

CHAPTER V.

THE DOMESTIC OUTLOOK OF THE
CHRISTIAN PATRIOT

“Ev’n then a wish (I mind its power),
A wish that to my latest hour
Shall strongly heave my breast ;
That I for poor auld Scotland’s sake,
Some usefu’ plan or bouk could make,
Or sing a sang at least.”

—BURNS.

“In the dimmest north-east distance dawned Gibraltar grand
and grey,
‘Here and here did England help me: how can I help
England?’—say,
Whoso turns, as I, this evening, turn to God to praise and pray,
While Jove’s planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.”

—BROWNING.

“I appeal to the House of Commons to bring back what my Lord Clarendon called ‘the old good-nature of the people of England.’ They may build up again the fortunes of the land of England—that land to which we owe our Power and our Freedom; that land which has achieved the union of those two qualities for combining which a Roman Emperor was deified—*Imperium et Libertas*.”—BRACONSFIELD.

“He had supported the extension of the franchise to the agricultural labourers, saying, ‘They must be taught to be citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven by being made citizens of the kingdom of England.’—*Life of Bishop King of Lincoln*.

CHAPTER V.

WE have tried in previous chapters to justify the use of the phrase "a Christian patriot." We have argued that there is no just cause or impediment prohibiting the union in lawful wedlock of the adjective and the noun. We have aimed at dispelling the suspicion that often broods over the minds of Christian people, that love of country is not a fundamentally religious sentiment, and that it may be forgone without serious loss to practical spirituality. Nay, more than that, we have pled for the conclusion that subordinate in importance only to love of God and love of family is that love of country which nature has planted as an instinct in every normal breast, and which offers an instrument of incomparable strength and temper to noble causes on whose success the welfare of the world depends. It has seemed to us as surely of God's appointment that men should be set as citizens in nations, as that they should be set as "solitary in families."

But if there be force in these contentions, then

the first general duty of a Christian patriot is to assure himself, beyond reach of contradiction, of the validity of the name he bears. Patriotism suffers loss because religious people so little labour to be in earnest with it. They do not think out for themselves the relation between love of country and love of God, or love of neighbour. And part of the mischief lies in this—that irreligious people on the opposing battle-front are in no such hesitancy as to what they believe or why they believe it. The revolutionary propagandist of our day loathes the very name of patriotism, and loathes it for a reason highly intolligent. He knows it to be the inexpugnable foe of his propaganda. He sees plainly that civilisation is at the cross-roads, and that the choice is being presented to mankind as to what scheme of division they will adopt—whether a vertical division of humanity, wherein distinct nations, maintaining their distinctness, shall aim at bringing diverse contributions to a common store; or a horizontal division, wherein upper and lower strata of capital and labour, “reds” and “whites,” shall contend in every country, each for its own advantage. The two paths are irreconcilable, and it will be hard to retrace a path once chosen.

The assumption, then, will be made in what follows, that writer and readers have reached a conclusion favourable to the retention of patriotism

on the list of Christian virtues. We agree with Cromwell that it is part of a man's religion to see that his country be well governed; and if this be so, he must *have* a country, and care intensely for its welfare. From this starting-point we set out on a new stage of our journey. Passing from theoretical to more practical aspects of patriotism, we shall consider what in fact are some of the elements in the duty of a Christian patriot towards his own fatherland. Regarding for the moment our own nation as if it stood alone, shutting out from view at this stage the claims of neighbour states and weaker races, we shall study in this chapter what might be termed the domestic activities of Christian patriotism, leaving the wider international activities for another opportunity. Borrowing two phrases from French politics, we may describe our present subject as the patriotic ministry of the Interior; and the correlative subject, to be dealt with later, as the patriotic ministry of the Exterior.

The factors in the duty of a Christian patriot towards his fatherland seem to the writer to fall into two groups. The first group is concerned with the maintenance of the vision of the national *ideal*; the second with the task of translating that ideal into *fact*. The Christian patriot must begin by taking seriously the adjective which qualifies his patriotism; and by endeavouring

from a Christian standpoint to discover the purpose which God had in view in calling his country into being. He must cherish a vision before he endeavours to turn the vision into reality. And he must not be dismayed at the outset if the ideal he thus cherishes have a serious quarrel with the present. A clear perception of the ideal always induces a critical view of the actual. But then, on the other hand, the vision is not given for the mere gratification of the seer; it is to become operative in the fulfilment of a task. "See that thou *make* all things according to the pattern shown thee in the mount," said the voice which spake to the first builder of a house for God. The ideal waits to be realised in the national life of the time.

It is clear, as has just been hinted, that there may be a certain apparent incompatibility between the two activities indicated—that is, between the patriot's maintenance of a worthy ideal, and the patriot's achievement of a possible actual. For, the man who beholds his country in vision, and gazes on what it was meant to be, is manifestly occupying for the moment a standpoint *outside* his country and above it. Whereas, he who is engrossed in the active service of his nation, stands heart and soul *within* the fatherland, and has identified himself with all that belongs to it. It is not always an easy matter to be duly regardful

of both these aspects of duty. Nevertheless, the effort must be made. As Chesterton says in another metaphor, we walk on two feet, and must be content to progress by advancing first one and then the other. To pursue the "task" of patriotism without the corrective influence of the "vision" of the ideal, would be to foster that "contentment with the second best" of which a distinguished Italian statesman has lately said that nothing more pernicious can characterise a nation. On the other hand, to be absorbed in the vision of the ideal without care for the task of translating it into terms of the actual would be to play the ignoble part of a spectator—the most contemptible of all parts in the eyes of a sincere lover of his country. We are not without instances in our own time of men who have become so engrossed in some mystical dream of abstract perfection, that they have merited the scathing rebuke of Canning :

"A steady patriot-of-the-world alone,
The friend of every country but his own."

