

Imagine a time when those who could find work toiled for fourteen hours a day in damp, rundown factories for little wages. A time where daughters were sold for bread and sons put to work at age eight. A time where social gaps made the Grand Canyon look like a hairline crack. Then flash forward to a time where everyone works to the best of his ability. No man is looked down upon based on the job they perform. Women are social equals to men. Education is provided for through college. And everyone is working in the field of their choice. This is what Julian West, narrator of Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backwards*, experienced; the rundown city of Boston 1887 turned into the utopia of Boston 2000.

The fundamental difference between the Boston of 1887 and 2000 is the removal of personal gain. The abolishment of money turned the world of chaos into a world of bliss. Money was the primary motive for crime as well as social well-being in 1887. Those who had money looked down upon the less fortunate who were not born of rich blood. Bellamy notes in his book that "Directly or indirectly, the desire for money, which then meant every good thing, was the motive of all this crime, the taproot of a vast poison growth, which the machinery of law, courts, and police could barely prevent from choking your civilization outright" (page 151). With the removal of money, there is no measure of personal gains. The playing field is leveled between the rich and the poor; no more is there a means of comparison between the two social classes. When everyone is set to an equal position, they tend to cooperate. Boston of 2000 had this feature. There were no social classes, everyone was a monetary equal of each other, and they lived in a

world without crime. With money abolished, crime had no meaning. No more was there an inequality of possessions to tempt one individual to steal from another. With money out of the question, general wellbeing became the motive of industry.

The next improvement over the Boston of 1887 is the removal of industry from private hands. Competition killed progress rather than promoted it. “The field of industry was a battlefield as wide as the world, in which the workers wasted, in assailing one another, energies which, if expended in concerted effort, as to-day, would have enriched all” (page 169). The time spent competing with one another for personal gains destroyed the hope of the nineteenth century to produce enough goods for the nation as a whole to be well off. Boston 2000 realized the potential producing power of the entire nation working together instead of against one another. Production increased due to the unification of industry and control by the national government. The lives of the people of Boston 2000 became physically less challenging and stressful due to the fact that a centrally-controlled industry, working together, can produce the needed number of goods in ample time for the nation to consume.

Technology also played a sufficient role in lessening the stress of everyday life. The means by which goods are transported from shop to home, the massive mess halls, public Laundromats, and at-home entertainment (music) are all examples of ways improvements in technology over the 113 years had helped reduce the stress in every citizen. Women’s role changed from grueling house work to jobs of their choice, as the public Laundromats and mess halls assumed the everyday household tasks of women. Music had been transformed into a beautiful array of sound that engulfed the listener. In 1887, it was a thing that only the rich were able to enjoy, being the only class with time

and money to travel and see imperfect symphonies. In Boston 2000, music can sooth someone to sleep, wake them from their slumber, and be enjoyed at all hours of the day. The distribution of goods had also been significantly changed for the better due to technological advance of the year 2000. Goods were sent nation-wide to local distribution factories, and then delivered almost instantaneously to people's homes via underground tubes. Selection of these goods was done from a single store which held samples off all possible items that could be needed, each with its own identification tag. These goods were selected through a touch of a button and the shopping was complete.

The lives of the people living in Boston 2000 were significantly better off than those living in 1887 Boston. Without social classes, there was no barrier of prejudice to overcome. The dispersion of pay between all men and women, being equal, practically eliminated crime altogether. National control over enterprise eliminated the labor problems of 1887 and opened the opportunity for all members of society to work to the best of their ability for the good of everyone. With technology guiding the way, people's lives in 2000 were far superior to those in 1887. Tedious tasks were done in single locations as opposed to being done in each household, removing the worthless labor and creating the opportunity to spend that time doing something more enjoyable. Music-on-demand technology improved the lives of everyone with soothing rhythms, easing the stress one might have. An overall improvement in working conditions where people freely choose the fields in which the wish to perform along with the destruction of money created the utopian society of Boston 2000, setting it completely apart from the living hell of 1887.