into fealty; “Little England” is to bear a still larger share of the burden of empire than at present; the Mother Country is to command the affection of her offspring by working harder for their benefit, and is to show the insolent German that she will not brook a snub to them. Already have the British workman and his children been mulct in their sugar and jam in the supposed interests of the West Indian planters, and now it is sought to extend the process, with the ultimate result of a substantial increase in the cost of the bulk of our foodstuffs.

Now Mr Chamberlain can scarcely be unaware of the economic effect of his proposals, whatever sophistry he may employ in his attempts to capture the ignorant. His past speeches show conclusively that he fully understands the subject, and knows—or, at any rate, did know—that a tax upon imported food will be attended with no pecuniary recompense, adequate or inadequate; indeed, the case against Protection and Colonial preference has seldom been

more vigorously stated than by him. Let a few quotations be made, for they help to appraise his new scheme at its worth.

"I can conceive it just possible, although it is very improbable, that under the sting of great suffering, and deceived by misrepresentations, the working classes might be willing to try strange remedies, and might be foolish enough to submit for a time to a proposal to tax the food of the country; but one thing I am certain of, if this course is ever taken, and if the depression were to continue, or to recur, it would be the signal for a state of things more dangerous and more disastrous than anything which has been seen in this country since the repeal of the Corn Laws. . . . A tax on food would mean a decline in wages. It would certainly involve a reduction in their productive value; the same amount of money would have a smaller purchasing power. It would mean more than this, for it would raise the price of every article produced in the United Kingdom, and it would indubitably bring about the loss of that gigantic export trade which the industry and energy of the country, working under conditions of absolute freedom, have been able to create."¹

"The owners of property—those who are interested in the existing state of things, the men who have privileges to maintain—would be glad to entrap you from the right path by raising the cry of Fair Trade, under which they cover their demand for Protection, and in connection with which they would tax the food of the people in order to raise the rents of the landlords. . . . Property cannot pay its debt to Labour by taxing its means of subsistence."²

"As to the prospect of any return to Protection in any shape or form, I think it is inconceivable that the agricultural interest would allow manufactures to be protected while food imports went free, and I think it equally improbable that the working classes of this country would

¹ *Speech in the House of Commons*, August 12, 1881.

² *Speech at Birmingham*, January 5, 1885.

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ever again submit to the sufferings and to the miseries which were inflicted upon them by the Corn Laws in order to keep up the rents of the landlords. If that is the programme of the Tory party, we have only in answer to it to recall the history of those times when Protection starved the poor, and when the country was brought by it to the brink of revolution. . . . That is not a retrospect which, I think, would be favourable to any party or any statesman who should have the audacity to propose that we should go back to those evil times.”¹

“I tell you that any proposal to tax corn is a proposal to put rent in the pockets of the landlords, and that any proposal to tax manufactures is a proposal to put profits in the pockets of particularly favoured manufactures. Ah, well! I do not think that you will be led away by these absurdities.”²

“This proposal requires that we should abandon our system in favour of theirs, and it is in effect that while the Colonies should be left absolutely free to impose what protective duties they please both on foreign countries and upon British commerce, they should be required to make a small discrimination in favour of British trade, in return for which we are expected to change our whole system and impose duties on food and raw material. Well, I express again my own opinion when I say that there is not the slightest chance that in any reasonable time this country, or the Parliament of this country, would adopt so one-sided an agreement. The foreign trade of this country is so large and the foreign trade of the Colonies is comparatively so small that a small preference given to us upon that foreign trade by the Colonies would make so trifling a difference—would be so small a benefit to the total volume

¹ *Speech at the Eighty Club*, April 28, 1885.

² *Speech at Birmingham*, November 12, 1885. The dates of these various speeches are noteworthy in view of Mr Chamberlain's recent statement that he had doubts as to free imports as far back as the early eighties when called upon to reply to the Fair-traders, and that his orthodoxy was shattered and his views shaken. *Speech at the Hotel Cecil, London*, July 8, 1904.

of our trade—that I do not believe the working classes of this country would consent to make a revolutionary change for what they would think to be an infinitesimal gain.”¹

“If you are to give a preference to the Colonies . . . you must put a tax on food.”²

The illustrations might be multiplied, but the object is not to convict Mr Chamberlain out of his own mouth—since that has now become a stale performance—but to adopt his admirable presentation (as far as it goes) of the case for Free Trade, and to show he once fully realised that Protection would not promote trade or add to the wealth of the country, and that it would injure the working classes. He now tells us that circumstances have changed ; but apart from the fact that some of the speeches are of comparatively recent date, it will be noticed that in all of them he was dealing not with particular circumstances, but with economic laws and their effects—that a food tax causes a decline in wages, a diminution of purchasing power, a rise in the price of home produce, an increase in rent, an injury to the export trade, the starvation of the poor, and national disaster. He has himself demonstrated that he is under no delusion on this score, and despite the extravagance of some of his recent utterances³ and the fact that he has eventually become what is euphoniously described as a “whole-

¹ *Speech at Grocers' Hall*, June 9, 1896.

² *Speech in the House of Commons*, May 28, 1903.

³ Such, for example, as that £92,000,000 of trade we might have done here has gone to the foreigner, and as the result we have lost £46,000,000 a year in wages during the last thirty years! *Speech at Newcastle*, October 20, 1903.

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hogger," we are driven to seek a better reason for his latest proposals than the one that he has been ensnared by the common protectionist fallacies.

The dominating motive of the Ex-Colonial Secretary he has indeed made clear to us, and his scheme is the logical outcome of his later career. No doubt he is desirous of drawing off the attention of the electorate from the miserable fiasco resulting from his South African diplomacy, and from the egregious blundering of the incompetent Government of which he was so conspicuous a member; and he presumably thought that to spring upon the country this revolutionary project, was calculated to accomplish that object. But this, in any case, is not his principal reason. He is before all things an Imperialist; it is not because he has forgotten his economics, but because he has become intoxicated with empire—so much so that, as he tells us, he dreams dreams of it¹—and has a rooted antipathy to everything which is not British, that he has embarked on this mad crusade. He has himself shown us he is not ignorant of the price that has to be paid; but to the man who has been mainly instrumental in flinging away some 250 millions in conquering a few thousand Dutch farmers, mere pecuniary considerations have no weight. His one dominant idea seems to be the glorification of the British Empire and of Mr Chamberlain as the man who runs it, and incidentally the disparagement of other nationalities and the discomfiture of all who decline to lick his boots; and he pursues this idea with the recklessness of the feverish gambler who, finding that he is losing,

¹ *Speech at Birmingham, January 11, 1904.*

plunges still more heavily. There was a time when he fully realised the dangers of Imperialism, a time when he truthfully depicted what would be the outcome of the very policy with which he has now long been enamoured, as is sufficiently evidenced by the following extract:—

“There is a great party in this country which seems to have learnt nothing by experience, but which is always eager for an extension of an empire already, I should think, vast enough to satisfy the most inordinate ambition, and which taxes our resources to the utmost in the attempt to govern it well and wisely. If we were to accept the advice which is so freely tendered to us, I predict that the temporary difficulties we have to face would become permanent dangers.”¹

But since he uttered these words he has far outstripped the “inordinate ambition” which was not then satisfied with the vastness of our possessions; and, although since then the vastness has become much vaster, he now tells us that the British Empire is only beginning:² and, having become the slave of this ambition, he either does not or will not perceive that his latest scheme, if adopted and pursued to its logical end, would ultimately spell ruin. Of course it is quite true that, when a gambler has almost infinite resources, the day of reckoning may be long delayed; and the public career of our Imperial gambler would have been impossible in any but an exceedingly wealthy country. Sooner or later, however, the time arrives when it is discovered that you may pay too dear for your whistle; and already is Mr Chamberlain being looked upon as a dangerous

¹ *Speech at Victoria Hall, London, September 24, 1885.*

² *Speech at Birmingham, January 30, 1904.*

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fanatic by some who hitherto regarded him as a heaven-born statesman. A great statesman he is not: he might more accurately be described as a "great wrecker." He once wrecked the Liberal party, and he has now wrecked the Conservative party; he recently wrecked South Africa, and if he is not arrested he bids fair to wreck Great Britain. There is only one way to avert this further catastrophe—Jonah must be thrown overboard.

Although, however, it may be difficult to take the new apostle of Protection seriously when he contends that the commercial prosperity of this country would be promoted by a reversal of our Free Trade policy, there are many of those who measure commercial prosperity by their own personal gains who firmly believe—and they have good ground for the belief—that those personal gains would be enhanced. There is "profit" in the business for some: in other words, the term "Protection" is a correct one; it does protect (at the expense of the community) the particular industries to which it is applied, for it raises the price of the home produce by substantially the amount of the duty placed upon foreign produce of a like character. And hence, the mercantile inspiration of the demand for "tariff reform" is of the same character as that for new markets—Protection is the correlative of Commercial Imperialism. "Just in so far as an Imperialist is logical," says Mr J. A. Hobson in his masterly treatise on the subject,¹ "does he become an open and avowed Protectionist." The

¹ *Imperialism, a Study.* By J. A. Hobson. London: James Nisbet & Co., Ltd. 1902. Page 72.

Saturday Review candidly recognised the same truth when it told us that the Imperialist will have to make up his mind to give up either Imperialism or Free Trade, and that he cannot retain both ;¹ and no sooner does the Duke of Devonshire revolt against the natural development of Chamberlainism than we are informed that "the ranks of the Little Englanders have gained another recruit" and that "the Duke is no longer an Imperialist even in name."² Just so. For if the object in obtaining new territories is to obtain new markets, then as soon as the fact dawns that trade does not follow the flag, steps must be taken to ensure that it shall ; if the Empire is to be self-contained, then Protective tariffs have to be imposed against other countries ; and if the foreigner is to be regarded with commercial jealousy, then "retaliation" is a blessed word.

The latest Imperialist proposals, therefore, are only the natural development of the policy which this country has been persistently pursuing for some years past, whether regarded from the political or commercial standpoint. Mr Chamberlain started from the political, but soon found that the commercial was the more popular ; and his solicitation for the unity of the Empire, and his appeal to sentiment, speedily yielded to a concern for British industry, and an appeal to the pocket, although he rings the changes.

A passing word then is all that need be offered on the one aspect of the question ; and in any case it is the other which is here chiefly pertinent. As

¹ May 28, 1903.

² *The Daily Mail*, November 25, 1903.

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to the unity of the Empire, it is worth while recalling that the Colonies form but a comparatively small portion of our dominions, and are not in fact ruled by us ;¹ whilst the wonderful scheme seems unaccountably to take no cognizance of India or our other dependencies, which sadly stand in need of the solicitude manifested for the welfare of our self-governing possessions ; and, further, that a unity which is to be promoted by bribes is scarcely worth having. And with regard to the anxiety to provide a weapon of defence against the tariffs of other nations, whilst (as we shall hereafter see²) the scheme is futile for this purpose, it is to be remarked that the avowal of such a purpose is another illustration of the spirit of Imperialism and is gratuitously provocative of international animosity. Foreign countries have not resorted to Protection as a menace to us, nor did we adopt a Free Trade *régime* out of consideration for them ; they have simply been actuated by the same motive as we have been, namely, a desire to promote their own interests ; and though their economics may be unsound, they have a perfect right to regulate their commercial affairs in their own way, and we have no legitimate grievance.

The important question for us, however, is the effect which the new revolutionary proposals would have upon our national well-being ; and the general observations already made upon the point, and the evidence elicited from Mr Chamberlain's former speeches may be supplemented by the enunciation of a few fundamental principles which govern the subject.

¹ See pp. 7-8 and also p. 214.

² Pages 132-142.

of course.

Now in the first place, it is an elementary fact, although it seems necessary to recall it, that duties on imports are paid by the country imposing them, and that their ultimate incidence is upon the consumer. Not that it is theoretically impossible for the duty, or a portion of it, under special circumstances to fall upon the exporter; as, for instance, if he possesses an absolute monopoly of the article, and the sum he obtains for it is merely limited by the demand; since here, the utmost price having already been reached, he must lower it by the amount of the duty in order to effect the sale. But cases of this character, if they ever occur, are too rare to be even regarded as a modification of the general rule; the possibility of imposing the tax on the exporter is so remote that it need not be taken into serious account. There is no device of man by which ordinary import duties can be appreciably and permanently shifted on to the exporting country, for the play of economic forces fixes price (and consequent profit) at such a figure that it simply would not pay to sell at the reduced price; and the exporting country would as the alternative take their exports elsewhere, or, if they could not, then soon cease to produce them at a loss. The result is that the cost to the consumer is increased by the amount of the duty. No one pretends for a moment that British manufacturers pay the tax levied upon their exports by a foreign country, or that they would in the long run get more for their goods (although they might do a larger trade) if the tax were removed; and as a matter of actual fact it will be found that where commodities upon which there is no import duty in Great Britain

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are exported to this country and to other countries which do impose such a duty, price varies (other circumstances being the same) by an amount at least equal to the duty. Mr Chamberlain candidly recognised this when he intimated he was prepared to assume that a preferential food tax would fall upon the consumer.¹ That ethical considerations would not restrain us from compelling the foreigner to bear part of our national burden, if we had the chance, was sufficiently demonstrated in connection with the imposition of a duty on exported coal in 1901; fortunately for morality we cannot do so.

Another elementary fact, however, is of much greater significance. Granted, it may be said, that the importing country has to pay the duty, still the Government must have revenue, and if it did not get it in this way, it would have to in some other; so that it comes to the same thing in the end, and the only effect of raising revenue by a new tax on imports would be that some existing tax could be remitted. Of course this contention ignores the grave objections there are to indirect taxation, one of which is that the cost of collection is greatly increased; whilst, in connection with import duties, considerable expenditure is also incurred in taking precautions against smuggling; so that the Government never benefits by the full amount of the tax. But the contention overlooks something far more vital—already incidentally alluded to—namely, that whilst revenue is derived only from the imported taxed produce, the price of all produce of the same character is correspondingly raised irrespective of its source. It is the peculiar vice of

¹ *Speech in the House of Commons, May 28, 1903.*

protective imposts that they take considerably more out of the pocket of the consumer than they put into the National Exchequer ; and it should be added that this mischief would only be intensified by giving a preference to the Colonies. For example, if a duty is levied upon imported corn, thereby increasing the price, there will inevitably be a similar rise in the price of home-grown corn, although it pays no duty. And if the duty is remitted upon colonial corn, its price will still be substantially the same as that of foreign corn, but it will be from the latter only that revenue will be derived. The very object of a protective duty is to enable the protected industries to get higher prices by eliminating foreign competition at normal price, and this object is effected ; whilst a remission of the duty in favour of the Colonies operates as Protection for their benefit. A duty on foreign food-stuffs, for example, would mean that we should tax ourselves for the benefit of the Colonies according to the extent of the imports from them, and for the eventual benefit of the English ground-landlords according to the extent of the increase in home-grown food, although for a time it might be possible for the farmer to intercept this particular gain. Mr Chamberlain's present comparatively modest scheme would, so far as food alone is concerned, probably result in the consumer paying about 16 millions, of which the Treasury would get only 6 millions, and the Colonies about $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions.¹

Note ¹ It is calculated that the Sugar Convention (combined with the tax, is costing us 8 millions a year (whilst it is almost ruining the confectionery trades), in order to "protect" the West Indian Colonies to the extent of $\frac{1}{4}$ of a million.

