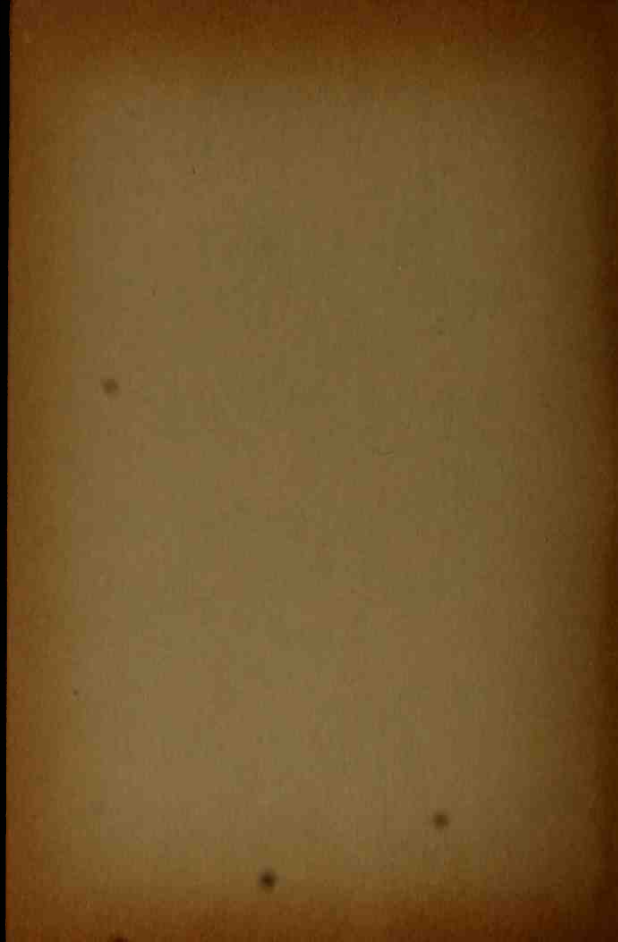


LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 910
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

**Is Life
Worth Living?**

A Debate

Frederick Starr—Clarence Darrow



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IS LIFE WORTH LIVING?

The Chairman: These two gentlemen have met before on this platform in discussion. I hope they will meet again. I think you will have the privilege probably next fall. The last debate was on the question: Is the Human Race Getting Anywhere? The debate today is on a question which interests us all and has to do with the great philosophy of pessimism, of which Mr. Clarence Darrow is the greatest living exponent. The day which brings these two central suns in conjunction is a wonderful day. The question: Is Life Worth Living? is the question to be discussed today. The debate will be opened by our distinguished friend, the greatest anthropologist the world possesses today. Professor Frederick Starr, of the Chicago University.

PROF. STARR'S FIRST SPEECH

Professor Frederick Starr said: The subject we are to discuss today, is very simply worded and it can be very simply discussed. It would be possible, of course, to indulge in any flight of oratory, to reach any depth of philosophy, in a discussion of this question, but it is not necessary either to indulge in oratory or in philosophy. I hope I shall present some facts that are worth thinking over.

Is Life Worth Living? And before we take up the discussion of the question at all, I want to emphasize what the question is not. I suspect that we are going to beat a great deal about the bush in this discussion instead of getting right down to the central thought, which is merely: Is Life Worth Living? Now, there are three things I want to call attention to as not involved in the discussion. First I want to say that we are not called upon in this discussion today to tell where man came from or whether it is fortunate that he came or how he came; nor is it for us to say where he is going, or what comes hereafter. These things form no part of the question, Is Life Worth Living.

I used to find a good deal of pleasure in this passage which I first read in its old, old English form:

To Edwin, King of Northumbria, an aged counsellor said:

“You know, O King, how on a winter evening, when you are sitting at supper in your hall, with your company around you, when the night is dark and dreary, when the rain and the snow rage outside, when the hall inside is bright and warm with a blazing fire, sometimes it happens that a sparrow flies into the bright hall and then flies out at the other end into the dark night again. We see him for a few moments, but we know not whence he came nor whither he goes into the blackness of the storm outside. So is the life of man. It appears for a short space in the warmth and brightness of this life, but what comes before this life, or what is to follow, we know not.”

That is as true today as it was a thousand years ago. But I want to emphasize absolutely the fact that it is this life we are talking about; it is this little space of time; the period when the sparrow is flying through the hall. It is not whence the sparrow came on the one hand, nor whither the sparrow goes, on the other hand. It is simply whether the sparrow

enjoyed, there in its terror and flight, the warmth and light and beauty, as it flew through the hall. Bear in mind, then, that whatever goes into either of these questions is not pertinent to the subject.

In the second place, I would call your attention to the fact that we believe—and when I say “we believe” I mean this audience believes, because I know just what this audience is; I know its attitude toward things—this audience believes that mankind has come into being through the operation, through ages, of certain influences and causes. Mankind is the result of operations that have been going on through a long period of ages. Well, now, mankind in becoming, has been adapted to these conditions. In other words, mankind fits; mankind *must* fit. It is inconceivable that man should *exist* unless he fits the situation in which we find him, and, it is inconceivable that he should continue unless he fits into the condition that we find him. In other words, if we believe, and we do believe, that man is the product of evolution; he cannot possibly be a misfit in the surroundings in which he exists. If he should be so he would disappear and die; if he ceases to fit, if he ceases to be in harmony with his surround-

ings, he simply disappears. And the mere fact of the existence of one billion, six hundred million human beings on the earth today (a number which, notwithstanding the late dreadful war, is increasing every day, every week), the mere fact of the existence of such a human population shows there is not a genuine maladjustment. There is, of course, maladjustment here and there, single and individual cases; yes—poverty, sickness, suffering—all those things exist, but they exist because man himself has meddled; because man himself has made mistakes; because man himself has brought about in these individual cases a maladjustment. But the very fact that we have that number of human beings—greater, unquestionably, than ever in the world before—demonstrates that life is not a failure.

There are, then, two ideas not pertinent to this discussion. We often see in similar discussions, the introduction of a cruel, tyrant God, making people weak, putting them into hard and unhappy surroundings which are impossible; no such discussion has any pertinence today, because if we believe that man became as he did, we may rule out of all account any thought of such a tyrant God. He is beside the mark. Notice: Not only is

a tyrant God beside the mark but, too, a vengeful Nature, spelled with a big "N" is beyond the mark. If there is such a Nature, dealing in horror, destroying from sheer desire to destroy, you surrender at once to the very foundation or fundamental idea in regard to man's becoming with which we started. So I say a line of argument cannot possibly be adopted in which such a God as I have suggested is held up before your gaze, nor in which such a Nature as I have hinted at can be called in.

There is a third thing that this debate cannot include. This is no debate here on optimism and pessimism. I do not care how Mr. Lewis introduced it. He introduced it so because he is used to talking that way. I understand that the question whether life is worth living is not a dispute between optimism and pessimism. I am not an optimist and I will not permit Mr. Lewis nor Mr. Darrow to put me into a position of that kind. An optimist is man without a brain! An optimist is a man who gives no consideration to the world; who can shut his eyes to evident facts. I am not an optimist, and this is not a discussion between pessimism and optimism. On the other hand, there is only one step of improvement between an optimist and a pessi-

mist; only one, and I am not a pessimist—no. I think one pessimist on a platform is as much as the world could possibly stand at any one time.

