V

THE LIFE-HISTORY OF DEMOCRACY

In the preceding four chapters there has been developed, in a clumsy laborious way, a smudgy, imperfect picture of the generalized civilized state of the coming century. In terms, vague enough at times, but never absolutely indefinite, the general distribution of the population in this state has been discussed, and its natural development into four great--but in practice intimately interfused--classes. It has been shown--I know not how convincingly--that as the result of forces that are practically irresistible, a world-wide process of social and moral deliquescence is in progress, and that a really functional social body of engineering, managing men, scientifically trained, and having common ideals and interests, is likely to segregate and disentangle itself from our present confusion of aimless and ill-directed lives. It has been pointed out that life is presenting an unprecedented and increasing variety of morals, ménages, occupations and types, at present so mingled as to give a general effect of greyness, but containing the promise of local concentration that may presently change that greyness into kaleidoscopic effects. That image of concentrating contrasted colours will be greatly repeated in this present chapter. In the course of these inquiries, we have permitted ourselves to take a few concrete glimpses of households, costumes, conveyances, and conveniences of the coming time, but only as incidental realizations of points in this

general thesis. And now, assuming, as we must necessarily do, the soundness of these earlier speculations, we have arrived at a stage when we may consider how the existing arrangements for the ostensible government of the State are likely to develop through their own inherent forces, and how they are likely to be affected by the processes we have forecast.

So far, this has been a speculation upon the probable development of a civilized society in vacuo. Attention has been almost exclusively given to the forces of development, and not to the forces of conflict and restraint. We have ignored the boundaries of language that are flung athwart the great lines of modern communication, we have disregarded the friction of tariffs, the peculiar groups of prejudices and irrational instincts that inspire one miscellany of shareholders, workers, financiers, and superfluous poor such as the English, to hate, exasperate, lie about, and injure another such miscellany as the French or the Germans. Moreover, we have taken very little account of the fact that, quite apart from nationality, each individual case of the new social order is developing within the form of a legal government based on conceptions of a society that has been superseded by the advent of mechanism. It is this last matter that we are about to take into consideration.

Now, this age is being constantly described as a "Democratic" age; "Democracy" is alleged to have affected art, literature, trade and religion alike in the most remarkable ways. It is not only tacitly

present in the great bulk of contemporary thought that this "Democracy" is now dominant, but that it is becoming more and more overwhelmingly predominant as the years pass. Allusions to Democracy are so abundant, deductions from its influence so confident and universal, that it is worth while to point out what a very hollow thing the word in most cases really is, a large empty object in thought, of the most vague and faded associations and the most attenuated content, and to inquire just exactly what the original implications and present realities of "Democracy" may be. The inquiry will leave us with a very different conception of the nature and future of this sort of political arrangement from that generally assumed. We have already seen in the discussion of the growth of great cities, that an analytical process may absolutely invert the expectation based on the gross results up-to-date, and I believe it will be equally possible to show cause for believing that the development of Democracy also is, after all, not the opening phase of a world-wide movement going on unbendingly in its present direction, but the first impulse of forces that will finally sweep round into a quite different path. Flying off at a tangent is probably one of the gravest dangers and certainly the one most constantly present, in this enterprise of prophecy.

One may, I suppose, take the Rights of Man as they are embodied in the French Declaration as the ostentations of Democracy; our present Democratic state may be regarded as a practical realization of these claims. As far as the individual goes, the realization takes the form of an untrammelled liberty in matters that have heretofore been considered

a part of social procedure, in the lifting of positive religious and moral compulsions, in the recognition of absolute property, and in the abolition of special privileges and special restrictions. Politically modern Democracy takes the form of denying that any specific person or persons shall act as a matter of intrinsic right or capacity on behalf of the community as a whole. Its root idea is representation. Government is based primarily on election, and every ruler is, in theory at least, a delegate and servant of the popular will. It is implicit in the Democratic theory that there is such a thing as a popular will, and this is supposed to be the net sum of the wills of all the citizens in the State, so far as public affairs are concerned. In its less perfect and more usual state the Democratic theory is advanced either as an ethical theory which postulates an absence of formal acquiescence on the part of the governed as injustice, or else as a convenient political compromise, the least objectionable of all possible methods of public control, because it will permit only the minimum of general unhappiness.... I know of no case for the elective Democratic government of modern States that cannot be knocked to pieces in five minutes. It is manifest that upon countless important public issues there is no collective will, and nothing in the mind of the average man except blank indifference; that an electional system simply places power in the hands of the most skilful electioneers; that neither men nor their rights are identically equal, but vary with every individual, and, above all, that the minimum or maximum of general happiness is related only so indirectly to the public control that people will suffer great miseries from their governments unresistingly, and, on the other hand, change

their rulers on account of the most trivial irritations. The case against all the prolusions of ostensible Democracy is indeed so strong that it is impossible to consider the present wide establishment of Democratic institutions as being the outcome of any process of intellectual conviction; it arouses suspicion even whether ostensible Democracy may not be a mere rhetorical garment for essentially different facts, and upon that suspicion we will now inquire.

