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## EMOTIONAL DISORDERS.\*

BY TH. RIBOT.

THE desires, feelings, passions that impart to character its fundamental tone, have their roots in the organism and are predetermined by it. The same applies to even the highest intellectual manifestations. Still, as the psychic states here play a preponderating part, we shall treat them as the immediate causes of the changes of personality, without forgetting, however, that these causes are in their turn effects.

Without presuming to give a rigorous classification of the emotional manifestations, which we have not to follow up in detail, we will reduce them to three groups of which the psychological complexity goes on increasing, while the physiological importance decreases. They are: (1) the tendencies connected with the preservation of the individual (nutrition, self-defense); (2) those relating to the preservation of the species; (3) the highest of all, those which presuppose the development of intelligence (moral, religious, æsthetic, and scientific manifestations, ambition in all its forms, etc.) If we consider the development of the individual, we shall find that it is in this chronological order the sentiments appear. We see it in a marked degree in the evolution of the human species. Inferior human races—with whom education does not correct nature by furnishing the accumulated result of the work of centuries—never pass beyond the preservation of the individual and of the species, or at most exhibit only a slight trace of the sentiments belonging to the third group.

The emotional states connected with nutrition constitute with the child in its early infancy the only elements, as it were, of its nascent personality. Thence arise comfort and peevishness, desires and aversions. It constitutes that sense of the body about which we have spoken so much, arrived at its highest psychic expression. As natural causes, too manifest to need further explanation, cause nutrition almost exclusively to predominate with the child, it follows that the child has, and can only have, a personality almost entirely nutritive, that is, the most indefinite and lowest form of personality. The ego, for him who does not re-

gard it as an entity, can here only be a compound of extreme simplicity.

As we grow up from infancy the preponderating rôle of nutrition will diminish; still, it will never completely lose its rights, because among all the properties of the living being it alone remains fundamental. Thus it happens that important alterations of personality are associated with its variations. When nutrition is diminished, the individual feels himself depressed, weakened, contracted; when it is increased, he feels himself excited, strengthened, expanded. Among all the functions whose harmony constitutes this basic property of life, the circulation seems to be that one of which sudden variations have the greatest influence upon the emotional states and display themselves by an immediate counter-stroke; but let us leave aside detailed conjectures, in order to investigate the facts.

In the states known under the names of hypochondria, lypemania, melancholia (in all its forms), we find alterations of personality that imply all possible degrees, including complete metamorphosis. Among these different morbid states physicians have marked certain clinical distinctions, but these are not very important here. We can include them within a common description. In such morbid states there is a feeling of fatigue, of oppression, anxiety, depression, sadness, absence of desires, permanent lassitude. In the most serious cases, the very source of the emotions is completely dried up: "The patients have become insensible to everything. They have no longer any affection for parents or children, and even the death of persons that were dear to them, would leave them perfectly cold and indifferent. They cannot weep, and nothing moves them except their own sufferings."\* As regards activity, there is torpor, loss of power to govern the actions or even the will, overpowering inaction for many hours, in a word, that "aboulia" (lack of will) of which we studied all the forms in treating of the diseases of the will. As regards the external world, the patient, without being under an hallucination, finds that all his relations to it are changed. It seems as if his habitual sensations had lost their usual character. "All that surrounds me," said one of them, "is still as formerly,

\* Translated from the French (*Diseases of Personality* Chap. II. 1.) by 770.

\* Falret, *Archives générales de médecine*, December, 1878.

and yet a change must have been effected; things still have their old forms, I can see them perfectly well, and yet they have also changed a great deal." One of Esquirol's patients complains that his existence is incomplete. "Each of my senses, each part of myself is, as it were, separated from me, and can no longer give me any sensation; it seems to me that I never actually reach the objects that I touch." This morbid state, due sometimes to cutaneous anæsthesia, may increase to such an extent "that it seems to the patient that the real world has completely vanished out of sight, or is dead, and that there only remains an imaginary world, in which he is afraid of dwelling."\* To this picture we may add the physical phenomena; such as disturbances of the circulation, of the respiration, and of the secretions. The emaciation of the subject may become considerable, and the weight of the body very rapidly diminish during the period of depression. The respiratory function is impaired, the circulation reduced, and the temperature of the body lowered.

