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## A PHILOSOPHER'S FEAST.

BY AMOS WATERS.

"SEND a philosopher to London, but no poet!" So advised Heinrich Heine. Send a philosopher there "and he will hear the pulse of the world beat audibly, and see it visibly," but send no poet for the "exaggeration of London smothers the imagination and rends the heart." But there came one who spoke among the philosophers with authority and preached philosophy in the dialect of poets, and it is a fleeting glimpse of his sojourn I am privileged to betray in these columns. *Personalia* is the salt of journalism—that is the new journalism, essentially of American origin; and there is consequently a touch of poetic justice in returning the trick in prose, that you of the new world have for good or ill, forced upon the slower mechanisms of the old countries.

On the evening of Saturday July 30, Dr. Paul Carus, editor of this journal, informally received at Anderton's Hotel, Fleet Street, a few of the more ardent and sympathetic of his colleagues in propaganda who claimed indeed to be of his soul-kindred. The gathering was animated by every graceful impulse, and it seemed apposite to certain grave and potent sages to depute the writer to record in these columns a few of the amenities exchanged. And the first propriety is to snatch a little advantage from the editorial absence, and convey the sense of delight we all realised in the impressive presence of our distinguished friend. We knew the profound thinker, the responsible moralist, the brilliant writer with the love of the past and the light of the future in his heart; but we did not know or but vaguely conjectured the alert and virile frame, and the handsome and singularly expressive face of the strenuous pioneer of monism. Dr. Carus is a missionary, and looks a missionary, ideally and intellectually. There was a thorn in the rose, a disappointment shared by all that he was not accompanied by another who bears his honored name.

Emerson said that there was "no end to the graces and amenities, wit, and sensibility," of the class in England represented however obscurely by the guests of the visitor-host. If there was indeed no end to these excellences, there was an admirable beginning

in the fraternal greeting voiced by Saladin in the principal post-prandial deliverance, the toast expressed with emotion and received with enthusiasm to the health and in welcome of Dr. Paul Carus. There sat at the table Dr. Lewins, the father of Hylo-Idealism, whose striking head the winters had whitened, and Dr. Bithell, the Nestor of Agnosticism, equally venerable. The disciples of Dr. Lewins were represented by Mr. George M. McCrie and Mr. Ellis Thurtell, M. A. Mr. Chas. A. Watts, editor of *The Agnostic Annual* and *Watts's Literary Guide*, the Napoleon of English liberalism was there, and also Mr. J. Harrison Ellis and Mr. Frederick Millar, editor of *The Liberty Annual*. Mr. Hermann Hegeler sat to the right of Dr. Carus. But for an unfortunate mistake in the hurry of arrangement, the group had been larger and more diversified. However, the interesting editor of *The Agnostic Journal* discoursed brilliantly of philosophy and poetry in the three lands familiar in the affections of Dr. Carus—Germany, England, and America,—sometimes witty, sometimes pathetic, and always eloquent. Then we tried our national institution, "For he's a jolly good fellow." It may be remarked that some philosophers can eat who cannot sing. Dr. Carus in reply spoke with excessive modesty, but with thought and generous feeling, and intensified the favorable impression generally conceived. He spoke of his spiritual pilgrimage and a little of his earthly trials. Once he paused, and evidently possessed by sincere and dignified affection unburdened his mind and heart of a noble tribute to Mr. Edward C. Hegeler. It was a touching and reverent estimate.

Other toasts were proposed and expanded including "The Liberal Press," with which the names of Mr. Ellis Thurtell and Mr. Hermann Hegeler for England and America were respectively associated. And when the toasts were ended the conversation was vivacious and intellectual. Perhaps the conversational incident was a subtle-issued tournament between the editors of *The Open Court* and *The Agnostic Journal*, and for long all were content to listen as the merits of monism and agnosticism were severally revealed. Most interesting, too, were the communings between Dr. Carus and Dr. Lewins. As the night grew the tone

of gravity deepened while yet the light graces of festivity were not forgotten. The philosophers were taking a holiday, and the joyous recreation of Hafiz with its serious echo might have been the motto cherished in the thoughts of all. "Let us be crowned with roses, let us drink wine, and break up the tiresome old roof of heaven into new forms." Hovering over the circle was an Empyréan of calm beatitude, mystic and fragrant incense soaring from the altar of Diva Nicotina who found just votaries in the grateful majority.

One final word may be permitted in expression of a thought which has long constrained me, and which was strengthened during that memorable evening. Between the monism of Dr. Carus and *The Open Court*, and the agnosticism of many—especially of the reverent school—in England, the difference is mainly technical. Agnosticism is essentially idiosyncratic and may not crystallise into any dogma, "unknowable," or other untenable refuge of halting mentalities. The strict Spencerians are an isolated and decreasing faction, whose arid pedantries are alien to the brighter spirits of the agnostic movement. With all respect I venture to say that the feud accentuated by Dr. Carus is based on a fallacious and penurious, if pardonable assumption. In truth it has on occasion been gravely questioned, as to whether "agnostic" adequately conveys the intent of the group of propositions it covers. Dr. Carus has acceptably concerned himself with the conciliation of religion with science, and he has vitally rescued beautiful truths from old and decaying creed-abstracts. In his interpretations of God and Soul, he envisages issues with enduring wisdom and prophetic ardor. It will, therefore, be acutely discouraging, if his sojourn on these shores does not intimately convince him that it is possible and desirable to effect a reconciliation between the monism of his choice and the agnosticism of his objection.