I.

The first duty, then, of a Christian patriot to his own country is to maintain undimmed the vision of the national ideal. This is no small matter, and corresponds to an end which will not

be reached without real effort. On the morning before Bishop Creighton died, he had been discussing with his chaplain a correspondence in the Press on the greatest danger of the coming century. "I have no doubt on the point," said the Bishop; "it is the absence of high ideals." If a man who loves his country, and desires for it that it may live worthy of its vocation, can only keep steadily before his mind the principles on which from a Christian standpoint all national prosperity is surely built, he is thereby offering his fatherland a real service. Ideals are the masters, and not the servants of mankind, as is shown by the fact that men are willing to yield their freedom in living and dying for them. Nothing could be more shallow, as recent events have proved with peculiar emphasis, than to set a chasm between the ideal and the practical; as though the relation between them was dubious or remote, and idealist a term correlative with visionary. Sancho Panza, it has been pointed out, may plume himself on being the most sensible of men, resolutely contemptuous of abstract principles, and the self-constituted saviour of a romantic master; but it is the lot of Sancho Panza to trudge all his days behind Don Quixote, compelled to follow whither the idealist leads, and to shape his life according to formulas not his own. And if this be true, even when the ideals are admittedly fantastic, how much more is it true

when the ideals are harnessed to service, like the soaring canvas of a well-ballasted ship. It must be remembered that clear visions, in the world of spirit, have a property not vouchsafed to them in the world of sense—they are infectious things. When one eye, and then another, catches the gleam, the common witness of what is seen is apt to be of amazing influence.

The proof of this statement is writ large in history. Who can measure the influence of such an ideal for Scotland as Knox saw gleaming before his eyes, when he conceived a schoolmaster skilled in grammar and Latin attached to every church; a high school in every notable town, and the edifice crowned by the splendid service of the universities? Who does not feel the reflected splendour of the vision of Savonarola, when he hears the Florentines cry out under the spell of it, "Hail to Jesus Christ our King?" Who does not recognise the brightness of the vision given to the men of Leyden, when, on being offered the choice between freedom from taxation and a University, they chose the University? And though the ideals of the Covenanters may seem to us to be inadequate in many of their component parts, we must not forget that through the influence of these ideals, Scotland came perhaps more near to being a dedicated country than any land of which we have record.

It must steadily be kept in view that while such

visions as those of which we have been speaking are of great value to the nation, they are often of great cost to the patriot. In the nature of the case, they tend to shine against a dark background. The most painful stab of apprehension which can pierce a patriot's heart may be the sense of what his country is, when contrasted with the vision of what it ought to be. As conviction of sin normally comes first in individual conversion, and leads to the "regenerating shudder" of repentance, so in national life disappointment and dismay in view of present facts may form the first step to a better future. Here, however, it should be said that the community enjoys an opportunity withheld from the individual; for the community outlives the generation, and thus lies periodically open to the piercing scrutiny of eyes new-born, looking out with new candour on old abuses, and scornfully incredulous of conventional explanations. It has frequently been felt that a wholesome feature of British character is a well-rooted habit of self-criticism; and it has already been pointed out, in studying the Old Testament, that a most valuable asset of Hebrew patriotism was the almost mordant scrutiny applied to the character of successive generations by the long line of the prophets of Israel.

In accordance with the alternate emergence into the foreground of the duty of maintaining a vision,

and the converse duty of translating the vision into reality, there is to be observed a remarkable feature in the history of nations—a feature which may be said to be peculiarly evident in the history of Great Britain. This is the extraordinary ebb and flow in the tide of national progress, which often suggests a national death followed by resurrection, a widespread conviction of sin leading to repentance, a winter of discontent breaking miraculously into spring. What Dr Glover has said of Rome in the early centuries is equally true of our own land: “It is hard to realise that a people’s history can be so uneven, that development and retardation can exist at once in so remarkable a degree in the mind of a nation.” Just as the mystics reported their hours of dryness succeeding seasons of exaltation, so does the historian trace the moral progress of his fatherland, not in a straight line of uniform ascent, but in a rising and falling curve, with many a depression, while yet with a general uplift. One half-century in our annals has often been almost incredibly unlike another. In one period we find in England an enthusiasm, an exhilaration, a *joie de vivre*, which embody themselves in such phrases as “Merrie England,” such claims of fact as that “England is a nest of singing birds,” such splendid panegyric as that of Milton in the ‘*Areopagitica*,’ such incidental statements as the remark in the memoir of

