MEN AGAINST WAR

by

NICHOLAS GILLETT

with a Foreword by

RITCHIE CALDER

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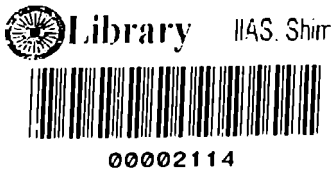
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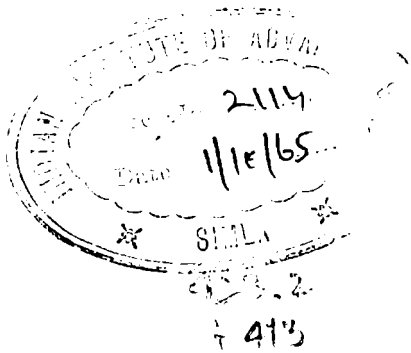

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD

by Ritchie Calder, C.B.E., M.A.,
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IN THE NUCLEAR stockpiles of the Great Powers, there is the equivalent of 320,000,000,000 tons of TNT which represents 100 tons of destructive power for every man, woman and child on earth. The United States has enough nerve-gas to paralyse all life over an area of 455,000,000 square miles, which by any reckoning is extravagant because that is four times the surface area of our planet. Added to that there are all the other chemical and biological weapons, including artificial epidemics from which humans, animals and plants have no natural immunity. *Homo Insapiens,* Unthinking Man, now has the capacity to veto the evolution of his species and reduce his planet to a desert.

War, always an absurd way of resolving (or not resolving) disputes has become patently crazy. Indefensible on moral grounds, it has now become intolerable on rational grounds.

When we had the Rehearsal for Doomsday at the time of the Cuban crisis and the hornlocked nuclear powers, U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. disengaged, Kruschev said, "People ask 'Who lost? Who won?' Human reason won. Mankind won."

The one independent Voice of Reason which really made itself heard at that time was a ninety-year-old voice, that of Bertrand Russell. He indignantly intervened with both parties. Kruschev, spurning diplomatic channels, responded to Russell

with an offer which caused a gasp of relief in the lobbies of the United Nations and released the tensions and helped the settlement of the crisis.

One cites this in preface to Nicholas Gillett's *Men Against War* as a reminder that, while the Disarmament Conference is holding its hundred and umpteenth session, individuals, with purposeful conviction, can still influence the course of events.

This is an admirable book, as simple and lucid as its motive. When the author first mentioned his choice of men, I was doubtful about some he had chosen, as well as by omissions. On reading the book, I withdraw my reservations. The pattern makes sense, because it illustrates the diverse backgrounds and approaches of men whose purpose is peace.

The inclusion of Pierre Ceresole is particularly satisfying to me because he demonstrates the functional method of building the defences of peace, by getting people to work together. Helping people to help themselves is a positive approach. The do-ers are as important as the thinkers. They provide the moral equivalent of war by making peace an adventure-with-a-purpose, by rallying people against the common enemies: poverty, hunger, sickness and ignorance.

Nicholas Gillett is himself a member of the expeditionary force of Men Against War. I have seen what he achieved as a do-er for UNESCO in the north of Thailand where his name is still gratefully remembered and where his work is now part of a new pattern of living, and I know what he has been doing in Iran. I include him in his own gallery.

Edinburgh 1964 R. C.

I ASOKA

How can war be avoided? The simple but incomplete answer is, "If people learn from the great peacemakers they will know how to save the peace." For a long time, however, they have admired or even modelled themselves on the great warriors and the great generals. These men have been called great too easily: real greatness leads to peace-making not war-making, and it is to real greatness that modern man needs to turn.

One of the earliest examples of a peacemaker was Asoka, who was emperor in India twenty-two centuries ago. His grandfather learned much from Alexander the Great, whose empire stretched so far east that its length equalled the distance between Iran and London. It is something of a mystery how such an empire was ever held together, even for a short period, by written instructions carried on horse-back. When Alexander died and his empire broke up, Asoka's grandfather founded a kingdom in northern India. He evidently knew about the countries to the west, and seems to have included among his wives at least one Greek, or partly Greek, woman. The extensive use of stone for building was one of the many changes brought about by these contacts. New ideas spread through this great empire, and Alexander's influence was carried on at second hand. Alexander himself had struck the imagination of peoples wherever he went. Only recently it was

discovered that there is an old folk-song still sung in Pakistan which refers to his coming 2,300 years ago.

Asoka grew up in a stone palace built as a series of courtyards, with the servants and slaves living downstairs and the more important people upstairs. Drainage was well developed and the town of Pataliputra, where he lived, was carefully laid out in square blocks. Most of the houses, other than the palace and main buildings, were built of wood.

The people who lived in this splendid town were no mere craftsmen and servants, but included traders who dealt with merchants in distant countries, men of learning, and, as the empire grew, a large body of officials. It is possible to imagine the young Asoka, self-assured by reason of his birth, watching their comings and goings and asking questions about the distant places which the traders and officials had seen with their own eyes. New ideas also came from his own family. His grandfather, for example, joined the Jainist sect and, in his old age, hastened his death by slow starvation voluntarily imposed, according to Jainist customs. The period was one of awakening, both in religion and in ways of government, and it was Asoka who joined these two aspects of life together.

Little is known of Asoka's childhood, but glimpses of how much parents and children resembled those of today may be caught from time to time. His grandfather, having heard a mother scolding her child for starting to eat his pudding from the middle of the plate instead of politely from the side, remembered this in founding his empire and thus subdued the frontier tribes, before conquering the centre. The young Asoka would have taken part in religious processions with his father and the priests, dressed in ceremonial robes skilfully woven in gold and silver so that they sparkled in the sun. The sacrifice of animals was becoming rare at this time, but

animals would undoubtedly have walked in the processions; above all, elephants, in highly decorated trappings, used to carry important people under parasols of gaudy colours. Camels, oxen and horses had lesser roles, but the whole procession was a glorious display of magnificence. It was not for nothing that the emperors of this dynasty were called the Peacock Emperors.

At other times there were lesser entertainments: snake-charmers, dancers and musicians would perform at the palace; and there were toys and games such as beads and dice for the children, and little clay figures, which were sometimes used for magic, sometimes as playthings.

The craftsmen lived each in his own quarter of the town: potters in one part, weavers in another, armourers, builders and leatherworkers in yet others, all passing on their skills to their sons, who stood watching beside them as they worked. Learning, for the most part, went on at a father's elbow rather than at a school, and even in the palace this must have been largely true. As the princes reached the right age they might be invited to accompany their father on his tours of the provinces, travelling in state with many people and beasts of burden, watching how roads were planned, taxes raised and disputes settled.

Asoka's father followed his grandfather as emperor, but when he died, leaving many sons, there was some doubt as to who should succeed him. For four years government continued without any decision being reached. Asoka, by this time, was acting as viceroy or provincial ruler of one of the provinces into which the empire was divided. He had put into practice what he had learned and made a name as a vigorous, or, according to some reports, ruthless ruler. He had collected the taxes efficiently so that the central government could be

maintained, and he had prevented local landlords from becoming powerful enough to question the authority of his father, the emperor.

It was usual at that time for those who were wealthy to have many wives, so that when the emperor died there were many sons who might claim the right to follow him on the throne. Usually there was one wife, known as the first wife, whose eldest son might have had the best claim. If, however, he lacked force of character his leadership would have been questioned. It seems that Asoka, full of confidence from his successful government of a province, had enough supporters to prevail over the other princes. Afterwards the tale used to be told—it made a good tale—that he killed ninety-nine of his hundred brothers so that they could not seize the throne from him. Story-tellers in those long-ago days did not bother to keep to the facts, and it may well be supposed that no one believed such a story. It does seem, however, that Asoka was not, at first, the good, gentle ruler he was later to become, and that he had only one brother who was not killed or driven away. This was Tissa, who became the vice-regent and lived a life of extreme luxury and idleness. Asoka grew angry with him and decided to tolerate this behaviour no longer. Going away for a time, he arranged for Tissa to act as emperor, but then he returned suddenly and accused his brother of trying to take the throne from him. Tissa was condemned to death, the sentence to be carried out in seven days.

It was during those terrible days when he was expecting to die that Tissa came to understand the Buddhist attitude to death, and later, when to his surprise he was allowed to go free, he gave up his old way of life and became a holy man. He no longer wished to live in a town, but to exist alone on a hill as a hermit. The land was flat for miles, however, and

Asoka, not wishing his only surviving brother to be very far away, built an artificial hill near the palace grounds especially for him.

Asoka, as emperor, had to administer a vast territory. It stretched from Afghanistan right across India and far to the south. To make sure his officers were governing well, he made long journeys or tours such as his father and grandfather had undertaken before him. His concern for his subjects may be judged by the writings on rocks and pillars which are the main monuments to his reign, and which are scattered all over his empire. They were established where many people would see and read them, in large market towns, or where trade routes, from town to town, crossed. If there were not suitable rocks, huge stone pillars were erected—some with a carved animal on top as a decoration. No doubt there were others written on wood or cloth which have perished through the ages. Often such writings were repeated in other languages, and these have provided clues so that it is now possible for experts to read every inscription that has been found.

The passages which describe the government of Asoka are numerous. Some were written especially for the officials of the empire, but it was thought important for anyone who could read to know what the officials were supposed to do, and doubtless the knowledge would have spread to those who could not read. One inscription begins like this: "By order of the Beloved of the Gods: the officers and city magistrates at Tosali/Sumapa are to be instructed thus . . . You are in charge of many thousands of living beings. You should gain the affection of men. All men are my children, and just as I desire for my children that they should obtain . . . happiness both in this world and the next, the same do I desire for all men. But you do not realise how much this means—perhaps

one man among you may realise it, but even he only in part. Reflect on it well, even those of you who are well-placed. Often, without reason, a man suffers imprisonment or torture and then is released from prison, and many other people suffer further."

The opening, "Thus speaks the Beloved of the Gods, the King Piyadassi" (another name for Asoka), is common to many of the rocks and pillars and is much more modest than the usual opening phrase found in the proud kingdoms to the west. Darius in Persia used to begin his carved proclamations: "I am Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King of countries containing all kinds of men, King in this great earth far and wide . . ." Although Asoka was more modest, he was firm, and, as the passage suggests, not inclined to overlook his officers' faults. His tours to see what they were doing, coupled with a system of reporters and spies, were designed to check the power of the powerful, to supervise the collection of taxes vital to all governments, and to inspect the armed forces. At that time there was an hereditary caste of warriors, and these men, supplemented by hired soldiers, had formed a formidable force during the period when the empire was created. They were supported by cavalry and elephants and, at the coast, by a navy of sailing ships. As so often happens, it proved easier to build up forces than to disarm, and in the period of peace, at the end of Asoka's reign, the highly paid hereditary troops became unpopular. In some empires there have been attempts by the generals to overthrow the ruler, but no such attempt was made against Asoka. He had indeed a very unusual device for his personal safety: the members of his armed bodyguard were women. It is supposed that they would have been less likely to follow the lead of an ambitious general and more likely to form a strong personal loyalty to the emperor.

The empire also depended on a hard-working ruler. Asoka set an extraordinary example to those who followed in the Peacock dynasty, by making himself available at all times for consultation, whether he was relaxing, say, in the palace gardens, or even while being massaged. By hearing and settling disputes he kept in touch with the details of administration. The disputes over water rights and grazing rights, and the problems of money-lending, were all familiar to him. India has always suffered from harsh money-lenders, perhaps because even in Asoka's time a very kindly view was taken of them. It was said "the wise and moral man shines like a fire on a hilltop, making money like the bee which does not hurt the flower. Such a man makes his pile, as an anthill, gradually".

To complete the picture of how the emperor and his people lived, it is essential to consider the castes which were already forming in India's first great empire. A caste is a group of people who keep apart from others, usually marrying one of their own number and fulfilling some special function. Thus in Asoka's empire there was first the priestly caste—the Brahmans, who lived as monks or holy men and performed the rites at the temples. They regarded themselves as superior to all others, and their influence was so great that it was sometimes a threat to the power of the emperor himself. Next in importance came the three largest castes, the herdsmen, cultivators and craftsmen; while the soldiers, officials and councillors, who were less important, were relatively few. Finally there were slaves and others outside the caste system altogether.

Thus the life of the emperor and his people can be made out from the legends and scraps of writing which have been preserved. It was this extraordinary empire that Asoka

astonished with a new idea which grew from his study of Buddha and his followers.

Gautama, the Buddha, had lived nearly three hundred years earlier. Little is known with certainty about him as he grew up, but innumerable legends have formed around his life. Some of these are common to many religious leaders in Asia, such as a capacity for walking on water or multiplying food. He set the pattern, to Asoka, of preaching not so much a religion, as the right way to live. Talking to a victorious king he asked:

"What would you do if you were told that a landslide was about to destroy you and your city?"

The king replied:

"I would live righteously. There would be nothing else to do."

"I tell you," Gautama went on, "old age and death are rolling down upon you. What are you going to do?"

The king smiled and answered:

"Live righteously."

Gautama taught that the aim of life was to escape from the petty hopes, fears and hates which make people little-minded, and to become serene and happy by rising above them. Nothing was written down about him or his sayings until shortly before Asoka's time, but then the tales began to accumulate as they were recounted in Buddhist monasteries where the monks gathered. Gradually the Buddhist religion separated itself from the Indian religion (Hinduism) and spread into other countries—and Asoka was partly responsible for this.

He was alert to new religious ideas, as his grandfather had been, and he must have met and talked with Buddhist followers. However, his conversion was not sudden, like St.

Paul's on the road to Damascus, nor did he have an experience such as Gautama had when the right way to live became suddenly clear as he sat meditating one day under a Bo tree. The great event in Asoka's reign was the Kalinga War, indeed it was to him what the Bo tree was to Gautama. Whereas many neighbouring kingdoms, that could have been overthrown by Asoka's powerful army, were left in peace, Kalinga obstructed his trade with the south and his trade by sea. Moreover, Kalinga's own trade in ships had grown to the point where it could yield rich taxes to support the government of Asoka's whole empire.

In the year 260 B.C., therefore, Asoka marched against Kalinga with many hundreds, maybe thousands, of elephants carrying archers, with cavalry and with the well-disciplined ranks of hereditary soldiers. Asoka accompanied the army and watched the slaughter which followed—and a glimpse may be caught, across all the centuries, of what this good ruler felt on seeing warfare at close quarters. Most men, when victorious, become so drunk with power that they will listen to good advice neither from statesmen nor prophets, but Asoka was appalled at the contradiction between the cruelty he saw and what he had learned of Buddhism.

Asoka's greatness can be measured by what he caused to be written on a rock after the victory: "When he had been crowned eight years, the Beloved of the Gods, the King Piyadassi, conquered Kalinga. A hundred and fifty thousand people were deported, a hundred thousand were killed and many times that number perished. Afterwards, now that Kalinga was annexed, the Beloved of the Gods practised, desired and taught Dhamma (the right way to live). On conquering Kalinga, the Beloved of the Gods felt remorse, for, when a country is conquered, the slaughter, death and

deportation of the people is extremely grievous to the Beloved of the Gods, and weighs heavily on his mind. What is even more tragic to the Beloved of the Gods, is that those who dwell there . . . who show obedience to their superiors, to mother and father and teachers, and who behave well to their friends, relatives, slaves and servants, all suffer violence, murder and separation from their loved ones . . . Today, if a hundredth or a thousandth part of those people who were killed or died or were deported when Kalinga was annexed, were to suffer similarly, it would weigh heavily on the mind of the Beloved of the Gods. . . . For the Beloved of the Gods wishes that all beings should be unharmed, self-controlled, calm in mind, and gentle. The Beloved of the Gods considers the victory of Dhamma to be the greatest victory of all. . . . This inscription of Dhamma has been engraved so that any sons or great grandsons that I may have should not think of gaining new conquests, and in whatever victories they may gain should be satisfied with patience and light punishment."

In other writings Asoka denounced fame and glory, and announced that to him the only glory was the following of Dhamma by his people. Although capital punishment existed in his empire, he disliked it and hoped to find a way of avoiding it. Like any good Buddhist, he came to believe it was wrong to kill either men or animals if it could possibly be avoided. Royal hunts were discontinued, vets were trained. He had banyan trees planted on the roads to give shade to beasts and men as they journeyed through the heat. Every nine miles wells were dug to save travellers from the torture of thirst. He discouraged sacrifices to the old gods, and desired monkeys to be specially protected because of their likeness to humans. Swans, geese and parrots were placed on a list of protected birds. As he grew older and even more con-

cerned to avoid cruelty, the rules written on the pillars became stricter: "An animal must not be fed on the flesh of another animal." To show his sincerity, meals at the royal palace were closely restricted so that not more than "one deer and two peacocks" might be killed daily. This also he made known to his subjects by inscriptions. He spared neither himself nor his officers. "Just as one entrusts one's child to an experienced nurse, and is sure that she is able to care for him satisfactorily, so my officers have been appointed for the welfare and happiness of the country people."

These instructions about government were mixed, in many of the writings, with Dhamma, the right way to live. "Dhamma has progressed through my instructions . . . for this is my principle; to protect through Dhamma, to administer according to Dhamma, to please the people through Dhamma, to govern the empire with Dhamma." His eagerness to look after his people, and also his awareness that kings are often tempted into doing wrong, is shown in many of the writings. "One only notices one's good deeds, thinking 'I have done good', but one does not notice one's evil deeds . . . and to be aware of this is really difficult. Cruelty, harshness, pride and envy cause men to sin. Let them not be the cause of my fall."

Despite his increasing interest in Buddhist beliefs, he was always sympathetic towards other sects, in the manner of modern Buddhists. It seems likely that he spent a period as a monk, just as the present King of Thailand has done. He would have been delighted to think that more than 2,000 years later a Buddhist (Mr. U Thant) would become the chief officer of a new kind of empire, responsible for the whole world.

Towards the end of his reign he kept contact with a large number of Asian countries, but, instead of sending only the

usual sort of envoys, he sent missionaries to explain Dhamma in the countries they visited. His influence as a wise ruler was therefore spread far more widely than if he had marched with his victorious armies. Later, Buddhism spread to Burma, Thailand and China, where a standard of humility for great rulers, and a belief in serenity, goodness and a reverence for life, were accepted and have never died out. It is doubtful whether there can ever be peace between countries unless this first lesson, taught more than 2,200 years ago, is learned: the power of rulers must be guided by kindness and wisdom. Although the Emperor Asoka appeared to be a failure, since his subjects gave up Buddhism, and within fifty years his empire fell to pieces, he was, in reality, like Jesus or Socrates —a man whose influence was extended by his death.

Indeed, the memory of the good emperor lingered on in the same way as the Pakistani folk-song that tells of the coming of Alexander; and the wisdom carried through the ages in Asoka's inscriptions helped to make possible the achievements of Mahatma Gandhi.

II WILLIAM PENN

THE LIFE OF Asoka is representative of those who, early in the story of civilisation, established some of the principles on which peace depends. Hammurabi, who was the first ruler to put laws into writing, so that anyone could find out what was legal and what illegal, was also of considerable importance. The idea, that laws which keep the peace between individuals within a country should be the model for laws keeping the peace between states, was spread, in the seventeenth century, by William Penn, an extraordinary if not eccentric statesman, law-giver and religious leader.

During Penn's youth, Europe was exhausted by the prolonged fighting of the Thirty Years War, and England was wrenched in two by the Civil War between Catholics and Protestants. Following these disasters, the search for peace was intensified. In some countries government by a King was strengthened into a form of dictatorship; even this seemed preferable to pillaging by the soldiery, who would ransack any district through which they passed, like locusts, leaving no food behind them. In England ideas went further than this: if the rich and powerful misgoverned the country, was it not possible that the ordinary man could take a share in government and do better than the gentry? Democracy was growing both in politics and religion. There were many Christians who came to believe that they could find their own way to Heaven without the help of a priest; there were those, too,

who believed that no government was needed, but that people should live in small communities on farms. Many people were seeking a new way of life—and some actually called themselves "Seekers".

In such a period of teeming thought and stirring events, a man was needed who could give a shape to the new trends. It was not yet the century of the Common Man, education was gained by few, but one or two of the landed aristocracy had the education, the public spirit and the leisure to make a step towards world organisation.

William Penn was born close to the Tower of London, which was no place for tourists in 1644, but a grim and threatening prison and an ill omen for the whole of William Penn's life. During his early childhood, all went well with the family. His father had been made a rear-admiral by Charles I, for successes at sea, and promotion came easily. At that time, when London was still small, people with influence all knew each other, and the approval of the King counted for much. However, difficulties arose later: Admiral Penn, who seems to have changed sides very readily, was sent by Cromwell to the West Indies with a fleet, but, since he failed to carry out his orders, he was imprisoned in the Tower on his return. Set free after some weeks, he took his family to Ireland, where they settled on estates near Cork, feeling that the distance from London added to their safety. If they were not quite refugees, they were certainly in disgrace, and there was no knowing what would happen next.

Young William grew up, therefore, in a very worldly atmosphere. His father was often away at sea fighting the Dutch, the Spanish or his own countrymen. The family home changed from London to Essex, back to London and then to Ireland. When the elder Penn came home from sea and took

his mother's attention away from William, the boy accepted his father coldly; and a quarrel which sprang up later must have had its roots in these early years. There were also a younger brother and sister in the family.

It is unfortunate that teachers seldom keep records of their distinguished pupils. No word remains of William at the school he attended in Essex. Later, when he wrote about education, he was doubtless thinking back to his own school days: "We are in pain to make them scholars but not men. We press their memory too soon, and puzzle, strain and load them with words and rules . . . leaving . . . mechanical and physical knowledge uncultivated which would be of exceeding use and pleasure to them through the whole course of their life."

"Children had rather be making of tools and instruments of play; shaping, drawing, framing and building, than getting some rules of propriety of speech by heart. It were happy if we studied Nature more in natural things; and acted according to Nature, whose rules are few, plain and most reasonable."

His school days ended when he was taken to Ireland at the age of twelve; then private tutors combined with Nature, in the form of the gentle Irish landscape, to shape his education. He was now old enough to ride round with his father, who had great success as a landlord. No doubt young William learned much which he was later to find useful. These were golden years, when there was time for boating on the river and for the thousand adventures of which town boys know little.

In 1660, Charles II was restored to the throne of his father, Admiral Penn found himself once again in favour at court,

and William, at the age of sixteen, became a student at Christ Church, Oxford. At that period it was fashionable for students to give little time to study, but to pass their days playing cards and drinking—they had no aim in life. From the first, William was not one of these; he divided his time between boating and athletics, on the one hand, and reading, on the other.

