MEN ON TRIAL

PETER HOWARD

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MEN ON TRIAL

BY

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IDEAS HAVE LEGS 1945 (75th thousand)

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MEN ON TRIAL

CHAPTER ONE

AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?

One autumn morning I trod my way to work on my Anglian farm along a secret, scented hedgerow path beaten

into hardness by the clump, clump, clump of generations of agricultural boots against the soil.

The apples hung from the trees, red with sunshine and warm with the sap of bygone summer. The uncut corn spread drowsily to the horizon and rippled in the waves of heat.

I took my four-pronged fork and began to shovel black moist muck from the cattle-yard into the tumbrils.

All through winter and spring beasts had slept, strolled and sweated knee-deep in the straw, munching beans and oats, mangolds, sugar-beet pulp and hay. The beasts were fattened and gone. But what they left behind them, pregnant with future harvests, was passing out again on to the fields, fulfilling the ageless cycle of the soil which takes back all that it has yielded and once more makes it fit for the mouth of man.

I did not sing at my work that morning. As my back began to ache in the rhythm of the toil, my heart ached too with a sense of apprehension and foreboding. For overhead, hour upon hour, in steady formation, the tugs and gliders flew East towards Arnhem. In one of them was my young and only brother.

I wondered whether John would look out upon the farm as he passed by. He knew the place and loved it. He had shot partridges there and tramped the fields with me. Only a few weeks before he had written asking if he could come and work there when the war was over.

So gay and brave I pictured him, as I straightened my aching back in the cattle-yard, and, resting on my fork, strained my eyes to watch the airborne cavalcade ride by.

His eyes were green-blue and his hair was golden. All through the war he fought—a private in the artillery, commando raids on the Channel Isles and Lofoten, a commission to the Royal Sussex Regiment, wounded at Alamein, now a captain in the Airborne Division on his way to Arnhem. "It will take more than a Nazi to get me," he said last time I saw him.

John never came back from Arnhem. He was still living and unhurt two days after he was dropped. That is all we know.

Most of his company were killed. They were at the flash-point of the fighting. John was enraged at the death of his friends. He was last seen by a British scout two miles outside our perimeter, hiding by himself in a ditch and sniping at the enemy. The scout asked him whether he would not return to the perimeter. "I'm doing very well where I am, thank you," answered John. So the scout gave him a few biscuits and a hunk of cheese and left him alone in his ditch with the enemy all around him. Soon the War Office reported him as "Missing."

Of course we all hoped, his parents, his young wife and I, for further news. We prayed he might be hiding up in some Dutch farmstead or lurking in the woods foraging for himself by night as he was so well able to do. We hoped he might be

in some German prison camp with news of him delayed on account of the smashing of German communications.

The uncertainty was almost more terrible than the truth, and sometimes at night one of those who missed the boy would lie awake thinking of terrors which might have befallen him.

Someone sent me a letter which said, "In the eyes of God there is no such thing as 'Missing'." That simple truth helped us.

Probably we never shall know his exact fate this side of eternity. Perhaps he lies in one of those graves marked "Unknown British soldier" or "Unknown German soldier" which are spread far and wide among the pines and wastes of the desolated Arnhem countryside, where experts say some of the most savage fighting of the whole war against Hitler's Reich took place.

Dear young and only brother John. I remember him as a fat, wriggling baby searching the carpet for imaginary animals called "Beadles" which he pretended to stuff down your neck.

I remember him winning the race at his prep school, so proud and so eager he was, with our father and me cantering along beside him cheering him to victory as he entered the straight towards the tape.

He was lucky at fairs—I can see him now carelessly bowling pennies down to the board of squares and going off

presently with his pockets full of cash, the showman scowling and the girls who had gathered to look on all giggling and nudging each other.

He was a slashing cricketer and scored more direct hits on the body with his own fast bowling and more direct hits on other people's fast bowling with his own bat than almost anybody else I know.

I can picture him hot and happy running in the sunshine or with a cool serious gaze studying some book, then bursting into roars of laughter, hurling it from him and springing halfway across the room with a single galvanic bound.

Hard it is to believe that someone so young and vehement can be so quiet and still. Many of us in so many lands today have simple and cherished recollections like this, pearls of great price threaded on the everlasting string of memory, about someone we have loved and lost awhile.

To me the worst pain of such a parting is the thought of how differently I should have acted if we could have our times together again. If only I had not said that... If only I had not done this... If only...

I loved the boy so much and often showed it him so badly. He was trying to get me on the telephone a few days before he flew to Arnhem. But I was away from home. I often wonder what it was he wished to say to me.

John never voted at an election. Like many thousands of others who died so that men should be free to make their

choice of government, he was too young when war broke out ever himself to have played a part in that process of democracy.

But he once helped to canvass for a Labour candidate at a by-election. John set his political hopes for the future on Labour. And he told me why. He used to say to me something like this. "At least I know what the Labour Party stand for. They stand for a square deal for you and me, with food, a house and a job for all who will do it. They stand for everybody having an equal chance and for more even distribution of the wealth of the world—not cigars at the Ritz and starvation at the Rhondda, not duck at the Berkeley and dole at Barrow. Whether they'll be able to give it to us, I don't know. A lot of folk say they are incompetent. Well, my hunch is that they are a good bit more competent than people imagine. Anyway, they can't be much worse than the Tories. And I don't understand what it is the Tories do believe in, except everybody who has anything clinging on to it like a limpet and everybody doing what they like and to hell with the hindmost."

Then I remember he once said rather wistfully as he puffed at a pipe several sizes too large for him, "There was a wonderful spirit out in the desert with the Eighth Army, you know. You felt a real comradeship in arms. That's the spirit we want when the war is over—but I suppose it is impossible in peace time."

Now Labour is in power in Britain, the party on which John's political hopes were set. That party, as the party in power, carries with it the dreams and hearts not only of the

Johns who died for liberty in foreign seas and lands and skies, but also of the Toms and Dicks and Harrys of every shade of political conviction who return home to build the new world we're wanting.

At the end of the first great war against Germany there was a foolish hope in the minds of millions that peace and a new world were secure for ever, that they would somehow drop into our lap without anybody in particular doing very much more about it.

At the end of this war against Hitlerism few have such over-easy confidence. Instead a measure of cynicism, equally foolish and no less dangerous, is widespread among the British people, the belief that wars are perhaps inevitable, that we can never win the kind of world we long for our children to enjoy, that mankind is caught like some dumb beast in a trap, condemned for ever to endure a measure of uncertainty and despair.

I do not accept this policy of defeat. I believe that British Labour has today one of the most golden chances ever entrusted to a party by the masses of the people, glittering opportunity at a time when the difficulties and dangers are as dark as ever before in our long history. But I do not think the fact that Labour is in power is by itself sufficient to usher in the millennium.

No. Labour governs us—but what idea will govern Labour? Will it be Labour led by God to remake the world or Labour led by the nose to remake the mess?

And the Conservatives? What is their part today? They have an opportunity as vital and constructive in opposition as they ever had in power. The nation needs the traditions of faith and patriotism which Toryism at its best embodies. Will Conservatives rise to their destiny?

These are the most important questions the coming years will answer. The answers will settle the fate of our children.

Every citizen and every party in the state has its part to play in securing the peace and building the new world. I am my brother's keeper. So are we all. It is up to nobody but us.

In this book, written by John's brother and the father of three children growing up as hostages to the future, are set out some of the personalities who will dominate the political scene. I present them to you warts and all—as they are today and as they can become tomorrow.

CHAPTER TWO

ROSES, ROSES ALL THE WAY

The Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill

When the late Philip Snowden, that grim crippled chip of Yorkshire granite, was driven back to Downing Street after his return from the Hague Conference on Reparations in

1929 and shortly after the formation of a Labour Government, the air broke into a mist with bells, the roofs and balconies and pavements of London seemed to heave and rock with the plaudits of the people.

Snowden, as Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer, had defied the world at that conference. When the Italian delegates after several hours of private consultation informed him that they were unable to agree to his terms, he merely remarked, "Then lock yourselves in your room, gentlemen, and stay there until you do."

When the French after haggling a whole day declared they could do no more, Snowden said, "Go through your pockets again. I am sure you will find enough left to cover what remains between us. It is out of the kindness of my heart that I wish you to do this, for I want you to have the satisfaction of having saved the conference."

So Snowden came back home with victory perched upon his banners. Unsmilingly he rode through the cheering multitudes. When he reached the quiet of his room in Downing Street a friend said to him, "Well, what do you think of this reception?" Snowden replied, "These things do not move me. I have seen too much of the fickleness of public opinion. One day the public put a halo round your head and the next day they press a crown of thorns upon your brow."

Winston Churchill, who fought Snowden fiercely through the tumult of a political lifetime and praised him when he was dead, must have had that philosophy of his old rival in

his mind as he saw the 1945 election results coming over the tape and realised how decisively the British people were rejecting the post-war leadership of a man who had led them through the passages of hell and the doorposts of death itself.

Churchill is proud. He takes political defeat hard. He takes it as a personal affront. It is one of the paradoxes of this citizen of destiny that although himself a Battling Butler of politics he is immensely and unduly sensitive to a debating cross-counter.

He reserves the right to criticise with violence when he is in opposition. Yet when in power he interprets similar tactics as mutinous and indeed almost treacherous to the state.

As a war leader Churchill is unsurpassed. He has claims to be the greatest war leader of all time. Destiny is the womb from which he sprang and history will be the shrine wherein he rests. No other man could have done for Britain, and no other man has done for Britain, what Churchill did for us in our dark hour of history. His pride in race and tradition and nationhood forbade him—and us—to admit even for a moment the prospect of defeat.

It is this proud quality, so essentially British, which makes other nations admire and love us in adversity and sometimes fear and dislike us when we prosper.

Churchill enjoys power. It is a drug which greatly stimulates him. He expected to retain it. He meant to govern Britain for some time after war ended. I remember as long ago as 1941 saying to Brendan Bracken, Churchill's intimate

friend, "If Winston is wise he will retire from public life the day Nazi Germany surrenders." Bracken answered, "He intends to stay on at least a year after that. He will be needed to settle the problems of Europe."

It is this serene self-confidence which served the nation so well in the toils and served the man himself so ill at the polls.

Churchill was too certain of himself in his appeal to Britain at the election. He seemed over cock-sure. He thought it was adequate to reply to a programme with a personality. The people chose the programme.

He answered ideas with smears, concrete proposals with clever tricks. And yet ... and yet—in some of the broadcast speeches which caused the greatest controversy Churchill had hold of the hem of Truth's skirt, although he was quite unable to present the garment to the electorate in such shape that they would wear it.

For instance, his references to secret police were greeted with a shout of rage and incredulity from the Cuillins to the Isle of Wight. Yet it is a fact that the battle within the ranks of Labour (and, incidentally, within the ranks of Toryism too) between the militant minority who desire control for the sake of the power it gives them and the well-meaning but sometimes over-quiescent majority who only desire as much control as national interest demands, has yet finally to be decided.

But Churchill over-simplified the issue. He tried to indict the entire Labour Party as materialistic apostles of Marx. It

was the old technique of Hitler who suggested that *all* who disagreed with him were Jewish bolsheviks. It is the new technique of certain sections of the Left who assert that *all* non-Leftists are fascist reactionaries.

Churchill is a strange mixture of contradictory elements. He fears nobody—and does not deeply care for many outside his immediate circle.

He excites the most intense loyalty and devotion from his friends—and he takes this very much as a matter of course. He treats his political adversaries with extreme violence, but quite soon forgives them for it.

He is often bad-tempered, except when things go really wrong. Then he is an island of calm in a sea of troubles. He can be extremely polite to dustmen and exceedingly rude to duchesses.

He loves the good things of life. I was once at a public dinner where he refused to make the speech expected of him until a particular article of refreshment had been procured for him. On the other hand he wandered through the London blitz in his siren suit and a tin hat carrying his dinner in his pocket with him—a plain meat sandwich.

At times he is intolerant of suggestions. "You can tell Winnie anywhere—but you can't tell him much," as a statesman with ideas on how the war could be won ruefully said to me. On the other hand nobody can be more hopeful and helpful if he chooses. In my days as a Fleet Street journalist he used to encourage me with advice and criticism.

When this mood descends upon him he has the art of making you feel you are the most important person in the world to him at that moment.

He can be obstinate to the point of folly. "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," he is fond of saying.

Once during the later stages of the war when he lay desperately ill and near to death, his doctor Lord Moran said he would have to be told to lay off official papers for a time. But Churchill stubbornly and steadfastly continued to read himself towards death. Finally Brendan Bracken was deputed to end the affair. He burst into the sickroom with the terse words "*You are going to die.*"

Churchill was jolted. Then Brendan swiftly added, "Yes, if you go on like this you are going to die. You can either live in the interests of your country or die a martyr to your red boxes." Seeing the point Churchill said, "You go to hell."

But the boxes were sent downstairs and Churchill began to pick up.

He is a man of extraordinary talents. Some of his writing will live as long as the English language lasts.

He is an orator of front rank although for years he found difficulty in speaking. He wrote his speeches out and recited them, "impromptus" and all, before his bedroom mirror until he learned them by heart.

He paints in oils for a hobby and paints extremely well. His London flat used to be decorated with his own pictures.

The staircase in it, designed by Churchill, had the walls and ceiling lined with mirrors which gave it a palatial aspect. The walls he builds for relaxation at his lovely country estate are perfectly constructed.

What is his future to be? He is over seventy it is true. But he is vigorous for his years. He is fond of recalling that Gladstone fought and won the toughest election campaign of his life when he was over eighty.

He leads one of the most formidable political parties that ever have existed, still two hundred strong, remember, in the new House of Commons.

This amazing man can yet play a part in the unfolding scene of British history, in the building of the new world my brother John and his comrades bled to win. At the time of Dunkirk Churchill told the House of Commons, "Capital and Labour have cast aside their interests, rights and customs and put them into the common stock."

The same unity and comradeship is needed throughout the nation if we are to triumph together over the dangers of peace as we triumphed together over the dangers of war. Churchill can help to make or to mar that unity on which the future of Britain rests. Now he can unite or divide this nation.

He can pioneer a new and true conception of democracy. He can set his face against carping and bitter impediment so that it shall not be justly said again as it was by Snowden after the last Labour Government took office, "It was clear that the Conservative Opposition were in a state of

exasperation from their electoral defeat and were determined to embarrass the Government in every possible way."

Churchill can bring the spirit of patriotism and statesmanship to this Parliament so it becomes the function and desire of the Opposition to help Government to do better rather than to make Government do worse.

Churchill will find this approach to those who have rubbed his pride in the dust contrary to the instincts of a lifetime. Yet a change of attitude in this respect could be his biggest contribution to the new sort of Britain all men long for.

There are years of experience, background and training in the ranks of Churchill's supporters which, without in any way impairing their right and indeed their duty to criticise, can be made available and helpful to the new and less experienced Labour men in these exceptional days.

So Churchill may stride forward into history with new glories added to his crown, evermore a patriot, nevermore a partisan, an ally of all the people in the hour of political defeat as in the years leading towards military victory.

CHAPTER THREE

THE DAVID OF DOWNING STREET

The Rt. Hon. C. R. Atlee

There was once a cobra who remarked "What a funny wee creature" as he saw a mongoose sidling towards him. But the mongoose broke the cobra's back just the same.

Similarly Goliath took a jaundiced view of David's fighting abilities and so had his head chopped off.

Clement Richard Attlee, Britain's Prime Minister, may turn out to be like David and the mongoose. Too many people have written him down for too long.

"A colourless figure," "A co-ordinator, not a creator," "A political pigmy"—these are the sort of terms which critics of Labour and folk inside Labour canvassing other claims to the leadership of the party have used about the man.

It has all happened before. When the late and great Lord Curzon heard that an unknown gentleman called Stanley Baldwin had been preferred to himself as Bonar Law's successor to the Premiership, tears of mortification and grief chased each other down his aristocratic countenance. Curzon was a man of extreme ability and knew it. Of him it was said,

> "My name is George Nathaniel Curzon,
> I am a most superior purzon."

Curzon's verdict on Baldwin was "A man of the utmost insignificance." Baldwin's reputation has to some extent fallen into decay. But whatever else he proved himself to be, the man who led Britain through nearly twenty years of

history, through the General Strike, the Gold Crisis, the Abdication, was certainly far from insignificant.

What manner of man is Clem? He is sixty-two years old. He peers out at life through slit eyes which give him a somewhat enigmatic appearance. He looks you straight in the face as he talks to you. His head is bony, long and lean and there is a great deal between his two ears besides skin and water.

On his upper lip he wears a tufty grey-black moustache. Strange how many men in all walks of life who have lost the hair from the top of their head raise a crop on their face, I suppose as some sort of a demonstration. This moustache conceals the fact that our Prime Minister has a strong, straight mouth, with a steely steadiness about the lip which portraits of Oliver Cromwell have carried down to us.

