

ГЕРБЕРТ УЭЛЛС

A MODERN
UTOPIA

Герберт Уэллс

A Modern Utopia

«Public Domain»

Уэллс Г. Д.

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H. G. Wells

A Modern Utopia

A NOTE TO THE READER

This book is in all probability the last of a series of writings, of which – disregarding certain earlier disconnected essays – my *Anticipations* was the beginning. Originally I intended *Anticipations* to be my sole digression from my art or trade (or what you will) of an imaginative writer. I wrote that book in order to clear up the muddle in my own mind about innumerable social and political questions, questions I could not keep out of my work, which it distressed me to touch upon in a stupid haphazard way, and which no one, so far as I knew, had handled in a manner to satisfy my needs. But *Anticipations* did not achieve its end. I have a slow constructive hesitating sort of mind, and when I emerged from that undertaking I found I had still most of my questions to state and solve. In *Mankind in the Making*, therefore, I tried to review the social organisation in a different way, to consider it as an educational process instead of dealing with it as a thing with a future history, and if I made this second book even less satisfactory from a literary standpoint than the former (and this is my opinion), I blundered, I think, more edifyingly – at least from the point of view of my own instruction. I ventured upon several themes with a greater frankness than I had used in *Anticipations*, and came out of that second effort guilty of much rash writing, but with a considerable development of formed opinion. In many matters I had shaped out at last a certain personal certitude, upon which I feel I shall go for the rest of my days. In this present book I have tried to settle accounts with a number of issues left over or opened up by its two predecessors, to correct them in some particulars, and to give the general picture of a *Utopia* that has grown up in my mind during the course of these speculations as a state of affairs at once possible and more desirable than the world in which I live. But this book has brought me back to imaginative writing again. In its two predecessors the treatment of social organisation had been purely objective; here my intention has been a little wider and deeper, in that I have tried to present not simply an ideal, but an ideal in reaction with two personalities. Moreover, since this may be the last book of the kind I shall ever publish, I have written into it as well as I can the heretical metaphysical scepticism upon which all my thinking rests, and I have inserted certain sections reflecting upon the established methods of sociological and economic science...

The last four words will not attract the butterfly reader, I know. I have done my best to make the whole of this book as lucid and entertaining as its matter permits, because I want it read by as many people as possible, but I do not promise anything but rage and confusion to him who proposes to glance through my pages just to see if I agree with him, or to begin in the middle, or to read without a constantly alert attention. If you are not already a little interested and open-minded with regard to social and political questions, and a little exercised in self-examination, you will find neither interest nor pleasure here. If your mind is “made up” upon such issues your time will be wasted on these pages. And even if you are a willing reader you may require a little patience for the peculiar method I have this time adopted.

That method assumes an air of haphazard, but it is not so careless as it seems. I believe it to be – even now that I am through with the book – the best way to a sort of lucid vagueness which has always been my intention in this matter. I tried over several beginnings of a Utopian book before I adopted this. I rejected from the outset the form of the argumentative essay, the form which appeals most readily to what is called the “serious” reader, the reader who is often no more than the solemnly impatient parasite of great questions. He likes everything in hard, heavy lines, black and white, yes and no, because he does not understand how much there is that cannot be presented at all in that way; wherever there is any effect of obliquity, of incommensurables, wherever there is any levity or

humour or difficulty of multiplex presentation, he refuses attention. Mentally he seems to be built up upon an invincible assumption that the Spirit of Creation cannot count beyond two, he deals only in alternatives. Such readers I have resolved not to attempt to please here. Even if I presented all my tri-clinic crystals as systems of cubes – ! Indeed I felt it would not be worth doing. But having rejected the “serious” essay as a form, I was still greatly exercised, I spent some vacillating months, over the scheme of this book. I tried first a recognised method of viewing questions from divergent points that has always attracted me and which I have never succeeded in using, the discussion novel, after the fashion of Peacock's (and Mr. Mallock's) development of the ancient dialogue; but this encumbered me with unnecessary characters and the inevitable complication of intrigue among them, and I abandoned it. After that I tried to cast the thing into a shape resembling a little the double personality of Boswell's Johnson, a sort of interplay between monologue and commentator; but that too, although it got nearer to the quality I sought, finally failed. Then I hesitated over what one might call “hard narrative.” It will be evident to the experienced reader that by omitting certain speculative and metaphysical elements and by elaborating incident, this book might have been reduced to a straightforward story. But I did not want to omit as much on this occasion. I do not see why I should always pander to the vulgar appetite for stark stories. And in short, I made it this. I explain all this in order to make it clear to the reader that, however queer this book appears at the first examination, it is the outcome of trial and deliberation, it is intended to be as it is. I am aiming throughout at a sort of shot-silk texture between philosophical discussion on the one hand and imaginative narrative on the other.

H. G. WELLS.

THE OWNER OF THE VOICE

There are works, and this is one of them, that are best begun with a portrait of the author. And here, indeed, because of a very natural misunderstanding this is the only course to take. Throughout these papers sounds a note, a distinctive and personal note, a note that tends at times towards stridency; and all that is not, as these words are, in Italics, is in one Voice. Now, this Voice, and this is the peculiarity of the matter, is not to be taken as the Voice of the ostensible author who fathers these pages. You have to clear your mind of any preconceptions in that respect. The Owner of the Voice you must figure to yourself as a whitish plump man, a little under the middle size and age, with such blue eyes as many Irishmen have, and agile in his movements and with a slight tonsorial baldness – a penny might cover it – of the crown. His front is convex. He droops at times like most of us, but for the greater part he bears himself as valiantly as a sparrow. Occasionally his hand flies out with a fluttering gesture of illustration. And his Voice (which is our medium henceforth) is an unattractive tenor that becomes at times aggressive. Him you must imagine as sitting at a table reading a manuscript about Utopias, a manuscript he holds in two hands that are just a little fat at the wrist. The curtain rises upon him so. But afterwards, if the devices of this declining art of literature prevail, you will go with him through curious and interesting experiences. Yet, ever and again, you will find him back at that little table, the manuscript in his hand, and the expansion of his ratiocinations about Utopia conscientiously resumed. The entertainment before you is neither the set drama of the work of fiction you are accustomed to read, nor the set lecturing of the essay you are accustomed to evade, but a hybrid of these two. If you figure this owner of the Voice as sitting, a little nervously, a little modestly, on a stage, with table, glass of water and all complete, and myself as the intrusive chairman insisting with a bland ruthlessness upon his “few words” of introduction before he recedes into the wings, and if furthermore you figure a sheet behind our friend on which moving pictures intermittently appear, and if finally you suppose his subject to be the story of the adventure of his soul among Utopian inquiries, you will be prepared for some at least of the difficulties of this unworthy but unusual work.

But over against this writer here presented, there is also another earthly person in the book, who gathers himself together into a distinct personality only after a preliminary complication with the reader. This person is spoken of as the botanist, and he is a leaner, rather taller, graver and much less garrulous man. His face is weakly handsome and done in tones of grey, he is fairish and grey-eyed, and you would suspect him of dyspepsia. It is a justifiable suspicion. Men of this type, the chairman remarks with a sudden intrusion of exposition, are romantic with a shadow of meanness, they seek at once to conceal and shape their sensuous cravings beneath egregious sentimentalities, they get into mighty tangles and troubles with women, and he has had his troubles. You will hear of them, for that is the quality of his type. He gets no personal expression in this book, the Voice is always that other's, but you gather much of the matter and something of the manner of his interpolations from the asides and the tenour of the Voice.

So much by way of portraiture is necessary to present the explorers of the Modern Utopia, which will unfold itself as a background to these two enquiring figures. The image of a cinematograph entertainment is the one to grasp. There will be an effect of these two people going to and fro in front of the circle of a rather defective lantern, which sometimes jams and sometimes gets out of focus, but which does occasionally succeed in displaying on a screen a momentary moving picture of Utopian conditions. Occasionally the picture goes out altogether, the Voice argues and argues, and the footlights return, and then you find yourself listening again to the rather too plump little man at his table laboriously enunciating propositions, upon whom the curtain rises now.

CHAPTER THE FIRST

Topographical

§ 1

The Utopia of a modern dreamer must needs differ in one fundamental aspect from the Nowheres and Utopias men planned before Darwin quickened the thought of the world. Those were all perfect and static States, a balance of happiness won for ever against the forces of unrest and disorder that inhere in things. One beheld a healthy and simple generation enjoying the fruits of the earth in an atmosphere of virtue and happiness, to be followed by other virtuous, happy, and entirely similar generations, until the Gods grew weary. Change and development were dammed back by invincible dams for ever. But the Modern Utopia must be not static but kinetic, must shape not as a permanent state but as a hopeful stage, leading to a long ascent of stages. Nowadays we do not resist and overcome the great stream of things, but rather float upon it. We build now not citadels, but ships of state. For one ordered arrangement of citizens rejoicing in an equality of happiness safe and assured to them and their children for ever, we have to plan “a flexible common compromise, in which a perpetually novel succession of individualities may converge most effectually upon a comprehensive onward development.” That is the first, most generalised difference between a Utopia based upon modern conceptions and all the Utopias that were written in the former time.

Our business here is to be Utopian, to make vivid and credible, if we can, first this facet and then that, of an imaginary whole and happy world. Our deliberate intention is to be not, indeed, impossible, but most distinctly impracticable, by every scale that reaches only between to-day and to-morrow. We are to turn our backs for a space upon the insistent examination of the thing that is, and face towards the freer air, the ampler spaces of the thing that perhaps might be, to the projection of a State or city “worth while,” to designing upon the sheet of our imaginations the picture of a life conceivably possible, and yet better worth living than our own. That is our present enterprise. We are going to lay down certain necessary starting propositions, and then we shall proceed to explore the sort of world these propositions give us...

It is no doubt an optimistic enterprise. But it is good for awhile to be free from the carping note that must needs be audible when we discuss our present imperfections, to release ourselves from practical difficulties and the tangle of ways and means. It is good to stop by the track for a space, put aside the knapsack, wipe the brows, and talk a little of the upper slopes of the mountain we think we are climbing, would but the trees let us see it.

There is to be no inquiry here of policy and method. This is to be a holiday from politics and movements and methods. But for all that, we must needs define certain limitations. Were we free to have our untrammelled desire, I suppose we should follow Morris to his Nowhere, we should change the nature of man and the nature of things together; we should make the whole race wise, tolerant, noble, perfect – wave our hands to a splendid anarchy, every man doing as it pleases him, and none pleased to do evil, in a world as good in its essential nature, as ripe and sunny, as the world before the Fall. But that golden age, that perfect world, comes out into the possibilities of space and time. In space and time the pervading Will to Live sustains for evermore a perpetuity of aggressions. Our proposal here is upon a more practical plane at least than that. We are to restrict ourselves first to the limitations of human possibility as we know them in the men and women of this world to-day, and then to all the inhumanity, all the insubordination of nature. We are to shape our state in a world of uncertain seasons, sudden catastrophes, antagonistic diseases, and inimical beasts and vermin, out of men and women with like passions, like uncertainties of mood and desire to our own. And, moreover,

we are going to accept this world of conflict, to adopt no attitude of renunciation towards it, to face it in no ascetic spirit, but in the mood of the Western peoples, whose purpose is to survive and overcome. So much we adopt in common with those who deal not in Utopias, but in the world of Here and Now.

Certain liberties, however, following the best Utopian precedents, we may take with existing fact. We assume that the tone of public thought may be entirely different from what it is in the present world. We permit ourselves a free hand with the mental conflict of life, within the possibilities of the human mind as we know it. We permit ourselves also a free hand with all the apparatus of existence that man has, so to speak, made for himself, with houses, roads, clothing, canals, machinery, with laws, boundaries, conventions, and traditions, with schools, with literature and religious organisation, with creeds and customs, with everything, in fact, that it lies within man's power to alter. That, indeed, is the cardinal assumption of all Utopian speculations old and new; the Republic and Laws of Plato, and More's Utopia, Howells' implicit Altruria, and Bellamy's future Boston, Comte's great Western Republic, Hertzka's Freeland, Cabet's Icaria, and Campanella's City of the Sun, are built, just as we shall build, upon that, upon the hypothesis of the complete emancipation of a community of men from tradition, from habits, from legal bonds, and that subtler servitude possessions entail. And much of the essential value of all such speculations lies in this assumption of emancipation, lies in that regard towards human freedom, in the undying interest of the human power of self-escape, the power to resist the causation of the past, and to evade, initiate, endeavour, and overcome.

