

George Cores

A GLIMPSE OF LIFE ON NEW EARTH, YEAR 2040

Our toil from thought all glorious forms shall cull,
To make this Earth, our home, more beautiful,
And Science, and her sister Poesy,
Shall clothe in light the fields and cities of the free!

Percy Bysshe Shelley, *The Revolt of Islam*

The world smiled. The sun shone for all humankind. All around the world, people walked fearlessly and happily to their everyday concerns with joy in their hearts and a kindly glint in their eyes. The age of darkness and misery was over and the human race had finally come to appreciate and, in the day-to-day routine of life, grasped the ideals of all who had fought in the past for human happiness. This was happening the world over, wheresoever men were living, regardless of their race or country.

I

There lies the Great City

Whitman

An old man who looked to be in his eighties sat down on a bench on London Bridge. A young woman in her twenties or thereabouts sat beside him, as did a young man of much the same age. In spite of his years, the old man displayed a sturdy physical make-up and huge energy and was gazing at the scene before him with great curiosity.

“Grandfather” – the young man said – “I’d love to hear the story of your life, when you left London many years back when you were young and on your own, cut off from your family on that Pacific island.”

“And so you shall” – the old man replied – “but before that I’d like to hear from you the details of the wonderful changes wrought hereabouts, which folk thought were impossible back in the days of my youth. I can see right here everything that remains of the Tower of London, Tower Bridge, London Bridge and St Paul’s Cathedral: and a few other places which I assume are regarded as historical monuments. Those ugly, cramped brick piles are gone and in their place fine, splendid warehouses, quays, slipways and passages have been built. All in all, great changes in improvement of the area. I appreciate, also, that the appearance of the despised railway bridge in the area has been transformed and adds to the overall respectability of the district.”

“Sure” – the young man said – “most of the pointless ‘businesses’ as they were termed – finance, banking, insurance, etc., – have been allowed to fall into disuse in the current circumstances: the place is awash with tourists from all over the world and they are spellbound by the sights of this renowned old metropolis. The local population has been boosted considerably and is employed in

purposeful industries, which bind them to the city, so that, in that respect, they are once more living in accordance with its ancient history. All of our sea ports have been moved inland and changed over time: and are still flooded with goods and travellers. Trading for the sake of mere profit has died out, and in its place there is a mighty trade with lots of other countries. As in different times, one can see fleets of ships on the move but they are better designed and better built for facing the perils of the seas and oceans.

“Brain and brawn no longer symbolize differing strata of society, because nowadays everybody shares in the wide range of social endeavours. Education and learning are shared by all: hence optimum mental and physical resourcefulness and everyone’s genius has a say in everything that is being done.”

“You mean that individuals toil altruistically for the benefit of others?” – the old man asked.

“No” – the young man replied – “It cannot be said that altruism comes into it. Everything that delivers enjoyment and comfort in life is equally accessible to every person. By “equally” I do not mean that every person receives the same measure of the same thing or anything like that. That view has fallen by the wayside, except in cases of exceptional difficulty such as shipwrecks, etc. I think housing is a good example of what I am talking about. Everybody needs and ought to have decent accommodation, a home, and not be liable to be turned out into the street by anybody whose only concern is with “ownership” and extracting what used to be described as rent from them. Palaces, mansions, farms and workers’ quarters have had their day and are no more. And as you can see for yourself if you look around you, the buildings, of whatever sort they may be, are agreeable and easy on the eye of the beholder. Indoors they are carefully kitted out for all the comfort and convenience of the residents. And they are not all of the same gloomy aspect. Our cities and towns boast a huge range of architectural styles and everything is built to last, as well with convenience and beauty in mind. The free guilds and trade unions – unions – of the architects, bricklayers and other workers have wrought what must have looked nothing short of a miracle to folk from a hundred years ago. The community is made up of individuals and since every individual has an equal entitlement to access to the benefits of society’s wealth, with everyone’s useful toil or service contributing to society’s assets, so every single person enjoys the benefits of this. Thus, the individual and the common interest are nowadays in perfect harmony. Shakespeare’s words about the “quality of mercy” and being “twice blessed” and “a blessing upon the giver and the taker” can be applied to all our mental or manual exertions.

