

or accomplished. Sowing the wind is esteemed harmless enough until the whirlwind comes to be reaped. To one ignorant of mechanics it would seem an innocent matter enough to plug a safety valve on a boiler. An explosion would teach another lesson. It seems the terrible fate of France to be the world's tutor and exemplar of the danger of sowing the wind of political license, and the risk of stopping the safety valve of political freedom. Universal suffrage was won at the barricades in 1848, won to give permanence to the Republic, which, in less than four years, it destroyed by an emphatic vote. It was spoken of by its advocates, Louis Blanc, Cremieux, Ledru Rollin, as "the enthronement of the sovereign people," the "crowning of a dynasty which could not die out nor be driven into exile," nor be tyrants nor traitors. But with an abject sense of impotence to govern, it gave up its crown to one citizen, helped him to rob a neighbor of two provinces, and urged him into a war to spoliat the soil of another, which led to the loss of richer territory than Savoy and Nice. Of this, Sedan was the culmination. Universal suffrage, where ignorance is universal in the masses of the people, is the investment of ignorance with sovereign power; and France, by having this political feature, and the sad experience of its working, is placed in the dilemma of Macbeth: danger is equally imminent whether it goes forward or retreats.

The Septennat is no more a truce, as was hoped. It is not even a compromise, for a compromise is a settlement by mutual concession, and the Septennat is only a postponement of a settlement. A truce suspends hostilities, whereas the present Assembly is a mere gathering for faction fight. It is held together as a governing body by the balance of opposing elements, as the earth is kept in its course by the equal action of laws which, operating alone, would rend it or drive it into space. The end is not far off. Were any of the pretenders to the Throne gifted with political genius: it had come ere this. The crisis demands what seems to be not yet on hand: a born ruler of men; hence our fear that anarchy will come again, and, through terror and blood, France will emerge weaker, but not wiser,

with a monarch or emperor to rule again only for a brief and troubled season, and then *la danse d'enfer* it has whirled in so long will be resumed. When the hour comes, then comes the man. Alas! for France. Her hour is at hand, and so is the return of—Rochefort!

With all its guillotine, barricade and fusillade horrors France has achieved no greater revolutionary success than that which England is winning for itself and humanity by the agricultural laborers' agitation. It needs an intimate knowledge of country life in the old land to appreciate the full significance of any movement in the peasants which evidences thought or ambition or hope or consciousness higher than animal instincts. The stir of men is natural; it of itself excites no remark, but the stir of dry bones in the valley of the dead is a wonder indeed. But this rising was foreseen. It was the hope of those who led the fight for national education, which ended in the village school; it was the dread of those who knew too well that the village school would destroy village serfdom. Cramped and warped as was the old school administration by squirearchical suspicion, and ecclesiastical prejudice, and obsequious subservience to farmer and landlord influence, it was an educational wedge which, by mere force of time, has been driven so far as to break up a social order as old as England itself.

Several months after the marriage of the late Emperor Napoleon, we stood talking with a Normandy farmer, within a few miles of one of the chief seaports of France, and found that neither he nor his neighbors had heard of the wedding,—an event which in the same week was being read about by some "schollard" of a boy to a group of laborers in every hamlet in England. These "schollards" with a newspaper in hand have brought about one of the great revolutions of history,—revolution being, however, a wrong word, for to revolve may mean, as is seen too often in France, a turning round only to reach the same point again; the change in this case is rather an evolution, a development from a seed to a tree beneath which generations to come shall find shelter, and from its boughs