He has a splendid memory. The first time I met him he pointed a finger at me and exclaimed at once, "Howard? I remember your father perfectly. I can see him winning the mile at Haileybury as clearly as I see you there." My father and he were just a couple of buddies at school together and went on together to Oxford University.

At his public school and Oxford our Prime Minister was a Tory and an Imperialist Tariff Reformer by conviction. He became a barrister and as a hobby undertook social work in the East End of London.

What he saw there shocked him into Socialism. He felt that no economic system could be right which permitted

disease, hunger and slummery in the richest city the world has ever seen. It was an appeal to heart and conscience which stirred Attlee and launched him on his journey to the highest office in the nation. Paradoxically the speeches he now addresses to the public sometimes lack that very heart-appeal which captured him. Instead they are head-appeal, trim and methodical statements of policy, addressed to reason not emotion.

Some say Attlee is cold and stand-offish. This is not always so. He is shy and a life spent in the bash and bang of politics has made him cautious. But when you win his confidence he offers you comradeship of a quality which elicits the most intense loyalty from many of those close to him.

He still travels all over the country linking up at British Legion dinners and other similar functions with the friends he made during the first world war. He fought right through that war in France, Mesopotamia and Gallipoli, emerging as a major.

At the time Attlee worked in the East End of London he was taking Sunday School classes. It was the contradiction as he saw it between Capitalism and Christianity which set his course.

He says, "I think that the first place in the influences that built up the Socialist movement must be given to religion.... To put the Bible into the hands of an Englishman is to do a very dangerous thing ... the Bible is full of revolutionary teaching.... I think that probably the majority of those who

have built up the Socialist movement in this country have been adherents of the Christian religion—and not merely adherents, but enthusiastic members of some religious body."

The Prime Minister adds, "It is not the theories so much as the lives of those who advocate them which really count in the progress of a great movement."

From these remarks it can be judged that our Prime Minister believes the moral conduct and convictions of Labour M.P.s. and Labour rank-and-file are of supreme importance if the party is to fulfil its destiny and we are to have a new world.

The Prime Minister is a devoted family man. At the age of thirty-nine he married a radiant and gracious girl, Helen Millar of Hampstead. They have three daughters and a son who is at present serving as a midshipman in a British collier.

Attlee enjoys pottering round the garden clipping the hedges and tidying the lawns. He is an enthusiastic amateur carpenter. He eats quantities of books at a gulp and his tried favourites are Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and Pepys' *Diary*. At home he helps Mrs. Attlee feed the chickens and is not above rolling up his sleeves and giving a hand with the wash-up.

He is a prisoner to his pipe. He smokes it almost ceaselessly but finds it hard to keep the thing alight. It has been calculated that he burns an ounce of matches to every ounce of tobacco that he consumes. He is a moderate eater and sips an occasional glass of sherry, port or claret. He plays

bridge at which he is a fair performer. During parts of the blitz on London he sat in Lord Beaverbrook's air raid shelter at the Ministry of Aircraft Production playing cards for small cash stakes. He has been known to lash a small, hard ball on a golfcourse and smash a larger, softer ball on a tennis court.

He is a club man, belonging to the Oxford and Cambridge and the Athenæum. Often he has been seen sitting sunk in an armchair at the Athenæum reading the newspaper just as Lord Baldwin does when he is in town. By way of contrast I am told that at Cabinet meetings Attlee sits leaning forward on the edge of his chair, modestly but swiftly interposing. Sometimes he is diffident but like the famous old pig "he won't be druv."

This can be said of Attlee. He is entirely sincere. He is an honest man. He wants less for himself out of public life than most men in the game today. He offers his colleagues a loyalty which not all of them have repaid to him. And he is so sanguine in his judgment of his own crowd that at times he becomes almost dangerously naïve about them. He tends to be shrewder about things than people.

It is typical of Britain that the first man to lead a Labour working majority in the House of Commons should not himself spring from the so-called working classes. For Attlee's father was a successful Putney solicitor who became President of the Law Society.

But indeed the present Labour Party in the House of Commons is not a class party. It is a cross-section of the middle and working classes with a few scions of the

aristocracy thrown in. In the Socialist parliamentary party today there are over 200 of the professional classes compared with about 119 trade union nominees. Others, of course, receive the support of trade union funds, but the net result is a body far more independent than the party in the last Parliament over half of whom were nominated by unions. The average age is forty-three as against fifty-six last time.

There are 40 lawyers in their ranks, 9 doctors, 19 company directors or business men, 40 ex-service officers, 18 schoolmasters, 22 journalists and authors, professors, lecturers, economists, civil servants and accountants.

So Attlee leads a national party with a national mandate, not a class party with a class mandate. He has the responsibility of restoring and extending the basic security of two-party democratic government, which is that both parties differ as to method but are united as to aim—the welfare of all the people.

On the evening the Labour election victory was announced Mr. Attlee's first words to the huge audience assembled to greet him were, "If only Keir Hardie were here tonight..." And Keir Hardie, the prophet of British revolutionary Socialism, scorned the conception of the class war which some of Mr. Attlee's supporters would foist on to the Labour movement today. "It is," he said, "a degradation of the Socialist movement to drag it down to the mere level of a struggle for supremacy between two contending factions." His appeal was not to the material interests of one class but to the moral conscience of the nation.

The quality of Attlee's mettle will be tested not so much by his dealing with the Opposition—mere weight of numbers will attend to that—but by his success or failure in equipping the sound elements of Labour with Keir Hardie's fighting faith which will enable them to outmarch, out-think and out-manoeuvre the class-war boys within their own ranks.

This task will take cold courage, hard thought and a fiery conviction. It will take all Attlee has given the nation so far—and more too.

As Attlee himself says, "The attempt by one section of the community to dominate all others inevitably means the adoption of terrorism as a weapon."

Keir Hardie's challenge to Labour was the same as Labour's challenge to society—the unselfish living and thinking which alone can finally outlaw greed and hate and fear. "Selfishness," he wrote in 1903, "is not by any means a monopoly of the rich. The same causes which lead the rich employer to lower wages or the rich landlord to raise rents, operate quite as freely with working men when opportunity and self-interest dictate a like course."

So today Attlee's task is not only to deprive the privileged of some things which for a long time they have regarded as "rights" but also to show us ordinary, unprivileged masses that while we may have "rights" we also have duties, and then inspire us to carry them out in the interests of the nation.

As a Labour man said to me, "These days we either sacrifice our selfishness for the community or sacrifice the

community for our selfishness."

The Prime Minister has the backing of all men of good will in his adventures. He may succeed or fail. But one thing is certain. If he can restore to the ranks of British Labour the fervour and the trust in God which upheld the early pioneers he will take a high place in the pageant of human history.

CHAPTER FOUR

ERNEST IN WONDERLAND

The Rt. Hon. Ernest Bevin

The big danger of modern history is that men's living has not matured so quickly as their thinking.

Canon B. H. Streeter, who possessed the largest-sized shoes and one of the best-shaped minds this century has yet seen, once remarked, "A nation which has grown up intellectually must grow up morally or perish."

What did he mean by that? The new atom bomb which in a second blasts and mangles cities into nothingness provides an illustration.

Man's intellect has penetrated a secret of the universe. Force infinitely more powerful than any we have yet known

is now unleashed upon the world. It is the result of the researches of many highly developed minds.

How will men use this force? That depends not on our minds but on our morals. It depends on whether or not the world has millions of highly developed lives as well as minds.

Man with his atom bomb and his V1's and V2's can destroy himself more effectively and swiftly than ever before—and he certainly will do so unless there is rapid moral growth on a hitherto unprecedented scale among the nations and the leaders of the nations.

For make no mistake. Fear of the devastation fresh discoveries may cause will never of itself keep man from war. It never has done so.

I am brought to these reflections when I think of Mr. Ernest Bevin, our Foreign Secretary. What a colossal task falls to his lot and portion in this day and age. Being Foreign Secretary was not bad one hundred years ago when communications were so slow that the man on the spot had to bear the brunt of his own decisions without consultation with Whitehall and when, if war happened, at any rate women and children were secure.

But today every corner of the world is affected in a matter of minutes by every mood of the Minister—and if a mistake is made and a crash comes the very walls of civilisation crumble. Yes, Ernest Bevin has a tough assignment.

But Bevin will not quail at difficulties. He is not the quailing kind. His life has been one of struggle, endeavour and usually of ultimate triumph.

He began as a Somerset farmer's boy. He was an orphan. He was eleven years old at the time and earned sixpence a week. His boss was short-sighted. So he got the boy to read the newspapers aloud to him. This was Bevin's first introduction to the affairs of the world.

A retired Indian civil servant used to talk to the boy about lands across the sea and sparked the imagination of Britain's future Foreign Secretary. One day with a few shillings in his pocket he set off to Bristol. He got a job as grocer's boy but was sacked at the end of a month.

He drove a ginger-beer cart for a time. Then he graduated to tramcars and steered them around the streets of the mighty city of Bristol where recently the University bestowed upon him an honorary degree for his service to the state.

His first real chance in life came when Ben Tillett gave him a job as trade union organiser in the old Dockers' Union. He became known as the Dockers' K.C.

He is sixty-four. He smokes cigarettes and cigars and drinks in moderation. He is fond of good food although his tastes are simple.

Bevin is a born organiser. His supreme test so far came at the Ministry of Labour during the war years. Many say that there he did as much as anyone to help Britain to victory. He

accomplished an immense job. The best side of it was his faithfulness and feeling for the ordinary folk from whom he sprang. He has a real love for the working-class fellow and a supreme respect for him. True he made mistakes. And he made some enemies. But nobody doing that job at that time could have emerged without enemies.

At the same time Bevin showed himself unduly intolerant over any opposition to his will. He brushes it aside and beats it down. He whimpers about "pressure" if people stand in his way—yet he uses the limit of his power in attempts to smash and destroy them. Right or wrong as they may be, they have dared to oppose him. That is enough to decide his mind.

In this respect he is very like Lord Beaverbrook. One of them will feel pleased, the other incensed at this comparison. But it is a true one. The men hate each other—but in many respects are like each other.

Both are tremendous human forces. Both can be forces for good or evil. That is their choice. Nobody can decide it for them.

Bevin says, "I have been in lots of fights and I never relied on sympathetic action. I made up my mind where I could win and went ahead."

This attitude is to some extent inevitable in a man who has had to fight as fiercely as Bevin against the massed material interests which have tried to frustrate the advance of Labour over the last fifty years. Bevin's fiery and bullocking tactics,

backed by the quality of his mind, have undoubtedly brought benefits to tens of thousands of the British labouring masses.

But Bevin is not fighting his way upward now. He is on top. The battering-ram which has smashed its way through the wall risks making itself ridiculous—and dangerous—if it continues to use equal fury in open country. And though from the personal point of view it may pay to smash forward in the hurly-burly of home politics, such tactics must eventually fail from the national point of view when as Foreign Minister you are confronted by other negotiators who represent the strength and will of an entire people.

In his job as Foreign Secretary Bevin can afford to avail himself of a new grace and mellowness which will make him an historic figure rather than merely a big shot of today. He could be the man whom hundreds of millions of inarticulate ordinary folk, Bevin's folk, the whole world over are looking for. That is, a reconciler of the nations.

If he is to do it he must first learn to reconcile people in his own nation. At present he outrages so many people inside as well as outside the Labour Party. He cannot seem to help it. Indeed he boasts that he is the elephant who never forgets an injury. But that quality may not get him far forward in manipulating foreign affairs.

The fact is that for the first time in his career Bevin is in a job which he cannot pull off alone. He cannot succeed in foreign affairs if he plays his habitual role of the single Colossus, the tough guy who fights his way through.

For if he tries that on he will not only alienate some foreign nations but also offend substantial sections of public opinion in his own country. And for this task in these days, so fraught with promise and with danger, Bevin needs the whole British people back of him all the time.

Britain's future depends on her sustaining in peace the moral leadership in the world which she achieved in war. To do this her whole people must be inspired not by a Big I, but by a Big Idea.

In war it was comparatively simple. Churchill's idea, "the Nazis must be destroyed," mobilised the civilised world. Foreign Minister Bevin has a harder task.

He has clear insight into the problem. The danger, he says, is that "one kind of totalitarianism is being replaced by another."

And his solution? "That very much overworked word democracy" must be "defined."

Defined, yes—and all credit to the new Foreign Minister for thus challenging the glib thinking of our time. But definition alone is a weak thing before the ideological passions which sweep the world today. Democracy will never be saved by definition, even when it is backed by armed force. The problem is to create democracies. For that, democracy itself must be re-inspired—and this can only be done if it is infused by the spiritual power and moral purpose which gave it birth.

If Mr. Bevin can rise to that task, he will have the entire nation behind him.

CHAPTER FIVE

MAN OR MONKEY?

The Rt. Hon. Lord Beaverbrook

Like most other people I am prejudiced about Lord Beaverbrook. Unlike most others who are prejudiced about him I know the man.

I worked seven years for him and most days during that time spent hours in his company. So I've had it.

I've had his boot in my pants and his bullion in my pocket. I've had him hit me with his fist below the belt and at the same time twist his fingers around my heart.

Yes—strange, rich, powerful, intensely unjust and immensely lonely as he is, I'm prejudiced about the fellow. I love him—I love him warts and all. And so far nobody I've met can tell me worse about him than I know myself already.

He is sixty-six and as full of energy as my skin is full of me. When I asked someone at the Tory Central Office the other day, "Who are your men of the future?" he replied,

"Well, certainly not Lord Beaverbrook." But Lord Beaverbrook himself may have to be consulted on that point before it becomes official.

Beaverbrook fascinates his foes almost as the weasel fascinates the rabbit. They say Beaverbrook is far too clever to be good.

> "For alas, it is seldom if ever
> That people behave as they should.
> The good are so harsh to the clever,
> And the clever so rude to the good."

That about sums up the situation between Lord Beaverbrook and some of his critics.

His Tory opponents blame him for losing the election. They say he is a bad man with a bad plan. But bad plan beats no plan at all. It is at least an equal criticism to say of the Tory Party organisers that they appeared to have no programme better than the one propounded by Lord Beaverbrook to put before the nation at the last election. If they had a better hole presumably they would have gone to it. Incidentally, if Lord Beaverbrook's advocacy did the Tories so much harm you would expect the Socialists to like him. But somehow some of them don't. It's the old story of the Two Black Crows, "Boy, even if that were good I wouldn't like it."

Remember this about Beaverbrook. He built the planes which fought and won the Battle of Britain. Nothing can take that from him. When Churchill said, "Never in the field of

human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few," he could have added, "and one man above all others made it possible."

Beaverbrook brought to the task the same piratical efficiency which has left the pathway of his tumultuous lifetime littered with broken friendships and burning loyalties.

Once early in the war a cargo of rare and invaluable machinery was unloaded at a North-Western port. It was earmarked for a Ministry other than the Ministry of Aircraft Production. It was an affair of secrecy and extreme importance. Nobody except the Minister concerned and North-West port officials were supposed to know about it.

The Minister organised a fleet of lorries by telephone and sent them to the dock to collect the machinery. They were welcomed by blank looks. "Lord Beaverbrook's lorries were here and left two hours ago with the stuff," they were informed. And the stuff was used to build planes for Lord Beaverbrook—the other Minister never got his hands on it again.

Yes, an exasperating colleague, a maddening master—but the Hurricanes and Spitfires took to the skies in time.

Beaverbrook is a man of grotesque changeability. He is consistent only in his inconsistency.

You find him one moment going in a meticulous and miserly fashion through his household accounts. Detail by

detail those razor-like eyes scan them. "That bloody butler is cheating me.... Why do we need bath salts? Tell the housekeeper to chuck them out.... We're using too many matches. Cut 'em down." Next minute he is writing a five-figure cheque to help a friend out of debt. He opposes state control as national policy and thumps his tub daily on over three million breakfast tables with cries for "Freedom" and "Liberty." But he keeps a tight grip on his own people. He likes to have a hold on the men around him and usually it is the control of cash. He also is a man to go to if you are in domestic trouble. The role of confidant and friend is one which immensely appeals to him. Somebody once offered me this piece of advice in my early days with Beaverbrook, "If you want to get on well with Max get the police on your track or start having rows with your wife." And the joke was not entirely serious.

Beaverbrook drives those who work under him so hard that they could kill him. Then suddenly he turns about face—and treats you so you would follow him to hell (and some of his enemies suggest you might not have to walk too far). I have seen secretaries reduced to tears—but they would never leave him.

One morning Beaverbrook told a fellow, "Whatever you do, remind me to ring Lady So-and-So before you go home to-night."

"Yes, sir."

"Now don't forget, or I'll roll you in the mud."

"No, sir."

The day wore on. Things did not go well. By evening Beaverbrook was in a rage. He said to this man very quietly (Beaverbrook is always at his most dangerous when he is quiet. Think nothing of it when he stamps and bawls), "See here, you. Go out of this room and don't come back till morning. If you do I'll get mad."

