

Mr. Chesterton is quite right when you apply his statement to politics. It is another part of the present subject to show that the only ultimate power in politics is an idea, a theory, a principle, not a rule. Nothing is an end in itself; and where that is overlooked, there is no power. The sanction of the state is nothing unless based upon a greater sanction than itself. There is a standard of liberty by whose criticisms we must in the long run abide or we can make no progress. There is a force, invisible, inexhaustible, whose ends alone are supreme, and in touch with which alone our narrower ends can lastingly survive.

The wisest of kings said long ago that the very true beginning of wisdom was the desire of discipline. He meant the readiness to be led by great principles, and the scorn of a practice that had no creed behind it, and no eternal path before; of a pragmatism that did not know where it was going, or why, or how. In what way can that discipline come, by what possibility can it bring us to the kingdom of our best and happiest, in a state where the only test of truth and of good is the power to accomplish quick and limited ends? How are we to achieve liberty if the mere power of a majority is to be exalted over the power of ultimate things; if the appeal is to be made to the essential tyranny of men, rather than to their overwhelming necessity for freedom? The more we ask these questions, the more we know that the greatest need of a democracy, to-day as always, is an aristocracy, building advance on criticism; and preaching that truth and that good which, if they are made one with the universe, can never be taken away.

That such a truth is already recognized by the state will be abundantly clear to those who, turning from the spasmodic turmoil of democracy, will watch the sober progress of the common law. Democracy and majorities are accustomed to think of the law as the creature of law-makers. Happily for freedom, happily for those who desire to guard in themselves that which they never attack in others, happily for all who wish to see the characters and commonwealth of men advance