

CHAPTER THE THIRD

Utopian Economics

Section 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.

Section 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.

Section 3

The difference between the social and economic sciences as they exist in our world [Footnote: But see Gidding'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.

Section 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.

Section 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?

A modern Utopian most assuredly must have a practically unqualified property in all those things that become, as it were, by possession, extensions and expressions of his personality; his clothing, his jewels, the tools of his employment, his books, the objects of art he may have bought or made, his personal weapons (if Utopia have

need of such things), insignia, and so forth. All such things that he has bought with his money or acquired--provided he is not a professional or habitual dealer in such property--will be inalienably his, his to give or lend or keep, free even from taxation. So intimate is this sort of property that I have no doubt Utopia will give a man posthumous rights over it--will permit him to assign it to a successor with at the utmost the payment of a small redemption. A horse, perhaps, in certain districts, or a bicycle, or any such mechanical conveyance personally used, the Utopians might find it well to rank with these possessions. No doubt, too, a house and privacy owned and occupied by a man, and even a man's own household furniture, might be held to stand as high or almost as high in the property scale, might be taxed as lightly and transferred under only a slightly heavier redemption, provided he had not let these things on hire, or otherwise alienated them from his intimate self. A thorough-going, Democratic Socialist will no doubt be inclined at first to object that if the Utopians make these things a specially free sort of property in this way, men would spend much more upon them than they would otherwise do, but indeed that will be an excellent thing. We are too much affected by the needy atmosphere of our own mismanaged world. In Utopia no one will have to hunger because some love to make and have made and own and cherish beautiful things. To give this much of property to individuals will tend to make clothing, ornamentation, implements, books, and all the arts finer and more beautiful, because by buying such things a man will secure something inalienable--save in the

case of bankruptcy--for himself and for those who belong to him. Moreover, a man may in his lifetime set aside sums to ensure special advantages of education and care for the immature children of himself and others, and in this manner also exercise a posthumous right. [Footnote: But a Statute of Mortmain will set a distinct time limit to the continuance of such benefactions. A periodic revision of endowments is a necessary feature in any modern Utopia.]

For all other property, the Utopians will have a scantier respect; even money unspent by a man, and debts to him that bear no interest, will at his death stand upon a lower level than these things. What he did not choose to gather and assimilate to himself, or assign for the special education of his children, the State will share in the lion's proportion with heir and legatee.

This applies, for example, to the property that a man creates and acquires in business enterprises, which are presumably undertaken for gain, and as a means of living rather than for themselves. All new machinery, all new methods, all uncertain and variable and non-universal undertakings, are no business for the State; they commence always as experiments of unascertained value, and next after the invention of money, there is no invention has so facilitated freedom and progress as the invention of the limited liability company to do this work of trial and adventure. The abuses, the necessary reforms of company law on earth, are no concern of ours here and now, suffice it that in a Modern Utopia

such laws must be supposed to be as perfect as mortal laws can possibly be made. Caveat vendor will be a sound qualification of Caveat emptor in the beautifully codified Utopian law. Whether the Utopian company will be allowed to prefer this class of share to that or to issue debentures, whether indeed usury, that is to say lending money at fixed rates of interest, will be permitted at all in Utopia, one may venture to doubt. But whatever the nature of the shares a man may hold, they will all be sold at his death, and whatever he has not clearly assigned for special educational purposes will--with possibly some fractional concession to near survivors--lapse to the State. The "safe investment," that permanent, undying claim upon the community, is just one of those things Utopia will discourage; which indeed the developing security of civilisation quite automatically discourages through the fall in the rate of interest. As we shall see at a later stage, the State will insure the children of every citizen, and those legitimately dependent upon him, against the inconvenience of his death; it will carry out all reasonable additional dispositions he may have made for them in the same event; and it will insure him against old age and infirmity; and the object of Utopian economics will be to give a man every inducement to spend his surplus money in intensifying the quality of his surroundings, either by economic adventures and experiments, which may yield either losses or large profits, or in increasing the beauty, the pleasure, the abundance and promise of life.

Besides strictly personal possessions and shares in business adventures, Utopia will no doubt permit associations of its citizens to have a property in various sorts of contracts and concessions, in leases of agricultural and other land, for example; in houses they may have built, factories and machinery they may have made, and the like. And if a citizen prefer to adventure into business single-handed, he will have all the freedoms of enterprise enjoyed by a company; in business affairs he will be a company of one, and his single share will be dealt with at his death like any other shares.... So much for the second kind of property. And these two kinds of property will probably exhaust the sorts of property a Utopian may possess.