#### MISS NADEN'S "WORLD-SCHEME."

##### A RETROSPECT.

BY GEORGE M. MCCRIE,  
[CONCLUDED.]

A position such as that defined in the last paragraphs of Part II of this paper, of course meets with the fiercest criticism. Neither the idealist nor the realist of our day will submit to the wear of a cosmical ego. Hence a reviewer in the *Journal of Mental Science* (April 1892), Miss Naden's latest critic, puts it as follows.<sup>1</sup>

"Miss Naden . . . is possessed by two currents of "thoughts, which she conceives her theory to recon-

"cile. She is very clear that, to us, there is no out-  
"side world—that every 'thing' is a 'think,' as Dr.  
"Lewins strangely states it—and that, in fact, each  
"man makes his own universe . . . But she is at the  
"same time, equally assured of the effective material-  
"ity of the universe<sup>1</sup>. . . . How did Miss Naden  
"reconcile her two cardinal lines of thought? How,  
"if the world is a vision—possibly a mirage or drunken  
"dream<sup>2</sup>—how can I posit any difference between the  
"real and the unreal, the true and the false? How, in  
"a word, can I know anything about it?<sup>3</sup> Are we not  
"referred back to that 'Scepticism of Hume<sup>4</sup> which  
"etc.'? . . . Truth and error, reality and unreality,  
"right and wrong, beauty and hideousness, are noth-  
"ing but the fancies of the hour!<sup>5</sup> The truth is, surely,  
"that the test and basis of the whole matter is what  
"test<sup>6</sup> of reality one's scheme of philosophy can pro-  
"vide.<sup>7</sup> That our universe is made up of phenomena,  
"all thinking persons will agree.<sup>8</sup> That in some  
"sense it is nevertheless real is obvious to all who are  
"not in a lunatic asylum, and to many who are.<sup>9</sup>  
"But the explanation of the meaning of reality<sup>10</sup> is the  
"erux of the philosopher, as the discernment of it is  
"often the test of the lunatic."<sup>11</sup>

The gist of the foregoing criticism is that in Miss Naden's auto-cosmic synthesis a "standard" of truth and reality is lacking. But if this standard is to be external, the bounds of "the universe as felt and known" must be transcended in order to discover it. And if internal, then one part of the universe must be employed to check the remainder. But all ideas of a

<sup>1</sup> Yes; and why should she not be so assured? "Materiality," even effective materiality is not necessarily a quality of "outsidedness." Everything characterising it is a mental endowment. And when the ego is coterminous with the cosmical sphere of thought, materiality is seen to be necessarily inside, not outside the limit. If anything were outside us we could have neither part nor lot in it. The critic is misled by the use of the terms "think" and "spectral." These are not unrealities. All things are spectral. But the is everything.

<sup>2</sup> But "a mirage or drunken dream" is as much within consciousness as anything else. The critic seems to think that because these chance to be wrongly related—unreal in certain relations—they are not within the sphere of the ego. But unreality in certain relations is reality in others, absolute unreality is nonentity.

<sup>3</sup> By being it; to know is to be.

<sup>4</sup> No, the *Scepticism of Hume* does not touch the point. Hume did not admit a "conscious subject" at all, though his theory—really a string of impressions illegitimately bound together in a series—sorely needed one. The subject-object relation of auto-monism, on the other hand, is conscious all through.

<sup>5</sup> Well, what of this *ad captandum* appeal? Everyone of these is in consciousness, and what has "the fancy of the hour" to do with it? The critics review, is it not the fancy of the hour? and yet he wishes it taken *au sérieux*.

<sup>6</sup> The test *is* the test, unquestionably—whatever anything is really, it is unalterably.

<sup>7</sup> As "the real is everything" there can be no such test.

<sup>8</sup> "All thinking persons" do not so agree, so it resolves into a "count of heads."

<sup>9</sup> A lunatic is only tested by the comparison of his speech and actions with those of others presumably sane. Viz., by means of relation.

<sup>10</sup> Explanation of the meaning of a reality," itself requires explanation.

<sup>11</sup> A universe, as it includes everything, cannot be tested by anything else. Internal cosmical relations are tested by their unalterableness.

<sup>1</sup> Vide appendix to Tract "Sadducee versus Pharisee" in which the criticism in question is reprinted entire.

standard are, in this connection, out of place. Such a standard must either be absolute, (when its own reality in turn would have to be guaranteed by something else and so on, in endless regress,) or it must be relative, when it would only take its place among the other relations of its own sphere. When the critic leaves the sober and waking conclusion of everyday life, which with him seem alone to count for "realities," and seeks to find *unrealities* in such things as "drunken dreams," "mirages," etc., which are every whit as real, in their own relations, as anything else, we need not follow him further. Let us endeavor, rather, to define Miss Naden's position more particularly. In what follows, the standpoint of the *Journal of Mental Science* reviewer will be found to be more and more untenable.

