CHAPTER THE FIFTH

Failure in a Modern Utopia

Section 1

The old Utopias--save for the breeding schemes of Plato and Campanella--ignored that reproductive competition among individualities which is the substance of life, and dealt essentially with its incidentals. The endless variety of men, their endless gradation of quality, over which the hand of selection plays, and to which we owe the unmanageable complication of real life, is tacitly set aside. The real world is a vast disorder of accidents and incalculable forces in which men survive or fail. A Modern Utopia, unlike its predecessors, dare not pretend to change the last condition; it may order and humanise the conflict, but men must still survive or fail.

Most Utopias present themselves as going concerns, as happiness in being; they make it an essential condition that a happy land can have no history, and all the citizens one is permitted to see are well looking and upright and mentally and morally in tune. But we are under the dominion of a logic that obliges us to take over the actual population of the world with only such moral and mental and physical improvements as lie within their inherent possibilities,

and it is our business to ask what Utopia will do with its congenital invalids, its idiots and madmen, its drunkards and men of vicious mind, its cruel and furtive souls, its stupid people, too stupid to be of use to the community, its lumpish, unteachable and unimaginative people? And what will it do with the man who is "poor" all round, the rather spiritless, rather incompetent low-grade man who on earth sits in the den of the sweater, tramps the streets under the banner of the unemployed, or trembles--in another man's cast-off clothing, and with an infinity of hat-touching--on the verge of rural employment?

These people will have to be in the descendant phase, the species must be engaged in eliminating them; there is no escape from that, and conversely the people of exceptional quality must be ascendant. The better sort of people, so far as they can be distinguished, must have the fullest freedom of public service, and the fullest opportunity of parentage. And it must be open to every man to approve himself worthy of ascendency.

The way of Nature in this process is to kill the weaker and the sillier, to crush them, to starve them, to overwhelm them, using the stronger and more cunning as her weapon. But man is the unnatural animal, the rebel child of Nature, and more and more does he turn himself against the harsh and fitful hand that reared him. He sees with a growing resentment the multitude of suffering ineffectual lives over which his species tramples in its ascent. In the Modern

Utopia he will have set himself to change the ancient law. No longer will it be that failures must suffer and perish lest their breed increase, but the breed of failure must not increase, lest they suffer and perish, and the race with them.

Now we need not argue here to prove that the resources of the world and the energy of mankind, were they organised sanely, are amply sufficient to supply every material need of every living human being. And if it can be so contrived that every human being shall live in a state of reasonable physical and mental comfort, without the reproduction of inferior types, there is no reason whatever why that should not be secured. But there must be a competition in life of some sort to determine who are to be pushed to the edge, and who are to prevail and multiply. Whatever we do, man will remain a competitive creature, and though moral and intellectual training may vary and enlarge his conception of success and fortify him with refinements and consolations, no Utopia will ever save him completely from the emotional drama of struggle, from exultations and humiliations, from pride and prostration and shame. He lives in success and failure just as inevitably as he lives in space and time.

But we may do much to make the margin of failure endurable. On earth, for all the extravagance of charity, the struggle for the mass of men at the bottom resolves itself into a struggle, and often a very foul and ugly struggle, for food, shelter, and clothing.

Deaths outright from exposure and starvation are now perhaps uncommon, but for the multitude there are only miserable houses, uncomfortable clothes, and bad and insufficient food; fractional starvation and exposure, that is to say. A Utopia planned upon modern lines will certainly have put an end to that. It will insist upon every citizen being being properly housed, well nourished, and in good health, reasonably clean and clothed healthily, and upon that insistence its labour laws will be founded. In a phrasing that will be familiar to everyone interested in social reform, it will maintain a standard of life. Any house, unless it be a public monument, that does not come up to its rising standard of healthiness and convenience, the Utopian State will incontinently pull down, and pile the material and charge the owner for the labour; any house unduly crowded or dirty, it must in some effectual manner, directly or indirectly, confiscate and clear and clean. And any citizen indecently dressed, or ragged and dirty, or publicly unhealthy, or sleeping abroad homeless, or in any way neglected or derelict, must come under its care. It will find him work if he can and will work, it will take him to it, it will register him and lend him the money wherewith to lead a comely life until work can be found or made for him, and it will give him credit and shelter him and strengthen him if he is ill. In default of private enterprises it will provide inns for him and food, and it will--by itself acting as the reserve employer--maintain a minimum wage which will cover the cost of a decent life. The State will stand at the back of the economic struggle as the reserve employer of labour. This most

excellent idea does, as a matter of fact, underlie the British institution of the workhouse, but it is jumbled up with the relief of old age and infirmity, it is administered parochially and on the supposition that all population is static and localised whereas every year it becomes more migratory; it is administered without any regard to the rising standards of comfort and self-respect in a progressive civilisation, and it is administered grudgingly. The thing that is done is done as unwilling charity by administrators who are often, in the rural districts at least, competing for low-priced labour, and who regard want of employment as a crime. But if it were possible for any citizen in need of money to resort to a place of public employment as a right, and there work for a week or month without degradation upon certain minimum terms, it seems fairly certain that no one would work, except as the victim of some quite exceptional and temporary accident, for less.