News reached him one day that Thomas Loe, the famous Quaker, was preaching in Oxford—news that brought back a very vivid memory from his years in Ireland. It was the custom in those days for well-to-do families to invite travelling preachers to speak in their homes. In the great hall, his family, the servants and the children had gathered to listen to the words of this same Thomas Loe. The preacher's message had been clear and forceful, for at that time he could count on a willing response to the warning and the hope of his Quaker sermon, even from such men as Admiral Penn. William had seen with astonishment, though he had hardly dared to look round, that there had been tears in the eyes, not only of his mother, but of his stern father. He had wondered to himself what would happen were they all to join the Quaker sect.

Now, at Oxford, he was listening again, and he and others felt compelled to make the choice between good and bad, between God and King. Several like-minded students met together in their rooms at college, absented themselves from college chapel and refused to wear the gowns which were regarded as contrary to their religion. They attempted to pull the gowns off the backs of other students; they would not apologise, nor could they be forgiven. These were early days in Charles' reign, and there was no knowing whether his opponents would attempt to send him back into exile. The universities were informed that they must be more strict,

and so many students, among them William Penn, were sent down from college.

Consequently, in the year 1662, William, aged eighteen, came riding home, his sword at his side, his hair in fashionable long curls. Though his father was relieved to see him dressed normally—not as a puritan—he feared that William cared little for sword and curls. At first the Admiral thought William would soon shake off his "stupid ideas" in the gay life of London. The family had a frivolous round of parties, and were much flattered at court; but William was not to be touched. What had been a difference of opinion grew into a quarrel; his father no longer spoke to him, and sent his meals to his own room. To ease the situation, William agreed to go on a journey through Europe, first to the French court, then to college in France. On one occasion, while in France, a street quarrel led him into a duel; the swords flashed, but his opponent, perhaps under the influence of drink, faltered and was at William's mercy. He knocked the sword out of the man's hand and then, with a bow, presented it back to him.

On his return, two years later, a sea-war with the Dutch brought further promotion to his father, and William accompanied him to sea. The Admiral was now highly successful and the King showered rewards upon him. But William soon dropped his fashionable Parisian ways and became more serious again. He returned to Ireland to look after the estates and there he heard Thomas Loe preach again. The text was, "There is a faith that overcomes the world, and there is a faith that is overcome by the world".

If there was a turning point in William's life, this was it. At last he was finding where he belonged, and he began to attend the meetings regularly. The soldiery broke up one of these quiet gatherings, carried off prisoners and accused them

of rioting. The Mayor was surprised to see among them Penn, the Viceroy's friend, and offered to set him free on condition he promised not to attend the meetings again; but this he would not do, and therefore went to prison.

The radical form of Protestantism which goes by the name of Quakerism is marked by a belief that no priest is needed to interpret God's will but that everyone may seek for himself. For this reason Quakers hold their meetings in silence and expect to find "something of God in every man", whether he be prisoner or priest, white or black, well or ill, young or old. There were many reasons for the persecutions the Quakers endured: in the first place they would never take an oath, on the ground that their ordinary promise was enough—this seemed to upset the law-courts; similarly, by refusing to take an oath of loyalty to the King they appeared to attack the government; and finally their views on the divinity of Christ caused the Church to question whether they could really be called Christian at all. As a result, fifteen thousand Quakers were thrown into prison in Charles II's reign. Four hundred and fifty died there, and a larger number died after their release, as a result of the insanitary conditions in which they had been kept. Penn was not taking a course that offered an easy life.

His father sent for him to come home, and argued with him. Setting great importance on his connections with the Court, he asked:

"What about the King? Will you keep your hat on, Quaker-fashion, in front of the King?"

William went up to his own room to think out how he could explain politely to his father that he would always do what he felt to be right, and later, when he hoped his father's anger had cooled, he said:

"It would not be right for me to take off my hat even in the presence of the King."

The Admiral was so angry that he shouted at him, beat him and drove him out of the house. William, therefore, found a lonely place where he could live on his own and write. Years later, when he kept his hat on at court, Charles took his own hat off and, on being asked what he was doing, laughed in reply, "We have a rule here that only one person keeps his hat on!"

Many other people were disowned by their relatives and friends for joining the Quakers, and William Penn came to know some of them as he went about preaching. In particular he enjoyed meeting Guli Springett, daughter of Lady Springett who, after her first husband had been killed in the Civil War, had married one of the Quakers. The Springett family lived outside London, and the daughter was the same age as William, who was now twenty-three.

It was about this same time that a minister, angry because some of his congregation had left to join the Quakers, persuaded the Bishop of London to condemn Penn's writings as contrary to religion; so Penn, without a trial, was locked up in the Tower. When asked about it, the Bishop declared:

"The young blasphemer shall rot and die in prison unless he will publicly admit his errors."

The Admiral sent word of this to William, who replied with the assurance which might be expected of him:

"Thou mayst tell my father . . . my prison shall be my grave before I shall budge a jot. They are mistaken in me. I care nothing for their threats."

When the King sent a message, he again replied with the fearless words:

"If the King wishes me to change my opinions, the Tower

is for me the worst argument in the world. Whoever may be in the wrong, it is quite certain that those who use force in religion cannot be in the right."

After his release from the Tower, William divided his time between working for the Quakers and managing the Irish estates—for his father was, by now, a very old man. Before the Admiral died, however, he not only softened, but showed that he had gained some sympathy for his son's bravery and even for his ideas.

From Ireland William wrote long letters to Guli Springett, and from London he went out to visit her; but before their friendship could mature, he had a Herculean labour to complete—a test of his strength, such as a Lady might have imposed on her Knight, in some ancient ballad. He was to stand trial on a charge of breaking the regulations governing preaching.

"Justice," he was to write later, "is a better procurer of peace than war." "That which prevents a civil war in a nation is that which may prevent it abroad, viz., justice." Having lived in the aftermath of the Thirty Years War in Europe, and of the Civil War in England, he was convinced not only of the need for freedom of worship and a tolerance of the religious beliefs of others, but of the need for honest and effective law-courts, in which quarrels could be settled without violence. Without good law-courts human life is stifled as surely as by a lack of air, and, at this time, in England men held such violent views that the courts offered them little protection. It was this which made prudent men keep away from courts and lawyers; but for Quakers this was not possible, and so Penn learned at first hand the value of preventing judges from twisting the rules to damage the

prisoners in the courts, a lesson which guided him later when making a constitution for his own colony.

At this time, one of the most profitable occupations in the country was that of Informer, one who reports those who break laws, "a petty-fogging caterpillar", to use the words of a pamphlet of the time. It was such a man who brought the accusation against young William Penn and his friend Mead which lead to a trial outstanding in English history. Penn's bravery in facing justices who were bent on pressing for a conviction against his public preaching, and who were backed by a powerful King, was remarkable.

After a fortnight in gaol, the two men were brought before ten justices, and what followed was the most comical mockery of a trial which could ever serve to remind citizens of the essential rights on which their safety depended.

As Penn and Mead came into court their hats were seized. The Lord Mayor shouted to the attendants:

"Who told you to take off their hats? Put them on again."

Then, turning to Penn, the Recorder asked:

"Do you know there is a respect due to the court? Why then do you not put off your hat?"

"Because," said Penn, "I do not believe that to be respect. We came into court with our hats off, and if they have been put on since it was by order of the justices."

Later, in the long trial which followed, he said:

"I have asked but one question and you have not answered me, though the rights and privileges of every Englishman are concerned in it."

"If I let you ask questions till tomorrow morning you wouldn't be any the wiser," snarled the Recorder.

"That depends on what the answers are," replied Penn.

After this clash, the justices refused to hear Penn in his

defence and ordered him to be put in a deep hole at the back of the court. Mead was given little time to speak and was soon sent to join him. The Recorder then spoke to the jury before they were sent out to decide whether the two men were guilty. At this point Penn climbed to the top of the hole and called out in a loud voice,

"I appeal to the jury whether it is not against all law to charge the jury in the absence of the prisoners."

The next laugh was with the Recorder when he retorted, "You are present. You can hear, can't you?"

The court's concern was now no longer with Penn and Mead but with the leader of the jury, Bushell. Day after day the jury withstood the threats of the justices and brought in a verdict of "Guilty of speaking in Gracious Street", which was no offence at all. For two days and nights they were kept without food, the justices hoping to starve them into submission, but they held firm, little knowing what a large part they were playing in the legal history of Britain—and, through Penn, in the history of the United States. All the jurors were then sent to Newgate prison with Penn and Mead for failing to find the prisoners guilty of an offence, but some time afterwards the jurors accused the justices of false imprisonment and won their case.

Thus at length William, not having been found guilty, regained his liberty—but not for long. Soon he was back again, in company with other Quakers, for refusing to take an oath of allegiance to the King. This time one of his fellow prisoners died from the foul air and lack of food, and, as a result, the prisoners were sent to another prison where there would be more room. No one accompanied them, people in the street advised them to run away, but the prisoners had given their word. "We could suffer for our religion but we

could not run away." The prison they came to was open to the street, "but we were true and steady prisoners, so both conscience and honour now stood engaged that we should not try to escape".

In 1672, at the age of twenty-eight, Penn married Guli Springett. She was accustomed to the rough life of the period, when each day had to be lived as though it were the last; and the hardships had left her with poor health but a warm heart. Penn had already been in prison three times; she, her mother and step-father, being Quakers since she was fourteen, were also acquainted with suffering for conscience's sake. This was the best preparation for what was to follow, for there were to be many preaching journeys on horse-back in all weathers, many long absences from her husband and periods when he was in prison. "Yet," wrote Penn, "she would not suffer me to neglect any public meeting after I had my liberty upon her account, saying often, 'O go my dearest! Don't hinder any good for me. I desire thee go: I have cast my care upon the Lord: I shall see thee again!' " Frail though she may have been, she was strong in the spirit needed to support Penn in the work which lay before him. She could not travel with him to America, but she encouraged him to go, believing that this might be the answer to the apparently unending persecutions which the Quakers were enduring. Her step-father was one of the wise leaders of the new movement; the son of a Lord Mayor of London, he was well able to help Penn both with his writings and with the schemes that were forming in his mind.

As the years went by, Penn wrote and acted more in accordance with other Quakers. There were no strict rules among them and, when he first joined them, he did not give up his fashionable clothes and sword. No doubt it was some

encouragement to his fellows to know that all sorts of people held their faith, including those about the court. However, at one of his meetings with Fox, the founder of the Quakers, Penn asked him whether it was right to wear a sword:

"Wear it as long as thou can'st," Fox answered wisely, and soon Penn gave it up, and bought simpler clothes.

The more he felt he belonged with the persecuted the more he wanted to hold out some hope of an escape for them to a happier land. It is doubtful whether he knew how much those who have been persecuted tend to continue new cruelties, though he was aware that some of those who had escaped to America, to worship in their own way, were ruthless in driving out from their new lands those who disagreed with them. It was to be one of Penn's greatest achievements that he moved not to a new intolerance, but to freedom for all to worship in their own way. It seemed that he met hate with love, and bitterness with understanding.

King Charles' new laws against non-conformists, the needs of Quakers in Europe, and the increasing ease with which colonies could be formed, combined to make the time suitable for Penn's adventure across the Atlantic. Following a preliminary visit to a little Quaker colony in New Jersey, Penn applied for a large tract of land, almost as large as England, on the opposite side of the Delaware river. It happened that the King owed the sum of £16,000 to the Penn family, so William proposed that the land should be given instead of payment and, after long negotiations, this was agreed. Penn attended at Whitehall to receive the charter, and it was then that the question of a name arose. Penn suggested New Wales, but a Welshman at court protested. So Penn put forward "Sylvania", because the land was wooded.

"Yes, that is good," said King Charles, "but we must have

Penn's name in too, in honour of Sir William. It must be Pennsylvania."

Penn was appointed Governor, and would have the opportunity to make just laws such as he and his friends had always longed for in England, but first a colony had to be established.

Already a number of people had sailed across the Atlantic and settled in what had become Pennsylvania. Two or three boat-loads of people would land with gifts for the Indians, and as they ate such fish and meat as they could catch, or gain by barter, they would struggle to get a good roof over their heads before winter, and some ground cleared and planted. Many, already suffering with the hardships of the two months' sea voyage, found the cold and meagre diet of the first winters too much for their strength; for it was no tropical paradise to which they came, and only a little easier than the gaols of England. It was a strange coincidence that Englishmen were being driven abroad just at the time when large territories lay open to them, and when the skills of building, farming, weaving and so on were known to most families, so that they could establish a self-sufficient life on their own.

Penn too was to become a jack-of-all-trades: amateur lawyer, manager of estates, writer, preacher and even diplomat. On the Atlantic voyage, nearly everyone fell ill with smallpox, so then he tended the sick.

To celebrate his arrival, a holiday was declared among the Swedes, English, Welsh and Germans of New Castle, and the whole population came down to the quay to greet him and ask him to add their territory to Pennsylvania. This was proposed later to the Assembly at Chester, where representatives of the people of Pennsylvania gathered together in the only room large enough to hold them, the Quaker meeting house.

The first work for the Assembly was to discuss Penn's "Frame of Government", in which he had set out the laws he thought should be maintained in the new colony. Among these were laws that everyone should be free to worship in the way he thought best; that anyone could be elected to the Assembly or Parliament; that every child should be taught a useful trade; that prison was for improvement not punishment; and that only murder and treason justified capital punishment.

There were no laws so advanced in Britain at that time. In the colony they worked well, and for many years the growing population lived happily together. At times Penn had his difficulties, but what mattered more than his personal relationships with his followers was that they showed by their way of life that his ideas worked.

If the success of the colony proved over a period that kindness among the settlers was possible—that laws do not need to be harsh or punishments cruel—it proved to be doubly true of the Indians.

Stories of the warlike Indians had come back with the ships returning to England and terrified the women who were considering going to live in America. The Indians, it was said, crept out of the forests which fringed the farms, attacking them on dark nights, especially when the men were away marketing their produce. They came quietly, when they were least expected, and they showed no mercy and hoped for none. Certainly, in some colonies, settlers and Indians were frequently at war. "What can you expect," growled the men, "you can never trust them."

It was one of Penn's greatest qualities that he did not believe all these stories: he believed that unjust treatment, and especially seizing the Indians' land, made them

dangerous. His Quakerism led him to cling to the fact that there is good in everyone, if only it can be laid bare. With these thoughts in mind, he began from the first to treat the Indians as honoured equals. Kindness, he insisted, could win them round. Some of those who heard his ideas laughed at him. They thought that kindness would seem mere weakness to such treacherous people as the Indians. A town, they argued, is bound to need a strong fort and guns. Penn, however, felt it was more important to recognise the Indians' rights than to build forts, so from the first land was bought from the Indians instead of being seized, and payments were made in the form of such things as kettles, guns, blankets, looking-glasses and fish-hooks.

When Penn first arrived as Governor, several Indian chiefs came to meet him, dressed in the feathers for which they were famous but leaving their weapons behind, so that neither side was armed. Later, when he visited the site of what was to become the great city of Philadelphia (a name which means brotherly love), he was invited to an Indian feast. He went with an interpreter, shared their cooked acorns, and, when they danced to show their pleasure at his sitting and eating with them, he joined in their strange vigorous dancing. It was not long before he was able to speak to them in their own language.

This, then, was the background of Penn's famous treaty with the Indians. The ground had been prepared by a sincere attempt on both sides to understand each other's way of life; the treaty was not so much a diplomatic triumph as the product of a friendly understanding which arose from doing things together. In the early days, the settlers in Pennsylvania had been helped in hunting and fishing by their highly skilled neighbours, the Indians; Penn intended to revive this friendship.

The treaty was made under a great elm tree where the Indian chiefs had long had a meeting place.* Here they smoked the pipe of peace. Once more the Indians put on their beads, their long feathers and their bear-grease. They laid their bows and spears aside when Taminent, their leader, put on the crown of beads with its small horn. It was time for Penn to speak:

"The Great Spirit who made me and you . . . knows that we wish to live in peace and friendship with you. We have come unarmed, for we never use weapons against anyone . . . All shall be openness and brotherly love."

The terms of the Treaty used similar words:

"All William Penn's people, or the Christians, and all the Indians shall be brothers, as the children of one father. The doors of the White men's houses shall be open to the Indians, and the houses of the Indians open to the White men, and they shall make each other welcome as their friends. If any injury should be done, complaint should be made and the wrong put right. Then all should be forgotten, and the wrong should be buried in a bottomless pit."

The Indians answered, using the striking phrases of their language:

"We must tell our children of this League and firm chain of Friendship. It must always be made stronger and stronger, and without rust or spot, between our children and our children's children, while the creeks and rivers run, and while the sun, the moon and the stars endure."

Gifts were exchanged. The Indians gave belts of beads, or wampum, made from shells or fish bones, which they used as money, and the White men gave blankets, looking-glasses and

* Recent historians have dismissed the story of the Great Treaty as class-room fiction. Indeed, all that is actually known is that some sort of treaty was formed.

tools. The six thousand Indians belonging to ten tribes were so peaceful, as a result of Penn's wisdom, that the Quakers and others went about unarmed, and were far safer than the settlers in neighbouring colonies who went in fear of their lives.

Some said that it was easy for Penn because his Indians were different from the others, but after his death, when the new colony was to be run by his second wife, Hannah, things changed. The new Governors had different ideas; the Quakers were outnumbered by newcomers who had no experience of the power of justice and kindness; and later, when Penn's sons took charge, things became worse.

For example, when fresh land was needed by the settlers, William Penn bought a tract of land "as far back as a man can go in three days". Penn himself and some Indians walked off for a day and a half stopping to eat and drink on the way, and moving leisurely. Thus half the land was measured. The other half was to be left until later.

It is difficult for sons to follow in the footsteps of a wise father, and years afterwards, Penn's sons, wanting to strike a hard bargain, cleared a way beforehand and chose two strong runners to measure the remaining land. When the Indians saw this, they went off in disgust. John and Thomas then made matters worse by bribing another tribe to attack those left living in the area they had greedily acquired. So one bit of trickery led to another, until eventually the Governor of Pennsylvania declared war on two tribes, and the Quakers all left the Assembly in protest. Selfishness had overcome kindness, and the Indians were gradually driven out. But two hundred years later, in Canada, when a descendant of King Taminent met the Governor of Canada, they discussed Penn's treaty and the Indian said, laying his hand on his heart:

"The Treaty is written here. It has never been broken by

the people who made it. We do not make treaties in our heads but in our hearts."

The success of the Treaty, and the fact that it is taught and understood in American and in some English schools, has been an inspiration to administrators and diplomats in dealing wisely and generously with non-European peoples in the succeeding centuries.

When Penn returned to England, after these great achievements, he did not return to the quiet life that he might have expected. He was forty, and he had weathered many rough seas; his wife, Guli, had recovered from the illness that had caused him to hurry home, but the whole country was full of rumours and plots which were to lead, some years later, to the abdication of James II. In the general confusion of the times, much of the storm which broke over Penn's head was due to a rumour that he was a Jesuit in disguise. His colony was confiscated, though he was to regain it later. Sometimes he was able to preach at meetings, but often he lived in hiding. At length his wife died; and he suffered a further cruel blow when he found that his agent had been claiming that the whole colony belonged to him, on account of a document Penn had rashly signed without reading.

When most hard pressed for money to pay off the debts which his agent had created, Penn appealed to the colonists to raise a sum by taxation. This they refused to do, and Penn, by then over sixty years old, went to prison for nine months as a so-called debtor. Now was, perhaps, the time when it was hardest to hold to his belief in the goodness of men, since it seemed that all his work for the colonists in Pennsylvania had gone for nought. He had been able to make one more visit there, this time taking his second wife, Hannah, with him. The towns had grown fast since his previous visit, life was less

hard, the Indians remained friendly. Once more, however, he had to return to England, instead of spending the rest of his life there. This time it was to oppose the taking over of the colony by the Crown. He had a few more active years, before suffering a stroke from which he never fully recovered, though he lived a further six years.

Until the time of his stroke he had been a regular writer. He wrote mostly on religious subjects, but some of his pamphlets gave his views on good government. One of these is of special importance because it sets out a plan not just for a single colony, but for the whole of Europe to live at peace, and if anyone was entitled to speak on this it was Penn. He called it "An Essay towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe", and it bears quotation today—indeed the standard work on the General Assembly of the United Nations quotes from it at the beginning of each chapter.

First of all, referring to the Thirty Years War in Europe, he made clear the advantages of peace: "He must not be a man," he wrote, "but a statue of brass or stone whose bowels do not melt when he beholds the bloody tragedies of this war." He then proceeded to show how necessary it was to be able to have a quarrel fought out in a court—in other words to obtain justice. "That which prevents a civil war in a nation is that which prevents it abroad." His proposals were practical and detailed. Such an assembly was to consist of representatives of each prince or state, in numbers according to their wealth, so that Germany might have had twelve, France and Spain ten each, Italy eight, England six and, if the Turks and Russians joined in, they might have had ten each also, for such was the balance of power at that time. To avoid quarrels about precedence, in that sensitive century, the room in which the court would sit should be round and with several

entrances, so that no one had to follow another; similarly, turns would be taken in presiding over the assembly. To reduce bribery, the voting would be secret, and proposals would need a three to one majority to be passed.

After explaining the working of the Assembly of Europe, he took the arguments against it, and dealt with them one by one:

1. The strongest may not wish to join, but, however strong, he cannot stand against all the rest.
2. Peace may produce weakness through affording no practice in fighting, but this depends on the education each state provides.
3. Younger brothers who would have joined the army will not become unemployed but will become merchants and farmers instead.

The arguments and their answers followed in their quaint seventeenth-century style, and he then went on to his own arguments in favour of the scheme. He wrote of the "cries of so many widows, parents and fatherless", of the reputation of Christianity and the saving of money. The ease of travel and trade are listed, and finally the princes, instead of fighting for fame, may, he says, freely converse face to face and rival each other in the learning, arts and buildings of their countries.

It was the first scheme for international peace not based on the strength of a single country. No comparable step forward was made until Smuts and others achieved the founding of the League of Nations.

William Penn died after prolonged old age and was buried in simple Quaker style at Jordans in Buckinghamshire. The grave of such a great man is always worth a visit, especially if it can be made in the spirit of a pilgrimage.