And in actual fact, folk could not bear the sight of unnecessary and avoidable needs and human suffering where there was plenty or where, by all marching in step, we might have a chance of producing plenty for all. Nor, these days, is there any tolerance for stupid, slavish toil. Work should be – and among us, does go hand in hand with whatever intelligence, interest and pride are invested in it. With private fortunes not coexisting with deprivation. A prosperous community in which everyone has an entitlement to share, is the greatest social success of our age.”

*The place to be happy is here,
The time to be happy is now
The means to be happy consists of making others happy.*

R.G. Ingersoll

The old man said: "Judging by the health and the free ways of the folk I have seen in the city of London and in Southwark, there is no question as to success." The planning of these well-constructed buildings, all of them with gardens and surrounding greenery, must make a formidable impact on the residents' mental and physical well-being. But these – to me – startling social changes – must have required enormous de-centralization in industrial methods and such."

"You are right there" – the young man replied. – "This is how far science and invention have come in bringing their help fully to bear. The reign of Old King Coal and Petroleum is over. Both are still moderately in use but the community is not irretrievably dependent upon them. Not only has the nature power of water been harnessed as a source of electricity – for heating, lighting and power – throughout the country but the science of electricity had made wonderful strides forwards in terms of discovery. We have set aside those huge centralized installations that provided hundreds of thousands of cubic feet of lighting, heating and power. Facilities that are much smaller are now up and running and the tenants in individual homes are able to produce all the energy they need using equipment that requires but little attention. Look at the vehicles passing us by: they are virtually electrically powered and you will note how much better they are than the vehicles back in your day. This has been made possible because of a brand new social approach of meeting human needs and interest rather than those of "business" as they were usually described, designed to enrich short-sighted, selfish folk. The world of mechanical science has popped up as if "prompted" by the most widespread and loftiest needs of the moment and it has high-mindedly responded. The same thing has happened right across the whole of our industry, with phenomenal results hitherto unimaginable."

"Speaking of industry" – the old man asked – "how is it going these days? There must surely be outstandingly gifted and capable men and women in charge, endowed with drastic powers to command conformity with their plans and dictates."

"No" – the younger man replied – "Such an approach would be entirely antiquated and unnecessary. Nor would it be tolerated. We are only too well aware of the horrors inherent in such an approach in bygone times. In addition to which we have a technically trained intelligentsia, plus the community has high hopes of reaping greater benefits from the work already done and only weak-minded folk could fail to identify with what has been achieved. Average intelligence is all it takes, as there is nothing standing in the way of any personal self-improvement. So what has been achieved to date should not be looked upon as if it has been accomplished despite the unfavourable circumstances of bygone days. Nobody needs press-ganging if the crew needs help. And there is no need to coax by means of violence or subversion in today's free community. We all reap the benefits of the progress made. There is no lower class denied the greatest advantages of civilized living. Plainly, we have our

male and female geniuses, but in every workshop or location where production is under way, there are workers' councils made up of all of those working in concert there. Plus every profession and trade has its national association, trade union or union, sponsoring or fostering much higher productivity levels and social benefits. There are lots of such bodies in industry, but they account for only a fraction of the vast administrative body in place. Which is not to say that we have a huge professional bureaucracy. That is an affliction that needs to be eradicated as a matter of practicality and vital necessity. It really was a parasitical, privileged element. Thus, there is a greater degree of coordination of all our social and individual endeavours. But let me try to say a little more about these matters when we come to another important stage in our lives."

"Many thanks" – the old man said – "But what arrangements have you for getting hold of raw materials for your factories or for coming by items produced abroad?"

"We have no problems there" – the young man said – "British-made goods enjoy a great reputation around the world due to their high quality and finish. If we were concerned about trade, we could export more than we currently do. There is huge demand for our goods from foreign countries and our international trade councils run into very few difficulties. The spirit of fairness that informs such matters has proved contagious and generated mutual trust between nations."

