

BEVERIDGE AND HIS PLAN

by

JANET BEVERIDGE



LONDON

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A toast to *Power and Influence*, the day it saw the light

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----- Tekst gaat verder na deze pagina -----

FIRST PRINTED MAY 1954
MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
FOR HODDER AND STOUGHTON LIMITED,
LONDON, BY T. AND A. CONSTABLE LTD.,
PRINTERS, EDINBURGH

*To all of those
on whose behalf William went out
to slay five giants*

All the characters in this book are real people. Scrupulous care has been taken to introduce nothing of a fictional nature

PREFACE

To write this book has been of primary importance to me, because it deals with the story of a momentous change in the social structure of our country. It is intended to give a simple statement of the facts; for the facts speak for themselves. It traces through William's life and work the origins and development which resulted in the Beveridge Report.

The Report was the apotheosis of a long devotion of nearly forty years to the fulfilment by one stage after another of the principles to which he first gave a tentative expression in his early leaders in the *Morning Post* written from his twenty-sixth to his twenty-ninth year, and in his book *Unemployment, a Problem of Industry*, published in 1909, when he was just under thirty.

Whether you like it or not, whether you are glad or sorry, the Beveridge Report was the inauguration of a new relation within the State of man to man, and of man to the State, not only in this country but throughout the world. The ethic of the universal brotherhood of man was here enshrined in a plan to be carried out by every individual member of the community on his own behalf and on behalf of his fellows. The phrases William used, the imagery he invented, have passed into the common speech of the people in every language, just as the principles they illustrated have passed into their minds.

As I moved from one episode to another, and from one chapter to the next, I have to admit that I found it harder and harder to remain dispassionate in a mounting sense of bewilderment.

But here it was William himself who came to my rescue as on an earlier occasion he had soothed his mother, as you will see as you read the book.

JANET BEVERIDGE.

Oxford.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AMONG my acknowledgements I have to thank our secretary in Edinburgh, Mrs. Winifred Law, who worked without complaint or limits to her time on successive typescripts; Mrs. Jones, who intervened at a congested moment by typing in her off-time a much mutilated chapter; Mrs. Thompson at Newton Aycliffe, who typed some of the early drafts; and Miss Anne Wood at Oxford, who worked indefatigably on the final form of the book, assisting in particular on the vital question of capitals and commas; William himself provided the Index.

For permission to quote Philip Snowden's *Autobiography* on pp. 78, 79, 81, we are indebted to Messrs. A. P. Watt on behalf of the author's executrix and to Messrs. Ivor Nicholson and Watson, publishers.

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CHAPTER I

Origins

The bee is little among such as fly; but her fruit is the chief of sweet things.
ECCLESIASTICUS II.3

WILLIAM's birth and early years followed a pattern which can never now be repeated. It is out of circulation, for the mould is broken.

His father was a member of the Indian Civil Service, a district and Sessions Judge. He had gone to India in 1857, having gained the first place in the examination held by the Civil Service Commissioners in that year. It was the third under the new regulations established by Gladstone's legislation for the reform of the Civil Service in India, which up to 1855 had been recruited through the East India Company.

Henry was thus a pioneer of that line of civil servants chosen not by nepotism but on their academic merits, seeking not wealth but to serve their country in the best interests of India, who for nearly a hundred years won the laurels they deserved. He was close enough to the tradition which the new régime had been created to abolish to be well aware of how necessary the reform had been. For him and his contemporaries, William Hickey and his like were no heroes to immortalise.

He had astonished the examiners of the Civil Service Commission by his knowledge. The test to which he was subjected is laughable now, it was so clearly designed not to discover what the candidates knew which might serve them in their career if successful, but consisted of haphazard facts or references which it was far more than probable that none of them could possibly have encountered in their academic pursuits or in their personal reading. The examination was intended to

select able men just graduated at the ancient Universities, favouring on the whole the classical discipline. That a Scottish youth from a small country house in Fife, who owed his University training to Belfast and Glasgow, should have been the first on the list in 1857 was a surprise indeed. There was no personality test in those days, still less a scrutiny during a weekend in a country house by psychologists and others. I have a shrewd suspicion that Henry might not have come out on top of such experiments. Yet even in such a company his transparent rectitude, his complete absence of vanity, his earnestness and above all the superlative quality of his intellect might have penetrated through their machinations. If there had been any women on the panel of inquisitors he would have won easily. Tall, handsome, fair-haired and blue-eyed, with a natural respect and even sentimental reverence for their sex, he would have been at the head of their list too.

William's mother, Annette Akroyd, came of Yorkshire stock. Like Henry, she was in an intellectual class far above the ordinary and of a *genre* rare in a woman. Her father had made money. Unlike Henry, who had to make his way, she belonged to the fortunate class, now nearly extinct, where easy circumstances enabled her to design her life without the limiting considerations of having to gain a livelihood. She pursued, for its own sake, the highest educational opportunities open to girls of her time, successfully passing such examinations as were offered to women by the University of London in the 1860's.

Born in 1842, she was the youngest child of her father's first marriage and his great favourite. When he married a second wife and provided her with a step-mother and two half-sisters, things were perforce less happy for her in the big house at Stourbridge. She can never have had an easy temperament; and no doubt the developing circumstances of the second growing family had a considerable part in sending her off to London to pass examinations. She was clearly a person

of inexhaustible vitality and decided ambitions in which marriage did not take the first place. She did not disdain the conventional social life for a girl of her time. She went to dances and attracted young men. It was not an unsuccessful love affair that drove her to study Latin and Mathematics. She just wanted irresistibly to do so, and did so very well.

The respective fathers of Henry and Annette were a study in themselves. Henry Beveridge, the elder, was a scholar by nature and a country gentleman by ambition. As the Squire of Inzievar, a small but pleasant property in Fife bought in the early days of his marriage with his wife Jemima's dowry, he was a failure to the extent of being sold up within a few years and thrown upon his own talents for the resources required to bring up his five children and maintain Jemima, now penniless. Their children were brought up among books, for which fortunately she also had a passion. It would have been a sombre enough upbringing but for her, for they saw almost no society.

Jemima has left in her letters to her son Henry (William's father) in India a glowing picture of herself. She discloses a fresh and vigorous mind and a passion for reading. Unlike her husband, she had a lively sense of humour and a sharp, discriminating pen and tongue. "After the name of bankrupt became mine," she confessed long after to her son, "I ceased to curl my hair." Her running commentary on the Beveridges is passed on to her son, without any embarrassing sense of restraint in candour. She loved the ins and outs of family relationships and all their absurdities.

William Akroyd was in every way a contrast. Beginning from the bottom, he made a considerable fortune in business, was a leading figure in his town, to which he brought the railway, and had handsome presentations of silver made to him in recognition of the benefits he procured for it. He was indeed a bustling, public-spirited notability in local affairs, with the most laudable views as understood in his days. He

was a Liberal in politics and a Unitarian in religion. Of his first wife, Annette's mother, nothing has been recorded.

In Annette's background it was her father who was the outstanding personality, in Henry's it was his mother. While the effect of the family fortunes and environment on Henry was to send him to a career which he could command by his scholarship and by which he could be sure of maintaining himself, the effect on Annette was to turn her mind to her own education and to social service.

In Annette's London life, when she was twenty-eight years old, she came under the spell of an Indian, Keshub Chunder Sen, who had come to England as the leader in a new religious movement to purify Hinduism and to establish a monotheistic type of worship. Her Unitarianism brought her into the group of enthusiasts who packed the halls where he made his impassioned speeches. It was not only religious reformation in India that he preached, but also the need for improving the position of Indian women. His rhetoric found a response in Annette. She took every opportunity of seeing and hearing him, and before long, after quiet and deliberate consideration and earnest correspondence with friends whom she trusted, she decided to visit India. Her mission was to be the education and social elevation of her Indian sisters. The story of her adventure, its trials and failures, and how it brought her, from rather one-sided correspondence with Henry into marriage with him, is told by her son in another book, *India Called Them*. Their marriage was a hastily improvised affair. Henry pressed it forward, giving her hardly time to know what she was about. It might have developed in any direction on lines leading to disaster, for all they knew of one another. Henry's motives in rushing Annette after five meetings into an engagement were not those of a young man falling in love at first sight. But he found her struggling in deep and stormy waters in the management of her school and he came more in the mood of a Galahad to the rescue of a

lady harassed and distressed who needed and longed for a rescuer and a haven. For Henry had been married before. On his first furlough, in 1869, he had fallen in love with a Scottish girl, Jeanie Goldie, when she was barely sixteen years of age and still at school. When he set off in the January of 1870 to return to India, Jeanie, now affianced to him, went back to school and won a prize for French. In the spring of 1871 Henry came home again for his bride. They were married in the autumn when Jeanie was not yet eighteen and Henry was thirty-five. He took her by way of a trip through the continent of Europe to Barisal in the province of Bakarganj in Bengal, where he records that it is a comfort that he has got a good house. But Bakarganj was the very back of beyond. Its isolation and notorious unhealthiness were such that no one lived there if he could live anywhere else. It had been described as the dustbin of Bengal. Before Jeanie set out with the husband nearly twice her own age, whom she adored, to this unknown destination, it is unlikely that she had ever ventured further from home than once on a short visit to London with her mother. The house of which Henry thought so well looks gaunt and dismaying enough in the picture. How could it have seemed to a girl brought up in a snug villa in Edinburgh in the midst of an established group of friends, pursuing the amusements of her fellow schoolgirls and attended on by Scottish maid-servants? Bakarganj had no such towns, no cosy coteries of neighbours and no maid-servants. There must have been times of bleak loneliness and homesickness for Jeanie. How did she spend the days when Henry was away in court and she had only her piano with occasional consignments of music from Calcutta, four to seven days' journey by water away, to pass the time? What did she make of housekeeping with a little army of Indian servants?

It was soon necessary for her to make preparations for her confinement, and one can imagine her sitting long hours in the silent rooms of her gaunt unhomelike house with her

sewing-basket and her dreams, tired by the heat, waiting for her husband to come home, and her boredom to yield to the radiant happiness of his presence. It is all in the imagination, for there are no records to show what she thought and felt during the year that was all she was to spend there. She died in January 1873. Her child had died at birth a week or two before, and she never rallied her strength to survive it. She was not yet twenty years of age.

Henry's despair and grief brought him to the very depths and he tried at first to get away from the place of such bitter sorrows. But he had endeared himself to the people of Bakarganj, as he endeared himself to the people everywhere in India. They begged him not to leave them, and he stayed. "I thought," he said, "that I had buried my heart with Jeanie, and so I told Annette." His scrupulous sense of truth bade him to do so when he asked her to marry him. He proved himself to have been wrong in the event, although to the end of his long life, for he outlived Annette and reached the age of ninety-three, he dwelt on the short companionship with Jeanie as something far transcending in beauty and fragrance the ordinary relationships of life.

As for Annette herself, she hardly had time to think what her real feelings were. But what woman could have resisted Henry's charm? He may have brought her a broken heart, but with it came such tenderness of spirit and a mind charged with such unassuming richness as is seldom encountered. Their relationship did, in fact, gradually ripen into passionate love. To her great credit Annette never showed or felt any jealousy for her husband's first love, but entered into and understood his memories, even going so far as to name her second daughter Jeanette, a kind of portmanteau rendering of Jeanie and Annette, combining the names of the two wives. It is not surprising that a marriage of two such rare characters should have produced remarkable children.

A fortnight after their marriage the couple sailed from

Calcutta to spend the eighteen months of holiday in England in visiting friends and relations. Annette now made the acquaintance of Henry's mother and his sister Maggie, and his rich cousins in Dunfermline and Edinburgh. The latter were frankly startled to find in their new relation a lady of so much determination and so many unusual talents and interests, for her ways were very clearly a deviation from their normal. They shook their heads together. Henry had indeed gone from one extreme to the other in his second marriage. Jeanie had been barely eighteen years of age, little more than a schoolgirl and a gentle, loving creature: Annette was thirty-two, with a full experience of the higher education, and sharing the ambitions of the more advanced women of her time, showing no tendency to become a docile, clinging wife.

The pair ranged up and down over England and Scotland, settling towards the end of their furlough in a house hired for the time from Mrs. Belloc, the mother of Hilaire and Marie Belloc-Lowndes, in College Street, Westminster. But all too soon the journey back to India was upon them. As in his first departure with Jeanie, Henry took Annette, five years later, through Europe to join their ship, this time at Venice; and there they embarked on September 28th for an unknown destination in Bengal.

When they reached Calcutta at the end of October the matter remained still undecided. And then they learned that Rangpur was to be their fate. Here, twenty years after his brilliant entry into the service, Henry had to take his second wife. It was all too terribly like Bakarganj, that other dismal swamp dominated by rivers and tropical pests where five years before Jeanie, the Scottish girl, had passed her one homesick year of married life and where she lay with her baby in her arms in the lonely churchyard.

Annette's diary of the journey from Calcutta is recorded in *India Called Them*. It took five days by road and boat, and when at last they reached Rangpur it was only to find that the

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“station” was away and that the circuit house was locked. They took possession of a room in a colleague’s home. “It is a terribly tumble-down place,” Annette writes in her diary, “with a Mr. Kelly in occupation.” Mr. Kelly must have been summarily dislodged, for the two began their life in it two days later on December 1st, 1876. It was in this house, where they lived for three years, that the reptiles, which were officially described as abundant, were apt to be encountered on the stairs in the form of cobras, the cause of frequent fatalities during inundations “when they sought refuge in the higher lands”, and evidently also in the higher rooms of the house.

It was an extensive district for Henry to cover on horseback or by carriage over bad roads or by boat when the floods often made the passages exciting and dangerous, for there were no railways when he began there. He had to be much away from home, continuously taking exhausting journeys. Now and then Annette went with him, ready as always to face the hazards and discomforts, but more often she stayed at home. They wrote letters to one another almost daily during these separations and Annette kept a diary, a habit begun long before and carried on through her life. Though the first entry of the day was often “Not well”, she set herself to learn how to use the tools of her new trade of running an Indian household of many native servants, how to spend the family income, and how to take Henry generally in hand, while at the same time, under her heart, she was carrying her first baby. These months of anticipation must have been a testing time for both of them, with the thought which cannot but have been in their minds of that other birth and its tragic consequences five years before. But there is no word in letters or in the diaries of any shadow of fear. Mrs. Toomey, the monthly nurse from Calcutta, duly arrived after her five days’ journey with a week to spare before Annette’s confinement. And at last on the 10th of July, amidst the cobras and other perils, their first child, a girl, was born. They called her



The infant Beveridge,
December 1879



The boy Beveridge, 1884

ORIGINS

Laetitia Santamani, their joy and their jewel of peace. The bitter grief in Henry's memory was assuaged, if not expunged.

Naturally a complete change came over their lives. A baby could not be kept for long at a time in a dismal swamp, and there began almost at once a life of journeys for Annette to and from the hills which went on continuously for the whole of the time during which her children were kept in India. It was the story of the lives of all the married pairs of English people in India at that time: the continual separations, the weariness of the heat, the difficulty of ever feeling well, the anxiety over the babies, of whom so many failed to overcome the exigencies of a tropical infancy, filling the churchyards with the myriads of little white stones remarked upon in later years with horror by Annette.

At Rangpur in the spring of 1879 their second child, a boy, William, was born, this time a day before Mrs. Toomey arrived. For him began, at two months old, the history of continued movement from one place to another which with modifications has characterised the whole of his life. On this first journey Henry took the caravanserai of Annette and her two babies, Laetitia, not yet two years of age, and William, only two months, with their nurses to Shillong. It took from May 1st to May 11th, beginning with four days in palki, or covered sedan chairs carried by bearers, covering fifty miles in all. There followed a voyage by rivers and a further journey by road in tongas and pompoms, both wheeled conveyances. This hazardous and forbidding journey, undertaken for the health of the children, very nearly ended in complete disaster. Cholera proved to be rampant in the station. Annette was taken ill with the disease. She lay unconscious and much nearer to death than to life for a fortnight, while Henry hardly ever left her room. She emerged triumphantly, and when the turning-point was passed made a rapid recovery. She had altogether phenomenal vitality and an indomitable will, not only to live but to extract everything

possible from life. On this occasion not only did she survive, but within an incredibly short time was enjoying all the gaieties of Shillong in full fling, sending for new dresses which Henry dutifully selected and despatched to the scene of her social triumphs. "Everything in the box (of fineries) has passed a Committee of Mrs. Boyd, Miss Dawson and Miss Elder, as being more charming than the last," she writes to him. "I stayed at the Fancy Dress Ball till 3 in the morning." "I think," she adds, "that I look the better for powder and rouge and shall continue it." When Henry proposed to send her some volumes of Comte to occupy her leisure she told him to keep them till she got back. She began the day when they left at last for home with a final badminton match at eight o'clock in the morning.

Henry had left her after two months, and she had remained with the children for four months more, recording the earliest impression of William. "Don't expect to see an intellectual-looking son," she warns Henry. "Prepare yourself for a red rough boy." Indeed both his parents seem to have thought very little of his mental qualities in those early days. For Henry, Laetitia was the one with brains. "Letty," he writes, "may hold her own in an age of negations, but what will poor Bhaia (William) do? He will float down the stream and perhaps go over the cataracts unless some kind fairy plucks him aside. I have great faith in that. Hylas will always find a nymph." "Bhaia is jolly but somewhat stolid." And still again, "Bhaia is Launce's dog Tray for unimpressionability."

They are scenes out of a vanished and almost forgotten world. The hill station where a group of English men and women, amply sustained in their life of leisure by unlimited numbers of native Indian servants, trod their daily round of small social engagements, free from the physical care of children and all the routine work of a house. Such a life does not enter into the experience of any British men and women any more.

The other side of the picture shows Henry and his life at work in the plains, sitting up all night to write 10,000 words of a judgment in the Courts, having previously sat for many weary days listening to hundreds of lies and trying to sift out the truth from among them. He had now been following this routine for over twenty-two years. Three years more and his work in India could be finished if he so desired.

The white man's burden can no longer be conceived as bringing enlightenment in terms of western civilisation to differently nurtured races in India and elsewhere. The missionary spirit, in all the nobility of its inspiration, has not often taken account of ancient philosophies little, or not at all, understood. Henry, long before his time, understood this paradox.

Almost immediately after her return from cholera and Shillong Annette was packing up for a move to the new station of Bankipur, near Patna, now offered to Henry. At last they were to be done with swamps. Bankipur was one of the most desirable situations. For Henry and Annette the next year or two saw the zenith of their happiness. The move to Patna had soon been followed by the birth of their third child, this time a girl, eighteen months younger than their son. They were radiantly in love and the nightmare ghost of Barisal, though never laid, almost ceased to haunt Henry, now deeply absorbed in Annette and their three children. Promotion to the High Court seemed to be within reach.

But in spite of the life in a healthier and livelier station the daily entries in Annette's diaries record the same history of fevers, laborious journeys to the hills—sicknesses and separations. At last the small white faces of the children in the heat, and the thought of the poignant history to be read on the endless rows of little graves in the cemeteries, were compelling, and the decision was taken. "The children must go home or to the hills. I will not bear to look on their pallid faces another season," Henry writes to Annette in October 1882.

CHAPTER II

School and Before

A merry heart doeth good like a medicine.

PROVERBS 17.22

IT was now the spring of 1883, and Annette, with her small army of domestic servants, was deep in preparation for the great trek homeward. Henry had completed already twenty-five years of service and was due for two years of furlough. He had indeed earned his pension and might have retired to begin a new life in England in his forty-sixth year. But India called him, and although he went into the arguments with Annette, for and against, he knew that the decision had never been in doubt. He meant to obey the summons of his heart to go back.

The party for the voyage home consisted of the three children, their German governess, their parents, and a young Bengali, Kumad, consigned to Henry's care. They joined their ship at Calcutta in April, and reached Gravesend in May. Henry immediately went off to Scotland with his beloved Letty, now six years old, to stay with his mother while he sought a furnished house near by for his family. Annette with the rest of the party stayed in London. For some time her deafness had been growing upon her and she began now a period of treatment by a London doctor. The accounts to Henry of the attempts to cure her are a sorry commentary on the medical knowledge of her time. The real cause of the trouble remained a mystery to the end of her life. It was only known that she was not born deaf and from whatever cause only began to be aware of a hardness of hearing after an illness from scarlet fever in her twentieth year. She said in her old age that

SCHOOL AND BEFORE

she had never really heard, as more fortunate people hear, the voices of her children. For Henry, it was his greatest pre-occupation to make up to her for this affliction. His example was part of the environment in which the children grew up and was ingrained in William's consciousness of the everyday habits of the family.

From his earliest childhood he had watched his father devising ways to bring Annette into full communication with the world of affairs, and even more meticulously, with every aspect of his life which would have been open to her if she had been able to hear. It was part of the normal routine followed, as soon as he was able, also by William himself. For a time mechanical aids to hearing were tried out. A kind of octopus on the dinner table could be used by the party, each of whom was supplied with a tube to speak through, the sound passing by way of a centralised container and thence by another tube to her ear. For a conversation *à deux*, an ear-trumpet was the method. In both cases the results led to such intricate misunderstandings that in the end it came to writing everything down. It also led to William's later habit of writing a daily letter to her when he was at any distance. She faithfully kept them all, so that there is until her death his account of his own life in detail, and a running commentary on public affairs.

Her own courage was dauntless, not only in facing the pain and misery of early attempts made by an ignorant aurist who held out to her, for a time, hopes of a cure, but, when these hopes failed, in adapting her habits to conquer the disability while accepting it. The difficulty of easy communication threw the children much more on their own resources than is usual, and led them to take to reading and other absorbing pursuits of their own devising. They came in this way to be intellectually more advanced than their contemporaries in age.

Earlier, his father is continually referring to the happiness of his infant son. No one, he says, could be blamed for bring-

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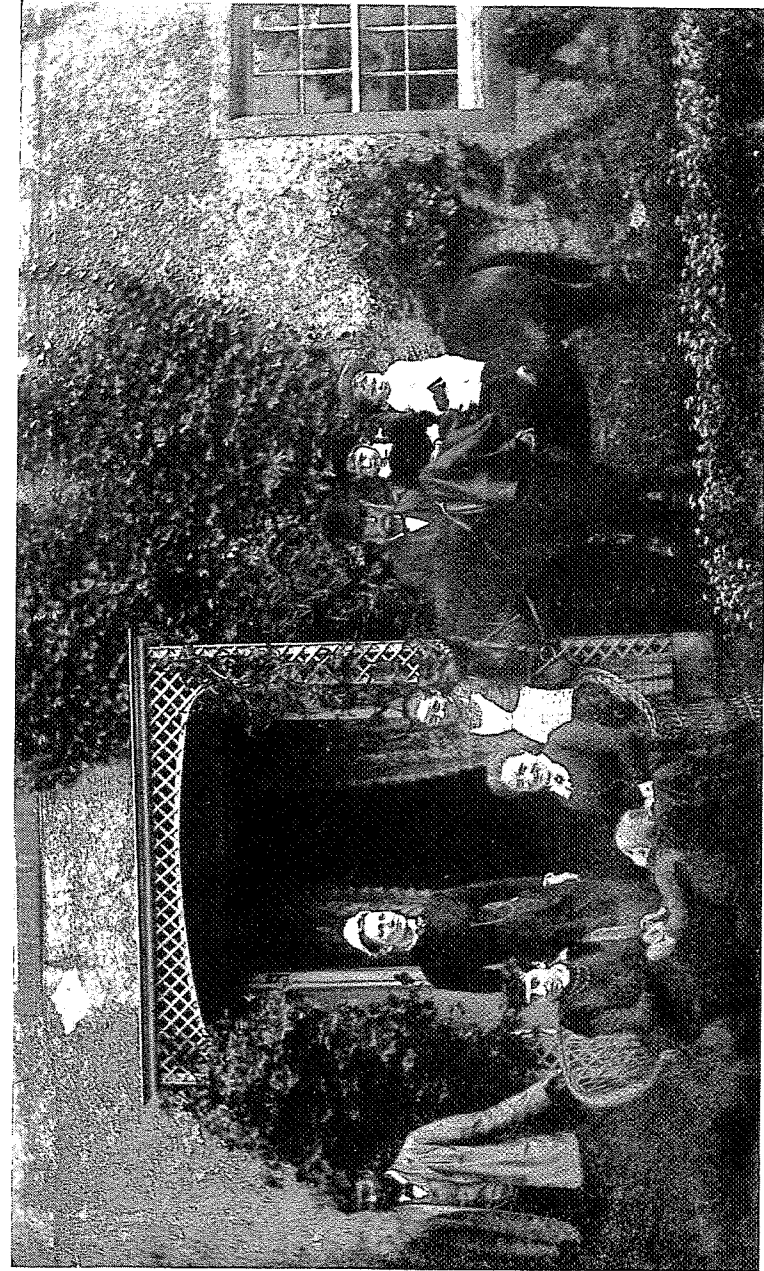
ing such a cheerful little creature into the world; he is always laughing and gay, but, he adds, will never set the Thames on fire. His mother writes of him rolling about on the floor, emitting cheerfulness.

From his earliest letters, starting at the age of four, the truth of these observations is apparent. There is an optimistic acceptance of the variations of fortune which has lasted his life. They give a picture of his laborious habit of recording an experience to the last detail, without much if any comment and never with any bitterness. One adventure over, he proceeded in childhood as in the rest of his life cheerfully and wholeheartedly to the next.

Henry and Letty found a house called Keavil near Dunfermline, within easy reach of the Beveridge grandparents and also of the rich cousins at Pitreavie Castle and St. Leonard's Hill. Of course, it was too expensive, the thing you want always is, but Henry took it with its lovely gardens and numerous bedrooms for the period of a year.

Keavil contracted for, Annette speedily enlisted a tribe of servants, and a new German governess, Fräulein Vögel, was engaged, at an annual salary of £23. An open carriage and a pony were purchased and the family settled down gloriously to the habits of a temperate climate.

The year at Keavil, though always remembered with rapturous happiness, had its trials too. In order to meet the running expenses, Annette induced her sister, Fanny Mowatt, to come with her children for a time as a paying partner. It was a daring experiment. The Mowatt family lived a life less concentrated on book-learning, and the two cousins, Ryder and Osmond, contemporaries of the Beveridge children, were not so far advanced when it came to lessons with the governess. Annette and her sister Fanny did not see eye to eye about anything, and inevitably disagreed whenever a common decision had to be taken. Henry, who liked his brother-in-law James Mowatt, found conversation with him difficult.



Family with friends at Keavil, 1883; William at his mother's knee

SCHOOL AND BEFORE

He did not even like Fanny and avoided trying to converse with her at all. Storms and sunshine succeeded one another, and in the midst of them the two Mowatt cousins mysteriously developed scarlet fever. They could not help it, of course, but that did not alleviate Annette's annoyance or anxiety and the trouble caused by their isolation. When, after six months, the experiment ended and the Mowatts went back home, Annette writes in her diary: "We felt as if a cord that had held us too tight had snapped." That was not even then the end of the trouble. The inevitable disputes arose and raged about who was liable to pay for what.

As Keavil drew regretfully to an end, Henry decided to cut his furlough short, and to leave Annette behind for a few months to settle the children in a school in England before coming out to join him, for of course the inevitable separation so cruelly necessary for English parents in India had to be faced.

William was four years old when he was left with his sisters, six and three, at a school in Southport for such stranded babes, run by a Miss Lewin, who was chosen both as a family friend and a Unitarian. Fräulein Vögel went into residence with them.

In India William spoke English to his parents, Hindustani to his bearer, and German to his governess. It is a solemn thought. He had begun also his habit of continuous letters to his parents. His first five letters were all written while the children were waiting at Hughly to embark for England. Four of the five letters were written in German; one only, to his grannie, was in English.

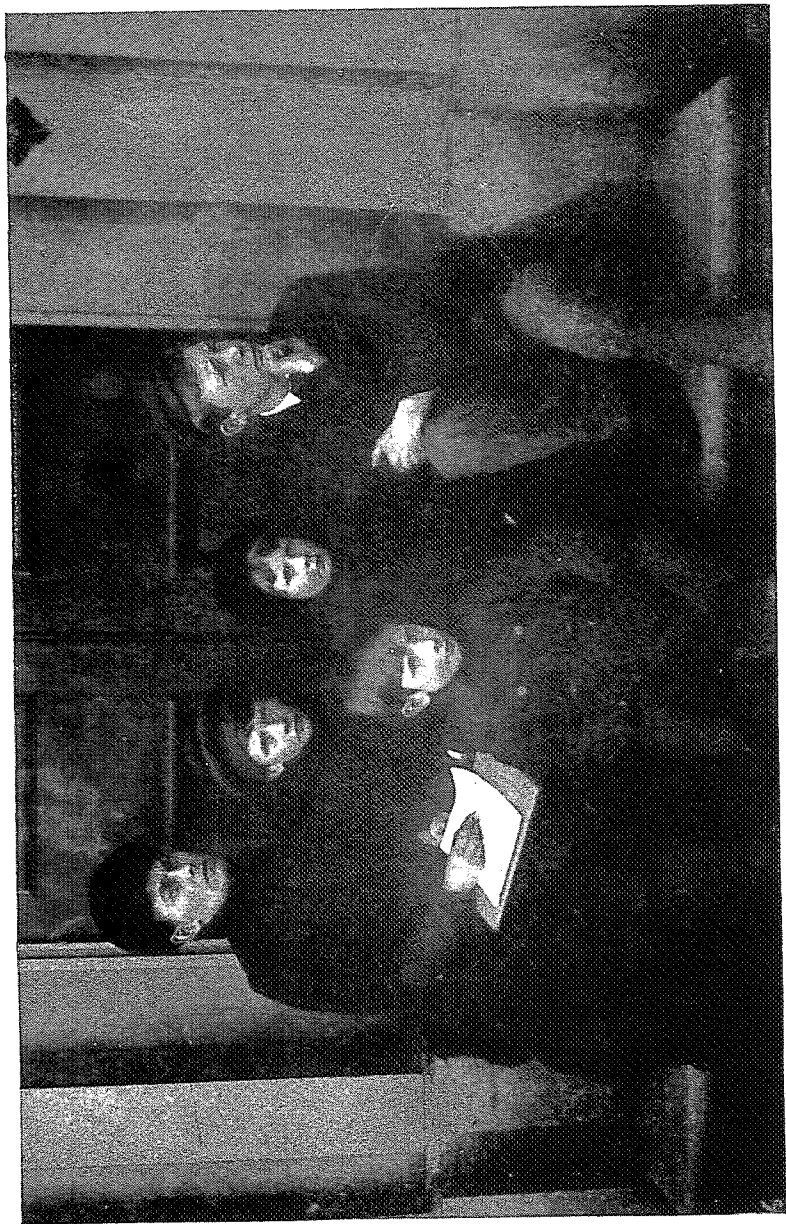
With the departure of their mother, Willie and his sisters fell into the routine about which their patient weekly letters to India never deceived anyone for a moment. The three years of Miss Lewin's school which went slowly by yielded a very dim experience indeed. A moderately bright relief came in the holidays, when they went with the faithful Fräulein Vögel to

elderly childless friends of Annette's. Fräulein Vögel herself was perhaps the best part of the whole thing. She cared for the three small creatures with genuine affection, and found teaching them to be a pure joy. Letty and Willie, on their side, equally enjoyed their lessons, lapping up everything set before them with incredible speed and thoroughness. They soon became merely bilingual, forgetting Hindustani. The pathos of their weekly letters is not that they complained about anything. It is that they made the best of everything, and such little things too. Willie's exuded cheerfulness and much natural enjoyment.

It was a heroic and mainly unconscious submission to unnatural circumstances. Letty was the first to show signs of rebellion, and even Willie's bonhomie waned in spite of his absorption in his lessons and alternative occupations.

When presently the three heard that they had acquired another brother, born in India, they gave way unanimously and clamorously to demands to see him and to join their parents. It was not only from the children's letters but also from the governess's that Annette and Henry became miserably conscious of how strong their longing had become for the family life again.

The unhappiness of separation was mutual. The parents began to debate the possibility of making the unusual and indeed hazardous experiment of bringing the exiles out to India. Letty was now in her ninth year, reading for her pleasure Dryden's translation of Virgil, while Willie at seven preferred, on the whole, arithmetic, finding particular pleasure and even delighted excitement in the Least Common Multiple. They were still laboriously recording the small excitements outside of these absorbing pursuits in dutiful weekly letters, sometimes in English and sometimes in German, faithfully guided by Fräulein Vögel in orientating their affection and interest towards their parents as the centre of their lives. Out in India the parents were well aware of all the facets of this many-sided



Trio in exile at Woodlands, with Fräulein Vögel and Harry Winstanley, 1885

situation. What was Henry to do if Annette joined the children in England, taking the new baby with her? That was not to be thought of. On the contrary, this entirely unpredictable couple decided that Henry should look after the baby in India while Annette came to England to reconnoitre the position there on the spot. She found not only the children but Fräulein Vögel refusing ever again to return to the Unitarian Miss Lewin's seminary in Southport. They were all quite firmly agreed that wherever they went it must not be there. In spite of the fact that it was considered undesirable for children of their age to live in the tropics, it was practically a foregone conclusion that it must be India, and India it was, with all the contingent dangers.

The period at Southport had its good sides. Willie acquired habits which lasted him a lifetime. He never for the rest of his life found any difficulty, for instance, in settling down with interest and enjoyment to the next job as it came along. Nature provided him with a passion of intellectual curiosity and an endless industriousness. The cheerfulness recorded by his parents when he was an infant never deserted him, however tough the treatment circumstances dealt out. One absorbing task finished, he turned to the fresh one with the same abandonment. Fräulein Vögel, a conscientious, industrious, thorough German woman, found in the youthful Willie everything such a teacher could desire. Her influence and his own personality moulded his character at this time, the time in the development of a child which is definitive.

After the reunion with their mother, the children did not go back again to Miss Lewin. The party took up their quarters in their step-grandmother's house in Regent's Park. But very soon they were all on the move again. The excursions in and around London to see the sights and to visit friends gave way to a journey to Germany. Annette had become involved in an arrangement for translating from German and in part revising and completing the biography of the Emperor Akbar under-

taken by the Count of Nöer, who had died before he finished it. She decided to go to Nöer in Schleswig-Holstein to make the acquaintance of the Countess, now a widow, who cooperated by inviting the whole party to come to the castle. Off they all went, Fräulein Vögel too, by boat from London to Hamburg. They were all horribly seasick, Fräulein retiring from the scene of action and leaving the others to render mutual aid.

The Countess showed the party the warmest hospitality, allotting them apartments in the castle where they remained happily for a month while Annette pursued her work on the translation of Akbar, aided by the Countess. Long after, when William was in Germany in 1947, he went to Nöer and there renewed his friendship with one of the two daughters of the house with whom he and his sisters had played on that early visit. He found her with her husband living at the castle. There followed a renewed correspondence until her death two years later in 1949, for her memories of the Beveridge party were as pleasant as William's of Nöer.

The month in Germany over, back to England they came again to prepare for a journey, this time to India, due almost at once. It was a very unusual and rash departure from the conventional to take the children at their age for a prolonged residence in India. But the children longed for their parents and they for the children, and the adventure and its chances were undertaken. Annette, of course, did not proceed by the easy route of a direct passage from England on a comfortable steamer. She took the three children and their governess, a new one, English this time, by way of Lucerne, spending there a couple of nights to show them its beauty. Thence the party proceeded by the Gothard tunnel to Genoa, changing trains in the middle of the night at Milan, to join a small Italian steamer of the Rubattino Line, a choice made because of its cheapness.

The sight of Stromboli and Etna still lingers in William's mind, where also uncertain memories survive of the strange

meals provided on the boat. It was not until long after that he understood the fraud that was practised on him to keep him quiet in the heat of the Suez Canal, by someone who set him to fish over the side of the moving boat with a bent pin on a string.

Annette's tireless energy in carrying out unconventional journeys under highly uncomfortable and exhausting conditions left a lasting mark on William. To write a chapter of a book at a railway junction never seemed to him out of the ordinary, nor did his attention ever become distracted by the noise or stir of trains at a busy station. The Beveridge Report itself was written at odds and ends of time on odds and ends of available paper, sometimes during air-raids in London and sometimes on long-drawn-out train journeys, and sometimes in peace and quiet. He owed this power of concentration on the matter in hand to his mother's travel arrangements in these early days of his boyhood. Her courage and energy were the more remarkable in that she was deaf. But undismayed by what to many would have been so great a handicap as to create complete dependence on others, she led her string of little children complacently across the continent of Europe, to Germany, Switzerland and Italy, and through the eastern seas to India, with enjoyment to herself at any rate.

From Bombay, where the party were landed from the steamer, they took train for three days and three nights across India to Calcutta. Here once more trains had to be changed in the middle of the night. This time it was at Allahabad. It was long before the days of large and rapid liners, or of trains with modern lavatory equipment, air conditioning, sleeping-berths or electric lighting. The imagination boggles. There must have been some provision on the train for washing, because the pomegranates laid in at Bombay for the journey were put into the wash-basin for preservation. It was also long before any precautions were taken against contaminated water. In spite of all the dangers, the party came safely at last to anchor

BEVERIDGE AND HIS PLAN

in the house in Ballygunge Road in Calcutta where their headquarters in India were at that time established, and where Henry, William's father, and Herman, his baby brother, awaited them. William was now seven and a half years old.

There followed four years of family life spent between Calcutta and Darjeeling. The English governess did not stay very long, and in her place, to the delight of the children, Fräulein Vögel was brought out to join them again in India. She shared Willie's education with a number of masters brought in from schools and elsewhere, and with his father, who undertook his Latin and Greek. The works of Euclid appear to have been assimilated at the age of eight. At seven he had been introduced to the game of chess. As his father, his only available opponent, was apt to be engaged in the law courts for long periods of the day, he had recourse to the books setting out the famous games of famous players, acquiring in this way much lore about the subtleties of the game. He was presented with a handsome set of chessmen by his mother on his ninth birthday. About this time he wrote and illustrated *The Story of an Indian Coolie*, a work carefully preserved by his mother and still extant. When it is remembered that these years were spent largely in the sweltering climate of Calcutta, with respites in the hot season in Darjeeling, there is little that is surprising in learning that a serious illness overtook him in the autumn of 1889 in his eleventh year. It was never diagnosed and lingered on for months, under experimental and fortuitous treatment which happened not to fail. With vitality far beyond the ordinary, he worried through. So concentrated and fantastic a régime would have been too much for most boys, even if the Indian heat had not also been added. He did in fact inherit from both parents great physical toughness. His father lived to be ninety-three years of age and his mother to be eighty-seven, both having endured some of the worst climatic conditions to be found in India, in their various stations in Bengal.



A solemn Puck at Darjeeling, 1886

The children entered into the social life of their contemporaries to the full wherever they happened to be. There were such festivities as the children's fancy-dress party given at Christmas by a neighbour at Darjeeling, for which they were prepared by being taught to dance the hornpipe—Willie wearing a black velvet suit to impersonate Puck, while his sisters went as fairies.

But the illness which fell upon their son decided his parents that their plan of keeping their young family in India must be relinquished. It was not only Willie who had caused them serious anxiety, but his young brother Herman too. He had succumbed to some form of eastern fever which retarded his speech, and plans had to be laid for the children and their mother to leave India for good. They came home to England in March 1890, leaving the head of the family to continue his period of service until the retiring age.

The party landed at Plymouth and, once more on the move, proceeded to a hotel at Dawlish, from which they passed to a furnished house at Ilfracombe while the vital decision could be taken for a permanent residence in a situation where the education of the children could proceed at English schools. Eastbourne was finally chosen, and Craigmount, a large pleasant house in an ample garden, was leased.

It was furnished and servants were hired. One of the rooms was just not large enough to take a billiard table, which was duly installed, with shortened cues to allow of play at each end. What it was for is obscure, for the head of the family, who played the game but badly, was bound to be in India for the next few years, and it is hard to imagine the three children and their mother passing the evening in a game of snooker.

Here, in Eastbourne, at last Willie settled down to the routine life of an English schoolboy at a preparatory school called Kent House.

E. M. Forster, a contemporary, was among the pupils. There was also the traditional bully, name now forgotten, who

saw in the shy youngster with the unusual upbringing an easy prey. It was quite a walk from Craigmount to Kent House, and gave plenty of time for kicks and blows. But the bully had not reckoned with his victim's mother, who, learning at last the reason for the dishevelled and discouraged condition in which her son was wont to return, one day descended on the home-coming party. She made it abundantly clear that she was prepared at once to take the law into her own hands and to administer summary and condign punishment, if necessary. In this encounter, as in many others, the threat was enough. Like all bullies, this one cringing fled, and Willie walked thereafter in peace. Some boys might have been furiously annoyed at her proceedings. But what Annette did was law, and acquiescence was habitual, for the effort of writing to make objections, which if spoken found a very deaf ear indeed, was too formidable.

Life at Craigmount had scarcely begun when little Herman died. His Indian fever was beyond the medical profession. The same year, a beloved aunt was killed in a carriage accident in her own avenue. Then the servants fell ill with typhoid fever, and it was discovered that the drains were defective and had to be dealt with *de profundis*. There seemed to be no end to the disasters.