Well, now, I am quite serious in saying that if we are today to discuss the question, Is Life Worth Living, we must rule out all the things I have indicated. We must rule out the question as to the unknown past and future. We are dealing with the present. We must take out the idea of that cruel, blood-thirsty and wicked deity, and we must rule out the idea of a capitalized Nature, and we must rule out the idea that we are talking about two systems of philosophy, optimism and pessimism. Now, I hope I am sane. I hope what I am going to say to you is simple, straightforward statement. It is not optimism on the one hand; it is not pessimism on the other hand. I shall not shut my eyes to sad things; but I shall not dwell on them. *He* will.

What remains? Why, the question as to whether life is worth living, remains. The question as to whether this little period of time during which we are in the light and warmth of the hall, is something worth while. That is what remains. And the discussion we have before us is to talk about life, its em-

ployments, enjoyments, and whether it can be shown how we can get the most out of life. Very good, then; let us see. I one time spoke to some school children graduating. I always try not to talk twaddle on such occasions, but to talk sense because the children need it badly; they have been in poor hands much of the time. If you do not believe that, read Darrow's *Farmington*. I think his chapter on the *School Readers* is lovely; I do, indeed. Now, in the talk I speak of, I started out by saying: "Young friends, if you were asked what you want you would quite likely answer: 'Health, wealth and happiness'." It is perfectly proper that people should want health, wealth and happiness. Perfectly legitimate. It is reasonable that a man should want to be healthy, wealthy and wise. Those are things we may strive for. We are not sailing on an uncharted sea. It is not true that people do not know what is good. It is not true that the world has not learned what is worth while. There have been human beings for hundreds of thousands of years; there have been men, women and children living through this vast period of time. They had every kind of experience that can be thought of. They have had their joys; they have had their sorrows;

they have learned what is worth while. It is not true that we do not know what things are good, what things are lovely. It is not true that we have not reached ideas as to the true, the good and the beautiful. No. There have been too many thousands and hundreds of thousands, millions and billions of people pegging away at the problems of the world for us to have any question whatever as to whether there are legitimate standards of the things that it is worth while to try to reach and gain.

When I examine the different things which people have said are worth while trying to get, I recognize the fact there are many men of many minds. Of course there are. I am glad of it. How stupid the world would be if we were just all alike! You wouldn't have to come here to hear me and Mr. Darrow if you all thought exactly alike; if we all had been run in one mold. There wouldn't be much enjoyment in life. It is because men are different, have different enjoyments, brains and ideas that life is worth living. Every man is different from any other man and any man has a right, within certain limits, to the enjoyment that he can find. It is not for me or for any other person to actually say that a man shall not find enjoyment in the lines that

please him. For example, I like to travel; I find a good deal of enjoyment in travel. But it is not necessary that everybody should travel. Mr. Darrow likes biology; that is a fine thing, but that is no reason why everybody must like biology. No. A little biology may please him. No biology at all may please you and you and another. That is all right.

I am not anxious that you should travel; I am not anxious that you should study biology. No; you have your preferences. I am glad you have. A few days ago—a few nights ago, I stood for a long time and enjoyed that splendid spectacle in the northern heavens. The finest Aurora Borealis I have seen for many long years. Wasn't it a splendid exhibition? I am sure many of you stood with enjoyment and saw that splendid natural phenomenon. And yet I know I have four friends who were urged, begged and pleaded with to come out and look at the Aurora Borealis. Did they go? No; they were playing cards, and they kept on playing cards through the whole of that splendid display. Well, thank heaven, there were some who appreciated the Aurora more than that. But I am not discontented that those four men played cards instead of going out to see the Aurora. There is no actual accounting for tastes. But there are dif-

ferent tastes. But, after all, there are limits. For instance, husks can be eaten; yes, a person may eat husks; some animals might really enjoy eating husks. But, after all, everybody knows that the soft, fine grains of corn are vastly better and more valuable than the husks are. Still, that is no reason why people who like husks should not eat them. People have a right to their own forms of enjoyment, and yet there are limits, of course.

Notice: These limits are not due to Divine command nor to man-made laws. They are due to the nature of things. Man became. And, in becoming there are certain things he cannot do in the way of desiring or finding enjoyment. There are things which involve a penalty for the man who tries to do them. No man can thrust his hand into the fire without suffering the penalty; no man can overeat without suffering; no man can go without food and continue to live. No; there are certain fixed limits within which a man must find his enjoyment; within which he must confine his life. Those limits are not, as I say, in this final manner, fixed by Divine command nor by man-made laws. No. They are in the nature of things, which produced this human being, capable of enjoyment.

There is another class of limitation. It is true that we are not alone. If I was alone, it would be quite possible for me to do anything I wanted within the range of my muscular and mental effort and there would be no harm done, unless possibly to myself. But we are not alone. There are many people, and it is true that if I wish to do certain things I am not only subject to the limitation of my actual nature, I am also subject to the limitation that I am not the only man living in the world. These two things limit my field of possibility and my enjoyment of life must be limited by those two things.

I reduce my system of pedagogy to very narrow limits. I sometimes am asked what is proper to teach to young people. And I think of a boy more naturally than of a girl when we speak of being educated, and I have often said there are two things a boy should be taught, from the time he begins to be old enough to gain any knowledge from the world. One is to recognize and demand his rights; the other is to recognize and admit the rights of others. That is the only education that anybody needs; that is the only education necessary to make life happy; it is the only sort of training that young people ought to have. Still, let us come to detail.

There are, then, two ways in which we must look at this life if it is to be lived with the idea of having it worth while. The first is with reference to ourselves; the second is with reference to others. Schopenhauer—a name which I suspect our friend on the left has heard—Schopenhauer recognized three kinds of pleasure. Notice that he speaks of them as pleasures. First, vital energy, such as food, drink, digestion, sleep, rest, and so forth and so forth; next, muscular energy, and under this he mentions sport and exercise, and so on; third, sensibility. Enjoy vital energy, muscular energy and sensibility. None should be neglected. The best man is one who has all developed evenly and suitably.

Health is largely a matter of one's thought. I am not a Christian Scientist, but I know most people are well when they think least about themselves; that they think least about themselves when they are most well. A person with a little the matter with him can make it infinitely worse if he chooses. Of course he can. I have already said that sickness exists. I am going to leave Mr. Darrow to find all these horrors for you; he will find them. I admit all these things exist. It is unfortunate that they exist. I am sorry for the

man who is suffering from physical pain. I am sorry for the man who is suffering the absolute privations due to poverty. I am sorry for the man who suffers from the meanness and wickedness of other people. Yes, sorry for all those things. But, after all, we often make things much worse than they need to be.

I want to read about two men, suffering under disadvantages, who met the disadvantages like men. There is a great deal in not paying too much attention even to the great troubles of life, and in meeting them in a manly way. There is the case of Epictetus. I like to talk of the old man.

“I must die, but must I then die sorrowing? I must be put in chains. Must I then also lament? I must go into exile. Can I be prevented from going with cheerfulness and contentment? But I will put you in prison! Man, what are you saying? You can put my body in prison, but my mind, not even Zeus himself can overpower.”

Jeremy Taylor says:

“I have fallen into the hands of thieves; what then? They have left me the sun and the moon, fire and water, a loving wife and many friends to pity me, and some to relieve me, and I can still discourse; and, unless I

list, they have not taken away my merry countenance and my cheerful spirit and a good conscience. * / * * And he that hath so many causes of joy, and so great, is very much in love with sorrow and peevishness who loves all these pleasures and chooses to sit down on his little handful of thorns."

He must be very much in love with sorrow and peevishness when he has so much joy in sitting down on his little handful of thorns. There are people who, when you ask them how they are will say: "I am enjoying very miserable health."

