

Significance of Compulsory Service

This furthest limit of inconsistency is universal compulsory military service. (99)

The social conception of life, we have seen, consists in the transfer of the aim of life from the individual to groups and their maintenance—to the tribe, family, race, or state. (99)

The man who is controlled by moral influence acts in accordance with his own desires. Authority, in the sense in which the word is ordinarily understood, is a means of forcing a man to act in opposition to his desires. (100)

All state obligations, payment of taxes, fulfillment of state duties, and submission to punishments, exile, fines, etc., to which people appear to submit voluntarily, are always based on bodily violence or the threat of it. (100)

Power is always in the hands of those who control the army. (100)

Government authority, even if it does suppress private violence, always introduces into the life of men fresh forms of violence, which tend to become greater and greater in proportion to the duration and strength of the government. (102)

It is generally supposed that governments strengthen their forces only to defend the state from other states, in oblivion of the fact that armies are necessary, before all things, for the defense of governments from their own oppressed and enslaved subjects. (103)

Armies, then, are needed by governments and by the ruling classes above all to support the present order, which, far from being the result of the people's needs, is often in direct antagonism to them; and is only beneficial to the government and ruling classes. (104)

In fact, the whole significance of the social conception of life consists in man's recognition of the barbarity of strife between individuals, and the transitoriness of personal life itself, and the transference of the aim of life to groups of persons. (105)

. . . every man, under universal military service, becomes an accomplice in all the acts of violence of the government against the citizens without any choice of his own. (106)

. . . done in every state, in the name of order and the public welfare, of which the execution always falls to the army. All civil outbreaks for dynastic or other party reasons, all the executions that follow on such disturbances, all repression of insurrections, and military intervention to break up meetings and to suppress strikes, all forced extortion of taxes, all the iniquitous distributions of land, all the restrictions on labor—are either carried out directly by the military or by the police with the army at their back. (106)

. . . that we do not nowadays carry or use firearms, but everyone professes humane principles and feels empathy for his fellows . . . (107)

The great extension of means of communication and interchange of ideas has made men completely able to dispense with state aid in forming societies, associations, corporations, and congresses for scientific, economic, and political objects. Indeed, government is more often an obstacle than an assistance in attaining these aims. (108)

Every attempt at the solution of the problems of labor, land, politics, and religion meets with direct opposition on the part of government. (108)

The disadvantages of compliance . . . absolutely nothing to do with me. (109)

For the man who submits . . . good to his fellow-men. (109)

Doctrine of Non-Resistance to Evil by Force Must Inevitably Be Accepted by Men of the Present Day

One sometimes wonders what necessitated the corruption of Christianity which is now the greatest obstacle to its acceptance in its true significance. (112)

Christianity is at once a doctrine of truth and a prophecy. (112)

Before Christ's teaching, it seemed to men that the one only means of settling a dispute was by resistance to evil by force. (113)

Men resorted to violence against others, and convinced themselves and others that they were directing their violence against evil recognized as such by all. (113)

. . . erring men are not rendered infallible by assembling together and calling themselves a senate or any other name. (113)

The men invested with religious authority regarded as evil what the men and institutions invested with temporal authority regarded as good and vice versa. (114)

Men have come to the point of ceasing to believe in the possibility or even desirability of finding and establishing a general definition [of evil]. (114)

The rich know they are guilty in the very fact of being rich, and try to expiate their guilt by sacrifices to art and science, as of old they expiated their sins by sacrifices to the Church. (115)

This circle of violence is now made up of four methods of working upon men . . . the first and oldest method is intimidation. (115)

The second method is corruption. (116).

The third method is . . . hypnotizing the people. . . . In republican states they teach them the savage superstition of patriotism and the same pretended obedience to the governing authorities. (116)

The religious superstition is encouraged by establishing, with money taken from the people, temples, processions, memorials, and festivals, which, aided by painting, architecture, music, and incense, intoxicate the people, and above all by the support of the clergy, whose duty consists in brutalizing the people and keeping them in a permanent state of stupefaction by their teaching, the solemnity of their services, their sermons, and their interference in private life The patriotic superstition is encouraged by the creation, with money taken from the people, of national fetes, spectacles, monuments, and festivals to dispose men to attach importance to their own nation . . . (116)

The fourth method consists in selecting from all men who have been stupefied and enslaved by the three former methods a certain number, exposing them to special and intensified means of stupefaction and brutalization, and so making them into a passive instrument for carrying out all the cruelties and brutalities needed by the government. (117)

There remains now only one sphere of human life not encroached upon by government authority—that is the domestic, economic sphere, the sphere of private life and labor. (118)

. . . in their private life what is considered good by all without exception is nothing but the Christian virtues; what is considered as bad is nothing but the antichristian vices. (119)

Though some non-Christian ideals, such as strength, courage, and wealth, are still worshipped by a few who have not been penetrated by the Christian spirit, these ideals are out of date and are abandoned, if not by all, at least by all those regarded as the best people. (119)

All the evil seems to exist through some cause independent of the conscience of men. (120)

This man expresses what all sensible rulers think, but studiously conceal. He says openly that the soldiers are in *his* service, at *his* disposal, and must be ready for *his* advantage to murder even their brothers and fathers. (122)

It is often said that the invention of terrible weapons of destruction will put an end to war. That is an error. As the means of extermination are improved, the means of reducing men who hold the state conception of life to submission can be improved to correspond. They may slaughter them by millions, they may tear them to pieces, still they will march to war like senseless cattle. (123)