

putting his hands in the Prince of Wales's hand, that he should keep the castle of Lourdes against all men during his life, except it were against the King of England."

The latter part of this speech, though picturesque in form, frankly puts the matter on a prosaic quasi-legal basis: contracts for good consideration are binding; if a man makes a bargain of his own free will and seals it with an oath, he must keep to it. Soldiers at this day, and others holding office of any kind under the Crown, are bound to serve according to their oath, and except perhaps by a few reckless Irish Members of Parliament, the obligation would never be questioned. But it is noticeable that the first and best argument put forward by the captain of Lourdes is that he wished to be "true to his natural lord." This is an entirely different feeling, a far higher form of obligation. It may be in accordance with the nature of feudal tenancy, or with any other system of caste, but it is absolutely independent, derived from no one state of society, but equally binding on all. The time is long past when we could be suspected of confusing patriotism with the Divine Right of Kings; if any proof were needed of our coolness and right judgment in these matters it may be found in the treatment which we award to the technically rebellious or treasonable. In Germany it is *lèse-majesté* to utter a word in criticism of the Emperor; in Russia no form of Opposition is tolerated; in France allegiance has been transferred to the Army, which reigns by a superstition even more deadly in its effects. The English alone among great nations go to the verge of the impossible in acknowledging the natural right of protest and revolution: under no other rule could the Irish Nationalists exist, or the rebels of Cape Colony escape with a penalty of simple disfranchisement. There are also among us a number of superior persons, artists, poets, litterateurs, and "advanced thinkers," whose culture has taught them the duty of being unpatriotic. But these are morbid and sterile growths, failures of nature such as are observed from time to time by one generation and forgotten by the next. The great mass of