

Many of the ideas that inspired enthusiasm forty years ago have been tried in the balance and found wanting. The state of foreign politics seems heartrending to those who remember the dreams of peace, liberty, and international good-will which sanguine prophets held out as the inevitable results that would follow from the unification of Germany and Italy, and the establishment of a parliamentary republic in France. Equally broken is the ideal of the elder exponents of free trade, who believed that a sort of industrial Millennium was to set in, when England frankly abandoned protection and opened her markets to all the producers of the world. The promises of 1850 have never appeared further from fulfilment than in 1899. The same kind of pity for lost hopes comes over us when we read the writings of well-meaning persons of the last generation, who were imbued with such a blind faith in scientific discovery that they made out of it a kind of "gospel of science," which was to settle all mental and moral problems. We no longer imagine that new facts in chemistry or physiology will help much to reform the evil ways of the world. The idea that material progress must necessarily lead to moral progress has gone out of fashion.

But if we face the coming years with less enthusiasm and confidence than some of our fathers felt, it cannot be said that we look forward on the twentieth century with fear or discouragement. Not in blind pride and reckless self-assertion, but with a reverent trust that the guidance which has not failed us in the past may still lead us forward, strong in the belief in our future that grows from a study of our past, we go forth to the toils and problems of another age.