By degrees these morbid states take form, organize themselves, concentrate themselves in some wrong conception, which—having been excited by the psycho-physiological mechanism of association—becomes in its turn a centre of attraction toward which everything converges. One patient will say that his heart has become petrified, another that his nerves are like burning coals, etc. These aberrations have innumerable forms, and vary according to individuals. In extreme cases the individual will doubt his own existence, or deny it. A young man, while maintaining that he had been dead for two years, expressed his perplexity in the following words: "I exist, but outside of real material life and despite myself, for nothing has really killed me. Everything in me is mechanical, and takes place unconsciously." Is not this contradictory situation, in which the subject claims to be alive and dead at the same time, the logical and natural expression of a state in which the old ego and the new, vitality and annihilation seem to keep in equilibrium?

Still, the psychological interpretation of all these cases is not doubtful. They are organic disturbances, the first result of which is to depress the faculty of feeling in general, and the second effect is to pervert it. In this manner there is formed a group of organic and psychic conditions that tend profoundly to modify the constitution of the ego in its inmost nature, because they do not act after the manner of sudden emotions, the effect of which is violent and superficial, but by slow, silent actions of unconquerable tenacity. At first this new mode of being seems strange or ex-

traneous to the individual and outside of his ego. By slow degrees, however, and through habit, this new feeling insinuates itself into and becomes an integral part of the ego, changes its constitution, and when of an overpowering nature, entirely transforms it.

In perceiving how the ego is dissolved, we understand also how it is made. In most instances, doubtless, the alteration is only partial. The individual, while seeming to become another to himself, and to those who know him, still preserves a fundamental feeling of himself. In fact, complete transformation can only be a very rare occurrence; and we may observe, moreover, that when a patient maintains that he is changed or transformed, he is actually right, notwithstanding the denials or hilarity of his friends. He really cannot feel otherwise, because his consciousness is but the expression of his organic state. Subjectively he is not the sport of any illusion; he is merely what he ought to be. On the contrary it is the unconscious unacknowledged hypothesis of an independent ego,—existing by itself as an unalterable entity,—which instinctively urges him to believe, that this change is only an external event, a strange or ridiculous garb in which his personality has been wrapped, while in reality the change is internal, and implies certain losses and acquisitions in the substance of the ego itself.

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The counterpart of these partial alterations is met with in cases where the ego is exalted and elated, and ascends extremely far above its normal tone. Instances of this are found at the beginning of general paralysis, in certain cases of mania, during the excited period of so-called "cyclic" insanity. It forms altogether the inverse of the previous picture. Here we have a feeling of physical and moral well-being, superabundant strength, exuberant activity, which vents itself with reckless prodigality in speeches, projects, enterprises, and incessant, fruitless journeys. To this superexcitation of the psychic life corresponds an overactivity of all the organic functions. Nutrition increases—often at an exaggerated rate—respiration and circulation are quickened, the genital function is aroused; and notwithstanding a great expenditure of force the individual does not feel any fatigue. Afterwards these several states group themselves, become unified and finally to a considerable extent transform the ego. One individual may feel herculean strength, and be able to lift prodigious weights, procreate thousands of children, race with a railway-train, etc. Another patient is an inexhaustible mine of learning, imagines himself a great poet, artist, or inventor. At times the transformation approaches still nearer to complete metamorphosis; and then the subject, entirely engrossed with the feeling of his matchless

\* Griesinger, *Traité des maladies mentales*. Fr. trans. p. 265. *L'Encéphale*, June, 1882.