Democracy of the modern type, manhood suffrage and so forth, became a conspicuous phenomenon in the world only in the closing decades of the eighteenth century. Its genesis is so intimately connected with the first expansion of the productive element in the State, through mechanism and a co-operative organization, as to point at once to a causative connection. The more closely one looks into the social and political life of the eighteenth century the more plausible becomes this view. New and potentially influential social factors had begun to appear--the organizing manufacturer, the intelligent worker, the skilled tenant, and the urban abyss, and the traditions of the old land-owning non-progressive aristocratic monarchy that prevailed in Christendom, rendered it incapable--without some destructive shock or convulsion--of any re-organization to incorporate or control these new factors. In the case of the British Empire an additional stress was created by the incapacity of the formal government to assimilate the developing civilization of the American colonies. Everywhere there were new elements, not as yet clearly analyzed or defined, arising as mechanism arose; everywhere the old traditional government and social system,

defined and analyzed all too well, appeared increasingly obstructive, irrational, and feeble in its attempts to include and direct these new powers. But now comes a point to which I am inclined to attach very great importance. The new powers were as yet shapeless. It was not the conflict of a new organization with the old. It was the preliminary dwarfing and deliquescence of the mature old beside the embryonic mass of the new. It was impossible then--it is, I believe, only beginning to be possible now--to estimate the proportions, possibilities, and inter-relations of the new social orders out of which a social organization has still to be built in the coming years. No formula of definite re-construction had been evolved, or has even been evolved yet, after a hundred years. And these swelling inchoate new powers, whose very birth condition was the crippling, modification, or destruction of the old order, were almost forced to formulate their proceedings for a time, therefore, in general affirmative propositions that were really in effect not affirmative propositions at all, but propositions of repudiation and denial. "These kings and nobles and people privileged in relation to obsolescent functions cannot manage our affairs"--that was evident enough, that was the really essential question at that time, and since no other effectual substitute appeared ready made, the working doctrine of the infallible judgment of humanity in the gross, as distinguished from the quite indisputable incapacity of sample individuals, became, in spite of its inherent absurdity, a convenient and acceptable working hypothesis.

Modern Democracy thus came into being, not, as eloquent persons have

pretended, by the sovereign people consciously and definitely assuming power--I imagine the sovereign people in France during the first Revolution, for example, quite amazed and muddle-headed with it all--but by the decline of old ruling classes in the face of the quasi-natural growth of mechanism and industrialism, and by the unpreparedness and want of organization in the new intelligent elements in the State. I have compared the human beings in society to a great and increasing variety of colours tumultuously smashed up together, and giving at present a general and quite illusory effect of grey, and I have attempted to show that there is a process in progress that will amount at last to the segregation of these mingled tints into recognizable distinct masses again. It is not a monotony, but an utterly disorderly and confusing variety that makes this grey, but Democracy, for practical purposes, does really assume such a monotony. Like 'infinity', the Democratic formula is a concrete-looking and negotiable symbol for a negation. It is the aspect in political disputes and contrivances of that social and moral deliquescence the nature and possibilities of which have been discussed in the preceding chapters of this volume.

Modern Democracy first asserted itself in the ancient kingdoms of France and Great Britain (counting the former British colonies in America as a part of the latter), and it is in the French and English-speaking communities that Democracy has developed itself most completely. Upon the supposition we have made, Democracy broke out first in these States because they were leading the way in material progress, because they were the first States to develop industrialism, wholesale

mechanisms, and great masses of insubordinate activity outside the recognized political scheme, and the nature and time and violence of the outbreak was determined by the nature of the superseded government, and the amount of stress between it and the new elements. But the detachment of a great section of the new middle-class from the aristocratic order of England to form the United States of America, and the sudden rejuvenescence of France by the swift and thorough sloughing of its outworn aristocratic monarchy, the consequent wars and the Napoleonic adventure, checked and modified the parallel development that might otherwise have happened in country after country over all Europe west of the Carpathians. The monarchies that would probably have collapsed through internal forces and given place to modern democratic states were smashed from the outside, and a process of political re-construction, that has probably missed out the complete formal Democratic phase altogether--and which has been enormously complicated through religious, national, and dynastic traditions--set in. Throughout America, in England, and, after extraordinary experiments, in France, political democracy has in effect legally established itself--most completely in the United States--and the reflection and influence of its methods upon the methods of all the other countries in intellectual contact with it, have been so considerable as practically to make their monarchies as new in their kind, almost, as democratic republics. In Germany, Austria, and Italy, for example, there is a press nearly as audible as in the more frankly democratic countries, and measurably akin in influence; there are constitutionally established legislative assemblies, and there is the same unofficial development of powerful

financial and industrial powers with which the ostensible Government must make terms. In a vast amount of the public discussion of these States, the postulates of Democracy are clearly implicit. Quite as much in reality as the democratic republics of America, are they based not on classes but upon a confusion; they are, in their various degrees and with their various individual differences, just as truly governments of the grey.

