

Three Pessimists.

To make realities of our particular feelings and dispositions, to convert our moods into measures of the universe, to believe that, because we want justice or love justice, Nature must necessarily have the same want or the same love, to suppose that because a thing is bad it can be made better without making it worse, these are romantic attitudes, and they define all minds which are incapable of conceiving reality as something outside themselves, infants crying for sublunary moons.

Almost all modern social reform is a romantic concept, an effort to invest reality with our wishes. The degrading concept of the perfectibility of man

The very pagan concept of ~~evil~~ the origin of evil proclaims the pagan tendency to be conscious of objective reality. The pagan conceives this world as governed directly by gods, which are men on a larger scale, but, like men, good and evil, or good and evil in turns, who have caprices like men and moods as men have; and governed ultimately by an abstract compelling Fate, under which both gods and men move in logical orbits, but according to a reason which transcends ours, if it do not oppose it. This may be no more than a dream, like all theories, but it does conform to the course and appearance of the world; it does make the existence of evil and injustice an explainable thing. The gods do to us what we do to animals and lesser things. ~~Evil~~

Compare with this the Christian thesis that the evil in the world is the product of a benevolent and omnipotent God, and the higher logic of the pagan theory will at once be seen. The existence of many gods may or may not satisfy the mind; the existence of erring and sinning gods may or may not satisfy the mind; but the existence of many and erring gods does satisfy the mind in respect of the existence of caprice, evil and injustice in the course of this apparent world.

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