At the end of two years at Kent House, Willie won the second place in the competition for the Entrance Scholarships to Charterhouse and went there in September 1892, at the age of thirteen and a half. The same year his father retired finally after thirty-five years of active service in India. The family was at last united in England as a permanency with high hopes for the future of the three remaining children.

But once more it was plunged into grief and sorrow. Letty, the first-born, and by all accounts the most promising of the children, died suddenly from influenza in her sixteenth year. For both parents it was a stunning blow. To Henry it must have seemed as if the fates had marked him out. When tragedy

brought to an end the one year of his first marriage, and his wife and baby had died, he had buried with them in the little grave a part of himself which had died with them. It was with a broken heart that he had offered himself two years later to Annette, who knew the story of Barisal. When Annette's first baby came joyfully into the world with no hazard either to her mother or herself, they called her Laetitia to mark their happiness. She grew through childhood with no sign of anything but normal health, and with every sign of more than common ability and strength of character. To lose her at the time when girlhood was passing into the new and winning phase of young maidenhood, with all her promise seeming to yield its reward, was hard indeed.

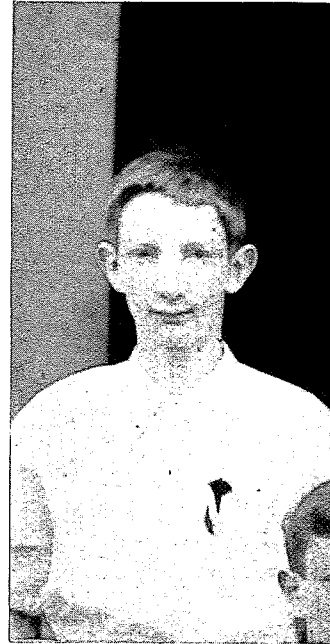
Willie came home from Charterhouse to a grief-stricken family, himself dismayed with grief. Between him and Letty, so near together in age and all their interests, there had been a close companionship.

For a time they were all three inconsolable, and it seemed that Annette could not drag herself out of the tragic vein. Henry never ceased to mourn the loss of the first-born and by him most beloved child. To the end of his life, even when his son was bringing home his sheaves, he spoke of her promise as far greater than his. It was to her son that Annette turned. He became the centre of her interest and hopes, and he, on his part, found in her the repository of his interests and hopes. The bond that binds a son to his mother is universally understood to have a special sanctity. But here, over and above this natural tendency, William's desire to make up to her for everything and in particular for her deafness so that she might not be excluded from anything that she could share with him, and on her part her need to solace herself for the loss of her eldest and youngest children, gave the relationship an unusual intensity and poignancy. Henry persuaded her to go on with her oriental studies and to learn for this purpose, after fifty, two new languages—Persian and Turki. He had taken the

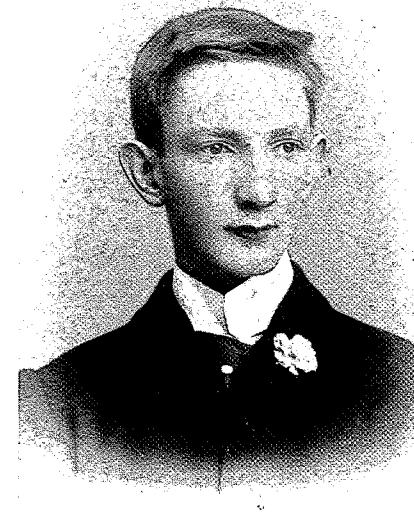
BEVERIDGE AND HIS PLAN

right line, for it became an absorbing interest for her during all the rest of her long life, and brought her to an honoured place among scholars in her field. From Persian she translated first the account given by Gulbadan, daughter of Babur, conqueror and first Mogul Emperor of India, of her brother Humayun's luckless reign. In Turki Annette went on to Babur himself and from newly found manuscripts made a fresh translation of his famous autobiography. Henry stood in the background of her work, bringing his own scholarship to her support, helping her with the language and keeping her to the right interpretation, making up to her at every turn for her deafness, becoming indeed both her ears and often as well her eyes. Their industry was tireless. In England, the Indian habit of early rising with the dawn continued, and both would be well on with their work on their books by the normal time for the British breakfast. To their schoolboy son on his holidays the whole procedure was accepted as the usual, and he who had left India at eleven years formed this habit of his parents, in later life rising to his work with the daylight.

During his five years at Charterhouse there was a continual flow of letters between himself and his mother. The effect on William seems to have been to accentuate and increase the isolation from his English-reared young companions which his different experiences created, so that he grew up within his devotion to his family group and to his bookish pursuits, shrinking from the heartier and more physically dominated adolescents at his school. He was easily the best academic product of his year—first in the school both in the field of mathematics and in classics, eventually becoming automatically head of the school. But he did not shine at football or at cricket, nor was he able to be hail-fellow-well-met with all and sundry, and consequently found a contemporary appointed above his head as monitor of his house, a selection of his housemaster which confirmed him in his already formed low opinion of himself. No doubt it will be



A prize-winner in Unders Football



At Charterhouse, with
crooked tie

argued in favour of the housemaster that he conformed to the pattern of his time in which the admiration of nearly all masters and of all boys was reserved for the athletes. He was universally known as Duck, in allusion to his gait. He was unmarried, and a man of means, putting more into his house than he took out of it. The boys enjoyed a private lawn-tennis court, a private cricket ground from which they sallied forth to matches with the neighbouring villages, and many varied outings: among other things a party of them was taken in a private launch to see the Naval Review of 1897 and regaled with unlimited *pâté de fois* sandwiches and champagne. The company was far from intellectual.

In one of Willie's first letters home he described the Duckites as "the least dodgy house of the lot", meaning the least clever in the school. He showed his passion for statistical verification even in those days by studying the school list. "We have only ten fellows in the Upper School while Hodgsonites have twenty-seven," he reports.

The school curriculum was wholly classical, with a smattering of "stinks", French and mathematics, except for a small group—about fifty, being specially prepared for the Army.

Those who did well enough to reach the Upper Sixth had another ancient language added and were taught Hebrew, ploughing through Genesis with the Headmaster. On one occasion Willie wrote out the whole of the 23rd book of the Iliad (800 hexameters) as the standard penalty for the Duckites if they missed morning chapel.

Here again, as at Eastbourne, he encountered the boy with a passion for bullying. Long after, he accepted an invitation from the bully to go to his house to meet his wife, for whom he felt he was going to be very sorry. On the contrary, he found his schooldays' friend trembling at her nod; he was getting all that he had given and more. It must have been a great assuagement for sufferings at Charterhouse.

The only two masters in the school in revolt against athleti-

cism (apart from the French and German ones, who, of course, did not count) were T. E. Page of the VIth and Leonard Huxley, with whom Willie used to play chess, angering him once by beating him. Willie, typically, was not in revolt against athleticism. He accepted the established régime without repining, as he had accepted the dull days at Miss Lewin's school, even finding something good to say about it. He played all games to the best of his ability, being least bad at squash. He was half-back in a winning team of a Football League Competition for younger boys. In his last year he got as far as the House XI.

Writing to his mother from Oxford in his third year, William says:

... I should never look back to Charterhouse in the orthodox manner as the happiest time of my life, but I do feel a deep debt of gratitude to the public school system in general and the greater part of Charterhouse in particular. Unfortunately as I did not play football and cricket on a large scale I did not (among other things) get to know many masters (the connection though obscure is real) so that now there are really only very few people there with whom I have more than a bowing acquaintance. That however I can enjoy myself there I think I showed myself on my last visit which I found very delightful indeed. And now my dearest mother I must say that though I am afraid I am one of the many people who really find themselves far more at home in their college than in their school yet I am really fond of Charterhouse as a school and of one or two individuals now there. . . .

CHAPTER III

Oxford

Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

PROVERBS 31.9

WILLIAM had become the object of his mother's especial pride and ambition. She threw herself into every aspect of his life with the force and concentration of an unusually strong and dominating personality. It is difficult, indeed impossible, to say whether her ambition for him and her intense interest in his affairs and the consequent relationship to her made him the more or less solitary creature of his schooldays which he remembers himself to have been. That he was living in an intellectual medium far more concentrated and mature than is usual even in very gifted schoolboys is quite certain. It is a hazardous position to be an only son with a devoted and ambitious mother, and William did not in some ways escape. There never was, in fact, any need for her to spur him on. By nature he was the scholarly type.

The little family, now reduced from six to four members, was soon to be on the move again. Craigmount held memories too sad, and Eastbourne had no longer any *raison d'être* as a place of residence with William away at Charterhouse and soon to be passing on to the University.

The neighbourhood of Hindhead was chosen because Annette's sister, Fanny Mowatt, and her husband and two sons had a house there, where they lived in considerable style far above what was possible for a retired Indian judge. Pitfold was found, a happily placed little house looking south in the middle of ten acres of land, some of it pasture and the rest cultivated vegetable and flower gardens. There were even

two vine-houses with fine grapes. The structure was simple, the design being attributed to a local hairdresser. Henry and Annette bought it at sight and very soon Eastbourne was in the memory only and a sad one at that. Here they settled down at last, within easy reach of their Mowatt relations.

Ryder, the elder of the two Mowatts, like his cousin William, a few months his junior, was destined for the University. Fanny, his mother, discovered that there was an Akroyd Scholarship reserved for Founder's Kin, in practice for those who could prove legitimate descent from the brother or uncle of the sixteenth-century testator, William Akroyd, a canon of York who died in 1518. She, like her sister Annette being an Akroyd, immediately set out to prove that Ryder had the required kinship. It took time and money and persistence to establish the claim through the long line of descent from the fifteenth-century Constable of Wadsworth and uncle of the Founder and, of course, a number of snags turned up. Fanny, however, having started the hare, had no idea of giving up the pursuit. Undaunted, she gave her time and her money to the matter and set herself to unravel all the kinks in the genealogy. It was found that in 1763 Mary, a daughter of Jonathan Akroyd of Lane Head, Ovenden, had married John Bates at Halifax. In the same year 1763 a son James was born to them and baptised at Halifax; by family tradition he subsequently kept his birthday in March. The question was whether James was born in wedlock? That was the first problem, for descent of Founder's Kin must be legitimate. The second was that the name of James Bates, turning up in the records mysteriously, later disappeared completely. There appeared instead a James Bates Akroyd, of Birmingham, who was undoubtedly the grandfather of Fanny and Annette. But was he also James the son of John and Mary Bates?

On the first point Fanny, not knowing the exact date in 1763 when James' parents married, could not do more than

affirm her confidence that "James Bates was *born in wedlock*" even if born in March of the year of his parents' wedding. "There may", she added to the enquiring solicitors of the Foundation, "have been some previous informal marriage ceremony, or it may be simply due to the difference between the manners and customs of those days and ours."

On the second point, Fanny herself produced essential evidence in a bundle of family letters kept by her father, running from 1806 to 1826 and proving beyond question the identity of James Bates Akroyd with James Bates. He had changed his name after a quarrel with his father.

Fanny felt—not unnaturally—that, having taken all the trouble and met all the costs of the enquiry, if at last she should establish a Founder's kinship she had a first claim on the scholarship for her son Ryder. Annette, of course, and equally naturally, took a different view. There followed a bitter correspondence in which Fanny gave Annette the cryptic warning: "If you call John Bates' baby Akroyd you ruin everything." To do so, of course, would mean giving the child his mother's name, as illegitimate, in place of his father's. Fortunately, Annette avoided the temptation to call John Bates' baby anything. All she said was that if Fanny's Ryder was Founder's Kin so, of necessity, was his cousin Will. Later research yielded the required marriage date; William's great-great-grandmother, Mary Akroyd, became Mary Bates in Halifax Church on January 13th, 1763, two months before her son was born, and legitimacy was established.

The two lads sat the examination together, with the other claimant a young Etonian, with the result which Annette, of course, had foreseen if Fanny had not, that William won it easily. The breach in the family relations was final. Fanny never forgave William or Annette, although it mattered little to her or to Ryder, who needed no scholarships to enable him to go anywhere he liked, while William needed them very much. A year or two later Ryder tried again, and this time, the only

Founder's kin in the competition, was awarded the scholarship. But so deep was the rancour that Fanny looked the other way when she met Annette in the street. They rarely, if ever, spoke to one another again.

William's parents had decided that he should go to Oxford. At Charterhouse his schoolmasters had advised him to offer mathematics as his main subject in competing for awards to enter Balliol. It was not good advice. He had no doubt shown up equally well at classics and mathematics at the school, as was often the case in those days with the bright pupils. But it showed a lack of true insight on their part. He was not destined to be a great mathematician, although he did win a mathematical exhibition, and supported by it, the Akroyd Scholarship and a string of school scholarships and prizes entered Balliol in the autumn of 1897.

He gave his first year at the University to the study of mathematics and won a First in Mathematics Moderations at the end of it, in June 1898, but it had been a dull and unproductive year in other ways. To begin with, Oxford was not the University he should have entered with mathematical ambitions. To have done so brought him into a group intellectually segregated away from the real spirit of the place and into a discipline which was not his academic *métier*. It is one thing to shine at school in the approach to the recondite science in which the earlier stages do not in fact necessarily sort out with any clarity the born mathematician from the rest of mankind. It is a hazard to be a born mathematician: to be merely a good mathematician may easily be a disaster. Unlike the musician or the sculptor, the pure mathematician can only share his intellectual gift with a very few. It is not an art which lends itself to popular exhibition. Those possessing it and entering into the region of its more recondite manifestations not uncommonly fail in dealing with the day-to-day humbler things of life. The fascination of their abandonment seems to be a sufficient reward for themselves, as the pursuit

of any art for the great artist undoubtedly must be. But for William, with his natural tendency to absorb himself in his own intellectual pursuits, in this personal aspect apart altogether from his mathematical quality, it was the wrong entry into the University life.

With much surer prescience his college tutors advised him to divert his studies into the classical school at the end of his first year. "We don't think much of our mathematicians at Balliol," said one of the classical dons, who wanted to see this promising, if diffident, young undergraduate safely gathered into his own fold. This was fortunate, for William's true instinct was for the humanities, and there indeed he was at home.

After this false start among the uncongenial mathematicians he found himself in his second year savouring to the full the University life of those days. It was still the era of leisure for the well-to-do, and it was still never questioned but that the years spent at a public school and then at Oxford in the study of Latin and Greek were the most desirable education for a gentleman entering upon life.

The century of expansion and of hope was drawing to an end. The complacency of its years of peace, to be rudely shaken by the war in South Africa, was followed by a new kind of animosity into political relations at home, heightened by rumblings of discontent with living conditions growing continuously louder. These clouds which were to gather and darken the sky of the opening century now only rising above the horizon were a portent that only gradually sank into the consciousness of the people.

They were still halcyon days for the Oxford undergraduate, although the atmosphere outside was changing with a falling barometer.

For William, as for others, the tedious discipline of a conventional public school, filling the time with successive fatigues, had given way to the freedom which comes at the

University to use the hours of each day as seems best. It is the supreme test. The three or four years of adolescence and responsible manhood spent in the beauty of Oxford in the companionship of the same age-group, and under the guidance of older members and the spell of the traditions of the place, are for those who see their true value a formative influence of incomparable value and enjoyment. It is the pause which precedes the battle, when body and soul begin to mature and make ready for the assault. It is the period of personal responsibility before the shades of the prison house with its treadmill of a job have fallen.

There was nothing new or exceptional in the way William used his opportunity. Among the undergraduates proceeding to Classical Mods. and thence to Greats he found congenial companions. Apparently unaware that the last decade of the 'nineties had been naughty, they absorbed themselves in the classics and contemporary literature, taking their off time in the tennis courts and on the river, in discussion clubs and the Union, playing cricket or football as their taste decided, according to the tradition governing their period.

In the October of 1899 when, having won a First in Classical Moderations, William was settling down to the first of his final two years in preparation for Greats, things came to a head in South Africa. We were at war with the Boers, and a new era opened. The life of Oxford undergraduates, however, proceeded without any change. They could not escape from the excitement of the daily progress of the war and were soon like everybody else to take a lively interest in the doings of the principal war-correspondent of the *Morning Post*. The name of Winston Churchill was almost immediately in the news. Within a month of his arrival in the theatre of the war he had been captured by the Boers, and within another month he had escaped, was given a commission in Lord Byng's regiment and was continuing to send his reports for publication to his editor. It was a thrilling tale of derring do. This mighty

figure of our time was now in his twenty-fifth year and already not only a veteran of campaigns in India and in Egypt, but a writer of accepted reputation. He had retired from the army and turned his face towards politics. What the young men at Oxford probably did not then know was that he had also aspired to be one of them. He tells in his account of his early manhood how in 1899, after meeting a group of young Conservative members of Parliament "all highly distinguished at Oxford or Cambridge", he felt a call to make himself more like them when he should return next year from winning a polo tournament in India. So he began enquiries as to how he might get to Oxford, to listen to lectures and argue with the professors and read the books they recommended. He found, however, that admission even for those of riper years depended on passing entrance examinations, not only in Latin but in Greek; these formalities were indispensable.¹ So with keen regret after much pondering he put the plan aside.

If by any chance a college had been found able and willing to take a more liberal and enlightened view, the young men of William's year might have found him in their midst. He would have been their senior by three or four years. They would have had two years of tuition in the University to their credit. He would have brought into the debates and discussions a knowledge of affairs, with an interpretation of the humanities and a personality which would have fluttered the doves.

The descendant of the first Duke of Marlborough undoubtedly carried a Field-Marshal's baton in his knapsack, but the son of Lord Randolph Churchill preferred to pack a carpet bag with the outfit of a putative Premier. When the second world war threatened humanity this predestined leader, "suckled in a creed outworn" in the nursery of the hereditary governing class of the Victorian age, now sixty-six years of

¹ *My Early Life* by the Rt. Hon. Winston S. Churchill (Odhams Press, 1947), pp. 199-200.

age, took the stage in the double rôle of Prime Minister and War Lord, playing each part for the first time.

It is an endless source of fascinating speculation to wonder how the political history of the fifty years of his public life not only in England but to the far reaches of the world might have assumed a different aspect if he had been admitted to Oxford. Would he have listened as the men at Balliol at that time were listening to Caird, their Master? Would his imagination have been captured then by the conception of Social Service as the main objective for the politician seeking influence in the changing world of the new century? It was not until 1908, five years after he had left Oxford, that William, a shy young disciple of Caird's, first came into contact with the aspirant for academic experience four years his senior. The call for which William had been fumbling in his undergraduate days had come, and his service to mankind in the scientific study of social conditions was already taking shape. To the young Cabinet Minister in a brilliant Liberal Government with social reform in the foreground of its platform, William probably appealed as an instrument ready to his hand.

The group in which William worked and played included a number of names now well known. There was Augustus Andrewes Uthwatt, who rose at the Bar to be a Lord of Appeal and who gave his name to a report on land values. R. H. Tawney, who became his brother-in-law, long a professor of Economic History and the writer of a number of books, early joined the Labour Party, contesting an unsuccessful election on their behalf. H. W. Garrod, still a don and a leading character at Merton, was one of the outstanding scholars of his year, winning the Newdigate and many other prizes. In the first world war he came into the Ministry of Munitions to work in the Labour Supply Department, in a group of University dons, artists and lawyers who spent their time interpreting the clauses of the various Ministry of Munitions Acts.

Closest of all to William was Collings Carré, with whom he shared rooms in their fourth year and whose achievement and early death he described in *Power and Influence*.¹ Richard Denman, almost as close, took to politics and became the Liberal member for Carlisle, and Private Secretary to Sydney Buxton at the Board of Trade. William Temple, the great Archbishop and enlightened leader of the Church, was a life-long friend. Raymond Asquith and John Buchan, later Lord Tweedsmuir, and, most distinguished of all, F. E. Smith, were among those with whom Sir Winston Churchill would have found himself in debate at the Union and elsewhere.

In his third year William's sister was entered at Somerville. She had been for some time at a French school and had a considerable knowledge of German, so that it was natural that the modern-language schools should be chosen for the academic aspect of the adventure. Her residence in Oxford made all the difference to her brother, bringing him into the social life of her friends. Together they organised parties in his rooms, and punting parties on the river according to the customs of these days. He was a willing partner at commemoration and other balls, which he might not have attended without the stimulus of her company.

I expect Tutu has given you an account of our festivities so I will not say much about them now. I must thank you and Aunt Kate exceedingly for making my dress; it was most successful and I got the proper theatrical preparations for painting my face so I was quite all right; the only thing wanting was a pocket, for as I was I had no place in which to put my programme. We had very great fun though I don't quite know what part of a dance I like, for I don't think it is either the actual dancing or talking inanely in the intervals. . . .

What could it have been that he *did* like . . . ?

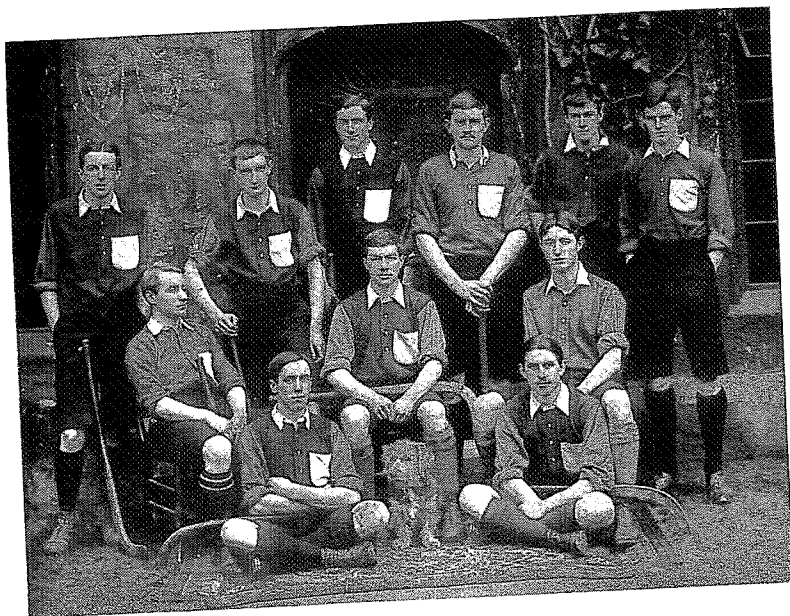
¹ Pp. 10, 36 and 427.

In William's day, as now, the long vacation for Oxford men stretched from the middle of June to the middle of October. There was no summer term for anyone, unlike Cambridge, where it was customary for the more promising men to go up for part of the "Long". The four months of freedom from keeping terms gave an opportunity for travel abroad which was then much the fashion. It was not exactly on the scale of the grand tour, but it was possible to range over Europe wherever the fancy led. The Universities of Germany, France and Scandinavia welcomed Englishmen as visiting students. There were no barriers to learning, no secrets in the discoveries of science, no limits to the interchange of knowledge. The results of research into new fields, whether science, history or philosophy, were freely exchanged.

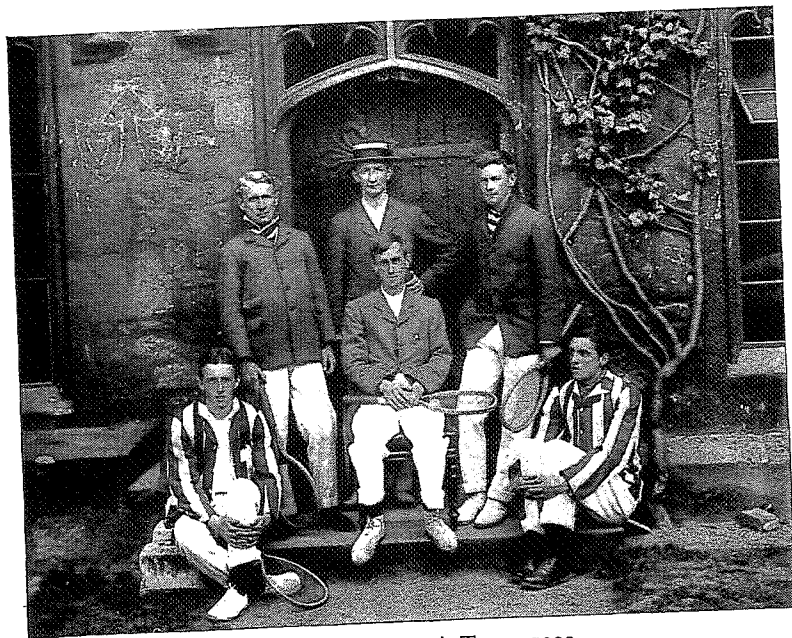
In Dresden, Leipzig and other German cities, English girls with musical ambitions went as a matter of routine to the conservatorium, and at the Sorbonne in Paris special courses were arranged for foreigners who could not take part in the systematic régime reserved for the French themselves. In all these centres of art and learning a cosmopolitan group of students was associated in the particular discipline of their choice. There were no passports carried and an English sovereign was currency anywhere. There was no Treasury sanction required defining the number of sovereigns the traveller could take. The whole of Europe was a holiday resort and a place of learning for all its members, whatever their nationality.

One of these holidays William spent in Norway with Richard Denman, Collings Carré and others, another with his own family in the Engadine. Switzerland above all drew him and his contemporaries, many of whom became Alpine climbers of repute.

The country life at home in the summer was a cheerful round of tennis parties and dinners, bicycle rides through the lanes—at that time a novel excitement—garden parties with



Balliol Hockey Team, 1900



Balliol Lawn Tennis Team, 1900

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croquet as a diversion, and dances to top off the evening. It was on a Christmas visit to his closest schoolfellow—Hugh Bell, at his home in Hampstead, when books by the fire were the order of the long evenings, that William, now twenty-two, was swept off his feet by reading *Middlemarch*. It was not exactly his first novel, but it was not far off it. The story of Dorothea and Will Ladislaw opened the floodgates. The wealth of Victorian poetry and fiction were now the playground of his leisure. Meredith, Browning read aloud while Mozart sonatas were played in the background, Matthew Arnold, Hardy, Tennyson, Wordsworth, Coleridge, the Brontës, and Mrs. Gaskell and all the rest, peopled the Elysian fields. "Meredith," his tutor expostulated, "is a very heady wine." It is, but that is what the young can take.

In his last year, just before Greats, William tried for the Craven, winning an honourable mention, and for the prize for the Latin poem and for the Newdigate prize. Both of these were won elsewhere. But the main preoccupation of every undergraduate in his last year is the final examination at the end of it. Beside it walks the other spectre of the career to be followed when its results are known, for the two are inseparable.

It is at this point that the question arises, what has the University graduate to offer, better than the man who goes straight into a job without it? There are the habits created by application to scholarship, the discipline of adapting himself to a society of men of his own age and ability, and the influence of the older members. To come under the spell of a great Master, such as Caird of Balliol, is a great piece of good fortune.

He preached lay sermons to the Balliol men about the Christian Ethic. He expanded his views of their duty in serving their fellow-men. He asked them to ponder over the unequal distribution of the world's goods, both physical and spiritual. At the same time his practical advice was that at Oxford their

first duty was self-culture, which should not be sacrificed in any way in the pursuit of philanthropy or politics. When this duty was performed, then it was permissible and desirable that those who were interested should try to discover why with so much and increasing wealth in the country there was continuing poverty. Others should go to spread the education that they had gained widely outside Oxford. The first half of this doctrine William observed religiously at Oxford, by sticking to his books. He never spoke at the Union (once only half-heartedly he tried and failed to catch the President's eye) and he joined no political clubs.

Bernard Shaw came to Oxford as a Fabian and William listened entranced, but he was not persuaded to join the Fabians.

Canon Barnett, who founded Toynbee Hall as the first of the University Settlements in 1884, in Whitechapel, went to the two ancient Universities for followers to join him in his settlement. He came himself to Oxford while William was there, describing it. He sent also to both the Universities parties of workers from the East End to stay for a day or two amongst the colleges. When they came to Oxford William helped to entertain them by taking some of them on the river in a punt. In 1901 he paid a visit to Toynbee Hall itself, the year he took his degree. The odd and interesting thing about all this is that he intimated to his parents during these Oxford experiences that he had no use for philanthropy and good works.

When it came to deciding on a job two bizarre suggestions were made to him. One, mentioned in *Power and Influence*, was his tutor Edward Jenks' invitation to him to devote his life to abstruse legal scholarship in editing the Year Books. The other, which has escaped record hitherto, was an invitation by the Master, Edward Caird, during a tow-path walk to make an independent investigation of Christianity for which a sum of money appeared to be available. William did not rise to this fly, but went away and studied the synoptic gospels word by

word and concluded that Jesus was a superman altogether beyond the comprehension of his disciples.

That William had been deeply influenced by the Master's lay sermons did in fact emerge later in his own choice of a career. But there is something very odd and intriguing in this proposal when it is considered that William was the unbaptised son of a declared agnostic.¹

At Pitfold Henry and Annette were canvassing the possibilities his tutors had suggested—entry to the Civil Service, Home or Indian, by way of the examination held by the Civil Service Commissioners. His parents came down for the Bar. He himself was drawn to the idea of the Indian Civil Service, but in the end consented to be called to the Bar, and to give it a trial. His father was pleased and satisfied. He had an immense respect for the law as a career.

The trial proved to be a very short one. Three months in Chambers devilling for an eminent leader convinced William that whatever else he did he would not pursue practice at the Bar as his profession.

¹ Recently William has mentioned this invitation and his reaction in a broadcast on "This I Believe" recorded for America. It may presumably in due course be published here.

CHAPTER IV

Toynbee Hall and After

Write the vision and make it plain upon tables that he may
run that readeth it. HABAKKUK 2.2.

IT was a far cry from the groves of Academe in Oxford to a Settlement in Whitechapel. The transit from the contemplation of service in the atmosphere of the Greek philosophers and the English poets to the work of giving it does not seem to have produced among the young enthusiasts who gathered together at Toynbee Hall any particular intellectual or moral strain. William at any rate regarded it as a continuation of his education.

The seed which was sown by Caird, the Master of Balliol, in William's undergraduate days was already producing a seedling plant by Christmas in 1902 when he threw up his chances at the Bar and accepted five months later the post of Sub-warden at Toynbee Hall, with the determination to find out for himself why poverty and distress existed side by side with such wealth and prosperity as this country was then enjoying. It was a great risk to take. In pondering over it at the time William registered in his mind that by his decision he might never rise beyond an income of £400 a year. That possibility did not seem to trouble him, and it may be said at once that the financial reward to be gained by any piece of work offered to him to do never had any influence throughout his life in deciding him whether to undertake it or not.

It was in 1903 that he became Sub-warden of Toynbee. The aftermath of the Boer War had brought a depression with serious unemployment. For the relief of men without work a Mansion House Fund had been raised. In the winter of 1903-4,

TOYNBEE HALL AND AFTER

in pursuit of his especial interest, William and his friends Maynard, Tawney and others at Toynbee Hall undertook the practical work of administering this fund by registering applicants for relief, investigating their conditions and deciding on whom to help. These thorough academic young men did not stop at giving the financial assistance for the moment, but set out to find later what good, if any, had been done in each case, why they had come seeking help, and how they were living apart from the particular crisis. For William, Unemployment as a sore in society which could not be cured by such occasional remedies as a Mansion House Fund, became his preoccupation.

For the whole of the forty years that followed until the publication of the Beveridge Report in 1942, by whatever means he took to secure an income to maintain him in his life, he found time to develop and mature his first research into the facts of poverty and insecurity to which he had dedicated himself.

In 1903, when he began these investigations, insecurity in its most desolating form of casual labour and chronic underemployment with practically no provision for its amelioration prevailed. Apart from a few hundred thousand skilled trade unionists, no insurance against it existed. Here was the problem he began to study and hoped to solve. As he says in *Unemployment, a Problem of Industry*:

Every one has seen in a window at times the notice, "Boy Wanted". No one, it is safe to say, has ever seen in a window the notice "Boots Wanted". Yet people in fact want to buy boots as much or at least as often as they want to buy the labour of boys. The contrast just noticed indicates a deep-reaching difference of industrial methods.

He invented labour exchanges to be the first line of attack on the "giant Idleness".

The purpose of Labour Exchanges is to substitute a market for unguided hawking from door to door as the means of

bringing the would be buyer of labour and would be seller together.

They became the King Charles' head of nearly all his writing and speaking, whether public or private.

Meanwhile the Mansion House Fund of 1903-4, which launched him on the problem of unemployment, had been followed by the London Unemployed Fund of 1904-5, and that by the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905 under which distress committees were to be set up in London and elsewhere to help the unemployed without the stigma of the Poor Law. In anticipation of this, the *Morning Post* sent a correspondent to discover how things were looking in East London. The correspondent, not unnaturally, went to Toynbee Hall as the most probable source of information, and reported, quite wrongly, that in advance of the official distress committee a register had been established there:

An unofficial list has been started at Toynbee Hall and when I called there yesterday afternoon three poor fellows—who, if they were “unemployables”, did not look the part—were handing in their names. . . . They were fairly young men, broad-shouldered and well set-up, but the pale haggard faces of two of them gave one the impression that they would need a few good meals before they would be capable of much hard work.

There was in fact no such register as this article described, but the article itself began to produce a flood of applicants to Toynbee Hall. William as Sub-warden wrote to Fabian Ware, the Editor of the *Morning Post*, asking him to correct the article. Ware, who had just been appointed, answered by telephone inviting William to luncheon, and then and there asked if he would join the *Morning Post* as leader-writer on social questions. After consultation with Canon Barnett, William accepted the invitation and ceased to be Sub-warden. The invitation, of course, was not based simply on the luncheon conversation.

Ware had read articles by William in other papers, and through Spenser Wilkinson, the chief leader-writer of the paper, had heard Edward Caird's recommendation of William.

For the next three years, from 1905 to 1908, the *Morning Post* suffered from him a continuous deluge of reminders that what society in England needed above everything else was his invention of labour exchanges. This advice penetrated into the most unlikely of leaders, but was never rejected as far as is known by the editor of the paper. The sheer persistence with which he played his tune made it impossible not to sit up and listen. He preached the doctrine in his evidence to the Poor Law Commission and converted among others Beatrice and Sidney Webb. He also took every chance that circumstances provided to address meetings on the subject, so that the name of labour exchanges became a household word. Their establishment in this country was finally due to the fact that he had convinced Beatrice and Sidney Webb at a weekend at Ayot St. Lawrence in August 1907 and through them had convinced Sir Winston Churchill at a historic dinner in March 1908.

Though labour exchanges were William's first plank for dealing with unemployment, he never suggested that they were enough by themselves. By July 1907 he was exploring in the *Morning Post* and elsewhere the possibilities and methods of unemployment insurance. And he was making himself an expert on all other forms of insecurity—sickness, old age and industrial accident—and on the methods taken in other countries to deal with them.

In August 1907 he went to Germany to study personally the German systems of social insurance dating from Bismarck in 1889. On this occasion, as on many more of vital importance, his power to converse with the German people in their own language made all the difference. His mother's preference for a German governess and her sojourn with her young children

at Nöer were a determining factor on occasions of international importance in William's later life. He came back from his visit to Germany finally convinced of the merits of contributory insurance against sickness, old age and industrial accident, and relentlessly hostile to means tests for old age pensions.

Any scheme of old age pensions must be free from the attempt to make their enjoyment dependent upon poverty. Otherwise it does become no better than a new form of Poor Law relief. . . . It gives people a reason for remaining poor in old age. If the only effect of having saved privately is to reduce the pension paid publicly, the motive for saving is deliberately destroyed. The paradox of paying pensions even to the comparatively well-to-do is more tolerable than that.

Leader, October 11th, 1907.

When the Government Bill of 1908 for non-contributory means test pensions at seventy was under discussion in Parliament, William to his stream of critical leaders added in May 1908 two special articles on Old Age Pensions by Contribution as an alternative to the Government Bill. These articles show as seedlings several of the ideas which came to fruit a generation later in the Beveridge Report of 1942. They begin, for instance, by countering the objection made by Mr. Asquith to a contributory scheme of pensions that under it no benefits can be enjoyed for twenty years or more. "The answer . . . is that it is perfectly possible to make concessions at the beginning of such a scheme to those who have already grown old or infirm." The "golden staircase" of 1942, under which pensions as of right should rise gradually to their full rate over twenty years with assistance to meet hardship meanwhile, already shows its shape.

They go on to answer objections to the administrative machinery of contribution, as exemplified in Germany. "The

three absolutely distinct systems of compulsory insurance—against sickness, accident and infirmity—each with its own complete set of authorities, certainly suggests a love of administrative machinery for its own sake. No one does suggest or need suggest any such complications in this country."

By 1942 the piecemeal development of social security in Britain had led to a welter and duplication of authorities as extravagant as could be imagined. The spirit of William's article of 1908 reappeared in the unification and simplification of social insurance that was a feature of the Beveridge Plan.

The articles end by facing an issue of contribution or non-contribution "far wider than that of provision for old age":

In some way or other the State must get hold of its individual citizens, must know much more about them, must make them actually and consciously part of the social organisation.

A non-contributory pension scheme sets up the State in the eyes of the individual as a source of free gifts. A contributory scheme sets up the State as a comprehensive organism to which the individual belongs and in which he, under compulsion if need be, plays his part. Each view involves abandonment of traditional *laissez faire*. The first, however, represents a change for the worse which it will be hard to retrieve. The second is a natural recognition of the growing complexity and inter-dependence of industrial life.

The central argument of the Beveridge Report, for contribution as against largesse, was fully fledged in 1908.

Whether Lloyd George read any of William's articles in the *Morning Post* is not known, but the arguments for contributory insurance put up in the Old Age Pension debates in the spring of 1908 led him to visit Germany himself in August 1908, just a year after William had been there. He returned

enthusiastic for the German system and started his campaign for National Health Insurance in October 1908.

Meanwhile, in the background of his other preoccupations, William was writing his first book. It was an analysis of the industrial system with special reference to recurrent periods of unemployment on a wide scale. The disease was diagnosed and the remedy expounded. Before it was ready for publication his labour exchanges and his conception of insurance against unemployment had already been accepted by Sir Winston Churchill. For some considerable time the Board of Trade had been trying to secure the services of this remarkable young social scientist, throwing out offers of a bewildering variety of jobs. William however was chary of accepting the chains of the Civil Service and clear that he would do so at any price for one purpose only. It was not until Sir Winston Churchill as President came down on the side of labour exchanges and asked him to come in to prepare and carry out legislation for their establishment that he succumbed to their, or rather to his, blandishments.

It was in the Toynbee Hall days that I made William's acquaintance. My husband, David Mair, whose mother was also a Beveridge, was his second cousin once removed, and ten years his senior. One Sunday morning in the spring of 1904 he came down to Banstead, where we were living and raising our family. The first two of them were still at the perambulator stage. As I wheeled them home from their morning outing, I caught sight of a young man loping along the path towards me. He was loosely built and badly dressed, but he had an air which put him in the interesting class at first sight. Pitfold, his parents' house at Hindhead, was within easy motoring distance of Banstead even in these days, and after William bought his first car—a two-cylinder Riley—in the summer of 1908, he would pick some of us up now and then to drive over for a night or a weekend. It was always an adventure; the distance was easy, but the motoring was not.

The construction known as the Cárden shaft had a way of coming apart, and as the car could not function until it was reunited with its bearings, the passengers were apt to spend long periods of rest on the wayside. Cars were open then, without any form of protection from rain or snow, dust or wind. But who would have missed the excitement and the thrill of pounding along at twenty miles an hour, or even twenty-five, eyes streaming, hair blowing and hat rocketing in the wind in spite of veils and spear-like pins to hold it on? These occasions were in fact rare, for William then as ever since was absorbed in his work in London. His absorption in the amelioration of the conditions of the working classes, as they then were known, was a familiar state of mind to me. My father, a Gladstonian radical, spent his reforming passion in building model dwellings and closing down the only too many redundant public houses in his neighbourhood. It was therefore congenial to me to form an audience on labour exchanges, and the decasualisation of dock and other labourers. It was in the same tradition, if by a new approach.

Beatrice Webb in her diaries of this period describes William as a young man of ugly manners. I think it was not exactly that he had ugly manners but that he was so absorbed in his own line of thought that he did not notice the feelings of other people who failed to interest him. It was a bad fault, never wholly cured, and made enemies for him quite unnecessarily and sometimes disastrously. I saw an altogether different side of him making an immediate conquest of my little children, taking infinite pains to delight them in original and successful ploys. He was always successful with small children. For myself, living then in a small Surrey village on the small income earned by my young husband, a member of the Civil Service Commission, his infrequent visits opened out a new world for contemplation. It was not only his vision of an ordered world, but also his delight in poetry and fiction that made his company congenial in our household. We took to

reading the *Morning Post* and followed his leading articles with immense pride in this rare type in the Beveridge connection. The Beveridges, we said, were either rich or intelligent, but never both. We ourselves certainly were not rich.

At Pitfold I saw his endless patient thought for his mother, who was by then practically totally deaf. She depended almost wholly on the written word. To bring her into conversation at the dinner table or during a game of bridge would be his chief preoccupation. It was laborious and difficult, although her quick intelligence met him half-way. To the end of her long life he continued to make her a party to all the changes and vicissitudes of his own, writing to her almost daily, spending much of his holiday leisure in motoring, which was her great delight. Together they went on expeditions that ranged across the hills and dales of England and Scotland. His manners were never ugly for her.