§ 2

There are very definite artistic limitations also.

There must always be a certain effect of hardness and thinness about Utopian speculations. Their common fault is to be comprehensively jejune. That which is the blood and warmth and reality of life is largely absent; there are no individualities, but only generalised people. In almost every Utopia – except, perhaps, Morris's "News from Nowhere" – one sees handsome but characterless buildings, symmetrical and perfect cultivations, and a multitude of people, healthy, happy, beautifully dressed, but without any personal distinction whatever. Too often the prospect resembles the key to one of those large pictures of coronations, royal weddings, parliaments, conferences, and gatherings so popular in Victorian times, in which, instead of a face, each figure bears a neat oval with its index number legibly inscribed. This burthens us with an incurable effect of unreality, and I do not see how it is altogether to be escaped. It is a disadvantage that has to be accepted. Whatever institution has existed or exists, however irrational, however preposterous, has, by virtue of its contact with individualities, an effect of realness and rightness no untried thing may share. It has ripened, it has been christened with blood, it has been stained and mellowed by handling, it has been rounded and dented to the softened contours that we associate with life; it has been salted, maybe, in a brine of tears. But the thing that is merely proposed, the thing that is merely suggested, however rational, however necessary, seems strange and inhuman in its clear, hard, uncompromising lines, its unqualified angles and surfaces.

There is no help for it, there it is! The Master suffers with the last and least of his successors. For all the humanity he wins to, through his dramatic device of dialogue, I doubt if anyone has ever been warmed to desire himself a citizen in the Republic of Plato; I doubt if anyone could stand a month of the relentless publicity of virtue planned by More... No one wants to live in any community of intercourse really, save for the sake of the individualities he would meet there. The fertilising conflict of individualities is the ultimate meaning of the personal life, and all our Utopias no more than schemes for bettering that interplay. At least, that is how life shapes itself more and more to modern perceptions. Until you bring in individualities, nothing comes into being, and a Universe ceases when you shiver the mirror of the least of individual minds.

§ 3

No less than a planet will serve the purpose of a modern Utopia. Time was when a mountain valley or an island seemed to promise sufficient isolation for a polity to maintain itself intact from outward force; the Republic of Plato stood armed ready for defensive war, and the New Atlantis and the Utopia of More in theory, like China and Japan through many centuries of effectual practice, held themselves isolated from intruders. Such late instances as Butler's satirical "Erewhon," and Mr. Stead's queendom of inverted sexual conditions in Central Africa, found the Tibetan method of slaughtering the inquiring visitor a simple, sufficient rule. But the whole trend of modern thought is against the permanence of any such enclosures. We are acutely aware nowadays that, however subtly contrived a State may be, outside your boundary lines the epidemic, the breeding barbarian or the economic power, will gather its strength to overcome you. The swift march of invention is all for the invader. Now, perhaps you might still guard a rocky coast or a narrow pass; but what of that near to-morrow when the flying machine soars overhead, free to descend at this point or that? A state powerful enough to keep isolated under modern conditions would be powerful enough to rule the world, would be, indeed, if not actively ruling, yet passively acquiescent in all other human organisations, and so responsible for them altogether. World-state, therefore, it must be.

That leaves no room for a modern Utopia in Central Africa, or in South America, or round about the pole, those last refuges of ideality. The floating isle of *La Cité Morellyste* no longer avails. We need a planet. Lord Erskine, the author of a Utopia ("Armata") that might have been inspired by Mr. Hewins, was the first of all Utopists to perceive this – he joined his twin planets pole to pole by a sort of umbilical cord. But the modern imagination, obsessed by physics, must travel further than that.

Out beyond Sirius, far in the deeps of space, beyond the flight of a cannon-ball flying for a billion years, beyond the range of unaided vision, blazes the star that is *our* Utopia's sun. To those who know where to look, with a good opera-glass aiding good eyes, it and three fellows that seem in a cluster with it – though they are incredible billions of miles nearer – make just the faintest speck of light. About it go planets, even as our planets, but weaving a different fate, and in its place among them is Utopia, with its sister mate, the Moon. It is a planet like our planet, the same continents, the same islands, the same oceans and seas, another Fuji-Yama is beautiful there dominating another Yokohama – and another Matterhorn overlooks the icy disorder of another Theodule. It is so like our planet that a terrestrial botanist might find his every species there, even to the meanest pondweed or the remotest Alpine blossom...

Only when he had gathered that last and turned about to find his inn again, perhaps he would not find his inn!

Suppose now that two of us were actually to turn about in just that fashion. Two, I think, for to face a strange planet, even though it be a wholly civilised one, without some other familiar backing, dashes the courage overmuch. Suppose that we were indeed so translated even as we stood. You figure us upon some high pass in the Alps, and though I – being one easily made giddy by stooping – am no botanist myself, if my companion were to have a specimen tin under his arm – so long as it is not painted that abominable popular Swiss apple green – I would make it no occasion for quarrel! We have tramped and botanised and come to a rest, and, sitting among rocks, we have eaten our lunch and finished our bottle of Yvorne, and fallen into a talk of Utopias, and said such things as I have been saying. I could figure it myself upon that little neck of the Lucendro Pass, upon the shoulder of the Piz Lucendro, for there once I lunched and talked very pleasantly, and we are looking down upon the Val Bedretto, and Villa and Fontana and Airolo try to hide from us under the mountain side – three-quarters of a mile they are vertically below. (*Lantern.*) With that absurd nearness of effect one gets in the Alps, we see the little train a dozen miles away, running down the Biaschina to Italy, and the Lukmanier Pass beyond Piora left of us, and the San Giacomo right, mere footpaths under our feet...

And behold! in the twinkling of an eye we are in that other world!

We should scarcely note the change. Not a cloud would have gone from the sky. It might be the remote town below would take a different air, and my companion the botanist, with his educated observation, might almost see as much, and the train, perhaps, would be gone out of the picture, and the embanked straightness of the Ticino in the Ambri-Piotta meadows – that might be altered, but that would be all the visible change. Yet I have an idea that in some obscure manner we should come to feel at once a difference in things.

The botanist's glance would, under a subtle attraction, float back to Airolo. "It's queer," he would say quite idly, "but I never noticed that building there to the right before."

"Which building?"

"That to the right – with a queer sort of thing –"

"I see now. Yes. Yes, it's certainly an odd-looking affair... And big, you know! Handsome! I wonder –"

That would interrupt our Utopian speculations. We should both discover that the little towns below had changed – but how, we should not have marked them well enough to know. It would be indefinable, a change in the quality of their grouping, a change in the quality of their remote, small shapes.

I should flick a few crumbs from my knee, perhaps. "It's odd," I should say, for the tenth or eleventh time, with a motion to rise, and we should get up and stretch ourselves, and, still a little puzzled, turn our faces towards the path that clammers down over the tumbled rocks and runs round by the still clear lake and down towards the Hospice of St. Gotthard – if perchance we could still find that path.

Long before we got to that, before even we got to the great high road, we should have hints from the stone cabin in the nape of the pass – it would be gone or wonderfully changed – from the very goats upon the rocks, from the little hut by the rough bridge of stone, that a mighty difference had come to the world of men.

And presently, amazed and amazing, we should happen on a man – no Swiss – dressed in unfamiliar clothing and speaking an unfamiliar speech...

§ 4

Before nightfall we should be drenched in wonders, but still we should have wonder left for the thing my companion, with his scientific training, would no doubt be the first to see. He would glance up, with that proprietary eye of the man who knows his constellations down to the little Greek letters. I imagine his exclamation. He would at first doubt his eyes. I should inquire the cause of his consternation, and it would be hard to explain. He would ask me with a certain singularity of manner for “Orion,” and I should not find him; for the Great Bear, and it would have vanished. “Where?” I should ask, and “where?” seeking among that scattered starriness, and slowly I should acquire the wonder that possessed him.

Then, for the first time, perhaps, we should realise from this unfamiliar heaven that not the world had changed, but ourselves – that we had come into the uttermost deeps of space.

§ 5

We need suppose no linguistic impediments to intercourse. The whole world will surely have a common language, that is quite elementarily Utopian, and since we are free of the trammels of convincing story-telling, we may suppose that language to be sufficiently our own to understand. Indeed, should we be in Utopia at all, if we could not talk to everyone? That accursed bar of language, that hostile inscription in the foreigner's eyes, "deaf and dumb to you, sir, and so – your enemy," is the very first of the defects and complications one has fled the earth to escape.

But what sort of language would we have the world speak, if we were told the miracle of Babel was presently to be reversed?

If I may take a daring image, a mediæval liberty, I would suppose that in this lonely place the Spirit of Creation spoke to us on this matter. "You are wise men," that Spirit might say – and I, being a suspicious, touchy, over-earnest man for all my predisposition to plumpness, would instantly scent the irony (while my companion, I fancy, might even plume himself), "and to beget your wisdom is chiefly why the world was made. You are so good as to propose an acceleration of that tedious multitudinous evolution upon which I am engaged. I gather, a universal tongue would serve you there. While I sit here among these mountains – I have been filing away at them for this last aeon or so, just to attract your hotels, you know – will you be so kind – ? A few hints – ?"

Then the Spirit of Creation might transiently smile, a smile that would be like the passing of a cloud. All the mountain wilderness about us would be radiantly lit. (You know those swift moments, when warmth and brightness drift by, in lonely and desolate places.)

Yet, after all, why should two men be smiled into apathy by the Infinite? Here we are, with our knobby little heads, our eyes and hands and feet and stout hearts, and if not us or ours, still the endless multitudes about us and in our loins are to come at last to the World State and a greater fellowship and the universal tongue. Let us to the extent of our ability, if not answer that question, at any rate try to think ourselves within sight of the best thing possible. That, after all, is our purpose, to imagine our best and strive for it, and it is a worse folly and a worse sin than presumption, to abandon striving because the best of all our bests looks mean amidst the suns.

Now you as a botanist would, I suppose, incline to something as they say, "*scientific*." You wince under that most offensive epithet – and I am able to give you my intelligent sympathy – though "pseudo-scientific" and "quasi-scientific" are worse by far for the skin. You would begin to talk of scientific languages, of Esperanto, La Langue Bleue, New Latin, Volapuk, and Lord Lytton, of the philosophical language of Archbishop Whateley, Lady Welby's work upon Significs and the like. You would tell me of the remarkable precisions, the encyclopædic quality of chemical terminology, and at the word terminology I should insinuate a comment on that eminent American biologist, Professor Mark Baldwin, who has carried the language biological to such heights of expressive clearness as to be triumphantly and invincibly unreadable. (Which foreshadows the line of my defence.)

You make your ideal clear, a scientific language you demand, without ambiguity, as precise as mathematical formulæ, and with every term in relations of exact logical consistency with every other. It will be a language with all the inflexions of verbs and nouns regular and all its constructions inevitable, each word clearly distinguishable from every other word in sound as well as spelling.

That, at any rate, is the sort of thing one hears demanded, and if only because the demand rests upon implications that reach far beyond the region of language, it is worth considering here. It implies, indeed, almost everything that we are endeavouring to repudiate in this particular work. It implies that the whole intellectual basis of mankind is established, that the rules of logic, the systems of counting and measurement, the general categories and schemes of resemblance and difference, are established for the human mind for ever – blank Comte-ism, in fact, of the blankest description. But, indeed, the science of logic and the whole framework of philosophical thought men have kept since

the days of Plato and Aristotle, has no more essential permanence as a final expression of the human mind, than the Scottish Longer Catechism. Amidst the welter of modern thought, a philosophy long lost to men rises again into being, like some blind and almost formless embryo, that must presently develop sight, and form, and power, a philosophy in which this assumption is denied. [Footnote: The serious reader may refer at leisure to Sidgwick's *Use of Words in Reasoning* (particularly), and to Bosanquet's *Essentials of Logic*, Bradley's *Principles of Logic*, and Sigwart's *Logik*; the lighter minded may read and mark the temper of Professor Case in the British Encyclopædia, article *Logic* (Vol. XXX.). I have appended to his book a rude sketch of a philosophy upon new lines, originally read by me to the Oxford Phil. Soc. in 1903.]