We are talking about ourselves. It is the agreement of all opinion that the greatest source of happiness and satisfaction are within ourselves. And the greatest thing that a man can ever have is the matter of personality. It was Schopenhauer who said that "happiness exists for the most part in what a man is in himself, and that the pleasure he derives from these blessings will depend entirely upon the extent to which his personality really allows him to appreciate them."

If a man is going to be happy he not only must use the different elements toward happiness that exist in his personality, but must wisely use his time. You know an idle man

is a sad man. A man who finds something all the time to do is happy. The man who really gets something out of life is the man who does not lose time. Not that one should be running a Marathon race every day and hour. No. But the man who occupies his time sanely and sensibly is the man who gets something worth while out of life.

Sir John Lubbock wrote a book on the Pleasures of Life. I like to quote him for certain reasons.

“But is it true that the ordinary duties of life in a country like ours—commerce, manufactures, agriculture—the pursuits to which the vast majority are and must be devoted—are incompatible with the dignity or nobility of life? Surely this is not so. Whether a life is noble or ignoble depends not on the calling which is adopted, but on the spirit in which it is followed.”

Again:

“It is generally the idle who complain they cannot find time to do that which they fancy they wish. In truth, people can generally find time for what they choose to do; it is not really the time but the will that is wanting.”

I want to say for Sir John Lubbock that when I was in London in 1899, they told me

what I had not realized before, that Sir John Lubbock was the busiest man in London. He was engaged in large affairs. He was president, trustee, director in banks of importance; he was the head of many important organizations; he was member of more important committees than any other man in England. And yet, as you know, he wrote book after book. And these books demanded the most close, rigid, continued, minute investigation. If Sir John Lubbock, the busiest man in London, could write a book on the habits of bees, ants and wasps, could study the interesting relations between insects and flowers, could study the science of biology, if Sir John Lubbock, the busiest man in London—at that time the greatest and most important city, the most vigorous and modern city in the world—could do that, what could not others do if they wished?

Lord Chesterfield—and it is very rarely that I quote Chesterfield—said:

“It is astonishing that any one can squander away in absolute idleness one single moment of that small portion of time which is allotted to us in this world—know the true value of of time; snatch, seize, and enjoy every moment of it.”

Very good advice, and yet I say we do not want to run Marathon races all the time. We want some rest.

So much, then, for ourselves, as viewed with reference to this question as to the occupations of life. Now, as regards others. The adjustment sounds at first difficult. Is it possible for human beings with their wide range of interests to adjust themselves to each other so that each one has some range within which he can find enjoyment and occupation? As a matter of fact, the adjustment is natural and easy and it has always taken place. Take the two most crowded regions of the world, those two teeming populations, China and India, where there are so many people crowded together that one might think we would find hell on earth and constant quarreling and battling. The contrary is true. In China and in India, there is far more peaceful relationship between men than in most countries. In those countries, where there are such enormous crowds of people, every man, woman and child has its place, and the place is a happy one. There is more happiness in proportion to the individuals, I firmly believe, in India and China than in most countries on the globe.

Our relation to others is an interesting ques-

tion. "It is only in society," and here again it is Schopenhauer who speaks. "It is only in society that a man's powers can be called into full activity. Now, to be a useful member of society one must do two things. Firstly, what every one is expected to do everywhere; and, secondly, what one's own particular position in the world demands and requires." Goethe remarks: "Every man ought to begin with himself and make his own happiness first, from which the happiness of the world would follow." There should be first of all thought for one's own self. Yes; and then, if it is genuine, if it is wise, if it is based on sense, there will be helpfulness for all in it. It is not necessary to go on a mission to do people good. No. You and I and everybody comes every day of their life, into contact with all kinds of people. If we do with reference to each person with whom we come into contact during the day, our part, kindly, wisely and sanely, there would be no problems of humanity left for solving. It is perfectly possible for you and me to make that the very fundamental basis of our life. It is possible for us to say we will not go out of our way to do some distant philanthropy. But if to every man, woman and child with whom we are

brought into daily contact, we play our part aright, we do that much toward making the world as a whole better.

Now, it is time for me to sit down. But I am going to make an analysis in two chapters of a man for whom we have great respect and affection. The first chapter comes at this point. My second chapter will come at the close of my next argument.

I want to analyze Clarence Darrow; we may take him as a specific instance. There is nothing like having a case in point that we can bring up and deal with. I believe that Clarence Darrow is a man who gets a lot out of life; I believe there are very few men who get more. I know few men who have a better time in the world than he. Let me illustrate: He has pretty good health and strength. I have sometimes suspected, I am not sure, I have sometimes suspected that he has dyspepsia, but, on the whole, I think his health is good. It is a great thing to be thankful for and to rejoice in. Health, wealth and happiness were the three things I told the boys in that high school were suitable to seek. Wealth; I don't know anything about Mr. Darrow's bank book, but I heard him say not long ago he was thinking of retiring pretty soon from

active life. When a man who has Clarence Darrow's business thinks about retiring from active life, you may be sure he has as much as he wants or is good for him. So far as happiness is concerned, his life is one long career of happiness. One of his greatest joys in life, of course, is grumbling; it is his long suit. People find joy in all sorts of strange things. And grumbling is a joy to him, of course; otherwise, he would get over it. Now, I would not be surprised if he were to use the word "dope" presently. There are people who have certain phrases that get to be a part of their make-up, just as grumbling is a part of his make-up. There are certain sounds that give them extreme joy. Well, when Mr. Darrow can say "dope," "dope," "dope," "dope," it is like sweet music to his ears. Do not think for an instant I would wish to take away from him that pleasure. It does him no harm. It does us no harm. It might be misunderstood by those who do not know him, but to us it is merely one of those things in which he finds pleasure, and we are glad to have him use the word. As for companions. Have you ever been out with Mr. Darrow? Have you ever seen him go into any crowded place at meal time, when the men, the business men of Chi-

cago, are eating? Everybody knows him. It is not only that everybody knows him, but everybody greets him with affectionate respect. Do you think that does not please him? Then you know we all find enjoyment in thinking of the heroes of the past. Thomas Carlyle's most taking book was the one on hero worship. The man who has a strain of hero worship is really a happy man. Though Mr. Darrow talks about all sorts of dreadful things most dolefully, he worships more human beings than any man I know—Thomas Paine, and Governor Altgeld and other great and good men; he talks about them; thinks of them, has them as companions when all others are away. Why he enjoys himself all the time! And, then, he is so fond of biology! Is it not a fine thing for a man to have some subject outside of his business that fills his soul with joy? I said one of the things desirable in a man and in life, is activity, activity, activity. He is very interesting in regard to that. In this matter of activity, he is *it*. But his friends know he is also one of the most lazy of men. The active man who is lazy is frequently the most happily active of active men the world knows. He begins and ends with grumbling, and I shall now make room for him to present his poor side of this debate.

The Chairman: The members and officers probably know if it were not for Mr. Darrow—

Professor Starr: See here; you are not talking in this debate. I have a whole chapter of analysis still coming!

The Chairman: The Chair rules the Professor out of order. If it were not for Mr. Darrow we probably should not have a society to present this debate. We have been on the narrow edge once or twice, and especially recently, but we have to thank Mr. Darrow for coming to the rescue, I will now ask Mr. Darrow to reply to the speech to which you have just listened.