The book, *Unemployment, a Problem of Industry*, which was to mark an era in economic presentation, was published on the 6th of February 1909, on the same day as the birth of my youngest child. I spent the leisure of the next fortnight in reading it.

William's mother, Annette, had soon come round to her son's choice of a career, although at first it was against her more conventional views of a profession in the accepted sense by her generation. As his reputation grew, her ambitions for him became satisfied. The importance put upon his work by such an exalted body as the Board of Trade removed from her mind any lingering fears that he might become a mere professional philanthropist. He was not her son for nothing. He inherited her hard-headed common sense, applying it to social reform if not to his own social advancement. He had in fact no use for the sentimentalist. He described casual employment and casual charity as evils of the same kind—making possible a debased and debasing way of life. He wrote for the *Morning Post* an attack on the Salvation Army's midnight feeding on

the Embankment which Fabian Ware thought too savage to publish; the editor of the *Spectator* took the same view as Fabian Ware.

The reception of William's book was a source of deep satisfaction to Annette. Every review was faithfully docketed, a work of loving care. I understand now so much better than I did then how just her pride and satisfaction were. Her son was twenty-nine years of age and had had no training in research or in economics, and now already he was accepted as an economist with an original contribution to make which was based on indisputable factual evidence, a rare enough combination at any time. I wish I could pay a tribute to Annette's memory by using at length the contents of these press cuttings. There are too many of them for that, but I add here what Professor D. H. Robertson wrote at the time of the publication of the amplified edition in 1930:

The disabilities imposed on teachers and students by the long absence from our shops and shelves of Beveridge's *Unemployment* have at length been terminated, and it was worth waiting for. The multifarious labours which have denied to the author the opportunities of an earlier recension have at least had this advantage—that the new book has been finished off and presented to the world at a moment when the great slump and the final disintegration of the Insurance Scheme have combined to raise the problems both of the diagnosis and of the treatment of Unemployment to a maximum of interest and urgency. And for the form of the volume (an almost verbatim reprint of the book of 1909, with another book of two-thirds of the length superseded), there is this, if there were no other, supreme justification. There are a few books (*The Wealth of Nations* and *Lombard Street* leap to my mind) which have not only recorded economic history but made it, and which on that account can never be out of date however much facts and

opinions change, and should therefore be accessible intact to future generations. To this rare class there can be no doubt that the 1909 *Unemployment* belongs. It has been a delight to the present reviewer to renew the impression formed by a beginner twenty years ago, that this was one of the very best possible books on an economic subject—perfect in its balance of abstract analysis with statistical evidence, and of both with practical wisdom, and rightly rewarded by its swift and decisive effects on official policy and on the welfare of thousands.

Annette's grief for her beloved daughter and the little brother faded into the background as the succession of events brought her surviving son into prominent recognition. A month or two after the book was published, her surviving daughter was married to William's friend of Balliol days, Harry Tawney, and went to live in Manchester. The Pitfold household was reduced to three. The whole of Annette's maternal ambition was more than ever concentrated on her son. She was a forceful woman of strong opinions, and she did not suffer opposition in any sphere easily. She was apt to consider it within her sphere to order the smallest details of his life, particularly in his choice of friends of both sexes. Anxious mothers gave up asking him what his adventure at Toynbee Hall was leading to now that he had brought his craft into a safe harbour. If Annette suspected danger, she was apt immediately to form a bodyguard to prevent the intrusion of any ephemeral interest and the pleasant young ladies in question with an eye to her son would retire discomfited. For his own part William seems to have found it easier to get on with women older than himself. For one of these, Mrs. Rose Dunn-Gardner, in age a generation between him and his mother, engaged like himself in voluntary local government work in London, he formed a lasting friendship. She understood and liked the earnest youth, breaking with the conven-

tions of his class and time, and helped him through his first experiences in the field new to him but grown familiar to herself. Nothing could have been more salutary for a young man with no companionship of his own generation within the family. She might have been that most desirable of all relatives—his maiden aunt. In fact, she was a childless widow whose own grief was the premature death of a beloved husband.

His entry into the Board of Trade in July 1908 plunged him immediately into responsibilities which many of the ablest of civil servants never experience. He was called upon not only to frame the Act establishing his labour exchanges and to see it through the Commons and the Lords, but also to set the labour exchanges up throughout the country and to man them. Later he took the brunt of the work of preparing the legislative measures for establishing unemployment insurance. The creation of his labour exchanges began during the months when Sir Winston Churchill was President of the Board of Trade, but Sir Winston soon moved on into higher office so that it was with his successor as President, Mr. Sydney Buxton, later Lord Buxton, that this second Bill was piloted through the two Houses. There is a fascination which I came myself to understand later in this parliamentary work. The precision required in the clauses of a Bill is confided to the care of the parliamentary draughtsmen of Whitehall, a formidable body of experts. But it rests with those creating the Bill to see that its intentions, limits and spirit are correctly translated by the legal draughtsman into their statutory form. William was in his element here, as I learned when I had the luck to be associated with him and the other civil servants concerned with the first and second Ministry of Munitions Bills in the early days of that amazing improvisation.

Lloyd George in 1909 was dealing with health insurance and he was understood to be lukewarm if not unfriendly to unemployment insurance, as he frankly was to labour exchanges, in their case siding with the business men who

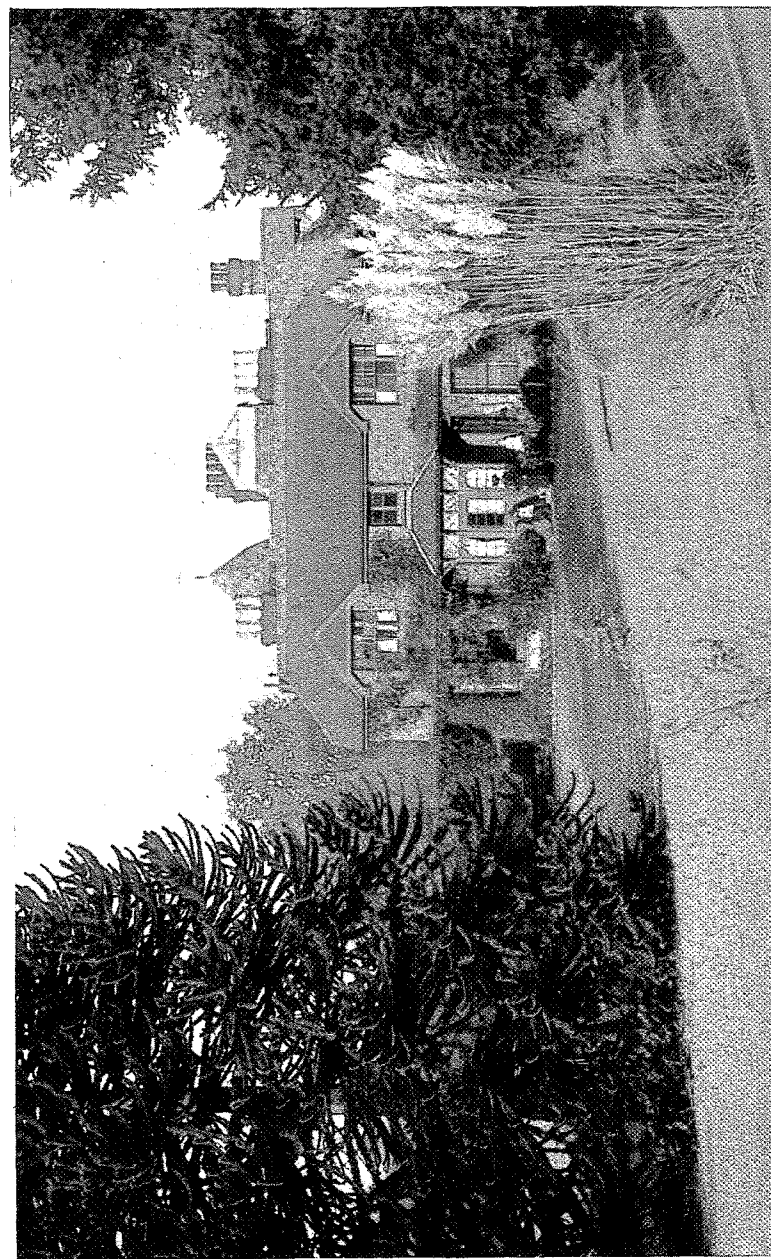
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wanted to be let alone in their extravagant use of man-power. He changed his tune about labour exchanges when the first world war came and he found them indispensable.

Lloyd George decided that the legislation for health insurance should come as the first part of a joint Bill, with unemployment insurance as Part II. Part II was drafted and ready long before Part I. It had consequently to be held up until Part I was out of the way, and did not become operative until 1911. For William both measures were the first steps towards his conception of a comprehensive insurance scheme for all and everything, already tentatively adumbrated in *Morning Post* leaders.

Perhaps the happiest years of all for the Pitfold trio were the busy, productive and successful period for the son, the apple of his mother's eye, between his entry into the Board of Trade and the outbreak of the first world war. At first he lived in a little transpontine flat overlooking a park in Battersea where the parents could spend the night when they came to town on their affairs. They were both engaged in literary work.

After a year or two William left Lambeth to take up house in Chelsea with his friend Richard Denman, whose first marriage was showing signs of breaking up. When indeed it did so, the two moved to Campden Hill, where my husband and I had brought our family so that the girls might go to St. Paul's Girls' School. In the course of the next few months William found himself obliged to find quarters of his own, and in the spring of 1914 he moved into 27 Bedford Gardens, a charming little Georgian house in a garden. For his parents as well as for himself the move brought great happiness and comfort. At the weekends Annette opened Pitfold with its lovely gardens to William and his friends. In the country it was still the world of tennis parties and summer dances, the last few years of a dying era. In London the theatre was drawing delighted and excited audiences for Shaw, Galsworthy and Barrie. The Court Theatre in Sloane Square was the



Pitfold, Hindhead

resort of the Chelsea intelligentsia for the first nights. Granville-Barker and Lillah McCarthy were acting the leading parts. Charlie Chaplin with his bowler hat was acting his devastatingly comic slap-stick silent films. Bloomsbury and the Cubists were hardly as yet recognised as a menace. The Georgian poets (published in volumes of selected examples by Eddie Marsh, that Peter Pan of Whitehall private secretaries) and such thunderers as Mr. Orage and Mr. Nevinson for-gathered in the Kibblewhites' house in Soho so alluringly described by De Morgan in *Alice for Short* and now pulled down to give way to modern flats. Mr. Wyndham Lewis produced at least two issues of a magazine bound in purple named *Blast*. Mr. Epstein had already become famous for his arresting early works. The Russian ballet was transforming the dress of the artistic young; Stravinski came to London to conduct his own music for the ballet *Le Rossignol* in the spring of 1914. Two months after that first performance, war had come to transform the world.

CHAPTER V

War and Aftermath

A land of darkness as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.

JOB 10.22

WILLIAM had invented the labour exchanges for peace. They were destined to prove indispensable for war—in 1914-18 and 1939-45 alike. But this destiny was not recognised in the first months of World War I; the slogan was business as usual, not total war. After putting through a few special tasks, William and his merry men found themselves less busy than they desired. "We chiefly do odd jobs—help a little with relief; help a little with supplies of timber and pit-props; concern ourselves a little with refugees and so on." William himself, just after he had written this to his mother in September 1914, found time to suppose that he had an inflated heart and to take a course of baths to cure it. The real cure came happily later, through his having no time to think of anything but endless work in the Ministry of Munitions and the Ministry of Food, the two most original creations of World War I. But the Ministry of Munitions did not come till May 1915 and the Ministry of Food not till December 1916.

On the outbreak of war the reorganiser of the War Office, Lord Haldane, the greatest War Secretary in our history as Douglas Haig called him, had been replaced under press and political clamour by Lord Kitchener. The new War Secretary launched an appeal for volunteers to form Kitchener armies. The appeal was indiscriminate and immensely successful. Kitchener was regarded by the great sentimental public at that time as a heroic figure in the superhuman category, just as Sir

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Winston Churchill came to be regarded in World War II—with better reason. Kitchener's name was enough, coupled with the highly decorative and much rejuvenated picture of him in full regimentals displayed on posters in every street of the United Kingdom. Recruits poured into his armies, and out of the skilled trades. The labour exchanges department of the Board of Trade, who were being appealed to at the same time to supply additional skilled men to the armament firms, became very much perturbed. They sought an interview with Lord Kitchener, and a deputation was duly received.

Lord Kitchener sat four-square facing the civil servants from behind a massive office desk on which no papers of any kind were seen to repose. He listened with rock-like imperturbability to the explanations made. The deputation begged him to avoid recruiting for his armies the skilled men who were desperately needed for employment on munitions of war and to release those who had already been accepted. Whenever a pause occurred for his answer, he said: "I cannot release or refuse anyone. I must have the men to fight the Germans with." Every effort was made in the simplest terms to infiltrate into his mind the fact that the men must have guns to fight the Germans with, that an army was of no use without guns and munitions and other equipment. His answer was always the same.

In the end it took a new Ministry, the first wartime Ministry ever improvised, to settle that difference. In that new Ministry, the Ministry of Munitions, conceived and set up in June 1915 by Lloyd George, William found himself at once in the thick of things. He became the first Assistant General Secretary in charge of the Labour Department of the new Ministry; with him the whole labour exchange organisation turned over from peace to the realities of total war.

Revolutionary changes in the traditions of the War Office, both on the side of regimental practice and of munitions contracts and the use of man-power which had been found

necessary and had been well and truly resisted by the established hierarchy of the time, were gradually effected, and put into practice.

On the death of Lord Kitchener in June of 1916 Lloyd George became Secretary of State for War and Mr. Montagu came to take charge of the Ministry of Munitions. As usually happens on such a changeover, rearrangements in administrative personnel at all grades took effect.

It is the opportunity for the intriguer—an all too well-known type in Whitehall as elsewhere—to set about his own promotion. When William went off for a holiday in September 1916, a plot which had been brewing came to a head in his absence. He came back to find that, ostensibly to meet the requests of Mr. Runciman, the President of the Board of Trade, who had in fact been continuously urging this, Mr. Montagu had agreed to release him to return to his department. He was thus cut off from all but formal connection with the Ministry of Munitions. It is to the credit of one of the plotters, who is now dead, that he afterwards wrote a letter of apology to William.

The turns of the wheel of fortune can never be foreseen or their results fore-judged. The cost of living, to which Mr. Runciman proposed that William should now attend, suddenly took the political field. An Inter-Departmental Committee on Food Prices set up to investigate the rising cost of food had issued an interim Report early in September. The 17th of October was set aside for a debate in the House of Commons to consider it. I was at this time acting as William's private secretary, a post which I had held for a little over a year, having taken it on when his two male secretaries, young civil servants, had joined the fighting forces. It fell to me in that capacity to write the first letters written on food control and prices to the various departments in accordance with a recommendation in the Report. With Sir Hubert Llewellyn Smith and William I went to the House to listen to the debate from the Ladies' Gallery, in which by that time I was at home.

It was not until after the passing of the Sex Disqualification Removals Act and my own promotion to the charge of a section of the Ministry of Food that I was permitted by the Speaker to sit in the Official Gallery behind the Speaker's Chair. William tells me that when I did so in February 1919 I became the first woman to sit in the House of Commons Chamber on the same floor as the members; although one woman member had been elected in December 1918, she was a Sinn Feiner representing an Irish constituency and never attended. My presence gave great excitement to the Press Gallery above me and Ministers came to shake me by the hand, by way of congratulation.

But in October 1916 I was still a lady in the Ladies' Gallery. It was a momentous debate. Mr. Runciman took the attention of members off the immediate concern by giving them for the first time an insight into the calamitous shipping losses from enemy submarine action. As I came away from the House on my way home, walking through the cloisters towards the Westminster Underground Station between my companions at the debate, I begged them to forget about the submarines and pay attention instead to the views of the housewives who were dangerously up in arms at the scarcity and bad distribution of food and its high prices. I was severely put in my place and silenced by the Permanent Secretary. I did not, however, intend to be silenced. The next morning I found that William had come to my conclusion. He had prepared the clauses of a short Bill giving the President of the Board of Trade powers to control the distribution and prices of food. It went to the parliamentary draughtsmen and was printed, but it never got as far as the first reading, although Mr. Pretyman, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, favoured it.

Meanwhile, events were following one another in a rush. In a second debate on Food on the 4th of November, Sir Winston Churchill made a dramatic call to action on the lines

of William's little Bill, which of course he had never seen, and demanded the institution of a Minister of Food with a relevant Ministry. Mr. Runciman, moved at last but timorous about piloting a Bill through the various stages in the House, accepted responsibility for the Board of Trade by taking powers under the Defence of the Realm Regulations. He found himself for the first and last time the cynosure of every eye, the most important and most popular Minister of all. Thus was inaugurated a form of government new at the time. And here again, by the grace of God, I found myself helping William to inaugurate a new department to cope with the business waiting to be done. It was a full-time occupation indeed. While staff was gathered together, Clause 2 GG of the Defence of the Realm Regulations, under which it had been decreed that action was to be taken by the embryo Ministry, had a busy time. All thought of the decasualisation of labour and extended unemployment insurance faded away for the time being into the limbo of cold storage—of which in passing may it be said it was found there was far too little for the preservation of essential foods. As for William, with the persistent good grace with which he has met all the vicissitudes of his life, whether favourable or the reverse, he threw himself into the new job with vigour, thoroughness and success.

The history of the Ministry of Food when Lloyd George, who had used its potential institution as one of the reasons for supplanting Mr. Asquith in the premiership, did in fact inaugurate it, has been fully described by William, from its Gilbertian period under Lord Devonport until its disappearance some months after the Armistice, in a volume of the Carnegie Endowment's *Economic and Social History of the World War I*.¹ The story does not concern us here.

General questions of social reform had naturally to give way under the exigencies of war, and with the term "full employment" but inadequately describing the need for men

¹ *British Food Control* (Oxford University Press, 1928).

to fill the jobs, unemployment insurance was not in the minds of preoccupied men, whether politicians or business organisers or trade union officials. But it never left William's reforming mind. As things settled down into the dreary routine of the four long years of trench warfare, he decided that this was the heaven-sent moment for extending unemployment insurance beyond the few trades covered by the Act of 1911, with their two and a half million workmen. With high wages and regular work during the war, contributions would not be felt as a burden by anyone, and practically nothing would be spent on benefits: a large reserve would be built out of hand. But when peace broke out, when swords had to be beaten back into ploughshares once more, when the limitless demand of the Government for every form of equipment ended, severe and general unemployment looked like being inevitable. William felt the need and saw the chance of getting practically universal insurance. Early in 1916 he drafted a Bill which, under the guise of insuring munition workers, brought in the whole of many trades and might have been extended by order to almost every trade, because no trade was without some munitions work. He persuaded his departmental chiefs to father the Bill, and the House of Commons and House of Lords let it through while they were thinking of what they regarded as more important problems. Then the fun began. As William put it, "Employers and work-people engrossed in prosperity would not look beyond their noses."¹ One trade after another—cotton, wool, boots and shoes and so on—rejected any extension of unemployment insurance to themselves; they would not have unemployment to speak of, and if they did they would know how to deal with it. At a conference in Bradford in August 1916 William was congratulated on having united the two sides of the wool industry more completely than ever before—in opposition to himself and all his works. When William told me of this I comforted him by saying that

¹ *War and Insurance*, p. 232 (Carnegie Endowment).

at least he had made the finest woollen combinations in history. The net result of his effort in 1916 to make unemployment insurance general was the addition of 1,000,000 to the numbers already insured.

William's next attempt to get those in power to look ahead to unemployment after the war had no better success. The Ministry of Reconstruction asked him to be Chairman of a Committee on Unemployment Insurance, pressed him to produce a report at a time when he was working day and night on the rationing scheme that killed the London queues. When, in spite of this, they received the Report signed on February 12th, 1918, with a scheme for nearly universal insurance, they failed for more than two years to do anything at all about it. Unemployment insurance was made general in November 1920, four and a half years after William's first attempt, two and a half years after his second attempt. An overwhelming depression was already upon us. "The generalisation of insurance came too late to have any chance of meeting the needs or being carried out according to plan."¹

Long before then it had become clear to William that he stood little chance of returning as an official to his first love of preventing want, dealing with it by insurance. When Lloyd George's reformed Coalition Government was established in December 1916, another new Ministry to which he found himself committed as a condition of Labour support, namely the Ministry of Labour, took over the whole labour activities of the Board of Trade under Mr. Hodge, a Labour Minister, with Mr. Shackleton as Permanent Secretary. William was cut off in 1916 from the department which he had invented and controlled since 1909, and by the end of the war it became clear to him that this separation was final.

When the Armistice was proclaimed in November 1918, as Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Food William was faced with the dreary task of winding it up. A rapid exodus

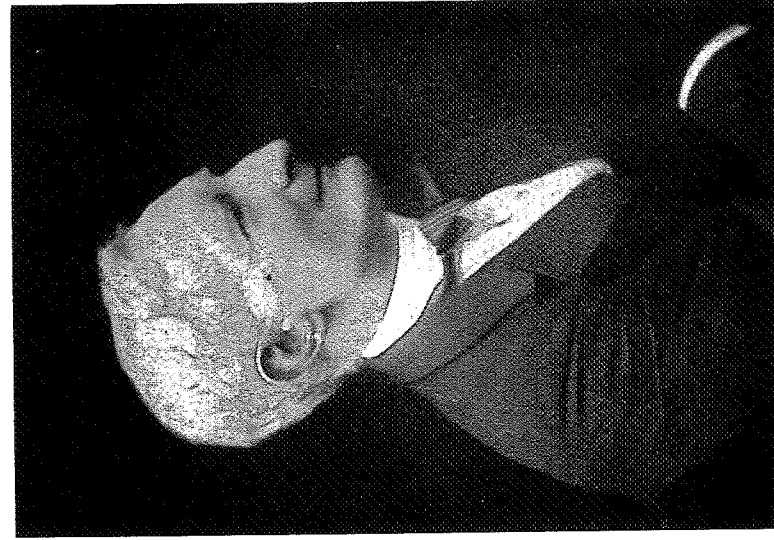
¹ *War and Insurance*, p. 241.

of business men who eagerly abandoned their efforts for their country to re-establish their own concerns in the free atmosphere of peace, left him with a decimated department. In the spring, soon after he returned from a short attendance at the Peace Conference in Paris, Sidney Webb put an unexpected proposal before him. He and Beatrice had decided that the London School of Economics needed a full-time and distinguished Director, and he invited William to fill the post. This invitation came at an opportune moment. Whitehall, with his own child torn from him, had no attractions. Sidney Webb had added the bribe of describing the Directorship as a job that would leave him ample time to pursue his own line of Social Research and to write as many books about it as he liked. William accepted and was formally appointed with acclamation to begin his new work with the opening of the session in the autumn of 1919. Sidney Webb had been wrong about the leisure which the administration of the School would leave the new Director. William found himself for the fourth time inventing a new department. It was becoming his rôle, it seemed. This time he had the hope of creating something permanent and, above all, free from the changing political atmosphere which was the constant menace to progress in Whitehall.

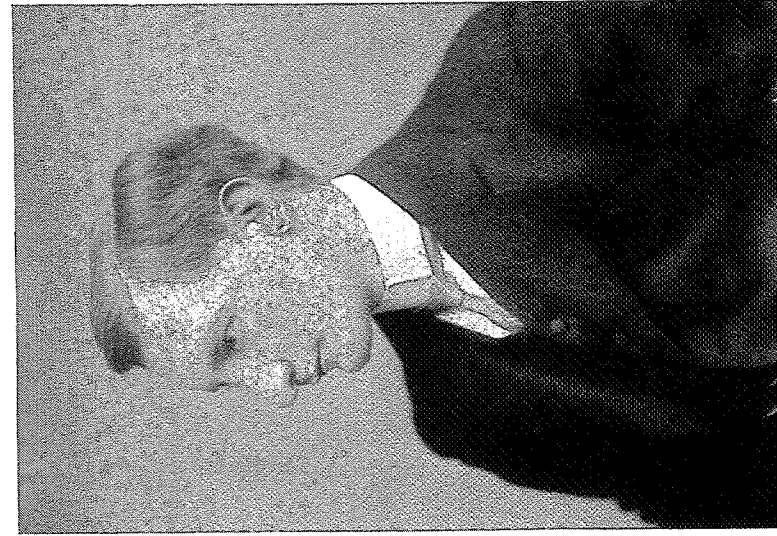
It was a strange thing to observe the Ministry of Reconstruction, for example, presumably invented to create a new and better world, busily pigeonholing the schemes put forward to this end by those whose experience in the war had taught them that they were essential to a good and also safe new Britain. Housing schemes for the workers worked out by the Housing Department of the Ministry of Munitions were never heard of again. Schemes for adequate cold storage at the docks, for a reform of road and railway facilities, the redistribution of the population away from London and other large towns, and many other obvious reforms, making for security in war and improved conditions in peace, all went

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by the board. The officials, like the public, generally turned their gaze backward rather than forward. No one realised, it seemed, that the pre-war world had gone for ever. It had certainly gone from Whitehall. The infiltration into its own particular school of administration by the business man with his altogether contrary practice left a permanent mark. Of the institution of new Ministries, like the writing of books, there seemed to be no end. The work of the Civil Service Commission in stocking them with adequate recruits has taken on strange aspects in the name of applied psychology. One reputable change, the entry of women into the highest grade by examination on an equality with men, is a notable reform on the positive side; in time no doubt they will also be paid for what they are doing on an equality with their colleagues. Who shall venture to say whether the changes since 1914 have been advantageous or not on balance?



Vice-Chancellor of University of London, 1928



The young Civil Servant, 1909

CHAPTER VI

A Foretaste of the Plan

For a man's mind is sometimes wont to tell him more than seven watchmen that sit above in an high tower.

ECCLESIASTICUS 37.14

ALTHOUGH in the years between the wars his preoccupation not only with the "refoundation of the School of Economics", as Sidney Webb described the work of his directorship, but also with its new relation to the University of London, had to come first, William never wholly disengaged his mind from social insurance.

The fate of William's attempts during the war itself to get unemployment insurance made universal has been described already. Towards the end of 1923 he returned to the general problem of social insurance against insecurity in all forms with the eagerness of a lover for his first love. As often happens when a problem of absorbing interest lies dormant for a time in the mind, when it is brought to conscious life again it is found to emerge enriched by a kind of spontaneous development. This was apparent when William published in February 1924 as one of a series of New Way pamphlets organised by the *Daily News*, a plan for *Insurance for All and Everything*. This plan fell short of its successor of nearly twenty years later in being neither so unified nor with so high a scale of benefits. But true to its name it was comprehensive; it covered everybody and all the main risks to security—sickness, unemployment, industrial accidents, old age and the death of the breadwinner—on the contributory principle. It took as its goal a verse from the Psalmist:

I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

The most important positive innovations involved were the introduction of widows' and orphans' pensions; contributory pensions from sixty-five to seventy when the existing non-contributory pensions began; and replacing workmen's compensation at employer's risk by contributory insurance.

As eighteen years later in the case of the famous Report, *Insurance for All and Everything* became immediately a best-seller. It appeared at a time of great public and political interest in social insurance.

The pamphlet was featured by all the newspapers and the weekly publications. Leaders and articles poured out, and letters appeared from all over the country arguing about it, offering improvements, claiming the ideas by other people for plans of their own. Pensions for the old, pensions for widows, with and without children, reverberated through the press. They became the subject of vote-catching devices for all the political parties. Everybody got busy to show how they could do even better than Beveridge.

Mr. Asquith in a speech at Plymouth on February the 23rd commended *Insurance for All and Everything* warmly and was followed by many Liberals—Lord Emmott, Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, Mr. C. F. G. Masterman, Captain Wedgwood Benn, Mrs. Wintringham and others. Sad to relate, the father of social insurance, Lloyd George, was not among the friends of William's 1924 enlargement. He was afraid that the method of administration proposed would rouse opposition from the industrial insurance companies and he was not prepared to face that. The Labour Government of that day were not among those who welcomed William. They did not, before they disappeared in the Red Letter Election of October 1924, do more than make a minor improvement of pension rates and appoint a Royal Commission on Health Insurance—which reported to their successors in 1926. William had drafted a Bill in May 1924 to give effect to part of his plan, and hoped to get it discussed in Parliament on a motion by C. F. G.

Masterman. That opportunity was lost. It was not until July 1924 that he decided to publish this Bill as a supplement to the *Nation and Athenaeum*.

Of more practical importance than the action of the Liberals were the evolutions of the Conservatives then in Opposition. They decided that they must do better than the Liberals who had espoused Beveridge. They announced in April 1924 a plan of pensions for all, altogether more generous than William's in the pamphlet. This appears to have emanated from an unofficial Committee of Conservative M.P.s with Sir John Marriott as Chairman. They called in to their assistance as an expert adviser Mr. T. T. Broad, a former Liberal M.P. who was the author of a project of his own for All-in Insurance. Mr. Broad's scheme was received with as much interest as William's both by the press and by the public. They may have been said to share the publicity between them. William was backed by the *Nation and Athenaeum* and Mr. Broad by the *Spectator*, and so on. The general reader was apt to favour Mr. Broad; naturally, for he promised much higher benefits than William in his more soberly calculated plan.

In May Mr. Baldwin announced officially that the Unionist Party had accepted the principle of "All-in National Insurance against the risks of ills of life", presumably including pensions and everything else.

Sir Winston Churchill at this time was in the political wilderness making his devious way back to his first love in political parties as William had returned to his first love in social reform. Having lost his seat at Dundee as a Liberal in November 1922, Sir Winston Churchill had failed as a Liberal Free Trader at West Leicester in December 1923, and failed again as an Independent with Conservative backing at Westminster in March 1924. For the famous Red Letter Election of October 1924 he returned formally and finally to the Conservatives. When on November the 4th Mr. Baldwin, Prime Minister once more, was forming his Cabinet, he asked Sir

Winston Churchill, who this time had at last won a seat, to become his Chancellor of the Exchequer. Having regard to Mr. Baldwin's declaration in the spring made while he was in opposition and to what he said later in his election manifesto, action on a large scale by the Conservative Government on contributory insurance was expected. Sir Winston as Chancellor took the opportunity to make the announcement of their policy in his Budget speech of April the 28th, 1925. But he did more than outline the scheme of contributory pensions for widows and orphans and old age which Mr. Neville Chamberlain as Minister of Health was to introduce in a Bill three weeks later. Sir Winston revealed at last "who dun it". He said that two years before, Mr. Baldwin, when Prime Minister for the first time in 1923, had appointed a committee of experts—they were in fact civil servants—with John Anderson, now Lord Waverley, as Chairman, to examine the possibilities of pensions before seventy, then the statutory age, and for widows; he explained that through subsequent elections and changes of Government the Committee had continued to labour in secret "in the deepest recesses of Whitehall", amassing an immense amount of material and information. "The scheme of insurance we have decided to inaugurate has been erected on that basis."

Mr. Snowden in his autobiography¹ throws another light on the history of this incident:

The Budget was memorable for two announcements which were not revenue proposals. The first of these was a return to the Gold Standard and the second a scheme for the establishment of a system of Widows, Orphans and Contributory Old Age Pensions. The latter was not strictly a Budget proposal at all, but Mr. Churchill could not resist the temptation of personally claiming credit for this scheme. He spent a long time in his Budget Statement in elaborating

¹ Published in 1934 by Ivor Nicholson and Watson. The three passages quoted here are on pp. 721, 636-7, and 230.

this measure down to the minutest detail, and then left it to Mr. Neville Chamberlain to take charge of the Bill and to pilot it through the House of Commons. This Widows and Orphans Pensions Scheme was based upon a plan which the Labour Government had prepared and which they would have introduced that year if they had remained in office.

Mr. Snowden also records that when he was making his own first speech as Chancellor in the Labour Government in the spring of 1924:

A Labour member had secured first place in the ballot for Private Members' Motions, and he had selected the subject of Mothers' Pensions. This was a subject which had come into prominence in recent years, and all political parties had committed themselves to the principle. Mr. Dukes, the Labour member who put forward this motion, introduced it in an extremely able and reasonable speech. In my reply I expressed on behalf of the Government much sympathy with the motion, and mentioned that, although we had only been in office a month, we had already had this matter under consideration. We had called in to help us in framing a scheme some of the chief experts in their various departments, and they were already investigating the subject.

I expressed belief that the House of Commons would sympathise with my position. I doubted, however, if there were ever a Chancellor of the Exchequer in a position more unfortunate in one respect than that in which I found myself. I was expected to do all kinds of impossible things. . . .

I had not yet had sufficient time to overhaul the national finances and get them into a sound condition. When I found that I could provide the money I promised that Widows' Pensions would be one of the first measures to which I should apply the resources which would then become available.

This motion was carried unanimously. I may here antici-

pate events by mentioning that the following year our successors brought forward a contributory scheme for Widows' Pensions, which was based upon the Report of the Enquiry to which I have referred.

It is interesting to note that when a Bill for contributory pensions was in fact taken through Parliament by Mr. Neville Chamberlain for the Conservatives the following year, the Labour Party showed that they were set on non-contributory pensions provided wholly from the Imperial Exchequer.

Sir Winston Churchill's name does not appear among the names of the sponsors behind the Bill, and after his Budget speech he took no further action in Parliament about it. The contrast between Sir Winston and Lloyd George, who also as Chancellor introduced a Contributory Insurance Bill in 1911, could not be more striking. Lloyd George, with Mr. Sydney Buxton's help on Part II, for insurance against unemployment, fought this Bill through at every stage with his passion for reform. It could never have reached the Statute Book without the untiring effort of these two Ministers, fellow-campaigners in a great forward action.

When that historic battle was over, for the two parts of the famous Act of 1911 were innovations in legislation, breaking the ground and preparing the way for subsequent enlargements and improvements, Mr. Buxton wrote to William:

December 17th, 1911.

My dear Beveridge,

Now that "Part II" has actually become an Act, I must write you a line of very warm congratulation on the event.

To you, and to H. Smith, the country owes a deep debt of gratitude for the inception of the measure, for working it out, for its careful modification, and for its successful passage through Parliament.

You may well be proud of your handiwork; for in all essential particulars the Act is the Bill as introduced.

As regards my own share, which was a minor one, it has been a *real pleasure* to work with you in such a matter as this; this co-partnership has made much of the satisfaction I feel in the whole affair.

I hope you will have a good holiday. You badly want one.

Mr. Buxton never at any time claimed the reform as his own: he gave the full credit where it was due. I quote again from Mr. Snowden's autobiography a reference to these enactments of 1911:

I say this now, after twenty years of experience of the National Health Insurance Act and the Unemployed Insurance Act, that these two measures, with the amendments which have been subsequently made, are the two greatest measures of social reform ever placed upon the Statute Book. The Unemployment Insurance Scheme has, I believe, saved this country from revolution in the long trade depression we have had since 1929.

The Conservatives' scheme for contributory pensions in 1925 had in fact been framed by the cavemen while Sir Winston Churchill was out in the wilderness trying in one way and another to get back into Parliament and into the haven of the Conservative Party. It was not by any means the scheme which in opposition they had foreshadowed with the help of Mr. Broad. It was altogether less flamboyant and financially more practical. Mr. Broad was very angry and told his story in a letter to the *Spectator* on May the 9th. Eighteen months before, that is in November 1923, when Sir Winston was wooing West Leicester as a Liberal, it seems he had expounded his own plan to him and thought it had been accepted. But now he complained bitterly: "Mr. Churchill has chosen to adopt the Beveridge scheme."

As consolation, Mr. Broad and the Conservative Committee whom he advised were mentioned with praise in Sir Winston's

Budget speech and thanked for their labour. Sir John Marriott, the Chairman of the Committee, said in debate during the progress of the Bill through the House of Commons:

I very much doubt whether we should be discussing this scheme this afternoon, at any rate with popular approval, if it had not been for the preliminary work done by Mr. Broad. But I am afraid I must confess, like my Right Hon. Friend, that I have come to the conclusion that the basis which Mr. Broad selected for his scheme was not actuarially sound.

But William's pamphlet of February 1924 was not mentioned at all. When he produced it he had never heard of Mr. Broad or the scheme he had presented to Sir Winston Churchill in 1923. He was, of course, in complete ignorance of the subterranean and deadly secret Committee of Experts, whoever it was who had appointed them. He knew nothing of who they were or what they were doing or what they were experts in. They, however, knew or could have known all that was in the pamphlet, so that it is hardly to be wondered at that Mr. Broad thought that William had invented the scheme finally put forward.

Annette watching this odd and intriguing story unfold itself was, like Mr. Broad, very angry at its dénouement, but for another reason. She thought that William should have got at least some of the credit. And so of course he ought; she was perfectly right—he ought probably to have got quite a lot. But he soothed her and told her that what Sir Winston had set out was very good.

"I was never consulted nor expected to be," he wrote.

"The interesting thing to me is that in most details so far as I know them the scheme agrees with mine. That doesn't necessarily mean that they took the ideas from me, but it's pleasing as suggesting that what I said is sensible."

One thing which was in William's pamphlet but did not appear either in the Civil Servants' Report or the Government scheme was the proposal to make Workmen's Compensation for accident part of contributory insurance. This was left in its old muddle until the Beveridge Report tidied it up in 1942.

The patterns spun by Clotho for William and for our great Prime Minister show their paths briefly converging again at this time on the diverse problems of coal mining and the University of London.

In August 1925, Sir Winston Churchill as Chancellor of the Exchequer on behalf of the Prime Minister, Mr. Baldwin, then enjoying his annual cure at Aix, invited William to become a member of a Coal Commission with Sir Herbert, later Viscount, Samuel as Chairman. The other members were Sir Kenneth Lee and Major-General Sir Herbert Lawrence. Sir Winston did not much like the comprehensive report which they issued in March 1926, although it was produced in record time. He complained that it did not tell him how much a miner earned and he disapproved of the proposal to nationalise the royalties.

The Government nevertheless expressed readiness to accept the Report in principle if the miners would accept it. But the miners would have none of it and they were supported for a time by the other unions in a general strike beginning at the end of April. It is interesting to record that the measures for fighting the General Strike were to all intents and purposes those prepared by the Ministry of Food during the war to meet any national emergency preventing the normal distribution of food and other necessities. They were based on a complete rationing scheme, including the use of all means of transport by road waggons under the protection of the troops. The existence of a defensive plan prepared to the last detail and kept in the closest secret enabled the Government to take immediate decisive and altogether unexpected action to

prevent the country from being starved out when they were threatened by a general strike designed to paralyse the whole national machinery of day-to-day life.

In June 1926, as William has recorded in *Power and Influence*,¹ he became Vice-Chancellor of the University of London and concerned in the rescue of the Bloomsbury Site on which the Senate House stands today. This involved deputations from the Senate to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who gave a financial start to the Bloomsbury operation by handing over to the University half the £425,000 that he had just recovered for the site from the Duke of Bedford.

It was not until 1928 that his other preoccupations both with the development of L.S.E. and as Vice-Chancellor with the affairs of the University of London gave William sufficient leisure to bring his original survey of unemployment insurance and labour exchanges up to date. His child had been growing up during the nineteen years since the appearance in 1909 of his first published work on the subject. He had observed from outside what had been happening to his offspring from whom at the age of seven he had been dissociated as an unsuitable parent, and from what he had seen, he thought he would in fact have done better for it himself. He did not like the look of this adolescent. Indeed, he told the Royal Commission on Unemployment Insurance set up in 1931: "The present system of Unemployment Insurance bears no resemblance at all either to the practice of Trade Unions or to the scheme of 1911 that was meant as an extension to it." And again: "All interest of employer or of workpeople in reducing unemployment has gone. Glaringly the scheme has become in many cases a means of subsidising casual industries and insufficient wages. In the past I have often had occasion to speak of insurance, popularly miscalled the dole. Today I am afraid that it might be truer to speak of the dole, officially miscalled insurance."

¹ Chapter IX.

He was well prepared to give such evidence by the two years of study which he had just given to bringing out in 1930 the second and enlarged edition of his book on Unemployment. The new edition gave in two long additional chapters the history of labour exchanges and unemployment insurance from their birth. It had been received with enthusiasm by economists and informed social reformers alike.

In the review published in the *Manchester Guardian* of 2nd October 1930 these interesting paragraphs occur:

The book of 1909, written before Parliament established unemployment insurance and labour exchanges, was the theoretical justification of the policies adopted by the Government in 1909—the organisation of the labour market, insurance against unemployment, and the steadying of the demand for labour—and Sir William Beveridge was appointed as the chief executive officer to carry them out. He can look back with experience, and now with detachment, on the manner in which those policies have been executed, and offer a judgment on their success or failure. His survey raises painful reflections. It is easy to be wise after the event, but no one can look back without serious misgivings on the way in which the constructive and remedial sides of unemployment policy have become submerged by a well-nigh indiscriminate system of public relief.

As a contributory cause to unemployment we are told that we should grimly recognise "the beginning of a permanent shift in the economic balance of the world, transferring industry from the coal of these islands to competing sources of power elsewhere". Here one can only summarise the argument, without going into Sir William Beveridge's extremely suggestive chapters on these points.

