THIS THEN is the extreme possible form of a World-State, the form dreamed of by the socialistic, scientific, humanitarian thinkers who represent the modern mind at its highest point of self-consciousness and are therefore able to detect the trend of its tendencies, though to the half-rationalised mind of the ordinary man whose view does not go beyond the day and its immediate morrow, their speculations may seem to be chimerical and utopian. In reality they are nothing of the kind; in their essence, not necessarily in their form, they are, as we have seen, not only the logical outcome, but the inevitable practical last end of the incipient urge towards human unity, if it is pursued by a principle of mechanical unification, — that is to say, by the principle of the State. It is for this reason that we have found it necessary to show the operative principles and necessities which have underlain the growth of the unified and finally socialistic nation-State, in order to see how the same movement in international unification must lead to the same results by an analogous necessity of development. The State principle leads necessarily to uniformity, regulation, mechanisation; its inevitable end is socialism. There is nothing fortuitous, no room for chance in political and social development, and the emergence of socialism was no accident or a thing that might or might not have been, but the inevitable result contained in the very seed of the State idea. It was inevitable from the moment that idea began to be hammered out in practice. The work of the Alfreeds and Charlemagnes and other premature national or imperial unifiers contained this as a sure result, for men work almost always without knowing for what they have worked. But in modern times the signs are so clear that we need not be deceived or imagine, when we begin to lay a mechanical base for world-unification, that the result contained
in the very effort will not insist on developing, however far-off it may seem at present from any immediate or even any distant possibilities. A strict unification, a vast uniformity, a regulated socialisation of united mankind will be the predestined fruit of our labour.

This result can only be avoided if an opposite force interposes and puts in its veto, as happened in Asia where the State idea, although strongly affirmed within its limits, could never go in its realisation beyond a certain point, because the fundamental principle of the national life was opposed to its full intolerant development. The races of Asia, even the most organised, have always been peoples rather than nations in the modern sense. Or they were nations only in the sense of having a common soul-life, a common culture, a common social organisation, a common political head, but not nation-States. The State machine existed only for a restricted and superficial action; the real life of the people was determined by other powers with which it could not meddle. Its principal function was to preserve and protect the national culture and to maintain sufficient political, social and administrative order — as far as possible an immutable order — for the real life of the people to function undisturbed in its own way and according to its own innate tendencies. Some such unity for the human race is possible in the place of an organised World-State, if the nations of mankind succeed in preserving their developed instinct of nationalism intact and strong enough to resist the domination of the State idea. The result would then be not a single nation of mankind and a World-State, but a single human people with a free association of its nation-units. Or, it may be, the nation as we know it might disappear, but there would be some other new kind of group-units, assured by some sufficient machinery of international order in the peaceful and natural functioning of their social, economic and cultural relations.

Which then of these two major possibilities would be preferable? To answer that question we have to ask ourselves, what would be the account of gain and loss for the life of the human race which would result from the creation of a unified
World-State. In all probability the results would be, with all allowance for the great difference between then and now, very much the same in essence as those which we observe in the ancient Roman Empire. On the credit side, we should have first one enormous gain, the assured peace of the world. It might not be absolutely secure against internal shocks and disturbances but, supposing certain outstanding questions to be settled with some approach to permanence, it would eliminate even such occasional violent outbursts of civil strife as disturbed the old Roman imperial economy and, whatever perturbations there might still be, need not disturb the settled fabric of civilisation so as to cast all again into the throes of a great radical and violent change. Peace assured, there would be an unparalleled development of ease and well-being. A great number of outstanding problems would be solved by the united intelligence of mankind working no longer in fragments but as one. The vital life of the race would settle down into an assured rational order comfortable, well-regulated, well-informed, with a satisfactory machinery for meeting all difficulties, exigencies and problems with the least possible friction, disturbance and mere uncertainty of adventure and peril. At first, there would be a great cultural and intellectual efflorescence. Science would organise itself for the betterment of human life and the increase of knowledge and mechanical efficiency. The various cultures of the world — those that still exist as separate realities — would not only exchange ideas more intimately, but would throw their gains into one common fund, and new motives and forms would arise for a time in thought and literature and Art. Men would meet each other much more closely and completely than before, develop a greater mutual understanding, rid of many accidental motives of strife, hatred and repugnance which now exist, and arrive, if not at brotherhood, — which cannot come by mere political, social and cultural union, — yet at some imitation of it, a sufficiently kindly association and interchange. There would be an unprecedented splendour, ease and amenity in this development of human life, and no doubt some chief poet of the age, writing in the common or
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official tongue—shall we say, Esperanto?—would sing confidently of the approach of the golden age or even proclaim its actual arrival and eternal duration. But after a time, there would be a dying down of force, a static condition of the human mind and human life, then stagnation, decay, disintegration. The soul of man would begin to wither in the midst of his acquisitions.