III JOHN BRIGHT

WARS BEGIN IN the minds of men, and the minds of men are shaped in the nursery. It may well be that one day the originators of the modern Nursery School will be awarded a place among the great peacemakers. Some nations and some families train their babies and young children with kindness, tolerance and gentleness, and so produce people who are less warlike, aggressive and quarrelsome, and more inclined to be co-operative and friendly. Others do the opposite. There are many Germans and Japanese who regret the militarism for which their countries are noted, but fail to trace it back to what some people believe to be its source, in the methods of looking after babies and children.

For the most part, in bringing up her children, a mother follows willy-nilly the customs she experienced in her own childhood. Traditions are handed down in families from one generation to another, and only recently have books on child care, and the establishment of Nursery Schools, set a pattern for parents to follow. It is, therefore, not unreasonable to suppose that the gentle understanding I received at the hands of my grandmother—who was left motherless in infancy—mirrored the way *her* father, John Bright, was treated as a child. Unlike William Penn, who was a convert to Quakerism, Bright was descended from several generations of Quakers, and in his daughter's house an atmosphere prevailed which was the work of a century.

To adults she was prepared to say: "The home is run for the children, but they must never know it." This meant, in practice, that adults took an interest in children's games and toys, that the animals, from horses to cats, which loom so large in children's eyes, were treated with the appreciation due to human beings, and that even such creatures as grass snakes, which were found from time to time in the summer, might be kept for a day in a special box so that they too could become the children's friends. Animals, and indeed all aspects of Nature, were regarded as an essential part of the education of old and young.

Behind the childlike games and fun, however, lurked the idea that every adult had also some serious public service to perform. On the walls hung portraits of her father's heroes: such men as Wilberforce, Lincoln, Cobden and Gladstone—the giants of the century—who seemed to be looking out of their frames asking for humble followers who, each in his own town or village, would champion the causes of freedom or peace. Despite this there was no excessive pressure to excel so much, even, as to lead a good and useful life. Anger and jealousy, if felt, were seldom shown. Children were always treated kindly and gently, though in some respects strictly, and they throve in such surroundings.

It was this quietness, coupled with a sense of duty, and liveliness without anger, which enabled Bright to stand up in opposition to the hysteria of war, and against all the temptations common to popular politicians. As with Asoka, power did not corrupt him; as with Penn dealing with the Indians, he learned to dispel fear.

John Bright's father had moved from Coventry to Rochdale in Lancashire where, in 1809, he borrowed money to start a small cotton mill. Two years later, John was born, and,

on his brother's death in childhood, he became the eldest of what was to be a large family. His mother, from whom he acquired many of his outstanding qualities, wrote on the back of his birth certificate, "May he indeed love his Creator in the days of his youth and continue steadfast to the end". That word "steadfast" aptly described both her own values and the character of her son. When he was eight, she wrote some lines which explain more exactly what she meant: "I have no wish at all to see my children great or noted characters, neither have I any right to expect that they will be distinguished for any extraordinary talents. But that they may be found filling up their station, however humble it may be, with uprightness and integrity, is both at this time and often my humble prayer." This hope for sincerity rather than success is a warning to those who would follow in the footsteps of great men.

Rochdale was certainly not the sort of place expected to produce a statesman. With a population of a mere ten thousand people busy establishing and working in the mills for which it has since become famous, it was cut off from the rest of the country by lack of transport and communications. This formerly picturesque town with its meandering river was linked only to Manchester—by a stage coach which ran twice a week. The railway did not reach there until 1838, two years before the penny-postage was started. The difficulties of correspondence before that time are well illustrated by an extract from a letter John wrote, when he was away at one boarding-school, to his two sisters at another:

"I suppose you have been a long time expecting a letter from me, but I have waited for an opportunity to have one conveyed to you without cost, which I think can be done now, as one of the boys is going home to Bradford and his father

going very often to Leeds can take it there and get it forwarded by someone going to York."

It is doubtful whether his great campaign against the Corn Laws, for which he is justly famous, could have been successful before railways and cheap postage made the circulation of speakers and newspapers possible.

John's first school was in a nearby cottage where the older children in the family were taught by the wife of the mill manager. It was not that his mother was incapable of teaching—indeed she taught classes for young women in the mill twice a week—but she had babies to tend, and may well have thought the older ones would be better out of her charge.

He started regular day-school when he was nine years old, and seems to have been one of the smallest in the class. He tells us that his young teacher used to take coffee and breakfast while the lessons were proceeding, but John Bright has left few recollections of any significance, either of that school or of the four Quaker boarding-schools he attended up to the age of fifteen-and-a-half. For those days, the schools were good, but this is saying little. Their chief merit seems to have been that they left the boy with a zest for reading and with the ideals of his home and of his Quaker meeting unimpaired. Although he was sometimes away for a year at a time, his spirit was not broken by the bullying atmosphere of a large public school.

The tales told of that period show that he was already quick with what might be called a parliamentary answer. Out walking one day, he was laughed at for being a Quaker. The village boys called after him "Quack! Quack!" so he turned and replied: "I should not have known thou was't a duck, if thou hadst not spoken."

When a teacher threw a Latin grammar at his head, he

picked it up and handed it back with due politeness, saying:

"Thou might want this again."

At fifteen-and-a-half, he entered into the work of the little mill managed by his father, or "Owd Jacob", as he was called by the work people. They were all treated as though they belonged to his family. John would often play cricket or swim in the river with the boys of his own age, and they all called each other by their first names. One thing John did not discuss was the fact that he often read before breakfast, in a room which he had fitted up over the counting house; he would mark passages in the works on history and economics as he read them, storing away information for the future. In the John Bright library at Bootham School, at York, runs this inscription beneath his portrait:

"A great love of books is like a personal introduction to the great and good men of all past time. If there be no seed time there will certainly be no harvest, and the youth of life is the seed time of life."

At this time he was, in fact, beginning to give himself his own university training, and he was aware of the advantages of acquiring it the hard way. Confronted, years later, with a proud young man who had just won a degree and was excessively pleased about it, he remarked in his direct way:

"Nature provides a very convenient safety-valve for knowledge too rapidly acquired."

His father appreciated his efforts and, at a time when business was going well, very wisely encouraged him to go on an eight-month journey to the Near East. The combination of reading and writing (with which he continued throughout his travels), and the powerful impressions made by Athens, Egypt and the Holy Land, improved his already extensive knowledge of the Bible and of the ancient Greeks.

The influences through which Bright was to become a great speaker are more difficult to trace than his education. Being brought up as a Quaker he was accustomed to hear, each Sunday, in the silence of the meeting, one after another of his neighbours stand up and preach, giving messages based on a daily reading of the Bible interwoven with events of everyday life—much in the way Jesus had done in the Parables. They spoke only if they felt called to do so, and therefore their words had a compelling sincerity which a trained public speaker seldom commands; and, moreover, they often spoke with an emotion which went straight to the hearts of their hearers. There is little doubt that it was these two qualities which, years later, forced a very different audience, in the House of Commons, to listen to John Bright.

Soon after starting work at Rochdale he had become known locally as a speaker on temperance, and he also spoke on education. At first he memorised in full the speeches he made; but this he soon dropped and the vigour of his early speeches may be judged from the following passage, delivered as he stood on a tombstone in Rochdale churchyard, during a campaign against compulsory church rates:

"I hold that to quote scripture in defence of church-rates is the very height of rashness; the New Testament teems with passages inculcating peace, brotherly love, mutual forbearance, charity, disregard of filthy lucre, and devotedness to the welfare of our fellow men. In the exaction of church-rates . . . in the imprisonment of those who refuse to pay, in the harassing process of law and injustice in the Church courts . . . in all this a clergyman violates the precepts he is paid to preach." The angry meeting of four or five thousand parishioners roared their approval and it was not long before a victory was won.

In the years following the Great Reform Bill, when more

and more people acquired the vote, and when there were so many major injustices to put right, a golden period of public meetings arose which really only ended with the coming of radio and television programmes on current affairs. John Bright was born into an age which suited his gifts. His power of speech cut like a sword, but, before it could be directed at those who waged frivolous wars, it was ground to a rare sharpness on the grindstone of the Corn Laws.

The call to play a full part in the campaign to abolish the taxes on corn came in tragic and dramatic circumstances. John Bright had married Elizabeth Priestman in 1839, but after a daughter, Helen, was born, in the following year, the young mother began to fail. "It seems that I could have been well content for ever almost," wrote Bright, "to have cared for that dear sweet being whose very presence made me happy." She died in 1841. Cobden, already firm friends with Bright as a result of the campaign, came at once to be with him. Many years later, at the unveiling of Cobden's statue, Bright described what had happened:

"Mr. Cobden called upon me as his friend, and addressed me, as you might suppose, with words of condolence. After a time, he looked up and said, 'There are thousands of houses in England at this moment where wives, mothers and children are dying of hunger. Now, when the first paroxysm of your grief is past, I would advise you to come with me, and we will never rest till the Corn Law is repealed.' "

The grinding of the sword-blade had begun in the area within reach of Rochdale. After 1841, the Anti-Corn Law League, which had been founded three years earlier, occupied almost all of Bright's time. This, the greatest of all British political campaigns, completed his political education. He and Cobden travelled from town to town, speaking to the

largest meetings that halls could hold. Cobden usually spoke first, giving the hard facts and cold arguments, and was followed by Bright, who spoke with all the moral and emotional depth of his powerful convictions. Years later, three old working-men who had often heard him in the Corn Law days, walked into Manchester from Cheshire to hear him speak once more. When they saw him enter the hall, they all three broke down and wept.

People passed on from one to another such verses as:

Child is thy father dead,
Father is gone!
Why did they tax his bread?

An agricultural labourer in Dorset gave the League one of its most memorable sayings about duties to protect the farming industry, when he stood up in a meeting and exclaimed:

"I be protected, and I be starving."

With such anecdotes, and with figures of speech drawn from the Bible and from other literature, Bright embellished his speeches. Although the tax on corn coming into the country was supposed to help the farm labourers, in practice it failed to raise their wages, while raising the price of their food. The campaign might well be considered the forerunner of meals in schools, which ensure that no child suffers from hunger—and also, ultimately, of the work of UNICEF. The campaigners hammered home their arguments, showing that the corn tax helped the rich landlords but struck hardest at the poor—the very opposite of what a good tax should do.

Unfortunately, the poor had no votes, and it was only by convincing the middle-class voters that progress could be made. On one occasion Bright had an extraordinary success with his fellow manufacturers: he stood up on a bench in the Man-

chester Cotton Market and cried out that, as political meetings were not allowed inside the building, they should meet outside. Although the Master of the room pulled him down by the collar, an enthusiastic meeting ensued and the dense crowd sent a petition to the House of Commons. But the response elsewhere was often slow, and in one moment of despair Cobden and Bright went so far as to consider whether it would be necessary for them to refuse personally to pay taxes.

In 1843, Bright was persuaded to stand for Parliament, and the story of his election explains why the government could ignore, for a long time, the clear preference of the majority of people for free trade in corn.

The constituency of Durham was considered a safe seat, belonging to the Marquis of Londonderry, who invited a fellow peer to stand. The two candidates spoke on a platform out in the open air, where a huge crowd gathered. Bright delighted the audience with his description of the "attempt to degrade you into the convenient tool of an aristocratic family". On a show of hands Bright would have won easily, but few of the crowd had the right to vote and, when a count was made, Bright lost by 507 to 405. Afterwards, however, it was revealed that three hundred of those who had voted against him received a pound each for their votes, and so a new election had to be held. Bright included the Corn Laws in his next speech:

"If a man have three or four children, he has just three or four times as much interest in having the Corn Laws abolished as the man who has none . . ." The final result was a victory for Bright, and the whole country marvelled at the downfall of what had been a Tory stronghold.

It is difficult now to imagine Bright's position in parliament. He was never popular there and always on the defensive; even twenty-three years later, a dinner invitation to him,

a mere manufacturer, from Lord John Russell, caused a scandal. Yet his fellow members were compelled to admire and respect the man they could not accept—this agitator from the North. Cobden, reinforced by Bright and the bad harvest of 1845, drove the attack on the Corn Laws right home. The Prime Minister, listening to Cobden's arguments, whispered to his neighbour, "You must answer this, for I cannot". The next year the campaign was won and the tax on corn abolished.

Then followed a number of years of more humdrum work in Parliament. Although Bright had played second string to Cobden in the attack on the Corn Laws, he was later to occupy a unique position of his own. At the age of forty, he was by no means one of the younger members, and, although he was regarded as an outsider, he had an immense following among the population at large. The power of his speeches both inside and outside parliament was such that he could not be ignored.

The issue on which he made a name for himself, in such a unique way, as the conscience of the House, was when he opposed Britain's entry into the Crimean War. Up to this point in his career there had been every temptation for him to court popularity and go with the crowd, but it seemed he never forgot the advice of a poor Scotsman who had said, when he was first elected to Parliament:

"Mr. Bright, I'll give you a piece of advice. You are going into bad company; and now that you're in, you remember that you stick to what you said when you were out." John Bright did remember, and he did stick to his earlier ideals; so, instead of becoming a servile demagogue, he followed his conscience and opposed the mob.

For a whole century following the battle of Waterloo, Britain and her growing empire excelled in industrial and, many historians think, in military power. British prime

ministers very readily thought that might was right, at a time when there was no United Nations to organise the views of lesser powers and when wars were undertaken as lightly as military manoeuvres. Certainly this was true when British troops were sent to support the cruel and corrupt Turkish Empire, and to fight against the Russians in the Crimea. John Bright had the advantage, along with Cobden, of having travelled in Turkey. "Alliances," he said in the House, "are dangerous things. It is an alliance with Turkey that has drawn us into this war. I would not advise alliances with any nation, but I would cultivate friendship with all nations."

He matched his attack to his audience and spoke more of their friends who were killed than of the horrors of war in general; more of the taxes which burdened the people than of Christianity: and he knew death and poverty at close quarters himself. The long but fatal illness of his first wife, the serious face of his orphan daughter, the grinding poverty of his Rochdale neighbours, in the early "forties", he had witnessed with such sympathy that he could speak with an overflowing heart of human suffering.

Thirty years later, at Bright's death, the Prime Minister was to speak of Bright and Cobden standing alone against the war:

"We had not known of the splendid examples they could set to the whole of their contemporaries, and to coming generations, of a readiness to part with all the sympathies and with all the support they had held so dear, for the sake of right, and conscientious conviction."

No one could deny the force of Bright's arguments, which were set out in the Press and in Parliament:

"At this moment, England is engaged in a murderous warfare with Russia, although the Russian government accepted her own terms of peace . . . and, at the same time, England is

allied with Turkey, whose government rejected the award of England, and who entered into the war in opposition to the advice of England."

His colleagues in the House of Commons tried to laugh him off, but they did not dare howl him down. His words stabbed right home:

"Many thousands of our own countrymen have already perished of pestilence and in the field . . . Who shall answer for these things? You have read the tidings from the Crimea; you have, perhaps, shuddered at the slaughter; you remember the terrific picture—I speak not of the battle, and the charge, and the tumultuous excitement of the conflict, but of the field after the battle—Russians in their frenzy or their terror shooting Englishmen who would have offered them water to quench their agony of thirst; Englishmen, in crowds, rifling the pockets of the men they had slain or wounded, taking their few shillings or roubles, and discovering among the plunder of the stiffening corpses images of the Virgin and the Child."

The greatest speech of all was to follow later, and the men who called the House "the best club in London" were so moved by this that a hush came over them almost as though they themselves listened for the beating of the wings of the Angel of Death:

"I cannot but notice that an uneasy feeling exists as to the news which may arrive from the very next mail from the East. I do not suppose that your troops are to be beaten in actual conflict with the foe, or that they will be driven into the sea; but I am certain that many homes in England in which there now exists a fond hope that the distant one may return—many such homes may be rendered desolate when the next mail shall arrive. The Angel of Death has been abroad throughout the land, you may almost hear the beating

of his wings . . . he takes his victims from the castle of the noble, the mansion of the wealthy, and the cottage of the poor, and it is on behalf of all these classes that I make this solemn appeal." It was a long speech, but no one stirred, and later that evening Disraeli sat down beside him and said, "I would give all that I ever had to have made that speech you made just now." Bright, however, believed that Disraeli was more concerned with making people listen to him than with what he said and therefore he answered, "Well, you might have made it, if you had been honest."

Many years later, when passing by the monument on which stands the one word "Crimea", his youngest son asked him what it meant. He paused for a moment and then answered gravely, "A Crime".

Never again, in Bright's lifetime, did Britain enter so lightly into a war. Those hard men who treated warfare as a kind of game were shamed into glimpsing the truth. Meanwhile, the ignorant mob, as Bright wrote in his diary, was drunk and unwilling to hear anything against its passion, and so they sang:

> To Brighten up the Quaker's fame,
> We'll put his body to the flame.

The shopkeepers and tradesmen of Manchester, whom by now he was representing in Parliament, made an effigy of Bright seven-and-a-half feet high, topped with a huge hat, and carried it through the streets, in procession, to be burned against a lamp-post. So great was the crowd that the police rescued the dummy, only to have it stolen back by the unmanageable mob. The police, according to the local paper, finally carried off one leg and locked it up in prison!

Bright, exhausted by the strain of opposing the war, had a

nervous collapse, and for long months no one knew whether he would ever be fit again. However, he recovered, and, as soon as he was well, stood again for Parliament. Manchester had disgraced itself by choosing another representative meantime, but Birmingham was quick to welcome him—he was badly needed to deal with another war.

During the American Civil War, the Southern States wished to claim independence from the North, in order to continue owning slaves. The Southerners were the aristocrats who had the sympathy of the aristocratic House of Commons, and it fell to Bright and his supporters to prevent, by what now seems a series of miracles, the British forces entering the war on the wrong side. The armies were evenly matched, despite the initial success of the South, and each side hoped for decisive outside help. At this critical point, the British government, against the rules governing neutrals, allowed the *Alabama*, an armed steam frigate fighting for the South, to sail from Liverpool and seize the shipping of the North at sea. It was enough to cause war between the American North and Britain, and Bright acted promptly to point out that an order had gone from the Prime Minister to prevent the *Alabama* sailing but that the order had gone too late. Similarly, when a British ship was stopped by the Northerners in order to remove two Southerners from it—an equally unjustifiable act—Bright again smoothed out the difficulties.

All this time, the cotton spinners of Lancashire, thrown out of work because no cotton was coming from the American South, stood firm in the cause of liberty, despite their own interest in a quick restoration of trade.

The diary which John Bright kept allows the reader to enter into his thoughts, even at all these crucial points in his career, in a way which is unique for a man playing a leading

part in politics. When Parliament was sitting he stayed in lodgings, and so had time both to keep a record of his daily thoughts and conversations, and also to write at length to his second wife and their growing family. His wife supported him in all he did, without being ambitious for him, and she certainly never pressed him to accept a seat in the Cabinet. Nevertheless, Bright had two short periods as a Cabinet Minister, but without any enthusiasm on his part, for, as he grew older, and especially after his wife's death in 1878, he had little spirit left for the work. However, in his speeches the old fire sometimes broke out. In the Town Hall at Birmingham he thundered again:

"I believe all wars are savage and cruel. . . . What is it that makes—if anything makes—this needless and terrible slaughter different in its nature from those transactions which we call murder? Let us claim no longer to be Christian. Let us go back to the heathen times whilst we adhere to the heathen practices . . . I say take down at any rate the Ten Commandments inside your churches, and say no longer you believe in or read the Sermon on the Mount."

He was as good as his word. Despite bonds of friendship formed with the Prime Minister, he resigned from the government when the British fleet bombarded Alexandria—and he was the only European statesman in that century to resign on such an issue. Few have the courage of their convictions in their old age, but Bright was steadfast to the end, and remembered the Scotsman's advice, so that there was nothing to mar the sad thankfulness for a life well lived when he lay peaceful in death, in the drawing-room at Rochdale, in 1889. If there had been an inscription written on the plain tombstone it might well have contained his own words, uttered against harsh dealings with the Irish: "Force is not a remedy."

IV LEO TOLSTOY

IT IS DIFFICULT nowadays to imagine growing up in the countryside before the invention of motor-cars. It is easy to suppose that it was uneventful and tranquil, but it did not seem so to people who knew nothing of the bustle of modern life.

Tolstoy was born in a lively country house, built in the grand style, with white pillars and a rather flat roof. It was sufficiently far south from Moscow to be buried in the rolling wooded countryside. At that time—he was born in 1828—the Russian peasants were still serfs, and when his father, Nikolai, had married his mother, a wealthy heiress, not only the fine estate but the eight hundred serfs who belonged with it were part of the marriage settlement. However, although Leo Tolstoy was, therefore, an aristocrat by birth, he was an aristocrat of an unusual kind, who took the side of the peasants and worked with them, so that the Communists revere his memory, and keep both the estate and his town house as museums.

His mother died when he was barely two, and his father when he was nine, so it would be unreasonable to look too deeply into his ancestry for an explanation of his ideas. He was brought up by a distant relative known (incorrectly) as Aunt Tatyana, who had herself been left an orphan, and whose motherly warmth did much to make good the gap in Leo's life. Her affection and patience seem to have had no

end, and had he not had three older brothers and a younger sister he might even have suffered from too much attention.

No one guessed in his childhood that he would later become a great writer; indeed, he was sometimes compared unfavourably with his brothers. It was said of their schoolwork, "Nikolai both wishes to learn and can, Sergei can but won't, Dmitri wishes to but can't, and Leo neither wishes to nor can".

It was characteristic of the brothers that they believed that people could and should improve their way of life—that they should endeavour to be kinder, wiser, happier and more friendly towards each other. The century in which they grew up was not a time of despair, but of hope and self-improvement. Even at an early age the boys absorbed such ideas from the adults round them, and Nikolai, the eldest (five years older than Leo), hatched out of his fertile imagination a game which exemplifies many of the values prevailing in the family. Nikolai claimed to possess the secret of how all men were to become happy by becoming what he called ant brothers: brothers as co-operative and peaceful as ants. And the four little boys, aged from five to eleven, practised their new role by draping rugs over furniture and hugging each other in their little nest. When everyone was an ant brother, Nikolai explained, there would be no more anger or illness, and everyone would be happy. The four brothers hoped to set the world an example, and the secret of how others were to copy them was supposed to be buried near a green stick planted in the woods on the estate. So vividly did Leo remember this incident from his childhood that in his old age he asked that he should be buried at that spot when he died.