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But the mischief would not stop at this, for when Protection is once introduced it inevitably spreads. The moment a duty is imposed which benefits a particular industry, other industries which derive no benefit from this limited protection, but which nevertheless have to share the burden, irresistibly clamour for like protection; whilst, the duty being soon found insufficient to accomplish the object, the natural tendency (exemplified in all protectionist countries) is to increase it; and the ball being once started rolling, cannot be stopped. The ultimate result might, therefore, well be appalling. The value of our food stuffs was for 1902 probably 820 millions, of which only about 180 millions came from foreign countries and about 40 millions from British possessions, the balance of 600 millions being an estimate of home produce. On these figures (and even if not strictly accurate, they afford an approximate illustration of the point) whilst an import duty of only 5 per cent. would raise the price by at least 41 millions, the Exchequer would get but 9 millions even if (as, of course, would not be the case) the imports from foreign countries were not reduced; 2 millions would represent a bonus to our Colonies (if their exports increased as those of foreign countries diminished, the bonus would be more and the revenue receipts less); and nearly 30 millions would go to the home producer in the first instance, the bulk of which he would have before long to transfer to the landowners in the form of increased rent. Our manufactures would indubitably suffer, and if the duties were extended to raw material (as a matter of fact the greater part of our imports help

to feed our industries¹), they would suffer still more, and would at once demand Protection ; a yet heavier burden would be imposed upon us, and the process, if not arrested, would ultimately point to bankruptcy. And a process of which this is the logical outcome is vicious *ab initio*. Reduced to its naked simplicity, Mr Chamberlain's proposal to tax imported food is one for making a dole to the Colonies and to British land magnates (a relatively small one to the former and a relatively large one to the latter) at the expense of the British community and primarily of the working man ; whilst his scheme for taxing imported manufactures is one for favouring some industries partly at the expense of others (but at the ultimate expense of the consumer) which in turn would successfully clamour for similar protection, until prices were raised all along the line ;² the natural development of the entire policy being something perilously near national collapse. If we seriously wish to tax ourselves for the benefit of our dominions abroad, it would pay us infinitely better to vote them a direct "grant in aid."

Here, however, it will perhaps be urged that there is another side to the question, and that if, in return for our concessions to them, the Colonies remitted

¹ Apart from this, we cannot give an equal preference to the Colonies, and should raise a hornet's nest about our ears unless we taxed foreign raw material ; for, whilst we import from Canada about twice as much food as raw material, from Australia and New Zealand we import three times as much raw material as food, and from the Cape and Natal we import raw material only.

² In this connection, it is worth recalling the fact that we are world carriers and derive no inconsiderable income from our shipping trade, which protective tariffs would seriously injure.

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in our favour their protective tariffs, there would be compensation for any loss we might otherwise sustain. As to this, it is in the first instance to be observed that there has so far been little indication of an intention on their part to do anything of the kind, and that, as they have very largely built up industries by protective tariffs, it might be rather a serious matter for them suddenly and appreciably to modify those tariffs, and in any case they would suffer a loss of income. But the more pertinent answer is, that it is out of their power to confer upon us benefits commensurate with the injury we should inflict upon ourselves; and that, even if it were within their power, the cost to them would be so great as to enormously outweigh the advantage they derived. The additional burden we should undertake would, as we have seen, be out of all proportion to any gain to them; so that if they undertook a similar burden they would be infinitely worse off. And assuming they were willing to meet us to the fullest possible extent, what would it amount to? Roughly speaking, of their total imports three-fifths are now sent from the United Kingdom and British possessions and only two-fifths from foreign countries, whilst of this latter the greater proportion consists of commodities we could not supply; and there is probably only about a further one-fifteenth of the whole—a possible 8 millions—which they might take from us instead of from foreign countries. Moreover, even if they did initiate the largest reciprocal measures possible, then in the language of John Stuart Mill, “the result of the whole transaction is the ridiculous one, that each party loses much in

order that the other may gain a little";¹ to which may be added his sarcastic observation on the "vicious theory of Colonial policy, which regarded Colonies as valuable by affording markets for our commodities, that could be kept entirely to ourselves; a privilege we valued so highly that we thought it worth purchasing by allowing to the Colonies the same monopoly of our market for their own productions which we claimed for our commodities in theirs"—a "notable plan for enriching them and ourselves, by making each pay enormous sums to the other, dropping the greatest part by the way."²

Thus much as to the benefits we are to confer upon the Colonies with a view to secure the unity of the Empire; there remains for consideration the injury we are to inflict upon foreign countries in order to coerce them into proper behaviour. What we require, it seems, is a weapon of defence; "Retaliation" is the new economic gospel of Mr Chamberlain's more cautious allies, and the Prime Minister is its prophet. We are, he tells us, "to do to foreign nations what they always do to each other, and instead of appealing to economic theories in which they wholly disbelieve, to use fiscal inducements which they thoroughly understand."³ As we cannot convert these unregenerate aliens, we are ourselves to backslide: hitherto we have been too considerate towards

¹ *Principles of Political Economy*. Book v. chap. x. sec. 1.

² *Representative Government*, chap. xviii. par. 4.

³ *Economic Notes on Insular Free Trade*. London: Longmans, Green & Co. September 1903. It will be remembered that only a few months previously (see footnote, p. 95) Mr Balfour had recognised, and indeed enforced, the truth that the prosperity of one nation con-

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public
and interest

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them ; we have generously opened our ports to their goods in a spirit of magnanimity which they have failed to appreciate ; we have bought their produce from philanthropic motives, and not because we wanted it, or because we found it cost us less, or because it fed our people and fed our machinery ; we have not done to them what they always do to each other, and we have set a noble example and have acted in an unselfish spirit. But we must sorrowfully confess that it does not pay ; we have been too neglectful of our own interests (it is a national characteristic), and advantage has been taken of this ; there is nothing left for us but retaliation. So, if other nations will not freely admit our goods, we must henceforth decline to freely admit theirs, and in this way shall we bring them to their senses.

This "weapon of defence" argument has the characteristic feature of all the contentions of Commercial Imperialism, it rests upon an assumption ; there is no attempt to show that retaliation would benefit us—that is taken for granted—and while some ingenuity is displayed in seeking to establish its ethical justification, there is a curious omission to demonstrate how it will operate or why it should prove efficacious. And, strangely enough, the doctrine is being promulgated precisely at the moment when other countries which have put it into practice are beginning to realise how vicious it is ;

duces to the prosperity of another ; it is exquisite to note he now leads one financial organ to observe : "Mr Balfour has just helped to demolish the fiction that the prosperity of one nation is necessarily the prosperity of another nation." (*The Financial News*, September 22, 1903).

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and our own representatives at the principal European capitals furnish us with most instructive reports as to the disastrous effects of tariff wars.¹ Of course, the fact is that had we once since we adopted Free Trade seriously thought it injurious to us, or that we could have effectually "retaliated" upon Protectionist countries by taxing imports from them, we should immediately have ceased to be content to "appeal to economic theories in which they wholly disbelieve"; and what the advocates of this peculiarly contemptible form of Protection have to establish is that the economic theories in which we have believed, if foreigners have not, are in fact unsound, and that they were right and we were wrong. Hitherto we have been satisfied that absolute Free Trade is good for us, even if other nations will not adopt it; now we are told that absolute Free Trade "in a world of Protectionists" is bad for us, and we are invited to revise our own policy because our rivals have not copied it. If they think they can outstrip us by carrying a heavy weight, we are to disillusionise them and have our revenge by carrying one ourselves.

It is no doubt true that, whilst a nation which imposes Protective duties does itself grave injury, it to some extent withdraws from other nations the benefits derived from the free international exchange of goods. Those benefits, as has been pointed out,² are that each country can obtain some commodities which it could not otherwise obtain at all, and can obtain other commodities at less cost than it could produce them for itself; and the only method by which all countries can command to the full the

¹ See *White Book*, Cd. 1938.

² See page 103.

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natural advantages enjoyed by each is by that of universal Free Trade. But unless Protective duties are so high and so general as to veto international exchange altogether, or at least seriously restrict it, the harm they can do to a nation that permits free imports is considerably less than is commonly supposed, and indeed is not substantially appreciable. For it is to these imports that the benefit attaches, that is to say, to the exports of other nations; and the duties they impose is, not on those exports, but on their own imports: the object is not to prevent merchandise going out of the country (for, on the contrary, the one desire is to export as much as possible), but to prevent certain kinds of merchandise coming in, the mistaken belief being that this, by artificially encouraging particular home industries, is beneficial to the nation. A country, therefore, which disowns this creed and, recognising that imports are a boon does not impede them, has no difficulty in procuring them—indeed the absurd complaint is that they enter too freely—and the only injury it can sustain from the Protective duties of other nations is such as may be due to the fact that they operate to somewhat restrict the amount of external trade. But so long as such trade in fact takes place, it is the free importing nation which derives the chief benefit. If all countries abolished their existing imposts an impetus would no doubt be given to international exchange; but, while such countries would ultimately gain enormously, there is little reason to suppose that Great Britain, which has already secured the advantages of Free Trade by

adopting it, would find those advantages substantially enhanced. At the present time there is no article of foreign origin which we cannot or do not obtain to the extent of our demand, and that at less cost than we could produce it, even where we could produce it at all. With a larger volume of trade it is not impossible that the cost to us might in some cases be slightly less, and that we could import more and increase our consumption, but it is certainly the Protectionist nations, and not ourselves, who would peculiarly reap the benefits arising from the abandonment of the system, for the reason that we (having abandoned it) reap them already.

But is it fair—the inquiry is frequently made—that foreign countries should have a free market for their goods, whilst they deny a free market to our goods? The question exhibits the old fundamental fallacy that what we are mainly concerned with is markets (by which is meant demand, and not supply), that we benefit by getting rid of goods and not by obtaining them. If we once realise that the advantages derived from international trade attach to imports and not to exports—to what we receive, and not to what we part with—and that exports merely constitute the method of paying for the foreign goods we require, we readily perceive that there is nothing unfair to us in the Protective tariffs of other nations so long as they freely send us their goods; and further that, whilst they take this latter course, their Protective tariffs are futile as against our goods, unless they are willing to make us a present of their own or supply them at less than they would otherwise do. Ah! but they entrench

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their industries behind a bulwark and then compete with us in other markets. Well! have they not a perfect right to do so if they can, and how does the "bulwark" help them or injure us? A bulwark costs money to make and maintain, and a nation which incurs this expense, so far from being thereby able more successfully to compete with a nation which does not incur such expense, only heavily handicaps itself. It produces under greater disadvantages, and can in fact only outbid its competitors by selling on less profitable terms, if not at a loss. And if it does this, then the purchasers (and we are all purchasers) reap the gain.

Here, however, there jumps up the "dumping" bogie. "Sell at a loss!" it will be said, "yes, that is precisely what is done; having a sure home market, these protected industries can afford to 'dump down' upon us their surplus produce at less than cost price; and if they continue the process they will eventually ruin our own industries, and then they will have us at their mercy and there will be no more selling at a loss." Let us see. In the first place, obviously whenever the dumping process is in operation, we are getting cheaper goods; or, to put it conversely, we are obtaining a higher price for our own goods; our exports are commanding a greater quantity of imports than they would otherwise do; the exchange is in our favour, and the process is therefore to our benefit. In the second place, dumping is not a continuous permanent phenomenon, but is of a temporary fluctuating character; it is not (as has been suggested, without any evidence) the outcome of a design to

ruin our industries (not one of which has yet been ruined by it), nor is it conceivable that it should ever be, for that would recoil upon its authors; it is analogous to shopkeepers' sales of surplus stocks at reduced prices, and is due to the fact that the production of particular goods sometimes outstrips demand, especially in the case of protected industries. In the third place, dumping is not the monopoly of foreign nations (who are regarded as hostile to us); it is equally characteristic of our own Colonies (who are regarded as friendly to us) and it is even possible that we ourselves are sinners (if sin it be); the explanation being of course the same in all cases, namely the desire to "cut a loss." In the fourth place, we are not the only "victims" (or beneficiaries) of dumping, for everybody seizes an opportunity to purchase at less than normal prices; and when we are told, as Mr Chamberlain tells us,¹ that the United Kingdom is the only country where the process can be carried on successfully and that all other great countries protect themselves by immediately putting on a tariff to keep out the dumped articles, the answer is that this is simply not the fact, and that articles are dumped in highly protected countries which, so far from counteracting this by a prohibitive tariff, take it "lying down." In the fifth place, since the bulk of our imports consist of food and raw material, both of which feed our own industries, it is obvious that any reduction in price, so far from injuring, must stimulate those industries; the cheap iron and steel, for example, sent us by Germany (to Mr Chamberlain's alarm) positively give an impetus

¹ *Speech at Liverpool*, October 27, 1903.

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to our manufactures and at the same time depress similar German manufactures. In the sixth place, the problem of how to prevent dumping is insoluble unless we definitely veto all imports by imposing absolutely prohibitive duties ; for no scheme could be devised which should automatically shut out particular goods precisely when, and just because, they happened to be offered at "unfair prices"—and indeed, long before the preliminary question of what was "unfair" could be settled in any given instance, the hare would not only be caught, but cooked and eaten. And finally, if "dumping" is so naughty, and the "dumpor" ought to be scotched, what about the wicked "dumpee"—the wretched English merchant who is so depraved and unpatriotic as to purchase these under-priced foreign goods? The malicious alien we cannot reach, but his more despicable fellow-conspirator is on the spot ; let him be arrested and placed on his trial (say for high treason) before a British jury (who can conscientiously declare that they never bought an article for less than it cost to make), and, if found guilty, dumped down in Portland for the rest of his miserable existence, and then we shall soon stamp out this calamitous influx of cheap goods. Poor dumping bogie—*requiescat in pace!*

It comes back, then, to this, that the amount of injury inflicted upon a Free Trade nation by the Protective tariffs of other nations is merely such as occurs from international trade being to some extent thereby restricted ; and, having regard to the present enormous volume of international trade and to the fact that, even with that large volume, only a relatively small portion of our national income can

be traced to this particular source, such injury is for practical purposes scarcely worthy of consideration. Under universal Free Trade we should no doubt somewhat increase our exports, but as already pointed out¹ there is another side even to this, and it does not follow that the comparatively small commercial gain would be a real net national gain; for, in view of the evils which attach to our present organisation of industry² the vital cost would probably be at least equal to the benefit. The chief aim of the reformer will be, not so much to increase our external trade, which has already reached the point of enabling us to share in nearly all the natural advantages of other countries, but to make our existing trade consistent with and more directly contributory to the solid welfare of the nation.