The trend of modern thought is entirely against private property in land or natural objects or products, and in Utopia these things will be the inalienable property of the World State. Subject to the rights of free locomotion, land will be leased out to companies or individuals, but--in view of the unknown necessities of the future--never for a longer period than, let us say, fifty years.

The property of a parent in his children, and of a husband in his wife, seems to be undergoing a steadily increasing qualification in the world of to-day, but the discussion of the Utopian state of affairs in regard to such property may be better reserved until marriage becomes our topic. Suffice it here to remark, that the increasing control of a child's welfare and upbringing by the

community, and the growing disposition to limit and tax inheritance are complementary aspects of the general tendency to regard the welfare and free intraplay of future generations no longer as the concern of parents and altruistic individuals, but as the predominant issue of statesmanship, and the duty and moral meaning of the world community as a whole.

Section 6

From the conception of mechanical force as coming in from Nature to the service of man, a conception the Utopian proposal of a coinage based on energy units would emphasise, arise profound contrasts between the modern and the classical Utopias. Except for a meagre use of water power for milling, and the wind for sailing--so meagre in the latter case that the classical world never contrived to do without the galley slave--and a certain restricted help from oxen in ploughing, and from horses in locomotion, all the energy that sustained the old-fashioned State was derived from the muscular exertion of toiling men. They ran their world by hand. Continual bodily labour was a condition of social existence. It is only with the coming of coal burning, of abundant iron and steel, and of scientific knowledge that this condition has been changed. To-day, I suppose, if it were possible to indicate, in units of energy, the grand total of work upon which the social fabric of the United States or England rests, it would be found that a vastly

preponderating moiety is derived from non-human sources, from coal and liquid fuel, and explosives and wind and water. There is every indication of a steady increase in this proportion of mechanical energy, in this emancipation of men from the necessity of physical labour. There appears no limit to the invasion of life by the machine.

Now it is only in the last three hundred years that any human being seems to have anticipated this. It stimulates the imagination to remark how entirely it was overlooked as a modifying cause in human development. [Footnote: It is interesting to note how little even Bacon seems to see of this, in his New Atlantis.] Plato clearly had no ideas about machines at all as a force affecting social organisation. There was nothing in his world to suggest them to him. I suppose there arose no invention, no new mechanical appliance or method of the slightest social importance through all his length of years. He never thought of a State that did not rely for its force upon human muscle, just as he never thought of a State that was not primarily organised for warfare hand to hand. Political and moral inventions he saw enough of and to spare, and in that direction he still stimulates the imagination. But in regard to all material possibilities he deadens rather than stimulates. [Footnote: The lost Utopia of Hippodamus provided rewards for inventors, but unless Aristotle misunderstood him, and it is certainly the fate of all Utopias to be more or less misread, the inventions contemplated were political devices.] An infinitude of nonsense about the Greek mind

would never have been written if the distinctive intellectual and artistic quality of Plato's time, its extraordinarily clear definition of certain material conditions as absolutely permanent, coupled with its politico-social instability, had been borne in mind. The food of the Greek imagination was the very antithesis of our own nourishment. We are educated by our circumstances to think no revolution in appliances and economic organisation incredible, our minds play freely about possibilities that would have struck the men of the Academy as outrageous extravagance, and it is in regard to politico-social expedients that our imaginations fail. Sparta, for all the evidence of history, is scarcely more credible to us than a motor-car throbbing in the agora would have been to Socrates.

By sheer inadvertence, therefore, Plato commenced the tradition of Utopias without machinery, a tradition we find Morris still loyally following, except for certain mechanical barges and such-like toys, in his *News from Nowhere*. There are some foreshadowings of mechanical possibilities in the *New Atlantis*, but it is only in the nineteenth century that Utopias appeared in which the fact is clearly recognised that the social fabric rests no longer upon human labour. It was, I believe, Cabet [Footnote: Cabet, *Voyage en Icarie*, 1848.] who first in a Utopian work insisted upon the escape of man from irksome labours through the use of machinery. He is the great primitive of modern Utopias, and Bellamy is his American equivalent. Hitherto, either slave labour (Phaleas), [Footnote: Aristotle's