MR. DARROW'S FIRST SPEECH

Mr. Darrow said: Professor Starr has told us what we cannot consider in this question, and what we can consider. Taking what we cannot consider and what we must consider, of course, it leaves nothing excepting his view of this question. Now, I think I will prove to him, from biology—and he certainly would not be mean enough to dispute me on biology—that we have a right to consider the future, and that we are bound to consider the past in giving an opinion as to whether life is worth while. It is not a question as to whether I enjoy life or not. I do the very best I can at it, anyhow, and as life goes, I think I do pretty well. But, I am willing to take the professor at his word and say that if I don't think life is worth while with what I get out of it, how is it possible that it could be worth while to anybody that cannot take dope? I will show you before I am done, I think, that a very large part of the professor's rules for living are dope, nothing else. Really, we all enjoy hearing him talk, and we are all very fond of him, but he didn't discuss this question. He really gave us some excellent receipts as to the way

to live our lives. He told us what we should do and what we should not do in order to make life happy. Now, that is not even logical, because when he tells me what to do to make life happy he simply tells me what he does or tries to do, to make life happy, and it is not at all certain that I could get happiness that way; and it is still less certain that I could do it if I wished to. His rules for the way to live may be good. They may be worth practicing, so far as we can practice them. But man does not live by rules. If he did, he would not live. He lives by his emotions, his instincts, his feelings; he lives as he goes along. Man does not make rules of life and then live according to those rules; he lives and then he makes rules of life. And, it is really an idle thing for anybody to tell anybody else how to live. Nobody is influenced by other peoples' opinions. Each must learn for himself and find out where he makes his mistakes, and, perhaps the things he thinks are mistakes are not mistakes after all. No one can figure this out. But, telling you the way to live is not discussing the question of whether life is worth while.

In spite of the rules, is life worth while? Let me take the simplest one he gives. Thus

in spite of the professor being a very able man and a very scientific man, the rule is as old as the first dope fiend. He says "work." Be busy. That is the first rule of living—get busy. Everybody who ever wanted to get rich, especially out of somebody else, has taught this to the people. Benjamin Franklin was one of the main exponents of this idea. Work is the great thing in life. I am inclined to think this is true. Now, let us find the reason for it. The reason is perfectly evident. Why should we work? Why, the professor says, it gets our mind off ourselves. That is true, too. That is the reason for it. If a man works hard, especially at something he is interested in, it takes his mind from himself. That is the only philosophical reason for hard work. There are reasons in the way of getting money which are poor reasons. But, to work hard, especially at what you are interested in, takes your mind from yourself. You may get up early in the morning at ten o'clock and try to enjoy yourself for two hours doing nothing. And, you think you have lived a whole lifetime, trying to enjoy yourself. But, if you have worked hard, the first time you may think of it, you think it has been fifteen minutes, when it has been a half a day. What

does that mean? It means just this: That work is good because it brings non-existence, and that non-existence is the most tolerable of all the forms of matter in life. There is no other answer to hard work. And I know of almost no one who has studied the philosophy of life but does not finally come up with the proposition that the only thing that makes life tolerable, is hard work, so you don't know you are living. So, I characterize hard work as dope for life.

There is one thing in life which is perhaps equal to it, and that is sleep. And, I never saw anyone, weary with the labor of life, or weary with the thought of life, that did not come home to his couch with pleasure in the thought that he would be lost to life for a time, at least. Now, I will admit, that this question is not a very satisfactory one for discussion. Perhaps the question cannot be settled by the professor bringing out all the good things in life and on the other hand by my stringing out all the evil things in life. Somehow or other, this must be settled, if settled, upon a much broader basis than that; upon some question of science or some question of philosophy. And, perhaps, it is not capable of being settled. Of course I will say, with

Professor Starr, as I said with Professor Foster, I would like to discuss this with a man who believed in it. I would like to discuss the question of whether life is worth living with one who believed that life was of value. I would like to discuss optimism and pessimism with an optimist. And, in the end, I presume this question gets down to optimism and pessimism. And the professor is too wise to be an optimist and too wise to be deluded with the beauty and pleasure of living, and too honest to say that he is.

But, let me make a few observations that it seems to me puts this question on somewhat broader lines. First, Professor Starr has said that whether there is a future life or not, has nothing to do with the question of whether this life is worth living; whether we came from anywhere has nothing to do with it, or whether we are going anywhere has nothing to do with it. All life and all experience contradicts him. If man was not cursed with consciousness he would be right. If man was not cursed with memory he could forget the past. And, if he was not cursed with imagination, he would think nothing about the future. But there is no fairly intelligent man or woman who is not bound to think every day in his life of the

question of whether life ends all and when that end will come. And with the great mass of men who live upon the earth, the question of the end of life affects their present feeling more than anything else affects it. If anybody says it does not affect it, he is simply bluffing. You may take one of the most eminent scientists of the world, Sir Oliver Lodge, and yet because he has the feeling that I have and the feeling that goes with living, that the fate of annihilation is abhorrent to the human mind—because of that, he almost consciously deludes himself with the silliest twaddle that has ever moved the minds of men. Do you suppose Sir Oliver Lodge would be a spiritualist if the fear of death or the hope of immortality did not make him one? Why, there is not a single fact that he reports that could stand for a minute in the light of the scientific analysis that he gives to every question of physical science, and he must know it.

What does the great mass of the human race think about this question as to whether life is worth living, and whether this is in any way affected by the question of the destiny of Man? Why, since man began to dream dreams and see visions; since he evolved consciousness; since he looked around and asked the meaning

of life and of death, he has sought by every means to prove that death is not death. He has braced up his love of life by making for himself a dream that there was something more to life than is shown by science or philosophy, or the facts that are apparent to everyone who thinks. And, take that feeling from the human mind today, and take it suddenly, and it would be paralyzed, and men would not live their lives. There are a few who might live it out. But, to say that the question of the destiny of man does not affect his present happiness is to say that man has neither memory, nor imagination, nor consciousness, nor thought.

Men suffer from evils that never come, and they experience joys that never come. A very large part of our conscious life is dreaming. We believe in happiness that will come tomorrow, and in misery that passed yesterday. We are terrified sometimes by disasters that will come tomorrow, more than we are by those that we lived through yesterday. Man's brain is such that his mind will reach into the future and into the past and all about him, and the future and the past, whether it exists or not, does exist for the present, and is the largest part of the things which affect the happiness or the misery of the man. It is idle to say man

must not take into account the question of his origin or the question of his destiny, when he considers whether life is worth living. Is it?

Now, I didn't know that I grumbled so much. I don't know why I should. I have got about through with the blooming game. I am about ready to retire. That does not mean I have money, but I study the actuary tables; I know I am about ready to retire. When I retire—well, while I will not be happy, I will not be miserable, and, as life goes, I believe I have as little cause for complaint as almost any person I know. And, I trust that I complain very little. At least I don't mean to. I have lived a life which is, approximately, as good as nothing. Not quite, but somewhere near it. And I will not be very much better off when I am dead; but somewhat.