A policy of "Retaliation," then, is from every point of view unsound: it is uncalled for, useless, and pernicious. If the injury which foreign nations can inflict upon us by their so-called hostile tariffs is comparatively so slight that it can be ignored,³ there is no necessity for reprisals, and the imposition by us of similar tariffs would inflict but comparatively slight injury upon them; Retaliation is a futile remedy

¹ See pages 106-115.

² *Ibid.*

³ Of course, as has already been pointed out (p. 100), if such duties were suddenly made so high and so universal as to seriously dislocate our industry, that would undoubtedly injure us for the time being; but this is practically impossible, and if possible, would be suicidal, whilst retaliative duties would then either be nugatory or add to the mischief. And although particular trades which export largely would suffer loss from any decided increase in the foreign tax on their products, there is no method by which this loss could be prevented, unless it be by taxing the entire community for the benefit of the particular industry—that is, converting a relatively small private loss into a large national loss.

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for what is in the main an imaginary ill. This, however, is only its negative aspect ; on its positive side it is a fruitful source of disease. Whilst it would be attended with no benefit, it would do us harm ; so far as it goes, it shares the vices (already pointed out) which are common to all Protective duties. Even regarding the matter from the limited standpoint of a competition for foreign markets, we should place ourselves at a disadvantage, for the object of retaliative duties is to attack the exports from other countries to us ; and we should therefore be compelled to tax raw material and food,¹ thereby raising the cost of production of our manufactures. Nor is there the slightest reason to suppose a mere threat on our part would result in the lowering of a foreign tariff, for those tariffs are imposed for the purpose of protecting native industries ;² whilst the actual imposition of a retaliative duty would only result in counter-retaliation, of which we have a recent instance in the imposition by Russia of a duty on Indian tea

¹ Raw material constitutes nearly 27 per cent. and food nearly 45 per cent. Of the remaining 28 per cent., 5 consists of crudely manufactured materials and 8 of wholly manufactured materials, both for use in industry. Of the balance, a large proportion consists of "luxuries" which we could not produce, and some of which are already taxed for revenue purposes. And it must be remembered that goods commonly classed as manufactures are really the raw material of many industries, and that it is practically impossible to tax any of these goods without injury to some of such industries.

² Even Professor Ashley, who (with the exception of Professor Cunningham) is probably the only authority of weight that can be cited in favour of the new policy, recognises with regard to retaliation that "it is hardly likely any considerable use of tariffs can be made for this purpose, because the countries which are excluding our goods by high customs are doing so in order to develop the industries themselves." *The Tariff Problem*. London : P. S. King & Son, 1903, p. 132.

as a reprisal for the exclusion of her sugar from our ports. Retaliation, in fact, means, as has been aptly said, that because we are smitten, or choose to consider we are smitten on one cheek, we are to smite ourselves on the other. The so-called weapon of defence is, as has been not less aptly said, a blunt knife with a sharp handle; in employing it to stab a supposed enemy we shall severely wound ourselves, whilst we scarcely penetrate his skin.

The truth is we cannot even coquette with Protection without paying for the flirtation—the siren, now as of old, is exacting in her demands. It is not infrequently remarked that Free Trade is obsolete; and that, whilst it might have been all very well when it was adopted, it is not suited to the altered conditions of industry. But there is really nothing obsolete in the fundamental principles of Free Trade; if, for example, it were formerly true that a protective duty taxes the consumer far beyond the amount of the duty, and that the tax cannot be shifted or converted into a productive investment, it is equally true to-day. The common argument that other nations have progressed and flourished under a Protectionist *régime* is a *non causa pro causâ*; the fact is that, if they have progressed and flourished, it has been in spite and not because of Protection. When a country has boundless tracts of fertile land (the ultimate source of all material wealth) it is potentially rich: yet, if it artificially fosters manufactures, it is easily deluded into the belief that its prosperity is due to this, whereas it is actually due to the country's inherent resources.

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The progress of the United States, which is often cited as an illustration of the efficacy of Protection, really points the opposite moral; for throughout this enormous area—nearly thirty times that of the United Kingdom, while the population to be supported is less than double—internal Free Trade prevails. Germany with its restricted area, is finding out that Protection does not pay; and although vested interests are strong, the mass of the working classes are in organised revolt against the system. France, whilst its area is about the same, has a much smaller population—less than the United Kingdom, although the country is nearly double the size—and as this population is almost stationary, the pressure does not increase. Sweden, which is regarded as a Protectionist elysium, has, since it resorted to an import duty on maize, steadily lost its export trade in bacon, butter and eggs; whilst that of little Denmark, which successfully resisted the attempt to impose a similar duty, has been rapidly growing. Our own Colonies, however, are not without their object lesson, for they are adding year by year to their debt, and this debt is not to any substantial extent traceable (as ours is) to reckless expenditure in war, but has arisen under a Protectionist *régime*: and enormously as our own debt has increased, theirs has increased in much greater proportion. In Australasia the amount in 1861 was equal to £9, 8s. per head, twenty years later it had grown to £34 per head, and now it stands at £58 per head, whilst our own huge debt only works out at about £19 per head. And unless Australia can accomplish the difficult task of

disclosing additional assets proportionate to its additional liabilities, what becomes of the theory that it has prospered under Protection, still more of the theory that it has prospered because of Protection?

It is often asked why, if Free Trade is so beneficial, other countries do not adopt it. The answer is that when huge industries have been called into being and fostered by tariffs, powerful antagonistic interests have thereby been created; and further, if those tariffs were suddenly abolished, the industries in question would collapse, a vast amount of fixed capital wasted, and workmen thrown out of employment; whilst other fields of labour would not be immediately developed, and a crisis would ensue which would for the time being have most disastrous results. Protection is not unlike a cancer; not only does it draw on the vital resources, but to remove it may involve the life of the patient. If he have a strong constitution, the cancer may not cause much inconvenience, and until it gravely develops, the mischief may not even be suspected: but when it does fully develop, there is great danger in resorting to a drastic remedy; and if it be possible to arrest the disease, and gradually to eliminate it, that is the course of safety. So, where Protection has obtained a firm grasp, although it is a devitalizing malady, at once to eradicate it is dangerous; only by degrees can it be safely combated without running great risks. The case of the abolition of the English Corn Laws may be cited to the contrary, but this affords no parallel to the case of protected manufactures. A tax on foreign wheat only "protected" the ground landlord (just as the

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re-imposition of the tax would benefit him); and although its removal may to some extent have caused agriculture to decline, such removal was really the withdrawal of a subsidy to a parasitic class; it involved no disorganisation of general industry, no loss to the community; but on the contrary it gave an impetus to general industry, and proved an immediate gain to the community. A country, however, in which there are very large protected manufactures, has a most serious problem to face whenever it contemplates adopting Free Trade; whilst the gigantic interests bound up in the existing system are sure to offer determined antagonism. So far from the result of Protection in other countries affording any encouragement to us again to resort to this artificial regulation of trade, it sounds a warning note against embarking in such a fatal enterprise.

We may, however, here be reminded that one of the effects of imposing a substantial duty on imported foodstuffs would, by giving an impetus to their home production, be the stimulating of agricultural pursuits. And this would certainly not be a result to be deprecated: indeed, to those who measure cost of production by the expenditure of vital force it will be apparent that, although all the evils arising from the enhanced price of food would still remain, to the extent to which more of the wage-earning classes were able to live healthier lives there would be a distinct gain. But this is not an argument which lies in the mouths of those who are now advocating a return to Protection, for the reason that they do not measure cost of production by the expenditure of vital force, but look only to the margin of private

"profit" which can be commanded, and that their object is not to enable the wage-earning classes to live healthier lives, but to "consolidate the Empire," exploit the foreigner and increase exports (that none of these results would be achieved does not alter the motive). Still, if any incidental advantages did ensue, and if they could be obtained in no other way, the candid investigator would have to give them due weight. A duty, however, which should materially stimulate agriculture would indeed have to be substantial—not 2s. on a quarter of corn, but five or ten times as much—and if this were remitted in favour of the Colonies, their competition would have to be reckoned with. But the substantial reply to the argument is that, whilst the incidental advantages would in degree be comparatively slight, they can be secured to a fuller extent in another way. Protection is only a quack remedy for agricultural depression, and the quack exacts enormous fees; it means, as has already been stated, the taxation of the whole people for the benefit of the ground landlords. The evils attendant upon our present industrial system are due to monopoly; to tax food is to still further enrich the arch-monopolist; it is feeding the disease at its source. The true remedy for agricultural depression would require considerable space adequately to expound, and it can only here be suggested. It lies in the direction of introducing a radical alteration in the tenure of land, of raising the standard of cultivation, of increasing the efficiency of labour, of securing effective organisation, and (it may be added) of nationalizing the railways. There is obviously

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something fundamentally wrong when we have millions of acres inadequately tilled, and at the same time a huge army of unemployed. The private ownership of the soil has resulted in the worst evils of monopoly; there is no inducement to render it more productive when the ultimate effect is to raise rent. Whilst enormous increase has been made in the yield of nearly every other industry, agriculture has remained almost stationary: science, skill, capital, energy have been increasingly placed at the disposal of manufactures, but comparatively speaking, the land has commanded few of these favours. Labour is attenuated, capital is inadequate, and organisation defective; the working farmer thinks himself fortunate if he can make both ends meet, and the most fundamentally important of all pursuits has suffered because other pursuits offer more "profit." In a country where land is practically unlimited the entire position is different, but in a small densely populated country like Great Britain there is most pressing need for reform. The monopoly of the soil by a few individuals is directly antagonistic to collective prosperity; and nothing but a drastic alteration of the system will result in the earth bringing forth her increase. A tax on imported food, so far from proving a remedy, would only tend to perpetuate the mischief, at the same time giving rise to the additional mischief already indicated: not by increasing the toll now levied upon labour, but by diminishing and ultimately abolishing it, shall we promote the solid welfare of the nation.

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And this leads to one further point, in conclusion.

Whilst the facts (many of them elementary) to which attention has been called abundantly demonstrate the falsity of the Protectionist's theory, there is yet another fact (not so elementary) with which the Free Trader is confronted; one which indicates there is a tendency for him to overstate his case, and which emphasises the necessity for that reconstruction of our industrial system referred to when considering the rationale of trade. Free Trade, by itself, is not always an unalloyed good. It induces the specialization of industry, that is to say an increased concentration of labour upon those branches of production where natural advantages can be most fully utilised; and in Great Britain, therefore, it has given a great stimulus to manufactures. Now it has already been pointed out that, although this may result in the acquisition of more material wealth, material wealth is not everything, and may be purchased at a ruinous vital cost;¹ and further that, so far even as material wealth is concerned, the men who produce it do not under prevailing conditions derive their legitimate share.² And it has also been indicated that it is those trades in which the vices of the existing system are especially exemplified—the parasitic or subsidised trades—which most readily command markets and stimulate exports;³ so that, to this extent, the specialization of industry to which Free Trade leads takes the form, as matters now stand, of drawing on the capital stock of the nation. The Free Trader, pure and simple, seldom realises this; he claims too much, and argues (or rather more

¹ See pages 104-109.

² See page 113.

³ See page 111.

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often assumes) that because unfettered international exchange is beneficial, the community necessarily shares equally in the benefit, and he does not appreciate the subtle way in which part of it is annexed by some to the detriment of others, and that Free Trade is quite consistent with the condition of many of the toilers being most abject. Protectionists, on the other hand, although they sometimes contend in the teeth of facts that import duties would raise wages,¹ come no nearer grappling with the fundamental economic problem. That problem is, how shall industry be organised so as to secure to all the maximum of solid gain, measured not by money, but by the satisfaction of healthy human wants; and to solve such problem Free Trade requires to be supplemented. The Protectionist would abrogate it, would resort to a policy destructive or reductive of its benefits; the social reformer would aim, not at getting rid of the benefits, but at directing them to their proper destination. To promote this, it is necessary that, whilst no restrictions should be imposed on international trade, restrictions *should* be imposed on the exploitation of labour. The effect of industrial parasitism upon national efficiency and national welfare, and its bearing upon Free Trade, have been subjected to an incisive and lucid analysis by Mr and Mrs Sidney Webb in their

¹ The Board of Trade investigation into "British and Foreign Trade and Industry" (*Blue Book*, Cd. 1761 of 1903, p. 289) shows that the average weekly wages in fifteen skilled trades is; as to capital cities, in the United Kingdom 42s., in France 36s., and in Germany 24s.; and as to other cities and towns, in the United Kingdom 36s., in France 22s. 10d., and in Germany 22s. 6d.; and as the purchasing power in the foreign countries is less, real wages are still lower. It is a significant fact that the only Protectionist country in which even money

monumental work on "Industrial Democracy,"¹ and no Free Trader can afford to ignore it. "If the employers in a particular trade are able to take such advantage of the necessities of their work-people as to hire them for wages actually insufficient to provide enough food, clothing, and shelter to maintain them in average health; if they are able to work them for hours so long as to deprive them of adequate rest and recreation; or if they can subject them to conditions so dangerous or insanitary as positively to shorten their lives, that trade is clearly obtaining a supply of labour force which it does not pay for"; and the result is, as is demonstrated, the same as that of the old vicious subsidies or bounties known as a "rate in aid of wages." And under a Free Trade *régime*, combined with unrestricted "sweating," there will be a "rapid growth of particular exports which imply the extension within the country of its most highly subsidised or most parasitic industries." "Seen in this light, the proposal for the systematic enforcement, throughout each country, of its own National Minimum of education, sanitation, leisure and wages, becomes a necessary completion of the Free Trade policy; only by enforcing such a minimum on all its industries can a nation prevent the evil expansion of its parasitic trades being enormously aggravated by its international trade." Hence "the economists of the

wages are higher than in Great Britain is the United States—traceable to its great natural advantages—and there food is the one article that is cheap, for it is home-produced and not taxed. Wages do *not* rise with the price of food

¹ Note, page III, *supra*. See Vol. ii. Part iii. chap. iii. section (d) and Appendix ii.

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middle of the century only taught, and the Free Trade statesmen only learned, one-half of their lesson"; and what is requisite is, not to unlearn the half already learned, but to learn the other half.¹ Protection is no remedy for the evil. An import duty on the products of the sweated trades themselves would be practically inoperative, for they are not appreciably subject to the competition of foreign imports; and an import duty on other products would equally leave them scathless. So long as any trade is subsidised, by whatever means, it is able to appropriate more and more of the export trade; and what is requisite is, not to tax imports, but to abolish the subsidy. If Protection is an illusory remedy for imaginary ills, it is not less an illusory remedy for actual ills; it would make the former real and it would accentuate the latter. Free Trade is a benefactor, not a robber, but its benefactions are largely intercepted; and our aim should be, not to cut them off at their source, but to divert them into their legitimate channel. It is not "tariff reform," but industrial reform, that is needed.