All through this Utopian excursion, I must warn you, you shall feel the thrust and disturbance of that insurgent movement. In the reiterated use of "Unique," you will, as it were, get the gleam of its integument; in the insistence upon individuality, and the individual difference as the significance of life, you will feel the texture of its shaping body. Nothing endures, nothing is precise and certain (except the mind of a pedant), perfection is the mere repudiation of that ineluctable marginal inexactitude which is the mysterious inmost quality of Being. Being, indeed! – there is no being, but a universal becoming of individualities, and Plato turned his back on truth when he turned towards his museum of specific ideals. Heraclitus, that lost and misinterpreted giant, may perhaps be coming to his own...

There is no abiding thing in what we know. We change from weaker to stronger lights, and each more powerful light pierces our hitherto opaque foundations and reveals fresh and different opacities below. We can never foretell which of our seemingly assured fundamentals the next change will not affect. What folly, then, to dream of mapping out our minds in however general terms, of providing for the endless mysteries of the future a terminology and an idiom! We follow the vein, we mine and accumulate our treasure, but who can tell which way the vein may trend? Language is the nourishment of the thought of man, that serves only as it undergoes metabolism, and becomes thought and lives, and in its very living passes away. You scientific people, with your fancy of a terrible exactitude in language, of indestructible foundations built, as that Wordsworthian doggerel on the title-page of *Nature* says, "for aye," are marvellously without imagination!

The language of Utopia will no doubt be one and indivisible; all mankind will, in the measure of their individual differences in quality, be brought into the same phase, into a common resonance of thought, but the language they will speak will still be a living tongue, an animated system of imperfections, which every individual man will infinitesimally modify. Through the universal freedom of exchange and movement, the developing change in its general spirit will be a world-wide change; that is the quality of its universality. I fancy it will be a coalesced language, a synthesis of many. Such a language as English is a coalesced language; it is a coalescence of Anglo-Saxon and Norman French and Scholar's Latin, welded into one speech more ample and more powerful and beautiful than either. The Utopian tongue might well present a more spacious coalescence, and hold in the frame of such an uninflected or slightly inflected idiom as English already presents, a profuse vocabulary into which have been cast a dozen once separate tongues, superposed and then welded together through bilingual and trilingual compromises. [Footnote: *Vide* an excellent article, *La Langue Française en l'an 2003*, par Leon Bollack, in *La Revue*, 15 Juillet, 1903.] In the past ingenious men have speculated on the inquiry, "Which language will survive?" The question was badly put. I think now that this wedding and survival of several in a common offspring is a far more probable thing.

§ 6

This talk of languages, however, is a digression. We were on our way along the faint path that runs round the rim of the Lake of Lucendro, and we were just upon the point of coming upon our first Utopian man. He was, I said, no Swiss. Yet he would have been a Swiss on mother Earth, and here he would have the same face, with some difference, maybe, in the expression; the same physique, though a little better developed, perhaps – the same complexion. He would have different habits, different traditions, different knowledge, different ideas, different clothing, and different appliances, but, except for all that, he would be the same man. We very distinctly provided at the outset that the modern Utopia must have people inherently the same as those in the world.

There is more, perhaps, in that than appears at the first suggestion.

That proposition gives one characteristic difference between a modern Utopia and almost all its predecessors. It is to be a world Utopia, we have agreed, no less; and so we must needs face the fact that we are to have differences of race. Even the lower class of Plato's Republic was not specifically of different race. But this is a Utopia as wide as Christian charity, and white and black, brown, red and yellow, all tints of skin, all types of body and character, will be there. How we are to adjust their differences is a master question, and the matter is not even to be opened in this chapter. It will need a whole chapter even to glance at its issues. But here we underline that stipulation; every race of this planet earth is to be found in the strictest parallelism there, in numbers the same – only, as I say, with an entirely different set of traditions, ideals, ideas, and purposes, and so moving under those different skies to an altogether different destiny.

There follows a curious development of this to anyone clearly impressed by the uniqueness and the unique significance of individualities. Races are no hard and fast things, no crowd of identically similar persons, but massed sub-races, and tribes and families, each after its kind unique, and these again are clusterings of still smaller uniques and so down to each several person. So that our first convention works out to this, that not only is every earthly mountain, river, plant, and beast in that parallel planet beyond Sirius also, but every man, woman, and child alive has a Utopian parallel. From now onward, of course, the fates of these two planets will diverge, men will die here whom wisdom will save there, and perhaps conversely here we shall save men; children will be born to them and not to us, to us and not to them, but this, this moment of reading, is the starting moment, and for the first and last occasion the populations of our planets are abreast.

We must in these days make some such supposition. The alternative is a Utopia of dolls in the likeness of angels – imaginary laws to fit incredible people, an unattractive undertaking.

For example, we must assume there is a man such as I might have been, better informed, better disciplined, better employed, thinner and more active – and I wonder what he is doing! – and you, Sir or Madam, are in duplicate also, and all the men and women that you know and I. I doubt if we shall meet our doubles, or if it would be pleasant for us to do so; but as we come down from these lonely mountains to the roads and houses and living places of the Utopian world-state, we shall certainly find, here and there, faces that will remind us singularly of those who have lived under our eyes.

There are some you never wish to meet again, you say, and some, I gather, you do. “And One – !”

It is strange, but this figure of the botanist will not keep in place. It sprang up between us, dear reader, as a passing illustrative invention. I do not know what put him into my head, and for the moment, it fell in with my humour for a space to foist the man's personality upon you as yours and call you scientific – that most abusive word. But here he is, indisputably, with me in Utopia, and lapsing from our high speculative theme into halting but intimate confidences. He declares he has not come to Utopia to meet again with his sorrows.

What sorrows?

I protest, even warmly, that neither he nor his sorrows were in my intention.

He is a man, I should think, of thirty-nine, a man whose life has been neither tragedy nor a joyous adventure, a man with one of those faces that have gained interest rather than force or nobility from their commerce with life. He is something refined, with some knowledge, perhaps, of the minor pains and all the civil self-controls; he has read more than he has suffered, and suffered rather than done. He regards me with his blue-grey eye, from which all interest in this Utopia has faded.

“It is a trouble,” he says, “that has come into my life only for a month or so – at least acutely again. I thought it was all over. There was someone – ”

It is an amazing story to hear upon a mountain crest in Utopia, this Hampstead affair, this story of a Frogmal heart. “Frogmal,” he says, is the place where they met, and it summons to my memory the word on a board at the corner of a flint-dressed new road, an estate development road, with a vista of villas up a hill. He had known her before he got his professorship, and neither her “people” nor his – he speaks that detestable middle-class dialect in which aunts and things with money and the right of intervention are called “people”! – approved of the affair. “She was, I think, rather easily swayed,” he says. “But that's not fair to her, perhaps. She thought too much of others. If they seemed distressed, or if they seemed to think a course right – ” ...

Have I come to Utopia to hear this sort of thing?

§ 7

It is necessary to turn the botanist's thoughts into a worthier channel. It is necessary to override these modest regrets, this intrusive, petty love story. Does he realise this is indeed Utopia? Turn your mind, I insist, to this Utopia of mine, and leave these earthly troubles to their proper planet. Do you realise just where the propositions necessary to a modern Utopia are taking us? Everyone on earth will have to be here; – themselves, but with a difference. Somewhere here in this world is, for example, Mr. Chamberlain, and the King is here (no doubt *incognito*), and all the Royal Academy, and Sandow, and Mr. Arnold White.

But these famous names do not appeal to him.

My mind goes from this prominent and typical personage to that, and for a time I forget my companion. I am distracted by the curious side issues this general proposition trails after it. There will be so-and-so, and so-and-so. The name and figure of Mr. Roosevelt jerks into focus, and obliterates an attempt to acclimatise the Emperor of the Germans. What, for instance, will Utopia do with Mr. Roosevelt? There drifts across my inner vision the image of a strenuous struggle with Utopian constables, the voice that has thrilled terrestrial millions in eloquent protest. The writ of arrest, drifting loose in the conflict, comes to my feet; I impale the scrap of paper, and read – but can it be? – “attempted disorganisation?.. incitements to disarrange?.. the balance of population?”

The trend of my logic for once has led us into a facetious alley. One might indeed keep in this key, and write an agreeable little Utopia, that like the holy families of the mediæval artists (or Michael Angelo's Last Judgement) should compliment one's friends in various degrees. Or one might embark upon a speculative treatment of the entire *Almanach de Gotha*, something on the lines of Epistemon's vision of the damned great, when

“Xerxes was a crier of mustard.
Romulus was a salter and a patcher of patterns...”

That incomparable catalogue! That incomparable catalogue! Inspired by the Muse of Parody, we might go on to the pages of “Who's Who,” and even, with an eye to the obdurate republic, to “Who's Who in America,” and make the most delightful and extensive arrangements. Now where shall we put this most excellent man? And this?..

But, indeed, it is doubtful if we shall meet any of these doubles during our Utopian journey, or know them when we meet them. I doubt if anyone will be making the best of both these worlds. The great men in this still unexplored Utopia may be but village Hampdens in our own, and earthly goatherds and obscure illiterates sit here in the seats of the mighty.

That again opens agreeable vistas left of us and right.

But my botanist obtrudes his personality again. His thoughts have travelled by a different route.

“I know,” he says, “that she will be happier here, and that they will value her better than she has been valued upon earth.”

His interruption serves to turn me back from my momentary contemplation of those popular effigies inflated by old newspapers and windy report, the earthly great. He sets me thinking of more personal and intimate applications, of the human beings one knows with a certain approximation to real knowledge, of the actual common substance of life. He turns me to the thought of rivalries and tendernesses, of differences and disappointments. I am suddenly brought painfully against the things that might have been. What if instead of that Utopia of vacant ovals we meet relinquished loves here, and opportunities lost and faces as they might have looked to us?

I turn to my botanist almost reprovably. “You know, she won't be quite the same lady here that you knew in Frognal,” I say, and wrest myself from a subject that is no longer agreeable by rising to my feet.

“And besides,” I say, standing above him, “the chances against our meeting her are a million to one... And we loiter! This is not the business we have come upon, but a mere incidental kink in our larger plan. The fact remains, these people we have come to see are people with like infirmities to our own – and only the conditions are changed. Let us pursue the tenour of our inquiry.”

With that I lead the way round the edge of the Lake of Lucendro towards our Utopian world.

(You figure him doing it.)

Down the mountain we shall go and down the passes, and as the valleys open the world will open, Utopia, where men and women are happy and laws are wise, and where all that is tangled and confused in human affairs has been unravelled and made right.

CHAPTER THE SECOND

Concerning Freedoms

§ 1

Now what sort of question would first occur to two men descending upon the planet of a Modern Utopia? Probably grave solicitude about their personal freedom. Towards the Stranger, as I have already remarked, the Utopias of the past displayed their least amiable aspect. Would this new sort of Utopian State, spread to the dimensions of a world, be any less forbidding?

We should take comfort in the thought that universal Toleration is certainly a modern idea, and it is upon modern ideas that this World State rests. But even suppose we are tolerated and admitted to this unavoidable citizenship, there will still remain a wide range of possibility... I think we should try to work the problem out from an inquiry into first principles, and that we should follow the trend of our time and kind by taking up the question as one of "Man *versus* the State," and discussing the compromise of Liberty.

The idea of individual liberty is one that has grown in importance and grows with every development of modern thought. To the classical Utopists freedom was relatively trivial. Clearly they considered virtue and happiness as entirely separable from liberty, and as being altogether more important things. But the modern view, with its deepening insistence upon individuality and upon the significance of its uniqueness, steadily intensifies the value of freedom, until at last we begin to see liberty as the very substance of life, that indeed it is life, and that only the dead things, the choiceless things, live in absolute obedience to law. To have free play for one's individuality is, in the modern view, the subjective triumph of existence, as survival in creative work and offspring is its objective triumph. But for all men, since man is a social creature, the play of will must fall short of absolute freedom. Perfect human liberty is possible only to a despot who is absolutely and universally obeyed. Then to will would be to command and achieve, and within the limits of natural law we could at any moment do exactly as it pleased us to do. All other liberty is a compromise between our own freedom of will and the wills of those with whom we come in contact. In an organised state each one of us has a more or less elaborate code of what he may do to others and to himself, and what others may do to him. He limits others by his rights, and is limited by the rights of others, and by considerations affecting the welfare of the community as a whole.