III

"Well-being for all is no dream. It is possible and feasible, thanks to everything that our forefathers have done to boost our productive capabilities."

Peter Kropotkin

"But what are things like for the folk in country areas?" – the old man asked.

"They have seen a series of wonderful changes there, just like in manufacturing." – said the young man. "But, to get a grasp of existing conditions there, you need to know that the land is no longer held under private ownership, a phrase that actually means that it was used as a stick with which to beat the community. Hitherto, the products of the sub-soil like coal or iron and other minerals were the property of the owners of the land. We today fail to understand why that claim was tolerated for so long.

The land is vital for us all – the young man added. It is not as if it was man-made. The community was forced to insist upon full and free access to it, as well as upon control over it. Only thus has it been possible to work the land efficiently, for the sake of optimum productivity and the well-being of all. This fine and fertile soil now produces a sufficiency of cereal crops, fruit and vegetables to ensure that the population can be properly fed. This has been achieved thanks to intensive cultivation, as was recommended by a renowned campaigner for fresh social conditions by the name of Peter Kropotkin during the nineteenth century. And because every one of our hamlets and cities has cooperative production groups, made up of all the rural workers and they monitor all of the work that is done. These days, everybody knows, not just the value, but also the skills involved in agriculture. As a result, life in the village is completely changed from what it was in days gone by. There is no contagious disease: the provision of water and sewage are as they ought to be. The

reason being that folk there are entitled and empowered to look after these matters for themselves, with no need to seek permission from the authorities and landowners, like in the old days. Of course, we do not always achieve optimum productivity from the land. But modern warehousing methods allow the community to provide against shortages or losses in any given year and thereby fully enjoy nature's bounty as long as it liberally repays people's labours. Over-production causes no disruption: and rising prices have fallen out of fashion thanks to the friendship between nations and freely afforded mutual aid. It is not as if we have no relationship with other peoples. Instead, we enhance all our lives thanks to lots more useful items, public services and luxury goods. Not that other countries are lagging behind in that regard and the principles of sociability and culture, the very foundations of civilized existence, are steering the human race in the direction of realization of the most high-minded social ideal. The commonsense practice and expertise of all those directly concerned makes all these things possible.

In all of these respects, the experience of the great Cooperative Movement has been of tremendous help. It allows folk to move more easily and naturally into a free Cooperative Community, albeit that initially, a lot of people from that Movement, and albeit timorously, saw an opportunity to move towards accomplishment of their greatest hopes. But those days have gone and the feasibility of this has been demonstrated more and more and a lot of ideas that once were deemed mere sentimentality have now turned into prosaic everyday actions. We have come to believe that there are no limits to what can be achieved through free and clever cooperation. Rather than trusting to the schemes and efforts of men of ambition who are out to steer, direct and govern, experience has taught folk that their own direct action is the best path to the accomplishment of better things.

The awful feeling of weakness and futility that wormed its way into the minds of millions of men and women for centuries, has now been banished for good and life can now be shaped and better attuned to heartfelt desires.

One noxious impact upon social relations has been the moral impact on folk, so much of whose lives have to do with the working of the soil. They are no longer looked upon, as they once were, as backward nor are they figures of fun. They proudly remain on an equal footing with their urban comrades and those in the industrial areas.

Not only is that the case, but millions of city folk have shown themselves increasingly disposed to spend their holidays among them, helping out with their day-to-day tasks. This has been doubly rewarding: boosting their physical health and enjoyment of life. The tiller of the soil is no longer society's and the government's beast of burden. That has been one tangible and positive benefit of the widest possible freedom."

"And are there some who work the land on their own, individual accounts?" – the old man pressed.