Commercial Imperialism and Imperial Commercialism illustrate in a painful degree how it is possible for a country to neglect its highest interests in order to pursue a chimera. Empire is expanded in the fatuous belief that it benefits trade, and then it is proposed to restrict trade in the scarcely less fatuous belief that the restriction benefits Empire. Surely never did argument run in a more vicious circle

¹ See also Mr Webb's article on "The Policy of the National Minimum," *The Independent Review*, July 1904, p. 161.

or exhibit greater misapprehension of objects and methods or of causes and effects. Based upon a gross conception of the nature of wealth, ignoring the ultimate purpose of its production, regarding trade as an end rather than as a means, and measuring success by the quantity of goods disposed of and not by the quantity appropriately utilised, this theory proceeds to advocate the acquisition by physical force and at ruinous expenditure of new "dumping grounds," and when the dragooning process fails proceeds to offer bribes ; at every stage ignoring patent facts and running counter to economic laws, and presenting, on the whole, the most insidious plan which the ingenuity of a mischievous imp could devise for producing chaos, disaster, and national retrogression.

Imperialism primarily results in the destruction of the liberties of the conquered race, although, when conquered, self-government may sometimes be ultimately granted them ; there is a certain retributive justice in the fact that it imposes shackles on the conquering race. Unfortunately, however, the retribution is not so perfectly meted out as to amount to even-handed justice ; for it is generally visited most severely upon the dupes, whilst the schemers either escape or achieve a pernicious success ; and it is not easy to arouse the dupes, since, although they realise the suffering, the cause is not patent to them, and if it were, they alone are powerless to remove it. Only by bringing home to the nation as a whole the fact that Imperialism is not profitable—for if it were, morality has not yet sufficiently advanced to pronounce an effective veto—will its

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growth be arrested. The task is not a light one, for the economic factors are numerous and involved; and a partial survey or presentation readily leads to erroneous conclusions, so that plausible appeals to self-interest can be made. There are, however, not wanting signs that the actual truth is at length being realised, less by force of argument than by object lessons. Our latest Imperial enterprise, upon which we entered with such a light heart, has proved so costly and has so enormously added to our burdens as to be alone calculated to give us pause; and in his last desperate appeal to racial pride, the reckless gamester who has been so largely instrumental in squandering our treasure has overreached himself, for the logic of a dear loaf can be grasped by the meanest intellect. It may be that this will prove the one benignant episode in his sinister later career; and if so, it can only be said—would that it had come earlier.

Since the foregoing was in type the Board of Trade Returns for 1904 have been issued; and they indicate that this was a record year as regards external trade, exports (of home produce) being over 300 millions, and imports over 551 millions. As these figures are somewhat higher than those quoted at pages 97-8 (re-exports, however, remain at 70 millions) the calculations based on the latter call for corresponding variation, but this is very slight and the general conclusions are unaffected. The fact that this record year synchronizes with an increase in the ranks of the unemployed further illustrates the fallacy (see page 96) of gauging commercial prosperity principally by external trade, and emphasizes the need of a just appreciation of the rationale of trade (see pages 104-115 and 148-151).

IV

ECCLESIASTICISM AND IMPERIALISM

THE CHURCH MILITANT

AMONG the forces which make for Empire, the influence of the Church is so potent and so unique in character as to render it peculiarly conspicuous and to suggest special comment. Great Britain is a professedly Christian country ; her religion is "by law established" ; upon her national deliberations "the blessing of Almighty God" is periodically invoked. She maintains a huge hierarchy with the avowed object of proclaiming the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth ; in every village and in every corner of every town her sacerdotal servants are to be seen. Outside this State-appointed and State-controlled ecclesiastic body, but of not less national significance, are various other religious organisations, which equally exist for the presumed purpose of upholding the Christian faith and for promoting Christian life within the community ; and here again, in every village and every corner of every town the ministers of such organisations are found. No doubt, neither church nor chapel commands the adherence of vast numbers of the population, probably not of a majority ; and pathetic inquiries are frequently made as to why the masses exhibit absolute indiffer-

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ence to the rites of religion. But, whilst it is not within the scope of the present investigation to seek an answer to such inquiries (although incidentally some light may be thrown upon the subject) the substantial fact remains that we boast of being a Christian nation, and that the Church—using the term in its widest sense—wields a powerful sceptre and exercises an enormous influence. And the preponderance of that influence is exerted in the cause of Imperialism.

Now, to those who stand outside the Church, and yet have some conception of the teachings of Christ—possibly a conception which is clearer for the precise reason that they *are* outside the Church, and are not therefore bound by official interpretation or priestly dogma—and who at the same time have some conception of the nature of Imperialism, with its claim to supremacy, its spirit of aggression, its stifling of independence, and its promotion of alien rule; the fact that war and racial predominance command the countenance, and even the blessing, of the Church, is one of the most melancholy, and, on the surface, most inexplicable of phenomena. The burden of the teaching of Christ was the brotherhood of man, irrespective of race; Imperialism is the subjection of man, based on the distinction of race. The office of religion is to ennoble life; war is the wanton destruction of life. The mission of the Church is to subdue men's passions, to promote amity, to preach peace; the lust of power means the unbridling of passion, the fostering of hatred, and the worship of brute force. When, therefore, we witness professing Christians proclaiming the doctrine

of national supremacy, religion identifying itself with a crusade of slaughter, and the Church enthusiastically encouraging the vices of patriotism, we are face to face with what is apparently so gruesome an anomaly that it may well induce grave disquietude.

Obviously a Church which not only fails in its mission, but runs counter to it, instead of being an instrument for good is an instrument for evil—the community would be better without it. If it not only fails to ennoble and purify, but actually debases and makes gross, blank Agnosticism is infinitely preferable. For morality still remains ; and though this may not exercise its legitimate influence, men are at any rate in less danger of regarding immoral conduct as moral. But to an individual of religious convictions, such convictions are paramount to morality ; that is to say, if there is a conflict between religion and morality, religion carries the day ; he does not even realise that there is a conflict, for the reason that to him religion embodies the highest conceptions of morality. Thus, when the Church tells its faithful adherents that their country is engaged in a holy war—there is great virtue in the word “holy”—he feels perfectly satisfied. The patriotic bias generally induces men to regard as righteous any national enterprise in which their Government embarks ; but if they are left to the domain of pure ethics, they may be able to subdue this bias, and endeavour to look at the matter impartially and dispassionately. When, however, their religion is enlisted in the cause of aggression, and they are told by their accredited pastors that the Deity is on their side and that they have been

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chosen to fulfil his beneficent behests, they are only too happy to find their own predilections so comfortably confirmed. "Spiritual guides," therefore, when they are blind, inevitably lead their flocks into the mire; they are not simply useless but are pernicious.

The Church, whether or not it justifies in a spiritual sense its not uncommon designation of "militant," undoubtedly justifies it in a material sense. It has almost invariably defended the harsh and illogical arbitrament of the sword, and it has substantially contributed to the growth of the modern Imperialist spirit. If we look to its past history, we everywhere see that it has allied itself with physical force. It has approved of war, it has incited to war, it has waged war; and recent revelations show that its character is by no means changed. By so-called civilised nations, probably more human lives have been sacrificed and more cruelty has been practised, either in the name or with the sanction of religion or through the direct or indirect influence of sacerdotalism, than from any other cause; and the bayonet has always commanded the blessing of the pulpit. With regard to our latest gigantic Imperial enterprise, Mr Chamberlain proclaimed with satisfaction that the ministers of religion, those "gentlemen whose profession inclined them to peace, to whatever denomination they belonged,"¹ were heartily on the side of the Government; and although he alluded only to the clerics of South Africa, this was possibly because he thought it superfluous to remind his hearers of the attitude of the clerics of England.

¹ *Speech at Birmingham, May 11, 1900.*

In fact it seems that, so far from those who pose as the followers of the Prince of Peace being ardent opponents of war, they are actually more militant than the men who make no such profession; and that, whilst happily some exceptions may be found, it is not to the Church but to those outside its pale that we must look for ethical guidance in times of national passion—it is they who are the strongest advocates of a pacific policy. Says Tolstoy, "War will exist so long as we not only profess, but tolerate without anger and indignation, that distortion of Christianity which is called the Christian Church, and according to which such things are admissible as a Christ-loving army, the consecration of guns and the recognition of a Christian and righteous war."¹ The dictum of an extremist, it will be replied; the view of one who preaches the doctrine of non-resistance, who interprets literally the injunction to turn the other cheek when smitten on the one. Well, it is just possible the extremist is right, that the doctrine of "non-resistance," as it is termed (though it might, as has been pointed out,² be more accurately described as the doctrine of "moral resistance"), is taught in the Gospels, and that its injunctions were intended to mean what they apparently mean; but, however this may be, the dictum itself is certainly not far from the truth, for this much is clear that until the Church ceases either to exist or to countenance war, war there will be. That a moral justification for drawing the sword may

¹ *Letters on War*. Maldon, The Free Age Press, 1900, p. 7.

² By Mr G. H. Perris, *Life and Teaching of Leo Tolstoy*. London: Grant Richards, 1904, p. 25.

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sometimes (though not often) be established, at any rate so far as one of the belligerent parties is concerned, it is not necessary to dispute ; but for the vast majority of wars—and this is the verdict of history—no such justification can possibly be found. Yet the Church has supported such wars ; it is not that she has occasionally defended some particular war, not that she has acted in accordance with pure ethics and merely ignored the letter of the possibly stricter mandates of Christianity ; it is that she has almost always ranged herself on the popular side, that she has invariably been the advocate of *force majeure* ; and that where, quite apart from any question of religious duty, ethics has pronounced condemnation and history has confirmed it, she has, nevertheless, given her approval and her benediction. In a word she has ever been a Church militant in the literal interpretation of the term ; and whilst her Master proclaimed that his kingdom was not of this world, else would his servants fight, she has ever been ready to fight, or to exhort others to fight, for kingdom in this world.

Reflections such as the foregoing are not so likely to be aroused in times of peace, but they have been irresistibly provoked in the minds of many by the attitude of the Church towards Great Britain's recent Imperialist campaign in South Africa. In the subjugation of the Boers, the destruction of their independence, the annexation of their territory and the forcible expansion of the Empire, and in the "methods of barbarism" by which these results have been achieved, Ecclesiasticism has materially

"aided and abetted"; and once more we have had promulgated the doctrine, *vox populi, vox Dei*. Patriotism has been preached as the "duty of the hour," as though (assuming it to be a duty) that duty was not sufficiently congenial to prevent any risk of its being neglected. In the English nation it has been discovered that there exists the modern Israel, called of God—that is to say, the Church's tribal Deity—for a special purpose. We were justified, said one priestly oracle, in invoking the blessing of the Most High on the English arms, and, to use the magnificent imagery of the Hebrew prophet, in speaking of the sword of England as 'bathed in heaven,' to carry out the work entrusted to the Anglo-Saxon race. A worthy Canon, to whom the Deity had apparently made a special revelation, informed us that a war which prevented this country being broken to pieces, and made it a great nation, was God's scourge. A still higher dignitary expressed the pious belief that by our praying and fighting we were spreading His precious gift of good government throughout the world. The war, we were informed by another confident prelate, was waged in the eternal interests of justice and truth, and was a blow at the tyrant, the oppressor, and the murderer. In picturesque language we were told by yet another reverend gentleman that we must strike for life and honour such a blow as should make all Boerdom reel, and that Oom Paul would "swim through seas of blood upon his belly, psalm-singing with every stomach-stroke, and not the least bit off colour all the while." Then the Nonconformist pulpit chimed in, amidst the loud

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applause of a delighted congregation, with the intimation that those who wished to stop the war were either imbeciles or traitors, imbeciles if they thought it could be stopped, traitors if they thought it ought to be stopped. From other inspired sources we learned that the Boers were a brutal and degraded race; that they were utterly devoid of truthfulness, honour or honesty; that they had a lower conception of the character of God and a lower interpretation of his word; that we were fighting for higher ideals, which were breathed by the Holy Ghost; and that from the bottom of our hearts we could invoke the blessing of Almighty God on our arms. Were attempts made to bring some of these bellicose clerics back to the teachings of Christ by sending them peace literature, the response was, for example, "I regard you as one of the greatest enemies of your country, and I shall ever pray that Almighty God will punish you both here and hereafter"; or, "Your effusions brand you as a traitor to your country, and while they ought to be burned, you ought to be shot or imprisoned for life."¹ And finally—no not finally, for the sorry utterance was made at a comparatively early stage of the war, when we fatuously thought we had conquered—it was confidently proclaimed that all was for the best in the best of all possible worlds, and that Jehovah had triumphed, his people were free.

Quotations might be multiplied *ad nauseam*, but sufficient indication has been given of the attitude and spirit of the "ambassadors of Christ" at a period when the nation was demoniacally possessed,

¹ Letters to Mr W. T. Stead.

and when all the forces of evil were in the ascendancy. There were honourable and noteworthy exceptions; there were not wanting men who resisted the popular passion, who fought against it—in some cases amidst contumely and scorn and at great personal sacrifice—and who even, with diminishing following or compulsory resignation of their pulpits, effected enough good to demonstrate what a potent instrument for righteousness the Church might have proved if it had only been true to its profession. But the vast majority of those whose sacred duty it is to preach peace on earth and good-will to man, were either openly and enthusiastically ranging themselves on the side of war on earth and ill-will to man, or else preserving that pitiful silence which gave consent.

The phenomenon might have been less striking, though sufficiently painful, if it had been confined to the clergy of the Established Church. For it is one of the incongruities of such an organisation that its officials owe a divided allegiance. A monopolist Church, a Church buttressed by the State, possessing special privileges and supported by State revenues, is impelled to approve a State war and to countenance State interposition in the interests of monopoly and privilege; and if the State embarks in war—well, it is the business of such a Church to demonstrate that the war is holy. At any rate, judging from its past history, it is vain to look to the Establishment to stem the tide of popular passion, or to range itself on the side of the victims of oppression. Through all the long centuries it has been a persecuting body, guilty of the most flagrant cruelty when it had the power, and invariably

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using its influence in the cause of despotism; in every crisis in the growth of English liberties, to quote Mr Morley (and he might have added, in the foreign struggle for freedom from English domination), the one when its own purse and privilege were threatened alone excepted, it has been the ally of tyranny, the organ of social oppression, and the champion of intellectual bondage.¹ These facts alone pronounce the most scathing condemnation, from the religious point of view, of the unnatural union between Church and State; and had the clerical stimulus to aggressive Imperialism been confined to the episcopal pulpits, it would have been a striking object lesson which might have considerably accelerated the advent of disestablishment. But the opportunity was lost; the Non-conformist pulpits were scarcely less belligerent, the doctrine of racial supremacy was not less confidently proclaimed; and the very men who had identified themselves with the cause of domestic liberty became supporters of the cause of alien coercion; the very men who gloried in their own independence, and in their country's independence, joined in depriving other men and another country of an independence not less highly prized. A furious wave of patriotism burst over the land—as it always does in time of war—and submerged the Church and conventicle alike.