It has been argued that the grey is illusory and must sooner or later pass, and that the colour that will emerge to predominance will take its shape as a scientifically trained middle-class of an unprecedented sort, not arising out of the older middle-classes, but replacing them. This class will become, I believe, at last consciously the State, controlling and restricting very greatly the three non-functional masses with which it is as yet almost indistinguishably mingled. The general nature of its formation within the existing confusion and its emergence may, I think, with a certain degree of confidence, be already forecast, albeit at present its beginnings are singularly unpromising and faint. At present the class of specially trained and capable people--doctors, engineers, scientific men of all sorts--is quite disproportionally absent from political life, it does not exist as a factor in that life, it is growing up outside that life, and has still to develop, much more to display, a collective intention to come specifically in. But the forces are in active operation to drag it into the centre of the stage for all that.

The modern democracy or democratic quasi-monarchy conducts its affairs as though there was no such thing as special knowledge or practical education. The utmost recognition it affords to the man who has taken the pains to know, and specifically to do, is occasionally to consult him upon specific points and override his counsels in its ampler wisdom, or to entrust to him some otherwise impossible duty under circumstances of extreme limitation. The man of special equipment is treated always as if he were some sort of curious performing animal. The gunnery specialist, for example, may move and let off guns, but he may not say where they are to be let off--some one a little ignorant of range and trajectory does that; the engineer may move the ship and fire the battery, but only with some man, who does not perfectly understand, shouting instructions down a tube at him. If the cycle is to be adapted to military requirements, the thing is entrusted to Lieutenant-Colonel Balfour. If horses are to be bought for the British Army in India, no specialist goes, but Lord Edward Cecil. These people of the governing class do not understand there is such a thing as special knowledge or an inexorable fact in the world; they have been educated at schools conducted by amateur schoolmasters, whose real aim in life--if such people can be described as having a real aim in life--is the episcopal bench, and they have learnt little or nothing but the extraordinary power of appearances in these democratic times. To look right and to be of good report is to succeed. What else is there? The primarily functional men are ignored in the ostensible political scheme, it operates as though they did not exist, as though nothing, in fact, existed but the irresponsible wealthy, and the manipulators of

irresponsible wealth, on the one hand, and a great, grey, politically indifferent community on the other. Having regard only to the present condition of political life, it would seem as though this state of affairs must continue indefinitely, and develop only in accordance with the laws of inter-action between our charlatan governing class on the one hand, and the grey mass of governed on the other. There is no way apparent in the existing political and social order, whereby the class of really educated persons that the continually more complicated mechanical fabric of social life is developing may be expected to come in. And in a very great amount of current political speculation, the development and final emergence of this class is ignored, and attention is concentrated entirely upon the inherent process of development of the political machine. And even in that it is very easy to exaggerate the preponderance of one or other of what are really very evenly balanced forces in the machine of democratic government.

There are two chief sets of parts in the machine that have a certain antagonistic relation, that play against each other, and one's conception of coming developments is necessarily determined by the relative value one gives to these opposing elements. One may compare these two groups to the Power and the Work, respectively, at the two ends of a lever.[33] On the one hand there is that which pays for the machine, which distributes salaries and rewards, subsidizes newspapers and so forth--the central influence.[34] On the other hand, there is the collectively grey voting mass, with certain prejudices and traditions, and certain laws and limitations of thought upon which the

newspapers work, and which, within the confines of its inherent laws, they direct. If one dwell chiefly on the possibilities of the former element, one may conjure up a practical end to democracy in the vision of a State "run" entirely by a group of highly forcible and intellectual persons--usually the dream takes the shape of financiers and their associates, their perfected mechanism of party control working the elections boldly and capably, and their public policy being directed towards financial ends. One of the common prophecies of the future of the United States is such a domination by a group of trust organizers and political bosses. But a man, or a group of men, so strong and intelligent as would be needed to hold an entire party machine within the confines of his--or their collective--mind and will, could, at the most, be but a very transitory and incidental phenomenon in the history of the world. Either such an exploitation of the central control will have to be covert and subtle beyond any precedent in human disingenuousness, or else its domination will have to be very amply modified indeed, by the requirements of the second factor, and its proceedings made very largely the resultant of that second factor's forces. Moreover, very subtle men do not aim at things of this sort, or aiming, fail, because subtlety of intelligence involves subtlety of character, a certain fastidiousness and a certain weakness. Now that the garrulous period, when a flow of language and a certain effectiveness of manner was a necessary condition to political pre-eminence, is passing away, political control falls more and more entirely into the hands of a barristerish intriguing sort of person with a tough-wearing, leathery, practical mind. The sort of people who will work the machine are people