Individual liberty in a community is not, as mathematicians would say, always of the same sign. To ignore this is the essential fallacy of the cult called Individualism. But in truth, a general prohibition in a state may increase the sum of liberty, and a general permission may diminish it. It does not follow, as these people would have us believe, that a man is more free where there is least law and more restricted where there is most law. A socialism or a communism is not necessarily a slavery, and there is no freedom under Anarchy. Consider how much liberty we gain by the loss of the common liberty to kill. Thereby one may go to and fro in all the ordered parts of the earth, unencumbered by arms or armour, free of the fear of playful poison, whimsical barbers, or hotel trap-doors. Indeed, it means freedom from a thousand fears and precautions. Suppose there existed even the limited freedom to kill in vendetta, and think what would happen in our suburbs. Consider the inconvenience of two households in a modern suburb estranged and provided with modern weapons of precision, the inconvenience not only to each other, but to the neutral pedestrian, the practical loss of freedoms all about them. The butcher, if he came at all, would have to come round in an armoured cart...

It follows, therefore, in a modern Utopia, which finds the final hope of the world in the evolving interplay of unique individualities, that the State will have effectually chipped away just all those spendthrift liberties that waste liberty, and not one liberty more, and so have attained the maximum general freedom.

There are two distinct and contrasting methods of limiting liberty; the first is Prohibition, “thou shalt not,” and the second Command, “thou shalt.” There is, however, a sort of prohibition that takes the form of a conditional command, and this one needs to bear in mind. It says if you do so-and-so, you must also do so-and-so; if, for example, you go to sea with men you employ, you must go in a seaworthy vessel. But the pure command is unconditional; it says, whatever you have done or are doing or want to do, you are to do this, as when the social system, working through the base necessities of base parents and bad laws, sends a child of thirteen into a factory. Prohibition takes one definite thing from the indefinite liberty of a man, but it still leaves him an unbounded choice of actions. He remains free, and you have merely taken a bucketful from the sea of his freedom. But compulsion destroys freedom altogether. In this Utopia of ours there may be many prohibitions, but no indirect compulsions – if one may so contrive it – and few or no commands. As far as I see it now, in this present discussion, I think, indeed, there should be no positive compulsions at all in Utopia, at any rate for the adult Utopian – unless they fall upon him as penalties incurred.

§ 2

What prohibitions should we be under, we two Utlanders in this Utopian world? We should certainly not be free to kill, assault, or threaten anyone we met, and in that we earth-trained men would not be likely to offend. And until we knew more exactly the Utopian idea of property we should be very chary of touching anything that might conceivably be appropriated. If it was not the property of individuals it might be the property of the State. But beyond that we might have our doubts. Are we right in wearing the strange costumes we do, in choosing the path that pleases us athwart this rock and turf, in coming striding with unfumigated rucksacks and snow-wet hobnails into what is conceivably an extremely neat and orderly world? We have passed our first Utopian now, with an answered vague gesture, and have noted, with secret satisfaction, there is no access of dismay; we have rounded a bend, and down the valley in the distance we get a glimpse of what appears to be a singularly well-kept road...

I submit that to the modern minded man it can be no sort of Utopia worth desiring that does not give the utmost freedom of going to and fro. Free movement is to many people one of the greatest of life's privileges – to go wherever the spirit moves them, to wander and see – and though they have every comfort, every security, every virtuous discipline, they will still be unhappy if that is denied them. Short of damage to things cherished and made, the Utopians will surely have this right, so we may expect no unclimbable walls and fences, nor the discovery of any laws we may transgress in coming down these mountain places.

And yet, just as civil liberty itself is a compromise defended by prohibitions, so this particular sort of liberty must also have its qualifications. Carried to the absolute pitch the right of free movement ceases to be distinguishable from the right of free intrusion. We have already, in a comment on More's *Utopia*, hinted at an agreement with Aristotle's argument against communism, that it flings people into an intolerable continuity of contact. Schopenhauer carried out Aristotle in the vein of his own bitterness and with the truest of images when he likened human society to hedgehogs clustering for warmth, and unhappy when either too closely packed or too widely separated. Empedocles found no significance in life whatever except as an unsteady play of love and hate, of attraction and repulsion, of assimilation and the assertion of difference. So long as we ignore difference, so long as we ignore individuality, and that I hold has been the common sin of all Utopias hitherto, we can make absolute statements, prescribe communisms or individualisms, and all sorts of hard theoretic arrangements. But in the world of reality, which – to modernise Heraclitus and Empedocles – is nothing more nor less than the world of individuality, there are no absolute rights and wrongs, there are no qualitative questions at all, but only quantitative adjustments. Equally strong in the normal civilised man is the desire for freedom of movement and the desire for a certain privacy, for a corner definitely his, and we have to consider where the line of reconciliation comes.

The desire for absolute personal privacy is perhaps never a very strong or persistent craving. In the great majority of human beings, the gregarious instinct is sufficiently powerful to render any but the most temporary isolations not simply disagreeable, but painful. The savage has all the privacy he needs within the compass of his skull; like dogs and timid women, he prefers ill-treatment to desertion, and it is only a scarce and complex modern type that finds comfort and refreshment in quite lonely places and quite solitary occupations. Yet such there are, men who can neither sleep well nor think well, nor attain to a full perception of beautiful objects, who do not savour the best of existence until they are securely alone, and for the sake of these even it would be reasonable to draw some limits to the general right of free movement. But their particular need is only a special and exceptional aspect of an almost universal claim to privacy among modern people, not so much for the sake of isolation as for congenial companionship. We want to go apart from the great crowd, not so much to be alone as to be with those who appeal to us particularly and to whom we particularly appeal; we

want to form households and societies with them, to give our individualities play in intercourse with them, and in the appointments and furnishings of that intercourse. We want gardens and enclosures and exclusive freedoms for our like and our choice, just as spacious as we can get them – and it is only the multitudinous uncongenial, anxious also for similar developments in some opposite direction, that checks this expansive movement of personal selection and necessitates a compromise on privacy.

Glancing back from our Utopian mountain side down which this discourse marches, to the confusions of old earth, we may remark that the need and desire for privacies there is exceptionally great at the present time, that it was less in the past, that in the future it may be less again, and that under the Utopian conditions to which we shall come when presently we strike yonder road, it may be reduced to quite manageable dimensions. But this is to be effected not by the suppression of individualities to some common pattern, [Footnote: More's *Utopia*. “Whoso will may go in, for there is nothing within the houses that is private or anie man's owne.”] but by the broadening of public charity and the general amelioration of mind and manners. It is not by assimilation, that is to say, but by understanding that the modern Utopia achieves itself. The ideal community of man's past was one with a common belief, with common customs and common ceremonies, common manners and common formulæ; men of the same society dressed in the same fashion, each according to his defined and understood grade, behaved in the same fashion, loved, worshipped, and died in the same fashion. They did or felt little that did not find a sympathetic publicity. The natural disposition of all peoples, white, black, or brown, a natural disposition that education seeks to destroy, is to insist upon uniformity, to make publicity extremely unsympathetic to even the most harmless departures from the code. To be dressed “odd,” to behave “oddly,” to eat in a different manner or of different food, to commit, indeed, any breach of the established convention is to give offence and to incur hostility among unsophisticated men. But the disposition of the more original and enterprising minds at all times has been to make such innovations.

This is particularly in evidence in this present age. The almost cataclysmal development of new machinery, the discovery of new materials, and the appearance of new social possibilities through the organised pursuit of material science, has given enormous and unprecedented facilities to the spirit of innovation. The old local order has been broken up or is now being broken up all over the earth, and everywhere societies deliquesce, everywhere men are afloat amidst the wreckage of their flooded conventions, and still tremendously unaware of the thing that has happened. The old local orthodoxies of behaviour, of precedence, the old accepted amusements and employments, the old ritual of conduct in the important small things of the daily life and the old ritual of thought in the things that make discussion, are smashed up and scattered and mixed discordantly together, one use with another, and no world-wide culture of toleration, no courteous admission of differences, no wider understanding has yet replaced them. And so publicity in the modern earth has become confusedly unsympathetic for everyone. Classes are intolerable to classes and sets to sets, contact provokes aggressions, comparisons, persecutions and discomforts, and the subtler people are excessively tormented by a sense of observation, unsympathetic always and often hostile. To live without some sort of segregation from the general mass is impossible in exact proportion to one's individual distinction.

Of course things will be very different in Utopia. Utopia will be saturated with consideration. To us, clad as we are in mountain-soiled tweeds and with no money but British bank-notes negotiable only at a practically infinite distance, this must needs be a reassuring induction. And Utopian manners will not only be tolerant, but almost universally tolerable. Endless things will be understood perfectly and universally that on earth are understood only by a scattered few; baseness of bearing, grossness of manner, will be the distinctive mark of no section of the community whatever. The coarser reasons for privacy, therefore, will not exist here. And that savage sort of shyness, too, that makes so many half-educated people on earth recluse and defensive, that too the Utopians will have escaped by their more liberal breeding. In the cultivated State we are assuming it will be ever so much easier for

people to eat in public, rest and amuse themselves in public, and even work in public. Our present need for privacy in many things marks, indeed, a phase of transition from an ease in public in the past due to homogeneity, to an ease in public in the future due to intelligence and good breeding, and in Utopia that transition will be complete. We must bear that in mind throughout the consideration of this question.

Yet, after this allowance has been made, there still remains a considerable claim for privacy in Utopia. The room, or apartments, or home, or mansion, whatever it may be a man or woman maintains, must be private, and under his or her complete dominion; it seems harsh and intrusive to forbid a central garden plot or peristyle, such as one sees in Pompeii, within the house walls, and it is almost as difficult to deny a little private territory beyond the house. Yet if we concede that, it is clear that without some further provision we concede the possibility that the poorer townsman (if there are to be rich and poor in the world) will be forced to walk through endless miles of high fenced villa gardens before he may expand in his little scrap of reserved open country. Such is already the poor Londoner's miserable fate... Our Utopia will have, of course, faultless roads and beautifully arranged inter-urban communications, swift trains or motor services or what not, to diffuse its population, and without some anticipatory provisions, the prospect of the residential areas becoming a vast area of defensively walled villa Edens is all too possible.

This is a quantitative question, be it remembered, and not to be dismissed by any statement of principle. Our Utopians will meet it, I presume, by detailed regulations, very probably varying locally with local conditions. Privacy beyond the house might be made a privilege to be paid for in proportion to the area occupied, and the tax on these licences of privacy might increase as the square of the area affected. A maximum fraction of private enclosure for each urban and suburban square mile could be fixed. A distinction could be drawn between an absolutely private garden and a garden private and closed only for a day or a couple of days a week, and at other times open to the well-behaved public. Who, in a really civilised community, would grudge that measure of invasion? Walls could be taxed by height and length, and the enclosure of really natural beauties, of rapids, cascades, gorges, viewpoints, and so forth made impossible. So a reasonable compromise between the vital and conflicting claims of the freedom of movement and the freedom of seclusion might be attained...

And as we argue thus we draw nearer and nearer to the road that goes up and over the Gotthard crest and down the Val Tremola towards Italy.

What sort of road would that be?

§ 3

Freedom of movement in a Utopia planned under modern conditions must involve something more than unrestricted pedestrian wanderings, and the very proposition of a world-state speaking one common tongue carries with it the idea of a world population travelled and travelling to an extent quite beyond anything our native earth has seen. It is now our terrestrial experience that whenever economic and political developments set a class free to travel, that class at once begins to travel; in England, for example, above the five or six hundred pounds a year level, it is hard to find anyone who is not habitually migratory, who has not been frequently, as people say, “abroad.” In the Modern Utopia travel must be in the common texture of life. To go into fresh climates and fresh scenery, to meet a different complexion of humanity and a different type of home and food and apparatus, to mark unfamiliar trees and plants and flowers and beasts, to climb mountains, to see the snowy night of the North and the blaze of the tropical midday, to follow great rivers, to taste loneliness in desert places, to traverse the gloom of tropical forests and to cross the high seas, will be an essential part of the reward and adventure of life, even for the commonest people... This is a bright and pleasant particular in which a modern Utopia must differ again, and differ diametrically, from its predecessors.

We may conclude from what has been done in places upon our earth that the whole Utopian world will be open and accessible and as safe for the wayfarer as France or England is to-day. The peace of the world will be established for ever, and everywhere, except in remote and desolate places, there will be convenient inns, at least as convenient and trustworthy as those of Switzerland to-day; the touring clubs and hotel associations that have tariffed that country and France so effectually will have had their fine Utopian equivalents, and the whole world will be habituated to the coming and going of strangers. The greater part of the world will be as secure and cheaply and easily accessible to everyone as is Zermatt or Lucerne to a Western European of the middle-class at the present time.