Politics, Bk. II., Ch. VIII.] or at least class distinctions involving unavoidable labour in the lower class, have been assumed--as Plato does, and as Bacon in the *New Atlantis* probably intended to do (More gave his Utopians bondsmen sans phrase for their most disagreeable toil); or there is--as in Morris and the outright Return-to-Nature Utopians--a bold make-believe that all toil may be made a joy, and with that a levelling down of all society to an equal participation in labour. But indeed this is against all the observed behaviour of mankind. It needed the Olympian unworldliness of an irresponsible rich man of the shareholding type, a Ruskin or a Morris playing at life, to imagine as much. Road-making under Mr. Ruskin's auspices was a joy at Oxford no doubt, and a distinction, and it still remains a distinction; it proved the least contagious of practices. And Hawthorne did not find bodily toil anything more than the curse the Bible says it is, at Brook Farm. [Footnote: The Blythedale Experiment, and see also his Notebook.]

If toil is a blessing, never was blessing so effectually disguised, and the very people who tell us that, hesitate to suggest more than a beautiful ease in the endless day of Heaven. A certain amount of bodily or mental exercise, a considerable amount of doing things under the direction of one's free imagination is quite another matter. Artistic production, for example, when it is at its best, when a man is freely obeying himself, and not troubling to please others, is really not toil at all. It is quite a different thing

digging potatoes, as boys say, "for a lark," and digging them because otherwise you will starve, digging them day after day as a dull, unavoidable imperative. The essence of toil is that imperative, and the fact that the attention must cramp itself to the work in hand--that it excludes freedom, and not that it involves fatigue. So long as anything but a quasi-savage life depended upon toil, so long was it hopeless to expect mankind to do anything but struggle to confer just as much of this blessing as possible upon one another. But now that the new conditions physical science is bringing about, not only dispense with man as a source of energy but supply the hope that all routine work may be made automatic, it is becoming conceivable that presently there may be no need for anyone to toil habitually at all; that a labouring class--that is to say, a class of workers without personal initiative--will become unnecessary to the world of men.

The plain message physical science has for the world at large is this, that were our political and social and moral devices only as well contrived to their ends as a linotype machine, an antiseptic operating plant, or an electric tram-car, there need now at the present moment be no appreciable toil in the world, and only the smallest fraction of the pain, the fear, and the anxiety that now makes human life so doubtful in its value. There is more than enough for everyone alive. Science stands, a too competent servant, behind her wrangling underbred masters, holding out resources, devices, and remedies they are too stupid to use. [Footnote: See that most

suggestive little book, Twentieth Century Inventions, by Mr. George Sutherland.] And on its material side a modern Utopia must needs present these gifts as taken, and show a world that is really abolishing the need of labour, abolishing the last base reason for anyone's servitude or inferiority.

Section 7

The effectual abolition of a labouring and servile class will make itself felt in every detail of the inn that will shelter us, of the bedrooms we shall occupy. You conceive my awakening to all these things on the morning after our arrival. I shall lie for a minute or so with my nose peeping over the coverlet, agreeably and gently coming awake, and with some vague nightmare of sitting at a common table with an unavoidable dustman in green and gold called Boffin, [Footnote: Vide William Morris's News from Nowhere.] fading out of my mind. Then I should start up. You figure my apprehensive, startled inspection of my chamber. "Where am I?" that classic phrase, recurs. Then I perceive quite clearly that I am in bed in Utopia.

Utopia! The word is enough to bring anyone out of bed, to the nearest window, but thence I see no more than the great mountain mass behind the inn, a very terrestrial looking mountain mass. I return to the contrivances about me, and make my examination as I

dress, pausing garment in hand to hover over first this thing of interest and then that.

The room is, of course, very clear and clean and simple; not by any means cheaply equipped, but designed to economise the labour of redding and repair just as much as is possible. It is beautifully proportioned, and rather lower than most rooms I know on earth. There is no fireplace, and I am perplexed by that until I find a thermometer beside six switches on the wall. Above this switch-board is a brief instruction: one switch warms the floor, which is not carpeted, but covered by a substance like soft oilcloth; one warms the mattress (which is of metal with resistance coils threaded to and fro in it); and the others warm the wall in various degrees, each directing current through a separate system of resistances. The casement does not open, but above, flush with the ceiling, a noiseless rapid fan pumps air out of the room. The air enters by a Tobin shaft. There is a recess dressing-room, equipped with a bath and all that is necessary to one's toilette, and the water, one remarks, is warmed, if one desires it warm, by passing it through an electrically heated spiral of tubing. A cake of soap drops out of a store machine on the turn of a handle, and when you have done with it, you drop that and your soiled towels and so forth, which also are given you by machines, into a little box, through the bottom of which they drop at once, and sail down a smooth shaft. A little notice tells you the price of your room, and you gather the price is doubled if you do not leave the toilette as you found it. Beside the