with "faith," as the popular preachers say, meaning, in fact, people who do not analyze, people who will take the machine as it is, unquestioningly, shape their ambitions to it, and--saving their vanity--work it as it wants to go. The man who will be boss will be the man who wants to be boss, who finds, in being boss, a complete and final satisfaction, and not the man who complicates things by wanting to be boss in order to be, or do, something else. The machines are governed to-day, and there is every reason to believe that they will continue to be governed, by masterful-looking resultants, masters of nothing but compromise, and that little fancy of an inner conspiracy of control within the machine and behind ostensible politics is really on all fours with the wonderful Rodin (of the Juif Errant) and as probable as anything else in the romances of Eugene Sue.

If, on the other hand, we direct attention to the antagonistic element in the machine, to Public Opinion, to the alleged collective mind of the grey mass, and consider how it is brought to believe in itself and its possession of certain opinions by the concrete evidence of daily newspapers and eloquent persons saying as much, we may also very readily conjure up a contrasted vision of extraordinary demagogues or newspaper syndicates working the political machine from that direction. So far as the demagogue goes, the increase of population, the multiplication of amusements and interests, the differentiation of social habits, the diffusion of great towns, all militate against that sufficient gathering of masses of voters in meeting-houses which gave him his power in the recent past. It is improbable that ever again will any flushed

undignified man with a vast voice, a muscular face in incessant operation, collar crumpled, hair disordered, and arms in wild activity, talking, talking, talking, talking copiously out of the windows of railway carriages, talking on railway platforms, talking from hotel balconies, talking on tubs, barrels, scaffoldings, pulpits--tireless and undammable--rise to be the most powerful thing in any democratic state in the world. Continually the individual vocal demagogue dwindles, and the element of bands and buttons, the organization of the press and procession, the share of the machine, grows.

Mr. Harmsworth, of the London Daily Mail, in a very interesting article has glanced at certain possibilities of power that may vest in the owners of a great system of world-wide "simultaneous" newspapers, but he does not analyze the nature of the influence exercised by newspapers during the successive phases of the nineteenth century, nor the probable modifications of that influence in the years to come, and I think, on the whole, he inclines very naturally to over estimate the amount of intentional direction that may be given by the owner of a paper to the minds and acts of his readers, and to exceed the very definite limits within which that influence is confined. In the earlier Victorian period, the more limited, partly educated, and still very homogeneous enfranchised class, had a certain habit of thinking; its tranquil assurance upon most theological and all moral and æsthetic points left political questions as the chief field of exercise for such thinking as it did, and, as a consequence, the dignified newspapers of that time were able to discuss, and indeed were required to discuss not

only specific situations but general principles. That indeed was their principal function, and it fell rather to the eloquent men to misapply these principles according to the necessity of the occasion. The papers did then very much more than they do now to mould opinion, though they did not direct affairs to anything like the extent of their modern successors. They made roads upon which events presently travelled in unexpected fashions. But the often cheaper and always more vivid newspapers that have come with the New Democracy do nothing to mould opinion. Indeed, there is no longer upon most public questions--and as I have tried to make clear in my previous paper, there is not likely to be any longer--a collective opinion to be moulded. Protectionists, for example, are a mere band, Free Traders are a mere band; on all these details we are in chaos. And these modern newspapers simply endeavour to sustain a large circulation and so merit advertisements by being as miscellaneously and vividly interesting as possible, by firing where the crowd seems thickest, by seeking perpetually and without any attempt at consistency, the greatest excitement of the greatest number. It is upon the cultivation and rapid succession of inflammatory topics that the modern newspaper expends its capital and trusts to recover its reward. Its general news sinks steadily to a subordinate position; criticism, discussion, and high responsibility pass out of journalism, and the power of the press comes more and more to be a dramatic and emotional power, the power to cry "Fire!" in the theatre, the power to give enormous value for a limited time to some personality, some event, some aspect, true or false, without any power of giving a specific direction to the forces this distortion may set going. Directly the press of

to-day passes from that sort of thing to some specific proposal, some implication of principles and beliefs, directly it chooses and selects, then it passes from the miscellaneous to the sectarian, and out of touch with the grey indefiniteness of the general mind. It gives offence here, it perplexes and bores there; no more than the boss politician can the paper of great circulation afford to work consistently for any ulterior aim.