Observe the extremes between which auto-monism is the golden mean. Absolute idealism and absolute realism may both be reckoned out of court. But between these theories there are median systems each with its measure of plausibility. There is *first*, and leaning to the persuasion of idealism, what may, on that account, be termed indeterminate idealism, that half-way system of thought which, positing an ego—mental or material or both—bridges the gap between it and the "objective universe," by means of hypothetical figments, such as vibrations, undulations, etc. Throughout the cosmos a dividing-line is drawn; on the one side the subjective, on the other the objective. Thinkers of this persuasion are not deterred apparently by the discovery that, if this dividing-line exists, if between the ego of the cosmos, and the non-ego of the cosmos, there be a distinction at all, the dividing-line in question must, at one extremity, invade the atomic province, rendering any "indivisible particle" an impossibility. And this objection is but faintly met when it is urged that the "indivisible particle" is hypothetical merely, inasmuch as it becomes evident sooner or later, that it will not serve to construct a cosmical edifice upon a purely hypothetical basis. Then *second*, there is indeterminate realism, the recoil from the foregoing theory. The upholders of this system, having discovered the importance of "sensations" in the construction of a cosmos, describe them as "elements," and practically abandon the ego altogether by saying that it, the ego, is not here, or there, or *nowhere*, but virtually *anywhere*. Where the sensations or elements are, *there* is an ego in the midst of them; where a complex of elements, ex. gr. that called "green" is, the *I* is *there*. And should the ego drop out, should the *I* die, there is an end of the "green." What remains is not clear, but "green," or, at all events, that particular greenness exists no longer. "That is all," we are told. Apparently no great loss! The contingency of any element, other than the ego,

"dropping out" is not faced, so far as we can interpret Professor Mach and his school.

Though not, perhaps, on the surface, these two thought-systems resolve into absolute idealism, and absolute realism, respectively. In the first, we have an ego *plus* hypotheses of stimulation. This is really nothing more than the subject *plus* various possibilities of its being affected, touched to the issues of sensation. Under cover of these possibilities of affection, the objective, pure and simple, actually disappears. For, if you imagine an object, distinct from subject, a non-ego fronting an ego, all the available terminology of philosophy will not suffice to express a relation between these two at once close enough to correspond with the ordinary, recognised facts of perception, and sufficiently marked to preserve the supposed distinction. Accordingly in indeterminate idealism a bridge of hypothesis is added, undulations, vibrations, atomic and odoriferous particles. But these devices, in the end, prove useless. Link them to the subjective you may, but not to the objective, except at the cost of annihilating objectivity itself. Once you bring in vibrations, etc., you practically provide a *second* object, which is really a part of the subject, and, in order to do this, you have taken from the original objective all that composed it.<sup>1</sup> And a corresponding *impasse* awaits indeterminate realism. The hypothetical medium between non-ego and ego being in this case abandoned, the readiest method seems to be to submerge ego in non-ego, and allow it there to take its chance. At first sight this plan seems feasible enough. It appears to suit the case to regard the ego as nothing more than a factor in, or element of, a complex; consciousness, sensation, perception, all rising spontaneously in the instant of grouping. Self-consciousness, indeed, is persistent, but why not treat that as an illusion? though *of* what, or *to* what, does not appear. Unfortunately, the theory has this weak point in it, that, if you admit "the complex," you enter the region of hypothesis once more. Just as, in indeterminate idealism, the non-ego could not be brought sufficiently near to the ego without the help of a hypothetical figment, so, in indeterminate realism, the two cannot be sufficiently separated to serve the required purpose. In the one case, the ego is too far distant from its counterpart; in the other too near. For, in "the complex," the ego, being practically on a level with the other elements, itself part, and part only, of

<sup>1</sup>In Dr. Brewer's pamphlet *Constance Naden and Hylō-Idealism*, from which we have already quoted, there is an instance of this virtual supersession of the object. Unfortunately the writer fails to supply the necessary Hylō-Ideal Correction. "Some stars may be extinct before the telegram of their once existence reaches our earth, so that we are seeing what does not even exist. . . . The spectator could not cognise them till their messages arrived, and even then he only received a telegram, and not the *res ipsissima*. The objects, however, must have existed, or no messenger could have been sent from their courts," pp. 10-11.

the composition of say, "green—" without which green, or that particular greenness "would not be—" can never sufficiently divorce itself from the combination of which it is a factor, in order to be able to sense it. Even as knowledge, in the sense of perception, of the component terms of a series, one by one, cannot bring us, by itself, to knowledge of the series *as a series*, so neither can one element of a complex present the complex to itself. The complex is stable so long as all its elements are present, and no longer; but, while it is thus constant, there is nothing left to which the complex can *be*, and a hypothetical supreme consciousness, such as Professor Green, in his system, ultimately introduces, becomes a logical necessity, "something out of time, for which all the terms of the relations are equally present, as the principle of the synthesis which unites them in a single universe."<sup>1</sup> As long as the separation of subject from object is, even nominally, insisted upon, so long must either of these "blind-alleys" be selected. You cannot bring the *not I* into the *I*, without the former slipping into the gulf, or bog rather, of hypothesis, where it perishes. You cannot logically have anything else than a purely supposititious, "consciousness other than the events and not passing with them," if you draw the ego into the sphere of the non-ego.