Afterwards, when he wrote of the "days of childhood, lost, never to return", he was no doubt thinking of times such as these, when healthy child-like pleasures and an open-air life,

surrounded by friendly people, made a kind of paradise for the orphan family. He was able to convey some of this nostalgia in his first successful work, *Childhood*, and his delight in the simplicity of his boyhood was echoed in later years by his reverence for peasant life. Likewise, the imagination and feeling which he showed when reading poetry indicated some of the literary talents which bore fruit afterwards; but these were exceptions, and there were few other signs that he was in any way more remarkable than his brothers.

Of Nikolai, Leo later wrote that he had everything which makes an author, except the vanity that drives a man to write. He thus recognised that talent is not enough: the urge to write, whether it be vanity or a desire to educate, is also essential. He hero-worshipped his second brother Sergei—indeed he always expected and made the most of loving relations with those about him. But he could be violent on occasions. At the age of nine, he made close friends with a little girl who was later to become his mother-in-law. After a time, he grew jealous and pushed her off a balcony. On another occasion, Leo thought he could fly. Being a doer rather than a thinker, he was quick to put his ideas to the test: he clasped his hands tightly round his knees and took off from an upstairs window-sill. He hit his head on landing and slept for eighteen hours before recovering.

Innumerable anecdotes of this kind are told of him, and they seem to show that the youngest of the four brothers worked hard to get attention, that he was often tearful, often philosophical, but often happy. There was little in his childhood to justify great expectations for his future.

The death of their first guardian led to the family moving to another aunt at Kazan, a river port on the Volga. When

Leo reached the age of sixteen he applied for entrance to the university but was not awarded a place because his marks in geography, history and statistics were too low. Later, he applied again, to fail, this time, in the mid-term examinations, and his gay life as a student was only preserved by transferring to the Faculty of Jurisprudence to study law. He became dissatisfied with academic work, however, and asked to leave the university before his second-year examinations. He had read extensively, but seldom to support his university course—he was not so much lazy as disorganised. His intellectual curiosity remained intact, despite the social life which his shyness and awkwardness prevented him from enjoying to the full.

One day, being late for a history lecture, he was locked up with another late-comer whose description of Tolstoy is striking enough to be quoted: "I kept clear of the Count, who from our first meeting repelled me by his assumption of coldness, his bristly hair, and the piercing expression of his half-closed eyes. I had never met a young man with such a strange, and to me incomprehensible, air of importance and self-satisfaction . . ."

At the age of nineteen he began to keep a diary, and it is full of his ideas on self-improvement. "It is easier to write ten volumes of philosophy than to put a single precept into practice," he wrote, and indeed he seemed determined throughout his life never to reach a theoretical conclusion about the way to live, without at least attempting to put it into practice.

The custom of keeping a diary was common among educated people throughout nineteenth-century Europe, and it was an effective method of considering how life squared with the promptings of the conscience. In the pages of Leo's diary it is possible to see more clearly the workings of his

extraordinary mind; often lists of good resolutions, although vehemently praised, are reported broken in the next entry. He spared himself nothing, and one biographer has opened his account of Leo's life by quoting from the diary of later years: "I clearly realised that my biography, if it suppressed all the nastiness and criminality of my life—as they customarily write biographies—would be a lie, and that if one is going to write my biography, one must write the whole truth."

Growing up and finding a cause worthy of a life-time are so much a matter of chance that even after a detailed study of Tolstoy's childhood, including his own account in his diaries, it is impossible to prescribe an education for a peace-maker. As he grew up he revealed an urge to rebel against the ideas of his associates at a period when the absurdity of war needed to be exposed. His independence of mind and contrariness of behaviour were well suited to fulfil this important purpose, and beyond these he had begun to acquire the talents of a great writer.

At this period, however, he had no idea that war was evil; he had grown up glorying in its apparent heroism, like others of his time, and he therefore underwent a complete change of outlook, a change that occurred gradually during the Crimean War.

After his period at university, Leo Tolstoy spent two-and-a-half years with the army in the Caucasus. The brave and independent tribesmen of the mountains were waging guerilla warfare against the Russians, and Tolstoy learned not only about fighting, but also about the more frivolous aspects of military life. He lived among his fellow officers as if behind a façade—his own thoughts about life and self-improvement

were revealed only in his long letters to Aunt Tatyana, his diaries, and the manuscript of *Childhood*, which closely reflected his own life.

In 1854, at the age of twenty-five, he set off to join the Russian army in the Balkans. Glimpses of Tolstoy's reactions may be caught from his writing. For example, outside Bucharest he was stationed on a height from which he could watch the fighting, and he reflected at length about all his experiences, even counting the firing, and timing it with his watch. However, although he had read critical accounts of the Battle of Waterloo, he still showed few signs of accepting the views for which he was later to become famous.

The Russians withdrew from Bucharest, for fear of offending Austria, and Tolstoy was transferred to the Crimea. The Crimean War, which broke out at this time, had remarkably little justification—indeed the Czar, Nicholas I, in so far as he wanted war at all, may have been concerned simply to distract his subjects from their wish for reforms. The Turks, backed by the British, who were already sensitive about threats to the prospective Suez Canal, resisted. But despite the inefficiency of the British and French forces—familiar from the biography of Florence Nightingale and the absurd poem "The Charge of the Light Brigade"—the war was going badly for the Russians. Tolstoy had suggested to the Czar that a news sheet might raise the morale of the Russian soldiers. While playing a conventional part with the battery of guns, to which he was attached as a sub-lieutenant, his lively mind was beginning to work. When he was moved from one post to another, it may be supposed that the reason was partly because he had criticised the ideas of his fellow officers. His patriotism had been aroused by the extraordinary initial success in

defending Sevastopol from the invaders. His family relationship to the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian forces in the Crimea had gained him more of a hearing than is usually given by army men to intellectuals. Having watched a fortified trench change hands many times, with the loss of many lives, he and a friend had proposed to the general that the English should be challenged to a game of chess to decide who should finally occupy it!

Gradually the inefficiency and dishonesty in buying supplies began to appal him, and he drew up a characteristic document for improving the plight of the infantry. "A soldier is beaten if he makes a pipe with a long stem, if he wishes to marry, or if he dares to notice how his superiors steal from him. How many Russian officers are shot by Russian bullets? We have not an army, but a crowd of oppressed, disciplined slaves." The manuscript, fortunately for Tolstoy, was never published or submitted to his superiors. Not long afterwards he was in the thick of the long siege of Sevastopol, where he wrote *Sevastopol in December*. Its subsequent publication caused a great stir. The comments of the public and the news that the Czar had read it combined to tempt Tolstoy to continue to write. Nothing was more characteristic of him than to meet the smile of fortune with a slap in the face, and he wrote, in the sequel, *Sevastopol in May*, a forthright attack on the stupidity of war. "Powder and blood settle nothing," he affirmed, echoing the famous speeches of John Bright. Having looked more thoughtfully at the horrors around him, he described the truces in which the soldiers made friends with their enemies while collecting their dead for burial, borrowing tobacco from each other, joking as they went about their grim business, and then, after this brief interlude of Christian behaviour, preparing to kill each other again. War thus

became for Tolstoy the denial of Christianity—indeed, it was probably largely as a result of the Crimean War that one of the world's greatest novelists came to recognise the true nature of all war.

Sevastopol fell, and the war petered out, with few Russians or others knowing what it had all been about. Tolstoy left the army to become what he later called "a general in literature".

Writing was the ambition of many talented young men in the period before radio, films and newspapers became common; but for a count such as Tolstoy, who was already assured at birth of an important place in society, with wealth and access to a career, it was an unusual desire. He never had to write for a living, and so he was free to write as he wished without courting fame. The second account of Sevastopol, in which he knowingly undermined the reputation he had made with his first, is evidence of this independence of mind. Despite the activities of the censors of the Press, who harried him all his life, he was able to have his manuscripts circulated privately or even published abroad; later, his family connections provided an umbrella of protection when he became unpopular at Court.

Occasionally he wrote under great difficulties—such as in the officers' rough quarters during the siege of Sevastopol—but he was fortunate in having Yasnaya Polyana as a quiet country retreat free from the distractions of town life. Most writers require a combination of stimulus and quiet: even Shakespeare's plays might have been less profound had his life been confined to the bustle of London. It is true that Tolstoy was responsible for the welfare of a large number of

serfs, and later also for a large family, but there were periods when his writing took precedence over them all.

Most people know, from their school-work, what it is like to write; but they usually suppose that it is much easier for writers of books than it is for them. A good deal is known about Tolstoy's writing, partly because he kept a diary and partly because, for a while, when he broke his arm, he dictated his work. Two years after his marriage, when he was staying with his wife's parents in order to have treatment in Moscow, his two sisters-in-law were delighted to take down his words. He would stop and say, "No! It's dull, it won't do". Then, perhaps, he would talk to himself before trying to improve a passage. Sometimes the phrasing would be altered three or four times. The younger sister-in-law, Tanya, who hero-worshipped him, felt as though she was seeing her god from the inside. When he dictated smoothly and without passion, he was worried lest he was missing something—he was really only satisfied when he felt himself completely involved in his subject.

He had acquired an enormous fund of experiences on which to draw. His own childhood, the peasants, the high society of Moscow, the Cossacks, the Caucasus, and the soldiers in the Crimea were the raw material. All were appropriate to his purpose, if indeed, in the early part of his life, his purpose in writing was other than for art's sake. He himself believed that he had begun to write in order to tell stories, but that when he had become convinced of the seriousness of life he felt that he must use his writing to teach people to live.

Certainly his writing about peace followed this pattern. It developed in three stages: first the description of the Crimean War, in which he seemed uncertain what to say; secondly, in *War and Peace*, which is sometimes called the world's greatest

novel and which had an enormous influence on public opinion, he raised a gigantic question mark over the battlefield but left the question unanswered; thirdly, with the publication of *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, thirty years after he had begun *War and Peace*, he addressed the world in a clear denunciation of war:

"It is often said that the invention of terrible instruments of destruction will put an end to war: war will destroy itself. That is not true. As it is possible to increase the means of slaughter, so it is also possible to increase the means of bringing men . . . to submission. Let them be slaughtered and torn to pieces by thousands and by millions, they will still go to the slaughter like senseless cattle." His ideas on such subjects are conveniently assembled in his *Address to the Swedish Peace Congress in 1909*, in which, when he was an old man of eighty, he told the world of his beliefs.

" 'Thou Shalt Not Kill' is enjoined on all Christians, and either governments claiming to be Christian must accept and disband their armies, or they do not deserve the support of their citizens." "The higher the position a man holds in the military profession the more criminal and shameful is his occupation." "By entering the ranks of murderers they infringe the Law of God which they acknowledge." Their profession "is as shameful a business as an executioner's and even more so. For the executioner only holds himself in readiness to kill those who have been adjudged harmful and criminal, while a soldier promises to kill all whom he is told to kill." "It is more natural for men to be guided by the reason and conscience with which they are endowed, than to submit slavishly to people who arrange wholesale murders." He re-tells Hans Andersen's tale of *The Emperor's New Clothes* and exclaims: "We must say the same [as the little

boy]. We must say what everybody knows but does not venture to say . . . murder always remains murder."

Let us resume the story of Tolstoy's life at the point when he returned from the Crimean War and settled down to live on his estate at Yasnaya Polyana. His first intention was to become a model landowner, and in *A Landlord's Morning* he wrote a vivid account of the hopes of a young man responsible for serfs, and of the difficulties of helping them. It ends characteristically with the wealthy landowner wishing he could be the strong, handsome son of a wealthy peasant setting out with his horses and waggon to cart goods from place to place. Tolstoy became involved in agriculture and forestry, in settling disputes, and in checking drunkenness; but by far his most important activity was the establishment of a school. He was convinced that his serfs would come to welcome new ideas and understand his vision of what peasant life could be, if only he could influence them in their youth.

The school had been started when Tolstoy left university, but after he returned from the Crimea it became much more important to him and indeed occupied much of his time from 1859 until his marriage, in 1862. Attendance was voluntary, there were no fees, and some forty pupils, including a few girls and a very few adults, were taught by three or four teachers in the subjects which were usual at the time. What made the school unique was the emphasis on originality and experiment. Tolstoy criticised German schools where pupils were drilled and stupefied so that teachers and children found themselves mutual enemies, and claimed that he could leave the room without the pupils changing their activities. In keeping with these ideas, he believed that grammar, writing with skill, and reading to understand, come of themselves in

favourable conditions. There is therefore no need to force children.

Many stories are told of the school. Punishments as well as prizes were abandoned—though there was one occasion when Tolstoy pulled a boy's hair for not being able to do a sum. Another time, when two children had been stealing from the school, their fellows decided that they should carry a card saying "Thief" around their necks; but, when the offence was repeated, the mocking of the other children caused Tolstoy to remove the card. "I convinced myself," he wrote, "that there were secrets of the soul hidden from us, upon which only life can act, and not moral rules and punishment."

The relationship between Tolstoy and his pupils was that of a father to his children. He not only taught them, but romped with them in the snow and told them stories. Once, at the suggestion of some of the boys, Tolstoy wrote the beginning of a story "The Spoon Feeds, but the Handle Sticks in the Eye", and told them the framework of the rest of the plot. Many boys chose to go home when school ended, but two stayed on to continue writing the tale. Each new development was discussed before the descriptions and conversation were dictated, and this work continued, despite hunger, until, eleven at night. Two days later, Tolstoy had to go to Moscow, and during his absence a craze for making paper pop-guns resulted in the destruction of the precious manuscript. Tolstoy's disappointment showed so deeply on his face, when he returned, that the two boys promised to re-write the whole story. They worked one evening in his study from nine until twelve o'clock. Then he knocked and went in and found them writing the last sentences impetuously, like artists, the lines running aslant the paper. They enjoyed a meal when they had finished, and slept under their master's writing table. This

became one of the pupil's tales published in an educational magazine Tolstoy was editing, and he himself contributed an article entitled, "Who should teach writing? The peasant children or the teachers?"

Anyone who knows that children, with gifted leadership, can produce literary works comparable with their paintings will not be surprised at Tolstoy's success as a teacher of literature, and yet the title of his article sounds as though it was devised a year ago, not last century.

As his life as a school-master continued, he spent more and more time on this periodical. His outspoken articles about existing teaching methods made him few friends, but although neither the government officials concerned with education nor the liberal educationalists welcomed his intervention, he was worshipped by those who worked under him and by a small circle of teachers who were awake to the need for a new approach. Many of his ideas are now either common practice, or widely accepted in theory, but the personal relationship between him and his pupils has yet to be fully appreciated. Some would say it was hopelessly idealistic, others that it was only possible for a unique man like Tolstoy; others again that it has no relevance to modern conditions. However, as with so many of his views, the passage of time has helped to support the truth of what he wrote.

It is interesting to compare his own recollections of the school with those of a pupil. In his old age he looked back on it as one of the happiest times of his life. He wrote in a letter: "You know what the school meant to me from the very moment I entered it. It was all my life, it was my monastery, my church, in which I redeemed myself while being saved from all the anxieties, doubts and temptations of life." One of his pupils recalled it, fifty years later, in these words:

"There I am a ten-year-old schoolboy, there is young, jolly Leo Nikolayevich (Tolstoy); there I am sliding down the steep hill, romping with Leo Nikolayevich, covering him with snow, playing ball, walking in the woods and fields, and having conversations on the terrace, telling our tales about the wizards. . . ."

But for a while the school was pushed into the background by Tolstoy's marriage. This followed a number of dramatic events, the first of which took place during the previous year, while he was visiting a neighbour's house where the novelist Turgenev was also a guest. No doubt the reputation Tolstoy had already established made for jealousy between the two men, and they quarrelled over a minor point in the education of Turgenev's daughter: whether or not she should mend the tattered garments of the poor.

"She is acting an insincere theatrical farce," said Tolstoy.

"I cannot allow you to say that," replied Turgenev.

"Why shouldn't I speak my mind?"

"Then you consider that I educate my daughter badly?" retorted Turgenev and brushing aside Tolstoy's attempt to justify himself added: "If you speak in that way I'll punch you in the face." Later Tolstoy challenged Turgenev to a duel which happily never took place. But Tolstoy's occasional irritability, and his unwillingness to endure qualified approval, made him rarely keep his friends for long—and he must often have felt the need for affection.

Another incident which took place at about this time was a visit of the secret police to Yasnaya Polyana. On the strength of inaccurate reports that Tolstoy was hiding a printing press in his house, they thought that he was, by implication, mixed up in dangerous revolutionary activities. He was away seeking a cure for what he believed to be tuberculosis, and his sister

and Aunt Tatyana who had brought him up, were at home. The police invaded the house almost as though they were the army, and settled down to reading his private correspondence and diary—even probing under the floor of one of the barns. The neighbouring landlords were glad to see a man of liberal views disgraced, and some of the peasants were amazed and some pleased to see a rich man brought low. Tolstoy's indignation when he heard the news raged unabated. He eventually won an apology, but an apology does not remove the stain on a man's character. On his way home he stayed with the Behrs family. There were three daughters—Tanya, the youngest, who had a beautiful voice, Sonya, aged eighteen, and Liza, the eldest. She had some difficulty in keeping up with the vivacious charm of her younger sisters, but she was outstanding as a student. It was at that time usual for parents to insist on the eldest daughter marrying first, but Tanya's singing was so moving that the bachelor of thirty-two was in obvious difficulties. Tolstoy's increasingly frequent visits to the family started the gossips saying that Liza would shortly be married, and there is little doubt that the custom of confining meetings between young people to the parents' house led at times to confusion. It even seemed that this distinguished and amiable stranger was courting the three daughters at once, to judge by their devotion to him. They all read his books and carried quotations from them next their hearts.

The day of decision came in the drawing-room of a house near Yasnaya Polyana where the Behrs family were staying as visitors. Tanya, having been asked to sing, had run to hide under the piano to avoid performing in front of a large audience. It was already late when Tolstoy walked in with Sonya, both of them unaware of her sister's presence. Tolstoy

had had great difficulty in reaching a decision, not only because he was much older than Sonya, but because he doubted his own ability to make a success of married life. Nevertheless, he was often playfully irresponsible and on this occasion Tanya overheard a most extraordinary proposal of marriage. He wrote the initial letters of a message which he asked Sonya to guess. With some help she deciphered, "Your youth and need of happiness remind me too strongly of my age and the impossibility of happiness". Sonya's growing hopes were confirmed and, to the dismay of her elder sister, the famous author and the doctor's second daughter were married in 1862.

The first baby was expected the following year, and Tolstoy began to read a number of books about child-birth. He took a great interest in the baby's kicking, and on one occasion entered the room and said, "He already has toe-nails", without giving Sonya any idea who he was talking about. For the actual birth he prepared the same bed on which he himself had been born. Yet he was never content. He wrote in his diary, "But in me there was always the same feeling of indifference and of irritation". After the birth, Sonya was ill and the doctor told her not to feed the child herself, but Tolstoy had already made up his mind that she should nurse her own baby, and it was only the combined forces of Sonya and her parents which prevented Tolstoy from insisting that his ideas should prevail.

The marriage was happy at first and provided the inspiration Tolstoy needed to write *War and Peace* over a period of only six years—*a tour de force* in itself. But later the couple became unhappy: Sonya was devoted to her husband as an author, and copied out his manuscripts for him until, years later, he began attacking the Church; but she was not easy

to live with. Her overflowing vitality alternated with bouts of depression—and she even threatened suicide. Later she became impatient with him, and rather self-important. But, for the present, life rolled by happily; they stayed at the country house in the summer, and in the capacious wooden house in Moscow during the winter.

It is possible to recapture in the Moscow house, even today, something of the atmosphere in which Tolstoy lived: his simple table for writing, his shoemaker's bench, and most touching of all the room with toys, which was kept undisturbed after the death of his youngest son. It is easy to imagine the stream of distinguished and eccentric guests. Although there were disputes and jealousies between the married couple, these were at first no more than the usual complications which arise when two idealistic young people are finding that married life is but a continuation of the hard lessons of childhood. Then, during summer in the country, there were picnics, hunting, receiving visitors, amateur plays, games with the children, and all kinds of work on the estate. Of course a good deal of time was devoted to writing, though Sonya was inclined to begrudge her husband his literary work, as she herself was ambitious to become a writer.

In Tolstoy's middle age, however, a crisis occurred: it seemed then that he had spent his spiritual force so that life became meaningless to him. He hunted through the beliefs of many religious sects in a vain search for some secret of life to which he could cling. He even contemplated suicide himself, and in a "Confession" he wrote how he felt that his work was finished. Eventually, out of this misery he evolved a philosophy—the "New Life" which has since had a great influence on those who seek an antidote to the ills of modern

industrial existence. In 1884 at the age of fifty-six he insisted that his servants should call him by his name, "Leo Nikolayevich", omitting his title; he began to dress in a peasant tunic held in by a broad leather belt, baggy trousers and home-made boots. With his big shaggy beard he looked such a thorough-going peasant that he was sometimes turned out of theatres and restaurants. More important than these visible signs of the "New Life", he undertook what he called bread-labour every day: in Moscow this might mean chopping wood, drawing water or shoe-making—the latter learned from a workman; in the country he mowed hay, built barns or ploughed (according to the season), and sometimes under the guidance of a peasant, when skills beyond those of the intellectual were required.

These new ideas developed over the years, and were foreshadowed by his belief both in the ability of his peasant school-children to write stories, and in the wisdom of their parents. On more than one occasion he had improved his own stories by getting peasants to re-tell them to him. At first his family supported him with enthusiasm, the Countess joined the hay-making in a homespun skirt, and outside the family his followers enthusiastically established communities to live according to these new ways. Their ideals were vividly described by a young man staying with Tolstoy: "We shall go to bed early, rise early, meet the sun without turning red, and look men straight in the eyes without feeling ashamed, for we too shall be workers." They were paving the way for the modern work-campers, though these perhaps have a more practical idea of bread-labour as a means of balancing university and factory life and helping backward communities at the same time.

In Tolstoy's communities it was the means, not the ends,

that mattered. If Ilya and Sergei, two of the sons, ploughed awkwardly at first, if visitors raised blisters as they scythed or raked, it meant not that they should have kept to their own occupations but that they would be able to appreciate the skills and fortitude of the peasants all the better. Tolstoy himself found difficulty in working at the top of a ladder when erecting a barn, as he was nearly sixty at the time and felt dizzy with the height; at first he despaired and came down, but the peasant with whom he was working would not let him give up, and took him to one side, saying, "You look down . . . fix your eyes on the drill and the hole and keep boring. You must look up at your work." Tolstoy, who was always quick to appreciate the significance and the symbolism of apparently trivial events, remarked that evening, "You know, I have learnt more today than one sometimes learns in a year. Only now do I understand fearlessness in other situations of life also."