Many of the reviews refer to this most prescient forecast of trouble to come from the "shift in the economic balance of the world" which is being so painfully experienced by Britain at the present day.

The Report of the Commission on Unemployment Insurance was issued in 1932 and led to the Act of 1934, which, with other things, established the Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee, of which William was invited by Oliver Stanley as Minister of Labour to be the Chairman. In this way he was called back to official dealing with insurance.

The U.I.S.C., as the Committee came to be known, was strictly speaking only concerned with unemployment insurance, but its work brought into relief the widely differing rates and rules of benefit in the various social services, and strengthened the case for co-ordination. It also gave William the occasion for dealing repeatedly with the T.U.C. Social Insurance Department and creating the friendly relations with its members which became so important in the intimate consultations later undertaken in the launching and the framing of the Beveridge Report. It brought home to him also the strength of the popular demand for security by insurance.

The depression begun in 1921 had developed into the deep and continuing depression of 1931. These conditions had brought about a complete change of heart in the trade unions which had so summarily rejected the Bill which William, foreseeing just such a contingency, had brought to their consideration in 1916. Now everybody still outside unemployment insurance wanted to come in; agricultural workers, share fishermen, private gardeners, non-manual workers above income limit like actors, professional footballers and many more.

Perhaps the most important thing about the U.I.S.C. was its practice of open consultation of the public affected by unemployment insurance.

His first statutory report includes these statements:

There remains one point which we wish to emphasise in concluding our first statutory report on the general scheme of unemployment insurance.

Under the Unemployment Act of 1934, at every point of our proceedings, whether in preparing proposals for insurance of agricultural workers under Section 20, or in reporting on regulations under Section 19, or in reporting on the financial condition of the Unemployment Fund under Section 17, we are required by statute to give public notice of our intentions to make a report and to consider any representations thereupon made to us by interested persons. We attach the greatest possible importance to this requirement and we desire to honour it in the spirit as well as in the letter.

We believe that this means giving to those who are interested in the insurance scheme whether as contributors or as beneficiaries, not merely the formal right of making representations, but full information as to the working of the scheme. They should be able to make representation in the light of as much knowledge as we can give of the extent of the resources available, of the various uses to which these resources can be put and of the considerations which seem to us important. The successful working of unemployed insurance is a vital interest of all who participate, as contributors or beneficiaries, and should be felt as a conscious interest. We have welcomed the opportunity of setting out as fully as we could in this report both the facts and the considerations that we have before us. When we come to make our next report, whether or not economic conditions then allow us to recommend improvements in the scheme, we shall welcome full and frank discussion of all we have said.

When any question of a regulation, or an extension of insurance, or of finance of the fund, or any other relevant

thing was going to be considered by the Committee, they were required formally by statute to give public notice of the question so that interested persons and bodies could express their views. The Committee in practice went much further than the bare requirement, in making consultation of the public not a formality but the corner-stone of their work; they recognised that what was important was not the opinion of seven unnamed people sitting secretly in a room in Whitehall, but the fact that no opinion should be expressed without giving all interested parties a chance of making representations "neither to a preoccupied Minister nor to permanent officials without constitutional responsibility".

The practice of open diplomacy in relation to the public was in striking contrast to the procedure described by Sir Winston Churchill as leading to the extension of social insurance in 1925—by secret lucubrations of officials in the recesses of Whitehall.

It was a forecast of the way in which the Beveridge Report of 1942 was made—by the maximum of consultation with the persons likely to be affected.

Again it was not the procedure which commended itself to Sir Winston and his Government in 1943, immediately after the Beveridge Report was published. There history repeated itself. The Government set up a Committee of Experts—seven civil servants—to lucubrate anonymously in the deepest recesses of Whitehall, during the turmoil of war, as the Committee of 1923 had lucubrated through the turmoil of General Elections, and to produce after nearly two years of retirement the White Papers of September 1944. Bureaucracy, not democratic consultation, was the relevant watchword.

The complete candour with which they were treated and the patient investigation of every representation which they made, made a lasting impression on all who came before the Committee, creating an understanding altogether free of the suspicion of officials. The bond then created stood William

in good stead when he was engaged in 1942 on his final report. In a pamphlet published by the L.S.E. in 1937 which he wrote setting out the work of the U.I.S.C. in its first three years is to be found a detailed survey of the progress made in the first three important years. It reveals information never before obtained or tabulated of every type of occupation, with no dark or remote corner of the structure of society left unilluminated. It shows a dissection of society into its minutest constituent parts yielding a discovery unequalled before of the general conditions of the life of the people, with all the reasons for insecurity against want and distress. It records the recognition that rescue from avoidable distress would depend above all on a much wider conception than that of merely legislating for insurance against unemployment.

It presents the case which William first sketched out in 1909 in his first book on Unemployment and brought him one step further towards the Beveridge Plan.

William's Chairmanship of the U.I.S.C., bringing to him continuous understanding of problems of the security, lasted ten years from 1934 to 1944. It continued through his change of principal occupation in 1937 from being Director of the London School of Economics to being Master of University College, Oxford. It continued through the change from peace to renewed war in 1939, and up to and through the enquiry which led to the Beveridge Report in 1942.

CHAPTER VII

Green Street

I made me pools of water.

ECCLESIASTES 2.6.

WHEN Annette expressed her indignation against the authorities for giving no credit to William for his pamphlet of 1924—*Insurance for All and Everything*—she was already in her eighty-fourth year. Time and oncoming illness were beginning to blur the keen edges of her remarkable mind and to slow down her equally remarkable physical powers. For some years her son had recognised the fact that he would have to protect both his parents from the difficulties of dealing with the burden of a country house with fairly extensive grounds without adequate service either indoors or out. Annette's deafness even in her younger and more vigorous days had been apt to lead her into misunderstandings with cooks and plumbers, and now under the exigencies of the new attitude of such members of the community after the first world war, the complications began to assume distressing proportions.

The pleasant house in Bedford Gardens had been sufficient while his parents were still regarded as making Pitfold their home and London their pastime. It was too small for the three on a full-time and permanent basis. A more commodious house was found near by with more and larger rooms and Pitfold was kept as a possible occasional retreat. For the next few years, in spite of his crowded official life, the two old people were William's care and preoccupation. Annette was still eager to seek new experiences, and long expeditions by car with William diverted and invigorated her. Above all,

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they gave her her son to herself. As the final years of her life advanced this became a first consideration. By long practice her husband and her son had created a technique of conversation with her in what had come now to be practically total deafness. But to the inexperienced conversation wholly written on one side presented alarming pitfalls. The whole matter was the more alarming in that she kept the written pads to ponder over at her leisure. But, on the other hand, the fact that she did so has proved invaluable to her son again and again in bringing back with accuracy the dates and circumstances of an incident. They were testing years, but by William uncomplainingly passed. For him his first consideration was to give ease and happiness to his parents, and especially to make up to Annette for her inability to hear. To this end he passed on to her all his written work, seeking her criticisms and comments so that she felt and enjoyed to feel that she had an especially intimate co-operation with him. In the early spring of 1929 Annette died. Through the last fatal illness, which fell upon her some months before, her son was with her, patiently day by day hoping for a moment of conscious recognition although for many weeks she was altogether unaware of it. The bonds which bound them together had not loosened for him while they had ceased with all other consciousness to be felt by her, so that when at last they fell away irrevocably with her death his sense of bereavement was overwhelming.

The summer before, my youngest daughter and I while on a holiday had come across a little house on the downs above Avebury which was in the market. It took my fancy at first sight. I rented it furnished for a moderate sum for six months to try it out. At the end of that time I entered into an agreement to buy the freehold and to gain full possession. Meanwhile, in fulfilment of an arrangement made before his mother's death, William sailed for America. He had become Chairman of a committee of academic experts from English

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and foreign Universities gathered together for the preparation of an international history of prices on a compendious scale. He was himself responsible for the British volumes. In order to consult important British records he went to Pasadena, where he spent a month at the Huntington Library, which had acquired the rolls of some of the most interesting of the English manors, including Battle Abbey. He left his father, now alone and rapidly failing, in the care of an elderly companion. It was to our great happiness that he was within reach of our own house on Campden Hill, for it made it possible for me to see him day by day. Not long after William's return from America he too died, in his ninety-fourth year.

The only change which I felt called upon immediately to make at the little house at Avebury was to give it a new name. The name given to it by its previous owner was "Abri de Paix", and a bronze nameplate had been affixed to the gate to the avenue to inform the public of her choice. It was decided to call it Green Street. This was because the acre and a half of land around it at that time was bounded on the north by the oldest road in England called Green Street in the records. The displaced nameplate remained as an object of mirth to our visitors. On its other aspects the house lay open to the downs, and to the fields of a neighbouring farmer. Its front of two large bay windows with an open porch between them looked south over a wide view beyond the valley of the Kennet to the Wansdyke. Although it was only a quarter of a mile from the heart of the small village of Avebury, no other building was in sight. To me and my family it seemed the perfect retreat from London at weekends and other holidays.

A year or two later I purchased first an acre of land from Lord Avebury on our western boundary, and after that the paddock of two and a half acres from a farmer neighbour on our east.

It delighted William to come to Green Street, for he had



At Green Street—William with the family

now no ties at home. There were endless improvements to undertake, and with my family and their friends and his own he helped to plan and carry them out.

At the top of the drive there was a roomy coach-house flanked by two small stables, and crowned with a large hay-loft. I transformed the loft into a room with a fireplace and three wide dormer windows for the use of William and my son. It was reached by an outside staircase, the doorway facing east with a prospect of the downs to the horizon, threaded by the one ancient road—Green Street. For centuries long before the Christian era it had been trodden by men. The valley of the grey stones lay not far off. The stones from some of which the great circles and avenues of Avebury were made were probably rolled down from there over its surface. It was rutted as if horse-drawn farm carts still used it when I bought the little house, but the ruts were all but hidden by the turf. It was still Green Street.

In the converted hay-loft the two men worked and slept in a retreat of their own. William brought his father's worn old writing-desk to furnish it, and when writing was his ploy it was seated at it that he was to be found. The room came to be called Cockpen, and William the Laird.

I was able to persuade a local motor garage proprietor to supply us with electricity from a small plant he had installed for himself. Without any interference from anybody and with the farmer's permission posts were erected to carry the wires from the garage to the house, and the garage proprietor with his son, about twelve years old, did the inside job. The father lay on the rafters between the ceilings and the roof and took his instructions as to the position of the points from his son: "A bit nearer the downs, daddie," or "You're getting too near Marlborough" would be heard as the wiring proceeded. That first summer brought phenomenal drought and the well went dry. The well at the bottom of the village receded so far that a curious piece of history was brought to mind.

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The village blacksmith, an old man, had in his boyhood seen this well go dry. It was the main water-supply of the whole population. His father, the blacksmith of the time, was lowered with tools to see what he could do. He hammered away a stone, and water gushed up. In fear of his life, he gave a signal to be hauled up, leaving his tools in his panic on a ledge near the bottom. They were recovered when the water fell again for the first time, on this our first summer, to the level to expose them.

I prepared against another drought by having an artesian well sunk below the green sand to a level which could never fail. My son found a disused electric pump, which with the requisite haphazard attachments and the garage man's electricity, brought up the water cold and fresh in as great a quantity as we could possibly desire.

Many distinguished visitors found their way down to Green Street. When the house would extend no further, tents in the gardens housed the younger men at nights.

Beatrice and Sidney Webb came over from Passfield. I took great pains to find curtains for the large window in their bedroom which would exclude the daylight, for she found it difficult to sleep in anything but a dark room. I prayed that no cock would crow loud enough to be heard and warned the household to make no noise. The only contretemps occurred one day at our midday meal. I had provided a rice pudding which according to my time-worn recipe was more or less a soufflé and very alluring. I had forgotten that for Beatrice a rice pudding in the schoolroom tradition was practically the only possible sweet to offer guests at luncheon. When I replied to her question that the soufflé was a rice pudding with five eggs in it she took me severely to task. I said in extenuation of my implied extravagance that eggs were only ninepence a dozen. She did not consider that that made it any better.

One weekend party in July 1930 included Professor Graham Wallas, André Siegfried, Sir Fabian and Lady Ware, Jeanette



At Green Street—Daltons and Lees-Smiths with Janet

At Green Street—William and the Webbs



(William's sister) and her husband Harry Tawney. A week or two before there were Mr. and Mrs. Lees-Smith, afterwards Postmaster-General in a Labour Government, and Mr. and Mrs. Dalton. Sir Richard and Lady Denman and my sister Anne Philip, Charles Morris, Hubert Henderson, Sir Thomas and Lady Sidey from New Zealand, Helen Thomas the widow of the poet, D. H. Robertson, Frank Pakenham and many more were among the early visitors.

When Julian Huxley came for a weekend he found the pace both in conversation and manual labour so exhausting that he affixed the bronze nameplate of our predecessors to the door of the large garden tool-shed, for there, he said, was the only retreat which he could discover where one might be alone with nothing to do. It was always thereafter referred to as "Abri".

Much as I delighted to welcome all these and many more friends of famous reputation, perhaps I experienced the greatest delight of all in the visits paid by my married daughter and her husband and her children. On their first visit from Edinburgh the two children then forming the family, George and John, were respectively four and two years old. John succumbed to measles on his second day.

The water-supply was so ample and so easily brought from the well that we decided to make a swimming-pool in the garden, feeding it by electricity with water from the well. The tenants of Cockpen sat down to the blueprints and the site was chosen by the women in the house below. Their idea was to put it between the tumulus on my land and the east front of the house. It was adopted and we started to dig—warily, for the tumulus was a national monument and not to be interfered with. Our archaeological neighbours working with my distant cousin Alexander Keiller, who owned the famous Tudor Manor House of Avebury, came to see if we were finding anything of importance in our own private excavations. When some coins of minor interest and some

fragments which might or might not have come there from our predecessors' dustbin did in fact emerge we felt that we were in our small way contributing to the magnificent work being done by the group employed by the Squire of the Manor House, now famous. The whole history of the Avebury rings and avenues was beginning to declare itself as one after another of the component parts was laid bare under their excavations.

The practical question for us was how to start digging so that the sides of the pool would turn out to be at right angles to one another. William proved to be full of resourceful ideas, and I was not much less adroit. Indeed, I settled the matter finally when I brought out a copy of *The Times* newspaper from which the corner was speedily pegged. The same means were taken at each of the remaining corners and the rectangle which resulted had, as *The Times* pages have, four rectangular corners and two sets of parallel sides.

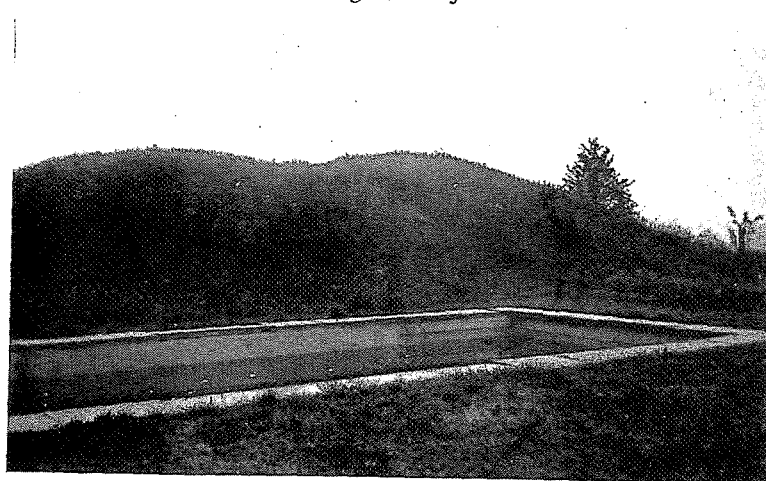
The pool was constructed without any professional help at all, by the free labour of the denizens of Green Street and the forced labour of their guests.

It continued to be the custom individually and severally to bring down our friends at the weekends. I do not think all of them would perhaps have come at the time when we were making a swimming-pool if they had known in advance.

As we got further and further down into the bowels of the earth, William began to wonder if it was really an economic use of labour to be heaving a spadeful of soil up on to the surface above the level of his head by his unaided human effort. And now Heath Robinson, whose blood-brother he proved to be, came into his own. Would it pay in time, he asked, to take half a day off digging in order to construct a crane for hauling bins of earth to the surface? By elaborate calculations he decided that this would, or might, save time in the end. He searched the tool-shed and the dump of the odds and ends which no one can ever decide to throw away, in the hope that he might find such component parts as would



The Pool begun, with John Gwilt



The Pool finished, under the Tumulus

emerge in due course as a crane. The first find was the drum on which a length of electric wire had been delivered. After that it was a case of bits and pieces of planking, a pulley and a length of rope. The crane thus thrown together was a complete success. The soil was spaded into an old dustbin attachable by a hook to the end of rope which was wound up round the disused drum. Even grandson Johnnie could easily turn the winding-handle to raise the bin loaded up to his own weight in soil from the bottom of the pool.

My son, who contrary to all my preconceived design had taken Mechanical Science as the second part of his tripos at Cambridge after a first part in Pure Mathematics, found his first job as an engineer in designing and building the swimming-pool. As far as I know, it is the only time he can be said to have made any practical use of his knowledge of engineering. His power of hard work on the constructional part of the enterprise was incredible. During the period of pool construction I offered hospitality for the Christmas vacation to an Italian and a German post-graduate student, both of whom had fled from their respective dictators and were strangers in our land. Ernest Weiss, the German, was the best worker other than my son and William that anyone could desire, and Maggio the Italian almost as good. My son borrowed a concrete mixer and the whole process of concreting the inside was accomplished in a few days at Christmas, a good deal by artificial light. An anxious and terrifying few minutes were passed when my son caught his fingers in the mechanism of the concrete mixer. His presence of mind and William's promptitude in doing exactly what Philip told him to do saved his fingers. It was a shattering experience. We rushed him over to Birmingham, where he was then living, to his doctor, who dealt with the crushed fingers so that he did not lose the use of them.

At last all was finished and on the 14th of April 1935 I turned on the tap to bring the water from the well. The party stood and watched with breathless silence. When the first trickle of

water was seen, a great sigh of relief registered emotion comparable shall we say with that felt on the conquest of Everest. The water flowed in and filled the pool. The next anxiety was that it might all seep out again through unsuspected exits in the concrete. It did not. The pool was a *succès fou*. Indeed, if there was any imperfection it was a slight difficulty in getting all the water out. It is true that we had to put up elaborate defences against frogs, who came from far and near to enjoy themselves. We did keep them out, but when Mr. David Rockefeller, an expert in beetles, came to stay he found between twenty and thirty different kinds sharing the pool with us. We decided not to mind and went on sharing it with them.

Even when the water froze the concrete did not crack and I began to think that there was something in the Cambridge engineering tripos after all.

The superiority of amateurs over professionals was demonstrated when a colleague at the School of Economics, fired by the sight of our bathing raptures, had a swimming-pool constructed in his suburban garden by a builder. He invited many guests to its inauguration for a summer evening of enjoyment. But the builder's pool leaked like a sieve, and gradually the bathers found themselves standing up in a receding tide which soon became no more than knee-deep.

As the popularity of Green Street increased I began to think of enlarging the house. I was afraid that this extravagance might be frowned upon. With artful duplicity I went ahead, carrying out my plan to a point from which it was impossible to retreat before anything was known about it. I built on a new wing with a quite beautiful sitting-room lit by two large windows to the west and north and giving access to the garden through a glass door at the south-west angle. I doubled the size of a bedroom and put in running water, and added a new bathroom. The house was all on one floor and from the downs looked a very capacious dwelling. We had painted it an off-

white all over the rather repulsive brick chosen by the original builder.

William and my son laid out a deck-tennis court in the acre sold to me by Lord Avebury and I planted an orchard on the rest. Great circles of chalk had to be cut out and filled with the appropriate soil for each tree.

I think everybody who came to Green Street fell under its charm, and for me it was balm in Gilead. All the cares of my public life and other pressing anxieties gave way to courage and hopefulness as soon as the car passed through the gates.

The history of prices was not the only preoccupation for William in addition to his continuous development of the School of Economics which kept him when at Green Street in the retirement of Cockpen. There were also the successive Reports of the work of the Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee, of which he became Chairman in 1934. In 1936 he also became, at the request of the Minister of Defence, Chairman of a Rationing Committee set up to prepare the machinery of Food Control against the possibility of the outbreak of war. The first volume of Price History on which he had been engaged since 1933 continuously was published in 1939.

When the declaration of World War II was made in September 1939 he had been for a month at Green Street with Mr. Harold Wilson composing a book, half of which was already written, on the Trade Cycle. Mr. Wilson had been elected a few months earlier to his first job as junior don in Economics at University College, Oxford, where William was now Master. His work with William on this book was his introduction to that kind of research, and he proved to be eminently successful at it. The war brought an abrupt termination to the work, and it has not been completed. Their immediate departure to Oxford left me with the problem of what to do with my beloved Green Street, for it was plain

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that the halcyon days there had come to an end. Gone were the weekend parties of the young and the carefree ploys.

I made up my mind to let Green Street to officers of the Air Force stationed at the rapidly increasing aerodrome near by. It was intended that only senior officers likely to preserve its amenities should come there. But that arrangement was not carried out and some of those that came brought partial ruin to my house and furniture and grounds. It was a sad but not uncommon history.

When peace came, I sold it.



The Man-Power Expert, March 1942

CHAPTER VIII

On the Stocks

Wisdom is better than weapons of war.

ECCLESIASTES 9.18

IT was in May 1941 that William received from Mr. Greenwood, on behalf of the Coalition Government, an invitation to become the Chairman of a Committee to consider social insurance and allied subjects.

William had been engaged during the autumn of 1940 on what he has described elsewhere as "Real Work on Man-Power".¹ As Chairman of a highly secret Committee he had made a report on man-power resources in relation to the departmental programmes for production of munitions and all the other necessities of life in total war. This report was applauded by some of those who saw it "as bringing sanity and a broad view, for the first time, into consideration of the vital problem of how to make best use of our limited man-power". It led, perhaps by somewhat unexpected ways (including the removal of the Minister, Mr. Arthur Greenwood, who had asked William to do the work), to several important decisions of the Government. It led finally to William being invited at Christmas 1940 to fill a gap through sickness in the Civil Service hierarchy of the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

Always ready to do anything that seemed useful, William accepted the invitation and became an Under-Secretary in the Ministry in charge of its department for Military Service. The Permanent Secretary was Sir Thomas Phillips, one of three bright young civil servants lured by William from other

¹ *Power and Influence*, pp. 276 seq.

tasks in 1910 to launch labour exchanges and unemployment insurance. The Minister was Ernest Bevin. In his new position William completed in three months a Schedule of Reserved Occupations on novel lines to govern the calling up of men.

It was his way to see the task in hand in relation to wider issues. He proceeded to produce, unasked, two memoranda for the Minister. One put the case for applying compulsory service to women as well as to men; this was not well received at the time, but six months later was accepted and put into operation. The other memorandum outlined a scheme for introducing the control of movements, dismissals, and wages, in essential civilian work. This, William was told, had interested Mr. Bevin greatly; after his discussions with associations of employers and workmen it became, with important changes, the basis of the Essential Work Order. It was the first step towards treating man-power as a whole and dropping the distinction, unmeaning in total war, between service in the fighting forces and service in the production of instruments of war. Mr. Bevin decided that the time had come to appoint a Director-General of Man-Power in all its aspects, military and civilian, but he did not want William in that position; he preferred to have one of the established civil servants, Mr. Godfrey Ince.

This left no room for William in the Ministry hierarchy. Mr. Bevin told him that there was another important matter that had to be attended to about which Mr. Greenwood would be seeing him. This was the decision to set up an Inter-Departmental Committee on Social Insurance. William was invited to become its Chairman; all the other members were to be civil servants from the relevant departments of state. William at this stage passed over from the status of voluntary temporary wartime civil servant to become voluntary handyman-in-general to the Government for the production of reports and other odd but pressing jobs.

He was not at once wholly cut off from current man-power

problems. The shortage of engineering skill of all kinds made it vital that none should be wasted. He was asked to become Chairman of a Committee to report to Mr. Bevin on the use of skilled men in the fighting services. This Committee, in addition to the Chairman, consisted of a prominent employer, a prominent trade unionist, and a chartered accountant from Edinburgh, with assessors from the Service Departments and from the Ministry of Labour.

The decision to set up these two Committees was made towards the end of May 1941. The appointment of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Social Insurance and Allied Services was announced in Parliament by Mr. Greenwood on June 10th, 1941. The appointment of the Committee on Skilled Men in the Services was announced by Mr. Bevin in Parliament on June 12th, in a debate on his appointment of a Director-General of Man-Power.

The problem of the proper disposition of skilled men in the services was not a new one to William. He had been through it all in the first Ministry of Munitions a quarter of a century before. Indeed, very few of the problems in the second world war were entirely new to those who had improvised the answers during the years 1914-18 in World War I. As for the other Committee, that on Social Insurance, it was the subject on which William was naturally regarded as the expert. The Government's decision to inaugurate a new enquiry arose out of an intimation from the Royal Commission on Workmen's Compensation appointed in 1939 that they could not continue their deliberations under war conditions. The Government hoped that the new Committee would, under William's Chairmanship, placate the T.U.C., who viewed the relinquishment of the duties of the Royal Commission with concern and dismay.

Although the Committee was not made public until June 10th, Mr. Greenwood had already started a campaign of publicity. On June 8th, two days before, *Reynolds News*

came out with a front-page headline "Greenwood's Big Security Plan Move". On June 11th, the day after the announcement in Parliament, the *News Chronicle* featured an article by Ian Mackay based on the Minister's speech. "Social Security for All after the War is being planned: a vast scheme to ensure that no one shall want." On the same day Maurice Webb wrote an article in the *Daily Herald*. A few days later the *Financial News* wrote:

While the appointment of Sir W. H. Beveridge to the Committee is generally welcomed, his departure from the Ministry of Labour is regretted. It is believed that he favoured far more energetic and business-like organisation of labour supply than the Administration was providing.

The *Spectator* of June 13th added that:

That perennially young man Sir William Beveridge is to preside over an interdepartmental Committee to work out a scheme of social security for all after the War. These two developments are more useful, in the battle against Hitler's conception of a new order, than a whole catalogue of high-sounding war aims. Or they would be if the present Government were alive to the fact that propaganda should be treated on the same footing of importance as the fighting services and MEW, or, if you like its full title, the Ministry of Economic Warfare.

The *Economist* published two articles on June 21st and August 16th, and the *Manchester Guardian* report of the House of Commons Debate of July 15th quotes Mr. Tom Johnston as saying that "the amending insurance bill shows that the Government is using the project of a major measure to defend this stop-gap legislation now". The ball Mr. Greenwood had started continued to gather momentum, and as soon as the actual work of the Committee began, it became the proverbial snowball.

The work of the Committee on the Skilled Men in the Services had naturally to take priority till it was finished. Its Report was duly presented in October 1941. The result of its recommendations was amongst other things the formation of the Army Corps now known as R.E.M.E., the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers. It brought a revolutionary and fundamental change into the structure of the Army, calling for the relinquishment of some of the most hoary traditions of long-established regiments. Sentiment melted before the new proposals. The economy of man-power and the certainty of improved efficiency in the commands was seen to be decisive. Indeed William, as a reformer from without, helped reformers within the War Office to realise their long-cherished dreams of improvement, and he remained on terms of cordial co-operation and friendship with those whom he had been bound to criticise. After holding up the publication of the Report for nearly four months, Sir Winston Churchill's brief reference to what he must have known to be a remarkable achievement, having regard to the cherished tradition of famous regiments, was merely to the effect that this change must be watched lest it should *impair the efficiency* of the fighting forces.

It became clear to both of us that those now engaged in wartime administration had little or no use for the veterans of the first world war. As in family life the young generation prefer to make the mistakes for themselves rather than to listen to the prosy advice of their parents, so it was in Whitehall in the second world war. It was a painful experience for such as us two who had been in at the inauguration of two new Ministries—the Ministry of Munitions in 1915 and the Ministry of Food in 1916—to sit by with our memories of the improvisations of twenty-five years earlier and the many lessons then learned. But the theory was that this was a new war and must not be fought with the knowledge of the one before.

This led me to take a different view from William about

the Report on the Social Services. I saw the invitation as a heaven-sent opportunity for William to bring to a head at last in a single comprehensive scheme the principles of his work on social security which had been developing and maturing in his continuous preoccupation with the problems over a period of nearly forty years.

From time to time in the turmoil of the second world war he had paid lip service to the principle that the preparation for civil life when peace came was as essential a part of war work as the reports on skilled men in the services and manpower requirements and so on, on which he had been engaged. But when the chance to carry it out was thrust upon him, he was reluctant to turn away from such direct contacts with problems of the active war itself. I used all my influence to divert his mind away from them. It was the opportunity for the apotheosis of his early ambition to abolish poverty and want. I was perfectly well aware of Mr. Bevin's limiting suggestions. Mr. Bevin wanted the Report to restrict itself to questions of procedure. But I had learned a lesson of my own in getting my way. It was to include everything in a scheme you wanted and to provide a considerable margin over and above what you thought you would get so that the other fellow could have something to cut down without doing much if any harm. Never on any account trim your sails to a putative prevailing wind has been my motto, and it usually succeeded in my getting everything I planned, including even the margin. By degrees William came round. Almost at once the plan began to take shape in his mind and our conversations. But he could not get down to it at once.

The Social Insurance Committee had been appointed in June. William himself did practically no work on it till November; he was more than fully occupied with Skilled Men in the Services. The five months from June to November were of course not lost to social insurance. William set all his departmental colleagues to their first task as members of

his new Committee by asking them to make a survey of the existing schemes and of the problems which they presented. At the same time, notice was sent to all the outside organisations concerned inviting them to prepare memoranda for discussion with the Committee. And an office and staff were organised at Egginton House, just opposite the barracks of the Guards.

With October the Report on Skilled Men in the Services was done and William turned at last seriously to social insurance and allied services. After that it was hell for leather, an expression which I accept but cannot interpret. The new Report could only have been done in so short a time by one whose mind had worked as William's had done continuously for years round each problem and round each facet of each problem, sifting out the dross and refining on the essentials, until perfection was at last achieved.

William began by presenting two memoranda to the Committee. The first of these, written in November 1941 and circulated on December 11th, set out "Basic Problems of Social Security with Heads of a Scheme". The Heads of a Scheme then set out are in essentials what appeared in the Beveridge Report a year later.

The other memorandum, written in December 1941 and circulated in January 1942, had its roots even further back. It was called "Scale of Insurance Benefits and the Problem of Poverty". It was William's answer to Edward Caird's question to him at Oxford forty years before; why with so much wealth is there so much poverty, and what should be done about it? I hope that some day the whole of this memorandum will be published. It used the studies of poverty made by Charles Booth, Seebohm Rowntree, Eleanor Rathbone and many more. From them he drew a few imperishable morals, such as that there was enough wealth to make poverty needless; that what was wrong was the distribution of wealth, and that by re-distribution want could be abolished. The intended

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re-distribution was not to be achieved by taking money from the rich to give it to the poor. It was to be made by the individual himself setting aside in times of earning money sums to insure himself against the times when by sickness, unemployment and old age he could not earn. Into the pool thus created, the state through taxation and the employer from his profits would add their allotted proportions. In other words, it was to be Social Insurance.

To write the finished Report took him just twelve months, including all the infinitely fruitful discussions with his Committee, the taking of evidence from organisations and persons outside and repeated consultations with the most important of these—the T.U.C. Social Insurance Department, the Friendly Societies and many more. These twelve months, moreover, were by no means free of other work. He did not drop skilled men in the services the moment that his Report on them was presented. He went on consulting with his friends in the War Office, and planning further reports. For nearly the whole of two months, March and April 1942, he was diverted to another task: the devising of a fuel-rationing scheme. Mr. Dalton, then President of the Board of Trade, who asked him to do this work, said that the Government had decided already in principle to ration the use of fuel and power by householders and others. The practical upshot of William's work on fuel, apart from loss of time to him, was that a new Minister other than Mr. Dalton was appointed to take charge of fuel and power, and the decision to ration was dropped. Apart from these major tasks the Government asked for his time on minor current jobs from time to time. Broadcasting and writing letters and articles in *The Times* brought him continually into the discussion of public affairs.

It was not surprising in these circumstances that William in the first part of 1942 enjoyed an amazingly good press, not only in *The Times*, which was always ready to print him,



With Frank Pakenham in St. James' Park, 1942

but in papers of all kinds, particularly the popular kind. The *Daily Mirror* of May 7th featured him as "The Man no Government can Do Without". The *Manchester Evening News* featured him on March 21st under the heading "Britons, You Owe this Man a Lot". In *Answers* he appeared in June 1942 as the man who "Cures Government Headaches".

It is a safe forecast that whatever Government is in power when the war ends and it is possible to make some progress with social reforms, it will turn to Sir William for advice. Sir William has been called an ideal Civil Servant because he makes bureaucracy the servant of the public and not the master.

How wrong they were.

Picture Post gave a picture of "The Rationing Expert" on his way across St. James's Park, from Egginton House to the Reform Club. Underneath this came a quotation from William himself: "The most effective spur to heroic effort is an idea, not the hope of personal gain."

Tributes about this time came to William elsewhere than from the popular press. One that pleased him and me particularly was from one of the best known miners in the House of Commons, Dai Grenfell. In a speech in 1943 he said that after speaking to everybody in the Ministry of Labour up to and including the Minister himself, Dai had come to William at the Man-Power Board with his problem: "He was the first and only person with whom I was able to speak and get a rational reply on this subject." William did at least get many skilled miners back to mining, as well as getting skilled engineers to engineering work, in the services or outside.

Fortunately by the time that the fuel-rationing diversion came in March and April 1942, the Social Insurance Report was well under way. The boldness and originality of the Chairman's conception captured the imagination of his Committee from the moment when it was unfolded to them, and

they settled down with keen enjoyment and concentration and in the most harmonious spirit to the work before them. William has often said both publicly and privately how greatly he enjoyed their wholehearted co-operation and how much he owed to them for their unstinted hard work and contribution. The Government stepped in at an early stage when the scope of the new ideas rightly seemed to take the proceedings into a sphere of possible controversy which might embarrass their Ministers. It was decided that they should become merely advisory to the Chairman, who was told that he himself alone must sign the Report and take the consequences. Nothing could have pleased him better. The curiously interesting thing is that when he issued the Report under these peremptory conditions, and became immediately the most universally commended individual by the press and the people both in his own country and in every other, one person after another went out of his way to state that he himself was responsible for all the ideas in it, or alternatively that some other person or persons, either already dead or perhaps only moribund, had said it all long ago.

This sort of thing seems inevitably to occur when there appears by the creative inspiration of a single individual a synthesis of the amorphous reflections and aspirations of his contemporaries. Before and after Aristotle, through the centuries observers of mankind made conjectures or formed aphorisms about heredity. The Scriptures tell us that the fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the teeth of the children are set on edge; on the other hand dogs are always born with tails, although their parents were docked. Aristotle pondered over such problems and when strange new features were reported as appearing in new-born animals or human beings, he quoted all manner of old-wives' tales to account for them. When Darwin's *Origin of Species* appeared, formulating the new principle of evolution by natural selection, and all the observations and speculations of centuries fell into their place

within it, his originality was immediately challenged by others who claimed to have established his law simultaneously on their own account. The same discussions or facts can be heard or collected by any number of different people. The outstanding quality of a mind that from such contemplation brings human knowledge to a higher stage, adding a fresh approximation to the truth, is genius. At the beginning of this century in particular, thought and discussion were rife on the subject of security against all sorts of disaster. The five giants of the Beveridge Plan¹ brought them into a constructive reality, and his scheme to conquer them was his own contribution to the advancement of Social Science.

Mr. Greenwood's early campaign of advertisement had done much to concentrate interest on the progress of the Report from the start, not only at home but overseas. He had even in the earliest days broadcast his action in setting it on foot to the U.S.A. and Canada. It was not, however, only in this way that the operations of the Committee had become a matter of overwhelming general concern.

As one after another of the relevant outside bodies was called to give evidence and the scope of the enquiry became more and more widely known, anticipation became more and more eager. The imagination of members of the public and of the troops at home and abroad was fired and the appearance of the Report was awaited with the keenest interest and even excitement. The subject of the enquiry directly concerned the life of every man and woman in whatever position in life.

By the end of October 1942, Parliament, the press and the public were neither to hold nor to bind. Sir William Jowitt had succeeded Mr. Arthur Greenwood as Minister of Reconstruction and it was therefore to him that a preview of the Report was submitted in October. Mr. Low, always with an

¹ The five giants were Want, Sickness, Squalor, Idleness through unemployment, Ignorance.

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uncanny instinct for what was relevant in rumour, published the cartoon, "Sir, the Steed awaits."¹

It had begun to dawn on the Government that they had prepared for themselves a false serenity and were living in a fool's paradise as the time drew near for the Report to be published. Nobody had dreamed that a survey with terms of reference interpreted to cover so wide a territory could have been accomplished in the time. The more they became aware of the real position, the more explicitly they made it clear that their policy would be to give the Report when it came the minimum of publicity and consideration. In the meantime they took pains to warn the author not to take any part in making its proposals known. It is easy to understand how they hoped to safeguard themselves from being involved in taking action on what now could be seen to promise a far-reaching alteration in the social structure and in the philosophy of Government. William accepted their warning and acted upon it to the letter. He did nothing to seek publicity—he was absorbed in the work itself—but he was powerless to stem the flood of publicity which rushed upon him and for which the Government themselves were mainly responsible, by their early action in advertising the Committee.

On November the 17th Sir Stafford Cripps as Lord Privy Seal announced that the publication of the Report was expected about the end of the month. A few days after, on November the 23rd, Sir Stafford had left the War Cabinet to take up the post of Aircraft Production. Mr. Low took the occasion to publish a cartoon on November the 24th with the title: "Look what's going in."

The continually increasing demands for information in advance of the publication were held at bay. Photographers lurked at every door, and journals sent their most persistent reporters to catch somebody out. The only undertakings given

¹ This and the other cartoon mentioned on this page were both reproduced in *Pillars of Security*, published by William in 1943.



"I didn't get far in"

ON THE STOCKS

were for talks to be recorded with a film for the cinema showing the author in person. Both of these were strictly confined to production after the Report should be published.

Against the background of this vivid and constantly moving and changing scene, the part taken by Frank Pakenham, who was working with William as a personal assistant, stands out in high relief. He threw himself into the work, becoming absorbed in the task of the administration of the continuous interviews, consultations and deliberations. He kept at bay the press and the photographers without giving offence, and he coped with a stream of correspondence, both relevant and irrelevant. He looked after William and the interests of his Report with completely impersonal devotion. The Committee and the little group of secretaries and Frank were a harmonious group stimulated to a high pitch of interest and hard work, not merely following an inspiring leader across country at record speed but supporting him with their experience and judgment and their expert knowledge to the full extent of their power. It is from such an atmosphere that great results should come, and on this occasion they did.

CHAPTER IX

Launched Amid Cheers

Unto me men gave ear, and waited, and kept silence at my counsel . . .

And they waited for me as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain.

JOB 29.21-23

THE Report was signed and sent to Sir William Jowitt, then Paymaster-General in charge of reconstruction problems, on November 20th, 1942. It was printed and put in the Vote Office of the House of Commons on December the 1st and the papers announced it with details on December the 2nd. The result was electrifying. It was said that a queue a mile long had immediately formed itself in Kingsway to obtain copies from the Government Stationery Office. The Report beat all records for the sale of official documents and had to be continuously reprinted: at least 635,000 copies, including the official summary, were sold.

The phenomenal sale gave rise to a widespread impression that William as author of a best-seller had made a large profit himself. Nothing of the sort happened. As William has written in *Power and Influence*, all his work throughout the war, whether for his college or for the Government, including the Beveridge Report, was done on his unchanged salary as Master of University; whenever it seemed right to ask the Government to pay anything for William's services in war the payment went to the college; the total so paid for work extending over two years was about £1500. How much net profit the Government made out of their best-seller was not published at the time, but appears to have amounted to some

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£8000 in Britain and to \$5000 on the American edition published by Macmillan.

William's own explanation of his Plan, as he recorded it in advance for the British Paramount News, ran as follows:

My Report is based on those words of the Atlantic Charter which speak of securing for all "improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security". It is a plan for turning those last two words "social security" into deeds; for securing that no one in Britain willing to work while he can, suffers from want while for any reason—of unemployment or sickness or accident or old age—he cannot work and earn, for securing that no man leaves his wife and children in want after his death. The Security Plan of my Report proposes, first, a unified social insurance system under which by paying a single weekly contribution through one insurance stamp everyone will be able to get all the benefits that he or his family need so long as they need them.

The Plan proposes, second, a scheme of Children's Allowances, so that all parents have enough to keep their children strong and healthy, and can have more children, if they want them, without stinting the children they have already. Third, the plan proposes a comprehensive health service, securing medical treatment of all kinds for all citizens in return for the insurance contribution.