In the thought-system to which Miss Naden dedicated her maturer years, the very noon-tide of her life, we have the true Eirenic between idealism and realism. Not only the "distance" but the apparent objectivity of the "external" world resolves into the outcome of an acquired sense-process, and its separateness, or "outsidedness" into an illusion.<sup>2</sup> The whole of the immemorial tangle of subjectivity and objectivity rights itself at once. But perhaps the "conclusion of the whole matter" may best be indicated by adducing the view which is the exact opposite of the true one. We find it in Professor Mach's words, part of the article in *The Monist* already quoted from.

"That Protean, illusory philosophical problem of "a single independent thing with many properties, "arises" from the misunderstanding of the fact that "extensive comprehension, and accurate separation, "although both are temporarily justifiable, and profitable for a number of purposes, cannot, and must "not, be employed *simultaneously*."

But they can, and must, be so employed. It is precisely this deprecated "extensive comprehension and accurate separation," simultaneously employed,

which reveals the ego-universe system as a single thing with many properties, the true unity of the manifold. The revelation of the barrenness of Professor Mach's intellectual Canaan is the index of the fulness of the true Land of Promise. Simultaneous analytico-synthetic vision is a necessity. "The kingdom is *within us*," yet, in order to realise this fact, that which seems to be, but is not "*outside*" must be included. This is why "near and far," with Miss Naden, were "quite indifferent." (Cf. *Reliques*, Appx. p. 243.) Once grasp the thesis, that subject and object are indissolubly one, not in the hackneyed sense of inter-relation, but in that of identity, and you have the complete reconciliation of all seeming contradictions.

The hollowness of any such rationale as, for example, that given by Dr. Cleland regarding the sense of smell, is evident from this standpoint. The introduction of a supposititious "odorous particle," as a vehicle of communication between the physical object and subject, is as superfluous as would be any such figment in pure philosophy. The so-called "stimulant of sensation" is as unverifiable as an "animating spirit," or as that "appulse" which Fichte dreamed of. The ego includes the whole of the cosmical situation.

That this rationale is not patent on the surface of ordinary perception arises from the fact that the apparent *externality* of the object<sup>1</sup> which is simply a question of perspective or adjustment, seems to negative its unity with the subject. Yet the burden of proving separation rests with the separatists. For deeper examination reveals the truth that unless the object is found to coalesce with the subject, there could be no perception at all; perception, in the vulgar sense, implying something acting where it is not. In a sense profounder far than the familiar Neo-Kantian dictum, partial knowledge is impossible. To know, not fully, but to know *at all*, is to Be.<sup>2</sup>

The various corollaries of this synthesis, as expounded in Miss Naden's essays, cannot be dwelt upon in this paper, but two points of the utmost importance, in the light of modern controversy, are made clear by it. They can only be mentioned.

1) Such terms as subject, object, relation, matter,

<sup>1</sup> Even if "externality" resided where it is popularly supposed to reside, viz. in front of us, we could not see it, in the popular sense; the essential factors in vision, the rods and cones of the retina, pointing, *not* "outwards" but *inwards*, and *backwards*.

<sup>2</sup> So accustomed are we to the subject-object rationale that its contradictions and absurdities are not reckoned with. The commonplace of vulgar realism, "I perceive a tree" is, on the plane of subject-object separation, quite unintelligible. Here is an object, which, in some mysterious way, affects the subject so as to incorporate its qualities with the latter, and yet, at the same time remains itself unmoved and unchanged, which may, at the same time affect any number of subjects, yet which remains one and the same undiminished object still. The truth is that unless I *am* that which I perceive, perception is an impossibility.

<sup>1</sup> *Prolegomena to Ethics*, Introduction, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> A recognised, and rationalised, "illusion," however, like the "rising" and "setting" of the sun. Similarly, an intricacy of nerve-process is responsible, *inter alia*, for that familiar feeling of having been, at some indefinitely remote period of our lives, identically circumstanced as at present, a feeling out of which mysticism has attempted to make much capital.

etc., are now seen, not to be meaningless, but to possess an added meaning. They do not correspond, however, to any fixed or definite distinction. Take the much-vexed question of "matter" for example. Matter is no independent entity. In the strict sense of the term, the material of the cosmos—so long as unity is preserved—becomes "indifferent." The query "if thing is but 'think,' what, then, is matter?" is seen to answer itself. Matter is just what—and as—it is thought to be.

2) In the auto-cosm all is rigidly egoistic. All "foreign centres of representations" in which some have supposed "the true external world" to reside, must assume their proper subordinate place. The existence of "other selves," being secondarily inferred, in no way touches the prime fact of solipsismal monism.

#### THE BASIS OF MORALITY.

BY C. STANILAND WAKE.

[CONCLUDED.]