"Yes, sir," answers the fellow gratefully. "But before I go I was to remind you——"

"Get out," interrupts Beaverbrook.

"But you told me——-

"I tell you to *get out*," says Beaverbrook in ominous tones, rising from his chair and advancing upon the wretched being who thereupon fled forth into the night.

Turning to me Beaverbrook then remarked in tones of mild astonishment, "Did you hear that, Peter? Why, it was attempted *mutiny*."

Nothing delights the Baron more than a joke at his own expense—provided he sees the joke, and likes it. Once a colleague of his, who usually found it simpler to let his views accord with those of his master, was describing a ride on horseback to Percy Cudlipp who now edits the *Daily Herald*. "The horses come to the door," he said, "Beaverbrook mounts and rides ahead like Napoleon while I follow behind like Marshal Ney."

"Marshal Yea, you mean," retorted Percy.

This conversation, when relayed to Lord Beaverbrook, highly pleased him.

One of his closest friends was the late Lord Castlerosse. Beaverbrook disapproved of Castlerosse's first marriage and did his utmost to persuade Castlerosse against it. So he was delighted when soon after it took place Castlerosse came to him and indicated that things were not going entirely as he had hoped.

Beaverbrook put Castlerosse on the afternoon train at Victoria and whisked him off to the South of France. They had a happy week in the sunshine. Then Beaverbrook received the hotel bills. He discovered to his surprise that Castlerosse, who had been doing himself quite well in the browsing and sluicing business in the public dining-room with Lord Beaverbrook, also appeared to be consuming considerable quantities of food and champagne in his bedroom at his host's expense.

"And by God, Peter," exclaimed Lord Beaverbrook, rocking with laughter as he told me the tale, "I investigated and found that unknown to me he had his wife up in the bedroom with him all the time."

Lord Beaverbrook considers that the deepest mistake of his political career was to accept a peerage. He often pokes fun at the aristocracy. But the shrewdest comment on this viewpoint was made to him by a young and beautiful lady at dinner one night.

Beaverbrook, apparently eager to impress her, was baiting various aristocrats who sat with their legs beneath his table. Finally he turned to the girl and said, "Well, Mrs. So-and-So, what do you think of all this?"

After a pause she replied, "I think that you joined the club of your own accord. They never asked you to."

Well, what is Beaverbrook's future to be? What part can he play in building the new Britain which my brother and our many brothers died to achieve? Mere disapproval of him is both silly and inadequate. It is like disapproving of the Niagara Falls or of a rushing, mighty wind. You cannot dispose of such things by disapproval.

Beaverbrook is there, large as life and almost as handsome. He is an elemental force. Where should that force be directed?

He probably cares for nobody in this world more than himself. He has won everything he has wanted in life—except happiness.

Today he has immense gifts to offer the nation if he chooses to do so.

He can achieve in the realm of character what he has accomplished in the realm of cash. If he began to practise in his own life and publish in his newspapers the doctrine that we ought to behave as we should rather than as we like, he could help to bring about the Golden Age instead of the Age of Gold in which he has benefited himself so handsomely.

He knows, of course, that he should do this. He does not need me to tell him so. He learned it way back in Canada sixty years ago where his Scottish father preached the gospel of Christ as a Presbyterian minister. But somehow he has got away from it.

He knows the Bible better than any other man I have met. He has large sections of it by heart. Late at night he entertains and enthrals chosen guests with stories from it. But he usually repeats the Old Testament, seldom the New. Maybe because the New Testament advocates that change of heart which would cost Beaverbrook so much and bring him the reward which yet eludes him.

Someone has truly said, "It may be an act of faith to expect a new world through a change of the human heart—but it is an act of lunacy to expect one any other way."

One of Beaverbrook's old employees put his hand on my shoulder when he was leaving Beaverbrook after twenty years of service and said, "Peter, stay with Max. He will lead the greatest crusade history has ever seen—or he will die unhappy."

Well, we shall see. Lord Baldwin believes that whenever Beaverbrook falls ill he hears the flames of hell roaring for him. I do not know. I cannot tell. My hunch is that the Baron would like to believe in nothing—but has unpleasant twinges from time to time when he considers he may be wrong.

There is a story of a disbelieving old Scot who was not everything he might have been. He died—and found himself

in exceedingly warm circumstances.

With all his heart he felt remorse and cried aloud to God, "Father, I didna ken it was a sin."

And the Lord looked down from Heaven and in His infinite mercy exclaimed, "*Mon, ye ken it noo.*"

CHAPTER SIX

HURLY-BURLY, BURLY PEARLY KING

The Rt. Hon. Herbert Morrison

People have often asked what happens when an irresistible force meets an immovable object. There is no mystery about it. What happens is a big bust-up.

This event took place in the declining days of the Churchill war administration between Churchill himself and Mr. Herbert Morrison. Here the metaphor ends—for while Morrison proved himself somewhat of an irresistible force, organising the electoral victory which swept Labour into Westminster on a flood tide, the legend of Churchill's immovability was destroyed and he floated quietly away from the anchorage at 10 Downing Street which had been his station through the hurricane of the war years.

Churchill went to Lewisham in the course of the election campaign and informed the electors there that Herbert Morrison was the colleague above all others to whom he was least sorry to bid farewell. Morrison, challenged by questioners, had alleged that Churchill was responsible for no warning being given in relation to a bad Lewisham bomb incident, and that consequently the casualties were needlessly heavy.

The electors of Lewisham cheered Churchill—and then voted Morrison to Parliament with a decisive majority.

By the drama of events, when the new House of Commons was summoned by the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod to attend the House of Lords and have the King tell them to get on with the job, Prime Minister Attlee was absent at the Potsdam conference. So Morrison as Leader of the House and Churchill as Leader of the Opposition rose to head the procession to the Lords.

Churchill glowered at Morrison—then jutted his chin and stumped silently down the corridors of Westminster. Morrison looked at Churchill. Then seeing the jut of that chin he set his own face steadfastly before him and stumped doggedly and silently at Churchill's side.

It is a pity that rancour should separate these two great Englishmen—for such they are. That word "Sorry"—so simple to pronounce, so difficult to say, would put matters right. And for Britain's sake the sooner it is said the better.

I expect Churchill's indignation at Morrison may have had something to do with the fact that Morrison did more shaking and less nodding of the head to Churchill's propositions than some other Cabinet colleagues. A lot of the Labour men tell me that Morrison is the only fellow they consider the equal of Churchill's calibre in their party.

Whether Mr. Bevin would agree with this assessment I do not know. I cannot tell. But time is on Morrison's side. He is fifty-seven, which is thirteen years younger than Churchill, seven years younger than Bevin and five years younger than Attlee.

This burly, lively figure with the quiff of hair curling back from his square forehead and giving him a look of perpetual enquiry is a pearly boy—a true Cockney King.

His father was a Metropolitan policeman. His mother was a housemaid. He began life as a grocer's boy. One day as he scudded along with his parcels he saw a crowd gathered around a curious-looking individual holding forth on the edge of the pavement. It was a street phrenologist. He persuaded Herbert to part with sixpence and have his bumps read. After running his hands over Herbert's skull the phrenologist said, "Not a bad head at all. What do you read?" Herbert pulled from his pocket something which used to be known as a penny dreadful.

The phrenologist said, "You should read a lot. You should read better stuff than this. With a head like yours you could be Prime Minister one day."

Well, who knows? Anyway this episode launched Morrison on a course of serious reading. He used to slip up to a room above the grocer's shop when no errands were to be done, and the literature he read has given him that clear, colourful and distinctive style of expression which is a main weapon in his armoury today.

Herbert, like many a great man before and after him, was a failure at his school. He never won a prize and was often caned. He was a lonely boy and declares he spent much of his time sliding down the banisters of a long staircase there.

He felt inferior to the other boys. And certain physical handicaps, over which in after-life he has triumphed, may have had something to do with this. For being lame myself I know that boys at school are not always sensitive to the misfortunes of others.

Morrison has had from childhood a weakness of the ankles. He has said, "Sometimes I could walk, sometimes I could only crawl and sometimes was in great pain." Quite recently our Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons had to have this infirmity treated under gas.

Morrison also has a wall-eye. His right eye is bad. But he does not miss much with the other one.

After his days as grocer's boy he got a job as shop assistant. Then he became a telephonist at Whitbread's brewery—and he found it "heaven" he says, not because of the smell of hops but because it was so peaceful.

Next he became a Brother of the Black Craft—he went into journalism as deputy circulation manager of the *Daily Citizen*. Like every circulation man he thought he could write the copy better than the editorial boys. Unlike most circulation men he was probably right. He had a flair for concocting advertisements (it comes out today in the fighting slogans he coins for Labour).

Unfortunately for him, as he was on the point of getting transferred from the circulation to the editorial, the *Daily Citizen* expired from lack of circulation.

Morrison thereupon took a £1 a week job as Secretary of the new London Labour Party.

He has an immense asset. That is his wife, one of the kindest, warmest and most gracious of the ladies of Westminster.

They have a house in S.E. London—and they know that it takes a little more than bricks and mortar to build the sort of homes we're wanting in the new world. As our Lord President of the Council has said, "The Labour Party can never grow merely from an intuitive thrust for more of this world's goods ... abundant life means something far more than, indeed something essentially different from, an abundance of material things. It means more than bread and circuses, more than minimums and movies."

The Morrisons have one daughter who married the son of Tom Williams, our Minister of Agriculture. They have all the simple-hearted gaiety of unspoiled people when they are

together, though to be sure the hurly-burly of fierce electoral campaigns has made the husband somewhat wary as he strides expectantly through the battle of life.

Their relaxation is dancing. The Morrisons are always first on the floor at any Labour Day dance. And Morrison does not miss one dance all through the evening. With a grin of delight on his face, he waltzes, foxtrots and veletas the hours away till dawn.

Labour holds his deep love and loyalty. He says, "Whether it is in alliance or whether it is alone, I am of it, for it, with it—and so will remain." He refused a salary of £7,000 a year offered him when he was out of Parliament between 1931 and 1935, preferring to stay secretary of the London Labour Party at £500 a year.

Some people declare that the policeman's son has somewhat of a policeman's mentality on his own account. They say he likes to boss and bully, to regulate and control. I am not sure whether this is so. True, in the course of the war it was his task as Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security to operate many restrictions on the liberty of the citizen. But he showed immense political courage—even though possibly some misjudgment as to timing—over the release of Mosley from gaol, and at a moment when some members of his own party from personal motives would have been glad to see him embarrassed. Morrison is more than a politician with both ears on the ground. He is a statesman with his vision on the future. He is gripped with a sense of destiny for himself, his party and his nation. He dislikes the idea of dictatorship wherever it emerges, Left or Right.

He has said, "This is in large measure a war of ideas ... Out of internal insecurity there would grow exaggerated nationalism, issuing in policies of economic restrictions, 'autarky' and war ... Victory of itself will not prevent the return of these things ... With what guiding idea shall we approach the future? For a guiding idea we must have."

Of the extremists who try to capture the Labour Movement from within and divert what began as a great spiritual and social crusade into a sordid materialistic and class dictatorship, he said in December 1944, "Our own British Communist Party—if it is our own and British—might at any time suffer a change of heart and go back to bloody revolution. For all I know it may be there already, underground. Anything is possible for a party which at one and the same time shouts for a United Front and puts up candidates against us with a view to splitting the Labour vote. All this is alien to our honest, straightforward, native, Socialist thought ... But you can't all the time say 'No, No, No,' to the Communists. The real answer to the Communist is a positive answer. We have to show more vigorous fighting enthusiasm, more faith, more sense of high adventure."

Unlike many distinguished leaders of the Left Morrison is not fooled by the Marxists, though he claims to be something of a Marxist himself. Unlike some who see the danger Morrison knows how to deal with it. But knowledge is one thing. Achievement is another.

He sees that in the war of ideas which runs through this nation and through the Labour Party today, the idea of the militant materialists is more than a political theory. It is a

faith and a bad faith. The mistake that a number of men in Labour appear to make is the idea that you can cast out a bad religion by a good political programme. Not so. It can only be cast back and out by a fiercer and better faith.

Has Herbert Morrison got that faith? Is he passing it on to others?

It takes a passion to cure a passion. It takes a revolution to cure a revolution. The answer to materialistic revolution is the greatest revolution of all time in the hearts of millions of ordinary men and women who start to live for others and not only for themselves.

It may be Britain's destiny to turn back the tide of evil in the war of ideas, just as she alone turned back the tide of evil in the war of arms after it rolled across the rest of Europe to our very shores.

So Morrison can win a renown for himself in the war of ideas which may even transcend in history the glory and importance accorded to Churchill as a leader in the war of arms.

CHAPTER SEVEN

PERSONALITY OR PROPHET?

The Rt. Hon. Anthony Eden

Whether Mr. Anthony Eden was born in neatly pressed trousers has never yet been disclosed. Certainly it is hard to imagine him otherwise than perfectly garbed and garnished.

His svelte figure, his handsome countenance and his smile have adorned and cheered the way at the conference tables of many nations. He gives altogether so charming an impression that some people discount or even dislike him because of it. They make the mistake of supposing that charm is the handmaiden of softness and that such a dandy must lack the rind and fibre to reshape an age.

They forget that some of the most delicate blades are forged from the truest steel—and a willowy rapier will accomplish more than a mere squat bludgeon.

But discussion about it and about will now end. We shall soon know the truth about Eden. Until the 1945 election the lines had fallen unto him in pleasant places and he had a goodly heritage. Almost without interruption since he entered public life the tide was with him.

Today he is in opposition. He is swimming in deep, rough waters and against the stream of the public emotion which just now is running in another direction. So his quality will out. If he is a mere dandy he will soon submerge. But if he is what millions of his countrymen still believe him to be, a statesman of destiny, he will be seen dauntlessly breasting the waters, swimming against the stream, giving a lead,

fighting every inch of heroic progress towards the principles which his heart is pledged to establish in the nation.

What manner of man is Eden? He is still young as politicians count age. He is forty-eight. He comes from County Durham where his ancestors have lived and loved and died since the fifteenth century. He is the son of a seventh baronet, and the Eden baronetcy was created by King Charles II in 1672.

His father was a most remarkable figure. "Walk as though you own the earth" was his motto. He loved horses, flowers, painting and women, hated dogs, children, other people's smoking and religion. He had a violent temper, and when he did not like the look of the plants in his own green-house, smashed the whole place to bits with a walking stick in a state of ungovernable fury. Yet, curiously enough, servants and gardeners were devoted to him.

When the rain fell as he and his guests waited to shoot pheasants, he groaned out of the window towards heaven, "Oh God, how like You."

Amid such craggy surroundings the sensitive plant of Anthony Eden's spirit pushed its way to maturity and gained precocious strength in the process.

He was a very untidy boy and drove his father into tantrums with the objects he scattered around the house and gardens. It was hard to get him out of doors as he preferred sitting inside reading history and sticking his large collection of stamps into albums.

At Eton he won a prize for divinity, played football for his House and was a good oarsman. His housemaster says of him, "He was neither taciturn nor gay with no special indication of an outstanding career."

He was caned for bad fagging. One of the duties of fags at Eton is to cook sausages and the discipline which he incurred through his schoolboy shortcomings has turned Mr. Eden into one of the best sausage chefs of Westminster.

He served with the King's Royal Rifle Corps in the first World War and was nicknamed "The Boy." He was brave in battle and went out into No Man's Land to drag wounded comrades back to safety. At the age of twenty-two he was a brigade major.

After the war he went up to Christ Church, Oxford. There he kept himself to himself and slogged away at Oriental languages, for which he won first-class honours. He can still make an after-dinner speech in Persian. He spent his vacations in France studying French and his appearance earned him the title of "Lord Eyelash."

He used to slip away sometimes from the spires and grey walls of Oxford into the scented and slumbrous countryside which girdles that ancient city. There he would read poetry and paint in water colours. He has considerable talent as a painter and is one of the best English authorities on modern French painting.

He displayed to his few intimate friends developing ruggedness. One day a car in which he was driving passed a

signpost. A passenger declared the signpost indicated a certain village. Eden said "No." After at least ten minutes' discussion in the course of which several miles had been covered Eden insisted, in spite of the protest of his companions, on turning round and going back to the signpost to prove his point.

When the passenger who disagreed with him about the signpost said, "After all, Anthony, what does it matter?" Eden replied, "It matters a great deal. You are wrong and determined to make everyone else agree with you. That is bad for you and you must learn your lesson."

The year after he came down from Oxford Anthony Eden married the daughter of a first baronet, Sir Gervase Beckett, the proprietor of the *Yorkshire Post*. He became one of the inky brethren like myself, a Black Craftsman, and earned a living as a working journalist for some time. He concentrated on political articles and notes on art exhibitions.