Does Professor Starr prove that life is worth living, because man is here? If so, that is a simple question. By what process can you prove that everything that is here is worth while? Or, what do we mean by worth while? Of course you can ask a lot of questions in discussing this. Of course, if life is worth living to man because man is here, it is likewise worth living to every animal because it is here. It is worth living to the dog and the

mouse and the cat that eats it. Of course, you might say that the life of the mouse is worth living to the cat that eats it. It is worth living to the ant and the grasshopper, and to those tiny insects who live only a fraction of an hour. And, in the sight of eternity, the longest human life is just as short. Even if the emotions, in the fraction of an hour, were all pleasant ones, it was not worth while to begin it when it was to end so quickly. The fact that life is here to my mind, proves nothing, excepting that if you got a certain amount of earth and heat and water—if they were resolved into the simple elements—given these elements in certain proportions under certain conditions, life will develop, just as maggots will in a cheese. Does that prove it is worth while? I cannot see it. It does not prove it in any meaning of the words worth while. If it does prove it, then everything is equally worth while, and the living man is no more a part of nature than the corpse. And the well man is no more a part of nature than the sick man. The pleasurable emotion is no more a part of nature than the painful emotion. The fact that it is here simply proves it is here, that is all. The only way that this question can be discussed, it seems to me, is as an intellectual or philosophical question:

Are the pleasurable emotions of life more than the painful ones? Is there a greater balance of pleasure than pain? And this cannot be discussed without taking into consideration every feeling and imagination that influences man, and influences the feelings of man. You cannot settle it by saying life is a question of health, wealth, happiness and wisdom. The second time he said wealth, health and happiness, he cut out the wisdom. Happiness surely is not a question of wisdom. It is a question of happiness, and happiness is a very complex thing. If life is a question of happiness, then it gets back to you, looking it over, with what has passed and what is still to come, has it more pleasure or more unhappiness? I believe almost every person who lives gets his pleasure in anticipation. All of the adages and teachings of life are built upon that idea. The young person should store up wisdom so that he may use it in old age—when he does not need it. He needs teeth more than he does wisdom. By the way, Professor, my digestion is bully. I can eat anything that tastes good and nothing that does not. A person should hoard up money so that he can spend it, and have a good time with it in the future—when he will most likely be dead. We should work today, so that we can

have a vacation tomorrow. Better take it today, for tomorrow you may be dead and you will get out of working. I ought not to be personal, as the professor was, but I ought to be a very wise man for I have listened to him for two winters with the greatest of profit. I remember once last winter—you will excuse me, Professor, for quoting you here? He gave us a wondrous picture of Japan; its beauties, and its glories, and the emotions that he felt in visiting Japan. And, he told us he was going again the following summer, which was last summer. And, there was a very joyful expression on his face in the anticipation of all the fun he would have in Japan. When he got back this fall, he told us that he had been much disappointed when he went to Japan; things didn't turn out the way he thought they were going to. And when I heard him say that he had been disappointed the last time he went to Japan, I was quite sure, that when he remembered his trip to Japan, he had a better time remembering it than when he took it. And, I fancy that, if it is not good biology, it is good psychology. If I could ever have as good a time when I went on a vacation as I anticipated before I went, I would hope to die while I was gone.

So, the past does get into it, and the future

gets into it. And, if you work hard there is no present. Let us see what the experience of man says—and really I don't pretend there is any way to absolutely settle this question—but let us see what all human experience says about it.

Everybody, after they begin to think a little, and before they can think much, makes a heaven for themselves. There, the streets will be paved with gold. Christian heaven. Of course, I could picture something that looked better to me. In heaven, there will be no weeping or wailing or gnashing of teeth. They will not even have teeth. The streets will be paved with gold. That makes it alluring to a Christian banker. You can play on a harp forever. Your friends will not die. I don't know about your enemies, but your friends will not die. There will be no marrying or giving in marriage; nothing but one long dream of joy! You won't even have to work to forget yourself—you will not want to forget yourself; you will want to walk on the gold pavement. And, the poor old grandmother sits by the fire-side mumbling, dreaming, happy, because she is going to heaven. And, the human race forgets its miseries and its sorrows because it is going to heaven. And man is happy in spite

of himself because it is living on this pipe dream—I was going to say dope.

Now, isn't that just exactly what man does? From the Methodists up to Sir Oliver Lodge? All of them? From the highest to the lowest, they consciously use every effort in their power to delude themselves with this myth of happiness; this will o'-the-wisp is right in front of them. And, I suppose when they close their eyes for the last time they see before them this illusion of the golden gates, and all the rest of the business opening before them.

Now, my friend quoted Epictetus, the stoic. Well, he was somewhat like my friend, quite a bluffer. He said, "What is the difference whether I am loaded with chains, my mind is free?" Well, that is a sort of self-hypnotism, if it is true. "What is the difference whether I am hungry or cold; my mind is free? You can do nothing to my mind, anyhow." Well, I wish they could do something to mine. That is the trouble with people. Before a piece of clay awoke to consciousness, it was getting along all right, but when it awoke, then came the trouble. Now, is there any philosophy in Epictetus? Why, it is a great, big bluff. I think one ought not to complain of his troubles. Nobody is interested in them. I would rather hear other

people's troubles than to talk about mine. Then I can forget mine. One of the prime receipts for being happy, which I will suggest to the professor, is hard work. I used to be taught that when I was a boy and wanted the moon—I haven't wanted it very lately—I don't know what in the dickens I would do with it if I had it and then I know I can't get it—one way not to worry about what you cannot get is not to want it; one of the prime ways. They used to tell us when we felt bad, to think how much worse somebody else was. You have heard that, haven't you? That proves that life is worth living, doesn't it? If I go out on the street, and get run over, taken to the hospital and lose a leg, I can be happy by thinking of some poor fellow in France that lost both of his! If I get one eye knocked out, I can get joy thinking of the blind! Now, that is a receipt for happiness. And, it is a good receipt; it is given out by everybody. Well, you are not happy today. All right. Think how much better off you are than some people. That proves that life is worth living. That is it proves that it is not quite so bad as it might be.

Of course, emotionally, one may stick around, because while we live, we want to live. But, I think I am going to be happier next year

than I was last year. Of course I know I will not be, but I think I shall. I think next week will be a good week. Last week was not so good. Next week will be fine. And next summer vacation will be good. Of course, as I said here before, I might run into some mosquitoes, or some people, but I am not thinking about them now, because it is next year. That is what I ran into last year. Pretty much all of it is in the imagination. And I don't condemn the dope fiend. I think he is—I was going to say wise, but I will do better than that by him—I think he is foolish, and, blessed be foolishness!

When you leave the cruder religions of the world, and men begin to get up where they cannot believe quite all that has been said, then they turn to Epictetus, and he was one of these self-deluding mortals who could sit on a pin and say, "Why, my mind is free." Of course, that is not even scientific. For a man's mind, whatever it is, depends upon his brain whatever it is, and that is a part of his body, whatever it is. So that he is not free; it depends entirely upon his body. It is just a bit of bluffing. Epictetus and a few other stoics bluffed their way through the world until their philosophy played out and now it has

been taken up by the Christian Scientists, who say: "Oh, no, there is no such thing as corns, they are in the head, not on the toes." "There is no such thing as death. The friend you loved that made up a large part of the pleasures of life, is not dead. He has just passed on." Just passed on! Things are not what they seem to be. God is love and love is God. There is no sin; there is no pain—only a condition of mind. Well, with the most of them there is no mind; so there is nothing!

Does all of that prove that life is worth living? It proves that it is not worth living. I will tell you why it proves it. It proves that there is nobody on earth who can stand the realities of life. That is what it proves. It proves that when the consciousness of life comes to one who is intelligent, that he straightway uses every effort in his power to prove that life is not life; pain is not pain and death is not death; that he takes every dope that is given him by someone else to make him dream, and if he cannot find anything given him by someone else that will put him to sleep, he makes one for himself that puts him to sleep. And, if perchance, he is too intelligent, even to manufacture a dope that will put him to sleep, and if he cannot find one that will

put him to sleep, then he resorts to hard work, so he cannot think of himself. Looking life over I have nothing to complain of—I am a real optimist; it might have been worse. There is optimism for you. It might have been worse. And, in spite of the pleasures that I have experienced in studying biology and listening to lectures on anthropology, and in spite of the companionship of my friends, and in spite of good food and vacations, in spite of all these—and I have had my full share of them—and a good digestion with it—and before I finish that sentence I want to call attention to one thing my friend suggested, then I will go back where I left off. He said digestion is good. Eating tastes good, but if you eat too much it hurts you. Well now, why should it? You like to eat, but if you eat too much it makes you miserable. What a glorious thought that is, isn't it?