The work publicly provided would have to be toilsome, but not cruel or incapacitating. A choice of occupations would need to be afforded, occupations adapted to different types of training and capacity, with some residual employment of a purely laborious and mechanical sort for those who were incapable of doing the things that required intelligence. Necessarily this employment by the State would be a relief of economic pressure, but it would not be considered a charity done to the individual, but a public service. It need not pay, any more than the police need pay, but it could probably be done at a small margin of loss. There is a number of

durable things bound finally to be useful that could be made and stored whenever the tide of more highly paid employment ebbed and labour sank to its minimum, bricks, iron from inferior ores, shaped and preserved timber, pins, nails, plain fabrics of cotton and linen, paper, sheet glass, artificial fuel, and so on; new roads could be made and public buildings reconstructed, inconveniences of all sorts removed, until under the stimulus of accumulating material, accumulating investments or other circumstances, the tide of private enterprise flowed again.

The State would provide these things for its citizen as though it was his right to require them; he would receive as a shareholder in the common enterprise and not with any insult of charity. But on the other hand it will require that the citizen who renders the minimum of service for these concessions shall not become a parent until he is established in work at a rate above the minimum, and free of any debt he may have incurred. The State will never press for its debt, nor put a limit to its accumulation so long as a man or woman remains childless; it will not even grudge them temporary spells of good fortune when they may lift their earnings above the minimum wage. It will pension the age of everyone who cares to take a pension, and it will maintain special guest homes for the very old to which they may come as paying guests, spending their pensions there. By such obvious devices it will achieve the maximum elimination of its feeble and spiritless folk in every generation with the minimum of suffering and public disorder.

Section 2

But the mildly incompetent, the spiritless and dull, the poorer sort who are ill, do not exhaust our Utopian problem. There remain idiots and lunatics, there remain perverse and incompetent persons, there are people of weak character who become drunkards, drug takers, and the like. Then there are persons tainted with certain foul and transmissible diseases. All these people spoil the world for others. They may become parents, and with most of them there is manifestly nothing to be done but to seclude them from the great body of the population. You must resort to a kind of social surgery. You cannot have social freedom in your public ways, your children cannot speak to whom they will, your girls and gentle women cannot go abroad while some sorts of people go free. And there are violent people, and those who will not respect the property of others, thieves and cheats, they, too, so soon as their nature is confirmed, must pass out of the free life of our ordered world. So soon as there can be no doubt of the disease or baseness of the individual, so soon as the insanity or other disease is assured, or the crime repeated a third time, or the drunkenness or misdemeanour past its seventh occasion (let us say), so soon must he or she pass out of the common ways of men.

The dreadfulness of all such proposals as this lies in the

possibility of their execution falling into the hands of hard, dull, and cruel administrators. But in the case of a Utopia one assumes the best possible government, a government as merciful and deliberate as it is powerful and decisive. You must not too hastily imagine these things being done--as they would be done on earth at present--by a number of zealous half-educated people in a state of panic at a quite imaginary "Rapid Multiplication of the Unfit."

No doubt for first offenders, and for all offenders under five-and-twenty, the Modern Utopia will attempt cautionary and remedial treatment. There will be disciplinary schools and colleges for the young, fair and happy places, but with less confidence and more restraint than the schools and colleges of the ordinary world. In remote and solitary regions these enclosures will lie, they will be fenced in and forbidden to the common run of men, and there, remote from all temptation, the defective citizen will be schooled. There will be no masking of the lesson; "which do you value most, the wide world of humanity, or this evil trend in you?" From that discipline at last the prisoners will return.

But the others; what would a saner world do with them?

Our world is still vindictive, but the all-reaching State of Utopia will have the strength that begets mercy. Quietly the outcast will go from among his fellow men. There will be no drumming of him out of the ranks, no tearing off of epaulettes, no smiting in the face.

The thing must be just public enough to obviate secret tyrannies, and that is all.

There would be no killing, no lethal chambers. No doubt Utopia will kill all deformed and monstrous and evilly diseased births, but for the rest, the State will hold itself accountable for their being. There is no justice in Nature perhaps, but the idea of justice must be sacred in any good society. Lives that statesmanship has permitted, errors it has not foreseen and educated against, must not be punished by death. If the State does not keep faith, no one will keep faith. Crime and bad lives are the measure of a State's failure, all crime in the end is the crime of the community. Even for murder Utopia will not, I think, kill.

I doubt even if there will be jails. No men are quite wise enough, good enough and cheap enough to staff jails as a jail ought to be staffed. Perhaps islands will be chosen, islands lying apart from the highways of the sea, and to these the State will send its exiles, most of them thanking Heaven, no doubt, to be quit of a world of prigs. The State will, of course, secure itself against any children from these people, that is the primary object in their seclusion, and perhaps it may even be necessary to make these island prisons a system of island monasteries and island nunneries. Upon that I am not competent to speak, but if I may believe the literature of the subject--unhappily a not very well criticised literature--it is not necessary to enforce this separation.

[Footnote: See for example Dr. W. A. Chapple's The Fertility of the Unfit.]