George Herbert, that Englishmen were at that time distinguished throughout the Continent for two things, their personal beauty and their skill in music. Of another period, a competent historian will tell us in well-considered words that it was "an age destitute of faith and earnestness—an age whose poetry was without romance, whose philosophy was without insight, and whose public men were without character." And if in spite of all fluctuation, the line of national progress be found to travel upward on the whole, the explanation must be found in the men and women who in the depths cherished a vision of the heights, and in the worst days of national depression set themselves bravely, and with penitent confession, to make the vision come true. "To obtain therefore God's favour," said a patriot of olden days, "the only and most next way is to redress our naughty manners. O England, England, my own native country, for whose prosperity I do not only shed my prayers, but also salt tears, continually to the Lord our God—would God thou mightest be free from the vengeance and plagues of God that are like to fall upon thee, if thou dost not repent, and amend thy sinful living." There is no joyful zest in the form of patriotic service reflected in such a prayer; nevertheless, more than most, such form of service has the reward anticipated by the psalmist: "he that goeth forth

and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him." We repeat, however, that the maintaining undimmed the vision of the national ideal may well be a costly thing to the lover of his country. It is to run the risk of being held disloyal to the fatherland, at the very moment when most truly loyal to it. It is to be misjudged as hating the thing, which one only loves well enough to wish it better. The poet Gower in the fourteenth century is said to have written of his country's shame with the tears running down his face; but it has been suggestively added that the men who read the poems did not see the tears. Justly has a recent writer declared of Swift at a later era that "the depth of his love for England may be judged from the bitterness of his indictment against her. Nobody who was indifferent to her welfare could have tried her by such a standard, or ever have found her so wanting as did Swift."

"If they should tell us love is blind,
And so doth miss
The faults which they are quick to find,
I answer this :—
Envy is blind ; not love whose eyes
Are purged and clear."

At this point the question may naturally engage our interest as to what in fact *are* the basal principles of national greatness beheld in the vision

of a Christian patriot. When the prophecy of Pentecost is fulfilled, and when, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, young men see visions and old men dream dreams, of what general form will these dreams and visions be? ¹ This is to ask, what are the principles on which, from a Christian standpoint, all national prosperity is seen to be inevitably built?

Now, no serious consideration of this question is in our day quite valueless, however little it may succeed in reaching a final answer. For Christendom is at present singularly devoid of a common mind in respect of the embodiment of national ideals. Christian men and women seem never to have reached a common understanding as to what the nature of the Christian order is with regard to national life. There is a gap here in our corporate thinking. Little dubiety exists as to what is the nature of the Christian order in respect of *personal* life; for we see general agreement throughout Christendom as to the essential elements of Christian character in the individual disciple. Similarly there is no dubiety as to the nature of the Christian order in respect of *family* life; and we should expect to find the chief features of an ideal Christian

¹ Bishop Westcott was wont to distinguish between the two parts of the sentence in Acts ii. 17. "You *must* see visions," he said to one of his younger clergy,— "I despair of you if you don't. Visions belong to youth; when you are older you will only dream dreams."

home to be indicated in much the same terms throughout the Christian world. But there seems to be a hiatus in the working scheme of thought operative in Christendom, in respect of a common understanding as to the nature of the Christian order, when that order is embodied in a nation. What, for instance, would be the economic basis of a Christian commonwealth? What principles would be embodied in its political constitution? What primary needs would guide its legislation? It cannot be claimed that modern Christianity offers the clear answer to these questions which an outsider might justly expect. The charge cannot be refuted which is brought by a modern scholar against the Church of our day: "The Church has never thought out in its fulness the kind of nation, of international life, of industry and society that are alone in harmony with faith, hope, and love, and the Christian idea of God. Having no such adequate ideal itself or clear objective at which to aim, it has, of course, failed to capture the world for it." The principles which follow are meagre both in conception and expression; but they disclose an outline which, like that of scaffolding, may indicate the shape of the building to be erected later by expert labour.

i.

One principle which stands out clear in the vision of a Christian patriot is, that the progress of a nation must be estimated in terms of **considered direction**, not in terms of mere rapidity of movement. Bishop Westcott, a pioneer of social study, against whom could lie no charge of obscurantism, was right when, in answer to enthusiasts eloquently referring to "these days of progress," he was wont to inquire, "progress towards what?" His contention was that progress is an advance towards an ideal, and that to estimate the progress we must fix the ideal. It can never again be assumed, as it too readily was before the Great War, that such a word as "progress," or such kindred terms as "civilisation" or "kultur," must necessarily embody a Christian ideal, even before the terms are defined. The most progressive nation in Europe has offered itself as an object-lesson to prove that some forms of advance are best expressed in Scripture language as "running down a steep place into the sea." The only fault of German civilisation, so thorough, so methodical, so sure of itself, was its lack of interest in the moral *whither*. But this lack is now seen to be fatal. "When I was young," said ex-President Wilson, "we used to flatter ourselves that progress inevitably meant peace. Unhappily, we know better now."

The question has recently aroused considerable interest as to whether there is in reality any solid guarantee of what is commonly understood as "progress," to be deduced from the past history of the universe, of mankind, or of national life. After debating this question in a recent Romanes Lecture with ability and ironic detachment, Dean Inge reaches no more comforting conclusion than that "it is safe to predict that we shall go on hoping, though our recent hopes have ended in disappointment." He quotes, as a plausible summary of modern achievement, the dictum of Disraeli, that we have established a society "which has mistaken comfort for civilisation." Nevertheless, it must be held that Christianity as a faith is deeply committed to the view that progress is a gift of God to the human race, whose Creator and Preserver He is. For Christianity has always maintained the vision of an ideal goal towards which humanity is marching. It would be hard to maintain the conception of God as the Father of mankind, or as in any sense the God of history, if the onward march of humanity is to be likened to that of travellers lost on the American prairie, who go round in a weary circle, and find themselves, when darkness falls, beside the ashes of the fire they had lighted in the morning. Jesus and His apostles have undoubtedly a goal in view, and discern the kingdom of heaven as developing