This is the limit of the power of the modern newspaper of large circulation, the newspaper that appeals to the grey element, to the average democratic man, the newspaper of the deliquescence, and if our previous conclusion that human society has ceased to be homogeneous and will presently display new masses segregating from a great confusion, holds good, that will be the limit of its power in the future. It may undergo many remarkable developments and modifications,[35] but none of these tend to give it any greater political importance than it has now. And so, after all, our considerations of the probable developments of the party machine give us only negative results, so long as the grey social confusion continues. Subject to that continuance the party machine will probably continue as it is at present, and Democratic States and governments follow the lines upon which they run at the present time.

Now, how will the emergent class of capable men presently begin to modify the existing form of government in the ostensibly democratic countries and democratic monarchies? There will be very many variations

and modifications of the methods of this arrival, an infinite complication of detailed incidents, but a general proposition will be found to hold good. The suppression of the party machine in the purely democratic countries and of the official choice of the rich and privileged rulers in the more monarchical ones, by capable operative and administrative men inspired by the belief in a common theory of social order, will come about--peacefully and gradually as a process of change, or violently as a revolution--but inevitably as the outcome either of the imminence or else of the disasters of war.

That all these governments of confusion will drift towards war, with a spacious impulse and a final vehemence quite out of comparison greater than the warlike impulses of former times, is a remarkable but by no means inexplicable thing. A tone of public expression, jealous and patriotic to the danger-point, is an unavoidable condition under which democratic governments exist. To be patriotically quarrelsome is imperative upon the party machines that will come to dominate the democratic countries. They will not possess detailed and definite policies and creeds because there are no longer any detailed and definite public opinions, but they will for all that require some ostensible purpose to explain their cohesion, some hold upon the common man that will ensure his appearance in numbers at the polling place sufficient to save the government from the raids of small but determined sects. That hold can be only of one sort. Without moral or religious uniformity, with material interests as involved and confused as a heap of spelicans, there remains only one generality for the politician's

purpose, the ampler aspect of a man's egotism, his pride in what he imagines to be his particular kind--his patriotism. In every country amenable to democratic influences there emerges, or will emerge, a party machine, vividly and simply patriotic--and indefinite upon the score of any other possible consideration between man and man. This will hold true, not only of the ostensibly democratic states, but also of such reconstituted modern monarchies as Italy and Germany, for they, too, for all their legal difference, rest also on the grey. The party conflicts of the future will turn very largely on the discovery of the true patriot, on the suspicion that the crown or the machine in possession is in some more or less occult way traitorous, and almost all other matters of contention will be shelved and allowed to stagnate, for fear of breaking the unity of the national mechanism.

Now, patriotism is not a thing that flourishes in the void,--one needs a foreigner. A national and patriotic party is an anti-foreign party; the altar of the modern god, Democracy, will cry aloud for the stranger men. Simply to keep in power, and out of no love of mischief, the government or the party machine will have to insist upon dangers and national differences, to keep the voter to the poll by alarms, seeking ever to taint the possible nucleus of any competing organization with the scandal of external influence. The party press will play the watch-dog and allay all internal dissensions with its warning bay at some adjacent people, and the adjacent peoples, for reasons to be presently expanded, will be continually more sensitive to such baying. Already one sees country yelping at country all over the modern world, not only in the

matter of warlike issues, but with a note of quite furious commercial rivalry--quite furious and, indeed, quite insane, since its ideal of trading enormously with absolutely ruined and tradeless foreigners, exporting everything and importing nothing, is obviously outside reason altogether. The inexorable doom of these governments based on the grey, is to foster enmity between people and people. Even their alliances are but sacrifices to intenser antagonisms. And the phases of the democratic sequence are simple and sure. Forced on by a relentless competition, the tone of the outcries will become fiercer and fiercer; the occasions of excitement, the perilous moments, the ingenuities of annoyance, more and more dramatic,--from the mere emptiness and disorder of the general mind! Jealousies and anti-foreign enactments, tariff manipulations and commercial embitterment, destructive, foolish, exasperating obstructions that benefit no human being, will minister to this craving without completely allaying it. Nearer, and ever nearer, the politicians of the coming times will force one another towards the verge, not because they want to go over it, not because any one wants to go over it, but because they are, by their very nature, compelled to go that way, because to go in any other direction is to break up and lose power. And, consequently, the final development of the democratic system, so far as intrinsic forces go, will be, not the rule of the boss, nor the rule of the trust, nor the rule of the newspaper; no rule, indeed, but international rivalry, international competition, international exasperation and hostility, and at last--irresistible and overwhelming--the definite establishment of the rule of that most stern and educational of all masters--War.