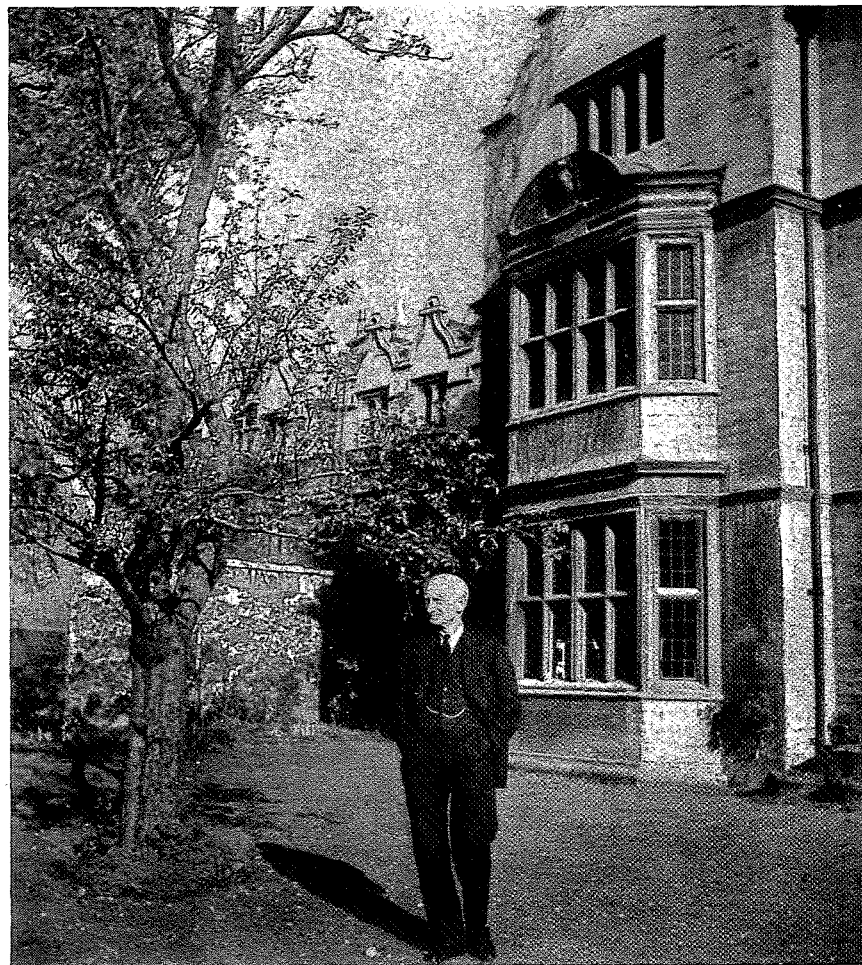
The Security Plan is only one step of many that have to be taken. To get the New Britain of all our desires, we must deal not only with Want but with four other giant evils;—with Disease (that is the purpose of the Health Service), with Ignorance (dealing with that means more and better schools), with Squalor (curing that means better planning of towns and country-side and more and better houses), with Idleness, that is to say unemployment.

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The broadcast in which on December 1st William introduced his Plan to the world, after repeating the reference to the Atlantic Charter, ended as follows:

The Plan, as I have set out briefly, is a completion of what was begun a little more than thirty years ago when Mr. Lloyd George introduced National Health Insurance and Mr. Winston Churchill, then President of the Board of Trade, introduced Unemployment Insurance. The Minister who more than thirty years ago had the courage and imagination to father the scheme of Unemployment Insurance, a thing then unknown outside Britain, is the man who is leading us to victory in this war: I'd like to see him complete as well the work that he began in social insurance then. But this is only my personal hope. What I have been telling you about is simply my proposals to the Government. The Government are not committed in any way to anything that I have said. They've only just seen my Report and you won't expect them to make up their minds—they oughtn't to make up their minds—without full consideration. But I hope that the Government and Parliament and you will like the Security Plan, when you have all had time to consider it, and will adopt it. Having begun to work on this problem of social security myself more than thirty years ago, having lived with it for the past eighteen months and discussed it with all the people who know most about it, I believe that this plan or something like it is what we need. It's the first step, though it is one step only, to turning the Atlantic Charter from words into deeds.

It is important that these excerpts should be put on record in their chronological order for reasons which will emerge when the story develops of the political handling of the Report by the Coalition Government and later by the Conservatives in their campaign at the general election in the summer of 1945, which failed so dramatically. How com-



Master's Garden at Univ. This he gave up

pletely they failed to assess the influence of the Report is one of the marvels of history.

An American correspondent wrote to William a few days after the Report was published sending him a few cuttings from American papers with the remark that if William had subscribed to a press-cutting agency he would assuredly be ruined. The press cuttings which have been kept are now stacked around me in tea chests, filing cabinets, large bulging envelopes, in parcels tied up with string, in disused cartons and biscuit tins. I quail at the task in front of me if I am to do the matter justice by going faithfully through them to ascertain (a) which best build up my narrative and (b) which best will amuse the reader. Life, I have concluded, at my age is not likely to be long enough, for I am not one of those personages who can command the auxiliary efforts of a posse of history dons. I must try to do it, if it could be done, and I fear it cannot, by myself. And yet it is so dramatic and to me so fascinating a narrative that I would like to try to bring it home by the best means in my power.

Every daily paper in Great Britain seems to have printed on December the 2nd, the day of publication, an account of the Plan, sometimes in great detail, and with copious and nearly always highly commendatory criticism. They were followed by weekly, monthly and quarterly periodicals. *The Times* had come out immediately with enthusiasm, calling the Report "a momentous document which should and must exercise a profound and immediate influence on the direction of social change in Britain". The *Daily Telegraph* called it the consummation of the revolution begun by Mr. Lloyd George in 1911. "Perhaps", they said, "the one really basic innovation . . . is the establishment of a national minimum level of subsistence." The *Manchester Guardian* called it "a big and fine thing", and the *Daily Worker* "a courageous attempt . . . to alleviate some of the worst evils of present-day society. The main principles will be endorsed by all progressive opinion."

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The subject was never indeed wholly dropped. The interest spread through all sections of the community. Comment raged on the possible action of the Government, cartoons did full justice to the importance of the occasion, and William, sometimes alone, sometimes with me, was photographed wherever we went. It was all very exhilarating except for the nagging doubts about what the Government meant to do. There was no doubt about what the people wanted.

The letters and messages which poured in upon us ranged from a telegram on behalf of King George by his secretary most graciously commanding William's presence at Buckingham Palace on December the 9th, a week after the publication, to the little Christmas card with a robin on a twig bearing a simple printed message with the written signature "from just a friend" which came a week or two later.

One pleasant memory stands out. Lloyd George was immediately enthusiastic about the Plan. Although he was not in the habit of leaving Churt for London, he came up one day early in the year to lunch with us at the Savoy to express his delight and his hopes for its success with the Government. It seemed to him that his early dreams were coming true. At that time William was receiving a number of invitations to stand for Parliament, and one constituency was pressing him very hard. The Chairman of their Committee assured him that he would win any constituency in the country. He consulted Lloyd George, who at first strongly opposed the idea, but changed his mind later when he saw what was happening in Government circles. That day his old vigour seemed to be stirred again by the excitement of the moment, which he fully and most warmly understood and shared with us. He was gay and full of talk, sitting in the dining-room at his favourite table in the window looking on the Embankment, with the staff remembering the dishes he liked and making an occasion of his visit. We only saw him once again, on the dramatic occasion when, the Beveridge Plan having been

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debated in Parliament, he went into the Opposition lobby to record his vote against the Government motion.

A cheerful occasion was our visit by invitation to meet the Council of the T.U.C. on the 16th of December, the day after we were married. William's long happy relations with the T.U.C. and the Beveridge Plan were the topics of conversation. They had high hopes of its implementation although already the clouds were gathering.

The fantastic limelight in which we lived might be illustrated by an experience on one of these early days when I was trying to find a taxi in Bond Street. It was very difficult at that time to find one, but I noticed that an empty one had drawn up at the kerb beside me. The burly driver leant over to say, "Do you want a taxi, Your Ladyship?" I was naturally surprised. "How do you know who I am?" I asked. "Oh, everybody knows that," he answered, opening the door. "Where to?" I gave him an address. When we reached it I asked him to tell me the fare. He said, "Nothing to you. It is an honour to drive the wife of the Beveridge Report." We shook hands in saying good-bye. I could not hurt his feelings by insisting on paying him.

The gratitude of these days to William for his rescue of the millions has never died out. If the behaviour of His Majesty's Ministers administered a cooling draught, getting colder and colder as the days went by, the people were heartening enough. I am often still asked, "Are you the wife of the famous Report?"

There was a highly comic side to the affair when a Wax Work Show at 250 Oxford Street issued a programme in which No. 8 of its attractions offered was: Sir William Beveridge presenting his Report to Mr. Eden, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Bevin, Mr. Attlee and Sir John Anderson. No. 2a was Joseph Kramer, "the beast of Belsen"; No. 3 The four Main Allied Leaders; and No. 5 Four leading quislings from Norway, France, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. A rich entertainment for

sixpence entrance fee and a penny for the programme, the latter not obligatory.

The reception of the Report by the press and public in Britain was summarised by the American weekly *Time*, under the heading "Rare and Refreshing Beveridge":

Not since the day of Munich had the British Press given such play to any single story. War news was all but pushed from the pages of London's war-curtailed dailies. Many of them devoted half their space to news of the document which, in the midst of war, looked forward to a better post-war world. The Beveridge Report published last week was the biggest domestic event for Britons in many years.

The first reaction of press and public was one of almost unanimous approval. Said the London *Times*, traditionally first newspaper on the breakfast tables of Britain's rulers: "A momentous document which should and must exercise a profound and immediate influence on the direction of social change in Britain."

To *The Times*, the American weekly added in its list of enthusiasts for the Report papers as diverse as the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Worker*. It ended the list with the *Man in the Street*: "A bit of all right."

The men in the street (and the women) were by this time practically wholly composed of the munition worker and the man and woman in military uniform at home or overseas.

Under the Scheme for Adult Education in H.M. Forces, the lecturers throughout the country found an insatiable and pressing demand for information about the Report. One of these dealing with the troops in Essex in the notes of his work during six weeks in December 1942 and January 1943 writes:

Out of 49 lectures 22 dealt with the Beveridge Report.

The questions and discussions following the lecture "proved the intensity of interest which all ranks seemed to take in the Report":

Out of the 22 audiences concerned all but one showed a majority of 80% or over in favour of the Report. The only exception was at a battery H.Q. of a pre-war territorial regiment where the Commanding Officer and many of the other officers and N.C.O.'s had all been members of the staff of the same commercial insurance company—here the report was rejected by a vote of 12 to 8 (with about 30 abstainers) after an impassioned speech by the Battery Commander. . . .

The House of Commons Debate on the Social Security Scheme will be followed by an interest made all the keener by the withdrawal of the A.B.C.A. pamphlet on the Report, but the effect of the withdrawal had damaged the position of all concerned with army education, including civilian lecturers.

These notes, dated January 14th, 1943, may be taken as typical of opinion among the troops at home. The reference of the A.B.C.A. pamphlet is a story in itself and comes later.

As for the men overseas, many illustrations might be given. The officer commanding all the forces in the Middle East asked for copies or summaries of the Report to be sent out, in view of the widespread interest aroused. From a Major in the British South African Forces (who had been through World War I) came the following:

— What you are striving for, Sir William, *must* obtain, there must be no more shame and starvation awaiting men of the Services who are at this very moment giving their lives for their country. See to it that the country sees to them afterwards.

In answering a letter from a signalman in the 8th Bde. H.Q. of C.M.F., William wrote:

It is heartening to know that the fighting men recognise that the social evil of Want must be overcome.

And so on.

From Oxford, I myself was called upon to go to the camps where the women in the forces were given time in the evening for recreation and repose to occupy their leisure, to give them an account of what the Report stood for. I accepted invitations of the same kind from all sorts of civilian groups and from the hospitals for the wounded.

Wherever I went there was one thing that always emerged in these discussions. Like true British men and women of free and independent spirit, the underlying principle of the Report especially appealed to them. This was to be a self-respecting insurance scheme without any taint of the dole, applicable to everyone whatever his income, with no means test. If a man works while he can, and pays his insurance premium while he is at work, then he is entitled by virtue of his contributions to the benefits set out when by no fault of his own he is unemployed or sick, and when he is old. That was the brief description.

It was very moving to hear the comments of young married women, many of whom came privately to say to me, when the séance was over, that such an insurance scheme would lift an almost intolerable load of anxiety from their lives and would make them worth living. A considerable number of these were the wives of young black-coated workers in the early stages of the professions and in offices. Doctors' bills were the nightmare they dreaded most. The provision for allowances during pregnancy and childbirth was a kind of Utopian dream. Their faces lit up, and they asked me if I thought it could ever come true. I could only say that I hoped that it would pass into legislation by general consent; for indeed that was what it should have done.

The Ministry of Information summarised the views of the Clydeside workers in a document dated March 18th, 1943:

The following notes have been written specifically on the attitude of Clydeside Workers to the Beveridge Plan, but correspondence and postal censorship reports from other areas show that similar points of view also exist in other parts of the country.

Interest in the Beveridge Plan on its publication was really tremendous. For a week or two the war news tended to take a back seat and one report says: "There has been possibly more widespread discussion on this than on any single event since the outbreak of the war." The publicity given to the Scheme by the radio and press together with the explanatory pamphlets on the subject, which appeared almost overnight, aroused a quite remarkable enthusiasm.

Practically everyone approved of the underlying principles, and hopes ran high that the Plan would be put into operation as soon as possible. Some workers indeed regarded the plan as an enactment. To some women for instance its reality was so actual that they were calculating how much they would be allowed to draw for their children and telling their menfolk that "We'll draw the money and not you; you will just hand in the same pay as usual." One woman writing to an older one at this time said, "It's hard lines on you. I arrived at the right time." Others who had feared wholesale disturbance after the war said, "This will give us something to fight for and look forward to. The soldiers needn't hang on to their guns after all."

Soldiers writing home spoke of their pleasure at the Scheme, saying, "This gives us some heart to fight. We know that if something happens to us our wives and children will never want."

To the critics who inquired "Can we pay for it?" the impatient reply was given, "We can always pay for wars,

BEVERIDGE AND HIS PLAN

this one costs £15 million a day. We will just *have* to afford the Beveridge Plan."

The cynics who said "This is just propaganda to keep us at it till the war is over" were looked upon as disturbers of the peace or as unpatriotic.

After the Parliamentary Debate¹ the general optimism slumped badly. The slump was not immediate; in fact it was about a week after the Debate that condemnatory remarks began generally to be heard.

Confidence in the Government, in political leaders, in fact in leaders of all kinds, greatly deteriorated.

One Trade Union official recently remarked, "I am almost ashamed to look the men in the face; they simply laugh at me when I ask them for more output."

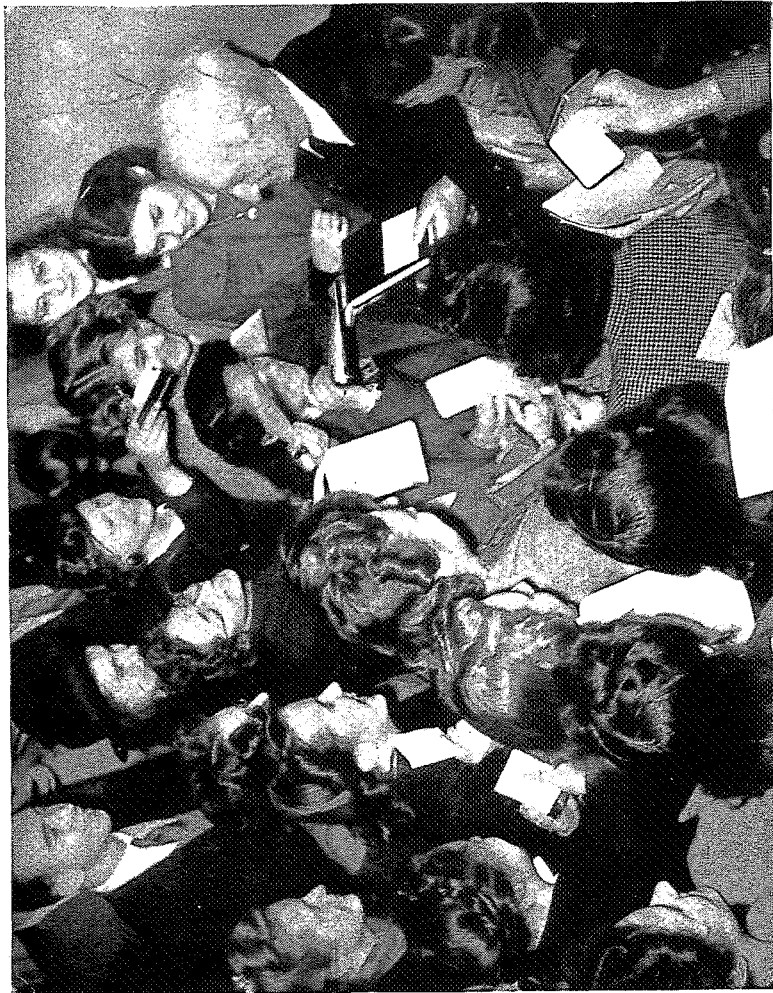
Nor is the workers' belief that they have been badly let-down helping to improve relations between them and their employers.

People stopped us in the street, asking for autographs, or just thanking William with gratitude for the picture of a new world he had painted. As the pedestrians met in passing on an island in the middle of Oxford Street one busy day, between the streams of traffic, a total stranger seized the moment to voice to us as we paused his paeans of praise.

Meanwhile all sorts of interested bodies were studying the scheme and publishing their comments. The Charity Organisation Society issued a four-page statement which was typical of most. The pamphlet went through the sections and endorsed them all. There were of course unfriendly criticisms too, but they were so few compared with the deluge of the others that they did not even seem to me then to matter very much, with the exception perhaps of the opposition of the industrial insurance companies, which was strong and persistent.

The Liberal Party were the first group officially to approve

¹ February 16-18 1943.



Autographs at Central Hall, January 1944

LAUNCHED AMID CHEERS

the Report. In December, fourteen days after its appearance, their Bulletin printed a resolution, adopted unanimously, giving unqualified approval to the objectives and the three guiding principles of the Beveridge Plan. The day after, the National Council, representing the Labour Party, the T.U.C. and the Co-operative Congress, printed the resolution quoted two months later in the House of Commons by Mr. Greenwood that:

The National Council of Labour, representing the Trades Union Congress, the Labour Party and the Co-operative Union, believes that, as provision against want is one part of a policy of social progress, an essential part of the reconstruction of the new Britain must be the adoption of a Charter of Security, so that if members of the Community meet with adverse circumstances a minimum standard of the essentials of life will be guaranteed, not as a charity but as a right, to citizens of the Country. The National Council, therefore, approves the principles laid down in the Beveridge Report and while the detailed proposals must necessarily be subject to further scrutiny, it welcomes the effort to safeguard the standard of life and health of the nation. The Council particularly accepts the emphasis of Sir William Beveridge upon the importance of giving effect to the general policy of the Report before the end of the war and, therefore, calls upon the Government to introduce the necessary legislation at an early date."

The Community Council of Lancashire had a meeting of the Executive Committee early in March and adopted a resolution that "They desire emphatically to endorse the principles of the Report on Social Insurance written by Sir William Beveridge and to urge that early effect should be given to them." There were many more of a like kind.

Perhaps the publicity that gave us most pleasure at the time and was most unexpected came on the day of our marriage

a fortnight after the Report was published. We had arranged a very quiet occasion with only my own children and William's most intimate friends. My son drove me to the registry office at Westminster where the legal part of the ceremony was to take place. As we turned into the street I remarked to him, "There must be some occurrence of public interest going on. Just look at the crowd and the cinema cameras on the roofs." I had only to step out of the car to find that we were the occurrence. It was such a friendly crowd and so obviously anxious to do us proud that we could not be anything but co-operative. The Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple, was to conduct a service in the vestry of a church near by in Victoria Street. It was all that had escaped from the bombs which had demolished the main structure. The Vicar had created there a little chapel for worship where he could conduct his services.

Pursued by our friends from the press and film producers, and protected by Frank Pakenham, we made our way there across the street to find it quite full with our twenty guests. William Temple, magnificent in robes of especial beauty, carried out his office with poignant and memorable fidelity. Frank Pakenham had arranged the party at the Dorchester to which we had invited many of our friends. We were deeply moved that so many should have come to wish us well. I think the kindest things of all perhaps were said to us by the American Ambassador, John Winant, and by Maynard Keynes. I cared for both of them very much: they were both my dear friends—and now they are gone, as is William Temple. Maynard Keynes never felt scornful, as he was sometimes thought to be, of his companions in life who made no claim to understand everything he wrote. He had been brought up in the administrative milieu in Cambridge where his father was so long the Registrar, and I think he understood my problems as the Secretary and acting dean at the School of Economics with a special and sympathetic knowledge. As for John Winant,

the feeling between us was one of mutual affection and respect. They were very welcome guests that day.

Maynard Keynes' wedding present was a volume entitled *Political Arithmetic* printed in 1691, although "long since writ by Sir William Petty, late fellow of the Royal Society".

It was inscribed characteristically with a reference to our marriage, which he had told us gave him especial pleasure: "To Sir William Beveridge this book by the founder of his (and my) craft on the occasion of his contriving social security for the rest of us and *not forgetting himself*." It is a discourse concerning:

The Extent and Value of Lands, People, Buildings, Husbandry, Manufacture, Commerce, Fishery, Artizans, Seamen, Soldiers; Publick Revenues, Interest, Taxes, Superlucration, Registries, Banks; Valuation of Men, Increasing of Seamen, of Militia's, Harbours, Situation, Shipping, Power at Sea, etc. As the same relates to every Country in general, but more particularly to the Territories of His Majesty of Great Britain, and his Neighbours of Holland, Zealand and France.

This little book stands in a place of honour on our shelves, beside four splendid volumes in green and gold, *Marlborough, His Life and Times*, inscribed by the author with a phrase immortalised because he coined it.

"To William Beveridge on the occasion of his marriage, December 1942, from Winston Churchill. May he bring the magic of averages to the rescue of the millions."

When we reached Edinburgh a day or two later almost the first thing to catch our eye was a notice outside of the Monseigneur News Theatre in Princes Street announcing a film of our wedding. We slipped in and saw ourselves as others see us, a rare but salutary experience for anyone.

We went to Elie in Scotland a day or two later for a short respite at Christmas. We found that a camp of Polish flying

officers was near our hotel. They came in to celebrate on Christmas Eve and they invited William to be the hero of a song and dance which it was a Polish custom to perform on any special occasion. It ended in them raising him up and handing him round the circle in the wildest of salutes, with hilarious Polish music. He stood it without a tremor.

Two more months later, on February 18th, 1943, the reception of the Report was summed up by Mr. James Griffiths in one of the most moving speeches that I have ever heard in the House of Commons:

The Beveridge Plan (he said) has become in the minds of the people and the nation both a symbol and a test. It has become first of all, a symbol of the kind of Britain we are determined to build when the victory is won, a Britain in which the mass of the people shall be ensured security from preventable want. . . . Almost every comment that has been made in the press and on the platform since the Report was issued, the widespread interest taken in it and in its proposals, and the almost universal support given to it, are clear indications that the Report and the plan meet a deep felt need in the minds and the hearts of the people.

Our people have memories of what happened at the end of the last war, memories of the periods of depression, memories of unemployment, frustration, poverty and distress into which large masses of our people were thrown.

. . . There is a deep determination among the mass of the people that we must build up a Britain in which if there is want which we can prevent we shall collectively prevent that want. . . .

One of the remarkable and significant things about the Beveridge Plan is the wide and cordial acceptance given to it by the middle class.

The Plan has among others three great merits. First it is comprehensive. It brings within the range of social insurance practically every citizen in this country.

The second great merit is that it provides security from want in adversity by guaranteeing a minimum subsistence income whatever the cause and however long the period.

The third great merit of the Plan is that it consolidates our social services into a single scheme under a single Ministry with unified administration.

If there is one proposal, one plan, about which this country is unanimous, apart from parties, apart from sections, apart from political differences, it is this.

CHAPTER X

Torpedoed

Am I a sea or a whale that thou settest a watch over me?

JOB 7.12

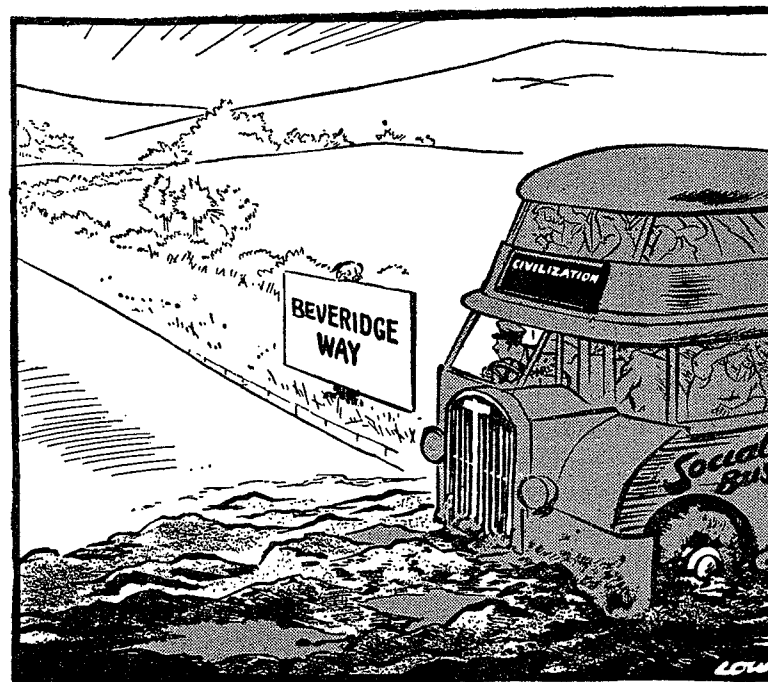
“THE first reaction of press and public was one of almost unanimous approval.” So *Time* summed it up in December 1942. But in addition to the press and the public, Britain had a Government. In this quarter, signs of very different feelings to the Beveridge Report began to appear from the beginning.

Just before the Report was published there had been an interchange of letters between the Paymaster-General, Sir William Jowitt, and William, in which the former deprecated premature publicity about the Report and the latter defended himself against the implied criticism of his actions. In fact, there was no stopping public interest in the Report. So many people knew what they had discussed with William as witnesses or otherwise, that the knowledge that something really large was on the stocks became public property inevitably. Nevertheless, the Government, till the very last moment before it was launched, planned to give the Report as little publicity as they could.

There came a dramatic change when the Minister of Information, Brendan Bracken, had a look at the Report. He saw at once that it was magnificent material for export to all the world, and a weapon of the first importance against Hitler. At the very end of November he rang William up in the friendliest manner to say that the Government attitude about publicity was altered. So far from trying to suppress it as much as possible, it was now decided to give the Report the

TORPEDOED

maximum of publicity. He asked William to come to a press conference under his Chairmanship to take place in the late afternoon of December the 1st at the Ministry of Information in the Macmillan Hall when the Report should just have been presented to the Government, and to broadcast the next day a



RIGHT TURN

Postscript for which all the Overseas lines would be cleared at 9.15 p.m. to announce it to the whole world. All this happened and the Report took the world by storm.

But not the Coalition Government of Sir Winston. There were many Ministers other than Brendan Bracken, and from one of them, Sir James Grigg of the War Office, came, within three weeks of the publication, proof of an attitude altogether different from that of everybody else the world over.

In the first flush of approval and interest following the appearance of the Report, the authorities in charge of A.B.C.A.—the Army Bureau of Current Affairs—invited William to provide them with a précis so that they might make it the substance of an early publication of their Bulletins to be used as the basis of organised discussion by the troops at home and abroad. The invitation came in a letter from Major Wakeford on December 4th, 1942.

William had prepared a Summary late in November for the Ministry of Information for press distribution, particularly overseas, but the Ministry had preferred to make their own. He sent this Summary to A.B.C.A., who added to it the final sections of the Report itself. Major Wakeford described them as "the best exposition of A.B.C.A. policy I have seen". He prefaced the Summary with an introduction of his own, raising issues for discussion which he did not show to William before issuing the booklet. In the same letter he added: "We have just received a wire from C.-in-C. Middle East asking for a précis of the Report to be wired out to him for the information of the troops." A.B.C.A. issued their Bulletin on December the 19th.

Two days later, on December the 21st, the Director of A.B.C.A., wired and wrote to William that the War Office had withdrawn the Bulletin in spite of his protests. "I am told that the Bulletin itself is unimpeachable, but that it is not thought desirable to promote formal and organised discussions upon it until Parliament has pronounced! Perhaps they mean 'Reichstag' not 'Parliament!'" On December the 24th followed an official letter to William announcing this withdrawal.

Questions in Parliament immediately followed, beginning on January the 19th.

Sir James Grigg on that day in Parliament took the line that A.B.C.A. discussions were compulsory parades and that it was vital that the briefs provided "should not only be completely

objective but should in addition be generally accepted as being so".

When then I was shown an issue of "Current Affairs", containing, besides an official brief, a Summary of the Beveridge Report written by the author himself, I took the view that compulsory discussion of this subject in the Army ought to be postponed until there had been at any rate a preliminary Debate in this House on the subject. For one thing it might easily have conveyed the impression that the Scheme set out in the Report was settled Government Policy whereas in fact no decision of any kind had been taken. Unfortunately, the matter was, for various reasons into which I need not enter, brought to me at a very late stage and the copies had already left the printer for distribution. It was, therefore, necessary to give orders for their withdrawal. The choice presented to me was a difficult one, but I have no doubt that I took the better of the two courses open to me. The factor which principally weighed with me was the absolute necessity of keeping A.B.C.A. out of possible political controversy, particularly in view of the fact that attendance at these debates is compulsory.

It is clear that, in spite of the Director's letter to William, Sir James Grigg did not in fact find the contents of the A.B.C.A. Bulletin "unimpeachable". The fact that the Summary had been written by William apparently was the main ground of his decision, even though it was preceded by an introduction not written or even seen by William, putting points both for and against the Report. The Report itself was of course without party political flavour, but Sir James Grigg in a panic seems to have attached importance to what some of the members of Parliament said to him to the contrary in the lobbies. On February the 2nd the matter was debated on the adjournment. On this occasion, in spite of vigorous attacks by John Dugdale and Thomas Driberg, who quoted the

Bishop of Bristol's description of the withdrawal as an "inconceivably stupid action", Sir James Grigg stuck to his guns:

Whatever the hon. Member for West Bromwich (Mr. Dugdale) may think about it, there does exist—and I find evidence of it in my post bag and in what Members say to me in the Lobbies—a suspicion or at any rate a fear that this scheme can be used to propagate one particular set of views, and this, besides being contrary to the spirit on which



"COME AWAY IN ME 'AND" (News Chronicle)

the present Government is founded, is definitely not in the interests of the Army educational scheme, which will then become the football of those holding extreme party views. The reason I deplore the fuss which has been made about this is that more has been done by the creators of the fuss to make the "A.B.C.A." scheme the football of extremists on either side than I could ever have believed possible.

I wish I could find words poignant enough to express my regret that the Government should have stooped to impute political motives to the author of the Scheme or the précis of it which he wrote for the A.B.C.A. Bulletin. It was that great Archbishop of Canterbury, our old and dear friend William Temple, who said of the Plan that it was the first time anyone had set out to embody the whole spirit of the Christian ethic in an Act of Parliament. It was something above party politics, an attempt to create an agreed measure of social justice which should never have been degraded into a vote-catching device to be tossed across the floor of the House of Commons between the parties in their competition for political power, a sordid game at any time. While disclaiming the wish to see it a football between parties, it was Sir James Grigg himself by his action who put it in exactly that position.

Today it is clear that the decision was the worst possible one for the prestige of the Prime Minister and the confidence of the country and the troops in his policy. The men in the forces were clamouring to learn all about the Report. From what they had already heard it seemed to them, as many wrote to tell us, that here at last was something they could fight for. For at the time when it was published many were already asking what indeed were they fighting for?

Mr. Casey, the Minister of State, in a broadcast on December the 2nd had drawn attention to the strong interest of the troops in the Middle East, and had also wired to the authorities in this country asking for the immediate provision of copies of the Report on their behalf.

Sir James Grigg by his decision formally withdrew from the troops one of the best opportunities of learning about the Report, after it had been dangled before them. They were naturally incensed. They could only conclude that Sir Winston Churchill's Government because they disliked the Report were afraid to trust them to come to their own free judgment. The men at home were able to buy the Report for a shilling, but

the fighting men abroad in the desert and elsewhere were to be deprived of what they considered to be equally their right. Like the men on Clydeside, these men came not unnaturally to distrust the Government, and showed with a vengeance that they did so in the 1945 election so disastrous and humiliating to the Prime Minister and his party. A great many copies of the Bulletin actually reached the forces before they could be recalled, and some of the recipients were able to secrete and keep them and pass them round. But this only made the authorities trying to get them back look the more foolish.

There was a perfectly good third course open to Sir James Grigg, between letting the original Bulletin stand and withdrawing it. He could have supplemented it with an instruction to all the officers using it as a brief that they should emphasise that the Report was in no sense yet Government policy; it was a proposal to which neither Government nor Parliament were committed. He could have respected the troops instead of insulting their intelligence. He should have remembered that you cannot both ask men to lay down their lives for their country and also subject them while doing so to a censorship not shared by their civilian brothers.

That the contrary view was held and acted upon became even more astonishing when at last in June, six months after the withdrawal of the Summary prepared by William, an A.B.C.A. Bulletin on Social Security appeared to take its place. It took the form of a double issue to include not only the version of the Beveridge Report as presented by the A.B.C.A. authorities, but also a transcript of a broadcast which Sir Winston Churchill had given in March, three months before. This they printed in sections, each provided with a headline of their own, not from the broadcast, in large black type. Of these the last ran: "An advance in Social Security, the Beveridge Plan". Now Sir Winston had not mentioned the Beveridge Report, or Plan, in the broadcast. Indeed, he is not known ever to have mentioned the Beveridge Report at any time

in any public utterance till he belittled it in an election broadcast of 1945. In the broadcast of March 1943 he mentions "his friend Sir William Beveridge" as an authority on labour exchanges, but attributes unemployment insurance to himself and Llewellyn Smith, and describes Lloyd George as "the prime parent of all national insurance schemes":

I was his lieutenant in those distant days (he said), and afterwards it fell to me as Chancellor of the Exchequer fifteen years ago to lower the pensions age to 65 and to bring in the widows and orphans.

The time is now ripe for another great advance. . . . You must rank me and all my colleagues as strong partisans of national compulsory insurance for all classes for all purposes from the cradle to the grave.

All this without any suggestion that a Beveridge Report had been presented to him three months previously with which the troops abroad and the people at home were seething.

During all those months, no attempt had been made at any time by the Prime Minister or his colleagues to see the author. The only occasion on which he was present when any gathering of politicians referred to the Report was at a private dinner-party given to us both shortly after its appearance by Lord Astor, who had invited us to meet a number of eminent members of the House of Commons of all parties. There was no serious discussion that evening, although it was bandied about in conversation as any other topical event of moment might have been at a dinner-party. I was silent but attentive. I was pleased at hearing the remark made by a guest that the Report was so perfectly integrated that if any attempt to change it or to pull it to pieces was made it would be ruined. I registered great respect for the speaker, for he was right, as was so abundantly proved as time went on.

It was some weeks after this party and two months after the presentation of the Report before the Government took any

action upon it. It was only because its reception had been on a scale unparalleled in parliamentary history, not only in Great Britain but all over the world, and in particular among the men of the fighting forces, that they found themselves compelled against their will, as you might say, to do so. For weeks before the publication, and continuously afterwards, the daily order paper showed a stream of questions. Day after day, William Jowitt, then Minister without Portfolio, had to use all his ingenuity in fending off without appearing to do so members probing into the views of the Government. Questions came from every quarter of the House irrespective of party. Everyone wanted to know what action, if any, it was proposed to take. No other topic could compete with it. Goaded by this non-stop and well-directed bombardment, on February the 9th Anthony Eden, then Secretary of State for Foreign affairs and Deputy Leader of the House, at last gave the decision of the Government in these words:

It may be convenient to announce that we propose to allocate three Sitting Days in the next series of sittings for a Debate on the Report of Sir William Beveridge on Social Insurance and Allied Services.

The matters which had now to be considered were the terms of a motion leading to a vote and the party and the person to move it.

The motion which eventually emerged under Mr. Arthur Greenwood's name was as vague and non-committal as it possibly could be. It ran:

That this House welcomes the Report of Sir William Beveridge on Social Insurance and Allied Services as a comprehensive review of the present provisions in this sphere and as a valuable aid in determining the times on which developments and legislation should be pursued as part of the Government's policy of post-war reconstruction.

The Political correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, writing before the debate, compared the verbiage to "a red carpet put down at a railway station for a distinguished visitor"; he had more than a suspicion that the Government themselves had drafted the motion; certainly they had seen and approved it.¹ The Parliamentary correspondent of the *New Statesman*, writing after the debate, had more than a suspicion; he said that the motion for debate was drafted by a Cabinet Committee of Anderson, Wood, Lyttelton, Attlee, Bevin and Morrison, and that Greenwood had been empowered by the Labour Party to put his name to the motion on certain understandings.²

The Cabinet's red-carpet motion was instantly and cordially disliked by ordinary members of all three political parties, who recognised without difficulty and at a glance the nature of the stalling policy from which it drew its inspiration. Perhaps the most arresting consideration in all the mêlée was the fact that even Members of Parliament appeared to forget vote-catching and party considerations in their immediate recognition of something above party conflict in the spirit of the Beveridge Plan. Here was a step forward, and the right step forward, in the advancement towards a better social structure. It is often rather broadly said that war not only brings the best out of men but also draws them together into a united purpose. The Beveridge Plan was a plan for peace, but it seemed in these early days of its first appeal that it did just those things in reality. Amendments to the motion came in from all sides. Lord Winterton, Quintin Hogg, Hugh Molson, Shinwell, McGovern, Wilfrid Roberts, Percy Harris found themselves together in their demand for the immediate implementation of the Report. Percy Harris said the motion did not mean anything. Lord Winterton said: "It seems to some of us that some of the Amendments are more definite and more objective

¹ *Manchester Guardian*, February 16th, 1943.

² *New Statesman*, February 20th, 1943.

than the original motion." The young Tories led by Lord Hinchingsbrooke had put down an amendment supported by forty members, asking "The Government to set up forthwith the proposed Ministry of Social Security for the purpose of giving effect to the principles of the Report." They and others pressed the Speaker to say that he would call one of the amendments, but he would not commit himself: "We will see how we get on."

The meaninglessness of the motion was illustrated by the first two speakers, Greenwood as mover and Arnold Gridley as seconder, who made mutually inconsistent speeches; the mover advocated the Report wholeheartedly, while the seconder damned it with faint praise. Greenwood, having cited the National Council of Labour Resolution of December 17th, 1942, proceeded:

No document within living memory has made such a powerful impression, or stirred such hopes, as the Beveridge Report. The people of the country have made up their minds to see the plan in its broad outline carried into effect, and nothing will shift them.

I therefore call—and I hope I can do so with confidence—upon the Government to begin implementing, without a day's unnecessary delay, the Social security scheme boldly planned in broad outline by Sir William Beveridge. This Debate will have failed in its purpose unless, during its course, the Government make a clear and explicit statement of their intentions.

The Government were represented on the first of the three days by Sir John Anderson (Lord President of the Council), and on the second day by Kingsley Wood (Chancellor of the Exchequer). The former read his speech, accepting much of the Report provisionally, while rejecting some of it, including subsistence minimum for benefits, and pensions rising over a period of years, and expressing doubts about the workmen's

compensation plan. He rejected also the proposal made in the Report and urged by the Tory Reformers for immediate establishment of a Ministry of Social Security:

We do not propose to constitute the new Ministry or Statutory board now. We will meet the necessities of the moment by putting the burden on existing Departments and setting up a small central staff of experienced people who will devote their whole time to the matter.

He repeated in nearly his last words that "there can be at present no binding commitment", though subject to that he had "made it clear that the Government adopt the scheme in principle".

No reservations that I have made will affect the speed and vigour of our preparations. In the nature of things, there could be no final commitment. Parliament, I believe, is never committed to a legislative proposal before it reaches the Second Reading stage.

Kingsley Wood emphasised the difficulties of finance and competing claims, rejected the early establishment of a Ministry of Social Security, and re-emphasised John Anderson's refusal to be definitely committed to anything:

After hearing the speeches of the Lord President of the Council yesterday and the Chancellor today, I think it could aptly be said that the Lord President stoned the Beveridge Report and that the Chancellor has thrown it into the water. It now remains with the Home Secretary to try what artificial respiration he can give to bring it back to life.

So at the end of the second day Mr. Sexton, the Labour member for Barnard Castle, summed up.

Earlier that day, before the Chancellor spoke, Quintin Hogg as one of the Tory Reformers made a strong appeal for positive

action, including setting up of a Ministry of Social Security at once. Having cited as one of the essential principles of the



"O.K.! NO BABIES."