towards it. Furthermore, it may be held that only Christianity, among the world religions, contains within itself the *secret* of effective corporate progress; forasmuch as Christianity alone cares profoundly for social uplift, and cherishes a boundless hope as to the possibilities that are latent in each and all of the children of men. It is at least obvious that there is no guarantee of social progress in Confucianism, with her ideals in the past; or in Buddhism, with her ambition for the extinction of desire; or in Hinduism, with her caste; or in Mohammedanism, with her ominous social record, and her doctrine of the inerrancy of the Koran. Christianity may be said to have a ground for believing in progress, because she is conscious in herself of the vital forces which may achieve it. Only, it is persistently to be kept in mind that a valid hope of progress must have a more solid guarantee than that of David Copperfield: "I continued to walk extremely fast, and to have a general idea that I was getting on." To move with the times is a phrase entirely destitute of moral significance, seeing that in certain ages it has meant moving to destruction on a steadily steepening slope. It is no light undertaking, no mean achievement, to hold this principle steadily in view. Persistence in doing so will never win the meed of popular applause. A democracy may be

as peevish and as tyrannous as any despot, and an advancing democracy does not welcome suspicion as to its "progress."

ii.

A second principle stands obviously in the forefront of the Christian ideal of national life—namely, that the wealth of a country must be measured in terms of personality. Whatever may be the final verdict of posterity upon the economic teaching of Ruskin as a whole, his constant insistence upon this point stands eternally to his credit, and the judgment is not likely in our day to be impugned. The Roman poet Ennius, writing two centuries before Christ, anticipated it when he said that the Roman commonwealth stood on ancient character and on men—*moribus antiquis stat res Romana virisque*. If we would form a worthy estimate of the essential greatness of any nation, we must do so in terms of character; and if the question be asked, "What character?" we reply, with a wise statesman of our own time, "the character of the average man." Personality is the most precious thing in the universe, and it is for the perfecting of personality that the ideal State must work. If on the one side of the truth the individual exists for the State, on the other

side of the truth the State exists for the individual. Unless democracy, government by the people, makes itself aristocracy, government by the *best* people, it is foredoomed. The hidden spring of the whole development of Anglo-Saxon history has been found by competent writers in a temperamental appreciation of the worth of the individual ; and they have argued that in so far as we have surpassed other nations politically, it is because we have thus believed in the individual, recognised him, encouraged him. It is certainly true that the word of God whereby nations live has often come most effectively, not in the earthquake of revolution, nor in the fire of war, nor in the whirlwind of politics, but in the still small voice spoken to the solitary prophet, and echoed by him. After Cromwell had been a short time with the Parliamentary army, he told Hampden that the cause would never win with the men then in the ranks, and that he must get "men of a spirit." "Even in war," said Napoleon, in words differing from Cromwell's in sound but not in sense, "men are nothing, the man is everything." "Produce persons," said Walt Whitman, "and the rest follows." The possibilities of a man are to be judged by his best moments, and the possibilities of a nation by its best men.

iii.

A third principle of national policy discernible in the vision of a Christian patriot is one whose statement may not command the same general assent. But it seems to the writer that if History be indeed Philosophy teaching by examples, and if it furnishes in its winding course a revelation of the will of God, this principle will be difficult to refute. It is, that wherever in the story of a nation there comes a point—as come there will—where Liberty and Order engage in a final struggle for the mastery; where tension seems to come to a breaking-point as between some new demand for freedom, and some old insistence on security; then the true course is indicated by God's providential rule of the world—namely, to grant freedom and take the risks.

II.

We turn to what will be generally regarded as the most simple and characteristic element in the duty of a patriot—hearty identification of himself with the interests of his fatherland, so far as these are “according to the pattern shown in the mount” of Christian vision. To see with the eye of solitude the vision of a noble commonwealth, and have no

care for the task of translating the vision into fact, would be in the last degree contemptible.

“The common problem, yours, mine, everyone’s,
Is—not to fancy what were fair in life
Provided it could be—but finding first
What may be, then find how to make it fair
Up to our means ; a very different thing.”

We shall most easily deal with this aspect of patriotic duty by using the analysis given in the first chapter, and by considering how the patriot may best dedicate to the fatherland his threefold endowment of intelligence, emotion, and will. While few patriots can emulate a Savonarola in the measure in which he is said to have displayed in the service of Florence “the prophetic mind, the hero’s heart, the martyr’s fate,” still the three basal faculties suggested in these clauses have all their part in normal patriotism. The patriot must think of his country intelligently, love it ardently, serve it manfully.

i.

The first element, then, in the patriot’s task is to bring intelligence into play, and to consider how love for his country may best be permeated with understanding. We do not wish to love our country without knowing why we love it. Devotion need not be blind. Under favour of Provi-

dence, our land has been entrusted in the past with various endowments of body, mind, and spirit, which have tended to fit us for our peculiar place among the nations, to differentiate us in a wholesome way from others, and to constitute us stewards of the divine bounty. We shall clearly have a strong link between intelligence and patriotism if we can form some general idea of what these endowments are, and of what may be expected of them in the future, as determining a national contribution to the joint stock of human good. It is a good and pleasant thing that an Englishman should on occasion sing "Rule Britannia," or enjoy without reflection the thrill produced by the casual glimpse of a Union Jack in a foreign land; and there are hours when no profounder stirring of the nature is in season. But the question cannot be permanently shut out as to whether Britain's rule has had any special quality in the past to awaken respect for it; and whether the flag of the Three Crosses has any feature beyond its beautiful symbolism to call forth the gratitude and loyalty of those over whom it flies. It need not be a vain, it may be a profitable thing to appraise our national heritage, and to inquire what peculiar contribution Britain brings to the commonwealth of mankind.