About such islands patrol boats will go, there will be no freedoms of boat building, and it may be necessary to have armed guards at the creeks and quays. Beyond that the State will give these segregated failures just as full a liberty as they can have. If it interferes any further it will be simply to police the islands against the organisation of serious cruelty, to maintain the freedom of any of the detained who wish it to transfer themselves to other islands, and so to keep a check upon tyranny. The insane, of course, will demand care and control, but there is no reason why the islands of the hopeless drunkard, for example, should not each have a virtual autonomy, have at the most a Resident and a guard. I believe that a community of drunkards might be capable of organising even its own bad habit to the pitch of tolerable existence. I do not see why such an island should not build and order for itself and manufacture and trade. "Your ways are not our ways," the World State will say; "but here is freedom and a company of kindred souls. Elect your jolly rulers, brew if you will, and distil; here are vine cuttings and barley fields; do as it pleases you to do. We will take care of the knives, but for the rest--deal yourselves with God!"

And you see the big convict steamship standing in to the Island of Incurable Cheats. The crew are respectfully at their quarters, ready to lend a hand overboard, but wide awake, and the captain is

hospitably on the bridge to bid his guests good-bye and keep an eye on the movables. The new citizens for this particular Alsatia, each no doubt with his personal belongings securely packed and at hand, crowd the deck and study the nearing coast. Bright, keen faces would be there, and we, were we by any chance to find ourselves beside the captain, might recognise the double of this great earthly magnate or that, Petticoat Lane and Park Lane cheek by jowl. The landing part of the jetty is clear of people, only a government man or so stands there to receive the boat and prevent a rush, but beyond the gates a number of engagingly smart-looking individuals loiter speculatively. One figures a remarkable building labelled Custom House, an interesting fiscal revival this population has made, and beyond, crowding up the hill, the painted walls of a number of comfortable inns clamour loudly. One or two inhabitants in reduced circumstances would act as hotel touts, there are several hotel omnibuses and a Bureau de Change, certainly a Bureau de Change. And a small house with a large board, aimed point-blank seaward, declares itself a Gratis Information Office, and next to it rises the graceful dome of a small Casino. Beyond, great hoardings proclaim the advantages of many island specialities, a hustling commerce, and the opening of a Public Lottery. There is a large cheap-looking barrack, the school of Commercial Science for gentlemen of inadequate training....

Altogether a very go-ahead looking little port it would be, and though this disembarkation would have none of the flow of hilarious good fellowship that would throw a halo of genial noise about the

Islands of Drink, it is doubtful if the new arrivals would feel anything very tragic in the moment. Here at last was scope for adventure after their hearts.

This sounds more fantastic than it is. But what else is there to do, unless you kill? You must seclude, but why should you torment? All modern prisons are places of torture by restraint, and the habitual criminal plays the part of a damaged mouse at the mercy of the cat of our law. He has his little painful run, and back he comes again to a state more horrible even than destitution. There are no Alsatias left in the world. For my own part I can think of no crime, unless it is reckless begetting or the wilful transmission of contagious disease, for which the bleak terrors, the solitudes and ignominies of the modern prison do not seem outrageously cruel. If you want to go so far as that, then kill. Why, once you are rid of them, should you pester criminals to respect an uncongenial standard of conduct? Into such islands of exile as this a modern Utopia will have to purge itself. There is no alternative that I can contrive.

Section 3

Will a Utopian be free to be idle?

Work has to be done, every day humanity is sustained by its

collective effort, and without a constant recurrence of effort in the single man as in the race as a whole, there is neither health nor happiness. The permanent idleness of a human being is not only burthensome to the world, but his own secure misery. But unprofitable occupation is also intended by idleness, and it may be considered whether that freedom also will be open to the Utopian. Conceivably it will, like privacy, locomotion, and almost all the freedoms of life, and on the same terms--if he possess the money to pay for it.

That last condition may produce a shock in minds accustomed to the proposition that money is the root of all evil, and to the idea that Utopia necessarily implies something rather oaken and hand-made and primitive in all these relations. Of course, money is not the root of any evil in the world; the root of all evil in the world, and the root of all good too, is the Will to Live, and money becomes harmful only when by bad laws and bad economic organisation it is more easily attained by bad men than good. It is as reasonable to say food is the root of all disease, because so many people suffer from excessive and unwise eating. The sane economic ideal is to make the possession of money the clear indication of public serviceableness, and the more nearly that ideal is attained, the smaller is the justification of poverty and the less the hardship of being poor. In barbaric and disorderly countries it is almost honourable to be indigent and unquestionably virtuous to give to a beggar, and even in the more or less civilised societies of earth, so many children

come into life hopelessly handicapped, that austerity to the poor is regarded as the meanest of mean virtues. But in Utopia everyone will have had an education and a certain minimum of nutrition and training; everyone will be insured against ill-health and accidents; there will be the most efficient organisation for balancing the pressure of employment and the presence of disengaged labour, and so to be moneyless will be clear evidence of unworthiness. In Utopia, no one will dream of giving to a casual beggar, and no one will dream of begging.