On this account alone no places will be so congested as these two are now on earth. With freedom to go everywhere, with easy access everywhere, with no dread of difficulties about language, coinage, custom, or law, why should everyone continue to go to just a few special places? Such congestions are merely the measure of the general inaccessibility and insecurity and costliness of contemporary life, an awkward transitory phase in the first beginnings of the travel age of mankind.

No doubt the Utopian will travel in many ways. It is unlikely there will be any smoke-disgorging steam railway trains in Utopia, they are already doomed on earth, already threatened with that obsolescence that will endear them to the Ruskins of to-morrow, but a thin spider's web of inconspicuous special routes will cover the land of the world, pierce the mountain masses and tunnel under the seas. These may be double railways or monorails or what not – we are no engineers to judge between such devices – but by means of them the Utopian will travel about the earth from one chief point to another at a speed of two or three hundred miles or more an hour. That will abolish the greater distances... One figures these main communications as something after the manner of corridor trains, smooth-running and roomy, open from end to end, with cars in which one may sit and read, cars in which one may take refreshment, cars into which the news of the day comes printing itself from the wires beside the track; cars in which one may have privacy and sleep if one is so disposed, bath-room cars, library cars; a train as comfortable as a good club. There will be no distinctions of class in such a train, because in a civilised world there would be no offence between one kind of man and another, and for the good of the whole world such travelling will be as cheap as it can be, and well within the reach of any but the almost criminally poor.

Such great tramways as this will be used when the Utopians wish to travel fast and far; thereby you will glide all over the land surface of the planet; and feeding them and distributing from them, innumerable minor systems, clean little electric tramways I picture them, will spread out over the land in finer reticulations, growing close and dense in the urban regions and thinning as the population

thins. And running beside these lighter railways, and spreading beyond their range, will be the smooth minor high roads such as this one we now approach, upon which independent vehicles, motor cars, cycles, and what not, will go. I doubt if we shall see any horses upon this fine, smooth, clean road; I doubt if there will be many horses on the high roads of Utopia, and, indeed, if they will use draught horses at all upon that planet. Why should they? Where the world gives turf or sand, or along special tracts, the horse will perhaps be ridden for exercise and pleasure, but that will be all the use for him; and as for the other beasts of burthen, on the remoter mountain tracks the mule will no doubt still be a picturesque survival, in the desert men will still find a use for the camel, and the elephant may linger to play a part in the pageant of the East. But the burthen of the minor traffic, if not the whole of it, will certainly be mechanical. This is what we shall see even while the road is still remote, swift and shapely motor-cars going past, cyclists, and in these agreeable mountain regions there will also be pedestrians upon their way. Cycle tracks will abound in Utopia, sometimes following beside the great high roads, but oftener taking their own more agreeable line amidst woods and crops and pastures; and there will be a rich variety of footpaths and minor ways. There will be many footpaths in Utopia. There will be pleasant ways over the scented needles of the mountain pinewoods, primrose-strewn tracks amidst the budding thickets of the lower country, paths running beside rushing streams, paths across the wide spaces of the corn land, and, above all, paths through the flowery garden spaces amidst which the houses in the towns will stand. And everywhere about the world, on road and path, by sea and land, the happy holiday Utopians will go.

The population of Utopia will be a migratory population beyond any earthly precedent, not simply a travelling population, but migratory. The old Utopias were all localised, as localised as a parish councillor; but it is manifest that nowadays even quite ordinary people live over areas that would have made a kingdom in those former days, would have filled the Athenian of the *Laws* with incredulous astonishment. Except for the habits of the very rich during the Roman Empire, there was never the slightest precedent for this modern detachment from place. It is nothing to us that we go eighty or ninety miles from home to place of business, or take an hour's spin of fifty miles to our week-end golf; every summer it has become a fixed custom to travel wide and far. Only the clumsiness of communications limit us now, and every facilitation of locomotion widens not only our potential, but our habitual range. Not only this, but we change our habitations with a growing frequency and facility; to Sir Thomas More we should seem a breed of nomads. That old fixity was of necessity and not of choice, it was a mere phase in the development of civilisation, a trick of rooting man learnt for a time from his new-found friends, the corn and the vine and the hearth; the untamed spirit of the young has turned for ever to wandering and the sea. The soul of man has never yet in any land been willingly adscript to the glebe. Even Mr. Belloc, who preaches the happiness of a peasant proprietary, is so much wiser than his thoughts that he sails about the seas in a little yacht or goes afoot from Belgium to Rome. We are winning our freedom again once more, a freedom renewed and enlarged, and there is now neither necessity nor advantage in a permanent life servitude to this place or that. Men may settle down in our Modern Utopia for love and the family at last, but first and most abundantly they will see the world.

And with this loosening of the fetters of locality from the feet of men, necessarily there will be all sorts of fresh distributions of the factors of life. On our own poor haphazard earth, wherever men work, wherever there are things to be grown, minerals to be won, power to be used, there, regardless of all the joys and decencies of life, the households needs must cluster. But in Utopia there will be wide stretches of cheerless or unhealthy or toilsome or dangerous land with never a household; there will be regions of mining and smelting, black with the smoke of furnaces and gashed and desolated by mines, with a sort of weird inhospitable grandeur of industrial desolation, and the men will come thither and work for a spell and return to civilisation again, washing and changing their attire in the swift gliding train. And by way of compensation there will be beautiful regions of the earth specially set apart and favoured for children; in them the presence of children will remit taxation, while in other

less wholesome places the presence of children will be taxed; the lower passes and fore hills of these very Alps, for example, will be populous with homes, serving the vast arable levels of Upper Italy.

So we shall see, as we come down by our little lake in the lap of Lucendro, and even before we reach the road, the first scattered chalets and households in which these migrant people live, the upper summer homes. With the coming of summer, as the snows on the high Alps recede, a tide of households and schools, teachers and doctors, and all such attendant services will flow up the mountain masses, and ebb again when the September snows return. It is essential to the modern ideal of life that the period of education and growth should be prolonged to as late a period as possible and puberty correspondingly retarded, and by wise regulation the statesmen of Utopia will constantly adjust and readjust regulations and taxation to diminish the proportion of children reared in hot and stimulating conditions. These high mountains will, in the bright sweet summer, be populous with youth. Even up towards this high place where the snow is scarce gone until July, these households will extend, and below, the whole long valley of Urseren will be a scattered summer town.

One figures one of the more urban highways, one of those along which the light railways of the second order run, such as that in the valley of Urseren, into which we should presently come. I figure it as one would see it at night, a band a hundred yards perhaps in width, the footpath on either side shaded with high trees and lit softly with orange glowlights; while down the centre the tramway of the road will go, with sometimes a nocturnal tram-car gliding, lit and gay but almost noiselessly, past. Lantern-lit cyclists will flit along the track like fireflies, and ever and again some humming motor-car will hurry by, to or from the Rhoneland or the Rhineland or Switzerland or Italy. Away on either side the lights of the little country homes up the mountain slopes will glow.

I figure it at night, because so it is we should see it first.

We should come out from our mountain valley into the minor road that runs down the lonely rock wilderness of the San Gotthard Pass, we should descend that nine miles of winding route, and so arrive towards twilight among the clustering homes and upland unenclosed gardens of Realp and Hospenthal and Andermatt. Between Realp and Andermatt, and down the Schoellenen gorge, the greater road would run. By the time we reached it, we should be in the way of understanding our adventure a little better. We should know already, when we saw those two familiar clusters of chalets and hotels replaced by a great dispersed multitude of houses – we should see their window lights, but little else – that we were the victims of some strange transition in space or time, and we should come down by dimly-seen buildings into the part that would answer to Hospenthal, wondering and perhaps a little afraid. We should come out into this great main roadway – this roadway like an urban avenue – and look up it and down, hesitating whether to go along the valley Furka-ward, or down by Andermatt through the gorge that leads to Göschenen...

People would pass us in the twilight, and then more people; we should see they walked well and wore a graceful, unfamiliar dress, but more we should not distinguish.

“Good-night!” they would say to us in clear, fine voices. Their dim faces would turn with a passing scrutiny towards us.

We should answer out of our perplexity: “Good-night!” – for by the conventions established in the beginning of this book, we are given the freedom of their tongue.

§ 4

Were this a story, I should tell at length how much we were helped by the good fortune of picking up a Utopian coin of gold, how at last we adventured into the Utopian inn and found it all marvellously easy. You see us the shyest and most watchful of guests; but of the food they put before us and the furnishings of the house, and all our entertainment, it will be better to speak later. We are in a migratory world, we know, one greatly accustomed to foreigners; our mountain clothes are not strange enough to attract acute attention, though ill-made and shabby, no doubt, by Utopian standards; we are dealt with as we might best wish to be dealt with, that is to say as rather untidy, inconspicuous men. We look about us and watch for hints and examples, and, indeed, get through with the thing. And after our queer, yet not unpleasant, dinner, in which we remark no meat figures, we go out of the house for a breath of air and for quiet counsel one with another, and there it is we discover those strange constellations overhead. It comes to us then, clear and full, that our imagination has realised itself; we dismiss quite finally a Rip-Van-Winkle fancy we have entertained, all the unfamiliarities of our descent from the mountain pass gather together into one fullness of conviction, and we know, we know, we are in Utopia.

We wander under the trees by the main road, watching the dim passers-by as though they were the phantoms of a dream. We say little to one another. We turn aside into a little pathway and come to a bridge over the turbulent Reuss, hurrying down towards the Devil's Bridge in the gorge below. Far away over the Furka ridge a pallid glow preludes the rising of the moon.

Two lovers pass us whispering, and we follow them with our eyes. This Utopia has certainly preserved the fundamental freedom, to love. And then a sweet-voiced bell from somewhere high up towards Oberalp chimes two-and-twenty times.

I break the silence. "That might mean ten o'clock," I say.

My companion leans upon the bridge and looks down into the dim river below. I become aware of the keen edge of the moon like a needle of incandescent silver creeping over the crest, and suddenly the river is alive with flashes.

He speaks, and astonishes me with the hidden course his thoughts have taken.

"We two were boy and girl lovers like that," he says, and jerks a head at the receding Utopians. "I loved her first, and I do not think I have ever thought of loving anyone but her."

It is a curiously human thing, and, upon my honour, not one I had designed, that when at last I stand in the twilight in the midst of a Utopian township, when my whole being should be taken up with speculative wonder, this man should be standing by my side, and lugging my attention persistently towards himself, towards his limited futile self. This thing perpetually happens to me, this intrusion of something small and irrelevant and alive, upon my great impressions. The time I first saw the Matterhorn, that Queen among the Alpine summits, I was distracted beyond appreciation by the tale of a man who could not eat sardines – always sardines did this with him and that; and my first wanderings along the brown streets of Pompeii, an experience I had anticipated with a strange intensity, was shot with the most stupidly intelligent discourse on vehicular tariffs in the chief capitals of Europe that it is possible to imagine. And now this man, on my first night in Utopia, talks and talks and talks of his poor little love affair.

It shapes itself as the most trite and feeble of tragedies, one of those stories of effortless submission to chance and custom in which Mr. Hardy or George Gissing might have found a theme. I do but half listen at first – watching the black figures in the moonlit roadway pacing to and fro. Yet – I cannot trace how he conveys the subtle conviction to my mind – the woman he loves is beautiful.

They were boy and girl together, and afterwards they met again as fellow students in a world of comfortable discretions. He seems to have taken the decorums of life with a confiding good faith, to have been shy and innocent in a suppressed sort of way, and of a mental type not made for worldly

successes; but he must have dreamt about her and loved her well enough. How she felt for him I could never gather; it seemed to be all of that fleshless friendliness into which we train our girls. Then abruptly happened stresses. The man who became her husband appeared, with a very evident passion. He was a year or so older than either of them, and he had the habit and quality of achieving his ends; he was already successful, and with the promise of wealth, and I, at least, perceived, from my botanist's phrasing, that his desire was for her beauty.

As my botanist talked I seemed to see the whole little drama, rather clearer than his words gave it me, the actors all absurdly in Hampstead middle-class raiment, meetings of a Sunday after church (the men in silk hats, frock coats, and tightly-rolled umbrellas), rare excursions into evening dress, the decorously vulgar fiction read in their homes, its ambling sentimentalities of thought, the amiably worldly mothers, the respectable fathers, the aunts, the "people" – his "people" and her "people" – the piano music and the song, and in this setting our friend, "quite clever" at botany and "going in" for it "as a profession," and the girl, gratuitously beautiful; so I figured the arranged and orderly environment into which this claw of an elemental force had thrust itself to grip.