It is true that this investigation is not altogether an easy one, nor is it one often embarked upon. If

it be difficult, as Burke declared, to bring an indictment against a whole nation, it appears almost equally difficult adequately to characterise one. A composite photograph is always blurred. Moreover, the Briton has an instinctive dislike to being explanatory in his patriotism; he shows to the world an easy content with the surface values of things, and if asked to give a considered reason for the patriotic faith that is in him, is apt to take refuge in a silence that is partly deliberate and partly enforced. Nevertheless, such reticence may be carried too far. Patriotism need not be stricken dumb in the court of equity when her case is called. We cannot have attained the position we hold to-day as a nation without some purpose in the Destiny that shapes our ends. And we are not over-introspective if we seek to be aware of the national type, and to reach some understanding of the nature of the trusteeship for which as a nation we must give account, as "good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

(a) If, then, with proper diffidence, we institute a brief inquiry as to the specific qualities of the British contribution to human good—the differentiating features of British character and temperament in the past, which have made our race of value to world-order and world-progress—we cannot overlook the fact that a certain physical endowment must be assumed as the basis of achieve-

ment. As the outcome, partly of heredity, partly of environment, there has become apparent in bygone years a certain toughness in the British physical frame, which has laid the first course for the addition of higher attributes. A well-known passage in Macaulay's history speaks of the English victories of the Middle Ages—victories such as that of Cressy—as being attributable to the personal superiority of the victors, and describes this superiority as being most striking in the lower ranks. "The knights of England found worthy rivals in the knights of France. Chandos encountered an equal foe in Du Guesolin. But France had no infantry that dared to face the English bows and bills." Manifestly, there must have been some physical basis for the fact thus signalled. Man for man, the Englishman must have shown himself stronger, tougher than his rival; or, in a comprehensive sense of the word, "better bred." He must have shown signs of what Pitt called in a later day "the fortitude which belongs to the national character." Six centuries later, in the throes of the most gigantic armed struggle of history, no consciousness seemed more inexpugnable in British soldiers than that of being man for man better than their foes, formidable as these foes were. "They have more guns than we have; but man for man we can beat them"—how often, in the earlier stages of the conflict,

did one hear this testimony from one of our fighting men, given not boastfully, but as a casual statement of fact. There is no food here, be it remembered, for national vainglory; for, while the men of Cressy were apparently representative of the whole population, the soldiers of the twentieth century were picked from a crowd which showed nearly a million other men unfit for military service, and extorted the warning from the Prime Minister of the day, "You cannot build an A1 empire out of C3 people." The British strain at its best is still capable of magnificent physical achievement; but no strain of human lineage has in the past been proof against the corroding of luxury, the malignancy of vice, or persistent disregard of laws of national health.

(b) As pertaining to the border-line between the physical capacity just considered and higher moral accomplishment, we may refer here to a second British characteristic, which has markedly contributed to the sum of human variety, and has also contributed in no small degree to the extension of the British Empire. We mean, the national fondness for exploration, with its associated love of adventure, and the passion (*absit omen*) for "going to and fro in the earth, and for walking up and down in it." "Wherever we go over all the earth," says Newman in a characteristic passage, "it is the solitary Englishman, the London

agent, the explorer, who is walking restlessly about, abusing the natives and raising a colossus, or setting the Thames on fire in the East or in the West. He is on the top of the Andes, or in a diving-bell in the Pacific, or taking notes at Timbuctoo, or grubbing at the pyramids, or scouring over the Pampas, or acting as prime minister to the King of Dahomey, or smoking the pipe of friendship with Red Indians, or hutting at the Pole. His country and the government have the gain; but it is he who is the instrument of it, not organisation, systematic plan, authoritative acts." It is in accordance with this characteristic that Gordon should have been able to say so truly that the British Empire was founded on the adventurer. The traditional battle attack of British infantry in open order, contrasted with the adoption by other armies of the method of close formation, is not without the force of a parable when applied to the national advance on more peaceful fields. While other nations have won their empires by massed attack, and have annexed this or that adjacent mass of territory, Great Britain has won wider dominions by an advance in open order. Let us again call to our help the descriptive power of Newman depicting the unofficial action of Clive at a turning-point of Indian history: "Suddenly a youth, the castaway of his family, half-clerk, half-soldier, puts himself at the head of a

few troops, defends posts, gains battles, and ends in founding a mighty empire over the graves of Mahmood and Aurungzeb." The islander naturally tends to be a rover, and if we have been right in saying that there is something tough and unyielding about the British physical constitution so that it maintains itself in any climate, we are also justified in ascribing to it properties of elasticity and adaptability, so that it makes itself at home over all the world. This trait—half-physical, half-ethical—is important, because it lies near the root of success in colonisation; and because, when dedicated to the noblest of all adventures in the furtherance of the Kingdom of God, it has led to the supreme achievements of the men who have hazarded their lives for the spread of the Gospel—a Livingstone, a Williams, a Hannington, a Grenfell.

(c) A still higher constituent of typical British character, when that character is taken at its best, is what no less an authority than the Austrian Chancellor called in a very recent appeal to our nation our "traditional sense of justice." It may fairly be claimed that an instinct for fair play, an honest desire to give his rights to the "other man," has been characteristic of the British attitude to fellow-mortals in the most typical representatives of our race. A writer so old as Montesquieu says that whenever England is the centre

of negotiations in Europe, she brings to them a little more honesty and good faith than do the others. Hence even in a disputed matter the average Englishman will often think it right to make an effort to cross mentally the boundary line of the dispute, and to look at the quarrel from the opponent's point of view. Upon preparedness to do this, and upon some measure of success in doing it, the just settlement of personal and industrial strife must often depend.