There will need to be, in the place of the British casual wards, simple but comfortable inns with a low tariff--controlled to a certain extent no doubt, and even in some cases maintained, by the State. This tariff will have such a definite relation to the minimum permissible wage, that a man who has incurred no liabilities through marriage or the like relationship, will be able to live in comfort and decency upon that minimum wage, pay his small insurance premium against disease, death, disablement, or ripening years, and have a margin for clothing and other personal expenses. But he will get neither shelter nor food, except at the price of his freedom, unless he can produce money.

But suppose a man without money in a district where employment is not to be found for him; suppose the amount of employment to have diminished in the district with such suddenness as to have stranded him there. Or suppose he has quarrelled with the only possible

employer, or that he does not like his particular work. Then no doubt the Utopian State, which wants everyone to be just as happy as the future welfare of the race permits, will come to his assistance. One imagines him resorting to a neat and business-like post-office, and stating his case to a civil and intelligent official. In any sane State the economic conditions of every quarter of the earth will be watched as constantly as its meteorological phases, and a daily map of the country within a radius of three or four hundred miles showing all the places where labour is needed will hang upon the post-office wall. To this his attention will be directed. The man out of work will decide to try his luck in this place or that, and the public servant, the official, will make a note of his name, verify his identity--the freedom of Utopia will not be incompatible with the universal registration of thumb-marks--and issue passes for travel and coupons for any necessary inn accommodation on his way to the chosen destination. There he will seek a new employer.

Such a free change of locality once or twice a year from a region of restricted employment to a region of labour shortage will be among the general privileges of the Utopian citizen.

But suppose that in no district in the world is there work within the capacity of this particular man?

Before we suppose that, we must take into consideration the general assumption one is permitted to make in all Utopian speculations. All

Utopians will be reasonably well educated upon Utopian lines; there will be no illiterates unless they are unteachable imbeciles, no rule-of-thumb toilers as inadaptable as trained beasts. The Utopian worker will be as versatile as any well-educated man is on earth to-day, and no Trade Union will impose a limit to his activities. The world will be his Union. If the work he does best and likes best is not to be found, there is still the work he likes second best. Lacking his proper employment, he will turn to some kindred trade.

But even with that adaptability, it may be that sometimes he will not find work. Such a disproportion between the work to be done and the people to do it may arise as to present a surplus of labour everywhere. This disproportion may be due to two causes: to an increase of population without a corresponding increase of enterprises, or to a diminution of employment throughout the world due to the completion of great enterprises, to economies achieved, or to the operation of new and more efficient labour-saving appliances. Through either cause, a World State may find itself doing well except for an excess of citizens of mediocre and lower quality.

But the first cause may be anticipated by wise marriage laws.... The full discussion of these laws will come later, but here one may insist that Utopia will control the increase of its population. Without the determination and ability to limit that increase as well

as to stimulate it whenever it is necessary, no Utopia is possible. That was clearly demonstrated by Malthus for all time.

The second cause is not so easily anticipated, but then, though its immediate result in glutting the labour market is similar, its final consequences are entirely different from those of the first. The whole trend of a scientific mechanical civilisation is continually to replace labour by machinery and to increase it in its effectiveness by organisation, and so quite independently of any increase in population labour must either fall in value until it can compete against and check the cheapening process, or if that is prevented, as it will be in Utopia, by a minimum wage, come out of employment. There is no apparent limit to this process. But a surplus of efficient labour at the minimum wage is exactly the condition that should stimulate new enterprises, and that in a State saturated with science and prolific in invention will stimulate new enterprises. An increasing surplus of available labour without an absolute increase of population, an increasing surplus of labour due to increasing economy and not to proliferation, and which, therefore, does not press on and disarrange the food supply, is surely the ideal condition for a progressive civilisation. I am inclined to think that, since labour will be regarded as a delocalised and fluid force, it will be the World State and not the big municipalities ruling the force areas that will be the reserve employer of labour. Very probably it will be convenient for the State to hand over the surplus labour for municipal purposes, but

that is another question. All over the world the labour exchanges will be reporting the fluctuating pressure of economic demand and transferring workers from this region of excess to that of scarcity; and whenever the excess is universal, the World State--failing an adequate development of private enterprise--will either reduce the working day and so absorb the excess, or set on foot some permanent special works of its own, paying the minimum wage and allowing them to progress just as slowly or just as rapidly as the ebb and flow of labour dictated. But with sane marriage and birth laws there is no reason to suppose such calls upon the resources and initiative of the world more than temporary and exceptional occasions.

Section 4

The existence of our blond bare-footed friend was evidence enough that in a modern Utopia a man will be free to be just as idle or uselessly busy as it pleases him, after he has earned the minimum wage. He must do that, of course, to pay for his keep, to pay his assurance tax against ill-health or old age, and any charge or debt paternity may have brought upon him. The World State of the modern Utopist is no state of moral compulsions. If, for example, under the restricted Utopian scheme of inheritance, a man inherited sufficient money to release him from the need to toil, he would be free to go where he pleased and do what he liked. A certain proportion of men at ease is good for the world; work as a moral obligation is the

morality of slaves, and so long as no one is overworked there is no need to worry because some few are underworked. Utopia does not exist as a solace for envy. From leisure, in a good moral and intellectual atmosphere, come experiments, come philosophy and the new departures.

