

things was not ended until 1745, when General Wade made military roads through the Highlands and deliberately laid waste the country. The similar intentional depopulation of Ireland needs no description in an essay primarily intended for American readers. Each one of them has at least three friends whose grandfathers were either starved out or persecuted out of Ireland. However, there is a limit to which even England can go in the way of wholesale massacre, and the Celts, being both brave and intelligent, soon sent over many men capable of conquering the British government by the simple process of taking charge of it. They could not be kept out; and the only condition required of them was that they should behave themselves in their new position. There were but few so endowed with that rarest and most unhappy gift, the determination to stand for truth and justice, that they unselfishly refused the shameful bargain. Or, they were to some extent befooled by the political idea that they could use their power to obtain better terms for their less fortunate compatriots. So even to-day we see people like John Redwood completely nobbled, and the trust of the people betrayed. Had John Redwood struck for Irish independence in August last, they would not have dared to imprison him. But there would have been certain dinner parties at which he would no longer have been welcome. In such silken cords does England net the swordsmen!

Very similar tactics have been used in the matter of social revolution. Leigh Hunt was imprisoned long ago, but when it was found that not only Shelley, whose father was a baronet, but Byron, actually a peer, were behind him, the affair was smoothed over. Later rebels of all kinds were hushed rather than suppressed. The idiotic treatment of Charles Bradlaugh stands out as almost the only exception to the rule. Whenever any spirit showed a gleam of the true fire, it was extinguished by flattery. Kind sympathizing friends, exquisitely dressed, pointed out quite truly that there was no real harm in soap and water, that a clean collar improved the appearance, that a frock coat with a gardemia, pearl-grey trousers and a sapphire pin in an Ascot necktie, did really make life easier in London. It was much less troublesome and much more effective than the "Scavenger's Daughter" of the Middle Ages. The man himself did not know that he was fettered; did not understand why he had lost the confidence of the class which he would have given his life to help!

There is unfortunately an objection to even the softest cushioned Callipyge sitting on the safety-valve. It is an obvious one. The poison of discontent is cumulative in its effects. The Plantagenets and the Tudors and the Stuarts were on the whole less intolerable than the Georges. Mr. Layton Crippen, in his superb picture of ancient and modern life, "Clay and Fire," has shown, Titianesque, the warmth and color of the Middle Ages, the greyness of our own times. Life in the fifteenth century might be full of fear and anxiety, of misery and disease and hardship, but people had leisure, and life held all the interest of mystery. To-day everything is commonplace, unless one can reach out beyond science to the dangerous edge of the Unknown. And only a few very specially gifted, and sufficiently wealthy people, can do this. It is harder to get out of the rut than ever before. Captain J. F. C. Fuller attributes many modern "inexplicable" crimes to the revolt of the soul from the boredom of daily toil. When adventure was possible, one endured. At any moment a dragon might arrive from the next country, or a Knight in Green Armor drop in for a stirrup-cup, or one might meet a Little Old Woman who would grant Three Wishes. Even if one is being oppressed, there are more fun and more self-respect in having a One-Eyed Ogre to do it. Nowadays the "clear light of knowledge" shows that none of these things can happen any more; even denies that they even did happen, and so removes the ray of hope that what has happened once may happen again. As folk-lore died, the interest of people centred on the game of war; and as wars went out of fashion, the only adventure left was crime.

So we came to the gentleman burglar story, from the realistic beginning in "Jonathan Wild" to the romantic climax in "Raffles" and "Arsène Lupin." It is only in the last 30 years that snobbery has obtained so complete a strangle-grip, so that these common cheats and thieves are described as "such perfect gentlemen."

It is impossible to depict the sullen hopelessness of the English for the past ten years. The atmosphere has been depressing

beyond potassium bromide. Everybody had a remedy, socialism (one man one kind of socialism), diet reform, dress reform, every type of vague irrelevant quack nostrum. Only a poet or a philosopher here and there recognized the symptoms of the disease, and diagnosed it as the melancholia caused by impotence. The joy of life had fled utterly away, and was no more. "Merrie England," its boys and girls dancing round the Maypole, was dead. The Puritans had removed that "stymynkyng ydollic." Great Pan was dead, and an exceeding bitter cry tore the throats of the children. They were to be forbidden the unique pleasure of life, the one thing that makes it worth living, the exercise of the creative faculty. For only in this does man re-enter heaven, and feel himself once more manifest as the image of God. So whether this faculty is used on the physical plane as love, or on the spiritual plane as art or religious ecstasy, it is forbidden in England. The great secret of autocracy is that "religion" and "morals" are only letters for common folk. Hence the distrust of poets such as Shelley, who wanted all men to be free to love. More recently, Wilde threatened to popularize the Oxonian type of "immorality," and was crushed.

"We come even unto the New Chapel and Thou didst bear away the Holy Grail beneath Thy Druid vestments.

"Secretly and by stealth did we drink of the informing sacrament.

"Then a terrible disease seized upon the folk of the grey land; and we rejoiced."

So speaks one of the Holy Books of the initiates of a certain secret cult. The disease is presumably boredom; the monotony of life. Even the hope of so exciting an experience as Billy Sunday's hell had been ravished from the parched lips of a multitude too listless even to enjoy the thrill of fear.

It is not of such stuff that revolutions are made. The proverb says that they cannot be made with rosewater; and ditchwater is worse. The history of the spirit is that of a nerve or a muscle; when it is teased it reacts, for a certain time, more and more strenuously. After that time it tires, until not even the greatest shock can stir it. Under the oppression of the Tudors the manhood of England was in no wise diminished; you had only to whisper "The King of Spain," and somebody jumped right up and singed his beard. The spirit of the nation was indeed so high that a very trifling tax precipitated revolution; and, if I understand American history, George Washington revolted because they charged him thirty cents for a cup of English Breakfast Tea. But with a Callipyge so ponderous as Queen Victoria on the safety-valve, even modern England might have exploded. No; for the wily old lady, before taking her seat, had used the precaution to let down the fires. Her sodden sentimentality, her cotton-wool prudery, her spineless morality, and her suety religion made England chaste as Klingsor, and honest as an Armless Wonder.

Have you ever observed the effects of the torture called Vigiliarium? It is a very simple experiment to perform. All you have to do is to take a man and exhaust him; then, when he begins to fall asleep, interfere with the process. At first he resents it; for a time this becomes more acute; presently it diminishes, until the man is like a log, and no longer responds to any stimulus. You would think your fun was over; but no! After a certain period the victim suddenly discharges a second reserve of force in his brain; he starts up a murderous maniac with the strength of fifty men, and unless you have previously secured him in an adequate manner, your trifle of science may prove extremely dangerous.

This condition has already been seen on one occasion; the French Revolution. There was no clear unity of purpose or idea in that frenzy; the blind giant in his agony struck at foe and friend alike. It was just the utter helplessness of the beast, the lack of constructive thought, that made his rage so dangerous. The moment that Napoleon's master mind seized it and harnessed it, imposed his will on it, France became sane again. The dogmas of Jacobinism were forgotten in five years; a simple, sensible, practical code based on the facts of life instead of on abstract principles of "Justice" was accepted as a matter of course, and has survived not only the other half of Bonapartism, but several distinct types of revolution.

Let us see whether we can discover any parallel between the France of 1793 and the England of to-day. England had been reduced to the penultimate stage in 1900. The Boer War did not