An illustration of this trait may be adduced from the life of Bishop Westcott of Durham—an incident which, standing as it does to the credit of the bishop, stands no less to the credit of the other parties concerned. During a prolonged coal strike in the county of Durham, the bishop offered to act as intermediary between the disputants; and when his offer was accepted, invited representatives of masters and men to his palace. Staking his faith upon their temperamental sense of justice, he addressed the two parties separately in similar terms. To the masters in one room he said, "I am not fully conversant with the merits of this dispute, but this one thing I know—that everything of success in this conference depends upon your trying to see this conflict *from the point of view of the men*. I shall leave you for an hour, and come back for the best terms you are prepared to yield me." To the men in another room, the

bishop spoke the same words with the necessary transformation: "everything depends upon your trying to see this conflict *from the point of view of the masters.*" Then he left the two conferring bodies, and retired to his chapel for prayer. After an hour he returned, and, receiving the masters' terms, submitted them to the men, and *vice versa*, only to find that at that stage they were irreconcilable. But without dismay, he repeated his injunction a second time, especially bidding each body regard the situation from the view-point of the other. And when at the close of the second period the bishop returned for the two sets of terms, he found them so nearly identical that a very brief adjustment removed the last discrepancy. If it is obvious that few mediators would have possessed in so rich a degree the confidence of the contending parties, the statement is perhaps equally warranted that in few other countries would such mediation have found the temperamental presuppositions which enabled it to be effective.¹

In pleasant harmony with what may be affirmed of the British instinct of justice is the currency of the proverb in many parts of the world—"as sure as the word of an Englishman." "These

¹ The incident is told in these terms in one of the official publications of the Church of England published during the "National Mission." Reference to the 'Life' of Dr Wescott confirms the essential facts, though the statement of them is there less concentrated.

barbarians have a curious habit of always speaking the truth," said a courtier once to an Emperor of China. To the typical Britisher, approximating to his best, the first elementary demand of justice is the communication of truth; and this demand of truth is peculiarly inexorable when a promise has been given to comrade or dependent. To give a promise to another whereon dependence has been placed, and then to lapse from the pledge; to be trusted and betray the trust; to "let a man down"—such sentences express the crowning treachery of which a Briton can conceive himself guilty. Hence the confidence which men of lower civilisations and weaker races have often felt in British good faith. In Nigeria, when war broke out in 1914, the chiefs were in possession of some 350 "scraps of paper," guaranteeing on behalf of Britain certain rights and privileges. Not a single British regiment, however, was on the spot to represent the majesty of empire, and only a few British officers in command of native soldiers. There were German troops in the neighbourhood, and efforts were made to shake Nigerian loyalty, especially by an offer to restore the lucrative slave trade which Britain had abolished. These efforts met with no success whatever. General Lugard reported "innumerable expressions of loyalty" from the chiefs, and numerous offers of assistance in the war. When for reasons of policy personal

assistance was refused, the Nigerian chiefs and people voluntarily contributed £38,000 towards the expenses of the conflict.

It is by no means fanciful to see a connection between the love of justice of which we are here speaking, and the British passion for sports and games. The very phrase "fair play" points to this connection. The British habit of thinking of war, and even of life itself, as a kind of superior game has often been commented upon, and sometimes with an accent of half-contemptuous impatience. "To interest a Frenchman in a boxing match," says a writer who is himself a Frenchman, "you must tell him that his national honour is at stake. To interest an Englishman in a war, you need only suggest that it is a kind of boxing match." But it is to be observed that a boxing match, when fairly conducted, has certain features whose implications stretch beyond the occasion. It demands rules, carefully and impartially framed. It suggests an umpire with power to enforce the rules. It implies a watching background of spectators conversant with the rules, and intolerant of any breach of them. Obviously, if a soldier can think of war under these terms, he thinks of it under terms which make a strong appeal to his sense of fair play, and at the same time to the manlier and more strenuous side of his nature. The conception does not mean that war is trivial,

like a game. It means that war, like a game, is truly an affair of honour. The man who in the schoolboy idiom "plays the game," or in soldier slang behaves "like a sportsman," is descended in lineal moral succession from the runner in the old Greek sports, whose ambition was not merely to reach the goal ahead of others, but to reach it with the lighted torch still unquenched.

(d) The most important contribution which Britain has so far brought to the joint stock of human wellbeing seems to the writer to be that reserved for final mention—a balance attained by no other nation between love of liberty and love of law. The auspicious union between order and freedom has presented itself to many observers as the main feature of our national history, in so far as that history is matter of legitimate pride. "Other societies," says Macaulay, "possess constitutions more symmetrical than ours. But no other society has yet succeeded in uniting revolution with prescription, progress with stability, the energy of youth with the majesty of immemorial antiquity." Palmerston found the spring of his buoyant optimism in the reflection that "this country has shown that liberty is compatible with order, that individual freedom is reconcilable with obedience to the law." And a more recent writer of expert knowledge, Mr Ramsay Muir, after speaking of how in ancient times Greece stood for

liberty, and Rome established our idea of law, and after tracing the development of these often conflicting principles, goes on to say: "But there was one happy land where even amid the turbulence of the Middle Age, both Law and Liberty in a more generous sense got themselves established. This happy land was England—the first of European nations to achieve full consciousness of her nationhood. This happy nation was to be, in the third and greatest age of Western civilisation, the main guardian and representative of the most fundamental ideas of that civilisation, though neither she nor her rivals were yet able to perceive this." Certainly, when we think of the nations geographically nearest to us, and of how in France, during the Revolution, the extreme of liberty ran unchecked into licence; and of how, in Germany, in a later period, the extreme of law was embodied in the autoeratic discipline of the drill-sergeant, we cannot but be grateful to God for what he has permitted our country to know of the harmonious co-operation of the two, and cannot but be mindful of the scriptural precept, "hold that fast which thou hast."

ii.