This result would come about for the same essential reasons as in the Roman example. The conditions of a vigorous life would be lost, liberty, mobile variation and the shock upon each other of freely developing differentiated lives. It may be said that this will not happen, because the World-State will be a free democratic State, not a liberty-stifling empire or autocracy, and because liberty and progress are the very principle of modern life and no development would be tolerated which went contrary to that principle. But in all this, there is not really the security that seems to be offered. For what is now, need not endure under quite different circumstances and the idea that it will is a strange mirage thrown from the actualities of the present on the possibly quite different actualities of the future. Democracy is by no means a sure preservative of liberty; on the contrary, we see today the democratic system of government march steadily towards such an organised annihilation of individual liberty as could not have been dreamed of in the old aristocratic and monarchical systems. It may be that from the more violent and brutal forms of despotic oppression which were associated with those systems, democracy has indeed delivered those nations which have been fortunate enough to achieve liberal forms of government, and that is no doubt a great gain. It revives now only in periods of revolution and excitement, often in the form of mob tyranny or a savage revolutionary or reactionary repression. But there is a deprivation of liberty which is more respectable in appearance, more subtle and systematised, more mild in its method because it has a greater force at its back, but for that very reason more effective and pervading. The tyranny of the majority has become a familiar phrase and its deadening effects have been depicted with a great
force of resentment by certain of the modern intellectuals;\(^1\) but what the future promises us is something more formidable still, the tyranny of the whole, of the self-hypnotised mass over its constituent groups and units.\(^2\)

This is a very remarkable development, the more so as in the origins of the democratic movement individual freedom was the ideal which it set in front both in ancient and modern times. The Greeks associated democracy with two main ideas, first, an effective and personal share by each citizen in the actual government, legislation, administration of the community, secondly, a great freedom of individual temperament and action. But neither of these characteristics can flourish in the modern type of democracy, although in the United States of America there was at one time a tendency to a certain extent in this direction. In large States, the personal share of each citizen in the government cannot be effective; he can only have an equal share — illusory for the individual although effective in the mass — in the periodical choice of his legislators and administrators. Even if these have not practically to be elected from a class which is not the whole or even the majority of the community, at present almost everywhere the middle class, still these legislators and administrators do not really represent their electors. The Power they represent is another, a formless and bodiless entity, which has taken the place of monarch and aristocracy, that impersonal group-being which assumes some sort of outward form and body and conscious action in the huge mechanism of the modern State. Against this power the individual is much more helpless than he was against old oppressions. When he feels its pressure grinding him into its uniform moulds, he has no resource except either an impotent anarchism or else a retreat, still to some extent possible, into the freedom of his soul or the freedom of his intellectual being.