bed, and to be lit at night by a handy switch over the pillow, is a little clock, its face flush with the wall. The room has no corners to gather dirt, wall meets floor with a gentle curve, and the apartment could be swept out effectually by a few strokes of a mechanical sweeper. The door frames and window frames are of metal, rounded and impervious to draught. You are politely requested to turn a handle at the foot of your bed before leaving the room, and forthwith the frame turns up into a vertical position, and the bedclothes hang airing. You stand at the doorway and realise that there remains not a minute's work for anyone to do. Memories of the foetid disorder of many an earthly bedroom after a night's use float across your mind.

And you must not imagine this dustless, spotless, sweet apartment as anything but beautiful. Its appearance is a little unfamiliar of course, but all the muddle of dust-collecting hangings and witless ornament that cover the earthly bedroom, the valances, the curtains to check the draught from the ill-fitting wood windows, the worthless irrelevant pictures, usually a little askew, the dusty carpets, and all the paraphernalia about the dirty, black-leaded fireplace are gone. But the faintly tinted walls are framed with just one clear coloured line, as finely placed as the member of a Greek capital; the door handles and the lines of the panels of the door, the two chairs, the framework of the bed, the writing table, have all that final simplicity, that exquisite finish of contour that is begotten of sustained artistic effort. The graciously shaped

windows each frame a picture--since they are draughtless the window seats are no mere mockeries as are the window seats of earth--and on the sill, the sole thing to need attention in the room, is one little bowl of blue Alpine flowers.

The same exquisite simplicity meets one downstairs.

Our landlord sits down at table with us for a moment, and seeing we do not understand the electrically heated coffee-pot before us, shows us what to do. Coffee and milk we have, in the Continental fashion, and some excellent rolls and butter.

He is a swarthy little man, our landlord, and overnight we saw him preoccupied with other guests. But we have risen either late or early by Utopian standards, we know not which, and this morning he has us to himself. His bearing is kindly and inoffensive, but he cannot conceal the curiosity that possesses him. His eye meets ours with a mute inquiry, and then as we fall to, we catch him scrutinising our cuffs, our garments, our boots, our faces, our table manners. He asks nothing at first, but says a word or so about our night's comfort and the day's weather, phrases that have an air of being customary. Then comes a silence that is interrogative.

"Excellent coffee," I say to fill the gap.

"And excellent rolls," says my botanist.

Our landlord indicates his sense of our approval.

A momentary diversion is caused by the entry of an elfin-tressed little girl, who stares at us half impudently, half shyly, with bright black eyes, hesitates at the botanist's clumsy smile and nod, and then goes and stands by her father and surveys us steadfastly.

"You have come far?" ventures our landlord, patting his daughter's shoulder.

I glance at the botanist. "Yes," I say, "we have."

I expand. "We have come so far that this country of yours seems very strange indeed to us."

"The mountains?"

"Not only the mountains."

"You came up out of the Ticino valley?"

"No--not that way."

"By the Oberalp?"

"No."

"The Furka?"

"No."

"Not up from the lake?"

"No."

He looks puzzled.

"We came," I say, "from another world."

He seems trying to understand. Then a thought strikes him, and he sends away his little girl with a needless message to her mother.

"Ah!" he says. "Another world--eh? Meaning----?"

"Another world--far in the deeps of space."

Then at the expression of his face one realises that a Modern Utopia will probably keep its more intelligent citizens for better work than inn-tending. He is evidently inaccessible to the idea we think of putting before him. He stares at us a moment, and then remarks,

"There's the book to sign."

We find ourselves confronted with a book, a little after the fashion of the familiar hotel visitors' book of earth. He places this before us, and beside it puts pen and ink and a slab, upon which ink has been freshly smeared.

"Thumbmarks," says my scientific friend hastily in English.

"You show me how to do it," I say as quickly.

He signs first, and I look over his shoulder.

