

outdone by you. Well, start a scheme of housing reform in Lancashire, make yourself king of your own people, buy up the papers and shove them down people's throats below cost. My dear sir, there will be strikes and riots until everyone is living in the same luxury as your people. The infection will spread to Yorkshire, carried by your subsidised press; there'll be parliamentary candidates; in half a dozen years not only will you have revolutionised housing conditions, but you'll have given yourself feudal power over the souls and bodies of your tenants. Of course, the press has been shamefully neglected. . . ."

In a rapid digression young Stornaway sketched a newspaper trust which was to undersell the old papers, ruin them and buy the ruins at break-up prices until no single paper remained outside the ring. Tories and Radicals should have each their old, proper organ, but the direction would come from a single controlling hand. And some day, when opposition had been killed, the thousand mouths of the trust would speak with one voice. And the controlling hand would grasp such power as had never been wielded before.

"It will take time to buy or break up old family properties like the 'Times' or the 'Morning Post,' but you can start doing it to-morrow. Hitherto the press has been established by relatively poor men, who can't take fancy risks; now your first job is to see that every man in the country gets a better paper at a cheaper price, whatever it may cost you. Give it away, if you like, but see that it gets everywhere; you can afford it, you can fling away money for a year or two, if at the end you're going to get your rivals coming to you on their knees. And your power as head of a newspaper trust. . . . It's like my scheme for getting control of public education. . . ."

The deck was growing gradually deserted, but Lancing seemed disposed to sit listening for a while longer. Stornaway pursued an unwearied course of explanatory declamation. He was convinced that all thought and expression could be controlled by the man who took the trouble to