

possibly have been wrong when he said "Yet man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward," is so utterly abominable to many, that it is perhaps better not to insist upon any point of mere nomenclature at this time.

It is fashion to assert roundly that civilized people—we are civilized of course; all not up to our standard are barbarians—are happier than others, and that in this age of greatest progress and development people are happier than they ever were before. This is very satisfactory to a man who can be content with averages and who does not insist that his averages shall show any rapid increase from year to year. But there are some questions that some of us still feel inclined to ask, and though we do not usually get a civil answer, or, indeed any answer at all, it may be worth while to give suggestively one or two. For instance, are all the people happier than they would be under less "civilized" institutions? Could we by any changes gain an increase of happiness that would compensate us for making the change?

I observe in the newspapers more or less graphic descriptions of people "suiciding." There must be a maximum of trouble and a minimum of happiness ahead of a man when he will answer Howlit's query in a way in which even that horror-stricken young gentleman did not dare to answer it. Admitting that more people would have committed suicide had we made less advances in modern civilization, would their number have included all those of whom we read to-day. I doubt it. It seems to me, therefore, that whatever may be credited to our present conditions or institutions in the way of happiness gained, it is only fair to put down on the other side the miseries which some would have escaped had things been otherwise. For those of us who enjoy life because

of the conditions in which we live, it seems to me that it ought to be an object to make that enjoyment universal. Otherwise we gain what we regard as enjoyment at the expense of others. When we insist upon having goods brought from all over the country for our enjoyment at home, and that demand brings into existence a vast system of railways, it seems worthy of our attention at least to note that these great machines are so scamped in the making that hundreds of happy, hearty young fellows are crushed and maimed or killed between the bumpers every year. For my part I would rather have a civilization that would make a complete railway while it was about it and not a lottery machine in which the prizes for thousands of good fellows are mutilation and death. The answer will be that such a railway would not be "commercially successful." The turnout of a fashionable family is not "commercially successfully," as a rule, it is in this respect a dead failure, bringing no revenue and involving great expense. Both the scamped railway and the ten thousand dollar rig are products of our civilization. It seems to me it would be a good scheme if, somehow, the commercial principle could be set aside in one case as well as in the other, at least to the extent of saving the lives of friends. I don't insist upon that way of doing it, but still I would enjoy all the more the beautiful things people tell me about the advantages of the railway if our civilization could arrange it so that there wouldn't be blood on so many of the bumpers. Of course the blood can be washed off; but still, though this is the plan usually adopted and regarded as satisfactory, I confess I would prefer not to have it there at all.

Then the other question: Could we make some changes that would make us happier? There is no use in limiting ourselves in this matter. We do