At this point there opens a tempting path, and along it historical precedents, like a forest of notice-boards, urge us to go. At the end of the vista poses the figure of Napoleon with "Cæsarism" written beneath it. Disregarding certain alien considerations for a time, assuming the free working out of democracy to its conclusion, we perceive that, in the case of our generalized state, the party machine, together with the nation entrusted to it, must necessarily be forced into passionate national war. But, having blundered into war, the party machine will have an air of having accomplished its destiny. A party machine or a popular government is surely as likely a thing to cause a big disorder of war and as unlikely a thing to conduct it, as the wit of man, working solely to that end, could ever have devised. I have already pointed out why we can never expect an elected government of the modern sort to be guided by any far-reaching designs, it is constructed to get office and keep office, not to do anything in office, the conditions of its survival are to keep appearances up and taxes down,[36] and the care and management of army and navy is quite outside its possibilities. The military and naval professions in our typical modern State will subsist very largely upon tradition, the ostensible government will interfere with rather than direct them, and there will be no force in the entire scheme to check the corrupting influence of a long peace, to insist upon adequate exercises for the fighting organization or ensure an adequate adaptation to the new and perpetually changing possibilities of untried apparatus. Incapable but confident and energetic persons, having political influence, will have been permitted to tamper with the various

arms of the service, the equipment will be largely devised to create an impression of efficiency in times of peace in the minds of the general voting public, and the really efficient soldiers will either have fretted themselves out of the army or have been driven out as political non-effectives, troublesome, innovating persons anxious to spend money upon "fads." So armed, the New Democracy will blunder into war, and the opening stage of the next great war will be the catastrophic breakdown of the formal armies, shame and disasters, and a disorder of conflict between more or less equally matched masses of stupefied, scared, and infuriated people. Just how far the thing may rise from the value of an alarming and edifying incident to a universal catastrophe, depends upon the special nature of the conflict, but it does not alter the fact that any considerable war is bound to be a bitter, appalling, highly educational and constitution-shaking experience for the modern democratic state.

Now, foreseeing this possibility, it is easy to step into the trap of the Napoleonic precedent. One hastens to foretell that either with the pressure of coming war, or in the hour of defeat, there will arise the Man. He will be strong in action, epigrammatic in manner, personally handsome and continually victorious. He will sweep aside parliaments and demagogues, carry the nation to glory, reconstruct it as an empire, and hold it together by circulating his profile and organizing further successes. He will--I gather this from chance lights upon contemporary anticipations--codify everything, rejuvenate the papacy, or, at any rate, galvanize Christianity, organize learning in meek intriguing

academies of little men, and prescribe a wonderful educational system. The grateful nations will once more deify a lucky and aggressive egotism.... And there the vision loses breath.

Nothing of the sort is going to happen, or, at any rate, if it happens, it will happen as an interlude, as no necessary part in the general progress of the human drama. The world is no more to be recast by chance individuals than a city is to be lit by sky rockets. The purpose of things emerges upon spacious issues, and the day of individual leaders is past. The analogies and precedents that lead one to forecast the coming of military one-man-dominions, the coming of such other parodies of Cæsar's career as that misapplied, and speedily futile chess champion, Napoleon I. contrived, are false. They are false because they ignore two correlated things; first, the steady development of a new and quite unprecedented educated class as a necessary aspect of the expansion of science and mechanism, and secondly, the absolute revolution in the art of war that science and mechanism are bringing about. This latter consideration the next chapter will expand, but here, in the interests of this discussion, we may in general terms anticipate its gist. War in the past has been a thing entirely different in its nature from what war, with the apparatus of the future, will be--it has been showy, dramatic, emotional, and restricted; war in the future will be none of these things. War in the past was a thing of days and heroisms; battles and campaigns rested in the hand of the great commander, he stood out against the sky, picturesquely on horseback, visibly controlling it all. War in the future will be a question of

preparation, of long years of foresight and disciplined imagination, there will be no decisive victory, but a vast diffusion of conflict--it will depend less and less on controlling personalities and driving emotions, and more and more upon the intelligence and personal quality of a great number of skilled men. All this the next chapter will expand. And either before or after, but, at any rate, in the shadow of war, it will become apparent, perhaps even suddenly, that the whole apparatus of power in the country is in the hands of a new class of intelligent and scientifically-educated men. They will probably, under the development of warlike stresses, be discovered--they will discover themselves--almost surprisingly with roads and railways, carts and cities, drains, food supply, electrical supply, and water supply, and with guns and such implements of destruction and intimidation as men scarcely dream of yet, gathered in their hands. And they will be discovered, too, with a growing common consciousness of themselves as distinguished from the grey confusion, a common purpose and implication that the fearless analysis of science is already bringing to light.