power, proclaims himself pope, emperor, god. "The patient," as Griesinger justly observes, "feeling proud, bold, cheerful; discovering in himself an unwonted freedom in all his decisions; and moreover, feeling the superabundance of his thoughts, is naturally prone to ideas of grandeur, rank, riches, or some great moral or intellectual power, which alone can have the same degree of freedom, of thought, and will. This exaggerated idea of force and of freedom must nevertheless have a motive; there must exist in the ego something that corresponds to it; the ego must momentarily have become entirely another; and the patient knows no other way of expressing this change, than by proclaiming himself a Napoleon, a Messiah, or some other exalted being." \*

It would be a mere waste of time to endeavor to show, that this transformation of the ego, whether partial or complete, momentary or permanent, is of the same nature as in the preceding instances, and that it presupposes the same mechanism, with this sole difference that here the ego is dissolved in the inverse sense, not through defect but through excess.

These alterations of personality into more or less, this metamorphosis of the ego, which either raises or lowers it, would be even more remarkable if in the same individual they followed at regular intervals. As a matter of fact, an instance of this very frequently happens in so-called "cyclic" madness, or insanity in double form, essentially characterized by successive periods of depression and excitement, following each other at regular intervals, and in some patients with occasional intermissions of lucidity. This is illustrated in the following instance reported by Billod: †

"A lunatic, an inmate of the asylum at Vanves, about every eighteen months would let his beard grow and introduce himself to the whole house, quite changed in dress and manners, as a lieutenant of artillery, named Nabon, recently arrived from Africa, to become a substitute for his own brother. He would say, that before leaving his brother had imparted to him information respecting every one; and at his arrival he would ask and obtain the honor of being introduced to each person present. The patient thereafter for several months remained in a state of marked exaltation, adapting his whole conduct to his new individuality. At the expiration of a certain time, he would announce the return of his brother, who, as he said, was in the village and would come to replace him. Whereupon he would have his beard shaved off, change his dress and manner, and resume his real name. But then he would exhibit a marked expression of melancholy, walking along slowly, silent, and solitary, usually reading the *Imitation of Jesus Christ*, or

the *Fathers of the Church*. In this mental state—a lucid one perhaps, but one that I am far from regarding as normal—he would remain until the return of the imaginary Lieutenant Nabon."

The above-mentioned case conclusively shows an exaggeration of what takes place in the normal state. The ego of all of us is made up of contradictory tendencies, such as virtues and vices, modesty and pride, avarice and prodigality, desire for rest and craving for action, and many others. In the ordinary state these opposite tendencies are balanced, or, at least, that which prevails is not without a counterpoise. But here, through very well determined organic conditions, there is not only an impossibility of equilibrium, but a group of tendencies is hypertrophied at the expense of the antagonist group, which is atrophied; then a reaction takes place in an inverse sense, so that the personality, instead of consisting of those average oscillations of which each represents one side of human nature, passes constantly from one excess to the other. Incidentally we may observe that these diseases of personality consist in a reduction to a more simple condition. But this is not the place to insist on this point.

#### A CRITICISM OF "THE ETHICAL PROBLEM."

BY PROF. FRIEDRICH JODL.

In your work "The Ethical Problem," I have read much with the heartiest approval, and with admiration of your frequently so happy, popular style of expression. Other things there were, however, that neither met my approval, nor were intelligible to me.

As the two points in your views with respect to which this was most the case, let me cite your polemical attitude towards Hedonism, and your reference to nature as a moral standard. What you oppose as Hedonism may deserve, indeed, your attacks; but I know of no author since La Rochefoucauld and Helvetius that has advocated such a hedonism.

The principle of general welfare as a criterion of the ethical value of character and acts, has, so far as I can see, been entirely neglected by your criticism. And how we can hope to overcome the old orthodox conception of ethics, without representing the new scientific ethics as eudemonism, I do not know. Let man, in his most virtuous conduct and in his most heroic acts, seek his happiness, on condition only that it take place in a manner and with means that are qualified also to promote the happiness of others. The whole question simply is, to teach men to seek happiness in the right way. Happiness itself need not therefore be eliminated from their thoughts. And this conscious striving after happiness is the very characteristic also that distinguishes human conduct from all natural phenomena. Nature is wholly disregarding of individuals; she merely creates, pro-

\* Op. cit., p. 333.