"Oh, yes!" – the young man said "By the tens of thousands. In actual fact, this is an obsession with a lot of people. They appear to have a fascination with the land. Which is a good thing. They make a pastime out of it, or, rather, they find it an attraction that busies their imaginations and attention almost entirely. They seem never to weary of work and their efforts have produced wonderful results. Their labours have produced some startling results. A lot of improved farming methods have

been introduced by them and they have sustained high levels of equality. By the way, a friend of mind believes that the existence of such outlets for burning off nervous and physical energy is not only useful and delightful, but accounts for the low rates of mental disturbance these days. During the 20th century, the numbers of lunatics and mentally ill persons were alarming. These days, we have very few. My friend says that this is a result of a more wholesome social life.”

“And what about the children?” – the old man asked.

“I’ll tell you as much as I know on that score” – the girl interjected. – “You have seen for yourself their overall splendid physical condition. They are well nourished, appropriately clothed and good-looking. Their levels of well-being are very high and consistently so. Nothing so mirrors good conditions and social care as children do. Today, May Day is an international holiday commemorating the martyrdom of a number of men who preached the advisability of the human race’s living such a life as we live these days. You can see for yourself the children having fun with submarines on the riverbanks, many of them paddling in swimming-pools and many others immersed in the endless list of pastimes involving sand.”

“Yes, I can see that” – the old man said – “But what about ordinary days? Don’t they have to go to school?”

The girl guffawed: and then recomposed herself:

“I hope you’ll forgive me for that bit of fun. It was your use of the expression “have to”, meaning obligation, that made me laugh. I should like to see somebody try to stop them from going to school. Here, please do not draw comparisons between past practice and what goes on these days. These days, schools are not haunts of fear or gloom or dens crammed with hordes of cowed children, controlled and disciplined by means of uninteresting, bland classes, places where they are trained for a future as submissive grown-ups.

“There are lots of wonderful things in the schools to be seen, heard and done. When the preference is for swapping the classroom for the playground – due to a lack of interest in the lesson – there will be a suitably friendly atmosphere available, and the ill-adapted pupils are not put off: that, though, is not a very common occurrence. For the most part, that assurance is down to the fact that essential changes have been made to our thinking about education. That teaching is one of the most demanding jobs, we know. But when we know how to do the job properly and have access to the tools needed to do the job, the task proves to be extremely easy. The same goes where child education is concerned. The teacher’s task is to lay out the manner and means of doing things properly. More advanced children help those lagging behind or who are less astute. This is done openly and it is of great assistance to the teacher in his task. It looks like there are all sorts of items of interest relating to the matter being taught, will illustrations also being used to hold the attention of the pupils.

“Unruly behaviour is not welcomed and leads to an invitation to leave the class in peace as it gets on with its work. In most cases, a gesture will suffice. As for the breadth of lessons, that is not the issue it was in times gone by. Some teachers are so popular that enthusiastic gangs of youngsters are eager to attend lessons. Several of the best appreciated teachers of my acquaintance, while teaching

geography, brought the lesson to life by recounting their own personal experiences in different parts of the world. Eye-witnesses have testified to enthusiastic applause at the end of the teachers' talks. It is up to professional teachers from the old education system to argue that their efforts – if there were any – to better the education and treatment meted out to their pupils were of any great progressive value.

“And a lot of male and female teachers who, on an independent basis, mounted educational efforts in which they demonstrated (or tried to) that a freedom-based approach boosts and bolsters moral progress by teasing out the child's innate inclinations and instincts. Ah! But such pioneers were regarded at the time as crackpots, whereas we today look upon them as the instigators of an experiment that been of service to the correct and the scientific.

“Another significant influence in a child's life. You know that in bygone days there was implicit belief that, thousands of years ago, some Asiatic deity created man and woman. That deity took umbrage at the disobedience of his creations, something that he could readily have averted, had it occurred to him. After that, boys and girls have inherited a 'sinful' nature. That teaching was undermined by the progress made in geological science in the 19th century. Moreover, a great scientist, sociologist and practitioner, Robert Owen, following in the footsteps of William Godwin, the philosopher, taught and proved that the behaviour of man, woman and child was palpably determined by their surroundings. Such teachings have been comprehensively borne out by the entire world in Godwin's and Owen's times. Humanity's well-being hinges upon the calm reflection of individuals and the unfolding nature of its character.