Almost as soon as he got into Parliament in 1923 Sir Austen Chamberlain, then Foreign Secretary, made him his Parliamentary Private Secretary and Eden was concerned with Foreign Affairs for the greater part of the time until Churchill's Caretaker Administration was beaten at the polls.

He is a shy man. He trembles before he makes a speech and sighs with relief when it is over. He is shortsighted and sometimes offends people by passing them in the street without recognising them.

In his large and ugly room at the Foreign Office, coloured with brown, red and gilt, Eden appeared like a gay butterfly trapped in a heavy and Victorian cage.

In the less formal atmosphere of foreign capitals his personality appeared to blossom. He used to play before-breakfast tennis at Geneva. Once at Rome Mussolini was showing him the buttons on his desk. "When I press the yellow one my Colonial Minister comes. When I press the green one my Foreign Secretary enters. And when I press the red one"—here the late Duce paused and jutted his chin like the rock of Gibraltar—"a million men are mobilised." Eden answered with a grin, "Too bad if you wanted a sandwich and glass of beer and pressed the red button by mistake."

In Sweden on a hunting expedition he astonished the newspaper correspondent's of the world by refusing to shoot an elk which came within range because he said it was so beautiful.

At a Berlin banquet Hitler told Eden they had fought in opposite trenches on the Somme. Eden made a drawing of the British position on the menu and passed it to Hitler who sketched in the German position. Eden still treasures the card.

Yes, through most of the bumps and grunts and groans of inter-war international relationships—the Spanish Civil War, Hitler's rise to power, the Lion of Judah chased off his throne by the Bullfrog of the Pontine Marshes, China invaded by the Red Star in the North and the Rising Sun in the East—

Anthony Eden sat manipulating the levers of power which decide Britain's part in world events.

Anthony Eden resigned the Foreign Secretaryship. He and his then Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Cranborne, went out into the cold together because they disagreed with Chamberlain's attitude to events in general and Hitler in particular.

It is a brave thing for a man to resign high office on an issue of principle, especially when the policies of which he disapproves are winning the general support of the public as Chamberlain's policy of appeasement unquestionably did with the bulk of British opinion in the year of Eden's resignation, 1938.

Yet it is a necessary part of democratic leadership which too many Tory politicians have neglected.

The Tories over the last twenty years lost this conception. And it helped to lose them the election. For the public began to think of them not as disinterested statesmen but as folk with axes to grind who considered they alone were equipped to wield power and would go to any lengths to achieve it.

Eden has guts as well as charm. In opposition he will have to rely less on his charm and more on his guts. He can reintegrate into the ranks of Toryism that it is better to advocate an unpopular course which you believe to be right than to win votes by advocating a popular course which in your heart you believe is inadequate.

With his guts and flair Eden has a more important part to play in opposition than he had in Government. For he can equip the Tories with a philosophy, if he finds it first himself. When I was young I read a book called, *Dr. Syntax in Search of a Wife*. Now the title should be *The Tory Party in Search of a Philosophy*.

They will not find it merely by competing with the Labour Party in promises of national well-being, but by educating the nation to recognise that our future as a power in the world depends not on the community giving everything to every individual but in every individual giving everything to the community.

This change, if it is to be cogent, must start in the ranks of the Tories themselves. Eden can set the pace for it. Fires of opposition and persecution can forge a prophet out of a picturesque personality and drive him forward to a greater destiny.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE CAT THAT WALKS ALONE

The Rt. Hon. Emanuel Shinwell

My brother John and I would tramp the hills together when we were boys. We would leave the grey city pavements

and grey city hearts behind us and go adventuring in the woodlands and wild places.

John, who now rests at Arnhem, loved the Highlands of Scotland in his lifetime. He would scramble the rocks and corries with the lashwhip of rain upon his face.

He plunged his body into the black embrace of many an icy loch and I would watch his white limbs a-glimmering in the water as he struck out against the cold and later climbed ashore and scampered himself to dryness in the wind.

We were anglers. Many a happy day have we spent, while the shadows of the mountains moved like ragged fingers across the valleys to mark the hours away, bending patiently over the reaches and eddies of a mountain stream to catch ourselves a dish of trout for supper.

We loved these hill rivers tumbling, circling, curveting through the granite, rippling like muscles around the rocky ribs of the pool, girding the banks with smooth strength on their power-ride to the sea.

Sometimes as we silently breasted a ridge startled deer would break away ahead of us, moving like swift and effortless machinery across the tangled landscape, pausing to glance back at us with a blend of fear and fascination before they vanished up the glen.

One day in the heart of the mountains we came upon a deserted village.

Here were crofts neatly snuggled into the contours of the land. Down below was the remains of a wall and jetty where the crofters used to launch their boats and land the harvest of the loch. But the piers were tumble-down and derelict, the doors and roofs and windows were gone, the squares which had once been gardens were rush, reed and heather.

Bracken and bog-myrtle spread lushly in the neat quarries where once the peats had been cut to warm the crofter's hearth.

It was there that John and I heard first about the evictions, and the cruelty of the tale affected my brother greatly. It was one of the things which influenced him in his deep sympathy with Labour.

The story of the evictions is simple. Generations ago the landlords of certain Highland properties decided that from their point of view it would be more profitable to keep sheep on their hills than tenant-crofters. So they sent agents who evicted the crofters village by village, men, women and bairns, from the homes where their ancestors had lived for hundreds of years.

Today the wind sighs round the walls which once saw such human suffering. Rains wet the thresholds which once were moist with tears. But the ancient Highland villages are deserted and Canada, Australia and many a far country have been enriched by the matchless human material which the avarice of the landlords banished for ever from our shores.

Just the same, though these evictions took place before anyone alive today was born, the sense of grievance lingers on in the hearts of many Highlanders. For bitterness is a deep-rooted plant of swift and stubborn growth. The fruits of it are garnered for generations after the seed is sown.

John and I met this same spirit in the mining valleys of the Rhondda. There in the middle of the mountains, rivers and valleys of vivid green, some of Britain's finest humanity was allowed for years to rust away.

The miners are the salt of the earth, but many of them are as bitter as aloes. Their work is dark, hard and dangerous. Since 1913 an average of over 1,000 miners a year have been killed in British pits—that is approximately three a day, seven days a week, Sundays included.

In the first Great War the miners were treated like heroes, paid large sums of money and told they were indispensable to the nation. As soon as the war was over they were neglected. Pits were closed down. Many miners went on the dole for five, seven and ten years at a stretch. Young fellows of over twenty in the Rhondda valleys and other British coal-fields had never done a day's work in their life, and that through no fault of their own.

Through the years of peace between the two wars 30,000 miners a year were thrown on the economic dust-heap because they were no longer capable of working underground. That is approximately eighty-five a day, seven days a week, Sundays included. Eighty-five families a day added to the total of human frustration and despair.

One of the most poignant memories I have is travelling in the bad years through mining village after village where roadways and paths were black and lined with silent men, their faces, hearts and pockets empty, crouched there in their multitudes in the posture miners the world over adopt when they are at rest.

They had sat there for years. There was nothing for them to do but sit. They squatted like vultures waiting for death, in these mining villages. And it was their own deaths that they awaited.

One of them said to me as I offered him something to eat, "Are you down from London? A newspaper fellow? They often come and look at us—but they don't do anything for us. I suppose there is nothing to be done."

One of the strangest, saddest tales of the pits comes from Lanarkshire in Scotland. In the last century there was trouble in these mining areas. The miners, feeling they were underpaid and exploited, went on strike. The owners imported Polish miners to break the strike. They came in cattletrucks, some with labels around their necks, most of them unable to speak English. Today the descendants of these men are valued Scots citizens. They have married and mingled their lot with the folk of Lanarkshire and are themselves Lanarkshire folk. But the legacy of ill-will between miners and management which first brought their fathers to Scotland persists.

Strangely the man who has been picked by Prime Minister Attlee to carry out the nationalisation of the mines, the most

revolutionary economic change the industry will ever have seen, is himself of Polish connection. His forbears were Jews named Shinwald. They immigrated from Poland in the last century. In the course of a couple of generations the name has become Shinwell.

So I present to you Emanuel Shinwell, His Majesty's Minister of Fuel and Power, born sixty-one years ago in London and one of the toughest, ablest men the Labour Party has yet produced in Britain. What I most like about Shinwell is his guts. Life may get him down but it will never get him under. This quality makes him a powerful champion of the oppressed.

The brightness of his brain shines out through his beady eyes which glint and gleam like fire.

Political ambition? I should say Shinwell possesses that commodity in about the same measure as ninety per cent. of his Parliamentary colleagues, and is more likely to fulfil it than most of them. He refused office under Churchill, but I am bound to say that the office he refused was hardly big enough for Shinwell's abilities.

He is a fighter. He started his working life doing odd jobs in Leeds. Then he was apprenticed to an East End tailor—if you want a gent's natty suiting the Minister is quite able to measure, cut and shape it to your needs.

He first made his name in the world of trade unionism by organising a vigorous Seamen's Union which helped to

improve the working conditions of merchant seamen. He got gaoled in 1919 for "inciting to riotous conduct."

He is a man of revenge. When Ramsay MacDonald, Shinwell's Socialist leader, formed the first National Government in 1931 and Labour sank without trace at the polls, as the *Morning Post* wittily though not altogether prophetically put it, Shinwell refused to join the National Government and lost his seat in Parliament. He was out of a seat, out of a job and with little money. His one ambition then was to get even with Ramsay MacDonald. He had to wait until 1935 to do it. Then he travelled to Seaham and fought Ramsay at the polls.

It was perhaps the most bitter battle of modern political history. Ramsay was reduced first to incoherence, then to silence and finally to tears by the savage and sustained violence of his opponent's political invective. Shinwell virtually bludgeoned his old chief out of political existence. Ramsay was never the same again after that election.

Shinwell won the seat by an immense majority and has held it ever since.

Once in Parliament a political opponent made what seemed to me to be a highly offensive observation to Shinwell. Peering down from my seat in the Press Gallery I was interested to observe that Shinwell appeared to take much the same view about the remark as I did myself.

He rose demurely from his seat, walked daintily up to where the other Honourable Member, about twice Shinwell's

size, was sitting and then caught him a sharp crack on the mazzard which sent him to bed for some days.

Shinwell prepares his political speeches out loud, walking up and down a room declaiming at speed while a secretary pants to keep up with him. In the debating chamber he lolls on the front bench with his feet on the Clerk's table. He does not always seem to be paying close attention to what goes forward. But when he rises to reply he seldom misses a point. And if anybody else's speech contains anything demanding retort Shinwell's feet leave the table at the same moment as his body leaves the bench. With a bound he is in the battle, his eyes transfixing his opponent, his hand chopping the air before him.

Now this man of fire has been given the job of keeping the home fires burning and the big wheels turning while he resettles the economic structure of Britain's mining industry. It is a hard task. But it can be done. Emanuel means "God with us." Perhaps it is an omen. Anyway, Emanuel Shinwell is better equipped than most men in the Cabinet to do the job.

Nationalisation is the policy. The public have demanded it at the polls and are going to get it. But that will not solve all the problems of the industry.

For the bitterness is there, that titanic explosive of the human heart which has wrecked empires, governments, nations and individuals since time began. No new system of itself will cure bitterness—but only a new spirit.

An old, wise friend of mine once told me that the test of true statesmanship is what you do with bitterness—do you cure it or do you exploit it? A militant minority in the pits of Britain have worked hard for years not to cure the causes of the bitterness of the miners but to extend and exploit these causes in order to win power for themselves.

These men want power—and nationalisation of the pits will not give it them. They are the boys who sometimes urge the men to disobey their accredited union leaders. If he is to make the grade Shinwell must win his fight with them as well as against the entrenched positions of those who will try to delay the whole scheme of nationalisation. Otherwise coal which has been black diamonds for Britain in the past will be black dynamite for her in the future.

Shinwell will make the greatest mistake of his career if he imagines the mining problem can be solved by strokes of cleverness and dictatorship coupled with an alteration in the organisation of the industry. Whatever system is established, the miners will be won and the production of coal will soar only when an appeal is made to the hearts of the best men in the industry and their faith and self-respect are given back to them. Then necessary reorganisation will be profitable and effective and the ideas as well as the tactics of the malevolent minority will be decisively repulsed.

For not only coal has to be mined from the belly of the earth, but gold too from the heart of the mass of the miners—and the gold is there for those who know how to reach it. There are rich traditions of comradeship, faith, character and teamwork in the pits. The ordinary miner will respond when

he is treated as an honest man by honest men, when he is shown that he has an essential part to play in recreating the life of the nation and is not merely tolerated because he is useful to the nation—when he becomes convinced he has much to give as well as something to get.

By inclination Shinwell is somewhat of the cat that walks by himself. He is not a team-man by instinct. Yet if he tries to tackle the mines on the basis of scoring a personal success he will find that selfishness breeds selfishness, and that the mines will become the wheel on which he is broken rather than the chariot in which he rides to triumph. If, on the other hand, he fights and works to build a team among the best elements of the industry who will lift management and miners to great living—then the mines will be his glory and the glory of the Labour Government.

CHAPTER NINE

BIG BEN'S BABIES

Mother Time herself looks out serenely above Parliament at Westminster. Smiling her secret smile, viewing men and affairs from the secure perspective of the centuries, she watches her children come and go, make friends and enemies, win success or failure in the corridors and debating

chambers and committee rooms which spread around her skirts beneath.

A sense of timelessness and history grips your imagination the first time you visit Parliament. Here the free men of Britain defied the might of autocratic monarchy and sent King Charles I empty away when he came to demand from Speaker Lenthall the names of five M.P.s who had offended him.

Lenthall sank down on his knees to the King, trembling with terror. But he bravely declared he could neither see nor say anything without the leave of the House. Charles went off having lost his temper—and before long he had lost his head also.

That was the last time a British King entered the chamber of the House of Commons. To this day when the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod arrives at the House of Commons bidding the members attend the King in the House of Lords, the door is slammed in his face as demonstration of the people's sovereignty. He has to knock three times before he is allowed inside to deliver his message.

It was in Parliament that battles were fought to secure those elementary principles of justice and fair play we now take for granted and cherish as our inevitable birthright.

Here Shaftesbury, aristocratic and ill, racked by physical pain which he could scarce endure and by personal ambition which duty enforced him to deny, pleaded the cause of the children. He made men weep with his tales of boys and girls

harnessed naked together underground, underfed, underpaid, sick, bestial and exhausted, dragging towards the daylight the coal on which the nation enriched itself.

Here Wilberforce won the battle for the slaves though he had arrayed against him the steely selfishness of a million human hearts.

Here came Keir Hardie in his cloth cap, with faith in his spirit and fire in his belly, first of the few, pioneer for the majority.

Snowden with his acid tongue and hard head in the bitter, struggling days of Labour—when some Tory paused in his speech to say, "The Hon. Member smiles?" Snowden pulled himself upright on his two sticks and spat across the floor, "I did not smile. I sneered."

Here the whole House was stirred by the aroused moral conscience of the nation when another King, for so long the darling of the gods and of the people, was forced to abdicate his throne.

Lloyd George rallying the nation through the bloodiest hour in British history—Churchill radiating an unconquerable resolve when the Empire stood in heavier peril than ever before—Gladstone—Burke—Disraeli—Pitt—what a pageant of life and glory and colour is woven into the Westminster tapestry.

So the new members of the new Parliament come crowding in to play their part in history. They are the great

men now. Perhaps it is not so easy to believe it at first. Many of them feel like Bonar Law who, when he became Prime Minister, remarked to a friend, "If I am a great man, then all great men are frauds."

It was a moving sight to see the new Parliament, the first Labour working majority in British political history, assembling at Westminster. Simple people most of them were, excited at a great adventure with wives and children tagging along behind them. There was a zest and comradeship about them, almost like the early days of the I.L.P. which Mr. Attlee has described in these terms, "Its active members brought to their task an apostolic enthusiasm. It had something of the quality of a religious body." They were so different from some of the plump, spruce, pickled, blasé and hardened bunch which could be found among those who sat in the place from 1935 to 1945, men of all parties with the same hard look in their eyes.

What brings men and women to Westminster? Disraeli, that disgraceful, delightful old cynic, once enraged an elderly political opponent by tapping him on the shoulder in the lobby and remarking, "You and I know what brings us both here—ambition."

It is true, I think, that personal ambition plays a part in setting many to climb the slippery slopes of a political career. But the big majority of new M.P.s, men of all parties, have a genuine and heartfelt longing to benefit their fellow men.

Alas, not all of them emerge from their first spell of Parliament with their illusions unscarred and intact. So many

have a picture of themselves standing before a packed and cheering House making speeches which shake the social fabric of the nation. Outside the evening newspapers are selling special editions with the latest sentences of the speech in the Stop Press column, and a crowd of citizens waits patiently in the roadway for a chance to show appreciation to the great man as he drives away from Westminster.

But it is not like that for everybody.