Well, in spite of all my pleasures, and all of my friends—I am glad I have so many; if they knew me better, I would have more—in spite of all of these, when I look back over life, with the many pains I have suffered that happened, and the many more I have suffered that did not happen, the greatest satisfaction that I find in any of it is when I am asleep. And, intellectually, I feel it will be the best

thing that can happen to me—to go to sleep again. Still emotionally and physically, I draw back from it, just like everyone else who ever lived. All this enters into my personal feeling of whether life is worth while. But as an intellectual question, I insist that practically everything that my friend has said and practically everything that everyone says in favor of optimism and the worth-whileness of life—pretty near all of it—proves that life is not worth while; that it is an unpleasant interruption of nothing, and the best thing you can say of it is that it does not last long.

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The Chairman: Professor Starr will continue the debate.

PROF. STARR'S SECOND SPEECH

Professor Starr said: Now, with the very best intentions in the world, I tried to find some argument in what was said that called for answer. I am quite serious in saying this. I wanted to find something that called for answer. There were suggestions made which called forth loud applause. Yet each time you made applause after such suggestions, I felt certain that when you thought it over you would see the fallacy yourselves. The only new thought that seems to me to call for discussion is the question of death.

I was really surprised at the readiness with which he accepted a good deal that I said. I didn't expect it. I confess that much of his speech—the more serious part of his speech—was a very strange address for a Rationalist. Still, we will let that pass.

Hard work he mentioned; yes, hard work. And you realize, that hard work is the joy of life. You know it is. He cannot get around it by foolish statements such as he made re-

garding hard work being dope. You knew he would have to talk about dope anyway. He says he did not realize that he was a grumbler. Of course he did not. When he first spoke about my referring to him as a grumbler, the thought came into my mind to say it is second nature to him, but that would be an error; it is first nature. So, of course, he is unconscious of the fact that he is a grumbler! In my remaining argument I have two or three points I wish to emphasize. It seems to me that nothing in what Mr. Darrow has said in the way of reply to what I had presented, really calls for answer. But there are some things that I would add to what I said.

First, it is very common, of course, for people to realize that they may have made mistakes or that they may have got themselves into hard positions. They may have lost opportunities which, when once passed, looked promising. It is not worth while to waste your life in mourning over the opportunities you missed. It is not worth while laying too much stress upon the mistakes that you have made. No. Those things are past. Learn from them. Avoid similar mistakes, if possible, in the future, but do not waste time, eternally harping on mistakes that you have made. Profit by your mistakes and let them

go. If it is something that you can rectify, rectify the error that you made; otherwise, let it go, and be a better and wiser man for the fact of the error or the mistake.

Mr. Darrow referred to the other point I had in mind, the fact that we worry a great deal about the things that lie ahead. He did not put it exactly in that way, but he suggested that we hope a good deal to the future, and we look forward with dread a good deal to the future. I think few people every really have been so miserable that they could not stand their miseries if they were sure they had reached the end. The uncertainty, the doubt, the fear, the dread lest things may not be so good in the future, or that the worst may come, is corroding, and destroying, yes. Constant anxiety in regard to the future, destroys the happiness of life for many a person. I have often thought if only we could be sure regarding the present moment that it is the very bottom, we should laugh really with joy, no matter how great the burden; no matter what the pain may be, if we were absolutely certain that it was the worst. Why, we could stand that; and we could think as we have stood that, the worst is past. Do not be over anxious. Grapple with troubles when they come; meet difficulties as they arise; use your best efforts to be happy and

do not give way to constant dread and fear of things that may never come, or worse conditions that probably will not come.

It seems to me that old age is far from dreadful. There are many people who think of old age as being simply a painful and sad condition. A great deal depends upon how one has used their younger years. One may look back over a life well spent with pleasure. And one of the greatest happinesses of life certainly is in thinking over the joys that one has gone through or things that one has undertaken and succeeded in; the good that one has done. A well spent life makes a happy age. It is not a good reason why one should do well today in order that he may come to look back upon it tomorrow; but it certainly is one of the joys of life, when one may look back upon well-spent years.

The matter of death is one that we all face; one that we all know will happen. There were fallacies of course in that description of the vacation which we will take today, because we might die tomorrow; the fallacy there is quite easy to see; but let that pass. I think Mr. Darrow and a great many people overestimate the horror of death, I cannot see why we make such sweeping statements in regard to the universal fear of death. It is not true

that mankind at large has an all-consuming fear and terror in regard to death. It is entwined in the surroundings under which we have been brought up; to us death has been rendered horrible, and has assumed frightful forms. We as a people are brought up from early childhood to look on death as the great disaster, the one awful thing. However, there are whole populations where death has relatively little terror; where one may say the horror of death, such as we hold it, is almost unknown. I object on the part of hundreds of millions of people, against assigning to them, and asserting of them, that same foolish and criminal fear of death which we, ourselves, harbor and hold.

I am thankful to say, even among ourselves, there are persons not afraid to die. It is true that our religious training—it is true that the books we read—it is true that the papers that we read—it is true that the songs we sing, all speak in this way of death. But, it is an unnatural way of speaking. It is not the human attitude toward death. On the part of the rest of humanity, I object to such an assertion and assumption. Even among ourselves, it is not true that all are afraid of death. There are men who have lived so well, and who have so well occupied themselves with

sound and sane action through life, that they meet death without fear, and without a shudder. Mr. Darrow is very fond of speaking of those persons as bluffers. It is not bluffing. Goethe died without apparent suffering, having just prepared himself to write and expressed his delight at the return of spring. It was no bluff on the part of Plato who died when in the act of writing. It was no bluff when Lucan died reciting a part of his book on the War of Pharsalus nor when Blake died singing. No. Of these people, some were Pagans; but, Goethe lived in Christendom. There are people who die in Christendom without belief and without fear, without a shrinking back before the end.

When I was in Japan the last time—and by the way I want to say Mr. Darrow misunderstood my attitude towards my last visit to Japan. It is true that I complained bitterly of the high cost of living; it is true when I found myself in Japan, I was unable to do one-half the things I had planned simply because the high cost of living was such that I had to draw in my expanding tentacles and sit tight there in Tokio. But, I never said I was disappointed in my visit. It was a trip of joy; happy during the time, happy in the anticipation, happy in the retrospect. He re-

ceived a wrong impression there. However, that is a personality you will forgive. I want to tell you a little incident that came to my knowledge in my last visit to Japan. I want to describe a death that took place between my two last visits. My little interpreter decided that he would like to learn archery. It is an art which the Japanese have carried to a fine development. Even today there are to be found some fine representatives of old Japan who know and teach archery. The boy, during my absence, found such an old teacher. There were about thirty-five who used to take their lessons from the old man. Archery in Japan is very exacting, rigid and precise; every detail is regulated; it is a fine art. The boy made advancement. During the year the old man died. Before he died, knowing the end was nearing, he sent word to each one of his pupils to come, and thirty-four gathered at his bed. The old man greeted them; the bows and arrows were brought out and laid beside him; he gave them a few last directions, and then he said: "Friends, students: I have done what I could for you; try, try, try to become perfect." And with those words he died. Just like that. As soon as the words were uttered, his eyes closed, and the old man was gone. There was no bluffing there. There

was no fear there. That man hadn't been looking forward toward the end of life with terror. He looked upon death as a perfectly natural end, like waking out of a sleep, like going to sleep. He didn't look upon it as a frightful thing that he should dread to have the end approaching. No, it is among ourselves and those brought up in the same way, that death has been given its horrors.

