

ures in business, cornerings, boodlings, murders, suicides, embezzlements, and cases of cruelty, lunacy, or destitution. No doubt a real table of contents would give a picture, though not so terrible and heartrending as this, yet rich in catastrophes. But it is forgotten that the catastrophes or the exceptional events alone are recorded by newspapers, especially in the tables of contents, which are intended to catch the eye. No newspaper gives us a picture of the ordinary course of life. No newspaper speaks of the countries which are enjoying secure peace, of the people who are making a fair livelihood by honest industry, of the families which are living in comfort and the enjoyment of affection. Buyers would hardly be found for a sheet which should tell you by way of news that bread was being regularly delivered by the baker and that the milkman was going his round.

Centuries unnumbered, according to recent paleontologists, human society has taken in climbing to what is here described as the level of a vast den of wild beasts or a Black Hole of Calcutta. Yet in one century or a little more it is to become a paradise on earth. So the writer of "Looking Backward" dreams; and to show that he does not regard this as a mere dream, he cites historical precedents of changes which he thinks equally miraculous—the sudden and unexpected success, as it appears to him to have been, of the American revolution, of German and Italian unification, of the agitation against slavery. In two of these cases at least, those of German and Italian unity, the wonder was not that the event came at last, but that it was delayed so long. In no one of the cases, surely, is anything like a precedent to be found.

In a century or a little more, if we are to accept the statement of Dr. Leete, the showman of the new heavens and new earth in "Looking Backward," society has undergone not only a radical change but a complete transformation, Boston, of course, leading the way, as Paris leads in the regeneration proclaimed by Comte, and all the most civilized communities following in her train. Society has become entirely industrial, war being completely eliminated. No fear is entertained lest when the civilized world has been turned into a vast factory of defenseless wealth, the uncivilized world may be tempted to loot it.