There are 640 M.P.s. In a big debate perhaps forty speeches are made. Of these, at least fifteen are reserved for the Government and Opposition leaders and spokesmen. That leaves twenty-five speeches to be divided between 625 Members of Parliament, all eager to catch the Speaker's eye. When an M.P. does get a chance to speak, often it is to row upon row of empty benches. Seldom do more than forty or fifty members listen to any but the big guns of the Parliamentary debates.

It has been said that a soldier's life is nine-tenths boredom and one-tenth fear. But there is not even the one-tenth fear to spice the existence of the average back-bencher. He has to spend hours and weeks of time sitting in the smoke-room waiting for the division bells to ring. He may seem the big shot to his constituents—he is just one more vote to his party Whips.

Everyone knows that the hardest time to maintain morale is when there is nothing to do but wait. Politics at Westminster is a waiting game. That is why being a Member of Parliament is such a test of a man's morale.

And the morale of Britain, the success or failure of the Labour Government, will depend on what the new members do with their time and their lives as they work the months and years away at Westminster.

It is here that a big battle in the war of ideas which settles the fate of nations will be fought out.

What is this war of ideas which men like Herbert Morrison and Quintin Hogg mention in their speeches? Well, a war of arms involves armies. The war of ideas involves faiths.

A war of arms is between nations. The war of ideas runs through nations, with men who talk the same language, live in the same street, even belong to the same family fighting on different sides of it. A war of arms decides what nation shall be the boss, but the war of ideas decides what idea shall boss the nations. Whole territories and nations can be occupied in the war of ideas as in a war of arms. For instance, Hitler won the war of ideas in Germany before he set Germany on the march. He fired the whole of his nation with the idea "My race shall rule" before a shot was fired in the war. And he got people in other nations fighting on his side too.

Similarly other large sections of the world are territories occupied with such ideas as "My class shall rule" or "Money shall rule"—and all these ideas have their allies in Britain to-day, bidding to capture the allegiance of the ordinary man and of the M.P. eagerly waiting to serve his nation at Westminster.

Now democracy's big idea is that "God shall rule in the affairs of men." It is from that idea, none other, that the conception of man's equality and brotherhood springs.

But somehow the fire for that good faith of ours does not always blaze in our hearts as fiercely as the hearts of other men blaze for bad faiths. For in the war of ideas as in a war of arms prisoners can be taken. I know because for years I was a prisoner in the war of ideas myself—and almost without realising it.

This is how it happened. It is a simple story and can be told in simple terms. I was brought up by my parents to have a faith in God—and that faith meant much to me.

When I grew older I found that some of the things I wanted in life were not always the things God wanted me to have. I wanted my own way, but it was not always God's way.

So as God's moral standards, which are absolute and changeless, interfered with my way as I wanted it, I invented a moral code of my own—and it was on a sliding scale as private codes of morals always are.

There were always plenty of folk around to tell me what a good fellow I was and to urge me not to be a spoil-sport. Also I always had at the back of my mind two or three people of whom I thought I could say, "Well, at any rate I'm not as bad as them."

So I was captured by the enemy in the war of ideas. Over things like drink and women, over issues like honesty, purity and unselfishness, I no longer let God have the right of way in my life. Thus though I wrote fierce newspaper articles in praise of democracy I myself quit the only idea which makes democracy possible—God-control which fits men for freedom by helping them to control themselves in the interests of their neighbours.

I was so anxious to make a name for myself and money for myself that I was not too particular how I did it. I knocked my rivals down instead of trying to build them up. I struggled to become a dictator in my own sphere. I seldom said "No" to myself. Thus when policies like appeasement arose and there was a question of when to say "No" to somebody else, my judgment was sometimes confused.

Then I recovered my faith in God. Under His orders I put right what I could put right. I escaped from my prison in the war of ideas.

Now I have never been a Member of Parliament. But I spent seven years of my life as a newspaper man in the corridors and lobbies of Westminster. I can tell you that the methods by which I myself was captured by the enemy in the war of ideas operate there quite freely. There are influences at Westminster which try to make it easy for others to go wrong. For they want to capture Britain with alien ideas—they do not want democracy's big idea of God-control to triumph. They know also that while absolute moral standards produce clear-sighted statesmanship, loose living produces

loose thinking. And they do not want our legislators to think clearly and so see what they are up to.

Once upon a time the private lives of Members of Parliament set a standard for the nation. Indeed it was impossible for a man or woman with a spot on their moral record to hope for nomination as candidate.

If the new M.P.s—and the old—fight and win the war of ideas in their own ranks, they will achieve something which no Parliament of recent years has achieved.

The public life of Britain depends on the private lives of those who run it. That is where victory—or defeat—in the war of ideas begins.

People who believe a change of government by itself will usher in a new age are doomed to disillusionment. Only a change of heart can do it.

For new governments adopt new and often necessary methods of dealing with the symptoms caused by the selfishness of man. But new hearts go to the root—they cure the disease itself.

Britain's future rests on whether she makes *What Is Right* the strongest idea in the world. She will capture the moral leadership of the planet if she succeeds in this task.

And only those M.P.s who make *What Is Right* the dominant idea in their own lives can make it the dominant idea in the life of their community.

CHAPTER TEN

BOBBETY

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Cranborne

For years successive Tory Governments were known as the Hotel Cecil. That was because so many members of the House of Cecil had taken up their abode inside them. And indeed in almost any period of history during the last 500 years a Cecil has been near the head of events.

In the reign of Queen Elizabeth Lord Burghley, the founder of the fortunes of the House of Cecil, tried to trace his family tree but could find no root stretching deeper down in time than the reign of Henry VII. At Hatfield, where the house of the Cecils spreads its beauty and antiquity among the fields of the park, the tree under which Elizabeth sat when told she was the Queen of England still grows, a tough old oak braving the centuries like the family from whose land it springs.

The present representative of the Cecils at the head of public affairs is Viscount Cranborne, who was Secretary of State for the Dominions and Leader of the House of Lords in the Churchill administration. He is the third successive generation of Cecils to lead the House of Lords. His grandfather, the Lord Salisbury who was Prime Minister and

who ended the political career of Winston Churchill's father, Lord Randolph, by "snatching at his resignation from the Chancellorship of the Exchequer as a dog snatches at a bone," predicted that the House of Lords would be abolished after his death. Instead for nearly fifty years his son and grandson have helped to pilot and preserve that institution.

And it plays a most important part in the legislative life of the nation. By and large the speeches of the Lords are far better than those of the Commons. For the men of all parties who warm the seats there are not afraid of losing them. They are in for a life-sentence and so can freely speak their mind. Also many of them have found their own way to the top of affairs and have years of high administrative or executive experience to contribute to the councils of the nation.

Lord Cranborne is fifty-two. He has a sharp countenance and a sharp mind. He is the soul of courtesy and good cheer with a high-pitched laugh which makes you jump if you are not expecting it. His eye and heart are gentle—but his tongue is a sharp blade when he is provoked.

He is a varied orator. Sometimes his hands dart like birds around his body, he leans forward and establishes every point with the most tense emphasis, thrusting his words defiantly before him. At other times he stands almost without gesture and conducts a speech as though it were a conversation.

He went to Eton where he was nicknamed "Bobbety," then on to Oxford where he played tennis well and was full of fun and good spirits, being summoned and fined at the Oxford

City Police Court for playing a polo match with Prince Paul of Serbia on bicycles in the street.

When he was twenty-two he married a daughter of the House of Cavendish whose courage, grace and insight have embellished and adorned his path from that day forward. He served through the Great War in the Bedfordshire Regiment and Grenadier Guards. After this he got a job with a firm of bill-brokers in the City and did well at it. He was known as one of the most cheerful men in the City of London. In that dark place his smile dispelled the gloom and most bankers kept some business for him.

One day somebody bet him he could not within half-an-hour leave his Lombard Street office, run to the top of the Monument's 345 steps and down again, climb to St. Paul's whispering gallery and return to Lombard Street. Lord Cranborne supplemented his income as bill-broker by performing this feat and pocketing the wager.

In politics he speaks his mind. This makes him dear to some and dangerous to others. This sturdy independence of spirit is part of the family tradition of the Cecils where all divergence of views is publicly aired and encouraged. Thus when old Lord Salisbury, the Prime Minister, was presiding over a tenants' supper one of his young children sprang up and said, "I want to make it clear to everybody that I do not share my father's political opinions."

Lord Cranborne, at that time Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, resigned with Mr. Eden from the Chamberlain administration as a protest against the spirit of

over-appeasement which he felt was beginning to dominate our dealings with Hitler and Mussolini.

Lord Cranborne is one of the very few public men today who not only takes an eager interest in Imperial affairs but also has a policy for Empire. Many lack even an economic policy for the British Empire, let alone an ethical and spiritual policy towards it. It may be one of Lord Cranborne's contributions to Britain when in opposition to produce a policy for the British Empire which will appeal to the hearts of the British people.

For after all the British Empire is a fact. It is there. You cannot get over it by debunking it or disapproving of it. It is a vast potential world source of good or of evil, of unity or disunity. It is up to us what we make of it. The British Empire can become a bulwark against the world force of materialism on the march. It will do so if the Mother Country performs the duties of a mother—and one of those duties is to think of her children's welfare and to live selflessly and ceaselessly for her family.

Soon after Mr. Churchill became Prime Minister he wanted Lord Cranborne to become Viceroy of India, but Cranborne had to decline as the doctors felt his health would not stand the climate.

Lord Cranborne is to my mind one of the most interesting figures in British public life today. He is like a fine piece of nineteenth-century horseflesh among the twentieth-century jeeps. He is one of the few survivors of the old aristocratic rulers of this nation. The fact that he and the Cecils survive at

all is the interesting feature in the situation. How do they do it in an age where the privilege of birth and rank is becoming increasingly outmoded and where so many aristocratic families only appear before the public in the gossip columns and the divorce courts?

The aristocracy have to some extent lost their hold on the hearts of the people because rightly or wrongly they have come to represent in the eyes of millions a higher class of privilege but not a higher class of conduct. There was an old phrase "Noblesse oblige." It meant that if you enjoyed special privileges of birth and inheritance you owed special duties to the society which gave them to you. These special duties were duties of moral conduct.

Some say that the British aristocracy has failed to adjust itself to a changing age. The House of Cecil shows this is a false picture. The British aristocracy so long as it retains its tradition of moral and spiritual leadership, which all wise men respect and would like to see restored to the fabric of British society, is equipped for the vicissitudes of any age. Such leadership is always valid currency. It is only when the British aristocracy departs from its best traditions and lowers its standards that it becomes submerged in the changes of an age.

Lord Cranborne believes there is very little difference in political theory between the Right wing of Labour and the Left wing of Toryism. In opposition it may be his task to draw the true battle line within the ranks of his own party. It lies between those who rely merely on the traditions of the past and those who create the traditions for the future,

between those for whom Toryism is a political theory which enables them to cling on to what they have and those for whom it is a faith, a way of life which helps all men to give their best enterprise and service to the nation. Lord Cranborne has said, "The English tradition of ordered progress is like a water-gate that controls that flood and releases it in a steady flow for the service of mankind. We, with one brief exception, have never sought to sweep away our ancient institutions. Our aim has always been to add to them.... We have never destroyed the old strong foundations built by our forefathers. That, I believe, is why we have survived when other nations have crumbled into ruin."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE GHOST THAT WOULD NOT GO WEST

The Rt. Hon. Sir Stafford Cripps

A few days after the Labour party had so decisively beaten Mr. Churchill at the polls I spoke to Sir Stafford Cripps. He said to me, "Some of our people say the battle is not yet over. Why, the real battle has yet to begin." He added, "A lot of my friends are afraid the Labour Government is going to move too far to the Left. In my opinion the risk is that we shall not move far enough in that direction."

I suppose that Sir Stafford meant that a party which wins an election on a policy, and then runs away from it, risks being accused of caring more for power than for the policy.

Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade, is the Ghost that would not go West. He is the corpse that refused to lie down. In the dim, distant, dreamy days of 1939 the Labour Party expelled him because as a member of their National Executive he circularised local Labour parties trying to convert them to his way of thinking. Many said that was the political death-knell for Sir Stafford. But he refused to be buried. Like Felix the Cat he just kept on walking.

He went on a tour around the world and in a three-hour talk with Molotov told him exactly what the common people of many lands felt about the Soviet attack on Finland. Within a short time the Soviet Government asked for mediation to end that war.

Then he was appointed British Ambassador in Moscow. Some say Cripps' Moscow mission came a cropper. Those who say that are his enemies. Others say that at Moscow Sir Stafford reaped a crop. Those who say that are his friends. I imagine the truth is that with the distrust, suspicion and hostility which at that period filled the air in Anglo-Soviet relationships no British Ambassador could have emerged unscathed. It needed events rather than men to influence the minds of Moscow. Be that as it may, it was during Cripps' mission in Moscow that Russia went to war.

Some months after Hitler invaded Russia Cripps was recalled to Britain. Public opinion flung him towards the

pinnacle of power. He was included in the War Cabinet as Leader of the House of Commons. It is the first time for over a century that a man without a political party has led the House of Commons.

Was Cripps a success as Leader of the House? The answer must be a shake rather than a nod of the head. On this Cripps' friends as well as enemies are agreed, though the friends are glum about it and his enemies gleeful. The House of Commons has that quality which sometimes it regrets to observe in the public. It hates being told what to do. Cripps told it.

Sir Stafford then went to India to settle the problems of that vast sub-continent. Like the dove from Noah's ark he flew across the waters and, like the dove on its first flight, returned with an empty beak. But in India Sir Stafford did a brave thing. After deadlock had been reached it was suggested to him by a journalist at a press conference that if he alone had planned the proposals they would have been more acceptable to the races of India. It would have been easy for Sir Stafford to let it be assumed that opposing political interests in the British Cabinet had tied his hands. Instead he frankly declared that if he alone had had the planning of the proposals he took to India they would have been in every broad detail the same.

In November 1942 he was appointed Minister of Aircraft Production.

He held that job until the break-up of the Coalition Government. It is said that Lord Beaverbrook did all the hard

work at the Ministry of Aircraft Production before Sir Stafford inherited his throne. The suggestion is that of Lord Beaverbrook's labour Sir Stafford reaped the gain. If this be so it shows considerable ability and astuteness on the part of Sir Stafford. Few men in British public life can claim to have had such a rich association with Lord Beaverbrook. In any event, since Sir Stafford went to the Ministry of Aircraft Production, though he has not enjoyed much limelight, his political progress has been sure. For with the aircraft he produced he did something more than kill the Nazis so dangerous to us all. He also killed a legend most dangerous to himself. The legend was that Cripps was an ineffective intellectual, slick in his theories but unable to carry the burden of administrative responsibility on a national scale. Yet, whoever may have laid the foundation, Cripps successfully administered a key department during the most critical years of British history.

What manner of man is Cripps? He is lean, long and aloof. He scans life through quarter-moon rimless spectacles which follow the arch of his eyebrows. I saw him poised before the traffic on a Fleet Street pavement at the start of this war, like a heron before a flood.

I said to him, "You will have busy days at the Bar now, Sir Stafford." He replied, "I don't think it is my job to carry on my profession. I'd rather do something to help win the war." So of his own accord he gave up a legal practice which was estimated to bring him in £30,000 a year. Even before war broke out he gave away the bulk of his earned income. He would budget with his wife for family needs, children's education, housekeeping, travel. The rest was anonymously

given for political and other purposes in which he and his wife were interested.

He does not drink. Offer him vintage port, dry wines of Rhine or Moselle, the old ale of England or the yellow spirit of the North, and he will say with a charming smile, "Do you mind if I take water?"

When he first entered Parliament in 1931 he saw the effect drink had on some of our public men. So he cut alcohol out of his life. Once he broke this rule with a draught of sweet champagne. It was in 1941. Then he clinked glasses with Stalin and Molotov in Moscow to celebrate the signing of the Anglo-Russian treaty.

Smoking? He puffs a cigarette, as Roosevelt did. He draws a cigar, like Churchill. He used to smoke a cherrywood pipe, like Stalin. But he has given up the pipe now except for an occasional suck at it. Yet when I refused the smoke he offered me he wistfully exclaimed, "You lucky man."

He springs from the soil. He comes of yeoman stock. His ancestors had their roots in the West Country.

He is the ninth member of his family in four generations to be elected to the House of Commons. His father, three uncles, a great-uncle, two great-grandfathers and his great-great-grandfather sat in that citadel before him.

His father was given a seat by the Conservatives, a title by the Liberals and office by the Socialists. At a by-election in Wycombe just before the last war Sir Stafford was helping

his father to win the seat in the Tory interests. Into the committee rooms walked a lovely girl, Isobel Swithinbank, grand-daughter of Mr. J. C. Eno, the founder of Eno's Fruit Salts.

Hoping to win votes for the father, she instantly captured the vote of the son. They married one year later and the Isobel Swithinbank of yesterday is the Lady Cripps of today. They have four grown-up children.