I said we knew nothing about the past from which the individual comes, and nothing of the future into which he goes. I meant just that, and it was said in order to cut this out from the argument. But, there is a past to which we are related; there is a past that means much to every man that lives well. Of course there is. Out from that past has come the stimulus, the helpfulness, the high thought, the inspiration that makes the bulk of our joys of life. In that sense, we all of us live in the past. We all draw from the past. The past means everything to us. And so again, when we die, that is not the end, no. Everybody who has come into contact with us has felt our impress. Hundreds of people remember, after we are gone, the good we did them, the influence we exerted on them. What we do lives after us. Whether there is a future existence, individually, for us, we do not

know. I am in no haste to die, but I do not fear death. I hope to live for some time yet; I hope to teach and help many a man, woman and child to better life, to greater happiness. I hope, too, that they will be better and that something of my life will continue in them when my life here comes to an end. I believe that and hope it, thoroughly and completely.

In other words, there is a future, and if we live our lives right, the future is the better for our having lived, and been here.

Lastly, you remember I had a chapter left over. It was a chapter of Clarence Darrow and our analysis of him. You remember we were talking first of the individual in himself, and secondly of his relation to others. In the first chapter of my analysis, I said Clarence Darrow was a pessimist, a cheerful pessimist. We spoke of his personal life: How now, of Clarence Darrow in society, toward others? Has Clarence Darrow helped people in his daily life here, now? You know he has. And, in that helpfulness, he has found joy! This Society, as Mr. Lewis told you—he had no right to tell you, yet you heard him call me to order for saying so—Mr. Lewis should have kept still when the debate was under weigh. Mr. Darrow has served this society. Yes. Do you think he deserves too much

thanks? No, he got as much joy and pleasure out of his service as you did.

Mr. Darrow: Probably more.

Professor Starr: In serving you and helping this society, in having an interest here, he gains true joy. You know about his clients. You know that when others will refuse a case because there is no money, or because it is desperate, he will take it. You know what his life is. You know how it is lived with reference to others. You know how many poor men he has helped out of serious perplexities. And, do you think that when he dies, he ends? No, no. The gentle memory remains when he has gone. Ends? Why, it is enough to read *Farmington*, to know better. *Farmington* will live after he has gone. An abiding influence. Is that worth while? It is worth while to have lived one's life so that one has joy through the days and weeks and years? Joy of anticipation? Joy in hard work? Joy in the retrospect? Helpfulness while he lives; blessing in death; exerting an influence beyond. Life such as that is well worth living!

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The Chairman: You will hear from Mr. Darrow.

MR. DARROW'S SECOND SPEECH

Mr. Darrow said: Well, my friend's very kind words make it hard for me to debate. Of course, I cannot discuss that question with him because he is right. He and I ought not to debate. Of course, I do appreciate the feelings of my friend.

I want to say a few words seriously. Perhaps I was not serious before. Life to me is a joke. That is the way I get by. It is an awful joke. A joke on me partly. But, seriously, I am not certain if Professor Starr is right on what he says about death—he certainly should know more about that subject than I do—whether there are hundreds of millions of people in the world who do not view death the way we Christians look at it. I confess that I don't know. And it is a topic that I would like to hear discussed by him fully because to Christians, like we people, it is an important question. And, if there are people in the world, and people who live close to nature, who, on account of their more natural life, or more natural views of life, have a different attitude, we ought to know it. I, for one, would be glad to know it. I have

read more or less about this subject. Not so much as Professor Starr has, and of course, he has traveled amongst the primitive people a great deal. I supposed that they had the same feeling toward death that we civilized people have; but perhaps not. Really, don't the primitive people have it, Professor Starr? I am asking seriously.

Professor Starr: Nothing to the degree we have. You used the word I refrained from using, the population that fears death.

Mr. Darrow: I didn't use the word fear with that attitude toward it.

Professor Starr: Fear, the higher idea.

Mr. Darrow: I fancy that they must. Even the primitive religions are based on immortality and I fancy that while the feeling may not be as strong with them as it is with us, it must be very substantial. It certainly enters into everything with what we call civilized people. It is not quite the right thing to say, fearing death. Personally, I have the same concern about it that everybody else has. I cannot imagine an intelligent person who has not. You know that any minute your best friend may be taken. You know that every day, those you love drop out by the wayside without warning. To know that the most important plans may come to nothing in a moment.

There is nothing in life that compares in seriousness with it. Whether a man could so live that he would not care about it, that is a most important question. Whether he can take life as life is, and give up the thought of a future life and think very little of death. I don't know how he can do it while in full health and the possession of his faculties.

Now let us look a little closer into that question. I am quite aware that I do not fear death. I don't expect to go to hell. I expect after death I am going to be—I was going to say happy—but I expect not to be unhappy. I expect to even be better off than as if I was working. I expect to be asleep, and not even dreaming. But, that in no way takes away my will to live, which is present while I live, and it in no way takes away my imagination which shows me how brief everything is, and how the deepest loves in life bring the deepest pain; and makes me hesitate many times to bring my friends real close to me—because I know what the shock will be when we part. It seems to me that goes with living. I would be glad sometime to hear Professor Starr tell us more about it. The very fact that we never discuss it—of course, I discuss it more or less. I do that just to get used to it. I fancy that the man in Christian

society who thinks less of death than anybody else, is the sexton, because he is dealing with it all the time. And, if I get to talking about it all the time I sort of get used to it. That is a way that I have. It may be good or bad, but I fancy that there is no avoiding the shock that comes with the thought of it to intelligent people, who do not take refuge in the idea of immortality, or future life.

I can see nothing in the thought that one who lives a good life is better content to lay it down than one who does not live a good life. I think the biggest sinners die the easiest, because they generally see heaven in front of them. The witch-burners, the fellows who build fires to make people religious. The prohibitionists. And that kind of people. Of course, I am happy when they die. They die happy in the anticipation of what is coming to them. Of course if they knew what was coming to them they might not feel so good. I don't think goodness has anything whatever to do with whether a man is willing to die or not, or with how long he lives. He couldn't live long by being good. It is proverbial that the good die young. I believe this myself, in spite of the fact that I am getting along some. One lives in accordance to the way they are adjusted to their environment. And if they

have a crooked environment, they have to learn to grow crooked, or they will be up against something. Life has nothing to do with that. And I fancy death has nothing to do with it. I still think these people who say they are glad to die and are not looking for something, are really bluffing; they are Stoics, or Spartans; they steel themselves to it. Take an example. Suppose very suddenly there is a cry of fire here in this room. It would terrify all of you. How many times has it happened? Why, it has happened in theatres over and over again; happened in this town. What extraordinary measures people take to save their lives! Even the devout Christian, when he is dangerously sick, sends for a doctor instead of a preacher. People will consent to be carved up; have anything happen to them, even give up their money, rather than die! And, of course, this does enter directly and most directly into the feelings all of us have on the subject of whether life is worth living.

And, let me make another suggestion right here. Suppose the Professor is right. Suppose there are no feelings of reluctance at the thought of death; supposing humanity reached that point, in some way, that it was perfectly willing to die. What does that prove? I fancy that proves that life is not worth living!