In any modern Utopia there must be many leisurely people. We are all too obsessed in the real world by the strenuous ideal, by the idea that the vehement incessant fool is the only righteous man. Nothing done in a hurry, nothing done under strain, is really well done. A State where all are working hard, where none go to and fro, easily and freely, loses touch with the purpose of freedom.

But inherited independence will be the rarest and least permanent of Utopian facts, for the most part that wider freedom will have to be earned, and the inducements to men and women to raise their personal value far above the minimum wage will be very great indeed. Thereby will come privacies, more space in which to live, liberty to go everywhere and do no end of things, the power and freedom to initiate interesting enterprises and assist and co-operate with interesting people, and indeed all the best things of life. The modern Utopia will give a universal security indeed, and exercise the minimum of compulsions to toil, but it will offer some acutely desirable prizes. The aim of all these devices, the minimum wage, the standard of life, provision for all the feeble and unemployed and so forth, is not to rob life of incentives but to change their

nature, to make life not less energetic, but less panic-stricken and violent and base, to shift the incidence of the struggle for existence from our lower to our higher emotions, so to anticipate and neutralise the motives of the cowardly and bestial, that the ambitious and energetic imagination which is man's finest quality may become the incentive and determining factor in survival.

Section 5

After we have paid for our lunch in the little inn that corresponds to Wassen, the botanist and I would no doubt spend the rest of the forenoon in the discussion of various aspects and possibilities of Utopian labour laws. We should examine our remaining change, copper coins of an appearance ornamental rather than reassuring, and we should decide that after what we had gathered from the man with the blond hair, it would, on the whole, be advisable to come to the point with the labour question forthwith. At last we should draw the deep breath of resolution and arise and ask for the Public Office. We should know by this time that the labour bureau sheltered with the post-office and other public services in one building.

The public office of Utopia would of course contain a few surprises for two men from terrestrial England. You imagine us entering, the botanist lagging a little behind me, and my first attempts to be offhand and commonplace in a demand for work.

The office is in charge of a quick-eyed little woman of six and thirty perhaps, and she regards us with a certain keenness of scrutiny.

"Where are your papers?" she asks.

I think for a moment of the documents in my pocket, my passport chequered with visas and addressed in my commendation and in the name of her late Majesty by We, Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoigne Cecil, Marquess of Salisbury, Earl of Salisbury, Viscount Cranborne, Baron Cecil, and so forth, to all whom it may concern, my Carte d'Identite (useful on minor occasions) of the Touring Club de France, my green ticket to the Reading Room of the British Museum, and my Lettre d'Indication from the London and County Bank. A foolish humour prompts me to unfold all these, hand them to her and take the consequences, but I resist.

"Lost," I say, briefly.

"Both lost?" she asks, looking at my friend.

"Both," I answer.

"How?"

I astonish myself by the readiness of my answer.

"I fell down a snow slope and they came out of my pocket."

"And exactly the same thing happened to both of you?"

"No. He'd given me his to put with my own." She raised her eyebrows.
"His pocket is defective," I add, a little hastily.

Her manners are too Utopian for her to follow that up. She seems to reflect on procedure.

"What are your numbers?" she asks, abruptly.

A vision of that confounded visitors' book at the inn above comes into my mind. "Let me see," I say, and pat my forehead and reflect, refraining from the official eye before me. "Let me see."

"What is yours?" she asks the botanist.

"A. B.," he says, slowly, "little a, nine four seven, I think----"

"Don't you know?"

"Not exactly," says the botanist, very agreeably. "No."

"Do you mean to say neither of you know your own numbers?" says the little post-mistress, with a rising note.

"Yes," I say, with an engaging smile and trying to keep up a good social tone. "It's queer, isn't it? We've both forgotten."

"You're joking," she suggests.

"Well," I temporise.

"I suppose you've got your thumbs?"

"The fact is----" I say and hesitate. "We've got our thumbs, of course."

"Then I shall have to send a thumb-print down to the office and get your number from that. But are you sure you haven't your papers or numbers? It's very queer."

We admit rather sheepishly that it's queer, and question one another silently.

She turns thoughtfully for the thumb-marking slab, and as she does so, a man enters the office. At the sight of him she asks with a

note of relief, "What am I to do, sir, here?"

He looks from her to us gravely, and his eye lights to curiosity at our dress. "What is the matter, madam?" he asks, in a courteous voice.

She explains.

So far the impression we have had of our Utopia is one of a quite unearthly sanity, of good management and comprehensive design in every material thing, and it has seemed to us a little incongruous that all the Utopians we have talked to, our host of last night, the post-mistress and our garrulous tramp, have been of the most commonplace type. But suddenly there looks out from this man's pose and regard a different quality, a quality altogether nearer that of the beautiful tramway and of the gracious order of the mountain houses. He is a well-built man of perhaps five and thirty, with the easy movement that comes with perfect physical condition, his face is clean shaven and shows the firm mouth of a disciplined man, and his grey eyes are clear and steady. His legs are clad in some woven stuff deep-red in colour, and over this he wears a white shirt fitting pretty closely, and with a woven purple hem. His general effect reminds me somehow of the Knights Templars. On his head is a cap of thin leather and still thinner steel, and with the vestiges of ear-guards--rather like an attenuated version of the caps that were worn by Cromwell's Ironsides.