But it may be urged—it has been urged—that the clergy are as much entitled to their opinions

¹ *The Struggle for National Education.* London: Chapman & Hall, 1873, p. 3.

as the laity; that they merely shared the common belief as to the war being righteous; that they conscientiously held that belief; and that they cannot, therefore, be censured even if the belief were erroneous. Such a contention, however, not only fails to recognise that the moral justification for an opinion depends upon how it is arrived at, but ignores the peculiar responsibility which attaches to the clergy. The tendency for most men is to jump to conclusions, especially if they are conclusions which are palatable; it avails them little to say that they are conscientious if they have shirked the labour of investigation, or have allowed themselves to be swayed by prejudice. And whilst we may properly condemn the ordinary man for the looseness and partiality with which he forms his opinions, the condemnation must fall far more heavily upon public teachers who exhibit similar characteristics, more especially when they claim to be ethical teachers and the opinions in question relate to questions of conduct. Ministers of the Gospel have a special obligation imposed upon them. They have chosen of their own free will to become the exponents of the Christian religion, to make it their endeavour to follow the teachings of Christ, to labour to induce other men to obey the injunctions of Christ. They have taken upon themselves the onerous duty of seeking to lead their fellows into higher channels; they claim to be ethical specialists who devote themselves to the study of conduct. If, therefore, they are simply to be judged by the same standard as the average individual, who does not profess to be "converted," still

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less to aim at converting others, and who may even repudiate Christianity altogether, their *raison d'être* disappears. We do not exonerate a doctor for unskilful treatment because the patient could not have done better himself; we do not acquit a lawyer of negligence because his client is a fool. And if the clergy, notwithstanding their "saintly office"—and none appear to attach more importance to it than they themselves do—are to appeal merely to the criterion which the "unregenerate" man recognises, then we may well ask for what object the pulpit exists. It is perfectly true that in matters of conduct every one ought to be a law unto himself, that the responsibility is imposed upon all of honestly and carefully arriving at convictions and of acting in accordance with them. As a matter of fact, however, very few make that scrupulous analysis of belief and conduct which they should make; impulse and inclination lead men astray; but it is precisely at a time when a whole nation is acting on impulse and in accordance with inclination that its public teachers should step in to admonish and rebuke. No doubt the vast majority of those who supported the South African War, and of those who are imbued with the spirit of Imperialism, thought the war was righteous and believe that it is a grand thing to extend British supremacy; and the gravamen of the charge against the clergy is, not that they hypocritically profess the popular belief, but that they, in fact, share such belief; that whenever the nation embarks on an immoral or disastrous enterprise—and nothing can be more immoral or disastrous than war—they are always able to

discover a justification for such enterprise because it is national.

War as a rule stands condemned by ethics, and *à fortiori* by Christianity; but whilst that condemnation finds pronouncement in the pulpit as an abstract proposition in times of peace, let a responsible Government but once threaten or engage in hostilities, and it will be supported by the Church. The general populace is easily persuaded that when their country quarrels with another, their country is right; there is a natural bias in that direction, and this bias is almost always stimulated by falsehood and distortion of facts, by unwarranted deductions from premises whether true or false, by blinding the eyes to the drastic nature of a remedy which is generally worse than the disease (where the latter exists), by appeals to passion and prejudice, and by the fostering of the spirit of hatred and uncharitableness. And no more formidable indictment can be brought against the clergy than to say that they, too, exemplify these common vices, frequently in an intensified form; and, above all, that they publicly encourage them and give to them the sanction of religion and the impress of divine authority. They of all men ought to make it their one strenuous effort to free themselves from bias, to examine into facts and give credence to nothing calculated to provoke war which is not irrefutably established, to make their deductions rationally and dispassionately, to exhibit a due sense of proportion, to realise that a drastic remedy can never be justified save for the most desperate disease, to discountenance appeals to passion and prejudice, and to sternly

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rebuke the spirit of hatred and uncharitableness. And it is because the bulk of them have once again failed in this obvious duty, and sunk to the level of the impetuous and unreflecting populace whom their special mission is to aim at uplifting, that they have demonstrated anew what a miserable failure is the so-called Christian Church, or rather what a sinister success it achieves in the promotion of anti-Christian sentiments. Insincere or hypocritical they were not; would that it were left to insincerity and hypocrisy to foster and support an aggressive war, for mankind is fortunately not so largely permeated with these vices that they can be considered dominant characteristics. The priests of the Inquisition, for aught we know, were honest in their profession that bodily torture was instrumental in saving souls; and more cruelty has been perpetrated by fanaticism than by deliberate malice. Indeed, the recognition of a debased standard of morality is calculated to result in far greater evil than the failure rigidly to adhere to an exalted standard.

“His honour rooted in dishonour stood,
And faith unfaithful kept him falsely true.”

To be falsely true—to what demoralisation does it not lead! To be falsely true to the belief that the universal Father has appointed some of his children to shoot down others of his children, and authorises one imperfect fallible human being to act as an avenging scourge towards another imperfect fallible human being; to be falsely true to the belief that racial supremacy and despotic rule are noble things to strive for, and that peace, prosperity, and happi-

ness are promoted by war, devastation, and misery; to be falsely true to the belief that our little systems are so vastly superior to other little systems as to make it righteous and Christian to extend ours by destroying those; to be falsely true to the belief that the liberty, independence, and autonomy, which we so highly prize, and an attack upon which we should resent to the death, can be legitimately stamped out when attaching to another race, whose men, women and children will die ere they submit; to be falsely true to the belief that it is wrong for a foreigner to do what it is right for an Englishman to do, and that vice is condoned if it is thought that virtue will result; to be falsely true to the belief that the religion of love and the gospel of brotherhood marks with its approval the fulminations of hatred and a fratricidal crusade, and that the life and death of the "meek and lowly one," who suffered martyrdom for humanity, can be invoked in defence of a spirit of arrogance and vainglory and of the martyrdom of others; to be falsely true to the belief that ethics approves of immorality doing its worst in the name of morality, and that Christianity countenances everything that is un-Christlike—this it is which drags us down to the lowest depths of ignominy, and almost suggests whether it were not better that we had no moral faculty whatsoever. To man is given the power to distinguish between right and wrong; at his best he struggles nobly, if intermittently and painfully, to attain to high ideals; at his worst he forsakes all ideals, and does what he knows to be wrong; but he never presents a more sorry spectacle than when, through the

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eclipse of reason by passion or through the perversion of judgment by prejudice, he fails to distinguish between right and wrong, and by the creation of a false ideal actually deludes himself into the belief that wrong is right.

THE CHURCH'S APOLOGIA

Of course, however, the clergy would vehemently, and no doubt indignantly, repudiate any suggestion of apostasy. They would scout the idea that they had acted inconsistently with their religious profession, or had mistaken wrong for right; they would deny that their opinions had been hastily formed without impartial investigation, or that their judgment had been perverted by prejudice or passion; and they would claim that they had been guided alike by reason, religion, and morals. And in justification of this they would assert, not merely that they believe Imperialism makes for the welfare of humanity, but that they have solid grounds for their belief; not merely that they consider a particular war to be righteous, but that it can be demonstrated to be righteous.

We must, therefore, bring this matter to the test of actual facts and of dry logic. Let it be investigated in the light of recent events and of the modern Imperialist spirit; for it is such events, and the evidence they afford of the growth of such spirit, which has prompted to this examination; and although the attitude of Ecclesiasticism in the past has been the same as it is to-day, the investigation can reasonably be limited—and even then it is tolerably

wide—to the justification it is sought to establish for the support given to the South African Imperial diplomacy and the South African Imperial war.

The Christian Church has once again been on its trial; it has joined in painting the map red; it has given its countenance to the expansion of the Empire by means of the destruction of two free Republics; and it is entitled to be heard in its own defence. Further, it can fairly demand that it shall be heard at its best; that it shall not be judged merely by detached utterances or rhetorical flourishes, such as have already been quoted; but that the most sober, dispassionate and exegetical apologia that can be found should be chosen for examination.

These various requirements seem to be most nearly met if the published volume of sermons by the Rev. Bernard Snell, M.A., B.Sc.¹ be taken as embodying the case for the War and for Imperialism from the point of view of the Christian Church. Of course it may be argued that each pulpit speaks only for itself, and that it is open to others to disown the utterances or to regard them as inadequate. The contention, however, is, at any rate broadly speaking, not admissible; for when a man of position speaks from a common platform and in the exposition of a common cause, others who occupy the same platform and advocate the same cause are more or less involved; and whilst mere community of interest and purpose does not bind all to every argument or opinion formulated by each, it can at least be assumed that accord exists as to leading principles laid down.

¹ *Sermons on the Boer War.* By the Rev. Bernard Snell. London: James Clark and Co. 1902.

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In any case, all that the critic can do, beyond referring to the prevailing general sentiment and tone, is to select for investigation the best detailed exposition he can find; and this particular one commends itself for a variety of reasons. In the first place, the volume consists of not less than five sermons, preached at intervals before and during the war, all specially devoted to the particular subject; and it is in this respect probably unique. In the second place, the fact that the sermons were collected and published indicates that they represent mature convictions and are intended to appeal, not merely to a particular congregation, but to the public at large. In the third place, they emanated from a Nonconformist pulpit, and are therefore the pronouncements, not of a State but of a free cleric; an examination of the case in the light of Christianity, not as "by law established" or as presented by Convocation, but as subject to no such restraint, and as interpreted by the individual conscience. In the fourth place, their author is a politician of advanced views who has laboured strenuously in the cause of progress, and cannot therefore be said to have any traditional sympathy with or predilection for a Conservative government. In the fifth place, he is a man of scholarly attainments, of high reputation, and of widespread influence. And lastly, he speaks with obvious sincerity and earnestness, and with certainly a minimum of that inflammatory rhetoric which has characterised some pulpit utterances and gained for them the applause of the congregations. It is extremely doubtful, therefore, whether any selection could be made which would do, even approximately,

the same amount of justice to the Church ; and it may not unfairly be suggested that if this apologia does not disclose an unanswerable case for the war from the Christian standpoint, such a case cannot be established.

The volume has a curious little preface, which leads at the outset to the suspicion that the author's customary ratiocinative power will not be strongly in evidence. He tells us it has seemed to him expedient that those who have lost relatives and friends should have the advantage of knowing that their countrymen who occupy pulpits are not without a sense of sympathy with them in their loss, and that they have spoken out their minds frankly to their congregations in the assurance that those lives have not been laid down in vain nor for an unrighteous cause. There seems a twofold suggestion in this statement, namely, that sympathy with the bereaved can be entertained either only or more fully by those who share the opinions of the preacher with regard to the war, and that there is some intimate connection between the duty of a soldier and the righteousness of the cause for which he is called upon to fight. The author would, probably, not be prepared to commit himself to these propositions in express terms ; but unless he is, his observation is pointless. He knows full well that sympathy with the bereaved was common to practically all men ; and it might not unreasonably have occurred to him that that sympathy would be more intense on the part of those who regarded the war as unnecessary and unrighteous, and who therefore felt that the lives need not have

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been laid down, than on the part of those who felt that the sacrifice was being made for a great end. And he also knows full well that the soldier, having once enlisted, has no choice but to obey orders, and would not be allowed to judge, even if he had the means of judging, as to the righteousness of the cause (whether or not he is justified in thus unconditionally surrendering the right of private judgment is, of course, another question), and that the responsibility for war rests upon those who make and support it. One cannot suppose that this Christian minister had no, or less, sympathy with the Boer widows and orphans, or that because he presumably thought the Boer cause an unrighteous one he had nothing but blame for the men who were fighting for their independence; and there is no doubt he would repudiate this not altogether unnatural inference from his observations. The fact seems to be that these very opening remarks indicate bias, foster bias, and appeal to bias; and by a *suggestio falsi*, of which the author is evidently quite unconscious, tend to obscure the real issue and to prejudge the question to be determined.) here

As we proceed with the sermons bias becomes more manifest, and takes the distinct form of racial prejudice and racial pride, colouring the argument and investing it with a specious sophistry. Let a few illustrations be cited:

“I am afraid that I have too little sympathy with those anæmic people whose one political axiom appears to be that whatever is British is wrong, to do them justice in characterising their attitude.”

“Do let us have a little more self-respect and respect for

our so dearly beloved country than to fling around cheap accusations of evil intent. I believe in my fellow-countrymen, and am jealous of the good name of my people."

"I need no convincing that in the maintenance of our Empire are involved the interests of peace, justice and humanity to hundreds of millions of human beings."

"It is true that Israel had a mission. So has England a mission."

"All the vagabonds of the world are against us—all the extremists, the absolutists no less than the revolutionaries."

"After all, it matters less to us what the outside world says, seeing that our own family is staunch. Our own people understand. By instinct they felt that we were right, and they stood beside us in our need."

Now what is all this but throwing dust in the eyes of the people ; patriotic dust which has got into the preacher's eyes, and with which he and his congregation alike no doubt enjoyed being partially blinded ? It is tolerably safe to say he never met the anæmics to whom he refers, and if he did they are certainly entitled to justice—especially as to assert that whatever is British is wrong is, whilst not more stupid and arrogant, less mischievous than to assert that whatever is British is right. Presumably the individuals he had in his mind were not the mythical personages to whom he refers, but the men who thought that their country was more or less responsible for the war ; in which case he would have to include such men as the Bishop of Hereford, Dr Clifford, Mr Herbert Spencer, Mr Frederic Harrison, and many other "anæmics" of eminence who could be named. Respect for one's country, and jealousy for its good name, are no doubt admirable qualities ; and it so happens they are shared in even by wicked

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pro-Boers, and partly impelled them to their ineffectual efforts to prevent what they regarded as a national crime; but such qualities are strangely perverted if they induce the belief that one's own nation cannot possibly commit a crime. As to the maintenance of our Empire in the interests of peace, justice and humanity, this raises the vast question which is elsewhere discussed,¹ as to whether alien rule is consistent with such interests; and the only observation which need here be made is that the substantial issue was whether the Empire should be forcibly extended, and that by means of a war which seemed to some to involve injustice and not a little inhumanity. The comparison of England to Israel with its "mission" was, of course, inevitable in any sermon in defence of Imperialism; but to those who assert a divine mandate for their actions the short reply is a challenge to establish a dictum which strikes at the very root of morality by shifting responsibility on to a super-mundane Power. To intimate that all the vagabonds of the world were against us, including extremists and absolutists, seems rather unkind to our friend the Sultan of Turkey; but whilst the observation is calculated to foster prejudice, there is a great deal of truth in it, seeing that a great part of the civilised world (which unfortunately contains some vagabonds) was against us, with the exception of men of our own race. Opinions may differ as to whether or not this matters, but the naïve statement that our own people "by instinct felt we were right" introduces a kind of canine standard of morality which clearly

¹ See Articles I. and V.

removes the question from the region of conventional ethics.