The two Crippses live in a two-room apartment in London. They prepare their own meals and wash their own dishes. Since 1935 they have eaten little except raw vegetables and fruit, salads, milk and cheese, with an occasional boiled egg or potato as a treat. Sir Stafford picked up a bug in France where he was driving a lorry at the beginning of the last war. For years he suffered from intense pain. Then a friend discovered a diet in Tahiti which he persuaded Cripps to try. Cripps benefited. He is still on it. Lady Cripps at first ate the diet with her husband to keep him company but nowadays because she has come to enjoy it.

Sir Stafford also plunges his body into a cold bath daily. Summer and winter, tropics or arctic, it is all the same to him. He did it in Russia at the height of a Moscow winter.

He loves dogs. In Moscow he bought an airedale and called it Joe. Lady Cripps ended a cable from England "Greetings to Joe." Then, thinking of the possible political interpretation which might be put on this by the censorship, she altered the phrase "Greetings to Joe airedale."

Sir Stafford is interested in wild flowers just as Lord Baldwin was a connoisseur of pigs, and Mr. Chamberlain studied the habits of trout and wild birds. Also, as Mr. Churchill is a first-rate bricklayer, so the President of the Board of Trade is a front-rank carpenter. He once made a glider. It glode—or whatever gliders do—but, alas, disintegrated on landing. He also fashioned a hand-loom and then wove scarves for his children upon it.

He has a wide business experience. In youth he set up a tea-shop and sold tea at sixpence a head to his father's guests at Parmoor. He has also been a newspaper proprietor. He was for five years in sole charge of the business side of the *South Bucks Standard*, locally known as Cripps' Chronicle, and it flourished under him. He directed a pottery works run by disabled men at Ashtead until the industrial slump closed it down. During the last war he was working in charge of several thousand people at the largest high-explosive factory in the British Empire. He was concerned with the growth of this vast undertaking from the moment the first sod of turf was cut. Cripps has the face of an ascetic and the hands of a mechanic, strong, blunt, yet strangely sensitive. In fact he is a scientist of ability. He was offered a chemistry scholarship at Oxford University. But his examination papers showed such a degree of brilliance that Sir William Ramsay, the famous chemist, asked him to study with him at London University and Cripps went there.

He is fifty-six, young for a man of his position and prestige. He takes immense pains over his public speeches. He writes them out, has them before him on small double-spaced typesheets, and uses them as full notes to his

speeches. Not long ago he delivered thirteen speeches in thirty-six hours. Yet he suffers from orator's nerves. His knees knock before his mouth opens.

He has been called a political innocent. Well, in an age where Guilty Men abound, Innocents are rare. They shine like good deeds in a naughty world. Sir Stafford's innocence consists in believing the faith which others of his party profess.

Once I asked him what he thought was the main need for the post-war age. He made a surprising answer. "I think our first need is to establish moral principle in politics. We need fixed and absolute standards of right and wrong, accepted by all, against which every political action can be measured."

I asked whether he thought this moral principle of right and wrong should apply to international as well as internal policy. Cripps replied "Yes."

Somebody once remarked that Christ was safe so long as you kept Him locked up inside churches. It was when you let Him out into the world that He became dangerous. Sir Stafford is one of those uncomfortable people who believe Christianity is "do" as well as "talk." He debunks the easy theory that it is possible to couple high ideals with low living. He says, "We cannot be Christians in international politics unless we are also Christians in our more intimate and personal relationships and above all in our relationship to God. Do not let us lecture others on how they should behave because none of us have yet learned to be wholly Christian ourselves."

Sir Stafford even goes so far as to think, in an age when avowed agnostics and materialists sit in high places of the State, that Christianity should find its way on to the statute book. "Sell all you have and give to the poor," but if you find this hard and it is in the national interest for you to do so, a little drastic legislation may be an encouragement.

I asked Sir Stafford whether he was in favour of the use of any measure of force to establish Socialism. He said, "Emphatically no—and I never have been." I then enquired what is his positive answer to the Marxist philosophy which creeps forward within the ranks of Labour. He replied, "Well, the short answer to Marxism is that Marx was wrong. For one thing a vast new class, the middle class, has been created since he wrote *Das Kapital*."

Here let it be said that this answer underlines the greatest weakness Sir Stafford Cripps has as a politician. He thinks it is adequate to demonstrate with cold logic that he is right and that other people are wrong. Not so. When somebody tells me I am wrong it tends to make me mad, not different. Cripps has yet to learn that it is possible to win your argument and lose your man.

Sir Stafford lacks practice in spotting wolves lurking under lambskins. He sometimes forgets that there is a war on—a fight to the death between the forces of selfishness who are out for control and use political manoeuvre as a tactical weapon, and the militant force of a new spirit at work in men and nations.

Yet Sir Stafford Cripps has special qualities that should enable him better than most of his colleagues in the cabinet to appreciate and grasp this struggle. His knowledge of the Bible and his own Christian experience could give him accurate diagnosis of men and motives and illumine much that is obscure in the contemporary scene. He could have the fighting faith to enlist the statesman and the ordinary man, whatever his political convictions may be, on the right side of the moral battle line. For the impact of mind on mind and life on life is the very thing that is needed to bring Sir Stafford's dreams for a new world into practical effect.

Those who know him best declare that recently the ingredients of the Cripps character are altering. The ice melts, say they, the fire of secret convictions develops a quality at which the world can warm its heart. I am told that this statesman who refuses to accept human nature as something immovable but believes that its basic destiny is advance and change, himself is changing.

If so, it will be a change into something rich and strange. It may make history. For Cripps is a man of destiny. He is one of the few men who could give this nation the sustained, disinterested and inspired statesmanship which alone will float us through the hurricanes of peace. Mere optimistic bluff which we are offered in such abundance will never do it.

Cripps has ambition, but I should say he is not entirely gripped by it. His personal future means less to him than the future of the nation. From that very fact he is bound to impact events, whatever his personal fortunes prove to be.

CHAPTER TWELVE

DIAMONDS IN THE DESERT

The Hon. Quintin Hogg
Mr. Hugh Molson
Mr. Peter Thorneycroft
Viscount Hinchingbrooke

The ostrich, when it has received a blow on the head, instantly buries that organ in the sand and foolishly waits until it receives an additional crack on another more convenient portion of its anatomy.

Contrariwise the formidable pelican, when it has been caught napping in the sunshine by an enemy, opens both eyes widely and rapidly scuttles to a new position or even takes to its wings and is airborne in order if possible to avoid another beat on the bonnet.

One of the most fascinating aspects of British public life right now is the sight of the Tory Party making up its mind whether it will behave in defeat like the ostrich or the pelican.

There is a considerable school of thought in the Tory ranks which believes in something called the swing of the pendulum.

The best expression of this idea which I have seen appeared in the *Review of World Affairs* which says, "The landslide which has now occurred may turn out for the best in the end. In due course the great law of reaction will once again operate and will sweep some national front party back to power, probably at a time when it will be much easier to govern than it will be during the next two or three years."

This beautiful thought presupposes that the famous pendulum has reached the limit of its Leftward swing. But supposing it has not? Supposing the vote for Labour at the last election represented a resolve that never, never, never again were the people of Britain minded to choose the theories which Toryism over the last twenty-five years has presented to the nation?

In that case, if disillusionment with Labour sets in and the Tory Party does nothing to change its ways but only waits for fate to return it to power, the people may move yet further Left where a militant philosophy of life is ceaselessly being propounded for them.

The Tories need a new programme if they are to survive. It will come by change, not by chance. That is where the Young Tories can play their part in the future of Britain.

Did you ever hear tell of them? They are without doubt a most interesting feature of public life today. They are the sparking-plug of Conservatism. They shine out like diamonds in the desert. At present they number approximately forty seats on the Opposition side of the new

Parliament. Some of the ablest men who represent the Conservative interest at Westminster are among them.

This crowd came together in February, 1943. They believe that Conservatism should represent a new philosophy of national change, unity and progress, not a mere hunger for "the good old days" and a desire to attack the Socialists. They think that the spirit of the Eighth Army, of fellowship, teamwork and shared sacrifice for a great cause which rose above party, class and creed can be carried by Britain into the peace years, and indeed must be so if we are to survive as a prosperous and powerful nation.

The Young Tories have something in common with the Fourth Party which raised Lord Randolph Churchill, the father of our former Prime Minister, to glory and greatness. The Fourth Party sat together, supported each other in debate, and always defended each other with bite and barb if one of their number were attacked. They provided much the most effective opposition to Mr. Gladstone in his heyday of prestige, just as through the war years the Young Tories were more effective than the official Socialist Opposition on the occasions when they opposed the Churchill Government.

The Fourth Party used to play on Mr. Gladstone's vanity. One would rise and thank the Right Honourable Gentleman for his most able and remarkable speech. But there was one part which no doubt through his own stupidity was not yet plain to him. Would Mr. Gladstone please explain it?

Mr. Gladstone, much pleased by the courtesy of his young political opponent, would rise and reply at great length.

Then another member of the Fourth Party would demand enlightenment on some further point. And though his own Whips plucked at his coat-tails and begged him not to be lured by those rascals, the Grand Old Man would once more stand up and make a sonorous and prolonged discourse. So again and again the Fourth Party induced Gladstone to talk so much that there was no Parliamentary time left to vote on legislation which he had planned and which they detested.

In this day and age the Young Tories have made themselves masters of Parliamentary manoeuvre and exploit each political situation to the utmost with real insight and finesse.

They have much in common also with the young crowd of Tories which Disraeli gathered around him on his road to power. For though not agreeing with each other on every detail of a political programme they have deep personal loyalty. They are capable of kindling and holding affection in others.

Thus Disraeli captured the imagination of Lord Charles Bentinck, a man whose passion was horse-racing, who appeared at the House of Commons late at night in muddy riding clothes and who had never made a speech in Parliament. Bentinck was so stirred by Disraeli's vision of what a public man could do for his country that he sold all his racehorses, risked his popularity in London society by defending the Jews who at that time were under fire, and worked so hard studying blueprints and making speeches that within a few years he dropped dead from exhaustion in a field of turnips.

Bentinck became sleepy after eating. He decided that he would eat nothing at all until late evening so as to stay awake during the debates in Parliament.

And while I do not believe any of the latter-day Young Tories have taken such extreme decisions, they do bring to public life a genuine enthusiasm which has been uncommon, at any rate on the Tory back benches, for some years.

Incidentally it is worth remembering that both the Fourth Party and Disraeli's Young England group made their first and biggest impact in opposition.

One of the liveliest of today's Young Tories is the Hon. Quintin Hogg, M.P. for Oxford City, thirty-eight years old, and with one of the swiftest brains and sharpest tongues in Britain. He fought against Hitler and was wounded.

When he was appointed Under-Secretary for Air in the Caretaker Government he remarked with much glee to his friends, "It is wonderful at the Air Ministry. For the first time in my life, when I press a bell, something happens."

Quintin has the face and heart of a boy. He is untidy and irrepressible. He is a most lovable companion. He delights to mount on a bicycle, put his hands in his pockets, and pedal along like an errand boy, whistling blithely. He rejoices in the simple things of life like food, hard work in the open air, and the love of friends. He rolls up his sleeves and helps his beautiful wife with the cooking and housework.

And yet with all these amiable qualities, it would be idle to pretend that Quintin is universally beloved. He has a temper which he has not fully mastered, and a wit like a rapier at which he himself laughs immoderately while the victim withers. He is an up-and-down fellow. One day he bubbles like champagne. The next he is flat as a pancake. He has days and hours of glory alternating with hours and days of gloom. I have noticed that the things about which he becomes most indignant are not always those about which in his heart he feels most deeply. His approach to most political problems is penetrating, vivid, but intellectual.

His intellect is, I fancy, a shield which he uses to protect his heart from hurt. It hurts less to expose your mind than to expose your feelings to the world. Yet millions will be moved by heart-appeal who are left cold by an appeal to mere reason.

If Quintin gives his heart to the world and fights sustainedly and publicly for the highest things he has seen, he will become one of the mightiest revolutionary forces in this generation.

Chairman of the Young Tories is Arthur Hugh Elsdale Molson, Member for the High Peak division of Derbyshire. He is forty-two and unmarried.

His father was a soldier and he was destined to be a sailor, but after studying at the Royal Naval Colleges of Osborne and Dartmouth, changed his mind and went to Lancing and New College, Oxford, instead.

At Oxford he became known as "Hot Lunch Molson" because whenever his friends were eating a snack of bread and cheese about midday Molson would excuse himself with the remark, "I can't do without my hot lunch."

One of Molson's relatives put the first steamboat on the St. Lawrence river. Another developed our export trade by introducing the Canadians to British beer. He has travelled the world, descending coal mines in South Wales and India, silver mines in Burma and gold mines in South Africa. To crown his adventures a land mine fell not far from him during Hitler's blitz on Britain.

So unlike the average run of Tories is he that the *Daily Mirror* once lauded him for his "keen social conscience"—and who should be a better judge of such matters than the *Daily Mirror*?

Molson is a fighter. When as a Parliamentary candidate he made some speeches critical of the administration, Tory officials in his division endeavoured to raise a revolt against him. Molson called a full meeting of his association, insisted on a vote of confidence in his political activities which was carried by 255 to 68 and then made the revolutionaries apologise for their commotion.

Another Young Tory is Peter Thorneycroft, aged thirty-five. He was in for Stafford. Now he is out on his ear. But he will surely be in again. His future is all before him. And he will be active in preparing Tory policy for the next election. He is a glittering bird of paradise, in the direct line of the tradition established by the late and great Lord Birkenhead,

faultlessly turned out, suave, colourful and dangerous to his enemies. He served with the Royal Artillery during the war.

He is a beagler. When he takes time off from politics he girds himself in short trousers and stout shoes and hunts the hares across the arable land with little dogs (hounds to you, sir) called beagles.

He carries a sharp sword with which he means to carve out some golden, glittering prizes from life, and also a razor with which to slit the soft white throats of his opponents.

He sips a wine with the air of a connoisseur. He comes from a long line of blacksmiths, the Midland ironmasters who have contributed so much to the wealth and power of Britain in this industrial and warring age.

Thorneycroft is sure to rise to the head of affairs. He is doomed to success. And doomed is the word because his temptation is to make personal success his main objective. In the long run this is ever a source of weakness for a man or nation.

Like some other Young Tories he has a public school shyness concealed behind his man-of-the-world assurance.

Yet if he found a living, fighting faith which made him constantly seek larger than his own, his qualities could swiftly set the nation on fire.

My last Young Tory is Lord Hinchingbrooke, thirty-nine years old, M.P. for South Dorset, heir to the Earl of Sandwich and in some ways the most remarkable of the bunch. He is

tall, quiet and extremely good-looking. He thinks before he speaks and he knows how to listen. These are rare virtues in public life today. He served in France in 1940.

Beneath an aristocratic and somewhat frigid exterior there beats a heart which loves humanity and is ready to fight for it too. You feel as you talk with Hinchingbrooke that public life for him is service not gain. He is of the quality and tradition of the great aristocratic reformers like Wilberforce and Shaftesbury.

If he learns to articulate in words and ways which the ordinary fellow can understand the ideals which mean most to him, he will live in history.

Lord Hinchingbrooke said to me, "The Conservative Party should stand not for the betterment of one section of the nation at the expense of another, but for the whole nation. It should offer a marching philosophy and faith, based on moral principles, which makes all men fit for freedom. The test of democratic statesmanship is to draw the best out of people and help all men to give more voluntarily for their country than they would give under any system of compulsion. Universal state control simply means the failure of policy—you expect the worst from people, have never taught them to give to the state instead of get from it and so have to enforce patriotic action upon them. In the immediate future we should trust the people—give them as much freedom as possible. But stern controls should be applied to any section of the community which by its selfish or foolish attitude risks the welfare of the whole."

Now am I, Peter Howard, a Young Tory? Alas, I am not so young as I used to be. As for my relationship with the Tory Party, it is very much the same in terms of affiliation and practice as Lord Beaverbrook's relationship with the Scottish Presbyterian Church.

But this thing I know. The Tories must develop a new philosophy, or die. The country is unlikely to swing back that way unless it senses change.

The Young Tories can provide dynamic to the whole Conservative cause. First of all they need a love and understanding of the ordinary man. For good or ill, Labour has succeeded in convincing the ordinary fellow in the street that Labour loves him. Have the Tories done this? When you talk with some Young Tories sometimes you have the sense that for them in their politics men sometimes cease to become men, creatures of blood, bones and feelings, brothers under God, but develop into figures in a ledger, ciphers in a plan or mere potential voters at an election.

Second, the Young Tories can provide their party with the flame of a moral purpose. This at present the Tories lack. There is more talk of political principle than of moral principle in their counsels. The difference between moral and political principles is this—moral principles do not alter; political principles are often shifting and degenerate to political expediency. That is why so many folk distrust Toryism today.

The Labour Party stands for work, houses, food. Yes. But man cannot live by bread alone. He needs that extra incentive

to satisfy his hunger for great living, to turn his heart from Get to Give.

