

the truly free State cannot suffer in its bosom any corporation, not even those which have deserved well of the country by reason of their devotion to public instruction. The modern tendency—as the result of actual happenings in the normal course of social development—is ever further away from the doctrine of the absolute State.

## 3.

We may take a broader sweep than the recognised and formal associations which are contemplated in the previous paragraph. The appearance of the “conscientious objector” raises the issue within another sphere. A good deal of learned contempt has been directed towards the “lone conscience,” and even doctors of the Church have told us that the caprice of individual consciences has no standing against the common judgment of the mass. It is not within our immediate purpose to discuss the case of the individual conscience, but rather to point out that the conscientious objector does not live alone. He is simply a constituent and sign of a social group which, though unorganised, is nevertheless quite real. To take the actual facts of the present case, there are probably twenty thousand men in England who decline, on grounds of conscientious scruple, to take part in war. They range from the uncompromising person who will not at this particular moment undertake any service on compulsion to the man who is willing to take service in the “non-combatant corps.”