He looks at us and we interpolate a word or so as she explains and feel a good deal of embarrassment at the foolish position we have made for ourselves. I determine to cut my way out of this entanglement before it complicates itself further.

"The fact is----" I say.

"Yes?" he says, with a faint smile.

"We've perhaps been disingenuous. Our position is so entirely exceptional, so difficult to explain----"

"What have you been doing?"

"No," I say, with decision; "it can't be explained like that."

He looks down at his feet. "Go on," he says.

I try to give the thing a quiet, matter-of-fact air. "You see," I say, in the tone one adopts for really lucid explanations, "we come from another world. Consequently, whatever thumb-mark registration or numbering you have in this planet doesn't apply to us, and we don't know our numbers because we haven't got any. We are really, you know, explorers, strangers----"

"But what world do you mean?"

"It's a different planet--a long way away. Practically at an infinite distance."

He looks up in my face with the patient expression of a man who listens to nonsense.

"I know it sounds impossible," I say, "but here is the simple fact--we appear in your world. We appeared suddenly upon the neck of Lucendro--the Passo Lucendro--yesterday afternoon, and I defy you to discover the faintest trace of us before that time. Down we marched into the San Gotthard road and here we are! That's our fact. And as for papers----! Where in your world have you seen papers like this?"

I produce my pocket-book, extract my passport, and present it to him.

His expression has changed. He takes the document and examines it, turns it over, looks at me, and smiles that faint smile of his again.

"Have some more," I say, and proffer the card of the T.C.F.

I follow up that blow with my green British Museum ticket, as

tattered as a flag in a knight's chapel.

"You'll get found out," he says, with my documents in his hand. "You've got your thumbs. You'll be measured. They'll refer to the central registers, and there you'll be!"

"That's just it," I say, "we sha'n't be."

He reflects. "It's a queer sort of joke for you two men to play," he decides, handing me back my documents.

"It's no joke at all," I say, replacing them in my pocket-book.

The post-mistress intervenes. "What would you advise me to do?"

"No money?" he asks.

"No."

He makes some suggestions. "Frankly," he says, "I think you have escaped from some island. How you got so far as here I can't imagine, or what you think you'll do.... But anyhow, there's the stuff for your thumbs."

He points to the thumb-marking apparatus and turns to attend to his own business.

Presently we emerge from the office in a state between discomfiture and amusement, each with a tramway ticket for Lucerne in his hand and with sufficient money to pay our expenses until the morrow. We are to go to Lucerne because there there is a demand for comparatively unskilled labour in carving wood, which seems to us a sort of work within our range and a sort that will not compel our separation.

Section 6

The old Utopias are sessile organisations; the new must square itself to the needs of a migratory population, to an endless coming and going, to a people as fluid and tidal as the sea. It does not enter into the scheme of earthly statesmanship, but indeed all local establishments, all definitions of place, are even now melting under our eyes. Presently all the world will be awash with anonymous stranger men.

Now the simple laws of custom, the homely methods of identification that served in the little communities of the past when everyone knew everyone, fail in the face of this liquefaction. If the modern Utopia is indeed to be a world of responsible citizens, it must have devised some scheme by which every person in the world can be promptly and certainly recognised, and by which anyone missing can

be traced and found.

This is by no means an impossible demand. The total population of the world is, on the most generous estimate, not more than 1,500,000,000, and the effectual indexing of this number of people, the record of their movement hither and thither, the entry of various material facts, such as marriage, parentage, criminal convictions and the like, the entry of the new-born and the elimination of the dead, colossal task though it would be, is still not so great as to be immeasurably beyond comparison with the work of the post-offices in the world of to-day, or the cataloguing of such libraries as that of the British Museum, or such collections as that of the insects in Cromwell Road. Such an index could be housed quite comfortably on one side of Northumberland Avenue, for example. It is only a reasonable tribute to the distinctive lucidity of the French mind to suppose the central index housed in a vast series of buildings at or near Paris. The index would be classified primarily by some unchanging physical characteristic, such as we are told the thumb-mark and finger-mark afford, and to these would be added any other physical traits that were of material value. The classification of thumb-marks and of inalterable physical characteristics goes on steadily, and there is every reason for assuming it possible that each human being could be given a distinct formula, a number or "scientific name," under which he or she could be docketed. [Footnote: It is quite possible that the actual thumb-mark may play only a small part in the work of identification,

but it is an obvious convenience to our thread of story to assume that it is the one sufficient feature.] About the buildings in which this great main index would be gathered, would be a system of other indices with cross references to the main one, arranged under names, under professional qualifications, under diseases, crimes and the like.

These index cards might conceivably be transparent and so contrived as to give a photographic copy promptly whenever it was needed, and they could have an attachment into which would slip a ticket bearing the name of the locality in which the individual was last reported. A little army of attendants would be at work upon this index day and night. From sub-stations constantly engaged in checking back thumb-marks and numbers, an incessant stream of information would come, of births, of deaths, of arrivals at inns, of applications to post-offices for letters, of tickets taken for long journeys, of criminal convictions, marriages, applications for public doles and the like. A filter of offices would sort the stream, and all day and all night for ever a swarm of clerks would go to and fro correcting this central register, and photographing copies of its entries for transmission to the subordinate local stations, in response to their inquiries. So the inventory of the State would watch its every man and the wide world write its history as the fabric of its destiny flowed on. At last, when the citizen died, would come the last entry of all, his age and the cause of his death and the date and place of his cremation, and his card would be taken out and passed on to the

universal pedigree, to a place of greater quiet, to the ever-growing galleries of the records of the dead.