They will find themselves with bloodshed and horrible disasters ahead, and the material apparatus of control entirely within their power. "Suppose, after all," they will say, "we ignore these very eloquent and showy governing persons above, and this very confused and ineffectual multitude below. Suppose now we put on the brakes and try something a little more stable and orderly. These people in possession have, of course, all sorts of established rights and prescriptions; they have squared the law to their purpose, and the constitution does not know us; they can get at the judges, they can get at the newspapers, they can do

all sorts of things except avoid a smash--but, for our part, we have these really most ingenious and subtle guns. Suppose instead of our turning them and our valuable selves in a fool's quarrel against the ingenious and subtle guns of other men akin to ourselves, we use them in the cause of the higher sanity, and clear that jabbering war tumult out of the streets."... There may be no dramatic moment for the expression of this idea, no moment when the new Cromwellism and the new Ironsides will come visibly face to face with talk and baubles, flags and patriotic dinner bells; but, with or without dramatic moments, the idea will be expressed and acted upon. It will be made quite evident then, what is now indeed only a pious opinion, namely, that wealth is, after all, no ultimate Power at all, but only an influence among aimless, police-guarded men. So long as there is peace the class of capable men may be mitigated and gagged and controlled, and the ostensible present order may flourish still in the hands of that other class of men which deals with the appearances of things. But as some supersaturated solution will crystallize out with the mere shaking of its beaker, so must the new order of men come into visibly organized existence through the concussions of war. The charlatans can escape everything except war, but to the cant and violence of nationality, to the sustaining force of international hostility, they are ruthlessly compelled to cling, and what is now their chief support must become at last their destruction. And so it is I infer that, whether violently as a revolution or quietly and slowly, this grey confusion that is Democracy must pass away inevitably by its own inherent conditions, as the twilight passes, as the embryonic confusion of the cocoon creature passes, into the higher

stage, into the higher organism, the world-state of the coming years.

FOOTNOTES:

[33] The fulcrum, which is generally treated as being absolutely immovable, being the general belief in the theory of democracy.

[34] In the United States, a vast rapidly developing country, with relatively much kinetic wealth, this central influence is the financial support of the Boss, consisting for the most part of active-minded, capable business organizers; in England, the land where irresponsible realized wealth is at a maximum, a public-spirited section of the irresponsible, inspired by the tradition of an aristocratic functional past, qualifies the financial influence with an amateurish, indolent, and publicly unprofitable integrity. In Germany an aggressively functional Court occupies the place and plays the part of a permanently dominant party machine.

[35] The nature of these modifications is an interesting side issue. There is every possibility of papers becoming at last papers of world-wide circulation, so far as the language in which they are printed permits, with editions that will follow the sun and change into to-morrow's issue as they go, picking up literary criticism here, financial intelligence there, here to-morrow's story, and there to-morrow's scandal, and, like some vast intellectual garden-roller, rolling out local provincialism at every revolution. This, for papers in

English, at any rate, is merely a question of how long it will be before the price of the best writing (for journalistic purposes) rises actually or relatively above the falling cost of long distance electrical type setting. Each of the local editions of these world travelling papers, in addition to the identical matter that will appear almost simultaneously everywhere, will no doubt have its special matter and its special advertisements. Illustrations will be telegraphed just as well as matter, and probably a much greater use will be made of sketch and diagram than at present. If the theory advanced in this book that democracy is a transitory confusion be sound, there will not be one world paper of this sort only--like Moses' serpent after its miraculous struggle--but several, and as the non-provincial segregation of society goes on, these various great papers will take on more and more decided specific characteristics, and lose more and more their local references. They will come to have not only a distinctive type of matter, a distinctive method of thought and manner of expression, but distinctive fundamental implications, and a distinctive class of writer. This difference in character and tone renders the advent of any Napoleonic master of the newspaper world vastly more improbable than it would otherwise be. These specializing newspapers will, as they find their class, throw out many features that do not belong to that class. It is highly probable that many will restrict the space devoted to news and sham news; that forged and inflated stuff made in offices, that bulks out the foreign intelligence of so many English papers, for example. At present every paper contains a little of everything, inadequate sporting stuff, inadequate financial stuff, vague literary matter, voluminous

reports of political vapourings, because no newspaper is quite sure of the sort of readers it has--probably no daily newspaper has yet a distinctive sort of reader.

Many people, with their minds inspired by the number of editions which evening papers pretend to publish and do not, incline to believe that daily papers may presently give place to hourly papers, each with the last news of the last sixty minutes photographically displayed. As a matter of fact no human being wants that, and very few are so foolish as to think they do; the only kind of news that any sort of people clamours for hot and hot is financial and betting fluctuations, lottery lists and examination results; and the elaborated and cheapened telegraphic and telephonic system of the coming days, with tapes (or phonograph to replace them) in every post-office and nearly every private house, so far from expanding this department, will probably sweep it out of the papers altogether. One will subscribe to a news agency which will wire all the stuff one cares to have so violently fresh, into a phonographic recorder perhaps, in some convenient corner. There the thing will be in every house, beside the barometer, to hear or ignore. With the separation of that function what is left of the newspaper will revert to one daily edition--daily, I think, because of the power of habit to make the newspaper the specific business of some definite moments in the day; the breakfast hour, I suppose, or the "up-to-town" journey with most Englishmen now. Quite possibly some one will discover some day that there is now machinery for folding and fastening a paper into a form that will not inevitably get into the butter, or lead to bitterness in a