The Tories will develop the historic heritage of Britain and her contribution to the world if they now decide to live this truth themselves and make it available for all the people.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

GENTLEMEN AND PLAYERS

The Rt. Hon. Hugh Dalton
The Rt. Hon. Arthur Greenwood

A week or two before the 1945 election results were announced I met a tall, stooping figure strolling in slow and melancholy fashion in the shadow of the houses along the pavement of a London street. His nose drooped upon his chin and his chin rested upon his chest. He appeared the embodiment of grief and woe.

It was the Right Honourable Hugh Dalton. "Who has won the election?" says I. "Churchill, I'm afraid," says he. "He will get a majority of seventy or eighty seats. Of course, Labour will win next time—and we'd have done so now if it had not been for the old man's personality." (By "old man" he meant that eternal and boyish, even schoolboyish spirit Winston Churchill.)

Two days after the results of the election were known and Churchill had resigned I met Dalton again. He certainly looked different. His chest, chin, nose and heart were high. Those curious attractive pale blue eyes of his were sparkling with fight. He briskly crossed the street in the sunshine with the large sombreroesque headgear that he fancies set at a cocky angle on his domed skull. The news of his appointment as Chancellor of the Exchequer had been published that morning in the Press.

"Well, my friend," says he, "amazing things have happened since last we met. The people have unmistakably told us what they want—and we must give it them."

"That is so," says I, "and you have a tremendous job on your hands."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer then spoke with a simple and deep humility which touched my heart. "We need everybody's help now," said Hugh Dalton. "All people of good will of every class and every party will have to help us if we are to do what we have been trusted to do."

This appeal to the whole nation, not one section of it, is typical of the sound heart of Labour. For the best elements in the ranks of Labour, though they do not all see how to beat the class-war boys, recognise that we cannot establish a classless society by declaring a war of extermination by one class on another. They know that the right way to unity is by enlisting men of every class and background in a crusade for a common cause.

Typical of this conception is the team Labour has picked to work together over the building of houses for the people. Two of these men are Dalton and Greenwood.

Dalton will be called upon to provide the money from the Treasury. Greenwood, as Lord Privy Seal, will supervise the bricks and mortar, the man power, brain power and will power necessary to launch the biggest construction programme any nation so far has undertaken in this sphere.

From what different backgrounds these two men spring, and what contradictory and complementary talents they bring to their task.

Dalton is sprung from the Church, Greenwood from the Chapel.

Dalton was born in Wales and nurtured in the South, Greenwood leapt from the rugged womb of Yorkshire.

Dalton's father was Canon of Windsor and helped to educate Queen Victoria's children. Greenwood's father was a painter and decorator—the boy himself rose in the world to get one of his first jobs teaching at different Yorkshire elementary and secondary schools. When Dalton was enjoying a youth of purple Greenwood was tramping from workhouse to workhouse, disguised as an ordinary casual, investigating the workings of the Poor Law.

One of Dalton's earliest recollections is of an elderly lady patting him on the head and offering him grapes. It was Queen Victoria. "Will you have *more*?" she said in tones of

some astonishment. "Yes, Queen," boomed the small boy in that loud, echoing tone which he carries with him to this day. "That child has a voice exactly like his father," remarked Queen Victoria with some asperity to her lady-in-waiting. She sat under Dalton senior in the Windsor Chapel for prayers.

Greenwood too has hobnobbed with Royalty. He was friendly with the Duke of Windsor at the time when that nobleman was Prince of Wales, and used to share breakfast on trains with him when one was going about his political business and the other on his way to hunt with some pack in the shires.

Incidentally, it is quite a legend that members of the Labour Party dislike Royalty. On the contrary, most of them are the loyalest of the King's subjects. And they value their touches with the Royal household. Why, we might never have had the *Queen Mary* built at all had not David Kirkwood buttonholed the Prince of Wales in the cloak-room of Lady Astor's London house and urged him to interest himself in the project for the sake of the then unemployed ship-yard workers of Clydeside.

Both Dalton and Greenwood are men of exceptional intellectual attainment. Greenwood has a phenomenal memory—European history, economics, social legislation and a mass of statistics on most subjects under the sun. Dalton was educated at Eton and Cambridge, won prizes for his research work, was called to the Bar and became a lecturer at the London School of Economics after serving throughout the last war on the French and Italian fronts.

Dalton is mostly abstemious but puffs at a pipe. Greenwood smokes cigarettes.

Greenwood finds it difficult to say "No" to himself—and to others. Dalton finds it harder to say "Yes" to anybody.

Dalton has had to put up with a measure of suspicion in the Labour movement on account of his aristocratic background. This makes him cautious and calculating. At one trade union conference, when I was reporting the affair for Lord Beaverbrook and was therefore looked upon askance by some of the delegates, Dalton said to me quite seriously, "Yes—I think I am sure enough of myself to be seen around with you now." He is so wary that he tends to be over-anxious.

Greenwood on the other hand is so open-hearted that he is sometimes not cautious enough. He has a spirit wide open to a world which sometimes takes an unfair advantage of it. Many a time and oft I have seen him sitting round a table singing songs and swapping stories with newspaper men who were out to harm him if they could.

Both are men of courage. Neither is scared of hitting a political enemy when he is standing up and I do not believe either would desert a friend when he was down. Greenwood, I know, though by no means a rich man, has opened his purse again and again to those fallen on evil days.

Dalton moves slowly and deliberately on his way. Only his eyes roll from side to side scanning the passers-by as he advances. Greenwood strides rapidly ahead, thrusting his

head this way and that and shouting to his friends. He used to run up the steps of the Ministry of Health so briskly when he was in office there during the last Labour Government that the staff of the place nicknamed him "Sunny Jim."

Both are men of considerable administrative experience. Dalton held posts at the Ministry of Economic Warfare and the Board of Trade throughout the Churchill administration. In a sense Greenwood can claim the parentage of the Beveridge plan. Way back in the first World War he lectured on social problems covering housing, industrial movements, insurance and so on. These lectures were the basis of his reports to the Labour and Capital Committee of Reconstruction. For twenty years they lay under dust-sheets in a Government office. Then when Churchill asked him to become Minister of Reconstruction Greenwood called in Sir William Beveridge and asked him to make what use he could of these old reports. So the Beveridge plan was born.

Dalton is a first-rate parliamentary orator but not always so much at ease with a large working-class audience. Greenwood with homely word and blunt phrase goes straight to the heart of the masses. In Parliament he sometimes stumbles and falters, though the finest speech of his life was made in Parliament on the eve of the war against Hitler when both sides of the House cried "Speak for England"—and from that strong, deep Yorkshire heart Greenwood did.

The two men hold in common a loyalty to Attlee, their chief. At one time or another both have been spoken of as potential leaders of the Labour party. It would have been easy for either of them, and especially for Greenwood during

certain periods of the recent past, to have manoeuvred a forward path for themselves.

Neither has done this. They have been loyal to Attlee in public. What is even more important, they have been loyal to him in private also. They have backed him through the tempest and they back him still. Not all the men at the top of Labour can make this claim.

Now these two men, from different backgrounds, of different tastes, inclinations and temperaments, yes, of different classes, work together unitedly in a common cause. Both are gentlemen in the best sense of that term and both are players.

Now they can integrate a new conception into the public life of Britain. That is the conception that the secret of great living is not to push your own claims all the time but to live to make the other fellow great.

Greenwood and Dalton, the first nurtured in the Wesleyan Chapel where so much of the true spirit of Labour was born, the second cherished in his childhood by the Church which has fitted many of England's noblest sons for leadership, can themselves set the pace for the whole community to return to the strong, simple truths of selfless citizenship they learned at the knees of their mothers.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

BRITAIN'S BROWN-EYED BOY

The Rt. Hon. Sir David Maxwell Fyfe

His irises are a delicate shade of vandyke brown. But he is the blue-eyed boy just the same.

After the Labour avalanche swept into Westminster I made an enquiry at Palace Chambers, the headquarters where the Tory organisers sat scratching their heads and licking their wounds.

"Who are your young hopefuls now?" says I. "*Definitely* Sir David Maxwell Fyfe for one," says they.

Sir David is Tory M.P. for the West Derby division of Liverpool. He is forty-five. At that early age he has been His Majesty's Solicitor General and His Majesty's Attorney General too.

He has Napoleon's sallow complexion, penetrating gaze and burly figure. If he were not so distinguished a gentleman you could accurately describe him as plump. He has an uncanny memory. Not long ago somebody asked him at dinner about an obscure legal point. Without a second's hesitation he reeled forth the reference in Halsbury's *Laws of England* including details of the volume, page, footnote and sub-section. The walls of his London dining-room are lined with books and, unlike most folk who own hundreds of

volumes, he has read and remembers almost all of them. By way of relaxation he devours one shocker each week.

He takes a large size in hats but he is not too big for his boots. He is a simple man. Last time I dined at his home he said to me, his face beaming with delight, "We have managed to find somebody to wash up for us tonight, so we can have a holiday."

His story is the age-old romance of the poor boy who makes good. He is a Scot. His father was an inspector of schools who wrote books and poetry. His mother was a Campbell of Sutherland. They spoke eight languages between them.

Young David was educated at the famous George Watson's College of Edinburgh. It was founded over 200 years ago for the children of Decayed Merchants and for the sons of Ministers of the Gospel, though under which head David Maxwell Fyfe comes it is hard to say.

He was just old enough to serve the last year of the 1914-1918 war in the Scots Guards. Then he went up to Balliol College, Oxford. It is typical of the man that at a time when the fashion was for all intellectuals to be Red or Pink he became a True Blue Tory—Treasurer of the Union and of the Oxford Carlton Club.

He was called to the Bar. He had no money at all. He asked a High Court judge for advice. The judge said, "Go West, young man. Or rather, go North-West. London is not the place for people who are in a hurry."

So Maxwell Fyfe took the train to Liverpool. It was a brave decision. He knew nobody there and had no local connection. By the age of thirty-four he became a King's Counsel. He is formidable in cross-examination. Cold as ice and with a mind like a Spitfire, he extracts truth relentlessly from the most reluctant witnesses. He prepares his cross-examinations with meticulous care before he gets to court and seldom asks a question without knowing what the answer will be.

By way of contrast, he does not spend much time on concocting his political speeches, unless he has to make some official pronouncement of Government policy. In this he differs from men like Gladstone who used to spend hours on a sofa "wombling" his big speeches over inside him.

Fyfe is a family man. Nineteen years ago he married Sylvia Harrison of Liverpool. Her brother is Rex Harrison, the actor. She couples beauty with great-heartedness, intuition with commonsense. She is a remarkable woman who plays a part in each stage of her husband's advance to greatness. Wives have often been an immense reinforcement to successful statesmen.

Lady Fyfe takes her husband to his work each day and fetches him home again each night. She cooks and darns and mends for him. She buys his clothes and has great difficulty in persuading him to discard his old ones. "He is an immense worker," she said to me. "Once, when the blitz was on, bombs fell all round our home. I got frightened and went in to the room where he was working. He said to me, 'My dear,

this is a most interesting point. Come and see if you can help me with it.' He had not noticed the bombs at all."

The criminal who has been transfixed in the witness box by the cold rapier of Fyfe's mind, the politician who has been bowled out by the accuracy of his reply might be surprised if they visited his home that same evening to find the Member for West Derby on his hands and knees under the dining-room table making animal noises at his youngest child. Three daughters have been born to the Fyfes.

Home life means much to him. Indeed, he is one of the few men in public life today who are convinced that it is a priority need for Britain that as much thought and energetic action be now given to rebuilding the home life of Britain as to rebuilding the houses which the bombs have knocked down. "Homes are the assembly line of national character," he says. "They are the cement of nations. When homes crack, nations crack. A citizen who learns to be unselfish in his home will be a selfless, patriotic unit in the nation."

He is engaged in writing a life of Spencer Perceval, the Unknown Premier of Britain. Perceval held office from 1807 to 1812, the years when Britain turned the corner in the Napoleonic wars, and then was murdered by a lunatic in the lobby of the House of Commons. He was a respectable family man with thirteen children. "Perceval was a real organiser of victory in the Napoleonic war," Sir David tells me, "but because he lacked the vices of Fox he did not get the attention he deserved from the publicists of his age."

It is worth while remarking that Spencer Perceval's first job in the Government was that of Solicitor General, six years before he became Prime Minister.

Sir David Maxwell Fyfe has a wide knowledge of policy. He is Chairman of the Conservative Party Central Committee on post-war problems. The investigations of this committee include education, agriculture, industry, housing and demobilisation.

He is a Tory by conviction and yet he is by no means an implacable party man. From his own experience he has a profound desire for brains and character rather than birth and privilege to be the key to positions of power. "An open road for the best brains," he once described as an objective of social policy. "I believe in getting seventy-five per cent. of what I want with the consent of eighty-five per cent. of Parliament, rather than fighting everybody because they won't yield everything that I want," he tells me.

He is an optimist for the future. "I do not consider that post-war slump and depression is inevitable," he says to me. "We can avoid it. But whether we do so or not depends as much on the people as on the politicians. I know this is an unpopular thing to say, but just the same it's true. We can make the best plans in the world, and we are trying to do so, but it takes people to operate plans. The years immediately after the war will be difficult years. Sacrifices will still be necessary. If everybody is on the 'get' every plan will fail. But if we all decide to continue to give our best to the nation in peace as in war then we shall win the peace as well as the war. Men need a moral urge, if that expresses what I mean, to

show them how to continue to live greatly for their nation instead of for themselves after the danger of war is removed."

Sir David Maxwell Fyfe is a planner. Planners are not popular with everybody. But Sir David is a planner with a difference. He never looks on men as mere figures in a ledger or labour as a mere item in a balance sheet.

He has had much to do with the drafting of the social legislation embodying so many proposals from the report of Sir William Beveridge. He is the backroom Beveridge.

In the previous century the Tories attempted to secure a major parliamentary triumph by adopting the measures of their political opponents. "They caught the Whigs bathing and ran away with their clothes," as Disraeli described it.

Well, Mr. Churchill's Coalition Government tried to do much the same thing with that latter-day Whig, Sir William Beveridge. I suppose the legislation recently drafted by Sir David Maxwell Fyfe and passed through Parliament is one of the most comprehensive schemes of social reform offered to any nation in any age. Every individual is affected by it. But most folk know very little about it.

What is the future of a man like Sir David Maxwell Fyfe to be? That he will play a big part in the political life of Britain is certain. It is within the range of possibility that he will do more than that.

Begbie wrote of Britain at the close of the last war, "The need of the nation was not for a great political leader but for a great moral leader.... Under the public show of our national life the heart of the British people was famishing for such guidance."

A friend of mine in America was asked about the qualities which contribute to such leadership. He replied, "Four F's—Faith, Fire, Facts and Filosophy—if you'll pardon the spelling."

Sir David Maxwell Fyfe, young in years, rich in experience, has three of these F's.

He has Faith. He has Facts. He has Filosophy.

But he needs Fire. It is there, but it smoulders instead of blazing. The coldness of intellect which is the strength of his judgment is sometimes the weakness of his presentation. He captures the minds of men, but not always their hearts. He has yet to burn so constantly for Britain that he sets great audiences and communities aflame.

A spell on the Opposition bench may give the fire. For Sir David has one lovable and unusual quality in a successful politician. He is humble enough to be ready to learn.

He is at the threshold of new depth and wide development.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE TRUE BATTLE LINE

Certainly to the bewilderment of the mass of the British people and possibly to the bewilderment of himself, Professor Harold Laski became a centre of controversy at the 1945 election which gave power to Labour. Laski, speaking as Chairman of the Labour Party, had declared that if Attlee accompanied Churchill to the Potsdam conference he would have no authority of his own and if he made any decisions there then the Labour Party would not be bound by them.

After the election Laski went to Paris. There, according to the French Press, he announced what he described as the British Government's attitude to Greece, Yugoslavia, America and China, suggested that the French should cut off commercial dealings with one of their neighbours and told them how they should vote in the elections shortly to be held there. (Incidentally, I wonder what Laski would have said if the Chairman of one of the United States political parties had made a speech urging Britain to vote for Churchill, immediately before our general election. Laski would have been outraged. And Laski would have been right.)

While Laski continued his tour to Copenhagen and Stockholm, Mr. Attlee administered a rebuke to him in the House of Commons, indicating that decisions on such matters would be taken by His Majesty's Ministers and not by His Majesty Laski.

But the Professor made one pronouncement in the flush of electoral victory which has far-reaching significance for the future of Britain. Laski said that it was Labour's task at the next election "to end the Tory Party as we have ended the Liberal Party at this election."

If this is to be taken seriously, and certainly many of Laski's admirers take it seriously, it would seem to mean the establishment of one-party government in Britain. Is that Britain's democratic aim? Or is it the aim of doctrinaires who are out for power for the sake of power?