The stranger who had come in got what he wanted; the girl considered that she thought she had never loved the botanist, had had only friendship for him – though little she knew of the meaning of those fine words – they parted a little incoherently and in tears, and it had not occurred to the young man to imagine she was not going off to conventional life in some other of the endless Froggals he imagined as the cellular tissue of the world.

But she wasn't.

He had kept her photograph and her memory sweet, and if ever he had strayed from the severest constancy, it seemed only in the end to strengthen with the stuff of experience, to enhance by comparative disappointment his imagination of what she might have meant to him... Then eight years afterwards they met again.

By the time he gets to this part of his story we have, at my initiative, left the bridge and are walking towards the Utopian guest house. The Utopian guest house! His voice rises and falls, and sometimes he holds my arm. My attention comes and goes. "Good-night," two sweet-voiced Utopians cry to us in their universal tongue, and I answer them "Good-night."

"You see," he persists, "I saw her only a week ago. It was in Lucerne, while I was waiting for you to come on from England. I talked to her three or four times altogether. And her face – the change in her! I can't get it out of my head – night or day. The miserable waste of her..."

Before us, through the tall pine stems, shine the lights of our Utopian inn.

He talks vaguely of ill-usage. "The husband is vain, boastful, dishonest to the very confines of the law, and a drunkard. There are scenes and insults –"

"She told you?"

"Not much, but someone else did. He brings other women almost into her presence to spite her."

"And it's going on?" I interrupt.

"Yes. *Now*."

"Need it go on?"

"What do you mean?"

"Lady in trouble," I say. "Knight at hand. Why not stop this dismal grizzling and carry her off?" (You figure the heroic sweep of the arm that belongs to the Voice.) I positively forget for the moment that we are in Utopia at all.

"You mean?"

"Take her away from him! What's all this emotion of yours worth if it isn't equal to that!"

Positively he seems aghast at me.

"Do you mean elope with her?"

"It seems a most suitable case."

For a space he is silent, and we go on through the trees. A Utopian tram-car passes and I see his face, poor bitted wretch! looking pinched and scared in its trailing glow of light.

“That's all very well in a novel,” he says. “But how could I go back to my laboratory, mixed classes with young ladies, you know, after a thing like that? How could we live and where could we live? We might have a house in London, but who would call upon us?.. Besides, you don't know her. She is not the sort of woman... Don't think I'm timid or conventional. Don't think I don't feel... Feel! *You* don't know what it is to feel in a case of this sort...”

He halts and then flies out viciously: “Ugh! There are times when I could strangle him with my hands.”

Which is nonsense.

He flings out his lean botanising hands in an impotent gesture.

“My dear Man!” I say, and say no more.

For a moment I forget we are in Utopia altogether.

§ 5

Let us come back to Utopia. We were speaking of travel.

Besides roadways and railways and tramways, for those who go to and fro in the earth the Modern Utopians will have very many other ways of travelling. There will be rivers, for example, with a vast variety of boats; canals with diverse sorts of haulage; there will be lakes and lagoons; and when one comes at last to the borders of the land, the pleasure craft will be there, coming and going, and the swift great passenger vessels, very big and steady, doing thirty knots an hour or more, will trace long wakes as they go dwindling out athwart the restless vastness of the sea.

They will be just beginning to fly in Utopia. We owe much to M. Santos Dumont; the world is immeasurably more disposed to believe this wonder is coming, and coming nearly, than it was five years ago. But unless we are to suppose Utopian scientific knowledge far in advance of ours – and though that supposition was not proscribed in our initial undertaking, it would be inconvenient for us and not quite in the vein of the rest of our premises – they, too, will only be in the same experimental stage as ourselves. In Utopia, however, they will conduct research by the army corps while we conduct it – we don't conduct it! We let it happen. Fools make researches and wise men exploit them – that is our earthly way of dealing with the question, and we thank Heaven for an assumed abundance of financially impotent and sufficiently ingenious fools.

In Utopia, a great multitude of selected men, chosen volunteers, will be collaborating upon this new step in man's struggle with the elements. Bacon's visionary House of Saloman [Footnote: In *The New Atlantis*.] will be a thing realised, and it will be humming with this business. Every university in the world will be urgently working for priority in this aspect of the problem or that. Reports of experiments, as full and as prompt as the telegraphic reports of cricket in our more sportive atmosphere, will go about the world. All this will be passing, as it were, behind the act drop of our first experience, behind this first picture of the urbanised Urseren valley. The literature of the subject will be growing and developing with the easy swiftness of an eagle's swoop as we come down the hillside; unseen in that twilight, unthought of by us until this moment, a thousand men at a thousand glowing desks, a busy specialist press, will be perpetually sifting, criticising, condensing, and clearing the ground for further speculation. Those who are concerned with the problems of public locomotion will be following these aeronautic investigations with a keen and enterprising interest, and so will the physiologist and the sociologist. That Utopian research will, I say, go like an eagle's swoop in comparison with the blind-man's fumbling of our terrestrial way. Even before our own brief Utopian journey is out, we may get a glimpse of the swift ripening of all this activity that will be in progress at our coming. To-morrow, perhaps, or in a day or so, some silent, distant thing will come gliding into view over the mountains, will turn and soar and pass again beyond our astonished sight...

§ 6

But my friend and his great trouble turn my mind from these questions of locomotion and the freedoms that cluster about them. In spite of myself I find myself framing his case. He is a lover, the most conventional of Anglican lovers, with a heart that has had its training, I should think, in the clean but limited schoolroom of Mrs. Henry Wood...

In Utopia I think they will fly with stronger pinions, it will not be in the superficialities of life merely that movement will be wide and free, they will mount higher and swoop more steeply than he in his cage can believe. What will their range be, their prohibitions? what jars to our preconceptions will he and I receive here?

My mind flows with the free, thin flow that it has at the end of an eventful day, and as we walk along in silence towards our inn I rove from issue to issue, I find myself ranging amidst the fundamental things of the individual life and all the perplexity of desires and passions. I turn my questionings to the most difficult of all sets of compromises, those mitigations of spontaneous freedom that constitute the marriage laws, the mystery of balancing justice against the good of the future, amidst these violent and elusive passions. Where falls the balance of freedoms here? I pass for a time from Utopianising altogether, to ask the question that, after all, Schopenhauer failed completely to answer, why sometimes in the case of hurtful, pointless, and destructive things we want so vehemently...

I come back from this unavailing glance into the deeps to the general question of freedoms in this new relation. I find myself far adrift from the case of the Frogal botanist, and asking how far a modern Utopia will deal with personal morals.

As Plato demonstrated long ago, the principles of the relation of State control to personal morals may be best discussed in the case of intoxication, the most isolated and least complicated of all this group of problems. But Plato's treatment of this issue as a question of who may or may not have the use of wine, though suitable enough in considering a small State in which everybody was the effectual inspector of everybody, is entirely beside the mark under modern conditions, in which we are to have an extraordinarily higher standard of individual privacy and an amplitude and quantity of migration inconceivable to the Academic imagination. We may accept his principle and put this particular freedom (of the use of wine) among the distinctive privileges of maturity, and still find all that a modern would think of as the Drink Question untouched.

That question in Utopia will differ perhaps in the proportion of its factors, but in no other respect, from what it is upon earth. The same desirable ends will be sought, the maintenance of public order and decency, the reduction of inducements to form this bad and wasteful habit to their lowest possible minimum, and the complete protection of the immature. But the modern Utopians, having systematised their sociology, will have given some attention to the psychology of minor officials, a matter altogether too much neglected by the social reformer on earth. They will not put into the hands of a common policeman powers direct and indirect that would be dangerous to the public in the hands of a judge. And they will have avoided the immeasurable error of making their control of the drink traffic a source of public revenue. Privacies they will not invade, but they will certainly restrict the public consumption of intoxicants to specified licensed places and the sale of them to unmistakable adults, and they will make the temptation of the young a grave offence. In so migratory a population as the Modern Utopian, the licensing of inns and bars would be under the same control as the railways and high roads. Inns exist for the stranger and not for the locality, and we shall meet with nothing there to correspond with our terrestrial absurdity of Local Option.

The Utopians will certainly control this trade, and as certainly punish personal excesses. Public drunkenness (as distinguished from the mere elation that follows a generous but controlled use of

wine) will be an offence against public decency, and will be dealt with in some very drastic manner. It will, of course, be an aggravation of, and not an excuse for, crime.

But I doubt whether the State will go beyond that. Whether an adult shall use wine or beer or spirits, or not, seems to me entirely a matter for his doctor and his own private conscience. I doubt if we explorers shall meet any drunken men, and I doubt not we shall meet many who have never availed themselves of their adult freedom in this respect. The conditions of physical happiness will be better understood in Utopia, it will be worth while to be well there, and the intelligent citizen will watch himself closely. Half and more of the drunkenness of earth is an attempt to lighten dull days and hopelessly sordid and disagreeable lives, and in Utopia they do not suffer these things. Assuredly Utopia will be temperate, not only drinking, but eating with the soundest discretion. Yet I do not think wine and good ale will be altogether wanting there, nor good, mellow whisky, nor, upon occasion, the engaging various liqueur. I do not think so. My botanist, who abstains altogether, is of another opinion. We differ here and leave the question to the earnest reader. I have the utmost respect for all Teetotalers, Prohibitionists, and Haters and Persecutors of Innkeepers, their energy of reform awakens responsive notes in me, and to their species I look for a large part of the urgent repair of our earth; yet for all that —

There is Burgundy, for example, a bottle of soft and kindly Burgundy, taken to make a sunshine on one's lunch when four strenuous hours of toil have left one on the further side of appetite. Or ale, a foaming tankard of ale, ten miles of sturdy tramping in the sleet and slush as a prelude, and then good bread and good butter and a ripe hollow Stilton and celery and ale — ale with a certain quantitative freedom. Or, again, where is the sin in a glass of tawny port three or four times, or it may be five, a year, when the walnuts come round in their season? If you drink no port, then what are walnuts for? Such things I hold for the reward of vast intervals of abstinence; they justify your wide, immaculate margin, which is else a mere unmeaning blankness on the page of palate God has given you! I write of these things as a fleshly man, confessedly and knowingly fleshly, and more than usually aware of my liability to err; I know myself for a gross creature more given to sedentary world-mending than to brisk activities, and not one-tenth as active as the dullest newspaper boy in London. Yet still I have my uses, uses that vanish in monotony, and still I must ask why should we bury the talent of these bright sensations altogether? Under no circumstances can I think of my Utopians maintaining their fine order of life on ginger ale and lemonade and the ale that is Kops'. Those terrible Temperance Drinks, solutions of qualified sugar mixed with vast volumes of gas, as, for example, soda, seltzer, lemonade, and *fire-extincteurs* hand grenades — *minerals*, they call such stuff in England — fill a man with wind and self-righteousness. Indeed they do! Coffee destroys brain and kidney, a fact now universally recognised and advertised throughout America; and tea, except for a kind of green tea best used with discretion in punch, tans the entrails and turns honest stomachs into leather bags. Rather would I be Metchnikoffed [Footnote: See *The Nature of Man*, by Professor Elie Metchnikoff.] at once and have a clean, good stomach of German silver. No! If we are to have no ale in Utopia, give me the one clean temperance drink that is worthy to set beside wine, and that is simple water. Best it is when not quite pure and with a trace of organic matter, for then it tastes and sparkles...

My botanist would still argue.

Thank Heaven this is my book, and that the ultimate decision rests with me. It is open to him to write his own Utopia and arrange that everybody shall do nothing except by the consent of the savants of the Republic, either in his eating, drinking, dressing or lodging, even as Cabet proposed. It is open to him to try a *News from Nowhere* Utopia with the wine left out. I have my short way with him here quite effectually. I turn in the entrance of our inn to the civil but by no means obsequious landlord, and with a careful ambiguity of manner for the thing may be considered an outrage, and I try to make it possible the idea is a jest — put my test demand...