Of course, this strong patriotic bias produces its characteristic and natural results when the facts come to be dealt with. If we start, whether consciously or unconsciously, with a conviction that we are in the right, the inevitable tendency is to overlook what would tell against us, and to discover what would tell in our favour. Throughout these sermons there is not the slightest attempt to regard the matter from the Boer point of view; we get no hint of their case beyond a casual reference, such as that it was said by some the Boers were but defending their homes, and that they were struggling for independence ("fatally wrecked by their own stupidity"!), although allusions to them as "a people essentially pacific and religious," and as doubtless having "fine qualities" and with "better stuff than the wasp's sting in their character," are calculated to suggest that after all they might have had a case. On the other hand, no difficulty is experienced in conscientiously finding premises for the conclusion that our action was justified, even down to the final stage of annexation and the destruction of independence. By failing to ascertain facts and giving credence to fictions, the most honest investigator will be led astray.

The contentions—if the attempt to weed them out and summarise them has been successful—resolve themselves into these: that England was fighting (1) to relieve her sons from grave oppression, (2) in self-defence, and (3) to prevent slavery. Of course, if these contentions were valid, an unanswer-

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able plea for the war, at any rate up to the point of ensuring the desired results, would be established; but there is scarcely a vestige of evidence called in support of them, and the absence of any reference to the rebutting evidence seems to indicate that our author simply shared the popular belief, without making full independent research to ascertain whether it was well founded or was not born and fostered of ignorance, pride, and passion.

Let us examine the contentions in detail.

With regard to oppression, we are told that the position of our kinsmen was intolerable, that no Englishman can permanently suffer the treatment meted out to pariahs, that our children were the prey of the stranger, that it is the duty of our Empire to protect its subjects, that we determined to end the wrongs of the Outlanders, and that war in destruction of oppression is approved by the universal conscience. Why the position was intolerable, who were the pariahs, in what the prey consisted, and what were the wrongs of the Outlanders, are, however, as difficult to discover as Lord Milner's historic "helots." Not a single fact is adduced in support of these grave allegations, not a suggestion offered that any answer to them had ever been made. No doubt it would be said that the grievances of the Outlanders were notorious, but there is a blissful unconsciousness of any obligation to ascertain whether such alleged grievances were fictitious or not, and whether, if real, they were of so terrible a nature as to justify a prolonged war and the ultimate destruction of two Republics. Probably no one now believes in Lord Milner's bogie

“helots,” or in Mr Snell’s bogie “pariahs” ; but even at the time there was ample evidence, for those who chose to investigate impartially, to have effectually destroyed these bogies. Let a few facts be quoted ; as, for example ; that Captain March Phillips, who lived and worked among the Outlanders (many of whom Mr Snell himself describes in terms of scathing contempt and condemnation), and who fought with the British, has intimated the grievances were a most useful invention which had a hand in the making of many fortunes, and the London newspapers were read with roars of laughter to find out what these precious grievances were ;¹ that Mr E. B. Rose, formerly president of the Witwatersrand Mine Employés’ and Mechanics’ Union, has declared that after twelve years’ residence in the Transvaal he

¹ *With Rimington* (London : Edward Arnold. 1902), pp. 105-6. It may not be uninteresting to quote in full Captain Phillips’ observations on the subject : “As for the Uitlanders and their grievances, I would not ride a yard or fire a shot to right all the grievances that were ever invented. The mass of the Uitlanders (*i.e.* the miners and working men of the Rand) had no grievances. I know what I am talking about, for I have lived and worked among them. I have seen English newspapers passed from one to another, and roars of laughter raised by the *Times*’ telegrams about these precious grievances. We used to read the London papers to find out *what our grievances were* ; and very frequently they would be due to causes of which we had never even heard. I never met one miner or working man who would have walked a mile to pick the vote up off the road, and I have known and talked with scores and hundreds. And no man who knows the Rand will deny the truth of what I tell you. No ; but the Uitlanders the world has heard of were not these, but the Stock Exchange operators, manipulators of the money market, company floaters, and gamblers generally, a large percentage of them Jews. They voiced Johannesburg, had the Press in their hands, worked the wires and controlled and arranged what sort of information should reach England. As for the grievances, they were a most useful invention, and have had a hand in the making of many fortunes. It was by these that a feeling of in-

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returned to England without a grievance ;¹ that the testimony of the miners (who formed the bulk of the "Outlanders") shows that they had no complaint against the Boer Government, and were never so well off in their lives ; that when the celebrated petition to the late Queen (the methods of obtaining signatures to which have long since been disclosed) was sent in, a counter-petition with a larger number (23,000) of signatures of Outlanders of various nationalities, including British, was addressed to the Government of the Republic, expressing perfect satisfaction with that Government and its administration ; that although the Outlanders were of all nationalities, not a single Government other than the British, even made diplomatic representation with regard to the alleged grievances ; and that several thousand Outlanders had such a curious sense of their wrongs that they actually fought for the Boers.

security was introduced into the market, which would otherwise have remained always steady ; it was by these that the necessary periodic slump was brought about. When the proper time came, "grievances," such as would arrest England's attention and catch the ear of the people were *deliberately invented* ; stories, again, were deliberately invented of the excitement, panic, and incipient revolution of Johannesburg, and by these means was introduced that feeling of insecurity I have spoken of, which was necessary to lower prices."

¹ Mr Rose, after a detailed *exposé*, writes : " I could take every one of the numerous grievances which we Uitlanders were alleged to be suffering under, and could show in much the same way how hollow were the pretences, how flimsy were the grievances which had any basis at all in fact, and how in the main these so-called grievances were simply part and parcel of the crusade of calumny upon the Boers, having for its object eventual British intervention and destruction of Boer independence, an object which has now only too successfully been accomplished."—*The Truth about the Transvaal*. (Footnote, p. 73), p. 154.

It has often been said that taxation was oppressive, but we have never been told what distinction in this respect was made between Boer and Outlander; and, as an actual fact, the taxation compared most favourably as regards amount with any other mining State, whilst the incidence was sound, since the mine-owners paid more for the simple reason that they were the more wealthy and were drawing a large revenue from the State. Ah! but it was taxation without representation. Even so, where is the justification to be found for rushing a Government into granting representation to aliens who voluntarily take up their residence for their own purposes, and simply for what they can get out of the country, without otherwise exhibiting the slightest interest in its welfare; and especially when they are so numerous that to do so might (as Mr Chamberlain pointed out¹) result in the extinction of that Government? And, above all, does it constitute a legitimate grievance that the franchise is refused to men who are unwilling to renounce their foreign allegiance or to assume the responsibilities of citizenship?

“If the Boers,” we are told, “had given a solitary sign that they would treat our settlers as their kindred are treated at the Cape, peace would have been certain, for no Minister of the Queen could have persuaded his colleagues to decree war.” Well, their kindred at the Cape have been treated as rebels, that is to say, as men who were subject to the Government under which they lived; it was not permitted to them to plead a divided allegiance; and amongst other penalties they have suffered

¹ *Speech in the House of Commons*, February 13, 1896.

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disfranchisement—with the result that the hero of the Raid is now Prime Minister of Cape Colony. But was ever a more fatal doctrine preached? Peace would have been *certain* if the particular treatment accorded to the Cape Dutch had been accorded to the Transvaal English; so that the case for war is made to rest on the bare circumstance that a foreign nation did not choose to adopt our particular *régime*.¹ As a matter of fact, in England no alien can claim the franchise as of right; he can apply for it after five years' residence, but the Secretary of State has an absolute discretion as to granting or withholding it, without assigning any reason.² The point, however, is not whether the Boer Government compared unfavourably or favourably with ours—as to which something more hereafter³—but that the simple existence of a difference is seriously regarded as a justification for the destruction of that Government. Moreover, the fact that we had distinctly agreed by Convention to abandon all claim to interfere in the internal affairs of the Transvaal is absolutely ignored—obligations undertaken by us evidently do not count—and even had no such agreement been made, the exponent of this remarkable doctrine may be challenged to cite any principle of international law by which one nation is entitled to dictate to another as regards its franchise or its fiscal policy. Opinions may differ as to the wisdom or expediency of some of the

¹ With some apparent inconsistency, however, it is elsewhere stated that but for the invasion of Natal, English opinion would never have tolerated the war.

² See *Naturalisation Act*, 1870, sec. 7.

³ See footnote, page 206.

Transvaal laws (as they do with regard to British laws), but the onus is upon those who assert "intolerable oppression" to prove, both that oppression existed, and that it was so intolerable as to justify recourse to arms; and had this preliminary duty only been realised and its performance attempted, it is more than doubtful whether this particular defence of the war would ever have been put forward.

The next contention elicited is that we were fighting in self-defence—"war became a necessity, imposed by the inexorable law of self-preservation." Doubtless there is no gainsaying this law, nor are there many who will challenge the proposition (somewhat elaborately urged) that defence is a duty; and if it could only be shown that the case came within this law and that the duty had arisen, there would be nothing more to be said on the subject. The marvel, however, is that it is not seen what a two-edged weapon is being brandished, and that the very justification of the Boers consisted in the fact that they foresaw all too clearly they were threatened with the deprivation of their liberty, the loss of their territory, and the destruction of their independence. To any one who could seriously maintain that our own action was traceable to the inexorable law of self-preservation, it should surely have been additionally evident that the very doctrine enunciated can never be more operative than when submission involves national extinction; and further, that, when a war is originally defensive, it can be converted into an aggressive one.

Of course the crucial question that is here raised

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is as to the origin of the war; and this is calmly ascribed to the Boer ultimatum. It is true there is some indication of knowledge that this was not the first act of the grim drama; there is a passing reference to the Raid as a "deplorable mistake" and an "unprincipled procedure" (one wonders if this description would have been found adequate had the position been reversed), and there is even an admission of failure to appreciate some of the steps of the controversy; but we are told that there is no need to unravel the tangled skein, for the Boers cut through all controversy by their utterly unexpected ultimatum and immediate invasion of our Colony. This, it is evidently considered, cleaned the slate; all previous records are sponged out, and there is not the slightest apprehension that the vital issue is whether these records did not indubitably point to war, and whether the Boers did not and were not obliged to issue their ultimatum in pursuance of the inexorable law of self-preservation and in the performance of the sacred duty of self-defence. There seems, however, to have crept in some lingering doubt as to whether the case did not require an additional buttress; and we are informed that the contest was precipitated by the imprudent dreaming of our opponents that they might drive us from the land, and that their aspiration for years had been to extrude us from South Africa and secure the ascendancy of the Dutch race.¹ Not a scrap of

¹ Mr Snell does not favour the term "conspiracy," so that theory need not be combated; but any reader who still doubts the truth of Mr Bryce's statement that the much-advertised Dutch conspiracy to expel British power from South Africa was a baseless fable is recommended to read Captain March Phillips' *With Rimington*, chap. xvi.

evidence is called in support of these "cheap accusations of evil intent," no doubt for the very adequate reason that evidence as to dreams and aspirations is not very readily obtainable, and if obtained is not of much value, seeing that phenomena of this description have not yet been penalised. As to the ultimatum itself, we are told that it was the last insult from a little Republic which owed its existence to us; but we get no clue to what were the previous insults, or why the Republic should be chastised by a big State for being "little"; and apparently the circumstance that it had an independent existence before it was annexed by us in 1877 was unknown or forgotten.

It is indeed upon the ultimatum that the whole case is made to hang; the basis of this theory of self-defence is that the Boers struck the first blow; they had, it is stated, prepared themselves for the eventuality, they had accumulated tremendous war-material for this one only purpose, and when they were conscious of a magnificent military strength they chose the moment and "raided" our Colonies. Of the fact that they had as much right as any other nation to accumulate war material; that after the Jameson Raid, and more especially after the Report of the English House of Commons and the public whitewashing of Mr Rhodes by the Colonial Secretary, they were in doing so only acting as any prudent nation would do, in recognition of the inexorable law of self-preservation; that the moment they chose was not selected until they had for months made bootless efforts to preserve peace, by offering concessions we had not a vestige of right to demand,

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and far beyond anything short of the greatest anxiety to prevent hostilities would have prompted, only to be met by threats, and eventually by a despatch withdrawing all proposals (accurately described by a Tory newspaper as the English ultimatum—to an actual “ultimatum,” Sir Conan Doyle intimates, “our Government was cautiously and patiently leading up,”¹) by the concentration of troops on their frontier, the shipment of strong reinforcements from India, the mobilisation of the reserves, the organisation of an army corps, and other warlike preparations—of all these things we get not the slightest hint. Dr Karl Blind (who will scarcely be regarded as one of the “vagabonds” or “extremists,” especially as he has always been friendly to England) has tersely and forcibly put the case when he says:

“You drive a man, forsooth, into a corner; you hold your fist before his face; you threaten him by saying that the sand of the hour-glass is running out, and that, unless he makes haste to kneel down, you will use other measures against him; you hold your sword and gun ready to attack him, and then, when he strikes a blow, *he* is, of course, the guilty party!”²

What the actual attitude of the English Government was has since been revealed to us by Lord Lansdowne, when he stated³ that in June 1899 (four months before the Boer ultimatum) Lord Wolseley wished to mobilise an army corps, and suggested the occupation of Delagoa Bay; that he pressed those measures upon the Government with an expression of his desire that the operations might

¹ *The Great Boer War*. London: Smith, Elder & Co. 1902, p. 78.

² *North American Review*, December 1899, p. 765.

³ *Speech in the House of Lords*, March 15, 1901.

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begin as soon as possible, in order that they might get the war over before November; but that, although the idea of forcing the pace in such a manner as to complete the subjugation of the two Republics (poor Orange Free State—what had it done?) by then did not commend itself to the Government, let it not be supposed that all this time they were sitting with their hands folded; they did not contemptuously brush on one side the advice given to them by their recognised military advisers; their policy was a policy of peace and not of provocation; they earnestly desired to have the country with them, and believed the country was not ready for war in the months of June and July 1899, and they therefore contented themselves with taking those measures they were advised were sufficient to ensure the safety of the Colonies in the meanwhile. Of course, the preacher is not to blame that, speaking as he did prior to this revelation, he failed to discover the actual mind of the Government or their military advisers; but it might have occurred to him that the war was the direct outcome of our arrogant demands and bellicose diplomacy. One Government organ, haunted long afterwards by the nightmare that we were threatened with the loss of South Africa, has intimated that had a Liberal Ministry been in power “the war would not have been begun at all” (there is the gracious qualification, “or it would have been ended with a worse Majuba”)¹; and the admission seems a somewhat tardy recognition of the fact that the responsibility for hostilities lay with Great Britain.

¹ The *Standard*, March 18, 1903.

