

chief object of desire, for all people felt instinctively that the conditions were but transient, and that when the stress was over, gold would still be valuable, therefore, during such periods it had a purchasing power equalled by nothing else. But when the stable earth itself lost its balance, when years of uprising and down-settling only indicated more years of disturbance, individualism was seen to be useless, and salvation lay in communism. When giving ceased to be a merit or a credit, taking was punishable by death, and the paramount authority, with its deputies and well disciplined officials, took the place, seemingly for ever, of father, mother, landlord, shop-keeper, judge and priest—then gold lost its charm, and, as being of national, not of personal, benefit, was less useful than an old blanket, or a little tea. We gave up *wanting* money, nor have we ever reverted to its use. We have been surprised to find we do not need it, any more than Egypt did under the Pharaohs.

The loss of property by a catastrophe for which the losers were in no sense responsible, seemed at once to lead to a conviction that those who lived in regions not invaded by the waters had no rights of exclusive holding, and in the same way that the early Christians, looking for the speedy end of the world, put all their means into one common stock, so now, not knowing what next to expect, the millions who lived near the Alleghany range and the hills and valleys connected therewith—those, too, who dwelt near the Rocky Mountains and their associated chains—obeyed with ready good will the decrees which vested all lands in the commonwealth, for the advantage of the whole, including the millions who had lost their belongings, their houses and lands, and even their country. All debts were cancelled when military law was substituted for civil authority; no interest could be remitted to Europe, even could it have been collected; indeed, interest

at once became, and has since continued, another obsolete idea, and is now considered a form of bondage unsuited to a truly free people, and one which should have ceased when slavery was forbidden.

To the Years of Migration succeeded another unexpected development of a surprising character—the growth of a new mountain system. This was another of the things many of the scientists had declared impossible. A reflective gnat, said Dr. Johnson, once told his fellow ephemerides that while they had been dancing in the sunbeams, he had been watching the progress of the sun; it was moving steadily westward across the sky, and must soon disappear, when the world would grow cold and the race of gnats would utterly perish. The philosophers of the conventionalized type of 1894 reminded one of this scientific gnat, or, perhaps one might better say, of a colony of August wasps. They, better informed than the cultivated long-legs, know that sunrise ever follows sunset. But their parent colony, all whose members have left the egg since May, are ignorant of winter, or have but a faint tradition, traceable to a queen wasp long deceased, of a snow and ice age anterior to historic times, and void (their critics think) of historic truth. So they deride the idea of change. During their experience, summer heat has been fairly steady, the supply of material for their paper house shows no sign of failing, the grubs they feed on are as plentiful as ever, while ripe fruits, their luxuries, increase in number and variety, indicating an ever growing vitality of wasp civilization. Yet the unexpected happens, the frost does come, and, after a short struggle, all but the queen wasps die.

Like them, because there were no written records of mountain-building on a large scale, we had deluded ourselves into the idea that we were never to have another such physical contortion of the terrene surface.