For an aristocrat to take up manual occupations and recommend them as a way of life was almost as astonishing, in those days, as it is now to travel in space. He found in this simple life the key to everything else he had to say: men can only live at peace without conflicts and war, they can only look sincerely into the eyes of the poor, they can only face the artificialities of modern life in towns and offices, if they know how to live as peasants. "What a delight it is," he wrote, "to rest from intellectual labours by means of simple physical work! Every day, according to the season, I either dig the ground, or saw and chop wood, or work with scythe, sickle or some other tool. As to ploughing, you cannot imagine what a satisfaction it is to plough. . . . It is not very hard work as many people suppose; it is pure enjoyment! . . . The blood runs merrily through your veins, your head becomes clear, you

don't feel the weight of your feet—and oh the appetite afterwards and the sleep!"

To glorify such work may seem inspiring to some and harmless to others, but it was extremely unpopular with the aristocracy at court. However, the Russian Orthodox Church was an even more serious opponent, for Tolstoy never minced his words. When he wrote *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, in 1893, he stated with his usual force that Christ's teaching had been misinterpreted, and that if the Sermon on the Mount were carefully considered it would be seen to deny many of the practices of that Church. The fact that it was more confused and corrupt than other branches of Christianity, and deserved to be attacked, made no difference. The Countess, Sonya, refused to copy out the manuscript, threats of murder arrived by post, and Tolstoy was called "The devil in human form". In 1901, the Church excommunicated him, some public libraries removed all his books, and the post office held back messages of sympathy, but to visitors he would say with a smile, "I positively decline to accept congratulations".

Not that he was always cheerful. When there was reason to be happy he was often sad. On his eightieth birthday, the congratulations poured in from all over Russia and from Europe and America, the party was gay and there was music, but his favourite composer brought tears to his eyes and he left the room. His daughter, Sasha, followed him and asked him what was the matter.

"Depressing," he said, "the people are depressing with their insincerity and falseness."

It was one thing for Tolstoy to pit himself against Church and State, it was another thing to pit himself against his

family, but this he did, and regarded his ensuing unhappiness as the lot of one who pursues truth before all else. Sonya had always been too artistic to be an easy wife. As the years passed she grew more and more out of sympathy with her husband's idea that property is evil and should be given away. Tolstoy did not impose his will on the rest of the family, but he wanted the family to own the property if they insisted on keeping it, rather than that he himself should do so. Sonya, always over-anxious about being left in poverty, wanted to be given the copyrights in his work—by far his most valuable piece of property. However, Tolstoy wished to give her only his early writings; he wanted to leave his later work to the public—and in the care of an ardent sympathiser—in order to ensure, as he thought, that whatever needed to be published would be published. The issue was complicated by the financial value of the actual books and manuscripts, and by the desire of Sonya to suppress some of the passages about herself.

When he wrote his will about the disposal of his writings he did not dare tell his family, and this preyed on his mind during his last months. Sonya became increasingly hysterical, and instead of enjoying a quiet old age Tolstoy became, by force of circumstances, a kind of mental nurse. There seemed to be only one way out, and that was to escape. Leaving a letter behind, he travelled away one night with his servant Dushan. At the age of eighty-two travelling was not to be lightly undertaken, but having reached the railway station they took places in a second-class carriage and soon engaged a fellow traveller in a conversation about non-violence and education. Tolstoy was quickly recognised—there was to be no quiet peasant's hut to which he could retire. He visited his sister who lived in a convent, but then moved on, fearing

his family would find him and force him to return. During the next journey he fell ill and had to stop at a tiny railway station which is now called after him. For a week he lay in the stationmaster's house. "Illness," he had remarked on an earlier occasion, "is like fire—it destroys but also warms," meaning that life is incomprehensible to those who are never ill. Now, attended by doctors, by his friend, to whom he had given the care of his later writings, and by one of his sons, Tolstoy lay unaware of the newspaper headlines about his illness. His wife was kept away by the doctors. One of his last remarks, murmured almost inaudibly, was, "To seek, always to seek". On November 7th, 1910, he died.

It was a tragic end to a stormy life, but he had made a deep mark on the thought of Europe. He is now honoured by Communists and non-Communists alike, a gigantic, rugged figure like the stuffed bear which stands inside his Moscow house, impossible to tame, always defiant of accepted ideas. Before Tolstoy, statesmen believed in the glory of war, after Tolstoy they were ready to believe in the glory of peace.

V MAHATMA GANDHI

THE PALM LEAVES high up in the tree-tops rustle harsh and dry, and the languid air stirs so sleepily that even the fine dust from the roadway lies still as the ox-carts move by with axles creaking. Lively boys sit quietly in the shade waiting for the cool evening, the time for games. Day-time encourages sleep or meditation in tropical countries, and meditation builds no factories.

It was in surroundings such as these that Mohandas Gandhi was born on October 2nd, 1869, in Porbandar, a town by the sea on the peninsula of Kathiawar, north of Bombay. His father later became chief official in Rajkot, a town of 36,000 inhabitants, and he himself, the youngest of six children, was to become the most saintly and controversial figure in the international politics of the twentieth century. The circumstances which fit a man to be a great leader are often accidental. Gandhi might easily have grown up to be a minor civil servant; instead, he was to lead the world in non-violent resistance. The details of his upbringing are therefore significant.

His parents were Hindus, but his mother was much influenced by Jainism, a form of religion which recognises the strength of purpose and single-mindedness that may be derived from fasting. In his autobiography, which he called *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Gandhi described how his mother would not give up her fasts even when she fell

ill. Once she vowed to eat only when she saw the sun shine—but if it was not convenient to eat just at that time, she showed no irritation: "God did not want me to eat today", she said.

Gandhi's father had married four times; his first three wives had died. He was indifferent to wealth, and had a reputation for being fair and honest. At family prayers, towards the end of his life, he used to repeat verses from the Gita, the Hindu scriptures, such as these:

"He who is able to endure here on earth, ere he be liberated from the body, the force born from desire and passion, he is harmonised, he is a happy man. He who is happy within, who rejoiceth within, who is illuminated within . . . goeth to the Peace of the Eternal."

A home background of high ideals does not necessarily produce a social innovator. But there was a streak of originality in Gandhi's make-up which was certainly not acquired at school, where he learned chiefly to call his teacher names. Nor can it have had any connection with the child-marriage that took place when he was thirteen. In order to save expense, he was married, together with his brother and cousin, as part of a triple marriage ceremony. The ritual was so complicated that the preparations took months, and the thirteen-year-old had to stay away from school for a year. During the ceremony the young couples sat on a raised platform, went through certain processionary steps, and put food into each others mouths as a token of the care they would show in the years to come. Afterwards, Gandhi returned to school.

It would be a mistake to suppose that he was a pattern of virtue in his youth, even though he compares well with Tolstoy. Gandhi's own story of his boyhood contains so much about his mistakes that those who wanted later to think of

him as a saint without blemish found it unpleasant to read. He was cowardly, obstinate and dishonest to his elders, pleasure-seeking and lacking in direction; but he contrived to convert some of his defects into virtues, his cowardliness into tenderness, his obstinacy into persistence, and all his experiences into the raw material of his later wisdom.

He smoked in secret when he was twelve, stealing money to do so, and after his marriage he defied his parents by eating meat—a custom that seems barbarous to Hindus and is strictly forbidden. Lying to his mother that he had no appetite after these escapades, pricked his conscience, and the first time he swallowed goat's flesh he imagined a goat bleating in his stomach. At that time the voice of the goat was less persuasive than the belief that by eating meat Indians could grow powerful enough to force the British to quit India. Already in 1885 nationalist feeling was strong even in the part of the country where the Gandhi family lived; though it was so remote that Europeans were seldom seen.

At school Gandhi was shy of the other children, and hesitated to join their games by the sea and in the streets. He struggled successfully with English, and the beginnings of geometry, but he was never an outstanding pupil. As he bent over his slate it did not occur to him that his future was likely to be different from that of his neighbours.

When he left school he wanted to study law in England. His father had died but his elder brothers and uncles were by no means poor. His mother was opposed to the idea and said he must consult his uncle; so he travelled the slow journey to Porbandar by ox-cart and camel, only to be told by his uncle that his mother should decide. By this time Gandhi himself had become so keen on the idea that he

accepted money from his brother and set off for England. He was not quite eighteen. The Hindus at home declared him an out-caste, since Hinduism could not be practised in England, but he did not allow himself to be deterred, even though he was opposing his mother's religious views.

Though a married man, Gandhi was still an adolescent, in his teens. Apart from the vows he had made to his mother before leaving, his situation was similar to any other schoolboy turning student who has to establish himself in a great city without the help of any acquaintances. To one of his sensitivity it was difficult to mix with other London law students; and so, to clothe his self-consciousness, he dressed in the accepted style of an English gentleman of the period. Later he was to become famous for wearing nothing but a loin-cloth even in climates which made it a hardship, but as a student he was not a dress-reformer in any sense of the word. In 1888, on his arrival in London, Gandhi chose spats, patent leather shoes, top hat, a stiff starched collar and a bright tie to go with his morning coat and striped trousers.

He seems to have had an exceedingly dull time, initially, but was ultimately rescued from this by his vegetarianism. At his first lodgings he was always hungry, and his discovery of a vegetarian restaurant near Fleet Street led to meetings with other vegetarians. He became a member of the executive committee of their society. An Indian friend who joined him for vegetarian meals was a writer and, with the greater assurance of a man whose work takes him into all kinds of places, persuaded him to visit France. "One day," wrote Gandhi, "he arrived at my lodgings in his queer clothes, a shirt and loin-cloth . . . I was shocked," he added.

There is very little else in his autobiography to reveal what he thought about London and the people he met there, and

it may well be that at this stage he was mainly interested in himself. No doubt he worked long hours, and in June 1891 he was called to the bar. He sailed for India two days later.

If his years in England had not been happy, his return to India was disastrous. In England, he had written, "Even when I paid a social call the presence of half a dozen or more people would strike me dumb." This was a bad start for a lawyer; moreover, his family only accepted him back on the assumption that he would make good and show some return for the opportunities he had been offered. But the first time he tried to speak in court, he found himself tongue-tied. He was at one and the same time self-confident and shy, and it was a nightmare experience: his diffidence prevailed and he had to pay another lawyer to take over the case.

He earned no money to provide for his wife and four-year-old son, but spent much of his time in contemplation, and thought about religious ideas which he had developed in London from reading the Bible and the Hindu scriptures. His ideas progressed further under the influence of a Hindu spiritual adviser, but he never surrendered his characteristic independence, nor found for himself a spiritual adviser whom he could accept without reserve.

Despite his initial failure as a lawyer, he was offered a job in South Africa by some Indian merchants who needed a legal representative there. He was amazed at the black-white relationships, with the Indian community separated from both groups, and was persuaded before sailing again for India to return and champion his fellow Indians in their demand that they should be allowed to vote—at least in certain circumstances.

During the months back in his own country, he spoke on

the South African situation at many political meetings. The Natal newspapers reported his attacks on the European monopoly of power, but omitted the qualifications that he added which would have revealed his true attitude. It was a short-sighted policy on the part of the Press, their cause losing, instead of gaining, by their distortions.

When, on his return to Africa, Gandhi landed at Durban, a newspaper-inspired mob gathered to attack him. He declined advice to land at dusk, but sent his family on ahead; he followed on foot with an Englishman. As the two men passed through the streets, Gandhi was recognised by the crowd, and stones and eggs were thrown at them. Jeers added to the excitement, and the mob set upon Gandhi and beat him until he fainted. The police intervened in time to save him and saw him safely to an Indian friend's house. The crowd, however, with much shouting, gathered round like a pack of hounds yelping for their prey. To gain time, the police superintendent led them in singing

> And we'll hang old Gandhi
> On the sour apple tree.

Meanwhile, arrangements were made to disguise Gandhi in police uniform and help him escape from the back of the house. Britain's reputation for law and justice suffered that day from the tough consciences of the journalists who had tampered with the truth, thus encouraging the mob to break the law.

From his second arrival in South Africa in 1897 to his final departure in 1914, Gandhi combined working as a lawyer with bouts of campaigning on behalf of Indian rights, and he very soon became the acknowledged leader of the Indians in South Africa. During this long period two important

changes were taking place there: on the one hand, Gandhi began experiments in simple living which became as important a preparation for passive resistance as military training for fighting. On the other hand, the political upheaval of the Boer War (1899-1902), followed by the Act of Union in 1910, gave independence to South Africa. These two developments were in no way related, but each forms part of the essential background for the first passive resistance movement to be successful in the eyes of the world, a movement which succeeded, without violence, by orderly demonstrations.

The domestic details of the simple life often seem petty. Gandhi shows with candour the entanglements which surround a man even of his resolution; and he seems only to have prevailed in his search for a simpler way of life because it was a by-product of his "search for truth" rather than his main aim. He began wisely by moving to a farm. This meant eventually surrendering his comfortable and cultivated lawyer's domestic life. He experimented with his diet; he reduced his expenditure; his wife squabbled with him when he wished to give away her jewellery which she wanted for her daughters; and he tried unsuccessfully to bring his sons up to be saints. Certainly the endurance of hardship needed to fit a man for civil disobedience requires regular practice, and Gandhi grew in strength and resolution.

The ups and downs of politics were no less complex than the difficulties imposed by the attempt to lead a simple life. For Gandhi never found it easy to perceive a clear-cut issue, and his opponents often accused him of being shifty or cunning.

His political activity began in 1897 when he opposed the tax of three pounds (a lot of money in those days) which was levied on labourers who had completed their five years of

work, and the disfranchisement of the handful of Indian voters. By securing support from Britain this met with success. In the Boer War which followed, Gandhi, a loyal supporter of the British Empire at that time, offered to form an Indian Ambulance Unit. It was finally accepted after two refusals, and the unit distinguished itself by its nonchalant bravery, both then and again in 1906 in the suppression of the Zulu "rebellion".

In that same year a bill was proposed requiring Indians to register, submit to finger-printing, and carry a certificate at all times. Gandhi spoke to a huge meeting of Indians and all promised "with God as witness" not to obey if the bill became law. A widespread campaign followed, but the bill was passed, and Indians who neither complied with it nor left the Transvaal were liable to imprisonment. Gandhi was among those who went to gaol.

Government measures against Indians became more stringent. The three-pounds tax was not repealed as Smuts had promised, no further immigration was allowed and all non-Christian marriages were declared illegal. This brought the campaign to life again and led to a defiant protest-march of women from the Transvaal into Natal, without the necessary papers for crossing the frontier. Indian miners came out on strike, and indignation in India and London reached a high pitch; funds flowed in to help the campaign. Women and strikers marched thirty-six miles towards the frontier, despite threats of shooting. At the frontier the guards let them pass and no one was shot, but later they were all arrested and carried away by train. Gandhi, in and out of prison, continued his work; fifty thousand of the labourers went on strike. In India even the British Viceroy protested at the South African government's actions.

It was at this point that Gandhi did three extraordinary things. While in prison he made a pair of sandals for General Smuts, the South African Minister of Justice, in return for a gift of books; they were certainly not made as a threat like the knitting of Madame Defarge, but showed that Gandhi, even at such a time as this, could rise above the bitterness common among prisoners. Secondly, he reduced his demands and stated that the Indians simply wished for a restoration of their lost rights. Finally, he astonished everyone by calling off a threatened mass-march when the government was embarrassed by a strike of white railway workers. By this extraordinary move he created conditions favourable to a settlement, and his demands were met by a new and less stringent bill.

Thus, against overwhelming odds, so far as physical force was concerned, Gandhi won the victory he had rashly promised his followers in 1897. By suffering, the Indians had shown their resolution, and a government derived from a European Protestant tradition had seen fit to give way.

On the occasion of Gandhi's seventieth birthday, Smuts wrote: "It was my fate to be the antagonist. . . . I must frankly admit that his activities were very trying to me. . . . We had a skeleton in our cupboard." (He was referring to the unjust law requiring the three-pound tax to be paid.) He may have been an opponent but he recognised the greatness of the man, and it was only the unusual circumstances in South Africa which brought them into conflict.

Gandhi's return to India, after the success of his campaign, has been vividly described by his friend, Nehru, who for many years was Prime Minister of independent India. To many the British seemed unbeatable; to Gandhi, steeled in the South African campaign, they seemed but worthy opponents. He

was prepared, as the British history books said in another connection, to singe the beard of the King of England in order to gain independence for his country. Often he was as subtle as a lawyer and always as kindly as a saint. The British had never before been opposed by such an extraordinary man. He was compared to a whirlwind that upset, among other things, the working of people's minds. His teaching was essentially fearless and truthful; and his actions sprang from these qualities which assured him a wide following in India and from which his influence both in religion and politics grew.

Gandhi's grasp of religion is not demonstrated only by the adoption of a simple life, for, if it were, the peasants of Asia would all be saints. Nevertheless, Gandhi also divested himself of as much of the paraphernalia of modern living as he could, and encouraged his friends to do the same. On one sea voyage he even persuaded an Englishman to throw a pair of field-glasses out of a porthole!

Although he assumed the simple life of the peasants, unlike them he could not settle down. When he was criticised for spending much of his time travelling and working away from his family, he replied: "All India is my family." He lived not in a family home but in an ashram, a centre for disciples as well as for his family if they chose to come.

In India, if a person admires a holy man very much, he wants, if possible, to live close to him and he calls him his guru or guide. In this way ashrams spring up, groups of huts which are neither monasteries nor colleges but somewhat akin to both. Here he expects to find good fellowship in the search for truth, and the inspiration of his guru. So it was necessary, for those who wished to visit the man who played the leading part in founding independent India, to walk five miles or take a carriage from the local town to the village

of Sevagram where, for many years, Gandhi's ashram was situated. Louis Fischer, his biographer, in describing one of his visits, tells of an earth-floored guest-room with a roof of bamboo poles; the tubs in the adjoining wash-room where he tried to type his notes while sitting in water to keep cool; and interviews with Gandhi which were always kept punctually, but with no rush to do business. Gandhi always liked to make jokes with young and old and it did no good to put on an air of dignity. Meals were eaten in a long hall with walls made of matting, the company sitting on floor-mats, and some of the members of the ashram doing the serving. The vegetarian food often seemed dull and the conversation no doubt acted as an appetiser. Prayers were said before meals. If the heat made the days hard to endure they were balanced by the cool starry nights when, in order to get as much air as possible, people slept at the doors of their huts.

It may sound to European ears as though an ashram is a remote country retreat where people forget the harsh life of the cities, but this is not always true. Gandhi's first ashram was formed near the industrial town of Ahmedabad. There was a terrace outside his tiny room that looked towards a busy river and a prison not far away (where, later, Gandhi and some of his followers were imprisoned). Further on could be seen the chimneys of the town's cotton factories. Gandhi's disciples, who comprised Europeans as well as Indians, often built their own huts. Their life included prayers and meditation based on several different religions, in addition to business connected with the political campaigns. Gandhi was not, however, in favour of hardening the body just for the sake of being able to endure pain, but rather to identify himself with the peasants by sharing their hardships. With Tolstoy and Ruskin he believed in the dignity of manual labour, so he

worked at his spinning to keep in touch with ordinary life and to show his neighbours how to become less dependent on foreign countries. For the remainder of his life he worked regularly at this and even brought his wheel with him to London in 1931.

Gandhi's form of self-help is continued by those schools which follow his methods: the children are able to earn enough by spinning to cover a large part of the expenses of the school. Spinning, like knitting, occupies the fingers while the mind is at rest. In India spinning filled this function, and at the same time made villages more self-sufficient: it came to have a religious significance, somewhat akin to telling beads. Gandhi was never the clumsy intellectual at practical work, but mastered weaving, nursing, carpentry and plumbing, so that he took a full share in the activities of the ashram.

His story is a jumble of campaigns, demonstrations, meetings and pamphleteering, mixed with these less orthodox activities. As a champion of national independence who, at the same time, renounced violence, his methods included fasting and civil disobedience, which often led to prison sentences. Rising early, eating little and working hard when at liberty, meant that prison life had few terrors for him and his followers, especially as the British officials took care to prevent him from suffering in captivity and thereby becoming a martyr. His self-imposed fasting was a much more serious ordeal than prison itself. This was an entirely new form of non-violence and one which has been widely misunderstood in the West.

A politician whose life is devoted to the varied issues which arise year by year does not produce material for a biography so much as for a card index. Gandhi, as an opponent of an autocratic regime, cannot be described in relation to the

parliamentary bills he supported or opposed. For those who succeed him it is the unique features of his methods which will be important, since they show how men can retain their independence, even under the shadow of a hostile government.

Fasting was nothing new for Gandhi. Like his mother, he often fasted for personal and religious reasons. "What the eyes are, for the outer world, fasts are, for the inner," he explained. No one who has not first tried for himself is entitled to scoff at such a remark.

His first political fast was made soon after his return from Africa, when the poverty-stricken labourers of the cotton mills of Ahmedabad were on strike. Gandhi had made the strikers promise to remain firm until the owners agreed to accept the decision of an arbitrator. He was a friend of the largest mill-owner, and indeed received help from this man's sister. He fasted not against the mill-owners but to strengthen the resolve of the strikers. Gandhi would not let any of the other strikers fast with him, because their active help was needed by their followers. In twenty-one days the strike ended with the acceptance of arbitration. But Gandhi did not yet recognise the value of the weapon he had forged.

Some years later, in 1924, his second fast was held in the home of a Moslem friend, in support of Hindu–Moslem friendship. He felt it his duty to strengthen, by his fasting, those who held the same ideals but were likely to weaken under pressure. On this occasion, he sought no gain for himself, nor was he bringing pressure to bear on his opponents so much as on his supporters. Gandhi's friend, Charlie Andrews, the English missionary, nursed him through the twenty-one day fast and described how, on the last evening, Gandhi "was wonderfully bright and cheerful. Many of his most intimate friends came to see him as he lay upon his bed

on the open roof of the house, which was flooded by the moonlight." Prayer and silence followed. The fast was ended the next day with a little ceremony; verses were read from the Koran, from the Hindu scriptures, and Charlie Andrews was asked to sing 'When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.'