“You see, my dear Teetotaler? — he sets before me tray and glass and...” Here follows the necessary experiment and a deep sigh... “Yes, a bottle of quite *excellent* light beer! So there are

also cakes and ale in Utopia! Let us in this saner and more beautiful world drink perdition to all earthly excesses. Let us drink more particularly to the coming of the day when men beyond there will learn to distinguish between qualitative and quantitative questions, to temper good intentions with good intelligence, and righteousness with wisdom. One of the darkest evils of our world is surely the unteachable wildness of the Good.”

§ 7

So presently to bed and to sleep, but not at once to sleep. At first my brain, like a dog in unfamiliar quarters, must turn itself round for a time or so before it lies down. This strange mystery of a world of which I have seen so little as yet – a mountain slope, a twilit road, a traffic of ambiguous vehicles and dim shapes, the window lights of many homes – fills me with curiosities. Figures and incidents come and go, the people we have passed, our landlord, quietly attentive and yet, I feel, with the keenest curiosity peeping from his eyes, the unfamiliar forms of the house parts and furnishings, the unfamiliar courses of the meal. Outside this little bedroom is a world, a whole unimagined world. A thousand million things lie outside in the darkness beyond this lit inn of ours, unthought-of possibilities, overlooked considerations, surprises, riddles, incommensurables, a whole monstrous intricate universe of consequences that I have to do my best to unravel. I attempt impossible recapitulations and mingle the weird quality of dream stuff with my thoughts.

Athwart all this tumult of my memory goes this queer figure of my unanticipated companion, so obsessed by himself and his own egotistical love that this sudden change to another world seems only a change of scene for his gnawing, uninvigorating passion. It occurs to me that she also must have an equivalent in Utopia, and then that idea and all ideas grow thin and vague, and are dissolved at last in the rising tide of sleep...

CHAPTER THE THIRD

Utopian Economics

§ 1

These modern Utopians with the universally diffused good manners, the universal education, the fine freedoms we shall ascribe to them, their world unity, world language, world-wide travellings, world-wide freedom of sale and purchase, will remain mere dreamstuff, incredible even by twilight, until we have shown that at that level the community will still sustain itself. At any rate, the common liberty of the Utopians will not embrace the common liberty to be unserviceable, the most perfect economy of organisation still leaves the fact untouched that all order and security in a State rests on the certainty of getting work done. How will the work of this planet be done? What will be the economics of a modern Utopia?

Now in the first place, a state so vast and complex as this world Utopia, and with so migratory a people, will need some handy symbol to check the distribution of services and commodities. Almost certainly they will need to have money. They will have money, and it is not inconceivable that, for all his sorrowful thoughts, our botanist, with his trained observation, his habit of looking at little things upon the ground, would be the one to see and pick up the coin that has fallen from some wayfarer's pocket. (This, in our first hour or so before we reach the inn in the Urseren Thal.) You figure us upon the high Gotthard road, heads together over the little disk that contrives to tell us so much of this strange world.

It is, I imagine, of gold, and it will be a convenient accident if it is sufficient to make us solvent for a day or so, until we are a little more informed of the economic system into which we have come. It is, moreover, of a fair round size, and the inscription declares it one Lion, equal to "twaindy" bronze Crosses. Unless the ratio of metals is very different here, this latter must be a token coin, and therefore legal tender for but a small amount. (That would be pain and pleasure to Mr. Wordsworth Donisthorpe if he were to chance to join us, for once he planned a Utopian coinage, [Footnote: *A System of Measures*, by Wordsworth Donisthorpe.] and the words Lion and Cross are his. But a token coinage and "legal tender" he cannot abide. They make him argue.) And being in Utopia, that unfamiliar "twaindy" suggests at once we have come upon that most Utopian of all things, a duodecimal system of counting.

My author's privilege of details serves me here. This Lion is distinctly a beautiful coin, admirably made, with its value in fine, clear letters circling the obverse side, and a head thereon – of Newton, as I live! One detects American influence here. Each year, as we shall find, each denomination of coins celebrates a centenary. The reverse shows the universal goddess of the Utopian coinage – Peace, as a beautiful woman, reading with a child out of a great book, and behind them are stars, and an hour-glass, halfway run. Very human these Utopians, after all, and not by any means above the obvious in their symbolism!

So for the first time we learn definitely of the World State, and we get our first clear hint, too, that there is an end to Kings. But our coin raises other issues also. It would seem that this Utopia has no simple community of goods, that there is, at any rate, a restriction upon what one may take, a need for evidences of equivalent value, a limitation to human credit.

It dates – so much of this present Utopia of ours dates. Those former Utopists were bitterly against gold. You will recall the undignified use Sir Thomas More would have us put it to, and how there was no money at all in the Republic of Plato, and in that later community for which he wrote his

Laws an iron coinage of austere appearance and doubtful efficacy... It may be these great gentlemen were a little hasty with a complicated difficulty, and not a little unjust to a highly respectable element.

Gold is abused and made into vessels of dishonour, and abolished from ideal society as though it were the cause instead of the instrument of human baseness; but, indeed, there is nothing bad in gold. Making gold into vessels of dishonour and banishing it from the State is punishing the hatchet for the murderer's crime. Money, did you but use it right, is a good thing in life, a necessary thing in civilised human life, as complicated, indeed, for its purposes, but as natural a growth as the bones in a man's wrist, and I do not see how one can imagine anything at all worthy of being called a civilisation without it. It is the water of the body social, it distributes and receives, and renders growth and assimilation and movement and recovery possible. It is the reconciliation of human interdependence with liberty. What other device will give a man so great a freedom with so strong an inducement to effort? The economic history of the world, where it is not the history of the theory of property, is very largely the record of the abuse, not so much of money as of credit devices to supplement money, to amplify the scope of this most precious invention; and no device of labour credits [Footnote: Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, Ch. IX.] or free demand of commodities from a central store [Footnote: More's *Utopia* and Cabet's *Icaria*.] or the like has ever been suggested that does not give ten thousand times more scope for that inherent moral dross in man that must be reckoned with in any sane Utopia we may design and plan... Heaven knows where progress may not end, but at any rate this developing State, into which we two men have fallen, this Twentieth Century Utopia, has still not passed beyond money and the use of coins.

§ 2

Now if this Utopian world is to be in some degree parallel to contemporary thought, it must have been concerned, it may be still concerned, with many unsettled problems of currency, and with the problems that centre about a standard of value. Gold is perhaps of all material substances the best adapted to the monetary purpose, but even at that best it falls far short of an imaginable ideal. It undergoes spasmodic and irregular cheapening through new discoveries of gold, and at any time it may undergo very extensive and sudden and disastrous depreciation through the discovery of some way of transmuting less valuable elements. The liability to such depreciations introduces an undesirable speculative element into the relations of debtor and creditor. When, on the one hand, there is for a time a check in the increase of the available stores of gold, or an increase in the energy applied to social purposes, or a checking of the public security that would impede the free exchange of credit and necessitate a more frequent production of gold in evidence, then there comes an undue appreciation of money as against the general commodities of life, and an automatic impoverishment of the citizens in general as against the creditor class. The common people are mortgaged into the bondage of debt. And on the other hand an unexpected spate of gold production, the discovery of a single nugget as big as St. Paul's, let us say – a quite possible thing – would result in a sort of jail delivery of debtors and a financial earthquake.

It has been suggested by an ingenious thinker that it is possible to use as a standard of monetary value no substance whatever, but instead, force, and that value might be measured in units of energy. An excellent development this, in theory, at any rate, of the general idea of the modern State as kinetic and not static; it throws the old idea of the social order and the new into the sharpest antithesis. The old order is presented as a system of institutions and classes ruled by men of substance; the new, of enterprises and interests led by men of power.

Now I glance at this matter in the most incidental manner, as a man may skim through a specialist's exposition in a popular magazine. You must figure me, therefore, finding from a casual periodical paper in our inn, with a certain surprise at not having anticipated as much, the Utopian self of that same ingenious person quite conspicuously a leader of thought, and engaged in organising the discussion of the currency changes Utopia has under consideration. The article, as it presents itself to me, contains a complete and lucid, though occasionally rather technical, explanation of his newest proposals. They have been published, it seems, for general criticism, and one gathers that in the modern Utopia the administration presents the most elaborately detailed schemes of any proposed alteration in law or custom, some time before any measure is taken to carry it into effect, and the possibilities of every detail are acutely criticised, flaws anticipated, side issues raised, and the whole minutely tested and fined down by a planetful of critics, before the actual process of legislation begins.

The explanation of these proposals involves an anticipatory glance at the local administration of a Modern Utopia. To anyone who has watched the development of technical science during the last decade or so, there will be no shock in the idea that a general consolidation of a great number of common public services over areas of considerable size is now not only practicable, but very desirable. In a little while heating and lighting and the supply of power for domestic and industrial purposes and for urban and inter-urban communications will all be managed electrically from common generating stations. And the trend of political and social speculation points decidedly to the conclusion that so soon as it passes out of the experimental stage, the supply of electrical energy, just like drainage and the supply of water, will fall to the local authority. Moreover, the local authority will be the universal landowner. Upon that point so extreme an individualist as Herbert Spencer was in agreement with the Socialist. In Utopia we conclude that, whatever other types of property may exist, all natural sources of force, and indeed all strictly natural products, coal, water power, and the like, are inalienably vested in the local authorities (which, in order to secure the maximum of convenience

and administrative efficiency, will probably control areas as large sometimes as half England), they will generate electricity by water power, by combustion, by wind or tide or whatever other natural force is available, and this electricity will be devoted, some of it to the authority's lighting and other public works, some of it, as a subsidy, to the World-State authority which controls the high roads, the great railways, the inns and other apparatus of world communication, and the rest will pass on to private individuals or to distributing companies at a uniform fixed rate for private lighting and heating, for machinery and industrial applications of all sorts. Such an arrangement of affairs will necessarily involve a vast amount of book-keeping between the various authorities, the World-State government and the customers, and this book-keeping will naturally be done most conveniently in units of physical energy.

It is not incredible that the assessment of the various local administrations for the central world government would be already calculated upon the estimated total of energy, periodically available in each locality, and booked and spoken of in these physical units. Accounts between central and local governments could be kept in these terms. Moreover, one may imagine Utopian local authorities making contracts in which payment would be no longer in coinage upon the gold basis, but in notes good for so many thousands or millions of units of energy at one or other of the generating stations.

Now the problems of economic theory will have undergone an enormous clarification if, instead of measuring in fluctuating money values, the same scale of energy units can be extended to their discussion, if, in fact, the idea of trading could be entirely eliminated. In my Utopia, at any rate, this has been done, the production and distribution of common commodities have been expressed as a problem in the conversion of energy, and the scheme that Utopia was now discussing was the application of this idea of energy as the standard of value to the entire Utopian coinage. Every one of those giant local authorities was to be free to issue energy notes against the security of its surplus of saleable available energy, and to make all its contracts for payment in those notes up to a certain maximum defined by the amount of energy produced and disposed of in that locality in the previous year. This power of issue was to be renewed just as rapidly as the notes came in for redemption. In a world without boundaries, with a population largely migratory and emancipated from locality, the price of the energy notes of these various local bodies would constantly tend to be uniform, because employment would constantly shift into the areas where energy was cheap. Accordingly, the price of so many millions of units of energy at any particular moment in coins of the gold currency would be approximately the same throughout the world. It was proposed to select some particular day when the economic atmosphere was distinctly equable, and to declare a fixed ratio between the gold coinage and the energy notes; each gold Lion and each Lion of credit representing exactly the number of energy units it could buy on that day. The old gold coinage was at once to cease to be legal tender beyond certain defined limits, except to the central government, which would not reissue it as it came in. It was, in fact, to become a temporary token coinage, a token coinage of full value for the day of conversion at any rate, if not afterwards, under the new standard of energy, and to be replaceable by an ordinary token coinage as time went on. The old computation by Lions and the values of the small change of daily life were therefore to suffer no disturbance whatever.