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Perhaps, however, it is the persistent demand of the Boers for arbitration which makes us marvel most at the evolution from the miasma of hypothetical dreams and aspirations of this theory that "our position in South Africa was assailed." Arbitration is not the creed of conspirators; and in continuously (almost piteously), from the time of the Bloemfontein Conference to the ultimatum, urging this mode of settling all differences, the Boers, had they desired to extrude us from South Africa, or to secure the ascendancy of the Dutch race, could not have taken any course more fatal to that object. Yet throughout these sermons, the one solitary indication that their author was aware of this absolute answer to his indictment is the bland (and in this connection, irrelevant) statement to the effect that he was unable to see "arbitration was more admissible than it was when Abraham Lincoln declared that he could not admit the existence of the Union to be a subject for arbitration"—whilst the men who from the first vainly looked to us to act in the spirit of the Convention we had recently signed at the Hague are calmly told that "if they had been bent on peace, they might easily have had it." And this taunt (which sounds very much like adding insult to injury) emanates from one who quotes with approval the statement that the great triumph of civilisation has been the substitution of judicial determination for the cold, cruel, crude arbitrament of war, and who actually concludes one of the sermons with the following apt appreciation of Christianity:—

"Do not be judge, advocate, jury and executioner in one. Refer it to impartial equity to decide. Be patient

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under injury. Rather suffer wrong than do wrong. That is the spirit of Christ's teaching and of Christ's life."

good. | The remaining contention is that we were fighting to prevent slavery; and the first observation to be made as to this is that of all the demands we presented to the Transvaal Government not one of them had reference to an amelioration of the condition of the natives. The plea is a belated one, put forward by many after hostilities had commenced, and eagerly seized upon by devout individuals who perhaps felt a little shaky as to the other pleas; but even if it had been based upon fact it would have been invalid as a justification for a war brought about by totally different causes. Still, to rescue the natives from tyranny is a noble thing; and if the war, however it originated, had been attended with that result, it would at least have been a mitigating feature. But even this consolation is denied us; the allegation no more squares with the facts than do those pleas already examined.

MS. |

W. | We are told that the conflict was one between two opposing ideals, the English ideal which includes no slavery, as opposed to the Boer ideal which is for racial supremacy—that they are for privilege and we are for equality. This, in part, is a peculiar inversion of the truth, for racial supremacy is the one thing for which we fought. It was laid down as indisputable that we must be the dominant Power in South Africa; this was the one reason assigned for annexation; and the establishment of British rule was throughout represented as the noblest of objects.¹

¹ Mr Snell somewhat curiously seems to think that the destruction of independence does not involve racial supremacy, and propounds a theory of "racial equality in consonance with the recognised traditions

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And as for "equality" as opposed to "privilege," when and where, it may be asked, have we treated native races as equals, and does not privilege in various forms far more largely prevail in England than it ever did in the Transvaal? ¹ For a charming paradox, however, it would be difficult to surpass the statement that the Boers "have not yet learnt that they who prize their own independence should prize that of others"; and it is marvellous that there should be no perception of the rich irony of such a statement, as made in defence of a war which we were determined should be arrested on no terms short of the destruction of independence. That was at length achieved, and the substantial question which arises, in connection with the present contention, is — will the natives as the result be better off?

The allegations apparently amount to this, that the Kaffirs were treated as slaves by the Boers, but by the British will be treated as equals; the former, we are told, seem to be as convinced as were the Confederates that slavery is an institution ordained of God, and but for England South Africa would lapse of our Colonies," whilst at the same time he is resolute against the concession of independence. But, as Mr Chamberlain has told us, our Colonies are "absolutely independent States; there is nothing to prevent their separating from us to-morrow; we could not, we would not, attempt to hold them by force; it is a voluntary bond." (*Speech at Rochester, July 26, 1904*). If then the Transvaal is to be placed on the same basis as Canada and Australia, the *reductio ad absurdum* is reached that we spent 250 millions in depriving it of an independence which we are prepared to regrant for the asking. Of course we have no intention of doing anything of the kind; the bond is not voluntary but compulsory, and "racial equality" is a myth: we fought for racial supremacy and we mean to maintain it.

¹ See footnote, page 206.

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into semi-barbarism. It is a patriotic picture, which many artists have sketched, and which never fails to command that popular admiration accorded to Mr Chamberlain's highly lurid daub, when, with a big splash, he portrayed the natives of the Transvaal as having been subject to treatment which was disgraceful, brutal, and unworthy of a civilised Power.¹ And now that the vile accusation has done its deadly work, and we are called upon to give practical indication of our own regard for the Kaffirs, we have had the following remarkable recantation :—

“ There is one thing I am bound to say in justice to our late opponents. I was led, as probably the majority of this House were, by statements which were made, to believe that the treatment of the native by the Boer was very bad ; and in that belief we expressed a hope that when the war came to an end we should be able to improve it. Now the war itself is evidence that this charge against the Boer was exaggerated. I freely make that admission. If it had not been exaggerated it is impossible to believe that the Boers could, as I know they did in hundreds and thousands of cases, leave their wives and children and property to the care of the few natives they had previously on their farms. Very few outrages took place ; and undoubtedly in many cases the natives gave assistance to the Boers during the war, just as in many other cases they gave assistance to us. And therefore, although the conception of the native by the Boer is something totally different to the conception which has been put before the House in the course of the present debate, and which represents, no doubt, the British idea of the relations between the races, yet of real brutality, violent misconduct, or ill-treatment, I think that, in the majority of cases at any rate, they must be absolved. The Boers do repudiate entirely any idea of equality ; they regard the native as little better than an animal, and certainly in no

¹ *Speech in the House of Commons*, October 19, 1899.

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case as deserving different treatment from that which we would give to a child. They do not hesitate to apply corporal punishment for very slight offences; and in other respects they act in a way which would undoubtedly be reprobated in a British subject. But it remains that they seem somehow or other to have understood the native character; they have not been regarded on the whole as hard or severe masters by the natives, and no great amount of ill-feeling has ever sprung up between the two." ¹

So that the Boer treatment of the native was not after all disgraceful, brutal, and unworthy of a civilised Power, as Mr Chamberlain and the majority of people were led to believe (alas! how many things were they "led to believe" which were not true), and this slander having served its purpose disappears. Still, the Boers' conception of the native is so totally different from ours, that they actually repudiate any idea of equality, whilst we, as all the world knows, regard him as a brother; "they," the preacher, as we have seen (voicing the sentiment of the statesman), appropriately reminds us, "are for privilege; we are for equality." But then comes the Government organ, and after commenting on the new discovery of the late Colonial Secretary, considerately tells us that "if this was the situation of the Kaffirs before the annexation, it will assuredly be no worse under British rule." ² So that we are rather perplexed, and have to ask which is it to be—are the natives to be treated as "equals," or are they to be thankful for the small mercy of finding that they are really no worse off than they were when equality was repudiated?

¹ *Speech in the House of Commons*, March 19, 1903.

² *The Standard*, March 20, 1903.

A third alternative presents itself. Will there be a change, but not for the better? Will the unfortunate Kaffir, whom we were supposed to rescue from a slavery now found to be purely mythical, be reduced to a condition which shall lead him to sigh for the days of the Republic? The question is forced upon us, both by our past history and by current events. Whilst the Boers are at length absolved from the charge of gross ill-treatment, our own record has been accurately described by Mr Morley as most abominable;¹ and one gentleman, whose testimony should carry some weight with the Church, the Rev. J. S. Moffat, intimated during the war that whilst the Boer without affectation treats the native as an inferior being, the European Uitlander has adopted the Boer view with alacrity, and is quite willing to go one better, and that the native had little to hope for from Colonial Governments and Colonial public opinion in the time then coming.² Ah! but the Home Government will override the Colonial Government; nay, such Government does not at present independently exist in the conquered provinces, and before establishing it we shall take good care to secure improved treatment of the natives. Shall we, dare we, can we? Or are not the men whose one solid grievance against the Boer Government was that they were not permitted to have a free hand with the native, and who so largely fomented the war in the interests of cheap labour, masters of the situation? Here, again, we may usefully see what Mr Chamberlain has had to say

¹ *Speech at Oxford*, June 9, 1900.

² *The Nineteenth Century*, June 1900, article on "The Native Races."

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upon the subject; for he has given us an explicit intimation as to the attitude of the Government. And that attitude is, that this is not a question in which we can force our Colonies against their will, if they differ from us; that, whilst they are at present for certain purposes Crown Colonies, it is the policy of the Government to treat them, with regard to legislative action, as if they were a self-governing Colony; that we must try and find out what they would do if they were already self-governing, and then act upon that basis; and that there is no idea of using our theoretical supremacy against the feeling of the vast majority of the people of South Africa.¹ Nor was this laid down in ignorance of what that feeling was (or was supposed to be) or of the course proposed to be taken; for in the same speech we have an intimation to the effect that there was a very general belief throughout South Africa that the natives should, in their own interest as in the interest of the country, be "induced to work"; and amongst the methods of inducement are instanced the holding out to them of the prospect of satisfying their needs and desires, including a weakness for extra wives and a love of finery. So that it was apparently hoped that, through the instrumentality of polygamy, amongst other things, the Kaffir would cheerfully consent to withdraw himself from the light of heaven, and spend a great portion of his waking hours in the congenial atmosphere of the mines. And this he is to do in his own interest and in the "interest of the country" (for which the mine-owners have such solicitude), and

¹ *Speech in the House of Commons*, March 24, 1903.

if the love of finery is not sufficiently strong, well it is only one of the modes of inducement, and other modes can be found—such, for instance, as “the gentle stimulus of cowhide”¹—for it is all essential that the mines should be made to “pay”; and hitherto some dozen of the more important of them have, it appears, only yielded dividends on the average of from 20 to 179 per cent., or on the collective average the paltry return of about 60 per cent.

Yet one hope there is for the Kaffir—he may be rescued by the Chinese coolie. The resources of civilization are inexhaustible; and the discovery has now been made that it is cheaper after all to import labour than to obtain it on the spot. The experiment was first tried of drafting 1000 natives from Central Africa, but unfortunately the change from a hot to a cold climate proved so disastrous as to involve considerable wastage; and, although another 5000 may be recruited, it has been felt that this source required to be supplemented; and China is now regarded as the happy hunting ground. It is true the bulk of the inhabitants of the Transvaal have not taken kindly to the idea; but then that does not matter, as they have no votes—the war, which was to extend the franchise, has resulted in wholesale disfranchisement; and it is fortunate that this is so, since under popular government the labour problem could never be solved (although, curiously enough, the *Standard* plaintively confesses² that “somehow the problem was solved, and apparently in a fairly satisfactory fashion, under the Boer

¹ *Blue Book*, Cd. 2025, p. 12. “Almost without exception the compound police carried sjamboks.” *Ibid.* ² February 17, 1904.

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régime”). Originally it was thought there would be an increased demand for white labour; but the English miners¹ have an extravagant idea as to their legitimate share of the gold they win from the bowels of the earth; and, moreover, they would by combination “become so strong as to be able to more or less dictate, not only on the question of wages, but also on political questions by the power of their votes when representative government is established,” so that the supremacy of the Randlords would be seriously threatened; and, of course, they have the first claim to our consideration. Thus although, as another divine tells us, “God has added to this Empire a diamond field, a land whose harvest is pure gold, or whose rich mines are of ruby, rocks of opal,” these are not for the British workmen, but are the preserves of the cosmopolitan capitalists, who, recognising little allegiance either to Europe or to Africa, look with benignant impartiality to Asia for their serfs. Our new territory, therefore, has witnessed an influx of Chinese labourers, allured by the wage of a little over a penny an hour, with food, housing, and (the all-important) medical attendance thrown in, to swallow a Labour Ordinance with a good round dozen penalties. They are duly “indentured,” prohibited from leaving the scene of their congenial employment unless a “permit” is graciously accorded them (which must not authorise absence for more

¹ “The war was in a certain sense a miners’ war—that was to say, it had been undertaken in order that justice might be done to the British miners of the Transvaal.”—Mr Chamberlain at Chase Town, October 8, 1900. As to the effects of the Chinese invasion, see *Yellow Labour*, by Thomas Naylor, London, New Reform Club, 1904.

than forty-eight hours), liable to imprisonment if they desert (as some of them have done after a few days' experience, suffering the penalty, whilst others shortly afterwards mutinied) or refuse to work; and any person harbouring or aiding or abetting a "deserter" can be fined £50 and in default sent to gaol.¹ Such is one of the results of a war which we were told was fought to prevent slavery—a slavery since discovered to be non-existent—and the only high ecclesiastic to record a vote of protest is the courageous Bishop of Hereford, the notable dignitary who from the dark days of the war downwards has been the consistent exponent of Christian principles. It seems a rather gloomy outlook; but the Church, which is fertile in resources, can still brighten the horizon; for will there not be a glorious opportunity to convert the "heathen Chinees"?—so glorious that it is confidently hoped "to see many of them sent back to their country good practising Christians"!

To return however to the respected author of the sermons we are considering—to whom the course of events, suggesting the foregoing digression, has been rather unkind—we read that

"The natives will be regarded as wards of the Government, and guarded against exploitation of conscienceless

¹ See The Labour Importation Ordinance, *Blue-book*, Cd. 1941. The *Standard's* frank observation is again worth noting: "There is something extremely repellent to English notions in this immigration of a draft of labourers, under precautions and restrictions which would seem better suited to convicts than to free working men." June 21, 1904. It is now reported that the Chinese are subjected to sjambokking by the mining officials, and to imprisonment and lashes by order of magistrates.

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companies or money-makers, be they miners or liquor-sellers. We cannot afford to lose the respect of the civilised world by attempting less than that, nor can we afford any better to alienate such sections of our own people as are not able to regard the war without grave apprehension, but who glory equally with ourselves in England's record as the fear of the oppressors and the hope of the oppressed. Nor can we afford to lose our own self-respect."

This is what we were to "attempt"; it is a very modest thing, for men who are "for equality" to attempt, or even to accomplish—merely to make the natives wards of the Government and to guard them against exploitation. But now we have it on authority that the attempt will not be made; our "theoretical supremacy" is not to be exercised—a most virtuous decision but for the trifling omission first to grant full representative institutions—and it looks as though the natives are after all to be left to the tender mercies of the "money-makers" (to whom the natives of another land are also to be delivered), and as though the loss of the respect of the civilised world and of our own self-respect, is to be visited upon us. To glory in England's record as the fear of the oppressors and the hope of the oppressed is no doubt a virtuous protest against oppression, but it should make us more resolved to see that England does not herself play the part of the oppressor or authorise oppression. The Boers did to some extent interpose barriers to the gratification of the greed of the capitalists; and surely there is an unconscious irony in the suggestion that we are to guard the natives from exploitation—we who have not yet learned to renounce exploitation; we who exercise arbitrary rule over some 300 millions alien

peoples; we who "bleed" India¹ and sanction the deportation of human chattels from China; we who grant charters to "conscienceless companies," and strike bargains with mine-owners whose chief concern for the native is what they can get out of him. Yet the prognostication was confidently made as a justification for the forcible suppression of the Boer régime of "inequality" and "privilege." We who, having been "led to believe" that the treatment meted out to the natives was unworthy of a civilised Power, and having now uttered our recantation, are appealing to the Kaffir's love of finery and extra wives as one mode of inducing him to spend his days in the bowels of the earth for the white man's benefit, or are allowing him to escape (with a capitulation tax on himself and his wives) by the vicarious sacrifice of another race—we it was who were to protect the native from exploitation, and thus vindicate the war to that section of our people who regarded it with grave apprehension.² What can

¹ Mr Snell, with characteristic Imperialist courage, cites India as bearing witness that our rule is just. The facts are stated at pp. 17-30 and 238-245.