There were no immediate results from the fast, no "sign" to satisfy the people; but attention had been called to religious tolerance in a new way. In addition, while fasting, Gandhi had expressed his ideas in a number of sayings and prayers: "Before they [the Hindus and Moslems] dare think of freedom, they must be brave enough to love one another, to tolerate one another's religion, even prejudices and superstitions, and to trust one another. This requires faith in oneself. And faith in oneself is faith in God. If we have faith we shall cease to fear one another." The man who wrote this, with the assurance of a seer, even when his followers distressed him, might have been writing a message for any age of fear. He was misunderstood by the naive peasantry who deified him, and he was misunderstood by a section of the educated Indians who regarded him as a kind of medicine man relying on popular superstitions and deprecating the advantages of their education or their high caste. What worried him most was the hardness of heart of educated men.

The next political fast was fraught with obscurities. It began in 1932 when the British government was offering India a constitution providing a separate electoral roll for Harijans, or untouchables, to ensure that they would be represented. The untouchables, although accepting Hinduism, were not allowed into Hindu temples because they were regarded as unclean. They were compelled to live on the outskirts of villages and forbidden to use communal wells—and their tasks were the most lowly, such as scavenging and

cleaning. Their social status was forced upon them by reason of their birth: an orthodox Hindu would feel compelled to wash himself if he was touched by one of them or even if their shadow passed over him. Gandhi, believing that a legal recognition would preserve for ever these terrible social distinctions, wished untouchables and other Hindus to come to some better agreement, and vowed that he would fast unto death unless they did so; once more he was appealing to his friends rather than to his enemies. Millions of Indians fasted the first day with him. Attempts were made to bring Harijan and Hindu leaders together, but the Harijan leader moved slowly because he was at first unwilling to believe in the offers made by the other side. At times there seemed to be hope, though at other times his friends despaired of ever seeing Gandhi again. Meanwhile, every day news of Gandhi's ebbing strength was carried all over the country. Eventually he was saved, but only just in time. An agreement was reached and, even more important, the practice of shunning untouchables was never again widely approved. Hindus might continue to cleanse themselves after some contact, but it was no longer quite respectable to follow this old-fashioned custom. Gandhi, always quick to practise what he preached, adopted an untouchable daughter. As the twentieth century progresses, this black spot in the Indian way of life is gradually being removed.

During the next fast, in 1942, when the war was already three years old, Gandhi was again in prison—this time, however, in the Aga Khan's palace. In a hostile correspondence with the Viceroy, each blamed the other for the widespread disturbances taking place at that time. Gandhi refused the offer of conditional release because he wished to fast in prison as a protest against the British charge of inciting to violence.

Gandhi felt that he might have prevented the outbreak if he had been at liberty at the right time. This was the nearest he came to fasting against the government.

Independence was granted to India in 1947. It proved impossible to make one united country, and Pakistan with its two separate parts in the Punjab and Bengal was formed. This division was followed by riots in which millions of Hindus were driven out of Pakistan and Moslems out of India. Those who died of violence or from the resulting famine were also counted in millions. Gandhi never accepted the partition, and refused to join in the celebrations of independence for that reason. He was deeply moved by the hatred that was revealed, and during the disturbances in 1947 and 1948 he fasted in protest against the lack of goodwill between the two religious groups. Despite his devotion to the ideal of independence, Gandhi always stated that religious tolerance was essential to it. He showed an astonishing courage during the riots: he walked round the streets of Calcutta and, later, Delhi, arm in arm with Moslem leaders to show that friendship could prevail—though he did not wish to force people to feign remorse for bloodshed. Even a number of British police officers joined a twenty-four-hour sympathy fast while remaining on duty.

Although Gandhi fasted as a penance for his failure, and believed that his life had been devoted to India in vain, it was, perhaps, at this time that his achievement was greatest. Hatred seemed to be everywhere, but he had remained true to his principle of love, and to some it seemed almost a miracle that in Calcutta and Delhi his influence prevailed. In his despair he felt happier fasting, though he again weakened almost to death. Just as the Harijans, after an earlier fast, had been allowed to enter Hindu temples for the first

time, so now temples were restored to Moslems by Hindus.

This was Gandhi's last fast, and it was not held in prison. Altogether almost six years between 1914 and his death were spent in prison, but his fasts were held regardless of where he happened to be at the time. No doubt a fast in prison is more impressive than one held elsewhere, but Gandhi was never guilty of seeking popular effects. The impact of his self-denial was therefore all the greater, and can only be understood in connection with the Indian veneration of holy men. In particular the fasts have little connection with Gandhi's part in gaining independence for India. Apart from the one occasion when he considered that he was unjustly imprisoned, there was no question of fasting against the British. His methods were indeed quite different. It is clear that for a long time he felt a strong loyalty to the strange empire which recognised equality for all before the law, and for this reason he had participated in the Boer War, and volunteered to raise an Indian ambulance unit again in 1914. "If we shun every Englishman as an enemy, Home Rule will be delayed. But if we are just to them we shall receive their support . . ." he wrote in *Indian Home Rule.*

Gandhi's campaigns were not always confined to personal fasts. For instance, by 1930 he had worked out a plan for organised political demonstration, for Indian independence, using non-violent methods. He informed the Viceroy that he intended to lead a demonstration in this manner, but gave no indication of his detailed plans. On the appointed day Gandhi walked forth from his ashram accompanied by seventy-eight members of the centre. They covered twelve miles each day, held many meetings and still found time for an hour's spinning. When Gandhi spoke he scarcely referred

to independence itself: instead, he praised homespun cloth, and denounced child marriage. In twenty-four days the party reached the sea; it had been a triumphal procession and aroused interest all over India. Gandhi had previously explained to the Viceroy that he intended to make salt, in defiance of the salt laws which confined salt-making to a government monopoly. On arrival at the coast, after all-night prayers, the party walked into the waves. Returning to shore, Gandhi picked up some encrusted salt left by the tide.

No more needed to be done. Throughout the country people joined in the act of defiance. Those by the sea made salt, those inland sold it; many were arrested, and soon there were 60,000 people in gaol. The most remarkable demonstration of non-resistance took place north of Bombay under the leadership of Mrs. Naidu, the poet.

Two thousand five hundred demonstrators, after praying together, advanced in orderly rows on large government salt-pans. As each row reached the police they were knocked down with clubs, but they kept coming and did not even raise their arms to protect their heads. Later some sat down and were kicked and dragged away. Three hundred and twenty of the victims were treated in a temporary hospital; but even in a demonstration of this kind the casualties are undoubtedly less than if there had been an armed rebellion. If the Moslem–Hindu riots were in one sense a failure for Gandhi's policy, the civil disobedience campaign was undoubtedly a victory.

Gandhi's worst enemies were not so much those British who scorned what they held to be the absurd little man, or those Moslems who hated any show of goodwill towards Hindus, but the extreme Hindus themselves. This is hardly surprising, since he had repeatedly defied the old Hindu rules: on one visit to a village he had allowed a sick calf to be

killed, out of pity for its suffering, although Hindus regard all cows as sacred animals. Similarly, he deplored the Hindu practice of child-marriage; for girls who had married in infancy were often widowed before they grew up, and he felt that the existence of girl widows was a blot upon Hinduism. Finally, on the question of caste Gandhi's ideas gradually became so extreme that he refused to attend any marriages except those between people of different castes or classes; he even said, "I therefore tell all boys and girls who want to marry that they cannot be married at Sevagram Ashram unless one of them is an untouchable". The strict Hindus felt as though Gandhi was claiming to be more holy than they were. Socrates, Jesus, Joan of Arc and many others suffered at the hands of religious conservatives who tried, without success, to save the beliefs of their forefathers by violence. Gandhi died as they had died, but without a trial.

After his last fast he was so weak that he was carried to his prayers in a chair. He asked Hindus to bring Moslems with them, and passages were read from the sacred writings of both parties. One result of this fast was that a large indemnity was paid by the Indian government to dispossessed Moslems. A group of young Hindus persuaded themselves that Gandhi was therefore a traitor to their faith, and the Punjab, which had become independent, would be reunited with India if only Gandhi were dead. One of them threw a bomb during the daily prayer ceremony, but Gandhi, thinking the noise was from military practice some distance away, continued the prayers. The youngster was arrested but Gandhi asked for him to be spared. To Gandhi his own safety meant little, since he had become master of pain and suffering, and in any case had never failed to forgive his enemies. Such a man is in a

sense impossible to defeat, since even his death can but perpetuate his influence. No precautions were taken to protect him, and late the following day another accomplice went to the prayer meeting in the park. Gandhi himself, supported by his relatives, went on foot, and about five hundred people gathered to pray with him. A few yards from the platform where he always sat a man stepped out as though to bow down in front of him, and would not be brushed aside. Instead of giving way, he pulled out a revolver and fired three bullets. Gandhi was shot dead.

This extraordinary man believed he was killing a traitor to Hinduism, instead of its saviour. He was a refugee from Pakistan, and considered that Pakistan must be invaded and wrongs righted. He could not understand why Gandhi preached brotherly love. His deed did nothing against the causes which were dear to Gandhi, but plunged free-thinking people all over the world into a personal tragedy. Gandhi, the searcher for truth, would have said that either he or the murderer might have been right, but that the murderer, whether right or wrong, was the victim of hatred.

Gandhi's work continues even today. Vinobha Bhave has been his successor in village work, though there is another pair of sandals which remain empty since the spiritual aspect of Gandhi's teaching still needs a new leader. But the growing State of independent India is a perpetual memorial to the life and work of perhaps the greatest peacemaker of all time.

VI JAN SMUTS

WHEN SEVERAL BOYS living in the same neighbourhood each make a den, several things may go wrong. One may envy his neighbour's den, or boast too much, or raid another's stronghold in his absence. At such a time a grown-up is often needed to make the peace. Perhaps he will simply point out how stupid and wrong it is to quarrel, and suggest that a better solution must be found: Tolstoy spoke to mankind in this way through his books. Another person might propose that the boy who is making a nuisance of himself should be asked to join the others in building more and better dens for other people, or even for himself. This is what Gandhi might have done. The third way is to say "Let's form a club. We can meet every week and we can work out some rules to deal with problems of this kind." This was the course recommended by Jan Smuts, the South African who was so impressed by Gandhi, to put an end to raids and quarrels on the international scale. He took Penn's idea of a Council of Europe and breathed life into it, extending it to encompass the globe. He helped to found both the League of Nations and the United Nations and paved the way for the great world civil servants, such as Hammarskjöld, who were to follow.

Smuts' personality was so many-sided that, at least until recently, it has been something of a mystery. One biographer nicknamed him "Grey Steel", but that was misleading, for he was far too colourful, too adaptable and too human to be dis-

missed in such a way. Some people think of him as the indomitable leader of the Dutch-speaking (Boer) colonists in South Africa during their struggle against the British; but history will remember his wisdom in lending his name and efforts in search of a formula for a just and lasting peace, because he saw that the wars in which he took part brought no real solution to the quarrels of nations. Other people, looking at his career and writings as a politician within South Africa, at a time when civilisation as we know it had only recently begun to reach the black peoples of his country, have thought that here he lacked courage and vision. They feel that, in spite of his declared opposition to the colour bar, he advocated policies that seem, in retrospect, to have paved the way for apartheid. His family and friends knew yet another Smuts—the warm human being. Unlike Tolstoy and Gandhi, he had admiring sons, one of whom wrote his life and showed us this side of him, which the public had never seen or understood.

Jan Smuts was not one of those people who are successful in public life because they have little pleasure in private life. If anything, the reverse was true: it was his public life which, on balance, he felt to be a duty. He enjoyed the company of children. Like an ideal uncle, he had an endless supply of stories. The longer ones tended to be told out of doors, away from other preoccupations. It was in camp that the best were heard. In the glow of the firelight older faces shone contentedly amused, but eyes grew large among younger listeners, who did not know what to believe. As some of the stories were true and some half-true, there was indeed no knowing where the leg-pulling began.

In those days, Smuts the story-teller explained, as he began one of the favourites, goods were transported in carts drawn

by eight pairs of oxen. They often travelled by night so that the men could sleep through the heat of the day. Early one morning, long before dawn, a team was outspanned (or unyoked) "in just such a place as this". Smuts waved his hand as he spoke, to indicate a cosy valley in the Zoutpansberg Mountains. But that night, the tale continued, the oxen wouldn't feed. They smelt a lion, and they kept stamping about and snorting, so that at length the two men in charge decided it was time to move on. In the darkness they rounded up the frightened creatures, inspanned them and set off. To their amazement they needed no whip. The tired oxen, ordinarily so sluggish, moved along at a furious pace, not just at the start but for more than an hour. As dawn began to break a strange shape, at first questionable, but later unmistakable, became visible at the back of the team.

It is easy to imagine the suppressed excitement of the children as they anticipated the end of this story. In their hurry, in the darkness, the men had inspanned at the rear not an ox but a lion. Smuts told this at much greater length, but, even in summary, it conjures up a little of the magic of the real scene, with small boys going off unwillingly to bed, wondering whether a lion would really allow itself to be yoked in that way.

Looking back, it is possible to realise the tremendous vigour of this man's thought and conversation. While the minds of most people would be lying fallow, waiting for the next crop of ideas, he would be turning over something which would emerge later on. In 1918, when an armistice was agreed between Germany and the allies, a clergyman, not knowing who he was, came up to him as he was walking on the Berkshire Downs. "Should I ring the bells?" he asked. "If you think it's a time for rejoicing," came the quick reply from Smuts, who

must have been reflecting that winning the war was barely half the battle.

All his life he was a great walker. He believed in exercise as a sun-worshipper believes in the sun, and his physical vigour increased the vigour of his thoughts. No doubt he preferred walking and riding because they stimulated reflection and conversation. At home in the Transvaal he had scope for long expeditions, often in search of grasses or flowers which he began collecting as a hobby when he was over fifty. In Capetown, during sessions of the South African Parliament, he climbed Table Mountain regularly, and in England he escaped to the Berkshire Downs, where the wide open spaces reminded him of home. But England seems a small, fenced-in country compared with South Africa, and he became a discriminating trespasser. On one occasion he came off the hills and found himself obstructed by a line of houses. In his mind, perhaps, he was once again facing the block-houses which barred his way in the Boer War. He did what no one else would have done: he gathered up his party, walked in at the back-door of one of the houses, excused himself with charm and walked out of the front door. There was indeed no knowing what would happen on a walk with Smuts, whom his friends knew as Oom Jannie. They learned never to be surprised.

The circle of Smuts' friends was so close that early biographers failed to penetrate. It was a lasting circle. When in camp he would stir the coffee, which he liked to drink strong, then lift it to his lips, murmuring in a deep voice the toast "Ewigdurende Vriendskap" [Everlasting friendship].

This man, who dazzled old and young with his extraordinary mind and range of talents, had had a very ordinary

start in life. He was not born in a palace like Winston Churchill, or surrounded with high family expectations like Tolstoy; in fact he seemed something of a freak to his family. His parents kept him at home, without schooling, on their wheat farm north of Capetown, supposing that he would follow his father on the farm. Life there was not dull or uneducative: adventures with baboons, exploring hills and kloofs so that the veld became part of him, leading the oxen at plough and listening to the stories of old Adam the Hottentot were a good basis for any education; but there is some doubt whether he even learned to read before he was twelve.

In four years he caught up with those who had been at school since they were six. At university he was an outstanding student and won a scholarship which took him on to Cambridge. Here again he worked hard and distinguished himself in law, as the most brilliant student of his generation, at the same time writing a lengthy treatise on personality, which foreshadowed his later work on philosophy.

Back in South Africa he spent some time in Capetown, trying to establish himself as a lawyer, and listening to debates in the Cape Parliament. Thinking there would be more work in a rapidly growing gold town, he then emigrated to Johannesburg.

At that time Cape Colony was governed jointly by its own Parliament and the Colonial Office in London. It was separate from the two Boer republics to the north: the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. The discovery of gold, in 1881, led to such an increase in the English population, however, that the Boer farmers were outnumbered by two to one. Moreover, the casual, rather inefficient government was not good enough to manage the difficult social problems created by a gold rush. A series of chances resulted in Smuts, although two years

below the usual age for such appointments, being made State Attorney (or Lawyer) and adviser to the aged President Kruger. It was in this capacity that he played a part in the crisis when the breakdown of talks between English and Boers led to the declaration of war in 1899.

The story of the Boer War is well known. The tiny forces of the Boers could not prevent the advance of the great army of the Empire, and the war seemed to be over when the British occupied Pretoria. Then, however, the Boer leaders decided to continue the fight on the open country known as the veld. A form of hit-and-run warfare developed, in which the Boers acquired all their supplies from their prisoners. The task which fell to Smuts, who was already a Commandant-General, although only thirty-one, was to lead his men towards Capetown and encourage the Dutch population there to rise and harry the British until they were so tired of the war that a compromise could be reached.

With a tiny force of 360 men he set off southwards across the vast grassy plain of the Orange Free State. The British were building blockhouses along the railways, intending first to prevent the Boers crossing and then to round them up. The Boers, however, were so skilled at fighting in the rocky "Kopjes" (or hills over which the tracks were too steep to ride), that the net spread to catch them closed in vain.

The weather grew colder and wetter than it had been for years, and in the mountains, as they moved further south, this caused terrible suffering among the Boer fighters. They huddled together at night; sometimes it was too cold to stop, and food became difficult to get until they neared farming districts. The vast expanse of the Karoo gave no shelter to the men, and their horses found no grass. Meanwhile the people of Capetown wondered what would happen. From within

sight of Port Elizabeth, Smuts moved through the mountains north of Capetown and, in 1902, with larger forces than ever, successfully laid siege to mining villages.

Bitter though feelings were, it was in some ways a gentlemanly war. Smuts treasured the captured letters of a young Englishman to his sister at home, in which the writer wondered why he was fighting, and wished there was still a John Bright to prick the conscience of Parliament. Bright was the very man he himself had thought of when events were rushing towards the war.

Peace came like the 'flu, depression following depression. Smuts' men were still winning their tiny victories, but elsewhere the point of exhaustion was reached and the war ended with a harsh treaty. Smuts agreed to the peace because he knew that a Liberal victory was expected at the next British election, which he felt would bring to power men with more sympathy for the Boers.

At the age of thirty-two, therefore, there seemed to be nothing but failure behind him: an unsuccessful war, service to a country that had ceased to exist, and tragedy in his own home. His wife was ill; three of his children had died during the war, and their home in Pretoria had been occupied by the army. It was a grey outlook, and there were few indications that he would be remembered as a philosopher-statesman, wise in the making of lasting peace.

All his life Smuts was attracted to the subtleties of peacemaking. He believed in the generous, healing peace rather than the one which sows the seeds of the next trouble. He used to tell the story of a wonderful old Zulu chief who inflicted a crushing defeat on the Boers and then came to them and begged for mercy. "How can you support a Colour

Bar against a man like that?" he would ask. He had failed to persuade the British to meet Boer demands at first, but later, with the new Liberal Prime Minister in London, he was astonishingly successful. "You can have the Boers for friends . . . you can choose to make them enemies. . . . If you do believe in Liberty it is also their faith and religion."

His words went to the heart and remain for all time as a reminder to those attempting to build on the bitter ruins left by war. Home Rule came in due course to South Africa, with Smuts as second-in-command in the government, and so, fifteen years after the Boer War was over, when a new, more terrible war was in progress, he was walking the streets of London, no longer pleading a forlorn cause, but as a member of a British War Cabinet. This confident man from far away seemed to know better than the British themselves what they were fighting for, and the sincerity of his belief seemed to be guaranteed by his willingness to forgive the past. The Press and London Society showered him with welcomes.

Knowing that war and peace are made in the minds of men he seized invitations to speak. When he first joined the War Cabinet of six men the war situation was serious for Britain and France. German submarines had swept sugar from the table if not the Navy from the seas; the Russian revolution was relieving pressure on Germany's eastern frontier, and the U.S.A. had not yet joined in the fighting, so Smuts' message of hope was timely. From the beginning of his stay he spoke often of the peace and, as 1918 drew on, this theme became still more frequent. He considered planning the peace and planning the war as a single task.

The idea of a League of Nations to prevent future wars was first hatched at Cambridge, and within a few weeks of landing in Britain Smuts had spoken at meetings called to

consider it. The example of the Commonwealth seemed to show how a League could work. The more he thought, the more it developed into the most persistent passion of his life, so that he wrote to his wife: "I am on active service for humanity."

Immediately the war ended he brought out a pamphlet, *The League of Nations—A Practical Suggestion*, and wrote in the foreword: "To my mind the world is ripe for the greatest step forward ever made in the government of man." It is a reasoned and compelling booklet, in which he sees this new organisation having "a very real role to play as the successor to the Empires", conscription and the private manufacture of armaments being ended, and disarmament begun. "I look upon conscription as the taproot of militarism; unless that is cut, all our labours will eventually be in vain," he wrote in it. He described the vast changes taking place and concluded, "The tents have been struck, and the great caravan of humanity is once more on the march". This pamphlet had a profound influence on President Wilson of the United States, who, according to the British Prime Minister, adopted its ideas as his own, and saw to it that eventually it became part of the Treaty.

Despite this, Smuts recognised in other parts of the Treaty of Versailles, which ended the First World War, such hatred, such an unwillingness to make peace, that the League appeared to be doomed from the start. Little men nursed their fears and hates, and betrayed the League before it could reach maturity.

Smuts returned to England and quickly gave away the silver tea-spoons he received on signing the treaty. For him it had not been a happy occasion that he wished to remember. He had written home: "It is a terrible document, not a

peace treaty but a war treaty", and to his Oxford friends, "The last battle of the war is being fought out in Paris, and we look like losing that battle, and with it the whole war". For weeks he had hesitated, not knowing whether to sign or not to sign; seldom has such a decided man been so undecided when faced with a major issue. In the end he signed.

Back in South Africa he became Prime Minister, but then lost an election. From that time South Africa was divided into those who sided with Smuts and those who were against him. Often his opponents were in a majority and, still embittered by the Boer War, their violence of language went beyond all reason. The more they were reminded of honours showered on Smuts in London, the more they seemed determined that he should have no honour in his own country. Yet even to his close friends he did not complain. He seemed to exist on a plane where neither fame nor abuse could touch him. Just as he could enjoy his old iron bedstead on the verandah of his Transvaal farm as much as the luxury of the Savoy Hotel with its view of the curving Thames, so he could turn his back on petty controversy and be content to concentrate on expounding his philosophy. For years he had wanted to write down his ideas. What he had to say was that it is the building up of parts into "wholes" that provides the clue to the understanding of what is good and right. Into this vision fitted his views, not only on life in general, but on the League of Nations, which united the whole of mankind.

In the big study of the rambling house at Doornkloof his work went on. The house was not impressive. It had a corrugated iron roof on which rain fell noisily, and it had served as officers' quarters in the Boer War, before being moved on to the farm. Here the large family lived—Mrs. Smuts, who was always a personality in her own right, their four daughters

and two sons. Books, people and cattle mattered more in that household than the appearance of the furniture.