“There is no question but that today's children, as they become men and women, will never countenance a return to those days of ignorance and suffering

“By way of example of the difference in the treatment today's children enjoy as against those in bygone times, there is the fact that we do not regard them as 'delinquent' when they depart from what we might consider 'standard' behaviour. As a result of the world wars, children's imaginations were fraught as they became used to playing with toy guns and planned ambushes, pretending to kill one another, in imitation of what their elders were actually doing. Of course, it sometimes happened that they went overboard. Excessive energy, abetted by a restless mind prompted them to commit actual trespasses, often breaches of the law. On one occasion, a number of children planned a picnic and, for snacks, they raided a shop and stole a number of edible goods. For this offence, they were sentenced to years locked up in a so-called reform school. Such vicious punishment is not visited upon children or adults from wealthy homes. It was only the poorer children who were open to such punishment. Those unfortunate children in bygone days were not at liberty to afford free rein to their needs and energies the way that today's little ones can do; the latter enjoy the mental good fortune that spares us the problem of 'juvenile delinquency'. Which is a considerable boost to happiness in our day.”

There is no power stronger than an idea whose time has come

Victor Hugo

“I’d be obliged” – the old man pointed out – “if you would be so kind as to tell me a little about another aspect of life, the intellectual side of things, say, as it affects the arts and sciences, as I regard both of those as typifying growth by the human race.”

“Well, I will do what I can” – the young man said – “to give you some sort of an idea as to the subject. The sciences are, so to speak, our life’s breath. I should add that, to date, there has never been such enthusiasm for study and scientific research. Same applies to the arts. I myself am a member of a youth group known as ‘The Apex Society’. I straightforwardly acknowledge the presumption of the young: but even though I have seen caution mocked on age grounds, I have never seen anybody harmed by it. Right, let us take our own group as a tiny example: one member, an engineer, excels in poetry and drama; another one, a carpenter, is studying biology; a third, who is a shoe-maker, is a student of languages, including Greek and Latin; one girl, a seamstress, is adept in Assyriology and Egyptology. I myself am a bricklayer and a student of engraving, sculpture and architecture. And we are just random examples of the thousands of young students of every age. Throughout the country, there are study groups delving into all the arts and branches of science. Printing, poetry, music, sculpture and architecture have countless devotees and, as far as scientists go, there are so many of them that we often joke that they are like grains of sand on the seashore. There are painters galore: oil paintings and black and white water-colours and so on can be seen everywhere. It appears to be something innate. Just think of how much fun children can derive from chalk and colouring pencils.

“In the course of a talk at the University of London recently, one lecturer boasted about intellectual progress. He pointed out that wheresoever there have been freedom and prosperity in place, even in small measures, the human intellect has flourished and reached its highest point during that time. And he also said that we have smashed all the records from times past, albeit that he did acknowledge our enormous debt to our forefathers. Say what you like, but there is no denying that there are high levels of intelligence and knowledge these days.

“We will not concede that there has been any diminution in terms of sports requiring demanding levels of physical effort or strength; on the contrary, you will find that physical exercise and sports generally are universally popular. Some, such as football and cricket still seem capable of inspiring real fanaticism. Running, walking and weight-lifting, cycling, wrestling, swimming and hundreds of other sports, ensure that our youngsters’ minds and bodies are in harmony and in good health.”

“Right, right” – the old man agreed – “But that still leaves the particulars regarding Health, say. Back in my day, it was a tremendous issue.”

The young man clarified: “We are still working on it but there are still problems with our medical and surgical services, but the plentiful complaints of bygone days in respect of lack of health and hygiene have all but dried up. Besides, people are no longer oppressed by the tremendous mental and

nervous stress that used to grind them down in less rational times. People are possessed of a higher level of physical and nervous robustness that affords them immunity against ailments that were commonplace in bygone times.”

