

CONSERVATISM IN GENERAL 11

are aware that such companies are often unsound and their offers delusive; we know little of the merits of this one, and it would cost us much trouble to look into them; we are satisfied with our existing investments. Why change? It is wiser to let it alone. Presently we take up the paper and see an advertisement of a remedy for some ailment from which we suffer. But we do not buy it. These drugs are often useless and sometimes dangerous. We know too little of medicine to judge whether this particular stuff is a genuine cure or an unwholesome quackery. We are accustomed to another remedy which is not indeed perfect, but does fairly well. Why change? It is wiser to let it alone. In the same paper we read an account of an accident to a flying machine in which the aviator has been killed. It seems a foolhardy affair to us; how can men trust themselves so recklessly among such dangers? For our part we do not mean to go flying till there shall have been a great deal more experience of these machines. We do not understand how they work or what their strength or weakness is, and we have no leisure to learn. Plainly they are dangerous at present. We will let flying alone; a motor-omnibus is fast enough for us. And so in a thousand other cases, the ordinary prudent man distrusts what he has neither

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