\(^1\) E.g. Ibsen in his drama, "An Enemy of the People".
\(^2\) There was first seen the drastic beginning of this phenomenon in Fascist Italy and Soviet Russia. At the time of writing this development could be seen only in speculative prevision. It assumed afterwards the proportions of a growing fact and we can now see its full and formidable body.
For this is one gain of modern democracy which ancient liberty did not realise to the same extent and which has not yet been renounced, a full freedom of speech and thought. And as long as this freedom endures, the fear of a static condition of humanity and subsequent stagnation might seem to be groundless,—especially when it is accompanied by universal education which provides the largest possible human field for producing an effectuating force. Freedom of thought and speech,—the two necessarily go together, since there can be no real freedom of thought where a padlock is put upon freedom of speech,—is not indeed complete without freedom of association; for free speech means free propagandism and propagandism only becomes effective by association for the realisation of its objects. This third liberty also exists with more or less of qualifying limitations or prudent safeguards in all democratic States. But it is a question whether these great fundamental liberties have been won by the race with an entire security,—apart from their occasional suspensions even in free nations and the considerable restrictions with which they are hedged in subject countries. It is possible that the future has certain surprises for us in this direction.³ Freedom of thought would be the last human liberty directly attacked by the all-regulating State, which will first seek to regulate the whole life of the individual in the type approved by the communal mind or by its rulers. But when it sees how all-important is the thought in shaping the life, it will be led to take hold of that too by forming the thought of the individual through State education and by training him to the acceptance of the approved communal, ethical, social, cultural, religious ideas, as was done in many ancient forms of education. Only if it finds this weapon ineffective, is it likely to limit freedom of thought directly on the plea of danger to the State and to civilisation. Already we see the right of the State to interfere with individual thought announced here and there in a most ominous

³ A surprise no longer, but more and more an accomplished fact. At this moment freedom of speech and thought exists no longer in Russia; it was entirely suspended for a time in Germany and Southern Europe.
manner. One would have imagined religious liberty at least was assured to mankind, but recently we have seen an exponent of “new thought” advancing positively the doctrine that the State is under no obligation to recognise the religious liberty of the individual and that even if it grants freedom of religious thought, it can only be conceded as a matter of expediency, not of right. There is no obligation, it is contended, to allow freedom of cult; and indeed this seems logical; for if the State has the right to regulate the whole life of the individual, it must surely have the right to regulate his religion, which is so important a part of his life, and his thought, which has so powerful an effect upon his life.4

Supposing an all-regulating socialistic World-State to be established, freedom of thought under such a regime would necessarily mean a criticism not only of the details, but of the very principles of the existing state of things. This criticism, if it is to look not to the dead past but to the future, could only take one direction, the direction of anarchism, whether of the spiritual Tolstoyan kind or else the intellectual anarchism which is now the creed of a small minority but still a growing force in many European countries. It would declare the free development of the individual as its gospel and denounce government as an evil and no longer at all a necessary evil. It would affirm the full and free religious, ethical, intellectual and temperamental growth of the individual from within as the true ideal of human life and all else as things not worth having at the price of the renunciation of this ideal, a renunciation which it would describe as the loss of his soul. It would preach as the ideal of society a free association or brotherhood of individuals without government or any kind of compulsion.

What would the World-State do with this kind of free thought? It might tolerate it so long as it did not translate itself into individual and associated action; but the moment it spread

4 It was an error of prevision to suppose that the State would hesitate for a time to suppress freedom of thought altogether. It has been done at once and decisively by Bolshevist Russia and the totalitarian States. Religious liberty is not yet utterly destroyed, but is being slowly ground out in Russia, as it was in Germany, by State pressure.
or turned towards a practical self-affirmation in life, the whole principle of the State and its existence would be attacked and its very base would be sapped and undermined and in imminent danger. To stop the destruction at its root or else consent to its own subversion would be the only alternatives before the established Power. But even before any such necessity arises, the principle of regulation of all things by the State would have extended itself to the regulation of the mental as well as the physical life of man by the communal mind, which was the ideal of former civilisations. A static order of society would be the necessary consequence, since without the freedom of the individual a society cannot remain progressive. It must settle into the rut or the groove of a regulated perfection or of something to which it gives that name because of the rationality of system and symmetrical idea of order which it embodies. The communal mass is always conservative and static in its consciousness and only moves slowly in the tardy process of subconscious Nature. The free individual is the conscious progressive: it is only when he is able to impart his own creative and mobile consciousness to the mass that a progressive society becomes possible.