“From what you are telling me” – the old man agreed – “I can appreciate that having a free society is a huge step forward for mankind. But there is one thing I am still none too sure about yet and it refers to the part money plays in your economy.”

“On that point” – the young man pointed out – “we still use money for our business dealings, albeit that use of it is pretty routine. But there is a motion under consideration by our executives apropos of getting rid of money altogether. We may well have unanimous agreement at national level in the near future. As you have seen, in these times of social endeavour we have run up against the impossibility of rewarding every single person according to the services delivered to the community. Secondly, our shared wealth is so enormous that it would be a waste to time and effort trying share it out. In an age of plenty when it is a pleasure getting together with others in order to makes our lives mutually agreeable and where everybody can reach an authentic social consciousness, differentiating rates of payment would not be worth the effort. We are completely and profoundly in disagreement with the notion that the most unpleasant and demanding work should be paid much better than any other sort of work. That, as we see it, is unfair and illogical and in our case does not apply.

“Here, supplies, imports and exports and exchange are based on the principle of the relative actual value of goods insofar as that can be established, rather than upon the vagaries of the money market, or something of the sort. We are no longer living under the curse of gold! There is no international money power bargaining and plotting on behalf of peoples but unbeknownst to the latter. That makes distribution simpler and easier. The money system used to place the bulk of the community at a disadvantage compared with the privileged minority. Here again you should bear in mind the huge changes wrought in social and economic affairs, as well as people’s mental and moral attitudes towards such vital issues. The habit of sticking to securing wealth individually by means of the subjugation of the other fellow: the perdition and poverty into which others are delivered, cannot prevail in our day. This is not a matter of sentiment, but of everybody’s right to life a happy life and enjoy the same well-being as everybody else.

“A lot of countries have gone full speed ahead for a system of free availability and use of the tools required for the maintenance of day-to-day life. Here in England, it looks like folk were more reluctant and timid and resisted or shied away from any departure from centuries-old practices. But in a huge number of places, they have been shifting to a common-sense stance and I am sure that we shall soon see it prevail everywhere. The overall idea is that this is what everyone wants and luckily, there is no authority to step in, the way it used to, to block the requisite changes by declaring them illegal.”

The old man observed: “You have now brought something to mind about which I am enormously curious. Do you not require a law passed by parliament, or some order issued by a public body or authority authorizing such changes or arrangements? The question may strike you as redundant, but you ought to appreciate that everything is very different from the way it was back when I left this

country in the days of my youth. For anybody like me these new circumstances can be very confusing.”

V

The State has to go ... Changes to the form of government are simply toying with degrees. A little more or less folly, the whole of it.

IBSEN

The young man responded: “The parliamentary system, the government of the nation, the machinery of force and violence: all of these have been done away with. They were, in every sense of the term, evil twins. There were laws by the thousands, awash with mistakes, produced over many centuries and laws that nobody could quite understand. Lawyers, people adept in the laws, can rarely agree upon how they are to be construed. As for governments, these days the memory of them brings to mind the instruments of repression and torture: weapons, prisons and wars. All of these institutions would amount to anachronisms as far as our current civilization is concerned. These days men and women have a surer grasp of things. Folk believed that our system would entail time wasted in discussions. This is untrue, but, if so, it would be a cheap price to pay for our being spared the errors of the State. As far as I am aware, the State has never stood out for its speed in the implementation of any sort of reform. In a way we have a Parliament, but it has no legislative or executive authority. Every year, we hold a congress of delegates from various groups or associations to debate public concerns. It amounts to a consultative assembly along the lines of the old British Association for the Advancement of Science. Its deliberations have proved very productive. But it lacks authority in terms of obligation or violence. All our consultative bodies lack such power. As you will recall, the old governments sometimes haggled without exercising any violent coercion against one another. They could not be continuously at war. But in actual fact, the mightiest power oppressed the weakest. The former felt compelled to adopt more subtle practices, procedures requiring no coercive authority in its negotiations. Among us, habit or custom prevails: the principle of intimidation has lapsed into complete disuse. So much for the story of the former slaves, once set free, being left bewildered. A similar feeling has been a great spur to progress.”