If, however, all conduct be subjectively alike, the difference between its several phases must be objective. The distinction may best be made plain by an explanation of what is meant by *immoral*. This is any conduct which is contrary to good "manners," using this term in its widest sense, as expressed in the laws, written or unwritten, of society, the observance of which is therefore morality. The laws must have been established, otherwise they could not be observed, but they cannot be said to have preceded the conduct to which they have reference. Command and conduct were developed together as effects of each other. "Thou shalt not steal," implies the existence of thieving, as well as the recognition of the immorality of the conduct forbidden. It has often been remarked that all primitive legislation takes the negative form. This is consistent with the fact that passive morality is the most essential to the existence of society, and it must therefore have been the soonest developed. Negative virtue is of no less importance, however, in all stages of social progress, not only on account of its restraining quality, but because it enters into the *duty* which every man owes to his "neighbor," that is, to the other social unit or units with whom he is brought into contact in the course of daily life. Every one is entitled to his "due," and if one is kept from it by any person, this person is guilty of a breach of the command "thou shalt not steal"; a law which is not limited to simple theft, but extends to all active or passive conduct by which any one is deprived of any object or benefit to which he is entitled. It is thus difficult to find any action affecting another person besides the agent, that does not possess an ethical element. This enters into the most ordinary conduct, but in actions which, although performed for the benefit of others, are prompted by egoistic motives—as services rendered for reward—the ethical element is of an incidental character, and therefore need not be regarded in the classification of such actions, which may be properly described as intellectual, rather than moral. The objective distinction between ethical and other conduct is, therefore, to be found in their chief intention, that is the motive by which an action is guided, or the end it has in view. If an action has for its chief aim the good or injury of another, it is moral or immoral, as the case may be, but if the benefit to the agent is the guiding principle of an act, it is morally indifferent, except where such benefit can be obtained only by injury to another person.

But let it be noticed that all actions, whether or not they possess the ethical character, have an important objective feature

in common. Conduct that is morally indifferent, that is, which has a purely intellectual object, such as is required for the performance of any kind of labor, is said to be "right" if it is fitted to attain the end in view. We have here fundamentally the same idea as when we speak of an action being morally right; as is evident if we apply to it, as we may, the term *proper*. What belongs to a man is his "property," that is, he has a right to it, and any action which interferes with this right is *improper*. In like manner, any action that is fitted for the acquirement of a property-right, or to attain a particular end, is said to be proper for that purpose, but if the action is not so fitted it is spoken of as improper or not proper. Now, in each of these cases the "propriety" or "impropriety" is simply rightness or wrongness, that is, fitness or unfitness for a particular purpose, the nature of which, and not the mental activity, stamps conduct as ethical or otherwise. The same conclusion may be arrived at by considering, not the special aim sought to be attained by any particular action, but the general object of such action. No act is performed voluntarily unless it is thought to be, in some way or other, beneficial to somebody—either to the person affected by it or to the person acting. Even wrong or immoral actions have this quality, as the agent intends to benefit himself directly or indirectly, affectively or effectively, whatever injury he may do to another. Actions morally indifferent may benefit the agent alone, but in many cases they are beneficial to both the agent and the recipient. This is the case also with actions having an ethical character, since not only do they directly affect others, but indirectly, or by reflex influence, they affect the agent as well, beneficially or otherwise.

The subjective agreement of ethical and intellectual conduct is thus confirmed by reference to the ultimate consequences of actions, and it may be further proved by a consideration of the nature of conscience. This is sometimes spoken of as the "moral sense," as though the organism possesses a special sense for the distinction of the moral quality of actions. Bearing in mind, however, what has been said above as to the subjective agreement of ethical and intellectual conduct, we shall be prepared to find that conscience is merely a special phase of consciousness, using this term in its widest sense as answering in the intellectual region to the general sensibility in the region of feeling. As a fact, in some languages the same word is used to denote both consciousness and conscience, as though their fundamental connection was recognised; as it is in the phrase "moral consciousness." Nevertheless, although conscience is subjectively the same as consciousness, yet it has special *objective* relations owing to which the term moral sense has come to be applied to it. The true relation of consciousness to conscience is made apparent by reference to Lewes's distinction between *faculty* and *function*. The function is the activity of an organ, answering to the use of an instrument. The term faculty has also been employed in that general sense, but Lewes proposed to limit it to "the action or class of actions into which a function may be diversified by the education of experience." Function would thus stand for the *native* endowment of the organ, and faculty for its *acquired* variations of activity. Thus if consciousness is the function of the intellect, the acquired activities of consciousness must be its faculties, and such is the case with conscience, which, as the faculty of the intellect concerned with ethical questions, may be properly termed the moral faculty; just as taste is the aesthetic faculty, and speech the linguistic faculty. All these faculties have the same subjective basis in consciousness, and therefore they are all expressions of the intellectual function, although they differ objectively as having to do each with a special group of phenomena, those which owing to their relationship are bound together by the law of association. The operation of any faculty may be so continuous in a particular direction, as by affection of the sensibility to form a special disposition, constituting a law of action, any infraction of which

may be felt as a shock to the feeling of propriety in relation to that particular line of conduct; just as action in another relation may give a shock to the moral conscience. When any doubt arises as to the fitness or propriety of any such action it is referred to the intellect for regulation, and as this applies to the moral as well as the æsthetic and intellectual faculties, we have here further evidence that all conduct, whatever its aim, is subjectively allied, and has a common basis in the general sensibility or in consciousness, according to whether it is habitual or otherwise. In either case the sensibility is affected, for, as Lewes shows, all knowledge begins and ends in feeling, which includes intelligence no less than sensation, and in accordance only with which thought itself has validity.

