

tion. Political necessity overthrew slavery. Political necessity will yet make the liquor traffic an outlaw. Municipal misrule is now the chief mischief in American politics. Its longest root is the liquor traffic. At the opening of the century, only one-twentieth of our population lived in cities. To-day, nearly one-tenth of the population is found in our ten chief towns. Fifty other towns of 30,000 inhabitants and over contain another tenth. One-fifth of our population is now found in cities large enough to have corrupt municipal governments. It is estimated that one-quarter of the voting population of our cities is made up of the employes and the patrons of the liquor saloons.

De Tocqueville predicted that the growth of great cities would ruin the American republic, unless they are kept in order by a standing army. Lord Beaconsfield was accustomed to lift up his jeweled finger and point across the Atlantic and affirm that not one American city of commanding size is well governed under universal suffrage, or ever will be. Sir Robert Peel predicted that American forms of government will fail to protect life and property in crowded populations. "As for America," said Lord Macaulay, "I appeal to the twentieth century. Either some Cæsar or Napoleon will seize the reins of government with a strong hand, or your Republic will be as fearfully plundered and laid waste by barbarians in the 20th century as the Roman Empire was in the 5th, with this difference, that the Huns and Vandals who ravaged Rome came from without her borders, while your Huns and Vandals will be engendered within your own country and by your own institutions." As Wendell Phillips was accustomed to say: "While rum rules the great towns, universal suffrage is a farce." But universal suffrage is not to be given up, and is to be made effective in securing all the ends of good government.

Precisely this is the Sphinx's Riddle in American politics—how to remedy the mischiefs of universal suffrage by means of universal suffrage. Govern great cities well under a free ballot, and the American Republic can be preserved, otherwise not. Outlaw the liquor traffic, and great cities can be governed well under a free ballot—otherwise not. The love of liberty and home in the Anglo-Saxon races is stronger than the love of intoxicating drinks. If it is clearly seen that the protection of liberty and home under universal suffrage is impossible without destroying the liquor traffic, the latter will be destroyed. When the mischief of municipal misrule, already so threatening, shall have become absolutely appalling, the people will remedy it, under the law of self-defence, by striking at its chief root.

II The aggressiveness and arrogance of the liquor traffic, its vast wealth, its unscrupulous and insatiable thirst for power in municipal, State and National politics, make its overthrow seem, as that of slavery did, a reform too prodigious to be effected under universal