Smuts saw his life's work in two parts: firstly, he was concerned to bring into being a sound international association, secondly, to show that it could work, by persuading Boers and English to live peaceably together in South Africa.

He expressed his belief in the good world in a speech to the students of St. Andrew's University in 1934. "The world itself . . . is a friendly world," he proclaimed. "It has borne us; it has carried us onward; it has humanised us and guided our faltering footsteps throughout the long and slow advance; it has endowed us with strength and courage. It has proved a real vale of soul-making for us humans and created for us visions, dreams, ideals . . ." This robust delight in the world was so natural to him that "Bountiful Jehovah" was one of his favourite exclamations.

As he had foreseen, however, the bad peace at Versailles ended in the outbreak of a new war. The Treaty which he had signed so reluctantly helped to bring Hitler to power only fourteen years later.

Politics never monopolised his attention. Reading widely in the early hours, he always had other interests. But as the two dictators, Hitler and Mussolini, established their place in the headlines of the world, his letters began to speak increasingly of "the two old volcanoes spouting away". The League of Nations was simultaneously being undermined by foolish men in many countries who, lacking the faith to make it work, thus also hastened a further war.

During the Second World War, his visits to London were shorter but more frequent, as he was once more Prime Minister at home. Although by 1940 he was seventy years old, he travelled four times to London and busied himself as

before with a mixture of strategy and peacemaking. In London, Winston Churchill, who had fought in the opposite cause during the Boer War, and was now leader of the British nation, gave him a doubly warm welcome. They had worked together as friends twenty-five years earlier. Gradually the gigantic ups and downs of the 1939–1945 struggle passed and were succeeded by the more crucial problems of rebuilding peace. The birth-pangs of the United Nations were naturally watched over by Smuts. Alone of all those who had brought the League into being, he had survived to help create this new international forum for peace. Already in London he had spoken words of warning to the Commonwealth Prime Ministers: "If San Francisco [where the conference setting up the U.N. was held] fails, I see nothing but stark disaster before mankind. Scientific discoveries have been made . . . which, if any war were to take place in the future, would make this calamity seem small by comparison . . . might even mean the end of the human race."

He lived through the humiliation of another unsuccessful election in South Africa and died in 1950. He was given a military funeral by which, once more, the world mistook a great peacemaker for a successful soldier-statesman. The task he left his successors is clearly set out in the rough draft he prepared for the Preamble of the United Nations Charter:

> TO prevent a recurrence of the fratricidal strife which twice in our generation has brought untold sorrow and loss upon mankind and
> TO re-establish faith in fundamental human rights in the sanctity and ultimate value of human personality, in the equal rights of men and women of nations large and small and

TO promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom and for these ends

TO practise tolerance and to live together in peace with one another as good neighbours,

IN order that nations may work together to maintain international peace and security,

BY the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods to ensure that armed force shall not be used save in the common interest,

BY the provision of means by which all disputes that threaten the maintenance of international peace and security shall be settled,

BY the establishment of conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations of international law and treaties and fundamental human rights and freedom can be maintained,

BY the employment of international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples.

The final version of the Charter embodied the thoughts and principles set out here.

VII DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD

SMUTS WOULD HAVE understood Dag Hammarskjöld. The dreamer of dreams needs the equally great man to make those dreams a reality, and now that the dream of world peace is in many men's minds it is the patient understanding of the statesman which is most needed. Dag was such a man. Like Smuts he came from a small country, where it is usual to look outside the narrow frontiers and sense the wider spirit of internationalism on which depend the hopes of a peaceful world. Like Smuts he loved to climb mountains as though to gain from a height a clearer view of world problems which seem too confusing from windows looking out on a city street. Unlike Smuts he became a world statesman not through military or electoral prowess but by the unspectacular successes of the civil service. At the time of his death he held a position of unique influence in world affairs, as Secretary-General of the United Nations. When it is asked, "What did he do with his life?" the answer lies clearly about us, namely that we are still alive, and the United Nations, the best hope for a future for mankind, is stronger than ever before. The way this came to be is, perhaps, best unravelled by starting with Dag's death and working backwards; we shall then see how such a man rose to prominence at so crucial a time.

His death was an astounding disaster; its circumstances an unsolved detective story. On September 17th, 1961, tired with the frustrating negotiations in which his efforts to settle the

crisis in the newly independent West African state of the Congo seemed on the brink of failure, he climbed into a 'plane leaving the Congolese capital of Leopoldville to travel to Ndola, in Northern Rhodesia.

At that time the government of the country was ineffective. The Congolese officials had never been trained for the posts they now had to fill, and tended to think that everything would run smoothly if they sat behind desks and gave orders. To them this was all the Belgians had appeared to do. The work which had gone into making a decision could not be seen and was overlooked. Now the country's police, for example, were in disorder, and the U.N. had drafted in from Nigeria and elsewhere the first unarmed international police force the world had ever known. Its men were magnificent: tall, smiling and highly disciplined, their morale as shiny as their boots. They kept the traffic moving and had made Leopoldville a relatively safe town to live in. Dag, however, was leaving Leopoldville, and checking on airport saboteurs is a very skilled job. Dozens of people get on and off a 'plane at an airport, and the Swedish Transair 'plane SE-BDY, a DC-6B hired by the U.N., depended for its safety on many individuals.

Dag was on his way to meet Tshombe, the head of the Katanga government, which was trying to claim independence from the rest of the Congo. As a 'plane belonging to the opponents of the U.N. had been reported, a veil of secrecy was drawn over his destination and his time of departure. There were obviously various groups and interests who would be glad to be rid of the mediator. In fact his departure was delayed and it was in the late afternoon that he took off. Elisabethville, the capital of Katanga, is as far from Leopoldville as Rome is from London, but Dag had further to go—

a distance of 1,100 miles, to an airport in the bush. The 'plane was over the airport soon after midnight and for forty-five minutes had been in touch with the ground by radio. There were apparently no difficulties in the 'plane itself until the moment when it hit the tree-tops, crashed and burst into flames, killing all on board. Was there sabotage? The commission which inquired into the disaster found no grounds for suspecting it, though it criticised the slowness with which search parties were organised (the wreckage was only found fifteen hours later). The search had been delayed because when the 'plane was reported missing the British High Commissioner had suggested that the Secretary-General might have changed his mind and landed elsewhere. There seems little reason to doubt that Tshombe took advantage of the situation and made every effort to strengthen the position of Katanga while the U.N. was confused by the death of its leader.

Whatever the cause of the disaster, the consequences were at once evident. Dag had been so successful in establishing a belief in the possibility of finding a way round the worst difficulties by patient negotiation that people with a knowledge of international affairs slept more soundly in their beds at night because they knew he was there. He was the first world father-figure, and his death brought a bewildering sense of loss, almost a feeling of despair, especially as it appeared, for a time, to mean the defeat of the U.N. in the Congo in its first great trial of strength.

The dispute that Dag Hammarskjöld had been trying to settle had grown up over many months. At the end of June 1960 Belgium granted independence to the Congo. This was followed by mutiny in the army. In the general confusion which followed, the Prime Minister, Lumumba, found himself powerless, and Katanga province declared itself a separate

state under Tshombe. As the valuable copper mines which supported the country's economy and paid rich dividends to their shareholders are in Katanga, there were many Belgians who remained there, and the mine-owners hoped to protect their interests by supporting the local leader. At this point the U.N. was called upon to restore law and order, and the response was both prompt and wise. Three days after the Security Council of the U.N. decided to intervene 3,500 troops, mainly from African states, had been flown into the country. Lumumba, however, was not satisfied with the speed at which the Belgians were leaving, and threatened the U.N. that he would call in troops from the U.S.S.R.

From this time on the Congo became head-line news. Politicians, fearing war between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., realised that the Congo might spark it off. But if the actual events in the Congo were confused, this was nothing compared to the confusion of the news reports, because the lines of communication which reporters had to use were in disorder. Moreover, the mining interests in Britain as well as in Belgium were concerned to make people think that Katanga would be best detached from the Congo, and that, therefore, the U.N. was the enemy of peace. Although this attitude threw them into the arms of their opponents, the Communists, who opposed the U.N. intervention, on this issue they were prepared to make common cause.

In the U.N. the Russians made bitter attacks on Hammarskjöld, accusing him of creating the war he was supposed to terminate. They proposed that he should be dismissed and the U.N. troops withdrawn; but they found no support for measures as extreme as this.

Meanwhile, Lumumba, though more far-seeing than most of his countrymen, had given way to the temptations of

wielding power. Although the Russians sent him 'planes, he lost the sympathy of many of his countrymen by attempting to decide everything himself. He demanded that the U.N. should at once move into Katanga. The Belgians refused to leave the state before U.N. troops were there, but Tshombe announced that he would use force against them if they came.

In February 1961, the Congolese army rose and displaced Lumumba, to the annoyance of the Russians. The new government restored a semblance of order to the capital, but the problem of Katanga remained. This was the situation when Dag decided to go in person to attempt to settle the dispute on the spot. It was a very complicated issue he had to handle. Against the U.N. support of the *"status quo"* it may be argued that the Congo is not a real unit, that its frontiers cut right across the middle of tribal areas and that Katanga has no more in common with Leopoldville than Italy with London. The Congolese are not such skilled administrators that they can hold together a territory twice as large as France, Italy and Western Germany put together. The U.N., however, was not called in to decide whether the Belgians should have divided the country up: it was called in to restore confidence and order, so that difficult decisions such as this could be arrived at peacefully. It was costly, but could it have been achieved with less?

The question is bound to be asked whether Dag should ever have made the journey. It might have been better if he had left negotiations on the spot to his assistants and attended to the business in the great U.N. building in New York. His earlier history shows how unlike him that would have been. By his personal intervention he made the U.N. presence a reality, and even his death on the scene helped the world to appreciate and complete what he was trying to do.

Almost as soon as he had taken up his post at New York, Dag Hammarskjöld had been faced with a crisis. The Korean War had been brought to an uneasy end, with the prestige of the U.N. at its lowest. The force opposing the Chinese and North Koreans had been a U.N. force only in name. After the armistice, and contrary to its arrangement, a group of twelve American airmen had been left in prison in Communist China. The American government was very reasonably calling on the U.N. to take steps to secure their release. Dag studied the question carefully. Negotiations are carried on differently in the Far East; moreover, mainland China was not admitted to the U.N., because the previous government still existed in the island of Formosa, so Dag had no official standing with the Chinese Communist leader, Chou en Lai.

He began by exploring the ground with the Chinese Ambassador in Sweden. This led to the first of his dangerous personal journeys, for he decided to go himself to Peking, where he was received by Chou. For a long time, in oriental fashion, the two men avoided the main question, as they talked in the Hall of the Western Flowers. Dag was interested in Chou as a man. Like himself, Chou was descended from generations of aristocratic civil servants, practising the art of diplomacy, some say, for over a thousand years. At length the two found a way of talking about the airmen without either feeling any embarrassment. No promises were made, but each impressed the other so much that six months later the airmen were released. Dag received a telegram wishing him well on his fiftieth birthday, and announcing the release as a kind of birthday present—as though the Chinese leader were saying, "You cannot make me do this, but I like doing it to please you".

Two years later, in October 1956, came the Suez Crisis.

At the end of World War II, the new state of Israel had been created and thousands of Jews from Europe settled there. As a result of Jewish difficulties with the neighbouring Arab states, many Arabs had to leave their homes in Israel and escape across the new frontier. Neither side was anxious to make peace, and there were many outbreaks of violence along the boundaries between Israel and its neighbours. When the position worsened, a number of U.N. observers were sent to patrol the frontier in order to provide unbiased evidence of what was happening. Dag himself, while on a longer journey, called on the heads of the governments concerned, but there was little response. Both sides seemed to prefer hatred to peace, hatred to loyalty to the U.N. and its Secretary-General.

The tension in this area assumed the proportions of an international crisis when the Egyptian Head of State, General Nasser, decided to nationalise the Suez Canal. His action represented a threat to Israel and to Israeli shipping on its way to the East, and it cut off Britain and France from the supplies of oil on which they depended. These three countries, therefore, banded together to seize back the canal: but their campaign miscarried. The canal was handed over to U.N. troops, and the ships which had been sunk to block the waterways were salvaged by an international team. More important for the future was the formation, during this crisis, of a fully international armed force, a new departure in the history of the world. It was on a minute scale, numbering only 6,000 men drawn from ten different countries; but these men stood for a new principle, namely, that wherever the peace of the world is endangered the U.N. should be called in to help. The plans for the new force were drawn up in forty-eight hours, which included obtaining the agreement of the countries sending the troops. As a pioneer, General Burns of Canada,

the commanding officer of the contingent, deserves a place in world history equal with that of the first man in space.

The U.N. force took over the canal, and then occupied territory between the Egyptian and Israeli troops, so as to give time for negotiation and the cooling of tempers. It is the business of the U.N. to keep politicians talking instead of letting them give way to pressure from impatient military commanders.

While the Suez Crisis was a triumph for the U.N., its response to the revolt in Hungary was unhappily a failure. Just at the time that the U.N. Emergency Force had to be hastily planned to cope with the Suez situation, the Secretary-General was officially requested to investigate and report on the rising in Hungary against the Soviet occupation which had lasted since the end of World War II. If the rising had come at any other time world opinion might have been organised to persuade the Russians to moderate their treatment of their subjects. As it was, Soviet tanks crushed the resistance of the Hungarians, showing the rest of the world that Communism also has revolutions to face.

The Secretary-General's position became more difficult after having to oppose both France and Britain over Suez, and it was not long before he also became the butt of Russian attacks in the Soviet Press and in debates at the U.N. During a lull in these attacks, however, he was invited to Moscow and treated with all the honours due to a Head of State. In the course of a social evening, Kruschev remarked to him, "You know, if I had listened to that fellow Gromyko you would not be here now. He thinks you're an agent acting for the West and should not be allowed to enter the Soviet Union." Dag replied gaily, "True, I was launched in Sweden, but once in orbit I do not come close to any country." To a

man like Dag it was obvious that the good of the U.N. must come before the good of any one country, but the idea grows very slowly in the minds of power-seeking politicians.

Soon after his visit to Moscow the Russian attacks on Dag began again. A certain crude bluntness is customary in Russian abuse. When it is translated it sounds very extreme compared with similar attacks in English or French. Dag could not turn to the French and British for support, and if he confided in the Americans he would seem to justify part of what the Russians were saying. To make matters worse, he had no longer any family on whom he could fall back for sympathy. He must have been an extremely lonely man, and it was then that he must have depended on the strength of mind that he drew from the mountains. What he felt has not been recorded, because he relied on himself, working incredibly long hours up on the thirty-eighth floor in the office skyscraper which rises among the U.N. buildings. It is tempting to think, however, that, just as mountain heights helped him to develop his wide international outlook, so the view from that office helped him to see the pettiness of the personal abuse, and to keep his attention on the great questions that faced the U.N.

Occasionally from his speeches it is possible to guess his thoughts at his office desk or at his bachelor's flat. "The greatest prayer of a man is not for victory but for peace", are words which might equally well have been spoken by Hammarskjöld or Smuts. In speaking about the meditation room in the U.N. building, after it had been re-equipped, he said, "We all have within us a centre of stillness surrounded by silence", and he described its meaning and purpose:

"This house, dedicated to work and debate in the service

of peace, should have one room dedicated to silence in the outward sense and stillness in the inner sense."

"It has been the aim to create in this small room a place where the doors may be open to the infinite lands of thought and prayer."

"People of many faiths will meet here, and for that reason none of the symbols to which we are accustomed in our meditation could be used."

"However, there are simple things which speak to us all with the same language. We have sought for such things and we believe that we have found them in the shaft of light striking the shimmering surface of solid rock."

"So, in the middle of the room, we see a symbol of how, daily, the light of the skies gives life to the earth on which we stand, a symbol to many of us of how the light of the spirit gives life to matter."

"But the stone in the middle of the room has more to tell us. We may see it as an altar, empty not because there is no God, not because it is an altar to an unknown god, but because it is dedicated to the God whom man worships under many names and in many forms."

It was clearly the man from the silent still places of the mountains who was speaking. It is perhaps because as a man he was sensitive to the meaning of such permanent things that he was tough enough to endure the responsibilities of running the U.N.

Future generations, however, may wonder how this remarkable man, whose name was scarcely known to the world, came to be picked out for the job that suited him so well. His selection was not made lightly. A suitable man had to be found who was acceptable both to the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. Lie of Norway, after seven years in office as Dag's predecessor, had said he wished to resign, partly, no doubt, because neither the Russians nor the Americans were supporting him in his work. To find a successor it was necessary to consider what countries were sufficiently neutral in the cold war between Communist and Western countries, and which of their diplomats or politicians might have both the experience of international affairs and an optimism proof against the disappointments which had surrounded U.N. work up to then. There are never enough able men with a willingness to put the good of mankind before themselves. Many had been driven by the war into a petty nationalism and into a belief that it mattered more who had the biggest bombs than who was right.

One man proposed was a Canadian, but the Russians turned him down, and suggested a Pole, who was unacceptable to the West. Whoever was to be successful had to gain the support of the five great powers, and it might well have been that no one would have been found if they had not all wished to fill the vacancy quickly. No doubt neutral countries such as Switzerland and India crossed the minds of some, but Scandinavia remains a reservoir of well-informed, skilful diplomats, and the fact that Lie had come from Norway made no difference.

The first person to propose Hammarskjöld in private is not known, but in the U.N. it was the French representative who, without consulting him, suggested his name, and at the same time obtained the consent of the Russians and Americans,

although they knew little of him. They were surprised to learn that he had represented Sweden at the opening meetings of the Seventh General Assembly of the U.N., and to obtain more information they put out enquiries. Reports came back to the Americans such as, "If you can get him, grab him". The British and French already knew him as a civil service aristocrat, not readily noticed, quick to find a road to agreement rather than a public orator. The Russians had had to deal with him when two Swedish 'planes had been shot down over the Baltic. They may well have mistaken his quiet persuasiveness for the weakness of a man who can be managed. It was Lie who opposed him, because it seemed to him, quite wrongly, as it turned out, that he would not have the courage to stand up for the U.N. Once in office, as often happens when a youngish man takes on a big job, he grew into it, like the sun which warms to its task as it rises higher.

Meanwhile, Hammarskjöld himself returned from New York to Stockholm a fortnight before the news broke, quite unaware that he was being considered. While he was sitting for his portrait, his friend, the artist, exclaimed to him, "It strikes me you would make a very good Secretary-General".

"Nobody would be so crazy as to propose me," replied Hammarskjöld.

Later, a woman in New York wired to say she was putting his name forward, and he wired back, "Amused but not interested". Late at night on that March 31st a newspaper editor, a friend of his, rang up to tell him the rumour, but Dag, still not believing that his name could have been put up, said, "I might have understood if it had been tomorrow, April 1st. Even then I should have thought it a cruel joke". By the next day the invitation was official.

Dag talked with his father, aged ninety-one, and the

Swedish Cabinet met and agreed to his departure: "It is the kind of job where you can only do your best," he told the Press. "You can read about its difficulties in the newspapers."

Arriving in New York he was met by Lie, who assured him that his was the most impossible job in the world. He soon had to face the Press. To their impertinent questions about his private life he replied, "The private man should disappear and the international public servant take his place". To avoid the traps they laid for him he maintained that the Secretary-General should listen and learn to understand the forces at work.

In the Assembly Hall, he swore to regulate his conduct, with the interests of the U.N. only in view, and not to seek or accept instructions in regard to the performance of his duties from any government.

The career in Sweden which led to this startling appointment was a curious mixture of the Civil Service and work as a Cabinet Minister. He started public life by preparing a lengthy report on unemployment. Theories about the causes of unemployment and ways of reducing it had been put forward in England and Sweden, and it was in Sweden that these were first put into practice. Dag worked enormously long hours in this and other posts: when he added to his position of adviser to the chairman of the Bank of Sweden the headship of the Finance Department, under a wise and gifted Finance Minister, it was said that there was often a light still burning after midnight in his office. Anyone meeting him at this time was bound to be struck by the intensity of the youngish man of thirty, who spoke English with extraordinary ease. His mind could hold in focus such long sequences of thought that, when he was speaking of theories rather than practical

problems, he often seemed difficult to follow. The drawback to his unusual intelligence was that he left ordinary men behind. I remember him in the Finance Minister's office, sitting forward in his chair as though the business in hand was the most urgent. The two men were clearly devoted to each other, and throughout their office, as in the Bank of Sweden, an air of kindliness and humanity prevailed such as is seldom met with in official circles.

Later, Dag became chairman of the Bank, and had a responsible post in Paris, arranging for American economic aid to be divided fairly among the various European countries. In 1951, he was appointed Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Cabinet. Through all this work he had avoided belonging to a political party and, as a good civil servant, he had practised keeping aloof from disputes in a country where disputes are in any case rare. Without knowing it, he was preparing himself for what was to come. One of his university teachers said of him: "What struck us first about Dag Hammarskjöld was his happy, cheerful approach to people. He never lost this . . . and I know of many people who never saw any deeper than this or went any further in their understanding of him." He went on to explain how different he was under the surface. He felt alone, and did not relax in company, but hid those feelings with the help of the iron control he exercised over himself.

It is clear that such a brilliant start to his career—he was only thirty when appointed head of the Swedish Ministry of Finance—must have been preceded by an unusually sophisticated upbringing and an outstanding university career. Hammarskjöld took his first degree course between the ages of seventeen and nineteen, and then studied economics for three

years, followed by a law degree in a year and a half. No wonder his father, who was Prime Minister, remarked, "If I had had Dag's brain, I should have gone far!" His fellow students must have wondered at the young man who mastered countless authors with what seemed to be an effortless method of study.

His boyhood was spent in the Swedish town of Uppsala where his family occupied the castle, in every way an extraordinary building to serve as a home. On one side alone there were a hundred and fifty windows; there were walls eight feet thick, dungeons, banqueting halls and a council chamber. Dag made the most of the space, the eerie corridors, and the magnificent garden which all formed part of the residence of his father, then the Lord Lieutenant. As his father was always busy, and tended to be taken up with the three elder brothers, Dag, the youngest child, was constantly in his mother's company, whether she was entertaining distinguished visitors from abroad, going to church, or merely out on a shopping expedition. She was a good complement to her husband and was described by Dag as being "as open to life as a child", with a warmth and sympathy for people in contrast to his father's stern sense of duty. Dag continued living with his parents for many years. His mother died when he was thirty-five; but he only left home five years later. She had entered into his successes and supported him in every way, so that the years which followed must have seemed all the more cold and sad.