Report the proposition that to prevent want after the war action must be taken during the war, Quintin Hogg proceeded:

Neither the Motion proposed by the right hon. Member for Wakefield (Mr. Greenwood) nor the statement from the Government pays the slightest attention to either of those essential principles in the Report. Neither accepts the moral

basis on which the Report rests, the six principles for which Sir William Beveridge asks acceptance, or the specific proposal for the institution of a Ministry of Social Security. It is for that reason that my Friends and I put down an Amendment in these specific terms. We believe the keynote of restatement of political controversy after the war to be practical idealism. We believe that the Government have failed in the practical aspect of the matter in failing to set up the necessary organisation to give effect to their principles, and in the idealism because there is nothing in the speech to which we listened yesterday which could kindle the smallest spark of imagination.

The Beveridge Scheme is a scheme for the abolition of want by a particular instrument. It is not a scheme for the abolition of want in the abstract; it is a scheme for the abolition of want by the instrument of a redistribution of wealth. There is no burking that fact. That is what it is, and that is what seems to me to constitute its very great value, and the mere fact that it is in fact a scheme for the abolition of want by means of a redistribution of wealth seems to me to rob much of the criticism on the economic side of its force, because so long as you redistribute what is there, you cannot destroy the economic resources of the country.

The first two days of the debate produced a rising storm of dissatisfaction and frustration which, with the comments of the press, brought the Government sharply to a sense of danger and almost to panic. At the termination of the second day, I remember very well coming along the lobby with William and meeting Mr. Attlee scurrying in the opposite direction like nothing so much as the White Rabbit when he had lost his gloves. As a member of the Coalition Government, Mr. Attlee had lost something a good deal more important, and there was no doubt, observing his face of anxiety and dismay, that he knew it. I was later given to understand that he was on his way,

and very quickly on his way, so quickly that he did not even have time to greet us, to a meeting hastily summoned by the Labour Party to decide how to pull the chestnuts out of the fire if it was not in fact already too late. There was so much at stake. The result of their deliberations became at once apparent at the opening of the third day. The Deputy Speaker announced his intention of calling an amendment in the names of James Griffiths, Shinwell, and other Labour members put down after John Anderson's speech two days before. Miss Ward, the Conservative member for Wallsend, protested that this meant forcing the Conservatives to vote on a Labour Party amendment—an amendment seeking a direct censure of the Government for its treatment of the Beveridge Report. The amendment was in these words:

That this House expresses its dissatisfaction with the now declared policy of His Majesty's Government towards the Report of Sir William Beveridge on Social Insurance and Allied Services and urges reconsideration of that policy with a view to the early implementation of the plan.

This virtually forced such ardent critics of the Government's conduct as the young Tory group to vote against their conscience. Speeches for the amendment were made amongst others by James Griffiths, George Grey, R. D. Denman and J. R. Clynes. At the end came Herbert Morrison, with as hard a job as anyone could wish. He began with compliments to William:

This Report is a great State document, and I agree with the complimentary things that have been said about it and its author. It is a very fine production, well knit together, well combined, well tied up, and it faces difficulties with great honesty and courage. It can be classed as a great State document that will live long in our social and economic history. It is the culmination of 32 years of social insurance

development. This Report is a logical outcome of tendencies, it must be remembered, that were being worked out ever since 1911, but so complete and thorough is the working out that this evolutionary Report, this Beveridge Report, has made history. Thinking about these subjects will never be the same as it was before. The country and the Government are therefore under a great debt of gratitude to the Report and to the outstanding public servant who was the architect of this great document.

He went on to argue that of the list of twenty-three changes suggested in William's Report the Government had accepted sixteen, held up six for further consideration and had rejected one only, that relating to industrial assurance, which the Report had starred as not essential to the whole plan. "On a report published on 2nd December that is not a bad record," he said.

But Herbert Morrison, like John Anderson and Kingsley Wood, had to describe all the conclusions of the Government as provisional, and to refuse emphatically anything like a commitment to anything.

Today we know from Sir Winston Churchill's War History what members generally did not know then, that all Government spokesmen in the debate were tied by a Minute of the Prime Minister's, excluding a positive attitude to the Report. Lord Winterton must have known of this Minute when he observed on the second day:

I wish to make myself wholly responsible for saying that it was not the fault of the Lord President of the Council that we had that terribly colourless speech yesterday. It was the fault of the whole Cabinet and particularly of the Prime Minister.

Bound by this Minute like his two predecessors, Herbert Morrison could not say anything to show a change of the

Government's attitude and could not bring his opponents round. The amendment was pressed to a division and in view of its hostile character had to be resisted with all the strength of the Government; a three-line whip was issued. The Labour and Liberal Ministers of the Coalition found themselves going into the lobby against practically all the unofficial members of their parties; Arthur Greenwood having moved the original motion voted with his party for an amendment that left nothing of his motion standing except the three opening words: "That this House". The Tory Reformers, in spite of their own amendment and their speeches, felt bound to vote for the Government. The Labour amendment was defeated by 338 votes to 121. After the vote was announced I met James Griffiths, whose speech in the debate was an outstanding contribution, in the lobby. He said: "This makes the return of the Labour Party to power at the next election an absolute certainty." He was indeed right.

The selection of this particular amendment turned the debate into a political demonstration in place of a way of getting ahead with social security. If in place of this hostile amendment the amendment of the Tory Reformers, which avoided any criticism of the Government but pressed for the immediate establishment of a Ministry of Social Security, had come to the vote the Tory Reformers as well as all the Labour and Liberal members would presumably have voted for it. The Government would have been put in a most embarrassing situation. By the pressing of a hostile amendment, the Government as a whole were saved from embarrassment. But the embarrassment recoiled all the more on the Labour members of the Government, most notably on Ernest Bevin.

Kingsley Wood's speech contains two references to the Minister of Labour and National Service which help to point to him as a principal opponent of early action on the Beveridge Plan.

In dealing with competing claims on reconstruction ex-

penditure which might be prior to social security, he mentioned first housing:

My right hon. Friend the Minister of Labour and other Ministers have been engaged during the last few weeks on the vital question of a proper programme of post-war housing.

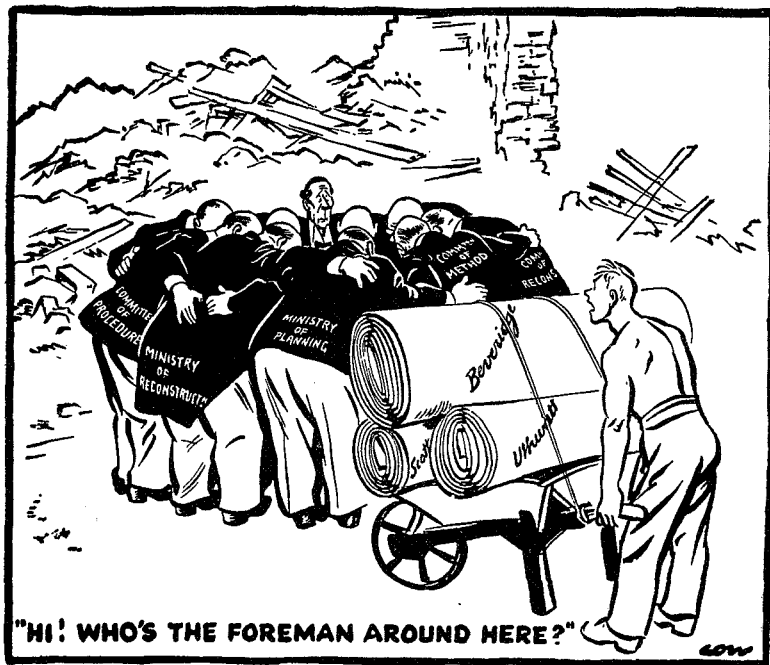
In arguing against establishment of a Ministry of Social Security, he played the familiar gambit of departmental jealousy.

If one goes through the various sections of this Report and the recommendations that are made, it will be found that a great many of the duties of implementing them will lie upon existing Ministers. For instance, the responsibility for a comprehensive medical service must lie on the Minister of Health, and if we try to interpose a new Minister we shall only hamper and hinder the machine. In regard to unemployment insurance, it would simply hinder matters if a Minister were interposed before what I regard as the duty and responsibility of the Minister of Labour. If hon. Members visualise, as they ought to do, the position of a Ministry of Social Security, they will find that if we are to have a proper and well-managed scheme, a great many of the responsibilities in connection with it must still lie with the old Departments. We cannot visualise, for instance, a comprehensive medical service being torn away from the Minister of Health and entrusted to a new Minister.

Kingsley Wood's argument of course was nonsensical. As another speaker pointed out, the Beveridge Plan laid down explicitly that the health service would be administered, not by the new Ministry of Social Security but by the Minister of Labour.

Ernest Bevin did not welcome the Beveridge Report or the excitement that it caused. "Man cannot live by Beveridge

alone" was one of his early comments, reported in the *Daily Mirror* of February the 16th. A little later, on April 14th, he told the Scottish T.U.C. that "people should not fall into the error of calling the Beveridge Report Social Security. It was really a co-ordination of the nation's ambulance service on a proper footing." A little earlier, in answering questions on the after-



noon of December the 2nd, 1942, he used a phrase which the evening papers of the same day reported as "The Beveridge Thing". In *Hansard* next morning the phrase appears as "The Beveridge Scheme". It has to be conceded that the press sometimes slip up on a word. But on this occasion it is presumable that they did so unconsciously if at all by diagnosing contempt from the speaker's voice. Above all, Ernest Bevin disliked the enthusiasm that the Report aroused in the Labour Party, and

the determination of the Party in the debate of February the 16th to 18th to press their amendment:

Mr. Ernest Bevin is known to have expressed a determination to resign if the party voted against the Government.

At the party meeting yesterday morning he made a sledgehammer speech. . . .

He found only three supporters when the vote was taken.

So the *Daily Express* reported in precise terms on February the 19th. *The Times* on the same day spoke of two stormy meetings of the Labour Party on February 17th and 18th, attended by most of the Labour Ministers and leading to decision, in spite of vigorous opposition by Mr. Attlee and "above all" Mr. Bevin, to back the amendment officially.

Ernest Bevin of course did not carry out his threat to resign, but he transferred much of his wrath with his Labour colleagues to the innocent author of his troubles. He became completely unfriendly to William. On almost the only occasion when he spoke to William after the presentation of the Report (it was at a social reception at Claridge's of foreign delegates on December 8th, 1943) he blamed him for not having given credit to his civil servant colleagues on the Inter-Departmental Committee. William immediately wrote him a letter enclosing extracts from things written or said by himself in public about his colleagues and his debt to them, beginning with the Report itself. Anyone who looked at these extracts would be bound to agree with the end of William's letter to Ernest Bevin.

You will see that any suggestion that I used the help of the civil servants (or of others) without acknowledging their help is contrary to the facts.

To this letter Ernest Bevin sent neither answer nor acknowledgment.

A week after the House of Commons, the House of Lords on Wednesday and Thursday, February 24th and 25th, held a two-day debate, opened by Lord Nathan, who, referring to the

action of the House of Commons, invited the Government "on the morrow of a great disappointment to undo the harm they have done to Britain at home and abroad by their faint hearts, their guarded speech, their little understanding of what 'Beveridge' has come to mean". The Government, represented by Lord Simon as Lord Chancellor and Lord Snell as Deputy Leader of the House, did not accept this invitation; they played the same game of emphasising competing claims on social effort and of rejecting an immediate Ministry of Social Security which Lord Nathan urged particularly, with the support of Lord Samuel, Lord Sankey, Lord Addison, Lord Crewe and Lord Bledisloe. In replying at the end of the debate, Lord Nathan described creation or not of such a Ministry as "the test of sincerity".

Now, if the Government would make that concession to feeling, I believe that an entirely new atmosphere would be created in regard not merely to this whole matter of the Beveridge proposals, but also in regard to reconstruction as a whole. For the attitude that the Government adopt with regard to the Beveridge Report will indicate in the minds of the people the attitude which the Government will adopt with regard to reconstruction.

There were innumerable bouquets for William from the Lords. Lord Samuel had said in the debate that the Beveridge Plan was "the finest body of proposals in the sphere of social reform that has been presented to the country in our time". Lord Dawson called it "a very fine piece of constructive thinking". Lord Simon said it was "a really wonderful document", and Archbishop Lang that it was epoch-making and epoch-marking.

Apart from these remarks, two observations are notable. One from the Archbishop of Canterbury, who said:

I am quite certain that those who are in close touch, for example, with the troops in our camps, would say that

nothing could be better for the morale of the Army at this time than the clearest possible declaration from the Government with regard to what they take to be possible in the implementation of the Report.

And one from Lord Addison:

I confess, as an old Parliamentarian, that I cannot recall a Parliamentary issue that was worse bungled.

The practical design of the Government in both debates was to torpedo the Report. They proceeded with the Plan announced by John Anderson of getting a Committee of civil servants to examine the Beveridge proposal and draft plans for legislation. They refused to give the names of this Committee in spite of repeated requests for them. As William had already had the benefit of the best party of civil servants available in making the Report, presumably they were the same people. If not, the inference does not need to be stated. The one thing that was abundantly clear was that William was not to be consulted about the Committee or by it.

The King's speech of November 24th, 1943, promised a statement of the views and proposals of Ministers regarding "an enlarged and unified system of social insurance, a comprehensive health service, and a new scheme of workmen's compensation". A few days later (November 30th), Mr. Attlee in reply to a question named as the Ministers specially concerned the Minister of Health and the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Minister of Labour and National Service, and the Home Secretary, with the Minister without Portfolio (Lord Jowitt) co-ordinating.

The new Committee of civil servants took longer to comment on the Report than the Report had taken to make. The two White Papers of the Government on Social Insurance Part I and on Social Insurance Part II Workmen's Compensation appeared on September 26th, 1944, nearly two years after the Report. The following passage from a pamphlet of

BEVERIDGE AND HIS PLAN

the Social Security League introducing a comparison between the Report and the White Papers describes the intervening period:

The Social Security League, first discussed in March, was launched in May 1943. In October 1943, Sir William Beveridge became its President. Founded "to promote the principles of the Beveridge Report" the Social Security League has worked steadily towards this end. Some sceptics became disillusioned with the Government, got tired and turned away. Others—some distinguished, some unknown—have worked unceasingly to press for Beveridge legislation. Among them are great crowds of serving men, who, writing from remote parts of the world, still send letters of encouragement and requests for Beveridge literature and posters.

Meanwhile the Government sat silent. Then there were rumours of a White Paper. To a Social Security League deputation which, in November 1943, pressed for swift publication, Sir William Jowitt expounded the intricacies of the subject. Many technical matters, as well as high policy, must be settled, he explained, before the public ought to know the Government opinion. Silence fell again. Eventually a new rumour began. The Government, it seemed, had worked out a new Social Security scheme which would "Out-Beveridge Beveridge". Utopia was round the corner. Finally the publication day drew near. Dense secrecy prevailed. September 26th dawned. After twenty-one months of arduous work the Government had made its scheme. . . . And there this introduction ends—the Government White Paper, in major pattern and in many details, is a re-write of the Beveridge Plan.

The political consequence of the debates was more important than its practical consequences. It signalled the Government of Sir Winston Churchill as "against Beveridge", the very

TORPEDOED

thing the British people had set their hearts on. Added to the withdrawal of the A.B.C.A. pamphlet, it made certain of the defeat of Sir Winston in 1945 as James Griffiths had foretold. Even a Labour Minister like Herbert Morrison, who was friendly to the Report, suffered for the part he was compelled to take in the debate of February 1943 in appearing hostile or lukewarm about it; his defeat by Arthur Greenwood for the Treasuryship of the Labour Party in May of that year was widely attributed to this cause.



CHAPTER XI

R.M.S. "Queen Mary"

When thou sittest to eat with a ruler consider diligently what is before thee.
PROVERBS 23.1

WILLIAM has told in his recently published volume *Power and Influence* how we came to be invited to go to America in the spring of 1943 as the guests of the Rockefeller Foundation. When, immediately after the publication of the Report in the December before, an invitation was cabled to him to address a joint gathering of the American Federation of Labour and the Committee on Industrial Organization, he was ready to go, but was discouraged by Brendan Bracken from starting until transport arrangements could be more favourable. William said he would not go without me, and most kindly the authorities on both sides of the Atlantic permitted me to go when the proper time should come. We heard in due course that we should be sent over by ship, and that we should stand by for final instructions.

The most complete secrecy, of course, was imposed upon us. We were warned at last to come within easy reach of Greenock to be ready to set sail, and we moved to our little flat in Edinburgh to await the final orders. To our surprise we were summoned to the office of the American Consul in Edinburgh, where we were invited not only to fill in extensive forms such as are obligatory for entrants into America in ordinary circumstances, but we were also compelled to have our fingerprints taken. We raised no objections, but having regard to the auspices under which we were undertaking the hazardous enterprise of crossing the Atlantic at the height of Hitler's submarine successes, we wondered a little. The days

R.M.S. "QUEEN MARY"

passed idly, for we could not make any plans, and then the word came that we were to proceed to Glasgow for final instructions. In the station hotel that night we talked to the editor of the *Glasgow Herald*; we also heard over the air that an old and much valued friend, Beatrice Webb, had died. She was eighty-five, and alert and active to within a fortnight of the end.

Next day we arose between five and six in the morning for a very early breakfast before catching the boat train. At the station we saw gathered some of those who were to be fellow-travellers. There were a few women amongst them, some with children, who had been given permission to join their husbands in America. The train took a long time to get under way. It brought us in a leisurely way to the jetty, from which a tug was to take us to embark on the *Queen Mary*. It was a windy fresh morning early in May, and again the delay in getting us off seemed interminable. That early breakfast began to fade away into the distant past. We looked across the water to our ship lying at anchor, and nature cried aloud. Very kindly consideration was shown to us at all stages, and when at last the tug reached the *Queen Mary* and our embarkation was imminent, we were asked to defer to one other passenger only, who, it was laid down, must be put aboard before anyone else. He was an American naval unit who had committed a crime for which he was to be tried in the United States. He looked only a lad of twenty or even under. His brown eyes met mine as he was led past us between his escort. I do not know what message they tried to give. I tried to give him back one of great compassion. We did not see him again and never heard what tragic misdeed had led him to so serious a pass, for here it was clear was no ordinary misdemeanour.

When he had passed out of sight into the lower regions, we led the party entering the ship. I had sailed on her in 1937 in the heyday of her splendour, before she had even the rivalry of her own sister-ship, the *Queen Elizabeth*, and was still trying

when everything should be propitious to beat her own records. It was odd beyond description to pass through her that morning, she was in such disarray and confusion. A junior officer told off to take care of us explained that our rooms were not ready and suggested that we might perhaps pass the time on a sofa in a corner of the great drawing-room of other days. I hesitatingly indicated that it was so many hours since we had left our hotel that perhaps he might lead us to a toilet. He was immediately deeply embarrassed. In a troopship, he tried to explain without causing me discomfort, such conveniences had no doors. My upbringing must have been defective, for my impulse was, far from blushing, to laugh immoderately. But that would have been altogether too much for that dear young officer of the Merchant Navy, who might have been my son for his age. I tried to assume the proper reserve in entering into the strangest form of conversation, for neither of us could get down to the solution. I suggested the Captain's quarters. But no, he thought not. All this time we had been traversing leagues up and down the length of that mighty ship, for, in fact, it proved he had a destination in view. We came to it at last, some sort of officers' quarters on the large scale—but still without doors. He indicated an inner branch of this sanitary block, standing at right angles to the main entrance, and quickly uttering the remarkable and to me unforgettable assurance that if I would trust myself to him he would undertake to face the outer world, proceeded to do so. Presently he led me back to a simple lunch in what had been the tourist-class dining-room, and there William and I had our first meal, cut off entirely from everything outside of the *Queen Mary* by security regulations. Our sleeping-quarters had been arranged on A Deck in a pleasant suite, but with many apologies an alteration was broken to us by the authorities. A mysterious rearrangement of most of that deck was only too clearly proceeding. In the idleness of the next day, for the ship showed no intention of

leaving the Clyde, I watched as I leaned over the rail what then seemed to me a reckless and shameful waste. For armies of men were engaged in tearing down wooden panelling and bed rails from the once luxurious rooms and heaving them into the sea. Other armies of men were engaged in repainting some of the interiors with equally reckless abandon and extravagance. The noise and bustle were indescribable and continued night and day. It soon penetrated into our uninformed intelligence that something out of the ordinary was going on. We had been warned that the *Queen Mary* carried troops, and that we should expect her to be very full of them. But this clearly could not account for what we saw. On the second day a rumour was handed out to us that the Queen of Holland with her suite was to sail on the ship. We felt that we could only hope that she was paying for the alterations, not to mention the new furniture, for some vanloads of chairs and sofas disgorged their contents on to the jetty, and finally, food and drink on the copious scale also began to be taken in. What an appetite, we thought, these new passengers must have, whoever they might be; for I may say we never believed in the Queen of Holland for a moment. The third day came with a slackening of disintegration and transformation. There appeared a ship alongside from the bowels of which began to pour out a great body of German prisoners. I can clearly remember the look of amazement which came on their faces as they gazed up at the immense hull of the *Queen Mary* towering above them. They were accommodated in the lowest part of the ship, and were only seen subsequently when on fresh-air parade from time to time. They had been in prison camps in the Western Highlands of Scotland and were brown and healthy. British and American troops poured in, and still the ship lay at anchor.

Presently an order was passed that no one was to look out of a window or port-hole until further notice. The great secret embarkation was about to take place. It was indicated

that thereafter our departure would be immediate. It was delightfully exciting—both the secret embarkation and the hope of setting sail. For me setting sail in whatever ship has a thrill which I could never adequately describe. The miracle of surmounting and moving over the ocean can never grow stale. To move suddenly and quietly out of her anchorage in a mighty liner rouses an emotion of wonder and surprise that only the dullest would not feel. On this day, it was far more than that. The war was in a deadly phase. Enemy submarines in the Atlantic were enjoying rich harvests; our convoys were in constant peril, which they seldom escaped. We had thousands of troops on board and we had that still unknown but obviously immensely important party. I was the only woman on board going to America on a private invitation without any Government mission to perform. It had been a great concession on the part of both the British and American authorities to allow such a departure from the rule. Who would not have responded to such a thrill?

I had never before seen the estuary of the Clyde from a big ship. Earlier in my life I had enjoyed sailing in a little ten-ton racing cutter owned by a member of my family, putting in here and there, venturing out into the great sea, nosing around the headlands. Once outside, the *Queen Mary* fairly bounded along. I do not know how many knots she was making. She was moving to a pattern which brought a sweep out of the straight at intervals that one began to watch for. They told us that she took 12,000 troops when she had only them to carry. How many thousand she had on this trip, I never knew. They seemed to swarm everywhere except, of course, on the decks and in the lounges reserved for the great secret party.

It soon emerged that Sir Winston Churchill and his war-lords were aboard, with all their attendant suites. We were given to understand that the rooms intended for us by a kindly Cunard staff-officer had been given over to a noble lord and his

secretaries. Part of the dining-room to which we were relegated was partitioned off for such of the entourage as did not eat alone or in parties in private rooms. We were restricted to a portion of the deck from which we could see on the sun deck occasional members of the W.R.N.S. taking the air.

We found ourselves next door to the head of the American Medical staff, a most friendly and delightful neighbour. The ship was divided into two spheres, one British and one American, each with a hierarchy of its own nationals in charge. We saw very little of the British members, who seemed to have quarters on the other side of the ship. We soon were on easy terms with the American medicos, who came to my aid when it became apparent that the Prime Ministerial party were not the only, to us, unexpected travellers on the ship. The reason for the reckless destruction of the wooden panelling and other appurtenances also explained itself. The ship had been for months in use for the transport of troops to and from the Mediterranean Zone and was, in fact, infested with biting insects of all the kinds harboured by man in such circumstances, and in particular by bed-bugs. Our room had, alas, not been stripped, and I fell a victim to the hunger of these creatures. It was so new an experience that I did not know what was biting me. When I went to consult my American friends they told me. They helped too to lessen my discomfort. Each night a fresh contingent attacked me, and every day the overworked servants did their ineffectual best in our room with insect powder. It was before the days of D.D.T. The whole ship took the liveliest interest in my plight and pitied me from the heart. No one else was suffering like me. The bitterest thing of all was that although William shared the room, and although we exchanged our sleeping-quarters, he was never bitten at all.

On the second night out William was discovered to be running a temperature. He went to bed and I was pressed to

make a fourth at bridge next door. There was a wonderful show of carefree jollity until a servant came in with a great tray of hot drinks and sandwiches. It then gave way to seriousness in a moment. "You weren't expected to know," they said, "but you will be wondering, so we'd better tell you. We shall all be at our stations to-night." "And what," I said, "am I to do with William if anything goes amiss?" "Leave that to us," they said, "we have our orders for you." I could not choose but leave it to them, but I said nothing to William when I left them to their emergency refreshment.

The next morning we received a note from Sir Winston's secretary inviting us to lunch with him in his quarters. I must confess that I was invaded by a paralysing sense of fearful anticipation. He knew that we had been invited to go to America because the publication of the Beveridge Report had aroused unprecedented interest in all parts of the U.S.A. He himself had never seen or spoken to the author since it was published. His parliamentary spokesmen in the three-day debate on the Report had been negative to the point of infuriating many of their listeners. But that was in February and Sir Winston had been ill and unable to speak in the House himself. Meanwhile, the British people at home and the British Army abroad had both made it clear that the Beveridge Plan was the goods as far as they were concerned, and that they meant to have it. What, then, were we to expect at lunch that day? Fortunately my bites had not as yet disfigured me. I wore a black frock which had cost me far more than I could afford, and went along with William to the purged part of the ship with my heart in my very neat shoes. We found a group of the Prime Minister's party awaiting him. A deep depression had obviously reached them and it very soon reached us too. When I was asked if I was comfortable in my apartment, I could only manage to answer No. I was, in fact, suffering from stage fright. Presently Sir Winston came in, and we went in to lunch. He was the picture of gloomy

abstraction—the great Prime Minister and Minister for War in the throes; and, indeed, who could wonder? We sat down at a round table and, as the only woman present, I was placed on his right. He spoke to me of my great courage in making the journey to America. "You are very brave," he said, but obviously his mind was preoccupied. For myself my tongue stumbled when I spoke. I spoke about the beauty of New York in May with the magnolias in bloom, calling them, in my nervousness, mangolias. He corrected me with great gentleness—but the conversation faltered. I tried again and heard my remark booming out in a sudden silence round the table. We had been served with crabs, a fatal delicacy both to William and to me. I toyed with mine, pretending to eat it, but William, sitting right opposite to Sir Winston, let his lie. The Prime Minister, observing this, broke into speech. "Why is he not eating his crab?" he said to me in clear tones, directing a rather stormy look at William. Then he went on to speak of the difficulty of implementing the Beveridge Plan. He told us that he could not at that stage commit the future on so far-reaching a measure. As he developed the theme, I am afraid that my head sank lower and lower. I was aware that a Bishop who sat opposite to me was trying to convey his sympathy and to tell me to pluck up my courage and show no wound. But the wound, no doubt unwittingly dealt to our hopes, was too much for me.

One of the party expressed his view that the troops were not interested in such preparations as the Beveridge Plan for their future; they wanted, he indicated, to come home to every sort of high jinks. But then, I do not think he can have had the advantage of seeing the letters that were coming from them to us from every front.

I do not think that William spoke at all. Presently the party broke up awkwardly. We stood for a few minutes talking by ourselves to our host, who chatted to William of old associations in bidding us good-bye. As we made our way out

of the room, in my misery and confusion I opened the wrong door on a wardrobe of gentleman's suits.

I think perhaps I felt the disappointment so keenly because all through the writing of the Report both William and I had looked forward to handing to Sir Winston a plan that was to be, we thought, the culmination of the early beginnings of their association, when the Prime Minister, then in his first office as the President of the Board of Trade, had shown such sympathetic understanding of the originality and importance of William's work. They were both young men at the beginning of quite different careers in 1908. Here they were to come together again thirty-five years on, I thought, for a piece of legislation that would show that the great war-lord was a great Prime Minister too, recognising that total war did not mean only battlefields, and that victory there alone would not do, if there were to be nothing in the field of social reform.

Lloyd George had promised the troops homes for heroes after the first world war. Here was a plan for far more than that ready to the hand that could have been implemented and in operation when, the terrific effort over, the longed-for peace with victory came. "There was the champagne, but he drank it not."¹

Later one of the secretaries took William to the war room to look at the war map without which Sir Winston, I was told, never travelled. It showed the progress of one of the most determined assaults of the war by submarines on an Atlantic convoy. The *Queen Mary* was sailing on a southern tack, over one hundred submarines were operating on the convoy to the north. It was this battle which had kept the troops on duty during the whole of the previous night. The convoy was suffering very heavy loss; many of the ships had already been sunk and others were so scattered as to be almost certain victims in the end. It was only when I heard of this from

¹ Ibsen, *Little Eyolf*.

William that I understood why the Prime Minister had so kindly praised my courage, and up to a point why to him the Beveridge Report had seemed that day a remote issue.

The *Queen Mary* did not depend this time merely on her speed and navigating tactics. As Sir Winston had told me at luncheon, she also had the benefit of an escort of cruisers as well as of the usual destroyers. The British Navy and Air Force accompanied her half-way and thereafter the Americans took over. It was a wonderful and exciting arrangement.

The last day on board was passed in a spirit of relaxation with danger passing. It was very warm and every inch of the decks was occupied by the troops. The great Ministerial party was taken from the ship in the Hudson river, and conveyed with no loss of time to Washington. During the interval, while the ship lay to for this operation, several of the German prisoners dived through port-holes into the water with a view to escaping. They were, of course, recaptured.

It was late before we docked in New York, and the word went round that we could not leave the ship till the following day. This caused us great disappointment, having regard to my tribulations, and an officer had just brought an immense bottle of champagne to our room as an alleviation when a message reached us that William and I were immediately to be disembarked. By now it was eleven o'clock at night and very dark, for New York was practising a black-out. I need hardly say that it would not have satisfied a British air-raid warden for a moment.

CHAPTER XII

The Plan Explained: America East and North

And thou shalt be secure because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee and thou shalt take thy rest in safety.

JOB II.18

WE stepped off the gangway into the landing place where the *Queen Mary* docks, and saw our modest stack of suitcases brought down and placed at our feet. The only occupant of the vast berthing place was an officer standing near by at a desk. We made our way to him in silence. He offered William a sheet of paper and a pen. We broke the strange quiet to ask what it was for. "For your autograph," he said. When obediently William had given it, we ventured to ask him how we were to reach our destination in New York. "Do not worry," he said, "the longshoremen will be here in a moment to take your luggage"—perhaps he said "grips", but I do not know. They came and we followed them down towards the exit, our steps echoing, our voices muted in the circumambient gloom. We met no one until, just within the closed gates that give on the outer world right into the middle of the city, we came upon an immense car. Our grips were quickly accommodated and we climbed in. "8 Sutton Square", we told our driver, and thither we sped through the dark streets. It was midnight by this time, but we need not have been anxious about our welcome from Joseph Chamberlain, our old friend with whom we were to stay. He had expected something of the kind, for everybody in New York knew that the *Queen Mary* was in and everybody seemed to know we had been aboard. It took us some little time to get used to the freedom

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with which our arrival and our tribulations on the voyage were eagerly canvassed by everybody; the departure from Britain had been treated with such scrupulous and portentous secrecy, not to be wondered at considering the personages with whom by chance we had been making the crossing. The Press did not confine itself to them, as the following syndicated cutting from many papers shows:

UNWANTED PASSENGERS

After the Churchill party arrived in Washington, British information service put out a press release which spoke of a pleasant voyage, making no mention of the fact that the ship was lousy.

The name of the ship is censored, but Lady Beveridge does not consider censorable the fact that there were vermin on board. She and Sir William, author of the famous Beveridge plan for social security, were not members of the official party (her husband was invited by the Rockefeller Foundation to give them his views on pensions), but that did not make them immune. Lady Beveridge confesses that she looks like a plum pudding.

But anyway, the vermin were better than submarines, and everybody was thankful.¹

The lamentable fact that I needed first aid from the doctors could not of course be concealed. The very apt description of my face was not however my own, although attributed to me, but the happy idea of some minion of the press. It was all too true. My appearance was too unusual to allow me to make a public appearance until the doctors, who were extremely efficient, brought it back to normal. It is understood that the Prime Minister expressed the view to the President that the most drastic measures would have to be taken to have the ship cleansed in New York. She certainly remained there in dock

¹ *Washington Merry-Go-Round* by Drew Pearson.

for three weeks. The British Ambassador, when, a few days after we had landed, I was lunching with him at the British Embassy in Washington, condoled with me on my experience. His secretary described the manner in which in Eastern quarters sometimes such biters had to be baulked of their prey by the use of fine muslin curtains, up and down the outside of which the intending sleeper could watch them in their myriads hungrily prowling on the lookout for a gap in the defences. The habit of secrecy had become so ingrained that I myself had never mentioned the matter to anyone at all, except the doctors, who faithfully promised to keep it dark. When I got home again to England my son also had heard all about it at the time.

It was not only on this particular and trivial matter that our reception in America took us by surprise. We had had some idea of how the Beveridge Report had been publicised throughout the length and breadth of the United States, both in anticipation before publication and in appreciation after, but we did not know that it had become so universal and even absorbing. We knew indeed that the press had given it an adequate show. Four days after the Report had been presented, the *New York Times* had printed a thousand-word article on "Britons Rush to Study Beveridge". Three days after that, *American Précis*, a wartime publication issued weekly in London by the American Outpost in Great Britain, filled two and a half pages out of its four with American press comments on the Report, and most of this comment was favourable.

"As far ahead of the original insurance acts as The Flying Fortress is ahead of Wright brothers' plane at Kittyhawk."—RAYMOND GRAM SWING.

"A historic step."—CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR.

"Beveridge blue print for social security has proved to be a personal triumph for its author. It is likely to prove political dynamite for any government that does not go a

long way towards attaining Beveridge's goal of freedom from want."—WALL STREET JOURNAL.

"The Beveridge plan backs up with a money forfeit all the current speeches about ending Want. . . . It makes our oratory good."—SAMUEL GRAFTON in NEW YORK POST.

"One lesson of the Beveridge Report is the distinction it implies between security and equality which are two entirely different ideas."—WALL STREET JOURNAL.

"The best statement of war aims we have had. . . . Perhaps Sir William's plan meets the needs of this age as Woodrow Wilson's 14 points met war aims needs of an earlier age. . . . We think there ought to be an American Beveridge Plan."—NEW YORK POST.

"Not so revolutionary."—CHICAGO SUN.

There followed almost at once the American reprint of the whole Report, published by Macmillan, finding a ready sale and netting a dollar profit to the British Government.

We knew therefore that some people in the States would show interest in us. We had no idea beforehand of the kind of reception that we should meet.

While I was recovering my complexion William paid a hurried preliminary visit to Washington, having a first and very discreet conference with Mr. Altmeyer and other members of the Social Security Board. After two nights he came back and together we met our first Press Conference in the Rockefeller Building in 47th Street. In preparation for my entrée I had arranged to have my hair and face attended to at the Elizabeth Arden beauty parlours in Fifth Avenue. As I walked over the black marble hall to the lift in their luxurious premises I heard the steps of another client behind me. When we met and were waiting to ascend, she said, "Would you mind if I came up in the elevator with you?" "Of course not," I naturally replied; "but why do you ask?" "Oh," she said, "it would be a memory for me—you are the wife of the Beveridge

BEVERIDGE AND HIS PLAN

Report, aren't you?" We parted for our allotted cubicles, where, in mine, I passed a considerable time. When I emerged to pay my bill, another lady shyly addressed me, saying, "Would you mind if I came down in the elevator with you? I should like to think that I had met the wife of Sir William Beveridge." It was in this amazing and most demoralising atmosphere that William and I passed the whole of our sojourn in the United States and Canada. Wherever we went, in shops, in taxis, in hotels and in trains we were greeted with an enthusiastic welcome. The American wage-earners and those in the lower-income professional groups saw the Plan, as in England they had seen it, as an escape from the agony of insecurity. They all knew us at sight; a far-reaching press campaign had provided them with our photographs, pedigrees, careers and ambitions, as well as with the gist of the Beveridge Plan. When William was on a train to Chicago, a negro attendant summed it up when he said, "Sho, you are the gentleman we are all talking about." He was indeed quite right. I think it was this welcome everywhere, making us feel that William was felt to have laid the foundations of a new conception of society universally acceptable in the ranks at any rate of the countless masses of the workers in every country, which so heartened and encouraged us that we found no great fatigue in carrying out the engagements and journeys to accomplish them that followed one another without a break for the next two months. No tonic can compete with approval.

Our friends at the Rockefeller Foundation were at first a little frightened of their boldness in asking us over. They could not be sure what we would say; they were even less sure of how we should be received. They made our first contacts private with experts; they begged us to avoid press interviews and conferences till we had felt our way. Their hesitations vanished after the first days. They gave free rein to their kindness and with infinite thoughtfulness provided for every possible need. Above all to Mrs. Julia Carson—herself a charming writer—

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whom they put at our disposal as secretary and manager, we owe it that one of the most strenuous times in our lives was also one of the pleasantest.

After a few days in New York we went off together to Washington. We were the guests of Mrs. Eugene Meyer, the owner of the *Washington Post*, for dinner on our arrival. The next day Mr. Churchill addressed Congress. In the morning William received this note:

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Kenneth Romney, Sergeant at Arms

WASHINGTON, D.C.

May 19, 1943.

TO SIR WILLIAM BEVERIDGE, GREETINGS:

You are hereby appointed a Special Assistant Sergeant at Arms of the U.S. House of Representatives, for Wednesday, May 19, 1943. Your appointment has the approval of Speaker Sam Rayburn.

(Signed) KENNETH ROMNEY

Sergeant at Arms

U.S. House of Reps.

Accepting the appointment, William sat on the floor of the House, just below and to the left of the Speaker. I was thus left to friends for the occasion, and I received a warm and very kind invitation to go with Miss Alice Roosevelt to sit with her in her accustomed place, which proved to be in the gallery right opposite the official British Embassy quarters. The whole great edifice was filled with the members of Congress on the floor and the privileged public in the galleries expectantly awaiting their guest, Mr. Churchill. As I kept scanning the scene I became aware of a stir like a gathering breath of wind, and I saw across the intervening space two small figures walking down the gangway towards the Embassy seats. Suddenly the members of Congress and all their guests were on their feet

waving handkerchiefs and loudly and continuously applauding. They were giving an ovation to the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. Then, a few minutes after the cheers had fallen into silence, Mr. Churchill himself arrived. Hearty though his welcome undoubtedly was, it could not but be conceded that the Duke and his Duchess had stolen his thunder. Mr. Churchill spoke for about an hour.

The press recorded:

Arriving at the capital, Churchill informed Kenneth Romney, house sergeant at arms, that his speech would be rather long.

"It may take an hour," he said. "Do you think that too long? I don't want to wear out the Congress."

"Don't worry about that, Mr. Churchill," assured Romney. "Everybody is very anxious to hear you."

Following the address, the Prime Minister again asked Romney while walking over to the Senate side for luncheon, if the speech was too long.

"I timed you 48 minutes," replied Romney. "We all enjoyed the speech immensely. I am sure no one thought it too long."

"My remarks read better than they sound," Mr. Churchill observed, pointing out that he had avoided oratorical effects in an effort to condense the speech.

It was not one of the great man's speeches from which rang out such immortal phrases as "some chicken—some neck", bringing a great roar of laughter across the continents. It was a hot day, and his solid and impressive utterances, familiar at that time, became a little harder to listen to as the minutes wore on, with an undeniable drowsiness creeping in. I had a reason for not succumbing to it, and I listened closely to every word. He said nothing throughout of the weapon of war, perhaps the

most potent of all, recently offered to him by that silent Assistant-Sergeant-at-Arms-for-the-day sitting so close to him on the floor of Congress. History provides examples for our contemplation of conquering generals turned Prime Ministers or Presidents or Dictators. Sir Winston Churchill has this in common with them, that he was bred in the army and that his most formative years of early manhood were passed in active campaigns as a soldier. His most memorable contributions in later life in the political arena have been in the pursuit of war on the practical side in the two world wars. At the time of the Washington speech he was combining the rôles of Prime Minister and Minister of War. If William had proposed a revolution in arms which had been immediately accepted as a work of genius, it would perhaps have been mentioned. But the Beveridge Plan was not a tank: it was only a vision of a new world worth fighting for to the end. That was how it appeared to the great masses of the people everywhere, and particularly amongst the fighting forces of every civilised country. That was how it appeared to the young men of the Prime Minister's own party—the University Conservatives unanimously urging implementation of the Report and the Members of Parliament establishing themselves as "Tory Reformers" to press for the Report; the leader of these reformers—Lord Hinchinbrooke—in sending to William their declaration of aims "Forward by the Right" inscribed it to him as the man who had told the fighting men one of the things for which they were fighting.

As we passed from one place to another in the U.S.A. it was frequently said to us, "There are only three British names for us—Churchill, Montgomery and Beveridge." The first two were for war, but Beveridge was the name for a new world of peace. For the silent watcher of affairs, it must always be a theme to ponder how the head of a state, perhaps from his isolation or from his choice of associates, may be prevented from sensing the feelings of the people he is governing.