² The testimony of native chiefs is that "the treatment now is worse than it was before the country was under British rule," and that "native labourers are being sjamboked and beaten and ill-treated in many other ways by their European overseers and indunas; so much so that the boys wish to call back the days of the Republic, when the Boers dominated, stating they were better treated then and received better wages for their work." *Blue Book*, Cd. 2025, pp. 25-27.

Even with regard to our Indian subjects in the Transvaal, the same general conclusion is reached. Here again the conduct of the Boers was held up to reprobation—"Among the many misdeeds of the South African Republic, I do not know that any fills me with more indignation than its treatment of these Indians." (Lord Lansdowne, *Speech at Sheffield*, November 2, 1899.) And now it appears that for the Indians also British rule is harsher than Boer rule, and even the

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equal the calm complacency which sits in judgment upon others, and fails to see in ourselves delinquencies attributed to them?

And this is the defence—selected, as has been said, at its best—which the Christian Church has to offer for its support of an aggressive war and its encouragement of the modern Imperial spirit. It is a defence which, built up by inconclusive deductions from false premises, and having no solid foundation in reason or in fact, ignominiously collapses the moment it ceases to be buttressed by prejudice. The offspring of patriotic bias, it consists in the main of a number of bare asseverations, of course fully believed to be true, but in support of which no evidence is called, none of which can be established, and all of which can be refuted. May it not be asked, was ever a cause fraught with such momentous issues more lightly espoused? This is no mere question of "parochial politics"; it is the policy of Imperialism which is being weighed in the balance, that is to say, a policy which bears upon the destinies of millions of human beings of every race in all parts of the globe; a policy the latest episode of which has entailed the loss of more than 20,000 British soldiers, with some 70,000 wounded or invalided, has cost us 250 million pounds, and has resulted in the devastation of a territory larger than

Colonial Secretary is constrained to write Lord Milner with regard to certain proposals "His Majesty's Government holds that it is derogatory to national honour to impose upon resident British subjects disabilities against which we had remonstrated, and to which even the law of the late South African Republic rightly interpreted did not subject them." *Blue Book*, Cd. 2239, p. 45.

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Great Britain, the slaughter of 4000 men of another race and—saddest of all—the sacrifice from pestilence and famine of 20,000 of their women and children. Such is the policy which it is essayed to vindicate before Him who is regarded as the judge of all the earth, and by the teaching of Him who is revered as the saviour of mankind. And the vindication, stripped of the misconceptions in which it is clothed, amounts briefly to—what? A plea of self-righteousness!

THE CHURCH PATRIOTIC

There is one explanation, and one only, of the strange phenomenon we are considering. As has been said, it is not to be found in dishonesty, it is not to be traced to insincerity; there is no cant about it. The pulpit utterances ring with conviction; but it is the conviction of passion and not of reason. And the passion which leads to the eclipse or perversion of reason, the passion which induces the Christian Church to support slaughter and rapine, is the same passion as that which impels statesmen to formulate and carry out a policy of aggression, and which leads the people to shout for war. It is, as has already been incidentally pointed out, the passion of patriotism—from which springs the spirit of empire. Pride is at the bottom of the whole miserable business; that pride which the pulpit is so ready to denounce in the man, but which it extols in the community; that pride which attaches to nationality; that pride which fosters the belief, not simply that one race is superior to

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other races (if it stopped short at this, it might be a harmless conceit, and might even rest upon a substratum of truth ; though in that case the fact should rebuke pride, and engender thankfulness, humility, and modesty) but that, as the result, there is a justification for and positive good in the subjugation of other races, in bringing them under the sway of this superior race and extending its dominion and enlarging its Empire. A modern patriotic - imperialist song¹ which has become increasingly popular, after melodiously apostrophizing our native land, continues (with the inevitable pious invocation) :—

“Wider still and wider shall thy bounds be set ;
God, who made thee mighty, make thee mightier yet !”

and then proceeds to eulogise its fame and proclaims :—

“A pride that dares, and heeds not praise,
A stern and silent pride ;
Not that false joy that dreams content
With what our sires have won ;
The blood a hero sire hath spent
Still nerves a hero son.”

And it is because this feeling of pride is encouraged, glorified, and elevated to the rank of a virtue, that nations in their dealings with other nations run amuck of their moral codes. Patriotism subverts ethics and subverts Christianity ; it is for the particular purpose made the supreme standard of morality, and by a strange inversion regarded as the embodiment of Christianity. The Church falls

¹ *Land of Hope and Glory*. By Mr Arthur C. Benson. Music by Sir Edward Elgar. London, Boosey & Co.

down and worships the tribal deity, it exhorts its adherents to prostrate themselves before him (although exhortation is scarcely necessary), and priests and people alike mistake a fetich of their own creation for the God of the Gospels. It is because the Church is a patriotic Church and not a catholic Church, it is because it is falsely true to a base ideal, that it is a Church militant in the literal, gross, and demoralising sense.

A most striking illustration of this truth is seen in the way in which moral and Christian men regard the sentiments, the aims, and the actions of other countries, as compared with those of their own country. When not prejudiced by national interests, and when not biased by national pride, they can form fairly accurate judgments on questions of morals; but when so prejudiced or biased, they either see manifested in other races vices which are not specially manifested, or exaggerate those which are; and they are either blind to the vices manifested by their own race, or regard them as positive virtues. If foreign critics condemn us, it never suggests to us the possibility that our conduct is worthy of condemnation, but an explanation is sought in their envy or malice; if other people cry "shame" we find consolation in the reflection that "our own people understand us," and "by instinct feel that we are right"; and for the rest—well, of course, "all the vagabonds of the world are against us," and nothing matters so long as we are assured of our own integrity. And yet one of the greatest statesmen we ever possessed—one who never allowed his patriotism to run away with him, one whose

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desire for the welfare of his own country was scarcely greater than for the welfare of all countries, and who strove, according to opportunity, to advance the cause of humanity irrespective of race—has left on record some oft-quoted sentiments, from which if even those only who profess to follow him had sought inspiration, we might have been saved much humiliation :—

“I, for my part, am of opinion that England will stand shorn of a chief part of her glory and her pride if she should be found separating herself, through the policy she pursues abroad, from the moral support which the convictions of mankind afford ; if the day shall come when she may continue to excite the wonder and fear of other nations, but in which she shall have no part in their affection and regard.”¹

Had any other nation acted as we have acted in South Africa what a cry of indignation would have been raised from one end of the country to the other ; what pulpit declamations would have gone forth ! When we are not ourselves the aggressors, we are loud in condemnation of aggression ; when not ourselves engaged in subduing small nationalities, our sympathies are on the side of those engaged in a struggle for freedom. If we could, not only see ourselves as others see us, but see ourselves as we see others, apply to ourselves the standards we apply to others, and purge ourselves from racial pride, how much inconsistency and how much moral turpitude should we not be spared ? We boast of our greatness, we boast of our prowess, we boast of our rectitude of purpose, we boast of everything national

¹ Mr Gladstone, *Speech in the House of Commons*, June 27, 1850.

(except perhaps our debt); we are eaten up with vanity; and it never occurs to us that what we regard as absolutely snobbish in the individual is not less snobbish in the race. The Church denounces pride as a deadly sin; but when it is exhibited collectively, it is condoned as patriotic, or rather exalted into a sign of grace. If we could only be imbued with the spirit of humanitarianism instead of the spirit of patriotism; if our priests could only substitute the catholicity of the Gospels for the exclusiveness of the Pentateuch; if the nation would only play the part of the good Samaritan instead of regarding itself as the modern Israel; then might Britain be "Great" in the noblest sense of the word. But so long as we are dominated by pride we are in truth "Little Englanders."

The marvel is that men do not realise the glaring inconsistencies into which they are betrayed, when they vainly seek to harmonise two incompatibles. It is a vivid picture which Herbert Spencer has drawn for us—one which presents this inconsistency in bold relief—in the following passage:—

"Throughout a Christendom full of churches and priests, full of pious books, full of observances directed to fostering the religion of love, encouraging mercy and insisting on forgiveness, we have an aggressiveness and a revengefulness such as savages have everywhere shown. And from people who daily read their Bibles, attend early services, and appoint weeks of prayer, there are sent out messengers of peace to inferior races, who are forthwith ousted from their lands by filibustering expeditions authorised in Downing Street; while those who resent are treated as

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'rebels,' the deaths they inflict in retaliation are called 'murders,' and the process of subduing them is named 'pacification.'"¹

The fact is, no actual Christian can essay to defend the policy of Imperialism without constantly tripping himself up. This, as was inevitable, is abundantly manifested in the volume of sermons which has been selected as the Church's apologia. We have only to contrast such portions of them as are inspired by the Gospels with those which are prompted by the dictates of patriotism, to marvel how both could have emanated from the same pulpit. Thus, we are told, on the one hand, that there is no escape from the position that war is barbarism, the business of barbarians, and its sanction is due solely to the survival of the savage in us; and, on the other, that war, though horrible, is a providential fact, one of God's judgments in the world, and that "carnage is God's daughter"; from which combined propositions we can arrive at the conclusion that the survival of the savage in us is a providential fact, and that barbarism is God's daughter (and, therefore, as has been irresistibly suggested, Christ's sister). Then we are informed that in war reason is all in abeyance, might displacing right; whilst elsewhere it is intimated that England was making a great effort in what she deemed a righteous cause; from which one seems to learn that the displacing of right may properly be deemed to be righteous. Again, it is laid down that evil can be overcome only by good, and that if evil is employed to overthrow evil, the victory is only temporary and in appearance; but then we

¹ *The Principles of Ethics*, 1893, Vol. ii. chap. xxvii. p. 257.

come across the statements that perhaps it was worth a war to secure for South Africa a century of peaceful development, and that an English triumph means the increase and not the diminution of the reign of beneficence and rectitude.

Even where there is any superficial reconciliation of conflicting doctrines, it is based upon a misapprehension or ignoring of facts. Thus the inquiry is gravely put whether there is a man who did not know that if God gave us the victory the Transvaal would be more of a Republic than she had ever been, more truly self-governed (there is a convenient omission of any reference to the Orange Free State); and this concerning a country which, by almost every test of democratic institutions, was in advance of Great Britain, and in which poverty, the blight of our fair land (now introduced in an acute form into the former prosperous States) was practically unknown.¹ Ignorance, however, concerning the

¹ It is probable that not one in ten thousand of those who were so fond of referring to the Boer "oligarchy" has ever read the *Grondwet*, or Constitutional Law of the Transvaal. A translation is to be found in the Appendix to Mr E. B. Rose's *The Truth about the Transvaal* (see footnote, *supra*, p. 73) and the author, who lived in the country for twelve years, gives no less than thirty-two comparisons, in parallel columns, of the laws and institutions of the Transvaal and Great Britain respectively (varying from matters of the highest importance to comparatively minor concerns), nearly every one of which, from the democratic point of view, tells in favour of the Transvaal, pp. 36-43.

The patriotic conceit above expressed, that British victory meant more real self-government, is of course merely the common delusion to which racial pride gives birth. As a matter of fact every vestige of self-government has been banished from the Transvaal, and it is under oligarchic rule (although some form of representative government seems to be contemplated now that the position has been rendered so acute as to make it desirable to shift responsibility); whilst its former prosperity has disappeared (except that the Randlords are flourishing), and the country

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Transvaal becomes less surprising when it is exhibited with regard to British sentiment; for we are told that to speak of "revenge" (which it is fully realised is anti-Christian) as a motive-force is too transparently ridiculous, too mean and despicable to deserve rebutting; whereas the fact was that the country was simply ringing with shouts of vengeance,

generally is in a most pitiable condition. The usual parasitism has set in, and the salaries of the principal officials which under the Boer régime worked out at less than £26,000 a year figure at more than £64,000, and altogether the head civil servants receive £184,000 per annum. The country is loaded with a debt of about £80 per head of the population (more than four times the amount per head of our own National Debt), the taxation is appalling, and the situation most serious. "The people would to-day but ask one favour of Lord Milner, and that is to send once again to the people of England his dispatch of May 4th, 1899, which ran as follows:—'The spectacle of thousands of British subjects, kept permanently in the position of Helots chafing under undoubted grievances, and calling vainly on Her Majesty's Government for redress, does steadily undermine the influence and reputation of Great Britain and the respect for the British Government within the Queen's dominions.'"—*Lord Milner's Record*, by R. L. Outhwaite, pp. 14, 15, London, Office of *The Echo*. Small wonder that General Smuts should long since have written (February 21, 1904):—"Will it not yet be with this South Africa as it is to-day with the British population on the Rand? To-day they are imploringly stretching forth their hands to the Boers to save them from the consequences of their evil work in the past. But the Boers, like Rachel's children, are not. Similarly I see the day coming when 'British' South Africa will appeal to the 'Dutch' to save them from the consequence of their insane policy of to-day, and I fear—I sometimes fear with an agony bitterer than death—that the 'Dutch' will no more be there to save them or South Africa. For the Dutch, too, are being undermined and demoralised by disaster and despair, and God alone knows how far this process will yet be allowed to go." In short, as Mr Morley told us more than three years ago, (*Speech in the House of Commons*, May 23, 1901)—and time has only confirmed his verdict—the war has brought "material havoc and ruin unspeakable, unquenched and for long unquenchable racial animosities;" and can only be regarded as "a war insensate and infatuated, a war of uncompensated mischief and irreparable wrong."

and that the first substantial victory was to be hailed, from the Prime Minister downwards through the Press to the man in the street, with the cry of "Majuba avenged."¹ Anon, as though with some perception of the difficulty of reconciliation, and in blank despair at rational explanation, the preacher takes refuge in sheer fatalism, and intimates that it seems as if the Anglo-Saxons were the children of what the Greeks called "Necessity," and were doomed in their own despite to be a fighting people; and that he knew nothing more deplorable or pitiable than that England, whose pride it had ever been to befriend small nationalities, should feel "laid upon her" the odious business of crushing those two southern Republics. And this continuous conflict of ideas is fittingly capped by the final incongruity, in which, as the closing words of a series of sermons in defence of the war, we get the loftiest injunction, conceived in the unalloyed spirit of Christianity, an absolute recoil from the militant advocacy:—

"Let us keep down pride and envy, let us repress greed and hatred, out of which grows enmity. Let us uphold things honourable and generous, for such things ingeminate peace. Let us exalt the beatitude to its fitting place, in these days no less than in those—'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.' So shall we do our part in hastening the day when men shall not learn war any more."

¹ "The death of Gordon has already been avenged. . . . That great blunder has at last been erased. There was another blunder, another humiliation, even greater than that of Khartoum, the humiliation which is connected with the name of Majuba. Perhaps it is too soon to say that that great humiliation has been erased, or that that great wrong has been avenged, but we feel that we are on the road to accomplish that." (Loud cheers.)—Lord Salisbury at the Albert Hall, May 9, 1900.