Family traditions are a partial explanation of the life of any man, but in the case of the Hammarskjölds they played a very great part indeed. Not only did Dag grow up in a large castle, but the lives of his father and his father's ancestors were written into the history of Sweden in a way that could not be ignored. One may picture him in his boyhood perched

in a large chair, turning over the leaves of the books about the Hammarskjölds and wondering what he would be able to add to the family story.

His uncle had been a general of the highest rank, and Minister of Defence; his cousin, Minister of Education. His father, Hjalmar, occupied many government posts, and was experienced in negotiation in international affairs. Sweden has the advantage of being a neutral state, usually detached from both sides in a quarrel, and is therefore frequently looked to for unbiased negotiators. It is easy to suppose that some of the experience gained in this work was passed on to Dag Hammarskjöld over the family dinner table. His father's work at the International Court at The Hague was continued later by his brother, who became its Secretary-General. Going back still further, to February 1914, when a farmers' march to the royal palace in Stockholm was organised demanding the dismissal of the Liberal government we find that Hjalmar Hammarskjöld was eventually asked to form a non-party government, which he led for a long period.

It was the family tradition, therefore, to be neither entirely a civil servant, under other people's orders, nor yet a party-politician, dependent on winning a popular vote. Dag was accustomed to the idea of taking the lonely, responsible road. No wonder he wrote, in a letter, in 1955, "Where is there human warmth? Everywhere and nowhere".

We should do well to ask of the universities of the world, "Where will successors to such men come from?" There can hardly be enough gifted men with the upbringing or family traditions to lead and help them into these crucial positions. Somehow a substitute for such traditions must be found.

VIII PIERRE CERESOLE

THE SEVEN GREAT men who have been described in earlier chapters were all involved in politics. If they did not belong to palaces or parliaments, if some even found themselves in prison, their influence with those who ruled was undiminished. However, political action is not the only road to the establishment of peace. Switzerland, that little country we associate chiefly with sun and snow, has many great achievements recorded in the pages of its history. One of these has been to demonstrate that French and German speaking people can live together in harmony, in spite of nearly a century of wars between Paris and Berlin. Out of the peaceful spirit of this land sprang the great organisation known as the International Red Cross, which keeps a sense of humanity alive in time of war or calamity, arranging for the essential well-being, exchange and news of casualties and prisoners. It was also in Switzerland that the idea of work-camps was first developed, until it grew into a world-wide movement. Behind the idea, however, there was already a fascinating history.

When Tolstoy led a party composed of his family and visitors to harvest a field for a widow, he was doing two things. In part, he was saying that everyone ought to do his share of what he called "bread-labour", and earn his keep by the sweat of his brow. At the same time, he was affirming that each of us should help our less fortunate neighbours. Mahatma Gandhi agreed wholeheartedly with both these principles, but

he linked them more closely than Tolstoy with what he saw as the decadence of industrial life that takes people away from the home and village crafts, which are varied and rewarding, to the soul-destroying monotony of minding machines. Even before either of these great men had given their philosophy to the world, an American author, named Thoreau, had built himself a hut in the woods to prove that he could support himself by the simplest manual work; and in Britain Ruskin had led his students out from Oxford to build a raised foot-path across the water meadows to a village to demonstrate the dignity of labour. The path remains to this day, almost a century later, lined with tall poplars, as a memorial to a fine ideal.

One could trace the history of such ideas still further back, to the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who preached the dignity and equality of man and the educational value of nature and work, from the Swiss city of Geneva in the eighteenth century. It was, however, a Swiss of our day, called Pierre Ceresole, who took these basic principles and used them to promote international reconciliation.

Pierre was no ordinary Swiss, for it is rare for ordinary people to have the courage to dream dreams and attempt to put them into practice. His father's family originated in Italy and his father was a Colonel in the Swiss army, a judge and, in 1873, President of the whole of Switzerland. Pierre was born in 1879 at Lausanne, in the French-speaking canton, or district, of Vaud. He was the ninth child among seven boys and three girls, and his mother died when he was only nine years old. Her family came from France, and, as he liked to point out in connection with the stupidity of frontiers, he also had a German grandmother and relations in England.

Little is known of his school-days, and certainly nothing

to explain how his fresh and original mind escaped from the usual rut of preparing for examinations. He was quick to understand and had a good memory, so perhaps that gave him a lead over his school-fellows, while still allowing him the time to develop his inner life. Years later he gave an indication of this: he described how, at the age of seventeen, he was walking in the woods and experienced "something which seemed to me like a solemn dedication to truth . . . in which the first necessity was to recognise one's own faults. In a blinding fashion there came to me the Vision of Truth amid nature's mysteries and solitude".

He achieved such success at university that he was offered a career in university teaching, but he soon broke away and set off for the United States. He made a habit of keeping pencil and notebook with him for entering his stray thoughts, and from these booklets, of which there are more than a hundred, it is possible to see that he was a man concerned with his religious position, fretting over the many failures of the Western way of life and yet generous about the people he met.

Being an engineer, Ceresole naturally appreciated people who were both studious and practical, and he liked the Americans. In order to work his way across the States, he first took a job on a poultry farm and later in an oil-field. After that he earned his passage to Honolulu, the capital of the Pacific islands of Hawaii, and settled there for two years. When he was unable to find manual work he earned his living by teaching French, but this resulted in his being paid more than he needed for his keep, so he gave fifteen thousand dollars away to charity.

Photographs of Ceresole in his early thirties show him as a worried, frowning man, lacking in charm. He once described himself as bursting in upon his acquaintances "like home

truths in an obituary notice". His natural gravity at the time was no doubt increased by the experience of an unhappy love affair. He did not finally marry until the Second World War, when he was sixty-two. He found few to sympathise with the serious view of life and religion which he expressed typically in this comment about Jesus: "I suggest that the time has come to give up using His name, which has divided us, and return to His work, which will unite us." However, it is possible to see in this the seed of those ideas with which he later enlisted men and women to the silent service of pick and shovel.

From Hawaii he moved on to spend almost two years in Japan, experiencing there an entirely new way of life, which helped him to see more clearly the virtues and follies of European culture. "The earth is a poem," he wrote, "an immense poem . . . which people have no time to read because they are busy in the office."

Returning home at the outbreak of war, in 1914, he gave all the money inherited from his father to the State, saying, "I believe that the teachings of Christ are superior to good business sense, and in the long run more practical, too". People failed to understand him, and enquiries were made as to whether he was out of his mind!

The war, in which Switzerland was not involved, haunted Ceresole. At his most optimistic he hoped it would open people's eyes to the falsehoods they accepted, but such optimism could not last long and he felt himself cut off from other people, who did not see things as he did. To the majority of his fellow-countrymen there was nothing that would explain Ceresole. They had no imagination, no understanding of what sends a man working his way round the world or

giving away his inheritance. Pierre felt alone. No wonder he wrote, in despair of his own times, that "Two thousand years ago there came a radiant light, full of peace and loving-kindness—and we immediately crucified it".

Ceresole, the engineer, once described a turbine as "a bottled hurricane". This would be an apt description of himself until the 1914–18 war was over. Then his life's work at last really began.

From 1920 the story of Ceresole and the story of work-camps is almost identical. Coming from a small country, and from a family that had played a large part in its government, he felt no hostility towards the State, as pacifists in larger countries may do, but was anxious to see the government leading the country on a right path.

He had been impressed with the sacrifices and heroism in war and wanted something equally positive mobilised in the cause of peace. The idea with which he became associated emerged at a meeting held in Holland shortly after the end of the war. It was a German who finally said, "We have been talking for two days, is there no practical work we can do to give expression to what we have been saying?" As a result, Pierre and an Englishman, named Hubert Parris, organised the first international work-camp, consisting of three Germans, an Austrian, a Dutchman and themselves, at a war-devastated village in France. A young Dutch woman cooked for them and paid the expenses. The idea was for people of different nationalities, including those whose countries had recently been enemies of one another, to join side by side in honest work, to rebuild not only the concrete things but also the feelings of brotherhood that are shattered by war. Sacrifice and service were to be used in all sorts of places where work needed to be done to relieve human misery.

When Germans came to England in the 'fifties, to help in the rebuilding of Coventry Cathedral, the gesture was greeted with pleasure, but in 1920 people were confused and full of misplaced hatred. The work of the first camp proceeded for five months, huts were built, a road was repaired, the foundations for the town hall were cleared, and so on; nevertheless, ill-feeling towards the Germans arose, and so the camp came to an end. Perhaps it began too soon after the war, and with too little preparation. Whatever the reason for its failure, Pierre was not daunted.

After attempting, unsuccessfully for a period, to persuade the Swiss government to recognise what was now called *Service Civil* as an alternative to military service, in 1924 he organised a camp of volunteer workers in his own canton where an avalanche had caused damage. He then established a second to clear up a landslide in another part of the country. The number of volunteers and the number of camps began to grow rapidly, and what had been the Swiss *Service Civil* became the *Service Civil International* (S.C.I.). It would be impossible even to mention all the early camps, but it is interesting to look at some of the different kinds of work that they undertook.

Often a camp is started in response to some temporary disaster, such as damage by landslide, flood or the disasters of war. One lent help to Liechtenstein in 1928. That tiny country, lying between Austria and Switzerland, has few economic or technical resources and suffered great devastation as a result of the flooding of the river Rhine. The assistance of the volunteers meant that work could be started immediately on relief and reconstruction. An appeal for volunteers, signed by many people, including the President of Switzerland,

stated: "We would desire to pay tribute to the Austrian and Swiss Engineer Corps who, in the hour of greatest need and danger, were the first to come and bring help to suffering inhabitants beyond their own frontiers. We wish to continue their work, and hope that the day is not far distant when the armed forces of all lands will know no other task than that of helping their neighbours." In response to this appeal seven hundred and ten volunteers came from twenty-two countries, though the work was to be long and hard, for the best fields of Liechtenstein had been covered by a desert of sand and stones, which had to be carted away.

This camp had its sleeping quarters in the village hall and school. A young American wrote, in a letter describing a typical morning when everyone was quiet for a moment to hear the assignments for the day: "Then there were the introductions of the newly arrived friends and the singing of the last farewell to those leaving on the train. Ah, that scene, that singing! I was yet to learn why I saw tears with difficulty suppressed in the eyes of stalwart youths." Later in his letter he described how the local people had been told to expect strange visitors, but were soon won over when they discovered the truth. Some of the campers, too, had been warned that the discipline would be too military, but efficiency was vital, since the organisers had the Press and public to face. Spades were made to work, not to lean on during philosophical conversations, and, as one camper said, "If this is militarism, make the most of it".

The first work-camp in which the *Service Civil* took part in Britain was in Brynmawr, in South Wales, where nearly nine out of every ten members of the population were at the time unemployed. This was no sudden disaster that had to be dealt with, but a long-term social disease, and at first it

seemed absurd to bring workers to a place where there was no work to do. But that was not altogether the case. Unemployed miners had begun to improve their town by starting to make a park, a play-ground and a paddling pool. They had given up, however, and it took the arrival of the volunteers to encourage them to start again. Seventy-seven campers came from Britain and thirty-seven from abroad. Since many were new to pick and shovel, the miners were glad to show them what to do, and glad, too, to join the camp for the evening discussions and songs—the Welsh always love singing. The local papers helped by raising funds, and the French peasants who had benefited from a previous camp sent a large sum of money to ease the plight of the Brynmawr people.

It seemed almost as though the ripples from that first experiment would never be halted. More volunteers came forward as a result of each camp, even though they often had to walk or cycle many miles to the sites. Money, too, came in surprising ways, and the organisers, always alert to new needs, dared to look further afield.

The biggest challenge came from Bihar in India, where an earthquake had broken the river bed and lowered parts of a vast plain three hundred miles long and fifty miles wide. Drainage canals were blocked, and torrential rains, which followed, caused disastrous floods. Innumerable villages were marooned in vast lakes with their animals alive and hungry, but their crops destroyed. It was no longer a question of where to find suitable work for the volunteers. There was work for a million. The question now was where to begin. Some of the problems which have become familiar to the technical assistants sponsored by the United Nations faced Pierre Ceresole as he surveyed the area in advance of the first team arriving. In the confusion, the worst shortage was organising-power,

but work-campers came not to give orders but to work side by side with the people they were helping. A reasonable compromise was made, and the four campers helped a number of villages in their move to rebuild on higher ground.

Just before their arrival Gandhi had been proposing that Indians and Europeans should work side by side to tackle village problems, so Pierre was quickly understood by the Indian leaders and established good relations with the British government there. His long letters and the jottings in his notebook describe his experience here vividly:

"I am supplied with a basket about as big as an ordinary hat and fall into line with the peasants, each armed with the same utensil to carry his contribution to the dyke destined to make a bridge across oceans of hate and misery, but to begin with across a marsh where one wets one's feet."

India intrigued him: "A young elephant is taking a bath in the tank near my tent. She is making all kinds of queer noises, first trumpeting and then purring like a steam engine, for her own entertainment and that of her boy driver, and he in turn accompanies it all with a flow of delighted songs and jests. She lifts her trunk above her head and then, like a baby contemplating its toes, she ends by putting it in her mouth and seeing whether she can make a complete knot."

Pierre met Gandhi on first landing in India and though, at some points, the European engineer could not accept the Indian teacher's apparent superstition and passivity, he became more and more impressed as he got to know him.

"Certainly this man must be the most powerful and genuine politician in the world—this man who resolves that, at least one day in seven, the most potent service he can render his country is just—to remain silent; a Sunday

absolutely solemnised by the resolution to listen instead of to talk. . . .

"I don't understand Gandhi's words, but it is always the tone and attitude which count; the perfect simplicity . . . which never fails to have its irresistible effect of sincerity. Mahatma is wrapped in his homespun mantle with one arm exposed, the wrist almost immovable, the fingers making the only gestures which accompany his speech—those little Indian gestures whose delicacy and suppleness one never ceases to admire."

The death of one of the work-campers cast a gloom over the party for a time. Pierre, without being asked, had moved over to sleep near him as he lay in a fever. Some time later he wrote in a letter home:

"I propose a memorial service for Paul Schenker, but it will be a service with pick-axe and shovel, eight good hours of good work with a whistle to mark the start and finish—for Peace, Discipline and the Service."

Pierre returned from his last visit to India in 1937. Since then, partly as a result of his efforts, the movement there has thrived. There is a Delhi office serving southern Asia, and countless other work-camps outside the *Service Civil* are organised each year. Gandhi's ideals of service, and the Hindu belief in the village community, have combined to make India the leading work-camp country. Many university degrees require a period of service during vacations, and some students therefore join the volunteers in this connection; but in some ways the practice creates problems. The slight element of compulsion in this case is not altogether acceptable to those who cling to the original idea of spontaneous offering.

Meanwhile, in Europe, the Spanish Civil War had created a need for relief work, and neither volunteers nor funds were

difficult to obtain. Then came World War II, and many work-campers were dismayed that they seemed to have achieved so little in the field of international understanding. Pierre, however, heard that the British government was allowing pacifists to plant trees as an alternative to military service.

"News from England," he wrote. "We shall have tree-planting to do. We shall plant them in Germany, too; we shall plant them all over the world. We shall plant young trees. Beautiful fresh young beeches, a blessing to mankind; beauty, delight: a forest of trees, inspiration of those who love . . . the nobility of this nation, England, its insight, its virility. Discovery, rediscovery for me of the truth and greatness to be found in this traditional Christianity which I mistrusted."

For Pierre work-camps and peace were the two threads always running through his life. Some people devote themselves to work-camps, others to peace, but Pierre always thought of the two as belonging together. He saw the work-camp as being national service in a better form, and, with many of his colleagues, he believed that if the ideas of the *Service Civil International* spread among young people they would make military service unnecessary.

As early as 1914 he had written:

"At this very moment as I write—do your hear, descendant? —hundreds of thousands of men are devoting all their ingenuity to killing hundreds of thousands of others against whom they have absolutely nothing, except that it is necessary to kill them."

To him it was clear that people who are afraid become blinded by their fear and are no longer able to recognise what

they are doing: "Only the man who is ready to die is more or less free." "If everyone were obliged to thrust his bomb or his piece of shrapnel personally into the body of his enemy, he would realise the horror of what he was doing."

The idea of the importance of personal meetings between opponents grew stronger in his mind, and he wrote: "The only way to find victory is to make an ally of all that is best in your enemy." Thus arose his idea that he must refuse to be locked in behind frontiers, unable to meet his adversary face to face. Like the planting of trees, crossing a frontier became for him a symbolic act. On one occasion he made an audience laugh by describing the perplexity of a hare that happened to be running along a frontier and found that it was German on one side and Swiss on the other. Apart from an extraordinary exchange of ideas with Mussolini, his efforts to maintain contacts seem to have been unsuccessful, to judge from what happened afterwards, but the value of his symbolic gestures is more difficult to guess. In November 1942 he wrote to his friends that he felt it his duty to make such a demonstration:

"On two former occasions I felt in a way I can more or less explain that it was necessary for us to go into Germany at times of crisis. The first time I did so was the 4th of August 1918, the second, November 16th 1933. I must go there again, I think, on the first of December this year.

"What I have to do now, as on the two former occasions, is, if possible, to make a human contact with our neighbours as simply and directly as I can. This command of humanity comes before a command of the State. The point of capital importance is this: for once—or rather for the third time—I have to establish this human contact without the authorisation either of the Swiss State or the German State. That was and

that will be my only crime. In certain respects and in normal times a police authorisation for passing a frontier may in effect be understandable and justifiable. I have never for a moment had the idea of making an anarchist demonstration which is a puerility without a real object. But now something quite different is involved. In regard to the simplest situation—meeting a brave man without any bad intention—we are concerned to affirm that the rights and duties of a human being are superior to those of the State."

On November 28 Pierre set out for Berne, where an important meeting of the *Service Civil* was in progress. He was firmly resolved to continue from there to Schaffhausen and on into Germany, but had to meet the objections of some of his friends. His brother, Colonel Ernst Ceresole, was one of those who did their utmost to dissuade him from crossing the frontier. By now Pierre was married and he wrote and told his beloved wife, Lise, how none of them had been able to change his decision. Ernst had insisted very strongly on what was "unreasonable" and even "absurd" in his undertaking, but few objections were put forward that he had not already quietly considered. He did not share their fears, or see his journey under the guise of a possible tragedy. His only concern was lest his intentions should make her afraid.

Apart from some postcards written from Schaffhausen on the same day, there was no further news of him for three weeks. Anything might have happened. He could have been exposed to every kind of privation, or even have found himself in a concentration camp. His friends needed all the confidence that Pierre himself showed when obeying his conscience.

At last, on Christmas Eve, Lise Ceresole received a telephone call from Pierre himself. The German authorities had

sent him back to Switzerland, where he was detained in the prison at Aarau. The following day (Christmas Day) Lise received what for her was a beautiful Christmas present—a long letter from her husband.

He had reached the German frontier unhindered, but had been arrested by a sentry almost as soon as he had crossed it. He had been conducted to a guardroom, interrogated and searched. From there he had been taken by an armed soldier to the police station. It was night by then and the soldier had walked behind him, informing him: "If you try to escape I shall fire without further warning. Understand?" Pierre had heard the man loading his rifle, and had wondered for a moment whether the words were not simply a death sentence. They were not, but on arrival at the station he had been shown into a damp and ice-cold cell. It seemed to him that to be kept there for a few hours would in itself be enough to freeze a man to death. This, he said later, was the only stage of the whole venture when he really ran any grave risk. Even then, he was able to write in his diary, he sensed a great peacefulness and joyous liberation in the knowledge that he had been given the courage to come through this experience.

After about an hour a soldier had come and conducted him to the nearest railway station, from which, guarded by two Gestapo agents, he took the train to Waldshut. There he had remained in prison for three weeks without being able to send news to his friends. He had been permitted to write a short note home, but it never reached Switzerland.

Nothing sensational happened while Ceresole was in the hands of the Germans, but he was able to talk in the most free and cordial fashion with, among others, a Herr Koenig of the Gestapo, whom he found to be a very intelligent man, and to discuss fundamentals with the prison governor, a furious anti-

semite of a curious mentality, who, like all the others, seemed alarmed lest Pierre should explain systematically in writing the principles he was putting forward to him. Here was the same refusal to argue a question objectively that he had encountered in military circles in Switzerland. These people seemed to have a horror of seeing the centuries-old prejudice, so carefully cultivated, collapse in ruin.

Eventually Pierre was able to obtain a double sheet of official paper to write a note for the German and Swiss authorities, and keep the original for his fellow countrymen. But he told his wife that, in fact, he no longer felt that he belonged to one country in particular: "I have never felt myself to be so truly and naturally international—or, to put it more correctly, a MAN, just that, unqualified, freed from all this stupid filth and monstrous folly of national idolatries."

Those strange days were, for him, among the best and loveliest of his life, though he confessed to having felt terror, especially when he thought of the possibility of real torture. He was thankful not to have been put to the test beyond his strength, and conscious of the debt he believed we all owe to the example of Christ, "who simply and wonderfully did his duty as we should do ours in circumstances of the utmost difficulty".

He was set free a few days after Lise received his letter. For his family, for the little Quaker group to which he belonged, and for the friends of *Service Civil* who had shared with Lise the heavy anxiety of his absence, the end of the year 1942 was made joyful by his return.

Pierre, like Gandhi and Penn, was repeatedly in prison. In 1941 he was gaoled after sending to every pastor in Neuchâtel, with his comments, a document that had been issued to the

Press by the Swiss censors, stating that "articles and commentaries stressing the horrors of war in order to show its inhuman, anti-Christian and anti-social character are forbidden". He died after the war ended in 1945.

The growth of S.C.I. and the work-camp movement in general has been enormous since that time. Ceresole had the satisfaction of doing what he believed to be right, but, unfortunately, he did not live to see the great success of what he had proposed. Each year a growing number of volunteers go to work-camps and there is scarcely a country that has not heard of them. In 1963 more than two million people gave their labour, and today the figure is higher still. Ceresole would no doubt have been happy to see the United States of America, which had attracted him as a young man, taking up, under the late President Kennedy, the idea of a national Peace Corps.

The great peacemakers are men who are difficult to imitate. Some wield great power, some have had to face the hatred of those about them; but anyone can become a work-camper, and for many this is the place to start—planting the young trees and crossing the frontiers.

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MEN AGAINST WAR