

them. When we add the perpetual errors of judgment which lead men to turn their resources into relatively futile channels because they know no better, and the further industrial wreckage which is perpetually and deliberately planned by those who shew false lights in hope to pick up some fragments of the wreck upon the shore, the imagination begins to form some conception of the moral and social chaos which may lie concealed beneath the apparent cosmos of that economic system, which outwardly displays the fascinating picture of a huge federation, as wide as the world, organised automatically upon a scheme which perpetually determines the flow of all resources, personal and material, to the point of the social organism where "the demand for them is most urgent and their significance highest."

We know that through the blind interplay of all these forces the collective means of forwarding human purposes steadily advance, and this shews that in point of fact the destructive and wasteful tendencies less than balance the constructive and conservative ones; and so far as we may believe that the progress of ages has brought, if not an increased yet at least a more widespread refinement of manners, so far as we can look forward hopefully to the gradual elimination of the most wasteful forms of savagery, so far as we have reason to think that in spite of all fluctuations and reactions a slow growth of the sense of responsibility and a slow purification of collective aims are going forward, we may perhaps draw encouragement even from the darker side of our general reflections. For so long as it was believed that the economic forces, if left to themselves, would create out of a chaos of individual impulses a cosmos of social order, and would result in the best of all possible worlds, there seemed to be nothing left but to harden our hearts in the presence of the major evils of social life. They seemed to be necessary and there was an end of it. If this is and must be the best of all possible worlds we need not hope to mend it. But now that we know better, and perceive that the economic forces never have been, never can be, and never should be, left to themselves, and are seeking deliberately to subdue individual action into harmony with collective purposes, the more clearly we can detect the evils which accompany the strength of spontaneous organisation, the more