The economists of Utopia, as I apprehended them, had a different method and a very different system of theories from those I have read on earth, and this makes my exposition considerably more difficult. This article upon which I base my account floated before me in an unfamiliar, perplexing, and dream-like phraseology. Yet I brought away an impression that here was a rightness that earthly economists have failed to grasp. Few earthly economists have been able to disentangle themselves from patriotisms and politics, and their obsession has always been international trade. Here in Utopia the World State cuts that away from beneath their feet; there are no imports but meteorites, and no exports at all. Trading is the earthly economists' initial notion, and they start from perplexing and insoluble riddles about exchange value, insoluble because all trading finally involves individual preferences which are incalculable and unique. Nowhere do they seem to be handling really defined

standards, every economic dissertation and discussion reminds one more strongly than the last of the game of croquet Alice played in Wonderland, when the mallets were flamingoes and the balls were hedgehogs and crawled away, and the hoops were soldiers and kept getting up and walking about. But economics in Utopia must be, it seems to me, not a theory of trading based on bad psychology, but physics applied to problems in the theory of sociology. The general problem of Utopian economics is to state the conditions of the most efficient application of the steadily increasing quantities of material energy the progress of science makes available for human service, to the general needs of mankind. Human labour and existing material are dealt with in relation to that. Trading and relative wealth are merely episodic in such a scheme. The trend of the article I read, as I understood it, was that a monetary system based upon a relatively small amount of gold, upon which the business of the whole world had hitherto been done, fluctuated unreasonably and supplied no real criterion of well-being, that the nominal values of things and enterprises had no clear and simple relation to the real physical prosperity of the community, that the nominal wealth of a community in millions of pounds or dollars or Lions, measured nothing but the quantity of hope in the air, and an increase of confidence meant an inflation of credit and a pessimistic phase a collapse of this hallucination of possessions. The new standards, this advocate reasoned, were to alter all that, and it seemed to me they would.

I have tried to indicate the drift of these remarkable proposals, but about them clustered an elaborate mass of keen and temperate discussion. Into the details of that discussion I will not enter now, nor am I sure I am qualified to render the multitudinous aspect of this complicated question at all precisely. I read the whole thing in the course of an hour or two of rest after lunch – it was either the second or third day of my stay in Utopia – and we were sitting in a little inn at the end of the Lake of Uri. We had loitered there, and I had fallen reading because of a shower of rain... But certainly as I read it the proposition struck me as a singularly simple and attractive one, and its exposition opened out to me for the first time clearly, in a comprehensive outline, the general conception of the economic nature of the Utopian State.

§ 3

The difference between the social and economic sciences as they exist in our world [Footnote: But see Giddings's *Principles of Sociology*, a modern and richly suggestive American work, imperfectly appreciated by the British student. See also Walter Bagehot's *Economic Studies*.] and in this Utopia deserves perhaps a word or so more. I write with the utmost diffidence, because upon earth economic science has been raised to a very high level of tortuous abstraction by the industry of its professors, and I can claim neither a patient student's intimacy with their productions nor – what is more serious – anything but the most generalised knowledge of what their Utopian equivalents have achieved. The vital nature of economic issues to a Utopia necessitates, however, some attempt at interpretation between the two.

In Utopia there is no distinct and separate science of economics. Many problems that we should regard as economic come within the scope of Utopian psychology. My Utopians make two divisions of the science of psychology, first, the general psychology of individuals, a sort of mental physiology separated by no definite line from physiology proper, and secondly, the psychology of relationship between individuals. This second is an exhaustive study of the reaction of people upon each other and of all possible relationships. It is a science of human aggregations, of all possible family groupings, of neighbours and neighbourhood, of companies, associations, unions, secret and public societies, religious groupings, of common ends and intercourse, and of the methods of intercourse and collective decision that hold human groups together, and finally of government and the State. The elucidation of economic relationships, depending as it does on the nature of the hypothesis of human aggregation actually in operation at any time, is considered to be subordinate and subsequent to this general science of Sociology. Political economy and economics, in our world now, consist of a hopeless muddle of social assumptions and preposterous psychology, and a few geographical and physical generalisations. Its ingredients will be classified out and widely separated in Utopian thought. On the one hand there will be the study of physical economies, ending in the descriptive treatment of society as an organisation for the conversion of all the available energy in nature to the material ends of mankind – a physical sociology which will be already at such a stage of practical development as to be giving the world this token coinage representing energy – and on the other there will be the study of economic problems as problems in the division of labour, having regard to a social organisation whose main ends are reproduction and education in an atmosphere of personal freedom. Each of these inquiries, working unencumbered by the other, will be continually contributing fresh valid conclusions for the use of the practical administrator.

In no region of intellectual activity will our hypothesis of freedom from tradition be of more value in devising a Utopia than here. From its beginning the earthly study of economics has been infertile and unhelpful, because of the mass of unanalysed and scarcely suspected assumptions upon which it rested. The facts were ignored that trade is a bye-product and not an essential factor in social life, that property is a plastic and fluctuating convention, that value is capable of impersonal treatment only in the case of the most generalised requirements. Wealth was measured by the standards of exchange. Society was regarded as a practically unlimited number of avaricious adult units incapable of any other subordinate groupings than business partnerships, and the sources of competition were assumed to be inexhaustible. Upon such quicksands rose an edifice that aped the securities of material science, developed a technical jargon and professed the discovery of “laws.” Our liberation from these false presumptions through the rhetoric of Carlyle and Ruskin and the activities of the Socialists, is more apparent than real. The old edifice oppresses us still, repaired and altered by indifferent builders, underpinned in places, and with a slight change of name. “Political Economy” has been painted out, and instead we read “Economics – under entirely new management.” Modern Economics differs mainly from old Political Economy in having produced no Adam Smith. The old “Political Economy”

made certain generalisations, and they were mostly wrong; new Economics evades generalisations, and seems to lack the intellectual power to make them. The science hangs like a gathering fog in a valley, a fog which begins nowhere and goes nowhere, an incidental, unmeaning inconvenience to passers-by. Its most typical exponents display a disposition to disavow generalisations altogether, to claim consideration as “experts,” and to make immediate political application of that conceded claim. Now Newton, Darwin, Dalton, Davy, Joule, and Adam Smith did not affect this “expert” hankey-pankey, becoming enough in a hairdresser or a fashionable physician, but indecent in a philosopher or a man of science. In this state of impotent expertness, however, or in some equally unsound state, economics must struggle on – a science that is no science, a floundering lore wallowing in a mud of statistics – until either the study of the material organisation of production on the one hand as a development of physics and geography, or the study of social aggregation on the other, renders enduring foundations possible.

§ 4

The older Utopias were all relatively small states; Plato's Republic, for example, was to be smaller than the average English borough, and no distinction was made between the Family, the Local Government, and the State. Plato and Campanella – for all that the latter was a Christian priest – carried communism to its final point and prescribed even a community of husbands and wives, an idea that was brought at last to the test of effectual experiment in the Oneida Community of New York State (1848-1879). This latter body did not long survive its founder, at least as a veritable communism, by reason of the insurgent individualism of its vigorous sons. More, too, denied privacy and ruled an absolute community of goods, at any rate, and so, coming to the Victorian Utopias, did Cabet. But Cabet's communism was one of the “free store” type, and the goods were yours only after you had requisitioned them. That seems the case in the “Nowhere” of Morris also. Compared with the older writers Bellamy and Morris have a vivid sense of individual separation, and their departure from the old homogeneity is sufficiently marked to justify a doubt whether there will be any more thoroughly communistic Utopias for ever.

A Utopia such as this present one, written in the opening of the Twentieth Century, and after the most exhaustive discussion – nearly a century long – between Communistic and Socialistic ideas on the one hand, and Individualism on the other, emerges upon a sort of effectual conclusion to those controversies. The two parties have so chipped and amended each other's initial propositions that, indeed, except for the labels still flutteringly adhesive to the implicated men, it is hard to choose between them. Each side established a good many propositions, and we profit by them all. We of the succeeding generation can see quite clearly that for the most part the heat and zeal of these discussions arose in the confusion of a quantitative for a qualitative question. To the onlooker, both Individualism and Socialism are, in the absolute, absurdities; the one would make men the slaves of the violent or rich, the other the slaves of the State official, and the way of sanity runs, perhaps even sinuously, down the intervening valley. Happily the dead past buries its dead, and it is not our function now to adjudicate the preponderance of victory. In the very days when our political and economic order is becoming steadily more Socialistic, our ideals of intercourse turn more and more to a fuller recognition of the claims of individuality. The State is to be progressive, it is no longer to be static, and this alters the general condition of the Utopian problem profoundly; we have to provide not only for food and clothing, for order and health, but for initiative. The factor that leads the World State on from one phase of development to the next is the interplay of individualities; to speak teleologically, the world exists for the sake of and through initiative, and individuality is the method of initiative. Each man and woman, to the extent that his or her individuality is marked, breaks the law of precedent, transgresses the general formula, and makes a new experiment for the direction of the life force. It is impossible, therefore, for the State, which represents all and is preoccupied by the average, to make effectual experiments and intelligent innovations, and so supply the essential substance of life. As against the individual the state represents the species, in the case of the Utopian World State it absolutely represents the species. The individual emerges from the species, makes his experiment, and either fails, dies, and comes to an end, or succeeds and impresses himself in offspring, in consequences and results, intellectual, material and moral, upon the world.

Biologically the species is the accumulation of the experiments of all its successful individuals since the beginning, and the World State of the Modern Utopist will, in its economic aspect, be a compendium of established economic experience, about which individual enterprise will be continually experimenting, either to fail and pass, or to succeed and at last become incorporated with the undying organism of the World State. This organism is the universal rule, the common restriction, the rising level platform on which individualities stand.

The World State in this ideal presents itself as the sole landowner of the earth, with the great local governments I have adumbrated, the local municipalities, holding, as it were, feudally under it as landlords. The State or these subordinates holds all the sources of energy, and either directly or through its tenants, farmers and agents, develops these sources, and renders the energy available for the work of life. It or its tenants will produce food, and so human energy, and the exploitation of coal and electric power, and the powers of wind and wave and water will be within its right. It will pour out this energy by assignment and lease and acquiescence and what not upon its individual citizens. It will maintain order, maintain roads, maintain a cheap and efficient administration of justice, maintain cheap and rapid locomotion and be the common carrier of the planet, convey and distribute labour, control, let, or administer all natural productions, pay for and secure healthy births and a healthy and vigorous new generation, maintain the public health, coin money and sustain standards of measurement, subsidise research, and reward such commercially unprofitable undertakings as benefit the community as a whole; subsidise when needful chairs of criticism and authors and publications, and collect and distribute information. The energy developed and the employment afforded by the State will descend like water that the sun has sucked out of the sea to fall upon a mountain range, and back to the sea again it will come at last, debouching in ground rent and royalty and license fees, in the fees of travellers and profits upon carrying and coinage and the like, in death duty, transfer tax, legacy and forfeiture, returning to the sea. Between the clouds and the sea it will run, as a river system runs, down through a great region of individual enterprise and interplay, whose freedom it will sustain. In that intermediate region between the kindred heights and deeps those beginnings and promises will arise that are the essential significance, the essential substance, of life. From our human point of view the mountains and sea are for the habitable lands that lie between. So likewise the State is for Individualities. The State is for Individuals, the law is for freedoms, the world is for experiment, experience, and change: these are the fundamental beliefs upon which a modern Utopia must go.

§ 5

Within this scheme, which makes the State the source of all energy, and the final legatee, what will be the nature of the property a man may own? Under modern conditions – indeed, under any conditions – a man without some negotiable property is a man without freedom, and the extent of his property is very largely the measure of his freedom. Without any property, without even shelter or food, a man has no choice but to set about getting these things; he is in servitude to his needs until he has secured property to satisfy them. But with a certain small property a man is free to do many things, to take a fortnight's holiday when he chooses, for example, and to try this new departure from his work or that; with so much more, he may take a year of freedom and go to the ends of the earth; with so much more, he may obtain elaborate apparatus and try curious novelties, build himself houses and make gardens, establish businesses and make experiments at large. Very speedily, under terrestrial conditions, the property of a man may reach such proportions that his freedom oppresses the freedom of others. Here, again, is a quantitative question, an adjustment of conflicting freedoms, a quantitative question that too many people insist on making a qualitative one.

The object sought in the code of property laws that one would find in operation in Utopia would be the same object that pervades the whole Utopian organisation, namely, a universal maximum of individual freedom. Whatever far-reaching movements the State or great rich men or private corporations may make, the starvation by any complication of employment, the unwilling deportation, the destruction of alternatives to servile submissions, must not ensue. Beyond such qualifications, the object of Modern Utopian statesmanship will be to secure to a man the freedom given by all his legitimate property, that is to say, by all the values his toil or skill or foresight and courage have brought into being. Whatever he has justly made he has a right to keep, that is obvious enough; but he will also have a right to sell and exchange, and so this question of what may be property takes really the form of what may a man buy in Utopia?

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