We were to find that everywhere we went, and we went to

many places, American interest was seething with the Beveridge Plan. In spite of that and with a group of fifty young Conservative Members of Parliament, with the whole of the Labour Party and Liberal Party clamouring for the acceptance of the Report; with all the speakers but two in the debate in the House of Lords demanding the immediate institution of a Ministry of Social Security; with the T.U.C. in full cry for its implementation; with the Ministry of Information deluging the Government with the overwhelming support of the public, both civil and military; with resistance movements in Europe risking the lives of their members to secure a copy; with practically every other country in the world translating it into its own language; with Germany showing its fear of this new political weapon by deriding and denouncing it, the Coalition Cabinet alone treated it lightly.

Who was responsible for this disastrous attitude? It was said to us that the Prime Minister had at first been moved to accept the Report, but that strongly hostile influence from a quarter he did not feel able to resist had been brought to bear, to which he had yielded. Nemesis came with Homeric justice with the rout of the Conservative Party in 1945, a rout which had been foretold by Mr. Griffiths on the final day of the great February debate in the House of Commons in 1943.

In these early days of May, great efforts were being made to bring Stalin into direct consultation with Roosevelt and Churchill while the latter was on his visit to Washington. They failed. But how much stronger Sir Winston's position would have been with both the other two if he had followed the people within his own political party and in his country at large in welcoming the Beveridge Report instead of ignoring it as completely as he could. Roosevelt could not have maintained an unfriendly view of him as a great imperialistic Tory of the Victorian type, and Stalin would have had no sound propaganda of comparison between his Communists and the British capitalist state with which to silence the Russian people and to

woo the satellite states. Roosevelt could not have said, as he is credited with having said, that he was nearer in political sympathy to Stalin than to Churchill.

After that warm afternoon listening to Sir Winston, we dined with Mr. and Mrs. Moulton at the Brookings Institute and talked with important guests about the Beveridge Plan far on into the night. William was wearing a suit which became famous in the States because he told the story that night of how, in the process of being made, it had been twice bombed in London when he was working on the Report.

Tired and very hot, we came back to our hotel to find that the cooling apparatus was not yet operating. We retired to sleep in the lightest of night wear as far as I was concerned, with none at all in William's case. I was aroused from impending slumber by seeing through the crack of the door a light from our sitting-room. I thought, half awake, that we had left the light on there and aroused William just as the door opened wide to admit a gentleman. He approached, and standing between our beds made the startling announcement: "This is my bedroom," the while beginning to remove his coat. William, in a difficulty about getting up unclothed, tried to reason with the intruder from his bed. As he was only succeeding in inciting him to reiterate in an ever-thickening voice that it was his bedroom while he continued further to undress, I seized the bedside telephone and summoned the manager. In an amazingly short time he appeared with a policeman. Our visitor gave in at the sight of the latter. "If that's a cop," he said, "I'd better go," and gathering his discarded garments together he allowed himself to be shepherded out. He was a gentleman from Chicago, they told us, who had been assuaging his thirst and had mistaken his floor in the hotel.

The next day we went by invitation to the White House to see Mr. Roosevelt. In May 1943 international affairs and the conduct of the war were giving a good deal of trouble to Presidents and Prime Ministers. We did not expect more than

a word of greeting. But it was not so. Mr. Roosevelt was deeply interested in William's particular interpretation, as you might say, of an aspect of the Atlantic Charter, and very sympathetic. He kept us for nearly an hour. He intimated to William that he would like him to visit the deep South, talking with great feeling about the negro problem. He also talked about research into poliomyelitis and the progress made in treating it. At last he asked us if he could do anything for us personally. William spoke up at that and indicated that while he had to be in London by the 20th of July he was not prepared to go back without me. On the other hand, he was being pressed to stay for an I.L.O. Conference on Social Security till well into the middle of July, at Montreal. He could manage that only if a Clipper seat could be found for me as well as for him. Seats in Clippers to cross the Atlantic were all but impossible to get for wives. Could the President help with that? The President took it smiling. Having ascertained that the Clipper was American, he said he thought it might be worth trying. Was he not, he said, the Commander-in-Chief of all the forces? He summoned the chief official of the Air Force and explained what was required.

The visit was a delightful occasion for us. As with all men on the grand scale, simple friendliness was Franklin Roosevelt's note. A few days after his death a short letter from him came to us in England, posted in Washington just a day or two before he died. It must have been one of his very last.

In the evening Frances Perkins, then Minister of Labour, with whom William had had considerable correspondence in the past, entertained us to dinner. She too was all for the Beveridge Plan. I sat between an important elderly Mormon from Utah and a distinguished and elderly judge. Opposite to me was Mr. Henry Wallace, whose conversation across the table, confined to anything but current affairs, was delightful. I could not picture him in the hurly-burly of politics. He seemed to me to be more at home in the academic contemplation of life in the

works of the great literary figures. He was a humanitarian who savoured the underlying philosophy of the Beveridge Plan and liked it. William had as neighbours Miss Perkins and the American ambassador to Norway, the first American lady to hold such an office.

Everybody wanted to hear William on his Plan and invitations poured in upon us from Washington enthusiasts. But the time only ran to a few meetings—with the Social Security Board and their staff, with the American Federation of Labour and the Congress of Industrial Organisations, with the Federal Reserve Board and with selected groups of Representatives and Senators. After two terrific days came May 22nd and a morning train to New York. At eleven in the evening we left for Ottawa, where we stayed with Malcolm MacDonald, then High Commissioner, the Governor-General and Princess Alice being in retirement after the death of a relation who had been staying with them at Government House.

During our few days in Ottawa, William broadcast an address one evening and on the following day addressed a joint meeting of the Parliamentary Committee in Parliament House. When he sat down, to my consternation I was invited to follow him with a contribution of my own. It was a great compliment. But I was altogether unprepared and was too much overcome to do William justice, a circumstance which causes me great unhappiness in retrospect, for it was so generous a tribute to my husband. Nevertheless, my unworthy utterances appear along with William's in the official printed record.

On this occasion, as indeed on every occasion both in Canada and America, it was the spirit of hope and conviction of a better world of peace and security to come which caught and fired the imagination and lifted the presentation of the Plan above the details of finance and administration, although their unassailability was everywhere recognised, into a region of universal principles to which only a very few could find exception. Under the magnetism of the author it became, as he

dealt with it, a charter of human rights above the squabbles of political parties with their vote-catching limitations.

In America, as elsewhere, there were here and there the doubters who saw in it only a vast expenditure and a premium on idleness. I do not however remember anyone who pressed the theory that the only incentive to work was want, and that to abolish it as the Plan aimed at doing would be a disaster.

I like to print this from a letter to William by Mr. Brooke Claxton of the Canadian House of Commons:

May 25th, 1943.

I cannot tell you how greatly obliged we are to you for giving us the time you have. Without exception everyone found that your speeches in the House, at Mr. Mackenzie's dinner, and before the Parliamentary Committee were of the utmost value. I can assure you that they have helped the good cause immensely in this country.

I know that the Prime Minister would wish me to say how deeply he appreciates what you have done and to express the hope that the heavy demands on your time did not leave you and Lady Beveridge too tired.

McGill University proposed to give William an honorary degree, and we had to tear ourselves away from the capital to stay with Cyril James, the President of that great University. Our visit had a double appeal for me. Like the other great Canadian University at Toronto, its statutes were drawn on the pattern of the Scottish Universities, and one of its early Presidents, Sir William Peterson, had been the Principal of Dundee College affiliated to my own University of St. Andrews, a noted figure in our Scottish academic circles in my girlhood. But the tie with Cyril James was of the closest also, for he was a graduate of the London School of Economics, where, while carrying on the duties of Dean, which included at that time the securing of appointments for our graduates, I had taken a deeply interested part in sending him out as one of our

very promising young men to Pennsylvania to become an assistant professor in geography. He amply fulfilled our expectations, rising steadily and rapidly to the onerous and distinguished post he still holds at McGill with such conspicuous success. He had asked William to speak for all the honorary graduates, and William took the chance to be optimistic: "This time we will make victory the gateway to a new world based on justice and liberty and that academic thing called reason. But this achievement of peace cannot be won by inaction, lack of vision, or shortness of aspiration. It calls for as ungrudging sacrifice and as ceaseless effort as was needed for victory itself. . . . Fellow graduates and all others present here, I charge you, when the victory is won, to carry on into peace all that you can of the heroic mood of war."

We were now due at Quebec, where an unexpected interest had been aroused by the Report. Cardinal Villeneuve, a far-seeing and liberal dignitary of the Catholic Church, was said to be in favour of some such improvement in social services for his people. Our visit was heralded by a leading article in one of the French papers of Quebec, *Les Conseils d'un apôtre sont toujours bons à retenir*. Our reception was in accord with this article.

We reached Quebec by train towards midnight. The station was brilliantly lighted and the cameramen ready, with the newspapermen hovering around. It was a beautiful evening and a delightful experience to drive up beyond the town to Spencerwood, the official residence of the Governor, at that time Sir Eugene Fiset, and Lady Fiset. I think they both viewed William and me with misgiving, expecting a learned economist with an earnest highbrow for a wife, for we had been publicised sometimes in these terms. But they thawed when they found that we could appreciate the marvellous cuisine and the accompanying recondite wine cellar for which we had been told their hospitality was famous. Indeed, Sir Eugene confessed as much to me on the morning after our arrival. The only

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sadness to him was caused when it was found that lobster was *interdit* for both of us. William was fully occupied making speeches to everybody and lunching and dining with the rest. There was a Liberal Government at the time, interested in social reform, and here as elsewhere the Beveridge Plan was arousing high hopes among those who would benefit most by it. William spoke at the reunion of the Canadian Club at the Château Frontenac before a large interested audience and was fully reported:

The purpose of my Report is to provide for a comprehensive scheme of social insurance to maintain income during any interruption of earnings, to provide allowances for children to be paid whether the parents are earning or not, and to provide a comprehensive health service. . . .

I propose that pensions should not be given to people as birthday presents when they reach the age of 65. The pensions should only be given to people retired from work, and to encourage people to continue working, we promise them a larger pension later on if they work past the age of 65. . . .

Our whole civilisation is threatened today, but tomorrow we shall not only save what is threatened but we shall add security.

William declared to me later that he uttered these closing words, not in English only, like the rest of his speech, but in French as well: *Nous pourrons, nous devons, je crois, à la liberté ajouter la sécurité.* I have no doubt that William pronounced something like these words. What language his audience thought him to be speaking at the time I am not sure.

In my only afternoon of leisure while this causerie was going on, Lady Fiset drove me in and about Quebec, with its wonderful views from the eminence on which it is built, high up over the St. Lawrence river, not unlike Edinburgh, with streets and houses falling away to the level of the great docks.

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In the Church of Our Lady of Victory we had the unexpected experience of finding that the victory commemorated was a triumph of the French over the English in the days of Wolfe.

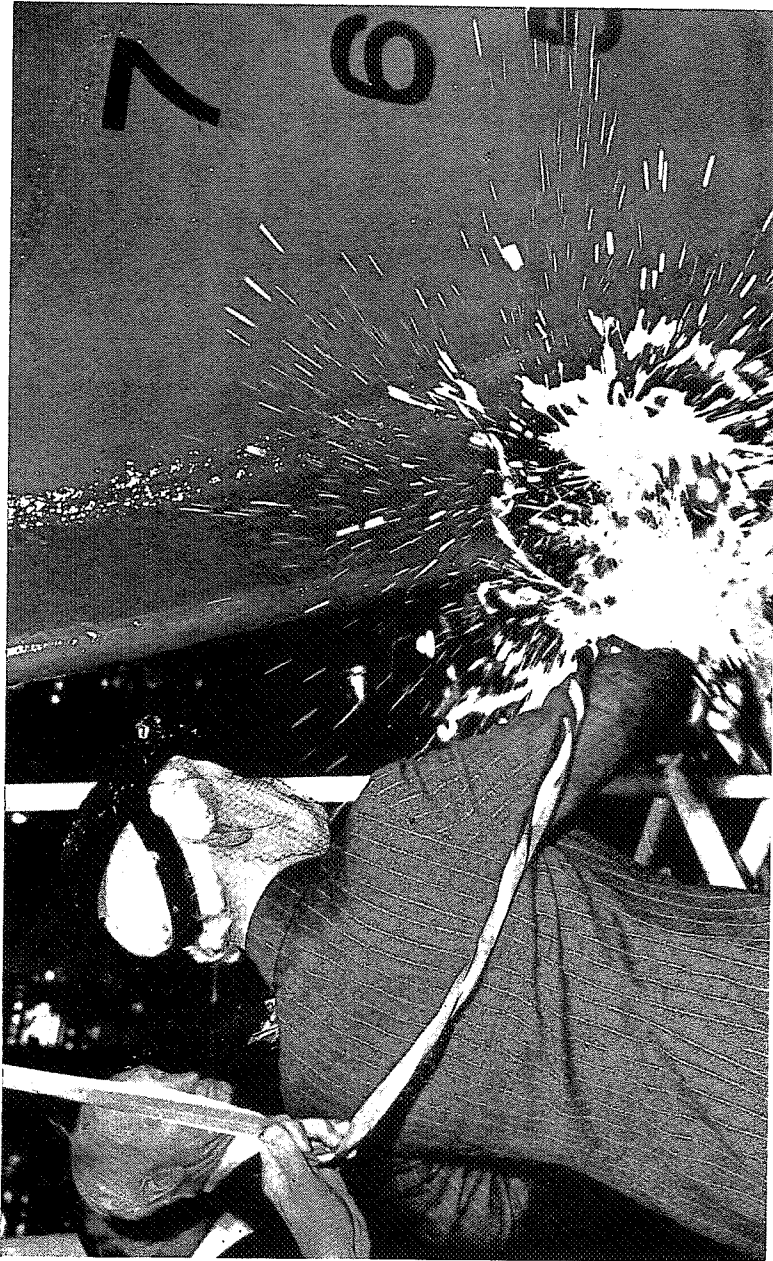
One evening when William was being entertained elsewhere Lady Fiset invited twenty of the chief ladies so that I might meet them. It was a testing occasion, for most of them spoke only the French of Quebec. I did my best. I was not very proud of it.

CHAPTER XIII

*The Plan Explained: America
West and South*

The rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of
them all. PROVERBS 22.2

WE flew back, following the Hudson river, on a bright sunny day into New York again. Our diary showed, as is apt to happen with visitors to that beautiful and fascinating city, a non-stop programme, sometimes for us both together, at other times in split formation but just as continuous. We enjoyed it all—broadcasting for William, speaking to hundreds of ladies at a tea engagement for me, dining with the English-Speaking Union and addressing them for both of us, buying hats in Park Avenue for me, getting an honorary degree at Columbia for William, and so on *ad infinitum*, always pursued by photographers and the press, both incredibly friendly and kind while persistent also, to the extent of penetration into the fastnesses of our dear host Joseph Chamberlain in his house in Sutton Square. One of the memorable private pleasures which this home in New York opened to us was the chance of entertaining there Harold Stassen, then Governor of Minnesota, and candidate for the Republican nomination, but also in the Navy. The three of us dined in the Sutton Square garden under the stars. He seemed to me that night to have every chance of a great political career, bringing to it a trained and stored mind, and the liberal attitude to the problems of mankind which we ourselves were so ready to welcome in a rising figure in our great English-speaking ally. In the same generation as my son, and very little older, he engaged the warm sentiment which the older of us must always feel in watching the new generation



A Liberty Ship is launched at Portland, Oregon

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preparing so adequately to take their place. I have not seen him since that night, although in a cinema which I visited while we were still in New York a flash of him appeared in his uniform on the eve of his departure to join the Navy on the high seas.

One evening when William was engaged otherwise is memorable for me because I passed it in the house of a relation of our host to have the opportunity at a party she gave of meeting a number of distinguished negroes. Doctors, lawyers, artists were there, all deeply interested in the Plan, and also in the place their race could take in the general life of a great free country. Paul Robeson, whose lovely singing voice is known throughout the world, was there, and he paid me a great compliment. I told him how my grandsons, then small school-boys, would play over and over again in rapt delight on their gramophone the record of his famous song, *Water Boy*. Later in the evening he asked his hostess if he might sing something for one of her guests. It was *Water Boy* for me; a lovely, unforgettable experience.

The major public event of this period for us was a gigantic luncheon at the Waldorf Astoria. The sponsors for this occasion had apologised when inviting us because the room for the occasion, although the best New York could do, would only accommodate 4000 people. Every place was occupied that hot summer day to hear William speak on the Plan and in particular about the giant Sickness and the National Health Service designed to conquer it. I sat between the Chairman for the occasion, Judge Thacher of the New York State Court of Appeals, and New York's famous Mayor, Mr. La Guardia. Having given thought to my toilet and also to Mr. La Guardia's christian name Fiorella, on which I was given to understand he laid great stress and made much play, I sought the interest of the milliners in Jay Thorpe's with a view to engaging his approval and to keeping him in happy humour. They entered into my little plot with enthusiasm, making me a toque in the prevail-

ing fashion composed of little flowers. It was far too smart and gay a little hat, the little flowers ranging from a deep pansy to a pale mauve, to wear at that time in England. I left it behind with a friend whose standard of dress was in the best New York tradition. As the luncheon proceeded from the Star-spangled Banner, sung by a famous contralto, through a series of dishes towards the British National Anthem and William's speech, laying siege to my companion on the left, who was to speak last, I asked him if he had observed my hat. He was not unnaturally surprised, but took a good look at it. Had he noticed, I continued, that it was composed of little flowers? He was at once melted, and not only made a warm supporting speech but also insisted on being photographed with me beside him.

It is sometimes a disadvantage to be a tallish woman. It was only in physical stature that Fiorella La Guardia might have been called small, for he looked small beside me. He had a full-sized mind and a very large heart and he won my heart as I had hoped I might win his. It was not only the giant Sickness that he wanted to destroy, but the giant Squalor and the giant Want in Old Age, and although children's allowances under a national plan were not in sight, the care of children in other ways was another preoccupation. He told me of his own great development as Mayor of New York in the care of aged persons. We found that adequate housing for the lower-income groups was a common interest. Later he introduced me to his housing associates in New York and arranged that they should take me to see his latest slum-clearance block on the East River where a community of 4000 persons had just been housed in groups of flats, ten storeys high.

It seems that an experiment was being made, for the first time, as I understood, of admitting a few negro families into this housing scheme. At the same time a group of identical flats was also being erected in the Harlem district of New York for negroes only. I was much impressed not only by the standard

of the houses and the moderateness of the rents, but also by the administration of each set by their own Housing Committee, trained social workers there to give help in the use of the new amenities and to stand by to see that they were appreciated and carefully maintained. The only thing which had not been provided in addition to the nursery school, surgery for first aid and so on, was a communal kitchen from which food could be bought cooked and eaten in the home.

For old people La Guardia had made a start by clearing away an old prison on the north bank of the East River and building on its site a group of appropriate buildings. Here was the assault on two of the giants in full swing. As always and everywhere in the U.S.A., the sensation of the power both of wealth and of physical force was overwhelming. It was as if in New York the small man with the large heart kept touching a button that released them both in an irresistible degree, creating almost overnight the new conditions he wanted. It was easy to understand why he gave so warm a welcome to William and his Plan.

A succession of meals with speeches, of conferences and of interviews with the press continued. One of these last produced the picture of us used for the dustsheet of this book. I had taken the opportunity to explain just what I liked most in the Beveridge Report. "The whole joy of William's scheme is its unconscious fairness to women." It allowed William to explain just what I meant by that:

Hitherto there has been too much concentration upon working conditions in the factories and not enough upon living conditions in the home . . . wages have been raised, the hours of work in factories have been shortened and we have given medical care to wage-earners.

My Scheme recognises the home. I hope that we shall now proceed to take as much trouble to shorten the hours of work of the housewife, by better and more efficient

housing and equipment, as we have done to shorten the hours of work and improve conditions in the factories.

Medical care not only for the wage-earning father but for the wife and the children, children's allowances, marriage allotments, maternity grants . . . plus an old age pension that can't be taken away from her, are some of the benefits under the Beveridge Plan.

Security for her old age is something that a wife doing essential work not for pay but as part of a team has earned. It is something that a husband cannot decide to give, or not to give, to his wife.

By the time that this interview was published, in the *New York Post* of June 16th, we were already at the other side of America in Portland, Oregon.

After the first three weeks in the east of the United States and of Canada, we had set off on our travels westward, beginning, of course, with Chicago. To tell of all that we did to explain the Plan and how much we enjoyed doing so on this journey is a book in itself. I can only hope to reproduce a highlight here and there. On the way to Chicago, William threw in a diversion to Albany, Boston, and Toronto by himself. At the first of these places he saw Governor Dewey, whom he reported to me as intelligent and easy to talk to but non-committal on peace collaboration. On the way to Boston in the sleeper he invented what he called later the security tripod with the three legs of peace, employment when one can work, and an income when one cannot work; there he saw another Governor as well as the Massachusetts Senate and had the usual continuous conferences. In Toronto, in addition to all the local notables, he had the delight of making contact again with one of his special students from Oxford, Peter Laing, with both feet blown off by a land-mine but going to be fully active again on artificial limbs.

At Chicago, where I went direct from New York and

where William joined me from Toronto, the high spot was a luncheon of the Association of Commerce at the Sherman Hotel. I wasn't there myself—all wives were kept away—but, apart from being snapped putting a large piece of pie in his mouth, William seemed to have done quite well with his speech. It was of course about the five giants of the Beveridge Plan.

Anyone who attended the meeting prepared to hear a social dreamer unaware of the needs of business and commerce for protection against visionary experiment was disappointed. For this Britisher proved himself to be hard-headed and practical on the point of keeping government in its place as the citizen's agent and servant, not his boss or patron.

One of the chief objectives of his plan for adequate income for people no longer able to work, because of age, illness or accident, is the preservation of their independence. The insurance is something they pay for as direct contributors. Everybody carries it, and all are beneficiaries, not just the poor who might be picked by a means test.

This from the *Chicago Daily Times* of June 11th, 1943, shows that William got his message home. Even the *Chicago Tribune* was perfectly polite. Here, though I wasn't at the luncheon, I was able to help the cause. The *Tribune's* reporter came round to see us and make sure that he had got William down right; he made it clear that he was all for William's Plan, but had no idea what his masters on the *Tribune* would say. What it said in fact, in reporting William, was just what we would have liked to write ourselves.

The proposed Beveridge post-war social security plan for England is not a scheme to let Britons celebrate victory by retiring from work forever, but a program to insure the population against want by application of insurance principles.

I was able to help with another group of reporters. They began by assuring us that Chicago had no use for titles: "You'll be plain Mr. and Mrs. Beveridge to us." "Why not William and Janet?" I asked. As William and Janet we became and remained friends with nearly all the press in the States, as we have always been in Britain. Some of the American papers declined to become converts to the Beveridge Plan. We cherish among our press cuttings the following from the *Nashville Banner* of Tennessee:

When better Beveridge plans are invented Mr. Beveridge will invent them. And, we hope, keep them to himself.

It took us three nights and two days to get from Chicago to Portland. The news soon spread through the train that we were aboard, and when we ventured along to the crimson velvet parlour where drinks were flowing, a place was at once cleared in the midst of our fellow-travellers from which William could explain to them what his five giants were and how he proposed to deal with them.

In Chicago, William had had the limelight. In Portland, Oregon, I had been asked to launch a Liberty ship of ten thousand tons from one of the Kaiser shipyards. Two such ships were being launched every three days and others of different patterns were pouring out on to the oceans of the world at a comparable rate. On the slopes above the shipyard a new town for the 80,000 workers was being erected at a speed to compare with the output of ships. My ship was the *John F. Steffen*, named after the founder eighty years before of the first Portland shipyard, which employed less than a hundred men all told. She had good luck, sailing the dangerous oceans till the end of the war, when she was laid up in honourable retirement. When I broke the champagne bottle on her at the launch, my hosts congratulated me on the strength of my arm: "You look like a cricketer." I explained that my son was a very fine cricketer indeed. At Portland William hardly appeared on

the public stage at all. When he did appear it was at a midday meeting to encourage saving, and he had to share the stage not only with me but with a bevy of dancing girls in tights. I had been asked to help the recruiting of women by giving an account of what their sisters in Britain were doing. When I made signs of starting my speech I was halted because I was not yet "on the air". This was the first indication that I was going on it at all, and very unnerving indeed. It had happened before, and I recognised it as probably a normal procedure, and began to look out for it.

To San Francisco we went by air over a range of mountains, including one peak, Mount Shasta, 14,000 feet high, a lovely but frightening spectacle. We saw of course all the sights that make San Francisco one of the wonders of the world—the Golden Gate and the big trees and the inland waters. We experienced one thing that we had not expected—a trial black-out as we were returning from dinner at Berkeley. The incongruity was heightened by the sight of another Kaiser shipyard across the water of the Golden Gate blazing like a gargantuan bracelet of diamonds, for work on the night-shift; three eight-hour shifts each twenty-four hours were the order of the day. That was one of the gratifying sights making victory seem to be certain; Germany and Japan were helpless to stay the growth of such overwhelming force against them.

To Los Angeles we went by night train, for a promised three days of holiday at Pasadena. William's first act on entering our room there, where I found awaiting me the largest orchids I had ever seen—a present from the Kaiser shipyard—was to announce a policy of repose: "I want to eat a few meals without having to make speeches." His next act was to give a long interview at our first breakfast table and to be photographed with me while doing so:

He emphasised that the benefits are paid without any inquiry into the beneficiary's other means.

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"That is fundamental," he declared. "To cut down because a man has money of his own would discourage saving."

The papers carrying William's declaration of a policy of rest at Pasadena carried another declaration, equally mistaken in the event, by Stafford Cripps on Hitler:

If posterity confers any importance on Hitler, this will be because he ended the previously existent distrust between the Russians and the rest of the world.

In spite of our busy beginning, our time in Pasadena provided delightful and varied relaxation, with escape on the whole from the Beveridge Plan. We lunched with British and American physicists from the California Institute of Technology who, though we did not know it, were hard at work on atom fission. There was a great sense of absorbed but passionate excitement about them, shining out of their eyes and passing to me from them.

On another plane of entertainment far remote from social insurance and the need for it, there followed a dinner at Beverley Hills with the chief of the Warner Brothers. It was a night of champagne and world-famous film stars. I was entertained by our host. William was placed at a small table entirely surrounded by admiring ladies with famous names, one of whom, with her arms around his neck, called to me that she adored my husband. "So do I," I comforted her, "but you're welcome." Our host having shown us this night an as yet unreleased film featuring Bette Davies in his private theatre, gave us the chance next evening of seeing an unexpurgated version of "Mission to Moscow" based on the book by Mr. Davis, a late American Ambassador in Moscow. We thought the film seemed much kinder to Russia than to Britain and its choice of actor to represent Prime Minister Churchill appeared frankly unkind. But we would not for anything have missed either of these evenings at Beverley Hills.



Lunch after the Launching

THE PLAN EXPLAINED: AMERICA WEST AND SOUTH

We came back to Chicago by a streamlined express, probably then the fastest train in the world. As we passed through the great central plain we saw another example of America's way with the material world. Somewhere in the prairie wastes a vast camp was being prepared, and the road to it, under the construction of a few men with machinery, grew mechanically and visibly under our eyes, as we have never seen a road grow elsewhere.

In Chicago William and I parted: I to stay with Mr. and Mrs. Max Epstein, friends whom William's speech there had made for us, in their lovely house on Lake Michigan, and William to make a voyage of exploration in the deep South which he had undertaken at the desire of President Roosevelt. This enterprise produced for him from the well-known columnist John Temple Graves a description of the Beveridge Plan which he has quoted ever since: "It's a plan for putting a floor to inequalities." The author of this phrase said also:

Sir William's hair-do misrepresents him, I think. That over-arching white lock may be necessary to hide the extraordinary shape of head and brow but it gives his pictures a long-haired scholar effect which is belied when you see him by the fine bullet of his nose, the firm but sensitive mouth, the gaunt and classic ruggedness of his jaw. Cut his hair and he could be the picture of a perfect major-general.

Soon after William's return from the trip South, he and I were united again briefly in New York and in Connecticut at the country house of a Mr. Altschul, a well-known lawyer in New York. But almost at once he went off again by himself to Washington to make two more speeches and to pay a second visit to the President to report upon his experiences in the deep South.

William made his last speech of all most appropriately to the National Press Conference, as one who had earned his living in his young manhood so happily as a member of the press, as

one who was without power or responsibility save that of helping to make public opinion, as the press did. That task, he said, was most important: the future of the world depended on its right performance. "Leaders may change or be changed. Consistent public opinion and the right public opinion through all changes was essential." He went on to sum up the impressions of our visit under two main heads. His first impression was of the inexhaustible power of America based on size, vigour, inventiveness and youth; this gave energy to spare even "for battles among yourselves". His second impression was of a common scale of values between the American and British peoples, a cherishing of the same essential liberties for the individual, a common liberalism in international affairs, a common lively interest in the world after war. Most differences between the two peoples were minor or unreal. Britain, in spite of her reputed love of lords, was not a class society: he invited consideration of Scotland, of the Labour Party, of the Universities. America was not all Hollywood, in spite of the attempt of Hollywood to pretend the contrary.

Those who have the function of making public opinion in the democracies have a high vocation. Above all is that true of the group of independent democracies known as the British Commonwealth and the federation of democracies known as the United States.

Upon mutual understanding and mutual trust between our peoples—between the peoples and not merely between their leaders of the day—in war and in peace—rests the hope of the world, the happiness of unborn generations throughout the world. Let us foster that trust by all means in our power, basing it not on hate of other nations, not on vague sentiment, but on ever deeper and wider intercourse, on realisation of our common scale of values.

So William ended at Washington his last speech from that day to this in North America.

His final visit to the President fell on one of the hottest days of the year for the President in more senses than one. It was July 7th in Washington. The Senate and the Free French were both making themselves as difficult as possible, but the President appeared wholly unperturbed and made no difficulty about seeing William at once. The interview, however, did not go according to William's plan. He began to report on his southern tour, but was interrupted. "Where is Janet, and why is she not here? Don't you want to hear about those seats for you both on the plane for Britain?" The President summoned his secretary to show that the seats were all right for both of us on the first day that we had asked for.

With our flight home together so kindly arranged, William felt free to go off to the I.L.O. Conference planned to take place at Montreal, leaving me for the last few final days at Sutton Square in the throes of a good New York heat-wave. We left the La Guardia airport in the morning on the 12th of July bound, in the first flight, for Botwood. Something went wrong with our engines and we got no further than Shediac on the coast of Canada, where we passed some tedious hours and a part of the night till 4 o'clock next morning in a hotel which appeared to be familiar with such exigencies. We bought a daily paper in which we were surprised to read an article by Mr. Laski which was being syndicated in a large number of provincial North American newspapers. At Botwood the next day another period of waiting following a boiled egg for lunch reduced my spirits to their nadir. When at last the summons came, conquering my quaking fears, I stepped down the footway to the Clipper between the officers awaiting us with a firm foot and a smile, both of which cost me dear, for I was frankly terrified to think of the passage over the Atlantic. Taking a little later a fleeting glance at the ocean below, I perceived some small flat lozenges which I found out by asking an officer were a convoy on its way to Britain. After that I watched the wonderful evening sky till sleep in an im-

provised couch brought a respite. I was awakened by the feeling that I was dropping through space quite detached from any solid foundation. We learned next day that the wings had become frosted and as the plane had no de-frosting apparatus there was no option for the pilot save to find warmer air below; for fear of enemy attack we were bound to fly the eastern Atlantic in the dark. We arrived at Foynes on the Shannon an hour before scheduled time and had to fly here and there over Ireland until the authorities were ready to receive us.

It then proved that enemy air operations with their attendant response were raging in the English Channel. Till the battle should be over we spent two nights in Adare watching the Irish Republican Army and comfortably idle. At last, eighty-four hours after leaving New York, we were quietly dropped in an English machine into anchorage harbour, where our arrival was expected and a welcome given. Dinner, a cursory look at our baggage, a special drawing-room carriage on the train, and London at 4 o'clock in the morning, and we were home.

Our visit to the United States and Canada was already a memory. But what a memory! A year or two later the Librarian to Congress came to see us in the Master's Lodgings at University. He told us that the welcome to us had been the greatest of such events in his knowledge.

CHAPTER XIV

Goebbels and the Resistance Movements

As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.
PROVERBS 25:25

IN August of 1945 a distinguished French journalist, M. Jean Victor Ziegelmeier of Colmar, was in shattered Berlin. In the informal freedom of those days he was allowed to wander unguided through the bunker where Hitler and Goebbels had come to their end. From a mass of unreadable reading matter collected there, he picked up two documents dealing with the Beveridge Plan. He asked what he should do with them; I am glad to say that he was advised to take them away. The chances were that most of the contents of Hitler's bunker would be destroyed.

On one of William's visits to Berlin he met M. Ziegelmeier at a Press Conference and was told by him about the documents, which were then in Colmar. Some time later M. Ziegelmeier sent them to William, thinking rightly he was the person most concerned. They are so interesting that after describing them briefly I give them below in full. The two documents, both described as annexes to another document and both dealing with the Beveridge Report, proved to be entirely different in character.

The first is an instruction to the press and all other persons writing for publication telling them what they are to say about the Beveridge Report; the instruction probably emanated from Goebbels himself, for it repeats the things that he is known to have said. The gist of it is that all "unnecessary dealing with the Beveridge Plan is to be avoided, as no indirect propaganda should be made for the Plan".

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This press instruction is not dated, but it refers to events as late as December 15th. The German papers from the beginning took, with or without instruction, the same line. The editor of a Belgian paper in England sent to William a selection of German press cuttings dating from the publication of the Report on December 2nd. They abounded in headlines such as Goebbels might have written: "The Beveridge Plan a Bad Imitation"; "Dishonourable Social Programme of the British Plutocrats"; "Sixty Years Behind Germany"; "Here are Plagiarists at Work"; "Inadequate Social Legislation". But the paper which began with the last of these headlines carried also a revealing last sentence:

Now that the English say that by the Beveridge Plan security will be built from the cradle to the grave, we can answer: that is nothing new, that has been so with us for decades. It is useful for us also to keep before our eyes the extent to which German insurance accompanies the way of the working people.

In this last sentence the significance and danger of the Beveridge Report as a weapon of war was accepted at once. But the most important instruction is that detailed comparisons between the German social system and the measure envisaged by the Beveridge Plan must be avoided at all costs. The reason for this becomes obvious when one turns from the first document to its companion.

The second document is meant for the personal and secret information of Foreign Office officials. It was written by a German enthusiast for social insurance who took no trouble to conceal his whole-hearted admiration for Beveridge and his Plan. "The Beveridge Plan is superior to the current German social insurance in nearly all points."

The men behind the scenes by whom the second document was written and others to whom it was addressed took the Beveridge Report very seriously indeed. This was shown not

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only by this document itself, but by their actions. The German Ministry of Labour made at once a word-for-word translation of the Report, and printed it for official use, with a preface dated April 1943. Copy 27 of this, once supplied to Professor Dr. K. Kumpmann of Lindenfels, has found its way to William's library, the earliest and most cherished of all translations of the Report. The most interesting passage in the preface is the reference to industrial assurance. William's Appendix D to the Report describing the industrial life offices and societies is printed in full, to blazon the backwardness of English social legislation in letting these private organisations exploit the poor. How the author of this preface must have chuckled when he learned that the rejection of William's proposal to take over industrial assurance as a public service was the first in all the list of changes proposed in the Beveridge Plan to be rejected by Mr. Churchill's Cabinet. The rejection was announced by John Anderson in his speech on behalf of the Government in the debate in the House of Commons in February 1943. This, the first announced decision of the Government, could only have looked to the German commentator as a confirmation of his gibe that Britain was still a plutocracy. He could have learned and no doubt did learn that an immediate consequence of the decision was to send up the prices of industrial assurance shares.

After these short references, I print below in full the two documents from Hitler's bunker, in the English translation made by William. The print is illustrated by a photostat of a page of one of the documents as it was found in Hitler's bunker, showing the stains and marks.

SECRET

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The following instructions are given for treating the Beveridge Plan in writing:

I. Unnecessary dealing with the Beveridge Plan is to be

avoided, as no indirect propaganda should be made for the Plan.

II. Discussion should be undertaken only when international debate (e.g. a discussion in the House of Commons and resulting world echo) or the circumstances in different countries demand it (e.g. Owen visit to Sweden).

III. In case discussion becomes necessary, the following arguments should be used:

(a) The Beveridge Plan is a product of the needs of war, designed to mislead the English public and the public of the world as to the real war aims of England (catchword: shopwindow propaganda). It is music of the future whereas the German Social Insurance has been a reality for more than fifty years.

(b) Detailed comparisons between our social system and the measures envisaged by the Beveridge Plan should be avoided. Our propaganda should be limited to those arguments that the opponents of the right and left in England bring forward against the Beveridge Plan. Here are some arguments that may be used:

1. The Plan is not financially feasible.
2. The Plan checks personal responsibility and initiative.
3. An active wage policy is preferable to the welfare ideas of the Beveridge Plan.
4. The effectuation of the Beveridge Plan presupposes prosperity of the British economy.
5. The Plan demands full employment of all workers.
6. Economically the social purposes can only be achieved when prices are stabilised.
7. The Plan is a danger to the export possibilities of British Industry.
8. Condition for coming into force of the Beveridge Plan is the international introduction of similar systems

into all other countries to avoid the onesided burdening of British industry.

9. The Beveridge Plan is an encroachment on private enterprise (abolition of Insurance Companies).

The aforementioned arguments are chiefly used by the right. The following arguments of the left may be taken up:

1. "Seebohm Rowntree Poverty Line." Seebohm Rowntree an English economist had formerly, following several tests, set a "Poverty Line" as a minimum living standard. From Seebohm Rowntree's letter to *The Times* of 15th December, 1942, it appears that the national "minimum standard" of the Beveridge Plan hardly lies above the "Poverty Line" that he laid down.

2. The Beveridge Plan contains improved social welfare, but no plans for changing the capitalistic structure of the economy in favour of a State-controlled order; strongest Proof: the Beveridge Plan itself counts on a permanent number of one and a half million unemployed.

3. Remark by Ellen Wilkinson, Labour M.P., against procrastination of the coming into force of the Plan: "The City of the future is built now, not in the future."

4. Reminder of the broken English promise of the 8-hour day, given in the first world war; Washington Convention on 8-hour day never ratified by England. Arguments against ratification similar to those against the Beveridge Plan: dependence of its coming into force on similar international agreements.

IV. In consideration of thesis 24, the Beveridge Plan should be mentioned as an especially obvious proof that our enemies are taking over national-socialistic ideas. The Beveridge Plan amounts to replacing the old English welfare arrangements, which rested on private and charitable

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initiative, by welfare through State Insurance systems of a Continental and especially a German type.

V. An article dealing with the arguments to be used in discussion is given in an annexe, and may be used as material, subject to the condition laid down above.

SECRET

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BASIC FACTS RELATIVE TO THE BEVERIDGE PLAN

Herewith a few basic facts regarding the Beveridge Plan which are meant for personal information of those concerned in the offices of the Foreign Office here and abroad.

The Beveridge Plan is an organic development of the British social security system which is based on principles of welfare and assurance. It was drawn up by an expert who, using all official documents and statistics, put down in it many years' experience in the sphere of creating social security against the different risks of life. Accordingly the Beveridge Plan is not just a compilation (*Machwerk*) or a patchwork (*Flickwerk*). It is a comprehensive system of sound principles carefully thought out, making allowance for the English way of thinking, and characterised by remarkable simplicity.

I. *The Beveridge Plan and the current German Social Insurance*

The Beveridge Plan is superior to the current German Social Insurance in almost all points.

1. *Sphere of application.* For all risks covered the Beveridge Plan comprises the whole British people, whereas the German Social Insurance still bases on the rule that only employees (dependent workers) are being insured. Moreover, the German Social Insurance on principle extends only to employees in a low-income class, with different income limits for the different insurance obligations.

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Genes 11

Unterlagen zum Beveridge-Plan.

Nachfolgend werden einige Unterlagen über den Beveridgeplan übersandt, die zur persönlichen Information der Sachbearbeiter der Dienststellen des Auswärtigen Amtes im In- und Ausland bestimmt sind.

Der Beveridgeplan ist eine organische Weiterentwicklung des auf Versorgungs- und Versicherungsgrundsätzen beruhenden britischen Sozialversicherungssystems. Er ist von einem Fachmann verfasst, der in ihm unter Benutzung sämtlicher offizieller Unterlagen und Statistiken seine langjährigen Erfahrungen auf dem Gebiet der Schaffung der Sozialversicherung für die verschiedenen Wagnisse des Lebens niederlegt. Der Beveridgeplan ist also kein "Machwerk" und auch kein "Flickwerk", sondern ein auf grundsätzlichen Überlegungen beruhendes, in sich geschlossenes System, welches weitgehend der englischen Mentalität Rechnung trägt und durch eine bemerkenswerte Einfachheit gekennzeichnet ist.