“So what about crime?” – the old man pressed

“We have reverted to the old days of the notion of being from the same tribe where that is concerned. Complete with precise familiarity with the present time of course. There are societies that deal specifically with such matters. It might be argued that we have made a lot more progress than the police forces ever did. Social circumstances and the laws back then spawned crime and criminals. Fortunately, we live in an age favourable to ideas and rational social relations. Offences among us are mainly due to physiological deformity or mental defects. One good example is that we have opened up a path to proper international understanding by means of the artificial language, Esperanto. Its creator had been impressed by the bickering between the different branches of the human race, the product of a multiplicity of languages. Hundreds of millions now employ this useful means of inter-communication and its has been a mighty aid in embedding a genuine consciousness

of brotherhood in every nation. Languages spoken around the world have their part to play and they have their advocates.”

“In the past” – the old man interjected – “the fear was that if social conditions were to improve, the demand for food would outstrip the ability to provide for the upkeep of the population.”

“Such fears cannot stand these days. A high level of civilization or growth in the average level of intelligence tends to lead to a reduction in population size. But the dominant influences these days are, first, a shared and broader scientific understanding of gender issues and, secondly, a familiarity with what we describe as birth control methods. Plus which the vast majority of men and women want to live for rather more than mere procreation of the species. Organisms spawned by mere procreation are always defective. We are men.”

VI

The destroyer is a builder too.

J. GREENLEAF WHITTIER

“Forgive me for all the questions, but I have another one for you. How was such a radical turnaround brought about? In my childhood days, such social changes were thought unlikely.”

“To some extent, that was a reasonable point of view. Allow me to tell you the story as it was told to me. Some 65 years ago, a brutal and inhuman government threatened to flood Europe and Asia with millions of slaves trained in warfare (recruits they were called). The governments of the countries under threat combined their resources and powers. Both sides were in possession of the most terrifying weaponry. They had it within their capability to hurl through the air huge shells that could have destroyed not just armies but the greatest cities and all of their inhabitants. That war never took place but there was a worldwide panic. The armies of the aggressor powers dispersed. The troops came to the conclusion that nothing could be worse than the destruction hanging over the world’s head. Their despotic rulers were unable to keep them in check. Enemy troops also refused the order to attack. The common interests of all the peoples cried out for peace. It was against this backdrop that there came to pass a worldwide rebellion against the system that had plotted the extermination of the human race. The notion of a new way of thinking about society spread like wildfire. There was a universal refusal to acknowledge the authority of any government. The notion of a free community enthralled the human race. The dream of all the martyrs filled the hearts of all men, not to say their minds. The main point was that women had a huge influence over men when it came to the business of rebuilding society and they themselves took that task to heart. Since when, there has been uninterrupted progress. No longer did any man agree to defer to any other man and allow any other man to act thus towards himself. Our parents have bequeathed us this splendid legacy and it would be a shame if we were to squander it.”

“I am much obliged to you for your kindness” – the old man finally said. – “From here on I have a clearer understanding of what I can see. I am convinced by the truth of your words and am grateful that I have lived long enough to see this age of liberation and fairness with my own eyes. A few

verses that were favourites of men back in my younger days seem as if they were written as a comment upon the present times. They were written by the poet J A Symonds and they go like this:

*These things shall be, – a loftier race
Than ere the world hath known shall rise
With flame of freedom in their souls,
And light of knowledge in their eyes.*

*They shall be gentle, brave and strong
To spill no drop of blood, but dare
All that may plant man's lordship firm
On earth and fire, and sea, and air.*

*Nation with nation, land with land,
Inarmed shall live as comrades free;
In every heart and brain shall throb
The pulse of one fraternity.*

*Man shall love man, with heart as pure
And fervent as the young-eyed throng
Who chant their heavenly psalms before
God's face with undiscordant song.*

*New arts shall bloom of loftier mould
And mightier music fill the skies,
And every life shall be a song,
When all the earth is paradise.*

George CORES

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