We have dealt with the point that when a Christian patriot dedicates his powers to the service of his country, the first power he should seek to

enlist is intelligence. He ought to have an intelligent apprehension of the probable purpose of God in securing for his particular country a distinct place among the nations; and he ought to argue that, if God have indeed written one line of His thought upon each people, it is desirable that each citizen should know what that thought is. But we have now to remind ourselves that man is much more than a merely rational creature, and that emotion must stand alongside of reason in patriotic service. Blind would the Christian patriot be to patent facts of life and to recent teachings of psychology, if he did not recognise the importance in history of that upsurging rush of feeling which proves itself so often the most potent instrument of social reform. The Christian patriot ought not to slight the value of disciplined emotion as an ingredient of his own character; and still less ought he to slight it as a necessary factor in the education of the young. The central thesis of one of the most notable books of the last decade, Benjamin Kidd's 'Science of Power,' is that the future of civilisation rests not on reason but on emotion; and that the "emotion of the ideal" is the most effective weapon known to history for the bringing in of a new era. Mr Kidd illustrates this thesis by reference to the astonishing change, in this case malign, which came over Germany in a single generation under the impulse

of ideals of national conquest presented emotionally in her schools and colleges. And he also adduces the more praiseworthy transformation of Japan under ideals similarly commended to her youth. No reader of Mazzini's speeches addressed to the men of Italy can doubt the almost irresistible power of strong emotion evoked by a national ideal clearly seen and adequately presented. Unhappily, the activities of Sinn Fein in Ireland offer at the moment of writing another and less welcome instance of the same astonishing power. One is led to feel that if good men could only cherish emotions of goodwill as evil men have often cherished emotions of hatred; if citizens could only find an emotional "equivalent of war," and not merely a "moral" one; the prayer would not so often be belated—

"O God, had we but loved enough
Our sea-girt land *in peace.*"

(1) It may be possible to indicate a little more precisely what is implied in the cultivation of patriotism as an emotion. Defined as love of country, it directs the most unselfish of all feelings to one of the most comprehensive of objects. Hence the Christian patriot ought to love his country deliberately. It is true that there is nothing more difficult or more delicate than the express culture of feeling; and that we cannot

love because we will, and when we will, even when it is our country which invites our love. Emotion seems to dwindle when direct attention is fixed upon it; and the saying is true that you cannot educate a rose to smell sweet by any process directed expressly to its scent. Nevertheless, emotion springs quickly to life under certain conditions. There is a Buddhist saying that our lives follow our thoughts as the wheel the foot of the ox that draws the cart. This saying is specially true of the relationship between intelligence and feeling. When intelligence is afoot in some new dawn of apprehension and has set out upon her march, emotions which were slumbering by the camp-fire will be roused and constrained to follow. Patriotism as a conviction will draw after it patriotism as an affection. Hence we ought to think deliberately at times of the debt we owe our country. "I would have you," said Pericles, "day by day fix your eyes upon the greatness of Athens, until you become filled with the love of her." However difficult it may be to define a nation in the abstract, at all events our own nation is for ourselves a concrete reality. It has been many centuries in the fashioning, and has become "the old country" in all significancies—grey in the bringing forth and nourishing of many children. Not without the respect of others, and the general esteem of mankind, have grey hairs appeared here and

there on the brow of the motherland. To her, also, a "hoary head is a crown of glory," and come what may in the future, she must needs have an illustrious and honoured name till human history has an end. It is only through our inheritance in our country that we are heirs of the past, and it must be chiefly through our country that we can be benefactors of the future. We can as a rule do little for humanity by our individual effort; but our country can do much for it, and we can help to make our country worthy of the task.

(2) Furthermore, the Christian patriot must needs love his country reverently. The more we ponder in Britain the record of God's dealings with our fathers, the more are we constrained to say, *Non nobis, Domine*, and the more shall we be concerned to pray to the God of our fathers, that He will indeed "be the God of their succeeding race." There has been entrusted to us in our island-home the best-defined territory in Europe. No question can arise as to whether the boundaries are rightly drawn; we are bounded by the sea. No new-drawn maps can vex us, as they have vexed other nations, traced by the ignorant or arrogant hands of conferring statesmen. Providence has given us our place on the map, which no power on earth can alter. In other lands, problems arise as to boundaries; in our land, none. Within this boundary, the same language is spoken and understood;

and a certain wealth of dialect but adds to the richness of the treasure. When we consider, therefore, the heritage which has become ours through the unmerited goodness of God, shown first to our forefathers and then to ourselves, we cannot but realise the marvel of the divine confidence which has been placed in us, and cannot but shudder at the possibility of its betrayal. "Lord, Thou hast been favourable unto thy land . . . show us Thy mercy and grant us Thy salvation."

