

with the powers of darkness and subjected to the tortures of the Spanish inquisition.

The officials tortured the father, but not the offspring of his genius. For the writing boy was merely a highly organized machine, containing nothing more wonderful than the ordinary cuckoo-clock. The materialism of the age in which these geniuses and philosophers lived led them to suppose that the problem of life could be solved by mechanics and chemistry. Whether they had in mind the construction of a mechanical man that could eventually be endowed with moral qualities we do not know. We do know, however, that no greater blessing could come to modern civilization than the construction of a mechanical servant girl that would do just what you wanted her to do without "talking back." We could afford to dispense with moral and intellectual qualities if all the other disagreeable qualities could be dispensed with as well.

The law of the conservation of energy is teaching men that something cannot be made from nothing. And this is what every man is trying to do who is deluding himself with the idea that a perpetual motion is possible.