railway carriage. This pitch of development reached, I incline to anticipate daily papers much more like the Spectator in form than these present mainsails of our public life. They will probably not contain fiction at all, and poetry only rarely, because no one but a partial imbecile wants these things in punctual daily doses, and we are anticipating an escape from a period of partial imbecility. My own culture and turn of mind, which is probably akin to that of a respectable mechanic of the year 2000, inclines me towards a daily paper that will have in addition to its concentrated and absolutely trustworthy daily news, full and luminous accounts of new inventions, new theories, and new departures of all sorts (usually illustrated), witty and penetrating comments upon public affairs, criticisms of all sorts of things, representations of newly produced works of art, and an ample amount of ably written controversy upon everything under the sun. The correspondence columns, instead of being an exercising place for bores and conspicuous people who are not mercenary, will be the most ample, the most carefully collected, and the most highly paid of all departments in this paper. Personal paragraphs will be relegated to some obscure and costly corner next to the births, deaths, and marriages. This paper will have, of course, many pages of business advertisements, and these will usually be well worth looking through, for the more intelligent editors of the days to come will edit this department just like any other, and classify their advertisements in a descending scale of freshness and interest that will also be an ascending scale of price. The advertiser who wants to be an indecent bore, and vociferate for the ten millionth time some flatulent falsehood about a pill, for instance,

will pay at nuisance rates. Probably many papers will refuse to print nasty and distressful advertisements about people's insides at all. The entire paper will be as free from either greyness or offensive stupidity in its advertisement columns as the shop windows in Bond Street to-day, and for much the same reason,--because the people who go that way do not want that sort of thing.

It has been supposed that, since the real income of the newspaper is derived from advertisements, large advertisers will combine in the future to own papers confined to the advertisements of their specific wares. Some such monopoly is already attempted; several publishing firms own or partially own a number of provincial papers, which they adorn with strange "Book Chat" columns conspicuously deficient in their information; and a well-known cycle tyre firm supplies "Cycling" columns that are mere pedestals for the Head-of-King-Charles make of tyre. Many quack firms publish and give away annual almanacks replete with economical illustrations, offensive details, and bad jokes. But I venture to think, in spite of such phenomena, that these suggestions and attempts are made with a certain disregard of the essential conditions of sound advertisement. Sound advertisement consists in perpetual alertness and newness, in appearance in new places and in new aspects, in the constant access to fresh minds. The devotion of a newspaper to the interest of one particular make of a commodity or group of commodities will inevitably rob its advertisement department of most of its interest for the habitual readers of the paper. That is to say, the newspaper will fail in what is one of the chief attractions of a good

newspaper. Moreover, such a devotion will react upon all the other matter in the paper, because the editor will need to be constantly alert to exclude seditious reflections upon the Health-Extract-of-Horse-Flesh or Saved-by-Boiling-Jam. His sense of this relation will taint his self-respect and make him a less capable editor than a man whose sole affair is to keep his paper interesting. To these more interesting rival papers the excluded competitor will be driven, and the reader will follow in his wake. There is little more wisdom in the proprietor of an article in popular demand buying or creating a newspaper to contain all his advertisements than in his buying a coal pit for the same purpose. Such a privacy of advertisement will never work, I think, on a large scale; it is probably at or near its maximum development now, and this anticipation of the advertiser-owned paper, like that of hourly papers, and that wonderfully powerful cosmic newspaper syndicate, is simply another instance of prophesying based only on a present trend, an expansion of the obvious, instead of an analysis of determining forces.

[36] One striking illustration of the distinctive possibilities of democratic government came to light during the last term of office of the present patriotic British Government. As a demonstration of patriotism large sums of money were voted annually for the purpose of building warships, and the patriotic common man paid the taxes gladly with a dream of irresistible naval predominance to sweeten the payment. But the money was not spent on warships; only a portion of it was spent, and the rest remained to make a surplus and warm the heart of the common man in his tax-paying capacity. This artful dodge was repeated for

several years; the artful dodger is now a peer, no doubt abjectly respected, and nobody in the most patriotic party so far evolved is a bit the worse for it. In the organizing expedients of all popular governments, as in the prospectuses of unsound companies, the disposition is to exaggerate the nominal capital at the expense of the working efficiency. Democratic armies and navies are always short, and probably will always be short, of ammunition, paint, training and reserve stores; battalions and ships, since they count as units, are over-numerous and go short-handed, and democratic army reform almost invariably works out to some device for multiplying units by fission, and counting men three times instead of twice in some ingenious and plausible way. And this must be so, because the sort of men who come inevitably to power under democratic conditions are men trained by all the conditions of their lives to so set appearances before realities as at last to become utterly incapable of realities.