Such a record is inevitable if a Modern Utopia is to be achieved.

Yet at this, too, our blond-haired friend would no doubt rebel. One of the many things to which some will make claim as a right, is that of going unrecognised and secret whither one will. But that, so far as one's fellow wayfarers were concerned, would still be possible. Only the State would share the secret of one's little concealment. To the eighteenth-century Liberal, to the old-fashioned nineteenth-century Liberal, that is to say to all professed Liberals, brought up to be against the Government on principle, this organised clairvoyance will be the most hateful of dreams. Perhaps, too, the Individualist would see it in that light. But these are only the mental habits acquired in an evil time. The old Liberalism assumed bad government, the more powerful the government the worse it was, just as it assumed the natural righteousness of the free individual. Darkness and secrecy were, indeed, the natural refuges of liberty when every government had in it the near possibility of tyranny, and the Englishman or American looked at the papers of a Russian or a German as one might look at the chains of a slave. You imagine that father of the old Liberalism, Rousseau, slinking off from his offspring at the door of the Foundling Hospital, and you can understand what a crime against natural virtue this quiet eye of

the State would have seemed to him. But suppose we do not assume that government is necessarily bad, and the individual necessarily good--and the hypothesis upon which we are working practically abolishes either alternative--then we alter the case altogether. The government of a modern Utopia will be no perfection of intentions ignorantly ruling the world.... [Footnote: In the typical modern State of our own world, with its population of many millions, and its extreme facility of movement, undistinguished men who adopt an alias can make themselves untraceable with the utmost ease. The temptation of the opportunities thus offered has developed a new type of criminality, the Deeming or Crossman type, base men who subsist and feed their heavy imaginations in the wooing, betrayal, ill-treatment, and sometimes even the murder of undistinguished women. This is a large, a growing, and, what is gravest, a prolific class, fostered by the practical anonymity of the common man. It is only the murderers who attract much public attention, but the supply of low-class prostitutes is also largely due to these free adventures of the base. It is one of the bye products of State Liberalism, and at present it is very probably drawing ahead in the race against the development of police organisation.]

Such is the eye of the State that is now slowly beginning to apprehend our existence as two queer and inexplicable parties disturbing the fine order of its field of vision, the eye that will presently be focussing itself upon us with a growing astonishment and interrogation. "Who in the name of Galton and Bertillon," one

fancies Utopia exclaiming, "are you?"

I perceive I shall cut a queer figure in that focus. I shall affect a certain spurious ease of carriage no doubt. "The fact is, I shall begin...."

Section 7

And now see how an initial hypothesis may pursue and overtake its maker. Our thumb-marks have been taken, they have travelled by pneumatic tube to the central office of the municipality hard by Lucerne, and have gone on thence to the headquarters of the index at Paris. There, after a rough preliminary classification, I imagine them photographed on glass, and flung by means of a lantern in colossal images upon a screen, all finely squared, and the careful experts marking and measuring their several convolutions. And then off goes a brisk clerk to the long galleries of the index building.

I have told them they will find no sign of us, but you see him going from gallery to gallery, from bay to bay, from drawer to drawer, and from card to card. "Here he is!" he mutters to himself, and he whips out a card and reads. "But that is impossible!" he says....

You figure us returning after a day or so of such Utopian

experiences as I must presently describe, to the central office in Lucerne, even as we have been told to do.

I make my way to the desk of the man who has dealt with us before. "Well?" I say, cheerfully, "have you heard?"

His expression dashes me a little. "We've heard," he says, and adds, "it's very peculiar."

"I told you you wouldn't find out about us," I say, triumphantly.

"But we have," he says; "but that makes your freak none the less remarkable."

"You've heard! You know who we are! Well--tell us! We had an idea, but we're beginning to doubt."

"You," says the official, addressing the botanist, "are----!"

And he breathes his name. Then he turns to me and gives me mine.

For a moment I am dumbfounded. Then I think of the entries we made at the inn in the Urserenthal, and then in a flash I have the truth. I rap the desk smartly with my finger-tips and shake my index-finger in my friend's face.

"By Jove!" I say in English. "They've got our doubles!"

The botanist snaps his fingers. "Of course! I didn't think of that."

"Do you mind," I say to this official, "telling us some more about ourselves?"

"I can't think why you keep it up," he remarks, and then almost wearily tells me the facts about my Utopian self. They are a little difficult to understand. He says I am one of the samurai, which sounds Japanese, "but you will be degraded," he says, with a gesture almost of despair. He describes my position in this world in phrases that convey very little.

"The queer thing," he remarks, "is that you were in Norway only three days ago."

"I am there still. At least----. I'm sorry to be so much trouble to you, but do you mind following up that last clue and inquiring if the person to whom the thumb-mark really belongs isn't in Norway still?"