This is the same silly and wrongful attitude on the Left as emerged on the Right when Labour was hard hit in 1931 and its days as a mighty and evolving political force seemed to be numbered.

But it is not democracy. Think of the days of Gladstone and Disraeli, when our democratic institutions were strong and Parliament commanded the respect of all the nation. True Gladstone and Disraeli lived in an age when a name for political grandeur may have been won more cheaply than now.

Perhaps their statesmanship was cast in too slight a mould to contain the vastness of some problems which today confront us. Certainly their period of history was one in which grave social injustice existed in the midst of extreme wealth, and this wrong state of affairs was largely accepted by both parties. Nobody would want any suggestion of a return to those bad old days.

Yet though it can be argued by latter-day pundits that neither Gladstone nor Disraeli had the flair for statistics, blueprints, plans and economics which many public men today possess, both these men had certain qualities which are necessary to a healthy, or even a surviving democracy, and which are becoming rare in public life now.

Gladstone and Disraeli disapproved of each other and even distrusted each other's political integrity. Their opinions of method were totally opposed.

Yet in a larger sense they were united. For each knew there were things far more important than their personal power or the power of their party.

Their home life meant everything to them. After difficult days the stately and puritan figure of Gladstone could be seen in the privacy of his drawing-room dancing before the fire with his wife and singing with her,

> "A ragamuffin husband and a rantipoling wife,
> We'll fiddle it and scrape it through the ups
> and downs of life."

Mary Ann used to stay up until the early hours of the morning to welcome Dizzy home—she would run from room to room lighting the candles so her tired man felt welcomed and warmed as he came back from Westminster.

Mrs. Gladstone and Mrs. Dizzy visited each other and were on friendly terms in the days when the stark rivalry between the husbands developed and the debates grew tough.

Britain with her traditions and above all the character of her people meant more to these two men than personal advancement for themselves or cash benefits for the citizens.

The freedom of the Parliamentary institution, the liberty of the individual and the function of the Opposition—all these things they cherished and neither would use his power to curtail them however advantageous to himself and his party it might be.

Above all, religion was the basis of both their philosophies and united them on moral standards however far they might diverge on political expedients.

This faith was common to both parties and to the men of all parties. It gave them common standards of public and private conduct. It was in the spirit of this unity that democracy and two-party government worked.

It is also why the form of parliamentary government, when transplanted to other countries, did not always work so well. It failed in Italy and in France where the form but not the faith was accepted.

France had no Wesley, but only a Rousseau. Italy was given a liberal constitution by Cavour, but this liberalism carried with it a spirit of licence which undercut the Christian faith from which true liberalism sprang. The fruit was without the root and shrivelled swiftly away.

In America democracy has succeeded because the Christian faith was exported there first and her own

democratic institutions have sprung from it.

Now in the British Parliament today men on both sides can be found who agree with this truth. Indeed the majority would agree if it were pointed out to them. But all are far less conscious of it than they were in the days of Gladstone, Disraeli or even Keir Hardie.

And a new element has entered in. Materialists on both sides of the House, a resolute minority opposed to the whole conception of Christian democracy and determined to do away with the Christian heritage which has made Britain all she is, are articulate and near to the seats of power. They plan, fight and manoeuvre towards their objective. They are encouraged by the godless dictatorships of Left and Right which have gained power in Europe over the last quarter century.

So the true battle line in Parliament today is not between Left and Right but between the sound elements in both who fight for Christian democracy and the materialists in both who fight for personal power and class control.

At present the materialists are outnumbered by the sound elements but outmatch them in both resolution and clamour. They see more clearly the battle line, they know where they are going and ceaselessly fight for their objective.

The whole cause of constructive democracy in Europe depends on a working demonstration in this island. So many elements in Europe are wavering and waiting. Some will go to the extreme Right, some to the Marxist Left unless they

see here the working model of a democracy which provides each side with the stability, balance and positive qualities that come from the spirit of faith.

Such a demonstration here might magnetise the potentially sound elements of both Left and Right throughout the continent, and then Britain could as decisively rally the forces of true democracy in peace as she did in war.

And the fire of a fighting faith once more kindling, warming and illuminating the councils of the nation would destroy for ever one danger which threatens our democracy —that is the danger of disillusionment. Parties which tie themselves to a mere programme of material promises sooner or later become discredited. People fed on promises always demand more and are never fully satisfied.

Soon they may become disillusioned with all public figures. Then the Strong Man steps in.

But parties committed to a faith and a philosophy, something which offers man more than bread alone to live by, something which satisfies his hunger for great living as well as for a good time, such parties never engender disillusionment even in the bad days of difficulty and hardship, for their hold is on the hearts not merely the pockets of the people.

Begbie wrote of the political situation which followed the last war, "Was there ever a greater opportunity in statesmanship? After a victory so tremendous, was there any demand on the generosity of men's souls which would not

gladly have been granted? The long struggle between capital and labour which tears every state in two might have been ended. The heroism and self-sacrifice of the war might have been carried forward to the labours of reconstruction. The wounds of Europe might have been healed by the charities of God almost to the transfiguration of humanity."

Last time we let that chance go by. Shall we again? The penalties of failure are so much heavier today than they were yesterday.

Transfiguration? It is a strong word. It means change, which is something more costly than sacrifice. Change for leaders—and for led. For we as well as they are on trial. Democracy itself is on trial. A change of heart rooted in Christian faith is alone adequate to usher in the greatest revolution of all time whereby we shall ride the storm, not be ridden by it, and remake the world to the pattern our dead soldiers desired and our children look for.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

MAN FROM MISSOURI

President Truman

This chapter was written in the week that President Truman succeeded to the White House,*

and is included here because he too is a man on trial.

* In "Everybody's Weekly". The author is indebted to the Editor, Mr. Greville Poke, in whose paper four of the chapters in this book appeared.

Let us now praise famous men. So sings the prophet. But let us not succeed them. So whispers the politician.

It is hard to take over a job where your predecessor has made a success. If you fail, your failure is more marked by comparison. If you succeed, men say you are merely reaping the fruits for which your predecessor planned and laboured and sowed.

And I suppose few men in history have been harder to follow than Franklin D. Roosevelt. That is the task destiny has laid on the shoulders of Harry S. Truman. When he heard the news he said to reporters, "Did you ever have a load of hay or a bull fall on your back? Well, I feel as if the whole moon and stars had fallen on mine. If any of you boys pray, I hope you'll pray for me now."

What manner of man is Truman? Some pressmen depict him as a simple and almost obscure figure, lifted by a series of accidents rather than by ability into perhaps the most important executive job of the modern world. That is a false picture.

It is true that office has sought the man, not the man office. Yet in his own right Truman has qualities of conviction and statesmanship which can make him one of the greatest of American Presidents if he follows his star.

The new President is as slow as ploughing and as inevitable as harvest. He is an American of Americans. "If you shake my family tree, almost anything may fall out," he has remarked. Scottish, Irish, Dutch and many another blood runs in his veins. So he reflects in his own personality the genius of American history, which has been to welcome men of every tongue and nationality and to mark them with the common stamp of a single nationhood and loyalty.

There is only one compromise in Truman's life. That is the letter S., which is his middle initial. What does the S. stand for? Nothing at all. One grandparent stood over a cot in May 1884, looking at the squalling scrap which was destined to become thirty-second President of the United States and declared, "I want the boy called Solomon." The other grandparent glared at him and remarked, "Shippe is the name." In the end they agreed to skip it, and the boy was named plain Harry S. Truman, so both sides of the family could fill in anything they liked after the S.

Truman is from Missouri (pronounced Mizourah). In the States they have a saying, "I'm from Missouri. I've got to be shown," which means that folk from Missouri believe things when they see them—but not until.

The new President is the son of a smallholder. He was raised on the farm. His mother, now aged ninety-two, said a

year or two back, "Say, I knew that boy would amount to something from the time he was nine years old. He could plough the straightest row of corn in the country. He could broadcast wheat so there wasn't a bare spot on the whole field."

Like Abraham Lincoln, Harry Truman has tried his hand at many jobs in his time, and has been more successful at some things than at others. He has been clerk to a chemist, timekeeper in a newspaper office, bank clerk, farmer, haberdasher and odd-job man.

Like Lincoln, his venture into shopkeeping was a failure, and like Lincoln he scraped and saved for years until every creditor was paid. He was still paying off debts when he was elected to the Senate.

Like Lincoln, too, he fought for his country. But unlike honest Abe, who used to say that his fighting in the Black Hawk war consisted of "a good many bloody struggles with mosquitoes," Truman was directing his artillery battery until one minute before the 1918 armistice. He ended up a major.

Coming home again, he didn't find life easy, and for a time knew real poverty. So he has an understanding of the hopes and fears of the returning soldier, for he was once a returned soldier himself.

Then fortune knocked at his door. Politics in Kansas City at that time were dominated by the notorious Pendergast machine. Pendergast himself ended up in gaol after making a fortune out of politics. But before that he was looking for

somebody without enemies. His eye fell on Truman, who thereupon was nominated to a local judgeship.

It is a remarkable tribute to the personal integrity of the new American President that although he owed his start in politics to one of the most shady political machines in the States, not even his most resolute enemies—and he has enemies—fail to give credit to his honesty and blameless personal record.

By 1934 Truman had become a United States Senator. He worked away industriously but without becoming a front-rank national figure.

Then, in 1941, before America entered the war, Truman felt restless about the efficiency of the industrial programme to help Britain. He made a 35,000-mile trip across the country at his own expense, inspecting countless factories and army installations. Back in Washington he said, "It doesn't do any good to go around digging up dead horses when the war is over. The thing to do is to dig this stuff up now and correct it."

The Senate agreed, and the Truman Committee was born. Within six months he was front-page news in every paper in the States. Without fear or favour he exposed incompetence, extravagance and waste wherever he found it. It has been calculated that he saved billions of dollars and thousands of lives by the skill and persistence of his investigation.

He did not spare the most powerful industrial interests of the States, nor the Federal departments themselves, from the

corrective of his reports. And as he travelled the land he did two things. He obtained a grasp of the facts about American production which led newspapermen to say of him, "His knowledge of the war set-up is second only to that of Roosevelt."

And he displayed a remarkable capacity for conciliation. Wherever he went he was able to draw the best out of both management and labour, because both sides trusted him.

He analysed the set-up in American industry in words which are worth studying today by all who have the trends of the post-war age at heart. Truman said, "A battle for control is going on in many of our major plants. Most management and labour in the country want to co-operate to win the war and build a lasting peace. But there are extremists in both camps who don't make the job any too easy. They represent an alien philosophy of conflict and so play into the hands of foreign ideologies.... There is only one answer to this sort of thing. We must start now to draw the battle line in American industry between the responsible and constructive forces in both management and labour against the small but active minority who believe in a finish fight."

Harry Truman prides himself on being an ordinary man. When a friend of mine congratulated him on his election to high office he replied, "Now see here, Harry's my name. I'm a simple fellow and I live at Independence, Missouri. You know the place. Push open the door and step right in to see me any time you are passing."

He gazes out at life from grey eyes through steel-rimmed spectacles. He combs his grey hair flat and neatly sideways. He does not smoke, but very occasionally sips a glass of bourbon whisky with ginger ale as a chaser.

He is a mighty reader. All through his life he has devoured books. He loves military history and probably knows as much about the details of the American Civil War as any living man. He wanted to go to a University but his folk could not afford to send him there. So he has educated himself with books.

He loves music, likes crooners as well as the classical composers (Chopin is his favourite), and occasionally plays duets with his only child, twenty-one year old Mary Margaret.

He enjoys poker, but will play only for small stakes. This pleases his friends because he usually comes away the winner. He has a thin, metallic jaw and a straight mouth which sets slightly downward at the corners.

He is fond of good food and eats plenty of it. But he retains his youthful figure and, unlike many a veteran of World War I, can still wear his old uniform with comfort. Like many a farmer's boy, he retains his childhood habit of early rising and he springs out of bed by six o'clock each morning. Then he takes a walk in the open air.

Truman was brought up as a Baptist. He used to be a regular attendant at the village Sunday School. At the age of seven he met a little girl of six there. She was called Bess.

Bess is now the Lady of the White House. "Bess is the only girl with whom I ever kept company," says the new President. "We went to Sunday School together."

He is a great home-lover. He is most at ease sitting shirt-sleeved in a dilapidated rocking chair in the doorway of his old-fashioned Middle-Western house, with its gingerbread gables, yarning away with his friends. The last years in Washington he has lived in a five-roomed apartment with his wife and daughter, and helped them with the housework and cooking.

He is very much of a family man. He says of his wife, "She is my chief adviser. I never write a speech without going over it with her. She takes care of my personal mail." His old mother still keeps a strict eye upon him. When he burst in upon her with the news that he had been elected Vice-President of the United States the old lady then aged ninety-one remarked, "Now, Harry, don't get beyond yourself."

The new President is a nervous public speaker. He copies out every word of every speech and holds it ready to read. His hands shake and his knees knock together. But once on his feet he often becomes gripped by the force of his own convictions. His eyes sparkle, he stands with his shoulders square and his chin out, he bangs out a challenge to the evil which seeks to dominate the world, with the fervour and confidence of an Old Testament prophet.

Like many a statesman who has grown rather than swelled with success and has walked with kings and kept the

common touch, President Truman has a great love of the ordinary fellow and also a faith in his destiny. Not long ago, talking of the post-war world, he said, "The time is ripe for an appeal not to self-interest but to the hunger for great living that lies deep in every man. What Americans really want is not a promise of getting something for nothing, but a chance to give everything for something great. We want something we can fight for with equal intensity in war or peace—something not confined to combat areas or election campaigns. We want to feel that what we are doing for the war effort is at the same time laying foundations for the future. After our experience in the last war we are wary of any programme for 'making the world safe for democracy' which does not also involve making democracy safe for the world."

Who can say what part this statesman of the soil is called upon to play in the building of a new world? Some say he will be outweighted in his dealings with men of the international stature of Churchill and Stalin. I am not so sure. I predict Truman will be a statesman formidable beyond expectation. For he has an immense source of strength. He is a man of unyielding principle. No threat or lure can induce him to trim. What he feels right he fights for and ways of expediency do not commend themselves to his attention.

His recent history offers a first rate example of his constancy and courage. During his investigations into the state of American industry he came in contact with the workers for Moral Re-Armament. He came to the conclusion that "there is not a single industrial bottleneck which could

not be broken in a matter of weeks if this crowd were given the green light to go full steam ahead."

Some of these workers were Britons, and it is worth recording that Truman's deep and outspoken friendship towards Britain was developed by his contact with these men and the impression he formed of their unpaid work for his nation. Certain sections of the American press began a smear campaign against Moral Re-Armament, and every inducement was made to Truman to withdraw the endorsement he had given to that work. Instead he called the American pressmen together and issued a statement, part of which said, "I have given much time and thought to this matter and have come to the clear conviction that the problems to which the Moral Re-Armament programme is finding an effective solution are the most urgent in our whole production picture."

After Truman had been nominated candidate for the Vice-Presidency by the Democratic party, on the eve of the Presidential election, an American newspaper which for years has attacked Moral Re-Armament, published the statement in contemptuous terms that Truman had disclaimed his interest in Moral Re-Armament and Dr. Buchman.

The easy course would have been to stay silent. Instead, Truman at once gave an interview to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the leading newspaper of his home State, in which he reaffirmed his belief in the work done by Moral Re-Armament and described how he first came in contact with the movement.

At the same interview he mentioned the community of interest between all religious and moral codes and said, "The preachments of the Sermon on the Mount and the Ten Commandments represent the full substance of my own religious beliefs."

When time has stilled the edge of agony which war brings to humanity, when the clear light of history illuminates the scene war obscured by smoke and fire and passion, it will be admitted by all men that President Roosevelt aroused America from her pipe dream. He showed the ordinary people of the United States the dangers which threatened them if Britain lost the war of arms.

Now it is President Truman's task to awaken America and the ordinary people of the free world to the danger in the war of ideas. He has the harder task of showing the victorious nations that they may themselves, after victory, be saddled with totalitarian systems they went to war to beat. He has not only to help build the new machinery of national and international harmony, but also to get public opinion to the place where it sees that without a new spirit in the engine there will be further breakdowns.

He has to educate the great powers, and not least America herself, to the conception that it is their duty to serve mankind rather than to dominate.

In an age where cynicism or mere lip-service Christianity have become fashionable, the new American President retains the fighting faith which affects every decision of his life. He believes that God speaks to those men ready to listen

to Him. In this he is again at one with Abraham Lincoln, who observed, "I have so many evidences of God's direction that I cannot doubt this power comes from above. I am satisfied that when the Almighty wants me to do or not to do any particular thing, He finds a way of letting me know it."

The President brings two great assets to his task—a humble appreciation of the limitations of all human leadership and a knowledge of the power from above. So far no man in such a position who stands firm in this spirit has failed to leave an eternal mark on civilisation.

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