

maladaptation following upon every attempt at better adaptation. This, indeed, is inevitable from the very nature of things, for stability is as impossible in social life as in the solar system: everything is change, the effects of the slightest disturbance in one quarter being communicated to all the others. A condition of humanity, then, in which stability shall have been acquired, and non-adaptation be done away, is an utterly unphilosophical dream.

But, it may be replied, the non-adaptation may, by the efforts of disinterested men here and now, assume less dreadful forms than those of the present. Admitting that evil is due to the diverse desires of men all striving in opposite directions; admitting that, since organic nature is committed to endless variety of form, men will always vary as much from each other as they do now; admitting that on these terms there will still be conflict, owing to all parties being desirous of forcing their views of life upon others; admitting that these views of life are the product partly of temperament, partly of training and environment; still, the conditions of the contest may be less horrible than they are now. Humanity may be purged of its grosser animal qualities, and the strife—if strife there must be—will be carried on upon higher and nobler planes; while, at any rate, the spread of science will prevent much of the misery due to disease and ignorance, and humanity as a whole may be able to avoid many of the evils which at present can only be avoided by the sane, the educated, the healthy, the well-to-do. I am not for a moment disputing all this. I simply ask, Where is your proof that humanity will be any happier than it is now? What is your criterion of happiness? I repeat, that to look forward even to such a golden age as this is to become once more the victim of the old illusion. And that for two reasons. In the first place, we do wrong to suppose that any removal of evils that now exist will mean happiness for those who are born into a later environment, in which these evils are unknown. *We* can imagine happiness to ensue upon the cessation of economic strife, because we suffer from the strife; but the men of an age that knows it not will be quite incapable of deriving any happiness from the absence of it. It will be their normal condition, just as breathing air is our normal condition; and it will give them just as little happiness. All along the line we are trying to take the iron bands from our own limbs, in anticipation of the pleasure that will ensue to *us* upon their removal; forgetting that a generation that has never had its limbs fettered will be as unable to feel any delight in that fact as we are unable to look upon