He is displaying more readiness than I should have expected. The book is ruled in broad transverse lines, and has a space for a name, for a number, and a thumbmark. He puts his thumb upon the slab and makes the thumbmark first with the utmost deliberation. Meanwhile he studies the other two entries. The "numbers" of the previous guests above are complex muddles of letters and figures. He writes his name, then with a calm assurance writes down his number, A.M.a.1607.2.ab+. I am wrung with momentary admiration. I follow his example, and fabricate an equally imposing signature. We think ourselves very clever. The landlord proffers finger bowls for our thumbs, and his eye goes, just a little curiously, to our entries.

I decide it is advisable to pay and go before any conversation about

our formulae arises.

As we emerge into the corridor, and the morning sunlight of the Utopian world, I see the landlord bending over the book.

"Come on," I say. "The most tiresome thing in the world is explanations, and I perceive that if we do not get along, they will fall upon us now."

I glance back to discover the landlord and a gracefully robed woman standing outside the pretty simplicity of the Utopian inn, watching us doubtfully as we recede.

"Come on," I insist.

Section 8

We should go towards the Schoellenen gorge, and as we went, our fresh morning senses would gather together a thousand factors for our impression of this more civilised world. A Modern Utopia will have done with yapping about nationality, and so the ugly fortifications, the barracks and military defilements of the earthly vale of Urseren will be wanting. Instead there will be a great multitude of gracious little houses clustering in college-like groups, no doubt about their common kitchens and halls, down and

about the valley slopes. And there will be many more trees, and a great variety of trees--all the world will have been ransacked for winter conifers. Despite the height of the valley there will be a double avenue along the road. This high road with its tramway would turn with us to descend the gorge, and we should hesitate upon the adventure of boarding the train. But now we should have the memory of our landlord's curious eye upon us, and we should decide at last to defer the risk of explanations such an enterprise might precipitate.

We should go by the great road for a time, and note something of the difference between Utopian and terrestrial engineering.

The tramway, the train road, the culverts, and bridges, the Urnerloch tunnel, into which the road plunges, will all be beautiful things.

There is nothing in machinery, there is nothing in embankments and railways and iron bridges and engineering devices to oblige them to be ugly. Ugliness is the measure of imperfection; a thing of human making is for the most part ugly in proportion to the poverty of its constructive thought, to the failure of its producer fully to grasp the purpose of its being. Everything to which men continue to give thought and attention, which they make and remake in the same direction, and with a continuing desire to do as well as they can, grows beautiful inevitably. Things made by mankind under modern

conditions are ugly, primarily because our social organisation is ugly, because we live in an atmosphere of snatch and uncertainty, and do everything in an underbred strenuous manner. This is the misfortune of machinery, and not its fault. Art, like some beautiful plant, lives on its atmosphere, and when the atmosphere is good, it will grow everywhere, and when it is bad nowhere. If we smashed and buried every machine, every furnace, every factory in the world, and without any further change set ourselves to home industries, hand labour, spade husbandry, sheep-folding and pig minding, we should still do things in the same haste, and achieve nothing but dirtiness, inconvenience, bad air, and another gaunt and gawky reflection of our intellectual and moral disorder. We should mend nothing.

But in Utopia a man who designs a tram road will be a cultivated man, an artist craftsman; he will strive, as a good writer, or a painter strives, to achieve the simplicity of perfection. He will make his girders and rails and parts as gracious as that first engineer, Nature, has made the stems of her plants and the joints and gestures of her animals. To esteem him a sort of anti-artist, to count every man who makes things with his unaided thumbs an artist, and every man who uses machinery as a brute, is merely a passing phase of human stupidity. This tram road beside us will be a triumph of design. The idea will be so unfamiliar to us that for a time it will not occur to us that it is a system of beautiful objects at all. We shall admire its ingenious adaptation to the need of a

district that is buried half the year in snow, the hard bed below, curved and guttered to do its own clearing, the great arched sleeper masses, raising the rails a good two yards above the ground, the easy, simple standards and insulators. Then it will creep in upon our minds, "But, by Jove! This is designed!"

Indeed the whole thing will be designed.

Later on, perhaps, we may find students in an art school working in competition to design an electric tram, students who know something of modern metallurgy, and something of electrical engineering, and we shall find people as keenly critical of a signal box or an iron bridge as they are on earth of----! Heavens! what are they critical about on earth?

The quality and condition of a dress tie!

We should make some unpatriotic comparisons with our own planet, no doubt.