(3) The Christian patriot is called, almost above all, to love his country hopefully. A besetting sin of Christendom in the past has been to be far too little hopeful of what, under proper conditions, one generation can accomplish. One of the sentences which Benjamin Kidd put in italicised headlines in the book already quoted is this: "Given clear vision in the general mind, this cultural inheritance (of goodwill) could be imposed on civilisation in a single generation." And there is nothing more certain, as a matter of historical observation, than that the temper and outlook of a nation may be revolutionised in a very short space of time. Nations lie just as open to conversion as individuals, though the word may be used in a somewhat different sense. Of whatever other treasures Pandora's box may be empty, it need not, when in Christian keeping, be empty of its primeval gift of Hope.

It should be remembered that the Christian has in the apostolic doctrine of the Holy Spirit a special incentive to hope. The Christian is invited to believe in men, because he believes in the potencies of the grace of God *in* men. The just criticism was once passed on Carlyle that while he had indubitably one qualification of a prophet in that he sincerely believed in his message, he lacked another qualification in this, that he never could persuade himself that his message would be *accepted*. He flung his teaching at "forty millions, mostly fools," and hence the impression the teaching often carried of something petulant, splenetic, ill-humoured. On the other hand, the remarkable influence over men of one of the greatest of modern English Churchmen (and the writer has heard the same explanation given of the influence of Dr Charteris in the Scottish Church) has been ascribed to the fact that his speeches and writings always contrived to suggest the conviction that men only wanted to know their duty in order to discharge it. He had faith not only in his message, but in those to whom he declared it. This is indeed the only position consistent with Christian orthodoxy. If we cherish a devout belief in God as Father, and a genuine reliance upon the Son of God as our Redeemer, we must not withhold belief in the power of the Holy Spirit to persuade and enable men to respond to the declaration of the divine

will. But the Holy Spirit is given in answer to prayer, and this naturally leads us to our next point.

iii.

Our final point in this chapter concerns the dedication of will to patriotic service. And there is one form of this dedication which is so congruous with Christian belief, and which lies so immediately within the reach of every Christian patriot, that it may stand here as the representative of all the rest. This is such dedication of time, strength, and vitality to the service of the fatherland as is involved in deliberate obedience to the command of the apostle: "I exhort that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for kings and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." "Intercession," says William Law, "is the ancient fellowship of Christians." From whatever other service a patriot may be withheld through lack of strength or opportunity, it is always open to him to fall back upon the resolve—

"And for mine own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray."

It has been suggestively said that prayer is an easy lesson, hard to learn. It is in one sense an easy lesson, because it is for most men an instinct

rather than an acquirement. "We hear," said William James, "a great deal of discussion about the efficacy of prayer, and many reasons are given us why we should not pray, whilst others are given us why we should. But in all this very little is said of the reason why we do pray. The reason why we do pray is simply that we cannot help praying." Yet on the other hand, this easy lesson is in another sense hard to learn. One of the main maladies of our age is that we so sadly fail to embody in the organised habits of daily living the creed of our noblest instincts. It is one thing to believe in prayer, another thing to believe in praying.

(1) It is by prayer that the Christian patriot will best acknowledge dependence upon God, and win an answer to the petition offered on his death-bed by Oliver Cromwell: "Teach those who look too much upon Thy instruments to depend more upon Thyself." When we look at the problems which emerge round the horizon of any national survey, when we think of the leadership needed to engage them, the qualities of heart and head needed to surmount them, each Christian citizen must say with the psalmist, "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him." We seriously need in those days some check upon our natural turning to material and intellectual forces—the wisdom of statesmen, the muster-roll of

armies, the pay-bill of industry, the suggestions of conferring councillors. *Nisi Dominus frustra.* Every one who prays, in however humble a sphere, and uses the opportunity of prayer to acknowledge his own dependence on God, and the dependence of his fellows, is doing something to liberate the strength that is made perfect in weakness, and to make national life a rallying-ground for the forces of heaven.

(2) It is by prayer that the Christian patriot will awaken and exercise his hope in God—that hope of which we spoke a few pages back as being characteristic of Christian insight. It is a special office of our Redeemer to take away heaviness of spirit in religious duty, and to give instead thereof the “garment of praise.” Normally, it is a real pleasure to a healthy man to embark upon a task which he feels to be thoroughly worth while. Joy in work which promises achievement, however strenuous that work may be, is one of the most pervasive and deep-seated joys in human nature. And perhaps the message about prayer which our age needs most of all is that for the least conspicuous disciple this “labour is not in vain in the Lord.” To turn to the teaching of Jesus on the subject is to recognise the too frequent chasm between His view of the matter and the view most prevalent in our time. Where we speak of the problems of prayer, He spoke of its achievements.

Where we explain its limitations, He dwelt on its possibilities. Where we present the matter in terms of apologetic, He presented it in terms of Gospel. Hence no Christian patriot will readily become a pessimist. He may be perplexed, yet not in despair; troubled, yet not distressed. He will seek by prayer to give a nobler application to the words of Shelley—

“To love, to bear, to hope, till hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates.”

(3) Finally, it is by prayer that the Christian patriot will find the appointed gateway to active service, seeing that the essence of prayer is fellowship, and fellowship implies the practical carrying out of the divine purpose, the being “fellow-labourers” with God. It is the saying of an old theologian that God can as little do without us as we without Him. Rightly interpreted, the statement is just. The King of Nations has chosen thus to limit Himself. There are apparently certain gifts He will not give, and certain loving designs He cannot bring to pass, except as His call to human partnership finds a willing response in the prayers and the service of men. The saying of Coleridge is true, both in what it directly asserts and in what it ultimately involves: “The act of praying is the very highest energy of which the human mind is capable.”