We are now in a position to point out the direction in which must be sought the basis of positive morality, the source of the moral obligation which expresses itself in conscience. The variability in the teaching of the moral faculty, as shown in the codes of morals current in different ages of the world and among different peoples in the same age, shows us that conscience cannot be depended on to determine the absolute moral value or quality of any particular action; although this may perhaps be affirmed where, as in the case of theft or homicide within the tribe, there is a universal consensus of opinion as to the immoral nature of such action. What has to be explained is the existence of the principle which finds expression in the moral conscience, or in other words the existence in the mind of the conception of "right and wrong" as an active test of conduct. Stated in this manner the problem under consideration is reduced to its simplest form, and practically it is resolved into a question of the origin of general ideas, which is that of the mental constitution itself. The mode of formation of general ideas is pointed out by Mr. Lewes when considering the source of man's superiority over animals. He states that objects, except as motives, do not exist for the animal. "He has no power of abstraction capable of constructing ideas of objects, he has only sensation and imagination representing sensibles. But ideas, expressed in words, are not sensible objects; they are mental constructions, in which relations abstracted from things are woven afresh into a web of sensibles and extra-sensibles, and concrete particulars become concrete generals. The experience of red is detached from the sensible experiences which originally accompanied it by being separately named. Red is then any red. Never being isolated in experience, red could only be isolated in thought by means of some sign which should give it separate embodiment; the sign thus particularising it, separating it, can by virtue of this detachment be applied to all similar occasions. The particular thus becomes generalised, and may become a sign of other qualities held in common by red objects."<sup>1</sup>

The power of abstraction on which depends the formation of the concrete generals, implies not only the possession of the power of inhibitive thought or reflection, but also the faculty of language by which the abstraction is named and thus identified as a general idea or concept. The construction of the concept right or wrong must have followed exactly the same course as the formation of the general idea of red. It is true that, while the latter is a quality of sensible objects, the former is a quality of actions. But right and wrong had relation originally to objects. The connection between *right* and *proper* has already been pointed out, and there can be no doubt that the idea of right was at first associated with property. A man was recognised as being entitled to, that is, as having a right to, what he had produced or acquired by his independent labor. At first the quality of "rightness" would not be separated from the objects which were thus regarded as belonging to a particular individual, but in the course of time the activity of the intellect led to the recognition of that quality in

thought so as by abstraction to become a general idea. The idea of right would thus be fixed in language as a concept, just as with the general idea "red."

Proceeding a step further, we find by the law of relativity every feeling is presented under a twofold aspect. As pointed out by Lewes, change in relations is the psychological condition of feeling, and unless such a change takes place there can be no consciousness. The twofold aspect is the alternation of abstractions, and all feeling and all thought being necessarily relative, the relation has two terms, one of which cannot be dominant in consciousness without throwing the other into obscurity, but neither of them can be thought without calling up the other."<sup>1</sup> It must be remembered, however, that there are two kinds of correlatives, those which are logical and those which are real. The difference is that between contraries and contradictories, and applying the distinction to the idea of right, we see that it has for correlatives non-right and not-right or wrong. The former of these terms has reference to the mere right of property, and is an affirmation that the right does not exist; whereas the latter affirms the right but declares that it is interfered with, and that such interference is wrong. In this declaration of not-right, which was due to the activity of intellect, we have the genesis of a moral idea, that is the clothing of the idea of right with the moral attribute. By the law of relativity the idea possesses the twofold aspect, and the idea of right would be called up by that of wrong, just as the idea of wrong would be suggested by that of right. The completed or perfect concept would, however, include more than this. The negative conduct must be endowed with the moral quality, which can be affected only by affirming that it is a duty to abstain from doing what is not-right or wrong.

Thus we see that so far from there being no basis for positive morality, it possesses the firmest of all bases, that of human nature itself. Moral conduct, like all other action, is governed by the laws of the mental constitution, that is, the laws of human nature, which are nevertheless merely the expression in the human organism of the laws of physical and cosmical existence. It is in accordance with human nature that actions are right or wrong, and as conduct is the expression of the will, its character or identity will depend on the disposition, of which organic condition conduct is the functional activity. The moral nature of an act can be determined only by its intended effect. If this is good, as being in accordance with the Golden Rule which requires the exercise of self-control in action, arising from a consideration for the rights of others, it is morally right. If, however, it takes no heed of the rights of others, and does harm instead of good, it is morally wrong. Conduct is thus the expression, in accordance with the laws of the mental constitution, of the positive and negative or aggregative and separative aspects of the disposition.

This is the objective view of moral conduct, but we must look for its, actual basis to the subjective side of human nature. Possibly the evil consequences of a particular action may not have been desired by the agent; that is, may not have been in accordance with his disposition at the time of its performance. The disposition is the condition for the time being of the sentient organism or sensibility as the result of experience, and it is to be judged of by reference to the motives which govern its expression in action, that is whether pleasure or pain is derived from the consideration of actions having the qualities of goodness or badness. According to Mr. Bain, pleasure and pain operate as the motives in will. Those affections of the sensibility must ultimately, however, be referred to the sentient organism, and hence, although where action is automatic or habitual the muscular sensation of pleasure or pain may deformine conduct, yet in other cases the conduct is referred to the intellect, by the operation of which light is thrown

<sup>1</sup> Problems of Life and Mind, III, P. 486.

<sup>1</sup> Problems, II, P. 20.

on motives to action when presented in consciousness. When the intellect is called into play it regulates the will in its activity and ensures that conduct shall be guided by reason, which can be only through observance of the primary laws of thought. If the mental disposition is such that the illuminating influence of consciousness can have its proper effect, reflection on what is good will give pleasure, while pain will be experienced at the thought of evil. If, on the other hand, the condition of the sentient organism is such that the intellect cannot exercise its proper action the opposite result must ensue. For the expression of the will in conduct depends in the ultimate resort on the disposition, which is the sum of the influences arising from the condition of the general sensibility.