It would seem so to me. When I was a boy I never wanted to quit playing baseball or eating pie; I never wanted to come in at night when I was out playing with the boys; I never wanted to get up in the morning when I was asleep, especially if I had to work. I was living a physical existence, and all right for the time. If men were happy; if life was happy; if it was worth while, it would be impossible to welcome death! And that, to my mind, is the great fact that settles this whole subject. I don't care about settling it. I am conscious that on many things Professor Starr and I think alike. I am proud to say it. But I find it hard to debate with him. I would prefer that this audience could see from such facts as Professor Starr has given us, some consolations for life, and some belief that on the whole it is worth while. But, the great fact in it is this, that the intense joy of life makes death a nightmare; it is the skeleton at every feast, and it is the only sure thing which says: No, there is no such thing as joy. Take that away; get a state of mind in the world where men are willing to die, and it can only mean one thing, that they are, at least, indifferent to life, and therefore, it is not worth while. I think we take life too seriously. Perhaps it would be better that we

did not. We all take ourselves too seriously. Life is at least not much worth while. We make too much of it. Perhaps we would be happier if we made less. I want to read you just in closing a short statement that I found from Sir Arthur J. Balfour, the English statesman, which seems to me to put this question of life, and of man, and of his existence on earth, better and simpler and more concisely than I have ever seen it before. It is from his well-known work, "Foundations of Belief."

"Man, so far as natural science by itself is able to teach us, is no longer the final cause of the universe, the Heaven-descended heir of all the ages. His very existence is an accident, his story a brief and transitory episode in the life of one of the meanest of the planets. Of the combination of causes which first converted a dead organic compound into the living progenitors of humanity, science indeed as yet knows nothing. It is enough that from such beginnings famine, disease, and mutual slaughter, fit nurses of the future lords of creation, have gradually evolved, after infinite travail, a race with conscience enough to feel that it is vile, and intelligence enough to know that it is insignificant. We survey the past, and see that its history is of blood and tears, of help-

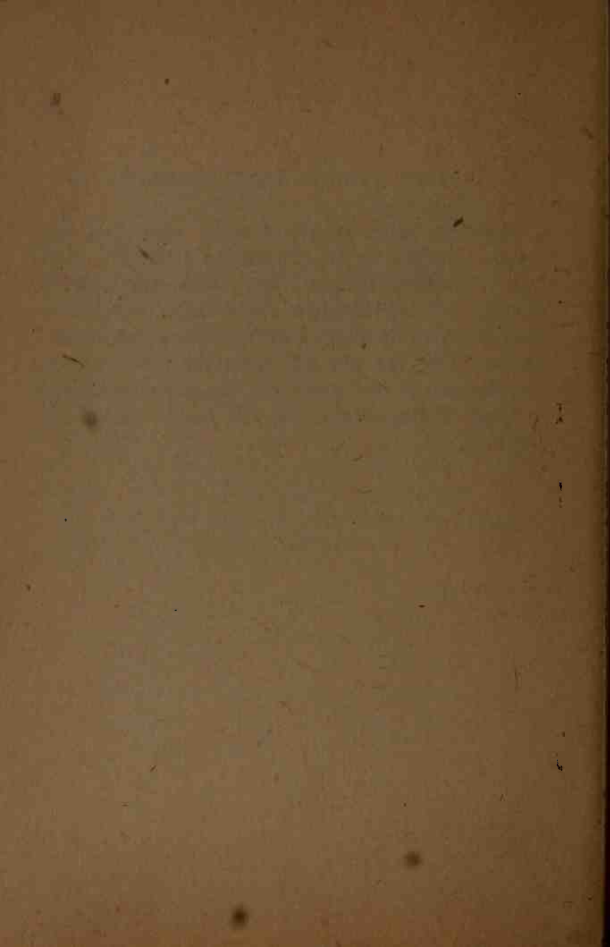
less blundering, of wild revolt, of stupid acquiescence, of empty aspirations. We sound the future, and learn that after a period, long compared with the individual life, but short indeed compared with the divisions of time open to our investigation, the energies of our system will decay, the glory of the sun will be dimmed, and the earth, tideless and inert, will no longer tolerate the race which for a moment disturbed its solitude. Man will go down into the pit, and all his thoughts will perish. The uneasy consciousness, which in this obscure corner has for a long space broken the contented silence of the universe, will be at rest. Matter will know itself no longer. 'Imperishable monuments' and 'immortal deeds,' death itself, and love stronger than death, will be as though they had never been. Nor will anything that is be better or be worse for all that the labour, genius, devotion, and suffering of men have striven through countless generations to effect."

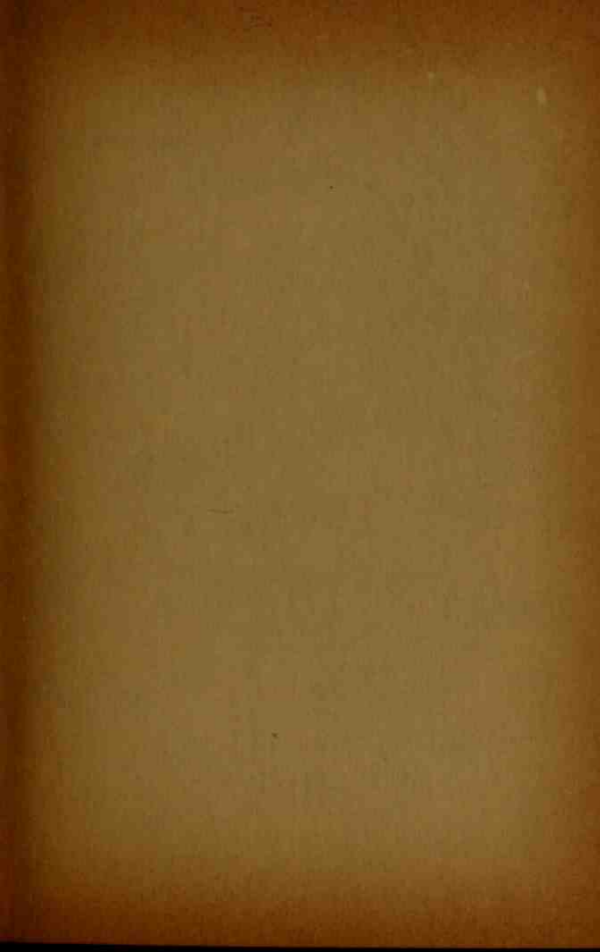
It seems to me that is life; that is man. Is it worth while? I want to make just one confession on this question. I know the Professor will agree with me on this. I take dope. I have tried pretty nearly every dope on earth. Somehow it doesn't catch. I am no different in what I try to do than the silly

fellow who says: Love is God and God is love. If I could believe God is love and love is God, I would do it. I cannot. To me life is of little value. I don't mean to me individually, but as I see life. This great senseless, wasteful, cruel spawning of life upon the earth! I see not only its pain, but its pleasures, and its joys annoy me more than its sorrows, for I don't want to lose them. I love my friends; I love people; I love life; but its everlasting uncertainty; its infinite miseries; its manifest futility; its unavoidable troubles and its tragic end appalls me. That is the truth about it. And, I am glad to take refuge in the one consolation, which I think is philosophy, but which may be dope, that life does not amount to much, and I should worry!

PROF. STARR'S LAST SPEECH

Professor Star said: I hope that you listened carefully to the quotation from Mr. Balfour. I will only say if you did, and it sank deeply, you will realize more than ever, first, that we are not responsible for being here; second, that we should therefore get all that we can while we are here, because whatever is true of the future, we are here. Make the most of it!







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