

**THE REVOLUTIONARY  
TENDENCIES OF THE  
AGE: THEIR CAUSE  
AND THEIR ULTIMATE AIM**

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The Revolutionary Tendencies of the Age: Their Cause and Their Ultimate Aim by Various

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ULTIMATE AIM



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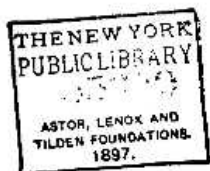
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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

**I**N the midst of the blue waters of a distant sea, lies an island of wondrous beauty. Rising gradually from the shores are hills, and back of these are mountains which pierce the sky.

So long had the good people who dwelt on this island lived as they now lived; so fixed were their thoughts and customs, that they learned to look on the laws which governed them as part of the eternal and immutable system of the universe. Thus, while many were familiar with discomfort, and suffered at times great misery, it occurred to but few that their unenviable existence was the result of human



regulations, and that a change in these might improve their condition. How, they asked themselves, could they alter that which had always existed—yes, as far back as the memory of man could extend? In winter, with ice on the waters and snow on the fields, the sun gave less warmth than their shivering bodies desired. Could they remedy this? The sun was so distant were it not useless to complain?

And the people kept on in their way—the same old way—thinking it was the only way. They wondered at nothing. A stranger, however, coming from a far-a-way land, and wandering over the island in search of information, wondered at many things he saw. Wherever he travelled, he observed that the same conditions prevailed: the picturesque hills and fertile valleys were reserved for a few manors, while the unattractive plains were covered with huts, built closely together. These had no verdure around them; nay, no more land than was required for them to stand on.

Prompted by curiosity, the stranger inquired at many of the humble doors why, for no apparent reason, so noticeable a difference existed between the habitations of men who were all of the same race. But he inquired in vain.

Leaving the plains, he strolled up the hillsides, among the terraced gardens, the flowers of which filled the atmosphere with fragrance. Between the groves of trees he espied lakes over whose crystal expanse sailed pleasure boats wafted by the breezes from the eastern seas. In the centre of lawns played fountains whose waters, shooting heavenward, fell like myriad brilliants scattered in the sun. Birds of rich and varied plumage were attracted to the spot; and while some fitted in the air to catch the refreshing spray, others, hidden in the foliage, sent forth melodious notes to express their joy of living. Wise birds—and more fortunate than many islanders—to choose such abodes!

Approaching the summit of a mountain, the wanderer saw, seated on a rock, a hermit, lost in meditation.

“Forgive me, good hermit, for disturbing your thoughts. I am a stranger in these parts, and would fain learn from you why it is the manor-houses, few in number, are surrounded by abundant verdure, while the huts, too numerous to count, have not a plot of grass.”

“You disturb not my thoughts, O stranger; mine travel the same path as yours. The hut-

dwellers have no verdure because they own no portion of this island whereon to cultivate it. Even were they lords of many fields, of what avail would these be without water to make them fertile?"

"And have they not water sufficient to irrigate land?"

"Alas!" exclaimed the hermit, "they deem themselves fortunate in securing enough wherewith to quench their thirst. Think not, however, that water is scarce. From time immemorial it has been flowing, in generous streams, from the mountains into the valleys; yet the plains of the hut-dwellers are arid."

"And why is this thus?" inquired the stranger.

The hermit's eyes flashed as, rising from the rock, he pointed his withered hand to the regions beneath: "Ask the greed of the few; ask the folly of the many! I, years ago, saw the iniquity of that which now causes you to wonder. I proclaimed it to all who would listen, and urged them to action; but the untutored people failed to grasp the meaning of my words; and the lords of the manors, alarmed at my doctrines, exiled me to the forest and the mountain, as a wild beast, dangerous to human life."