We thus see that the ultimate basis of morality is to be found in the sentient organism itself. Lewes points out that "from the varieties of feeling we extricate certain constant appearances which we call laws of sensibility, forms of thought, logical rules. These we describe and classify, as we describe and classify the planes of cleavage of crystals. But to suppose that these laws have an *a priori* independence, and render our feelings and knowledge possible, is equivalent to the supposition of planes of cleavage floating about in the cosmos, and when descending upon certain solutions fashioning them into crystals." Mental forms have no more existence apart from the sentient organism, than have the experiences which result from the reaction of the organism to the stimulation of the external medium. Thus as the organism itself forms the ultimate basis of all experience, in it must be found the basis of positive morality, which is the expression of certain phases of experience in relation to the exigencies of social life. Nevertheless, the social medium itself must not be lost sight of as an important factor in the development of morality. Lewes shows that we must seek outside of the organism and its inherited aptitudes for the origin of a large portion of our mental life, and he states that "we can find it only in the constitution of the social organism of which we are the units. We find there the impersonal experiences of tradition accumulating for each individual a fund of knowledge, an instrument of power which magnifies his existence. The experiences of many become the guide of each; they do not all perish with the individual; much survives, takes form in opinion, precept, and law, in prejudice and superstition. The feelings of each are blended into a general consciousness, which in turn reacts upon the individual consciousness. And this mighty impersonality is at once the product and the factor of social evolution. It rests on the evolution of language, as a means of symbolical expression by the stimulus of collective needs," and therefore, as we have seen, without language there can be no intellectual or moral life; no tradition, and therefore no religion, science, or art. (Psychology, p 80.)

The general mind is resolvable, however, into the experiences of individual minds, and the further back we trace its beginnings the fewer the units which constituted the social organism, and the more simple the teachings of that experience. Moreover, although without the social organism the development of intellectual and moral life would have been wanting, yet its foundations are laid in the mental constitution of each individual, and the true basis of morality, as of intelligence, must be sought in human nature itself. This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that man alone is a moral creature. The lower animals have the elements of morality as of intelligence, due to their possession of a sentient organism, but in the absence of self-consciousness there can be no moral or logical development, no idea of "right" or "wrong" in relation to conduct, and no language in which to give form to such conceptions. This is dependent on the exercise of the "thought," and as this function is the special heritage of mankind, we must conclude that positive morality is the expression of the laws of *human* nature in response to social influences.

## CURRENT TOPICS.

IN a moment of poetic enthusiasm Pope exclaimed, "For forms of government let fools contest, that which is best administered is best"; a melodious bit of sophistry which has led many minds to undervalue the importance of set principles in the political organism of a state. The doctrine may be erroneous, but the opinion of the poet is not without wisdom after all, for essential principles moulded into a "form" of government may be so excessively protected by the checks and balances of written constitutions, as to become fetters on liberty, and vetoes on the people's will. A monarchy in form may be harnessed in such a way as to be in its practical operations a democracy in fact; and of this Great Britain is a picturesque example. On the other hand, a democracy in form can be so "regulated" as to work like a monarchy; and of this the United States of America is a colossal illustration.

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In England constitutions grow; in America they are made; and thus it is that the British constitution fits the time, and with a moral force beyond the strength of armies it compels the government to yield at once to a democratic mandate given at a general election. In the United States the administration, or even the senate, may treat the popular verdict with royal and imperial contempt. On the 28th of June, the British Parliament was dissolved, and a new election ordered. At the end of a "campaign" some three weeks long the election was over, and the will of the voters known. A week or two after that the new Parliament met and the Commons, not the Lords and Commons, but the Commons, promptly changed the administration by hinting to Lord Salisbury that they had no "confidence" in his policy. His Lordship took the hint and at once resigned his office. Although the Senate, or the House of Lords, as they call it over there, was in favor of Lord Salisbury by more than two to one it counted nothing; the Senate, even if unanimous, could not save him. The will of the democracy must be obeyed. Lord Salisbury himself is a member of the senate, and it became his duty to inform his brother Senators that he had been dismissed from office by the Commons; not in those words exactly, but in these, "My Lords, owing to the vote of 'no confidence' adopted by the House of Commons, the ministers have resigned their offices, and our resignations have been accepted by the queen." Lord Salisbury quietly hands the reins to the queen, and she turns them over to Mr. Gladstone; that is all. In less than two months from the death of the old parliament, not only the offices, but also all political power and responsibility have been transferred from one party to the other. Nothing so republican as this can be found anywhere else in the world. It is democracy in action; under the form of monarchy.