The idea needs explanation. He says something incomprehensible about a pilgrimage. "Sooner or later," I say, "you will have to believe

there are two of us with the same thumb-mark. I won't trouble you with any apparent nonsense about other planets and so forth again. Here I am. If I was in Norway a few days ago, you ought to be able to trace my journey hither. And my friend?"

"He was in India." The official is beginning to look perplexed.

"It seems to me," I say, "that the difficulties in this case are only just beginning. How did I get from Norway hither? Does my friend look like hopping from India to the Saint Gotthard at one hop? The situation is a little more difficult than that----"

"But here!" says the official, and waves what are no doubt photographic copies of the index cards.

"But we are not those individuals!"

"You are those individuals."

"You will see," I say.

He dabs his finger argumentatively upon the thumb-marks. "I see now," he says.

"There is a mistake," I maintain, "an unprecedented mistake. There's the difficulty. If you inquire you will find it begin to unravel.

What reason is there for us to remain casual workmen here, when you allege we are men of position in the world, if there isn't something wrong? We shall stick to this wood-carving work you have found us here, and meanwhile I think you ought to inquire again. That's how the thing shapes to me."

"Your case will certainly have to be considered further," he says, with the faintest of threatening notes in his tone. "But at the same time"--hand out to those copies from the index again--"there you are, you know!"

Section 8

When my botanist and I have talked over and exhausted every possibility of our immediate position, we should turn, I think, to more general questions.

I should tell him the thing that was becoming more and more apparent in my own mind. Here, I should say, is a world, obviously on the face of it well organised. Compared with our world, it is like a well-oiled engine beside a scrap-heap. It has even got this confounded visual organ swivelling about in the most alert and lively fashion. But that's by the way.... You have only to look at all these houses below. (We should be sitting on a seat on the Gutsch and looking down on the Lucerne of Utopia, a Lucerne that

would, I insist, quite arbitrarily, still keep the Wasserthurm and the Kapellbrucke.) You have only to mark the beauty, the simple cleanliness and balance of this world, you have only to see the free carriage, the unaffected graciousness of even the common people, to understand how fine and complete the arrangements of this world must be. How are they made so? We of the twentieth century are not going to accept the sweetish, faintly nasty slops of Rousseauism that so gratified our great-great-grandparents in the eighteenth. We know that order and justice do not come by Nature--"if only the policeman would go away." These things mean intention, will, carried to a scale that our poor vacillating, hot and cold earth has never known. What I am really seeing more and more clearly is the will beneath this visible Utopia. Convenient houses, admirable engineering that is no offence amidst natural beauties, beautiful bodies, and a universally gracious carriage, these are only the outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace. Such an order means discipline. It means triumph over the petty egotisms and vanities that keep men on our earth apart; it means devotion and a nobler hope; it cannot exist without a gigantic process of inquiry, trial, forethought and patience in an atmosphere of mutual trust and concession. Such a world as this Utopia is not made by the chance occasional co-operations of self-indulgent men, by autocratic rulers or by the bawling wisdom of the democratic leader. And an unrestricted competition for gain, an enlightened selfishness, that too fails us....

I have compared the system of indexing humanity we have come upon to an eye, an eye so sensitive and alert that two strangers cannot appear anywhere upon the planet without discovery. Now an eye does not see without a brain, an eye does not turn round and look without a will and purpose. A Utopia that deals only with appliances and arrangements is a dream of superficialities; the essential problem here, the body within these garments, is a moral and an intellectual problem. Behind all this material order, these perfected communications, perfected public services and economic organisations, there must be men and women willing these things. There must be a considerable number and a succession of these men and women of will. No single person, no transitory group of people, could order and sustain this vast complexity. They must have a collective if not a common width of aim, and that involves a spoken or written literature, a living literature to sustain the harmony of their general activity. In some way they must have put the more immediate objects of desire into a secondary place, and that means renunciation. They must be effectual in action and persistent in will, and that means discipline. But in the modern world in which progress advances without limits, it will be evident that whatever common creed or formula they have must be of the simplest sort; that whatever organisation they have must be as mobile and flexible as a thing alive. All this follows inevitably from the general propositions of our Utopian dream. When we made those, we bound ourselves helplessly to come to this....

The botanist would nod an abstracted assent.

I should cease to talk. I should direct my mind to the confused mass of memories three days in Utopia will have given us. Besides the personalities with whom we have come into actual contact, our various hosts, our foreman and work-fellows, the blond man, the public officials and so on, there will be a great multitude of other impressions. There will be many bright snapshots of little children, for example, of girls and women and men, seen in shops and offices and streets, on quays, at windows and by the wayside, people riding hither and thither and walking to and fro. A very human crowd it has seemed to me. But among them were there any who might be thought of as having a wider interest than the others, who seemed in any way detached from the rest by a purpose that passed beyond the seen?

Then suddenly I recall that clean-shaven man who talked with us for a little while in the public office at Wassen, the man who reminded me of my boyish conception of a Knight Templar, and with him come momentary impressions of other lithe and serious-looking people dressed after the same manner, words and phrases we have read in such scraps of Utopian reading as have come our way, and expressions that fell from the loose mouth of the man with the blond hair....