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WAR AND PEACE

CHAPTER I

THE HUMAN SWARM

THE first step in science is to learn to make distinctions, especially between appearance and reality. We know that war has been a vast preoccupation throughout history, and that the most advanced nations of to-day are engaged in preparations for war on a scale undreamed of by the great conquerors of the past. From this it might appear, and it has often been concluded, that warfare is an inevitable feature of the growth of human societies, and must continue because it is rooted in instincts and passions which are modified in only the slightest and slowest way from age to age, without which, indeed, the race would soon decay and die out. A moment's reflection, however, shows the idea of an unchangeable "human nature" to be full of difficulty. Modern thought points to nothing so certainly as the universality of change. We stand on a whirling ball, every atom and molecule of which is in perpetual movement.