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On the result of the general election in Great Britain depended all the government, and every question of public policy. The democracy demanded everything, and the monarchy made no resistance to the claim. No such radical consequences depend on the national election here, however emphatic the popular verdict may be on either side. Our campaign began earlier than the other, and it will continue longer. From early June, when the conventions meet, until November, the party chieftains drill their battalions in the manual of party discipline, and organize them for the battle of the ballot boxes; on the assumption that the American people are fools by a large majority, and that it is necessary to keep them so until after the election. All through the summer and the autumn, we hear the hewgaw of the stump orator while the band plays "listen to the mocking bird," and the torch-light processions illuminate the land from Portland, Maine, to Portland, Oregon. All this is very democratic, in appearance and in sound, but the verdict at the end has no substance in it, for it may be

scornfully set aside by the House of Lords, or as we call it here, the Senate. Though Mr. Cleveland should be elected, with a democratic House of Representatives, it would not give the democratic party political control, because according to party ethics it would be the duty of the senate to thwart the popular will. And, supposing Mr. Cleveland and a republican House of Representatives elected, it would be his duty according to the party code to rule the country in defiance of both Houses of Congress, or in obedience to the will of the minority. This is monarchy in action, under a democratic form. Or, suppose the people should vote "no confidence" in the present House of Representatives by electing a republican majority to succeed it, the repudiated House would pay no attention whatever to the message, but would go on as if nothing had happened, with all sorts of post mortem legislation until the 4th of March. And, most monarchical of all, the new Congress is not allowed to have anything to say about political affairs until thirteen months after its election, unless convened in extra session by the King, or as we call him here, the President. I do not mean to say that the English system is better than the American; I merely claim that it is more democratic in its mode of work, not better. Did I say better? If so I withdraw the word, for I have lately heard it said that the American plan because less democratic is better than the English way. It is claimed by many Americans as a merit of the constitution that so long as it remains as it is now, democracy never can be triumphant in this land. This is the "conservative" opinion, and it may be correct, although I prefer the more democratic view.

\* \* \*

The Speaker of the British House of Commons is a very lofty personage, one of the grandest in the kingdom, a dignitary so exalted that ordinary mortals blink in the sunshine of his presence. As he walks in state with the awful mace before him, his trailing robes alone, to say nothing of his wig, transfigure him into another Olympian Jove, and he speaks with the authority of thunder. He has a kingly salary, and lives in a palace like a king, a palace provided for him, and furnished for him by the nation. He has a chaplain, and a sword bearer, and a purse bearer, and a mace bearer, and a train bearer, and secretaries, clerks, cooks, and bottle washers without number. He holds also a peerage and a pension in reversion. Radiant with aristocratic adornments he presides over the House, and his baritone call to order will make even the Prime Minister of England tremble and beg pardon like a school-boy. It seems very strange, and yet it is very true that this gorgeous potentate has not one twentieth as much political power as is exercised by the Speaker of the House of Representatives at Washington. The democracy long since deprived him of all that. The form and ceremonials, the gewgaws and the flummery, even the dignity of the office he may enjoy, but he is not allowed the control of legislation even to the extent of his own vote. He must hold that in abeyance during his term of office lest the giving of it should identify him with one party or the other. He must be absolutely and democratically impartial, upholding the equal rights of every member on the floor, and showing neither by voice nor vote what his own preference is. Here again we see democratic practice clad in robes of despotic theory, the exact reverse of what we see at Washington, where the Speaker of the House in a democratic uniform exercises arbitrary power, not only over the members, but over every subject of legislation. He is every inch a king. Let him put on a royal robe, and we will dethrone him instantly, but he may rule as rudely as the imperial Czar if he be careful to wear American clothes. He may smite us with an iron hand if he will only wear upon it the glove of "republican simplicity." It is the form of things we care for, not the substance.

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In the development of the House of Commons it has come to be the rule that the Speakership shall be free from the vicissitudes

of politics, and whatever the party luck may be, the old speaker shall be reelected by the new parliament, unless he declines to serve. The speaker of the late House of Commons was Mr. Peel, an opponent of Mr. Gladstone's policy, and it was therefore conceded in America that by the organic law of politics Mr. Gladstone would give that very fine office to one of his own followers, but to our great astonishment, as soon as the new parliament met, a tory member proposed that Mr. Peel be Speaker, and in what appears to us to have been a moment of temporary insanity, Mr. Gladstone seconded the nomination, whereupon Mr. Peel was elected by a unanimous vote. To an American partisan that sort of thing is entirely out of order, because by such eccentric action some "good man" of the majority is cheated out of an office. It was an inspiring sight when the American editors brought their journalistic telescopes to bear on Mr. Gladstone's head, exploring it for a reason, like a party of astronomers investigating Mars. A Gladstonian editor of one of "the great dailies" of Chicago, having a telescope more powerful than the others, discovered the reason almost hidden away in the deep valley of Mr. Gladstone's cunning. "He makes two votes by it," said this journalistic astronomer, "Behold the political sagacity of the grand old man! As the Speaker does not vote, the enemy loses one by having the speakership, while Mr. Gladstone saves one for his own side; and this makes two on a division." Mr. Gladstone may not regard that praise as a very high compliment, but the editor meant it as a flattering tribute to the genius of a skillful politician. It is only fair to say that Mr. Gladstone was actuated by a higher motive; and the election of the Speaker was in logical harmony with the law of impartiality fixed upon the office. If the Speaker must not know either party, it follows that both parties ought to strengthen his position by their votes. If he must preserve the equal rights of every member on the floor, it is only reciprocal fairness that every man should vote for him. The unanimous vote for Speaker gives a very high tone to parliament, and it shows the intellectual progress that fifty years has made in the evolution of politics.

M. M. TRUMBULL.

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