I. Der Beveridgeplan und die geltende deutsche Sozialversicherung

Der Beveridgeplan ist der geltenden deutschen Sozialversicherung nahezu in allen Punkten überlegen.

1. Anwendungsbereich

Der Beveridgeplan erstreckt sich für sämtliche gedeckten Wagnisse auf das gesamte britische Volk. Die deutsche Sozialversicherung dagegen beruht immer noch auf dem Grundsatz, dass nur Personen in abhängiger Arbeit versichert sind. Es kommt hinzu, dass die deutsche Sozialversicherung sich grundsätzlich nur auf Beschäftigte mit niedrigem Einkommen erstreckt, wobei die Einkommensgrenzen für die Versicherungspflicht verschieden festgesetzt sind.

2. Leistungen

Die Leistungen des Beveridgeplanes liegen in allen Versicherungszweigen über den Leistungen der deutschen So-

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2. *Application.* The payments to the insured stipulated by the Beveridge Plan are in all insurance branches above those of the German Social Insurance. The German Annuity Insurance provides as its highest annuity in the Employees' Insurance the purely theoretical sum of RM. 145.- against the general allowance of 40s. per week for a couple, of the Beveridge Plan, which works out at RM 132.- per month, basing the purchasing power on RM 0.75 for 1s. This annuity, however, presupposes that the employee has paid the contributions for the highest class from his youth, which means for a monthly income of RM 600.-. The average annuity of the German Employees' Insurance is at present RM 70.- to 75.- per month, the average German Invalids' Insurance annuity RM 40.- to 45.- per month; the highest Invalids' annuity is RM 80.- to 85.- per month; this, too, is theoretical only.

The same holds when comparing the provisions for the other branches of Social Insurance. Only Health Insurance payments are at about the same level compared with the Beveridge Plan, which in some detail goes beyond the German extra allowances, e.g. the special allowance at birth.

3. *Raising of Means.* According to the Beveridge Plan money is raised by contributions of the insured person, the employer, and the State. The contributions paid by the State from general taxation are an essential basis for the Beveridge Plan. According to Beveridge's calculations for 1945 they would be 351 million £. The total budget for this year being 697 million £ they would be approximately half of the total budget. The relation between State contributions and the contributions made by the insured and the employer shifts further towards an increase of the State contributions. For 1965, the relation is given as 519 million £ State contributions and 339 million £ from the other contributors.

Beyond doubt, the Beveridge Plan is based on the principle of welfare. This explains also the relatively low contribution of the insured person as suggested by the Plan. They are in Class i, for people of 21 years and older, 4s. 3d. per week. Taking into account the fact that the lowest weekly wages for full time working men are 60 sh. in England the contribution rate is about 7.1 per cent. of this lowest wage. A German worker with equally low wage, RM 45.- per week, would have to pay 9.4 per cent. for Health, Invalids', and Unemployment Insurances. In these circumstances the fact that under the Beveridge Plan the contributions are not graded according to the income of the insured person is of no importance.

In the current German Social Insurance system, the social balance between the earners of lower and higher incomes is attained by a sliding scale of contributions yet equal receipt for all insured, whereas this is attained in the Beveridge Plan by the State contributions, which essentially derive from taxes. If seen that way, the uniform rate of contribution of the Beveridge Plan is not really unsocial, but of indifferent social value, because the Beveridge system is decidedly based on welfare.

One has to take into account the innate opposition of the Conservatives against the adoption of the Plan. Owen estimates that it would be accepted in principle at once, but that the execution of the total plan will be postponed until the end of the war. Owen further estimates that 80 per cent. of the Plan will be put into effect by 1945. From the adoption of the Plan no financial difficulties will be raised for the present, as the following account will show.

When introducing the Plan, the additional burden of the Treasury for 1945 has been calculated by Beveridge at 86 million £ per year. This figure included the Unemployment Benefit for the one and a half million unemployed,

precautionally allowed for by Beveridge. At present, the number of unemployed in England is only about 100,000. (16 Nov. 1942—95,442; 12 Oct. 1942—101,080.)

The consequence is that the additional burden, compared with the present one for the Treasury on account of the risks covered by the Beveridge Plan and estimated by Beveridge at 86 million £ per year, cannot only be discounted, but some savings will result for the Treasury by implementing the Plan.

The Germans by the time of the presentation of the Report had occupied practically the whole of Western Europe. In every occupied country strong resistance movements were in full swing. As soon as the Beveridge Report was published it ran like wildfire through them. How right the Germans were in realising the danger of this weapon against them.

We learned after the war that it had not only been to the British Army that the Report came as a message of hope and encouragement, promising a world worth fighting for. If Britain in the worst days of the war was making plans for a better world in peace, she had no doubts of ultimate victory. To those heroic men and women in every underground movement it was a clear call to stick it out to the bitter end.

To get copies of the Report for translation and distribution became a matter of the first importance. No danger was too great to face.

Wherever we went in Western Europe, William found himself greeted and thanked by former members of resistance movements who had stories of incredible ingenuity and resourcefulness to tell. In Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, France—everywhere these intrepid patriots, men and women, came to tell him that he had given them the most powerful weapon of all for their use against the enemy.

In respect of France the story came to William with dramatic irony not in France itself but in Germany, when in January

1947 he visited the three Western Zones of occupation there. Several of those then in charge in the French Zone of Germany had lived desperate lives in the resistance movement of German-occupied France. More than one of them told William of the encouragement that had come to them through publication of his Report.

This story came to William alone. In Holland, Norway, Denmark and Belgium we were happily together.

From Holland, even before we went there late in 1946, we had heard by letter. M. Blokhuis on behalf of the Dutch Underground Movement wrote to William in July 1945 sending him the summary translation of his Plan made by the Movement:

The Dutch Underground Movement asked me and some friends of me in 1943 to give an outline of the developments of social security in England. It was almost impossible to give a reliable impression of what was going on in your country.

We heard through the B.B.C. something about your report, and the Danish Banks told us in their publications only a little bit, while the Germans made some statements which afterwards proved to be untrue.

Our first survey was quite incomplete, but in 1944 we got hold—for a very short time—of a Swiss editor of your Report. Later on some more information reached us from London and it was on this basis possible to make a better summary. This was published in August 1944.

It was too dangerous and there was not enough paper available to print this report, so we could only make a few hundreds of copies, which were in a few weeks sold out.

New documents were made, replenished with new items of information that came in. Last winter we published another outline, completed with data of our own details.

Separate from this work, we discussed this theme in many

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study circles and tried to make some plans about the expected developments in our own country after the war.

It is a very great pleasure to me to be able to send you herewith our last published report about your work. We also want to express our gratefulness to you, because your magnificent report helped us physically in our fight against the usurpers.

We hope that the British government will understand that your work is of great value for the whole population of England and we also hope and trust that our own government will inform us about the details of what was going on in your country, because there are still a lot of questions to be answered over here.

On the first occasion after the war of giving degrees at the University of Oslo, the Norwegian authorities celebrated their re-entry into normal University procedure by honouring men of outstanding reputation in many of the European countries, including Russia. The Russians, however, did not come to the great ceremony. William was among those from England; he was chosen to speak for all the guests at the Graduation Ceremony which was attended by the members of the royal family. He took this distinguished international occasion to pay a tribute to the Norwegian people for the help their small but most gallant and intrepid country gave with men and ships to their British ally in the dark days when without them Britain would have stood altogether alone in the struggle. He made use of my remark that we had had not only seas around us but men. So often had it come to be said that Britain had stood alone, that the recognition of Norway's help brought tears to the eyes of the company assembled that day.

On another occasion, groups of eminent persons gave us luncheon to which they had each contributed rations, at that time strictly limited, to make it a great feast. We went by in-



visitation to the Foreign Office and there we were greeted with warmth by the Minister, Herr Lange, who had been a post-graduate student of the London School of Economics. And we dined at his Palace with His Majesty King Haakon, who discussed the Report with keen interest.

In Denmark we again met members of the resistance movement, with whom it was once more the same story. A farmer whose dairy was famous even for Denmark begged us to come to see him, for he wanted to show us two of the cylinders which the British had used on their secret air journeys to drop material for the underground movement in a carefully hidden place on his land. They stood at the top of the steps to his house. The Germans had eventually discovered the part he had taken and had rushed him off to a prison, brutally ill treating him. Now he was free again, but his wife was dying, and he was utterly sad and nearly eighty. He wanted to see William to tell that he had gladly taken all the risks, well knowing how great they were, to bring to his fellow Danes the evidence of the Beveridge Plan, that Britain was neither defeated nor downhearted in spite of the broadcasts to the contrary continually put over by their German occupiers.

Perhaps the most moving of all these greetings was in the city of Ghent. There William and I went in November 1946 so that he might give a lecture about British democracy on behalf of the British Council. But the leading citizens of Ghent had no intention of merely listening to a lecture. They said they would like first to show us their Town Hall, one of the oldest and most famous in Europe. When we reached the Town Hall, we found ourselves being led by the acting Burgomeister to a room like a chapel reserved for special occasions, and were set down in two throne-like chairs facing the Burgomeister across a table. His fellow Burghers grouped themselves around us. We felt as if we were going to be married all over again. Not till the Burgomeister stood up to read us in his delightful English a carefully prepared address did we realise what he was about. I

have printed the whole address elsewhere.¹ Here I give a few passages only:

My Lord,

It is with feelings of deep gratitude that we have the honour to welcome you in this old and venerable Town Hall, a witness of many a fierce struggle for more social justice.

We shall not easily forget how in the midst of the horrors of the war, when living under the Nazi terror, we heard your name mentioned in the B.B.C. We heard that Britain was going to have a new charter made, a plan for social insurance, the basis for a new start in the entire social life of the whole nation. . . .

I remember the tremendous effect this announcement made in the ranks of the resistance. . . . For it made us realise that our struggle against the enemy was not to be fought by weapons and propaganda alone, but by the knowledge that we had to prepare for peace, for the liberation, for the practical work after the war. . . . Your plan, milord, was the real silver lining in the dark clouds of war.

The Burgomeister went on to tell us how the Belgian resistance movement had arranged for a copy of the Report to be parachuted down by night from England by one of those in secret co-operation with them for such services.

But at last it was in our possession!

But we had it only in the English text. Great Scott! It had to be translated. And the lessons "English by Radio", to which we had so carefully listened every day, had—alas—not been able to make our English fluent. Still, we had to translate it.

Alderman Story looked after the French translation. Two of my colleagues who are present here were a great help. Alderman Brans, who is familiar with social problems, lent

¹ *Antipodes Notebook* (Pilot Press, 1949), in a chapter called "Speaking Third".

a hand and made the Dutch translation. Our Councillor De Keuleneire typed it out in eight copies on his typewriter, the eight first Dutch and French copies of the Beveridge Plan. And he will be proud, my Lord, if you will allow him to present you with a French copy as souvenir of those times when you made that most formidable weapon against the anti-humane and anti-social regime.

Then the discussions began. And I cannot look back without emotion on those times when our Alderman Story was working together with our future Prime Minister Van Acker. Mr. Story, a well-to-do industrialist, social-minded, who turned his back to the old Manchester-Liberalism, working in harness with that old Labour hand, Mr. Van Acker, to endow their country with a Belgian Beveridge Plan.

Mr. Story, alas, did not see the outcome of his most strenuous efforts; he was brought to death in the concentration camp of Cross-Rosen.

If we may say that Britain has given us back our liberty, we are indeed proud to add that your social ideals have given us a vision on a better use and an extension of that liberty.

The Burgomeister ended by giving William the medal of honour of his city. He and his fellow-citizens gave to William and myself that afternoon one of the most moving experiences of our lives.

The Report which stirred such feelings all over Europe, indeed all over the world, was the same Report as that of which at the same time our own Prime Minister found nothing to say in public, while in private, by Cabinet Minutes,¹ he deprecated the raising of false hopes and gave an instruction to his colleagues against committing themselves to legislation or to the expenditure involved. A Prime Minister commits the future as much by what he leaves undone as by what he does.

¹ *The Second World War*, Vol. IV, Appendix F, pp. 861-862.

CHAPTER XV

Salvaged with Mixed Metaphors

If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place.
ECCLESIASTES 10.4

THE Beveridge Plan was too tough a craft to sink. Even so gallant an engagement as that in which the chiefs of the Wartime Cabinet themselves were manning the guns failed to do more than leave it scarred. It survived their attacks and emerged, damaged, it is true, but triumphant. The Report had been signed on November 20th, 1942. It was in the hands of the public a fortnight later. It has been discussed far and wide at home and abroad from that day to this. It was debated in the House of Commons on the 16th, 17th and 18th of the following February and a week later in the House of Lords. And then, as has been recorded in Chapter X, the Report, was confided to an anonymous Committee in Whitehall.

In secret this Committee spent nearly two years in considering it.

They did not call into serious consultation any of the parties outside concerned in its recommendations, and they did not consult the author. While the Committee were thus engaged in bringing their own minds to their deliberations, Members of Parliament sought again and again to discover whether the Prime Minister himself had taken any opportunity of discussing his plan with William. When asked by Mrs. Cazalet-Keir on March 18th, 1943, whether the Government had consulted him on the setting up of the machinery to implement his recommendations and whether it proposed to do so, the answer by the Prime Minister was short and simple and finite. "No, Sir," he replied to both questions. Meanwhile

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William himself had sought an opportunity of seeing him. To his letter the Prime Minister replied that he would like to see him but that he was too busy for the time being. Nothing more was ever heard of that request.

On the Report as a whole the Government which had asked for it had gone much slower than William had hoped. On one recommendation of importance they went ahead much faster than he had advised. The provision of a comprehensive health service available to all members of the community was the second of the three assumptions underlying William's plan for social security; it came in as Assumption B with universal children's allowances as A and maintenance of employment as C. The practical details of how a health service should be organised seemed to William to fall outside his terms of reference and the special knowledge of his Committee. Having given his reasons for establishing it, he advised a further enquiry in which the finance and the organisation of the service should be considered together. He wanted an enquiry as independent as his own and as thorough, "in consultation with the professions concerned and with the public and voluntary organisations which have established hospitals and other institutions".¹

But the Government with their official advisers felt that they knew better than this. They went ahead on their own. They produced in February 1944, seven months before they said anything about social insurance as a whole, a White Paper plan for a National Health Service. This White Paper was followed by another and different White Paper in March 1946 accompanying a Bill which became the National Health Service Act in November. At no stage was there the kind of enquiry and consultation that had produced the Beveridge Report and that had been advised in that Report before a health service was framed.

As provision of a health service for all was one of the

¹ *Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services*, para. 437.

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assumptions of his Plan, William had felt bound to include in his Report a figure of the estimated cost. The tentative figure of £170 million a year which accordingly appeared was not calculated by William himself. It was provided by the Government Actuary "after consultation with the Ministry of Health and the Department of Health for Scotland". When the Coalition Government came to give their own estimate for the



(News Chronicle)

health service officially in the White Paper of February 1944, it was less than the figure printed by William; it was £148.5 million a year. When the Labour Government introduced their National Health Service Bill in March 1946 they gave practically the same estimate of total annual cost—£152 million—in the Financial Memorandum attached to the Bill.

All these official figures evolved in Whitehall were ludicrously less than what has been spent in practice, reaching by 1951-52 £449 million. William had urged that both the finance and the organisation of a National Health Scheme should be held over for thorough investigation and criticism before any action was taken. If William's advice had been

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followed at the time there might have been no need for the Guillebaud Committee today.

The public at home and abroad, unaware of the attitude of the Government, continued to canonise William. The demands on his time for speeches and articles became incessant and far beyond the scope of any one man. A Social Security League was formed, and six months later he became its President. Eventually he passed on to it the job of sorting out the appeals. Among them the most alluring of all had been the invitations to the United States and Canada. We should have liked to stay longer in both these countries, but we had to fly back to be in time for a meeting in the Central Hall, Westminster, in July, arranged by the late Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple, who acted as Chairman. Thousands of people packed the hall. I had taken some trouble with my toilet, having just left New York, where the standard was as always high. A little conscious of my hat, I asked William Temple if he thought it was all right. He said it certainly indicated social security.

When it had become clear that he was to be boycotted completely, William turned his mind to a new enquiry on full employment, in the sense of "Assumption C. Maintenance of Employment" appearing in his Report. He had made it clear to the Government that he would prefer to make the new enquiry on their behalf. They showed no inclination to accept such an arrangement. William was driven to make his second and supplementary survey on his own account without their help. He secured from three friends money enough to provide an office and to get together a few assistants. Frank Pakenham continued with unabated and invaluable devotion to work with him. His enquiry, which resulted in the book *Full Employment in a Free Society*, was under way and announced by the beginning of April, although it was not until he got back from America in the middle of July that the work on the survey of full employment could start in earnest.

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In accord with his usual practice he proceeded to consult all the experts on the subject, including those in Whitehall.

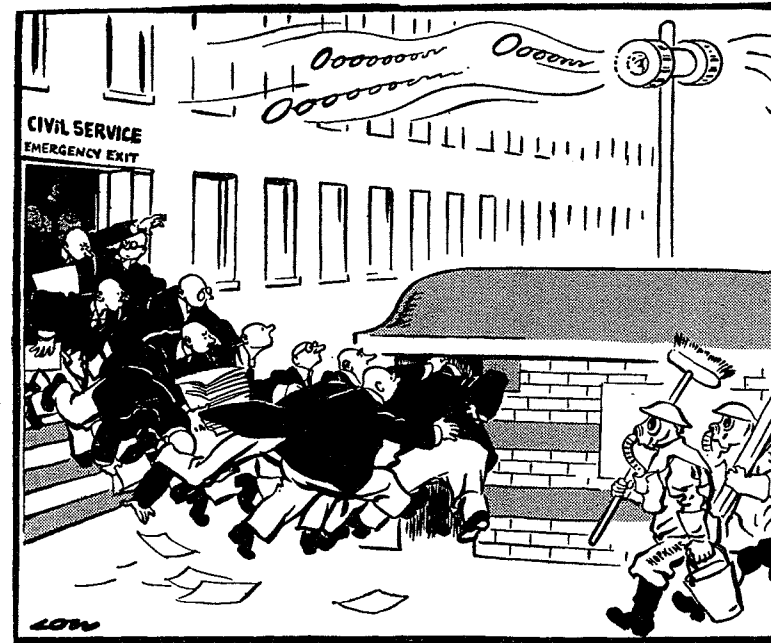
William has told elsewhere the strange and unaccountable action of the Treasury when this became known, and I need not say much about it here. I need only conjecture that they must have hoped to make it impossible for him to write the book by barring him from all communications on the subject with his friends and colleagues of a lifetime in the Ministries of Whitehall, in an order issued by the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself which he subsequently defended in the House of Commons. Again with Frank Pakenham as his devoted and tireless right hand and a group of economists and secretarial assistants, in spite of the altogether monstrous attitude of the Government, the work proceeded. No one save the Government themselves was found to defend their proceedings on this occasion. *The Times* in a leading article on "A New Monopoly" described the Treasury circular as "altogether an unlucky production" and was joined by nearly all the press. Low took immediate action with the cartoon reproduced on facing page.

The Government having decided to prepare a White Paper of their own on full employment in spite of the fact that William had himself already embarked upon his book appear to have made it their ambition to get it out first by fair means or otherwise, bans included. Those of the observers who understood the situation laid bets, I am told, on the winner in the race.

William writes in *Power and Influence*: "In fact, Government enterprise and private enterprise . . . produced their finished documents together in the end of May 1944, just at the time of the invasion of Normandy." William's book took longer to print than the White Paper, so that it was not published until six months later. It had to go through the delays and restrictions of private publication whereas the White Paper had the advantage of the Government's printing arrangements. Unlike

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the White Paper, it proved once more to be a best-seller. It has in fact become the classic on the subject, as his first book on Unemployment has continued to be for over thirty years. As I write, a new edition of *Full Employment in a Free Society* is in the press. What has happened, I wonder, to the White Paper?



It was not only appeals to William to speak and write that continued to pour in. There were also requests from constituencies that he should stand for election to represent them in Parliament. Lloyd George had changed his opinion by this time, looking on in amazement at the tortuosities of the Government. The first idea was that William should remain independent of parties and that if he stood at all it should be as such in a University constituency. But the death of Captain

Grey, the sitting Liberal member for Berwick-on-Tweed, on July 30th, 1944, in Caumont in Normandy, brought the issue to a decision. On his last leave some weeks before, Captain Grey came to see us in Oxford at the Master's Lodgings at University College, where William was then Master. It was a moving occasion, for he came to say to us how he recognised in William the exponent of all that seemed to him best in British political ideals. He said that William's work and aims would be a light to lead him in the political field if he came back to follow the political life. He spoke to William as a son might have spoken to a revered father. These hours together that day stand out in the memory as a strange and vivid contrast to the atmosphere of the Coalition Government at the time.

George Grey did not come back. His life was over almost before it had begun. He was one of the best of his generation, the flower of British manhood. For him politics were not a means to his own advancement or glorification. He wanted like William to leave the world better than he found it, and he thought to do that through the political machine. It might have crushed his spirit, then so fine and clear; who knows?

When the Liberals asked William to stand for the vacant seat, I think the memory of young George Grey was the deciding element. My husband was clear that he would not in the crisis of the war stand for Parliament in opposition to a candidate put forward officially as a supporter of the Government conducting the war. But by the Coalition agreement by-elections were not contested by the parties; a vacant seat went to another of the same creed. This consideration and George Grey's single-minded Liberalism which tuned in so well with his own led him to accept the invitation. He became member for Berwick-on-Tweed on October 16th, 1944, three weeks after the Government had issued at last their lucubrations on the Beveridge Plan in the two White Papers, nearly two years after it had been presented.

The first White Paper began its final paragraph with a tribute:

In conclusion the Government wish to place on record their gratitude to Sir William Beveridge for the great work which he did in preparing his comprehensive and imaginative Report. Their main tribute is the embodiment of so much of his plan in the proposals set out in this White Paper, proposals which will, in their belief, afford an adequate basis of social insurance for many years to come.

It was debated in the House of Commons on November 2nd and 3rd. William made his maiden speech on the second day. The other paper was debated on November 8th and 9th and on that occasion he spoke on the first day.

In William's maiden speech he admitted paternity for the White Paper proposals, and the "large and rather noisy baby" which he had laid on the Government doorstep two years before and from which he had been separated by himself being evacuated from Whitehall. Now when they met again in Westminster, he found that the White Paper proposals were his plan so little altered that "every now and again I do rather wonder just what that baby was doing, how it filled in the long time that it spent in Whitehall". There was of course the unusual circumstance that it seemed to have developed into twins.

They were not identical twins, and one was called Social Insurance Part I and the other Social Insurance Part II Workmen's Compensation.

Although White Paper I had ended on a tribute, it had unfortunately begun with a derogation. In one of its early paragraphs it explained the delay of the Government in dealing with the Report among other things by describing William's plan as "an outline plan" which "did not purport to be a complete and final scheme. The detail had still to be worked out." This was both ridiculous and far from the facts. The

famous Report presents a brilliant, comprehensive and succinct plan, and above all an entertaining and absorbing work, every word of it written by William himself in the lucid and fresh style of a great master of the English language. It sets out in reasoned and exhaustive detail every aspect of the risks to be met by social insurance as they had never been set out before. In terms of material size his Report is nearly three times as long as the two White Papers combined. Number one, apart from the Actuary's memorandum, runs to 40 pages, while number two has 26—66 pages for the two. William's Report without the Actuarial Report and other appendices took 172 pages. It is a contribution to the history of the British way of living based upon a unique experience and a comprehensive study of the facts which will give it a permanent place in the archives of our people. It has been accepted as such by its readers in every language of the world.

His Plan ("the sacred text")¹ was no outline, but it was a *tour de force*. Far from not being ready "for immediate transformation into legislative form", it is written where appropriate in the form which lends itself to easy transformation into a parliamentary Bill, as he was so exceptionally fitted to do. His experience in that line began as soon as he entered the Board of Trade in 1908 and continued intermittently throughout the whole period of his service in Whitehall. After inventing labour exchanges, unemployment insurance and food rationing, and framing and piloting Munitions of War Acts through Parliament, he has forgotten more about turning ideas into legislation and practice than most civil servants are likely ever to know.

Of course his Plan needed to be turned into a Bill. But there was nothing to justify the passage of nearly two years between William's Report and the White Papers, and the further time between the White Papers of September 1944 and the National Insurance Act introduced in December 1945 only to become

¹ Turnover article in *The Times*, April 18th, 1952.

law on August 1st, 1946. The delay is the more remarkable that the civil servants who produced the White Papers were exempted from the main work which had taken William most of his time, namely the consultation with every sort of person and institution likely to be affected. Many days were spent by William with the Friendly Societies; they were never consulted at all between his Report and the White Papers. He spent many days with the Trades Union Congress and their Social Insurance department; the T.U.C. at their request in order to stimulate action secured one interview with the secret Committee in April 1943 and another about September 1943 which was almost formal. William's Report was based on consultation with everybody. The Government promised to consult outside interests in preparing the White Papers. But no evidence can be found that they did so. They may indeed be said to have acted in this matter in the purely bureaucratic manner.

The validity of no fact established in William's Plan has ever been questioned. The finance on which its practical success depended was planned with the co-operation of the best actuarial minds available. It was scrutinised and approved by the unquestioned authority of William's close but highly critical friend in such matters, Maynard Keynes. Other Treasury officials, including Professor Robbins, lent for war service there, played their part. It was worked out also on the basis of insurance and not in the lax spirit of charitable gifts. The Plan took account of the moral welfare of the people whom it concerned as well as of their physical state. It aimed at providing a floor above want for all on the basis of individual contributions to a universal insurance scheme, with every inducement to thrift in the provision contemplated. It set out to abolish a means test. It provided a floor, but not a ceiling.

In his maiden speech when the White Papers were under discussion, William gave a brief outline of the aims of the Report. In doing so he remarked that he would not call it the

Beveridge Report although it had inevitably come universally to be known as that, because it had not been only his work. He said:

I hope this House will allow me very rapidly to name the main features of this plan and emphasise the enormous changes which it is going to make in the life of the people and the happiness of the people of this country.

The first great change is the change to universality of insurance; instead of having a scheme for employees only we shall have a scheme for all citizens, including housewives and persons working on their own account. Secondly, there is the principle of classification, treating different classes of citizens according to their needs. Third, there is unity of administration, typified by that appointment, which we all welcome, of the Minister without Portfolio to be the Minister of Social Insurance. There is the idea of making pensions not a birthday present to be got when you become 65, but pensions to be given on retirement and increasing as retirement is postponed. Then there are the family allowances. That, I think, is the greatest of all the revolutions in this scheme. There is far better provision for housewives and widows. There is the abolition of the approved society system, on which I shall have a word to say later.

Finally, there is the death grant. Hon. Members may wonder whether the introduction of the death grant is really a major change. I suggest that it is, having regard to the history of this proposal. Everybody in the country will die sometime, and everybody will need, even if he does not enjoy, his funeral. The case for compulsory insurance for expenses that occur at death is overwhelming.

The Report had dealt with the highly debatable point of the period of contribution required for the beneficiaries to qualify under the new system for the old age pensions proposed. As the plan was above all intended to be a self-respecting com-

pulsory insurance against old age, as well as other risks, it took the line that the new pension with adequate subsistence and freedom from the means test should come after a period of contribution which might be as long as twenty years. Such persons as had not qualified by this initial stage would be cared for immediately by having the basic pension already provided substantially raised, and increased on evidence of need by the Assistance Board. Gradually such persons would fade out of the picture, and with them the need of a means test for any but special cases.

The Beveridge Report kept the cost to the State of pensions within narrow bounds, in the immediate aftermath of war, while maintaining the principle of a pension by right of contributions on a subsistence level without a means test as the ultimate fulfilment of the Plan. The White Paper, instead of dealing with pensions by raising them to subsistence level over an agreed period of years, proposed to raise them at once to a point well above the starting-point in the Plan but below the subsistence level. This was in fact a striking difference in principle. It weakened the attack on want, and disposed of the contributory principle, the two basic ideals underlying William's Plan. He made this one of his main subjects of criticism in his maiden speech on November 3rd, 1943:

Now I come to my criticism of the provision of old age. Here I am concerned not with the immediate rate of pension but with the ultimate rate of pension at which we should aim. I suggest that our aim should be that every British citizen, who works while he can and contributes while he is working and earning, should be assured of an old age without want, without dependence on the young, and without the need for charity or assistance. The Government quite definitely reject this aim.

There was also a change of the rate of children's allowances. The Report proposed 8s. a week plus perhaps a shilling in

kind. The White Paper reduced this to 5s. with "greatly extended provision in kind". The large proportion of aid in kind in the form of school meals and free milk would of course only benefit children of school age; this seemed to defeat the primary intention of abolishing want for children as well as interfering with parental responsibility, and William also criticised the change strongly:

The first principle should be that we should regard it as a primary aim of social policy to ensure every child against want, against going hungry, cold, ill-clad and ill-housed, not because the parents are spending their money badly, but because the family income is not sufficient to provide the bare necessities of healthy life.

I would name as a second principle that we should do that in such a way as to preserve the parental responsibility as completely as possible. I would urge the Government, most respectfully, to take these as their principles in dealing with childhood after the war, in place of the principles laid down in the White Paper.

I do not want to abolish parental responsibility, but I do suggest that we want an entirely new outlook on the problem of the children of the country. We should put children and the future first.

They also rejected the proposal in the Plan to use the Friendly Societies in co-operation with the Government for the administration of the benefits.

Apart from recognition of the pioneer work of the Societies such a concession to their contribution to the welfare of the people would have helped to humanise the administration, bringing in outsiders who were the unquestioned experts with long experience to work in co-operation with the civil servants.

And finally the Government rejected the principle of a subsistence level for the benefits in general on the two grounds

of variations in the cost of living and of the differences in subsistence needs.

William's ship had suffered grievous scars, of which the two most glaring were the quite inexcusable delay of twenty months in preparing the White Papers, a period of time longer than that given by William to the production of the Report itself, and the abandonment of the principle of the subsistence level for all benefits, bringing inevitably with it the consequential abandonment of restriction of the means test to special cases. Close after came the destruction of the financial framework by the alteration of the arrangements for retirement pensions, and the tragic introduction of vote-mongering by favouring old age pensioners with a vote in improving their position, as against the children without a vote whose allowances were drastically cut. The procedure was inaugurated, to be followed by both parties, of contriving to adapt the plan to secure votes. With meticulous regard to the advice of the actuaries and in close co-operation and consultation with Maynard Keynes the financial structure of the Report had been formed. It was so closely articulated, that to tear it apart was to destroy it.

After the eleven years which have now passed since the Report was published in December 1942, there can be few to deny that the Coalition Government of that time, by their treatment of the Report and its author, committed one of the most unfortunate mistakes in the history of British legislation. So strong was the feeling for its acceptance not only in the country but in the members of every party in the House of Commons, except some of those holding office in the Coalition Government, that it would assuredly have passed into law rapidly and practically unchanged if it had been confided at once to its author, himself a past master in parliamentary drafting and legislation.

Nothing of the kind was allowed to happen. On the contrary, when the General Election was called in May 1945, a campaign

of derogation of the author of the Plan was inaugurated by the Prime Minister himself in a broadcast, in which he spoke of William as returning in 1941 to a field from which he had long been absent. William was then and had been since 1934 Chairman of the Unemployment Insurance Statutory Committee. As such he had the duty of investigating the discrepancies existing between the various insurance schemes as they were repeatedly being brought to his notice, a continuing experience which did much to form the foundation of the unified structure of the Report.

It was not of course only on this account that Sir Winston's hearers were startled and dismayed; perhaps least of all on this account, for they could not know the long history of William's contributions to Social Reform which culminated in the Beveridge Plan. I have written it out, in this volume, in so far as it is relevant, so that it might be on record. On the further suggestion in the broadcast that Sir Winston himself had been constantly in touch with Social Insurance, it may be recorded again here that the last time at which he is known to have come into even a bowing acquaintance with the problems was in 1925 when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer and when William had written a year before the pamphlet on *Insurance for All and Everything* already referred to in Chapter VI.

The result of the election in 1945, as James Griffiths had foretold after the debate on the Plan in February 1943, was a crushing defeat for the Conservative Party. The Labour Party were returned with an overwhelming majority. The Liberal Party went to the wall, although they were the first to have accepted the original plan *in toto* and were united in supporting it in full and its author. He lost the seat in the Commons which he had held for only a few months, having sought it so that he might in Parliament if nowhere else speak up among other things for the scheme he had framed, but for which from the moment of its completion he had been deprived of all responsibility. The Labour Party, with Mr. Attlee as Prime Minister, as they had

deeply committed themselves to do, immediately proceeded to prepare legislation.

The Beveridge Report, so overwhelmingly popular, was in essentials put into force in 1946. The social insurance of Great Britain is now comprehensive both of persons and of risks. It is unified in administration under a Ministry of National Insurance, dealing with all benefits as well as with children's allowances and national assistance, subject to a means test for those whose needs for any reason are not met by insurance, and a Ministry of Health for all medical treatment. It has uniform benefit rates in most cases. There are, of course, some differences from the proposals of the Beveridge Report; industrial accidents were dealt with by a separate Act of Parliament and receive higher benefits. The proposal of the Report to use voluntary Friendly Societies to administer sickness benefits was rejected. The proposal of the Report to raise old age pensions to their full level only over a period of years and contribution was rejected; after the pronouncement of the Coalition White Paper in favour of raising pensions at once and irrespective of contribution to a point much higher than suggested in the Report, it would have been impossible politically for any party to go back to the Report, even if they had wished to do so. But these points, however important in themselves, do not affect the substantial acceptance of the Beveridge Report and its putting into force.

Most important of all today is one point on which the Labour Government of 1946 went back in principle to the Beveridge Report of 1942, as against the White Paper of 1944. This is the issue as to whether insurance benefits should be designed on the basis of subsistence costs.

The fundamental Beveridge conception was that the benefit should always be enough by itself to provide the *bare necessities of life*—food, clothing, housing and so on; if prices and the cost of living changed materially the rates of insurance benefit would have to be reviewed and changed to correspond.

The Labour Government returned to the Beveridge ideal. They included in the National Insurance Act of 1946 the very important section 40, implying their acceptance of this basic principle. Every five years the Government Actuary has to report on the working of the Social Insurance Scheme, and the Ministry of National Insurance, on receipt of this quinquennial report, must "review the rates and amounts of benefit in relation to the circumstances at the time of insured persons in Great Britain, including in particular the expenditure which is necessary for the preservation of health and working capacity and to any changes in those circumstances since the rates and amounts of benefit were laid down". The first quinquennial report of the Government Actuary and the Government review of benefits are due to be made in 1954.

They are bound to cause many headaches for those in charge of our affairs. For money in the last few years has been losing its value as prices rose continually. The insurance benefits though raised from time to time have failed to keep pace with costs. At the end of 1952 one in every four persons on retirement or widow's pension, one in five on unemployment benefit, one in seven on sickness benefit was receiving national assistance as well; their insurance benefits were below subsistence level. In the view of some critics, national assistance under means test is replacing insurance as the basis of social security. Whatever Government have to make a review of benefit rates will have an embarrassing task. They will have to find many millions more for social insurance or they will have formally to abandon the central principle of the Beveridge Report.

The problems now facing Britain in the field of social security cannot be ignored. They arise not from the nature of the Beveridge Plan but from outside—through the changing age-distribution of population, through the difficulty of preserving the value of money under full employment, through the difficulty of combining solid human progress with per-

petual cold war. To face up to those problems does not imply any going back in Britain on the principle of social security embodied in the Acts which followed William's Report.

But it cannot be denied that if his Report had been embodied as it stood in an Act of Parliament in the months immediately following its presentation these problems would have been soluble gradually as their presence demanded.

The changes, however, do not destroy the substantial identity of the Report and the Act.

The ship came home, though bearing scars. On 6th of February 1946, almost exactly three years from his first forecast that the Conservative Party would lose the election when it came by their initial treatment of the Report in the first debate upon it in the House of Commons, James Griffiths, the Minister of National Insurance in the Labour Government, while introducing the National Insurance Bill on the second reading, said:

The Beveridge Report has taken its place as one of the great documents of British history. I am sorry that Sir William is not with us in the House to take part in the translation of his Report into legislation.

Mr. Attlee, the Prime Minister, added the next day:

This Bill is founded on the Beveridge Report.

Like Annette in 1925 I was angry to think of the mutilations of the Report and of the boycotting of its creator. But, as on that earlier occasion, William again pointed out that his work had not been in vain, and turned his mind to the next task.

CHAPTER XVI

A Last Word

O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.
ISAIAH 48.18

WILLIAM, having produced his Report, without rancour or bitterness endured first the delay of the Laodiceans and then the action of the politicians in dismembering it. He had done his bit and went on to the next survey. In my unregeneracy I am not able altogether to emulate his magnanimous tolerance.

To me the Plan was something far more than a piece of machinery for setting up regulations. It was an intensely human document with an ethical purpose. It was not merely an expression of social justice, it was a call to the higher impulses of men in their service to mankind. The different proposals were integrated in this sense.

That was why the abandonment of the insurance principle while the minimum subsistence level was maintained made hay both of the balance of finance and the first principles of the Plan. That was why the introduction of old age pensions without adequate insurance contributions with the compensatory reduction in children's allowances cut at the root of self-respect of the beneficiaries and incidentally introduced political competition between the parties. The withdrawal of industrial accident into separate legislation destroyed the underlying conception of a unified related treatment of all the ills against which compensation should be met by a general insurance scheme involving every member of the community.

The precipitate institution of a National Health Scheme

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without a searching and adequate preliminary enquiry with the doctors in full co-operation not only created many problems still unsolved, but antagonised many of the members of the medical profession, perhaps the finest and least self-seeking of all the professions in its service to humanity, friendly to the conception as revealed to them in the consultative discussions with William during the framing of his Report.

It is not necessary for me to remark that the wars of my adult life bear no resemblance to the campaigns of any previous history. Action by the fighting forces has undergone cataclysmic changes. But it is the inclusion of the civilian population into the preparation and hazards of war that has altered the content of parliamentary government both in war and in peace, and the attitude of men and women whether in uniform or out of it to their responsibility to their country.

A War-lord who is also a Prime Minister has in fact only one problem. It has different facets. The marshalling of armies in the field or on the sea or in the air in concert with allies of different civilisations and ambitions with the attendant contentions between the generals, admirals, air-marshals and rulers is only one of them. The relation of the fighting men to their civilian opposite numbers in their own country is another. Both share the attack since modern warfare threatens the lives of every man, woman and child not in the field, in their own homes or schools, or places of employment. The Prime Minister's side of his dual functions must take care of the second while the War-lord supervises the first. They are his equal concern, for those concerned are equal partners.

The Beveridge Plan inspired both elements with the belief that without fear or favour they would come out of the struggle equal in hope and security. It brought them into a unity of self-help and brotherly interdependence the moral value of which might have been incalculable.

Into the care of a Coalition Government, a body of politicians exempted, with the full agreement of the nation whose

different political creeds they represented, from competitive political considerations "for the duration", the Beveridge Report was presented. It was the contribution of a small group with William at its head to the creation of a new world of security in peace. It came at the height of the most savage conflict with a promise that the effort of no man or woman would be forgotten. It was eagerly accepted as such by every ordinary citizen uniting the people on all the fronts as no projected social reform had ever before united them.

I have shown in the chapters of this book how circumstances had fortuitously brought William over the years into recurrent contact and co-operation with the greatest figure of our time. The co-operation was direct and close in the launching of Labour Exchanges and Unemployment Insurance from 1908 to 1910. Fifteen years later in 1925 the two pursued separately the same purpose of expanding Social Insurance to make pensions contributory. Soon after in 1926 and 1927 they came together in saving the Bloomsbury site for the University of London.

Ten years on, Sir Winston Churchill in 1936 to 1937 was fighting against the incapacity and sloth both of the Tory Government and the Labour Opposition alike, one of the finest battles of his career for preparedness against war from Hitler—a battle which he fought almost but not quite alone. In Parliament he had the steady support of Sir Archibald Sinclair with his fellow Liberals; he described their intervention in a debate as the Liberals' finest hour.

In profound admiration for and agreement with the prescient and unremitting efforts of his one-time chief, William, now a veteran of World War I in administration, having prepared for the Government a food rationing scheme against the risk of war, was seeking to support Sir Winston's efforts in general by pressing for equal preparedness elsewhere on the home front, pouring forth articles in *The Times* and memoranda everywhere.

Five years later, in 1942, it was his duty to present to Sir

Winston the Report on Social Insurance that he had been asked to make by his Government. In introducing it on the air William voiced the hope that the man who was leading us to victory in the field would complete as well the work in social insurance in which he had played so daring and imaginative a part more than thirty years before, so bringing total victory in total war.

That things did not work out that way has been the fault not of any one person but of the accident and pressure of circumstances.

The Plan had assumed the coming of peace. Instead there is a cold war, bringing crippling taxation in its wake, accompanied by inflation and rising prices. With the weakening of the Plan the increasing menace from these conditions is leading the country into a new crisis in its social history. It can only sadly be recorded that the way out is going to be harder than if the Beveridge Plan in full as it was conceived, with its moral lesson, had been in operation today.

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