† *Annales médico-psychologiques*, 1858, according to Ritti *op. cit.*, p. 156.

duces in the greatest possible abundance, and thus maintains herself in equilibrium. What sacrifices this may cost, the destruction caused by it, is of no consequence. Her procedure is the type of what we may characterize as colossally brutal immorality. But her human victims gradually came to speech and thought: the whole history of morality is to me nothing but a growth of nature out and beyond itself, an aspiration to replace natural laws by the laws of rational will, to win for every living being his rights to put into the blind-mechanical play of natural forces the soul of a purpose—eudemonism. How much have we already won, how much yet remains? Reason and will, however, are still too feeble, we still copy too much "our good mother nature," confide ourselves only too willingly to her guidance, and we constantly have to experience that what she wants and what we want are two wholly different things.

There are many passages in my *Geschichte der Ethik* which represent my views perhaps more precisely and fully than I have done here. Yet I state them here again, because our common cause, it seems to me, demands unity on this very point.

#### IN ANSWER TO PROFESSOR JODL.

PROF. FRIEDRICH JODL advances two points in which he cannot agree with the views presented in *The Ethical Problem*. First he criticises my polemical attitude towards Hedonism, and secondly he declares that Nature cannot be considered as a moral standard. Concerning the latter point, I have to say that the demeanour of Nature (if we use the poetical licence of personifying her) cannot be and I suppose never has been proposed as a model for imitation. Nature is neither moral nor immoral, but Nature and Nature's laws are that immutable power conformity to which makes man moral. In this sense alone can Nature be said to be the moral standard, and ethics must be grounded upon our knowledge of Nature.

What we say of Nature holds good also for the theological conception of that power in which we live and move and have our being. There is no pleading with God (Job 16, 21); no entering into judgment with him (Job 34, 23); no multiplying words against him (Job 34, 37). The apostle says: "O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" In short God is neither moral nor immoral; he is the standard of morality. It would be a poetical licence to speak of God as being moral, for morality is obedience to his commands, or conformity to his immutable will.

Professor Jodl says:

"The whole history of morality is to me nothing but a growth of Nature out and beyond itself; an aspiration to replace natural laws by the laws of rational will."

It appears that Professor Jodl has a different conception of Nature from what we have. I see no possibility of replacing natural laws or growing beyond Nature. Says Shakespeare:

"Yet nature is made better by no mean,  
But nature makes that mean; so, over that art,  
Which, you say, adds to nature, is an art,  
That nature makes . . . . .  
. . . . . This is an art  
Which does mend nature—change, rather; but  
The art itself is nature!"—*Winter's Tale*.

Concerning our objections to Hedonism, Professor Jodl says:

"How we can hope to overcome the old orthodox conception of ethics without representing the new and scientific ethics as eudemonism, I do not know."

This passage corroborates my conviction that hedonism and utilitarianism were put forth in opposition to the old orthodox conception of ethics, which declares that the ethical motive in man, conscience or the sense of duty, is of supernatural origin. The orthodox as well as their antagonists believe that the pursuit of happiness alone is natural; the natural man seeks pleasure and shuns pain. The presence of higher motives, accordingly, is considered by the orthodox believer as a proof of supernaturalism, while his adversary feels constrained to deny their existence.

It appears to me that the old orthodox conception of ethics (religious ethics) contains a truth which the hedonistic ethics (irreligious ethics) does not contain. The old orthodox conception of ethics, although represented in mythological allegories, is nevertheless based upon the facts of life. It has grown naturally; and its main mistake is that it represents some natural facts the origin of which it did not understand, as supernatural interferences; it misinterprets facts; it has not as yet developed from the phase of a belief in magic into a scientific conception.

Hedonistic ethics, on the other hand, must appear as artificial. It represents ethics as eudemonology, i. e. the science of attaining the greatest possible maximum of pleasure over pain, and it goes on to explain that the peace of soul following the performance of duty is a satisfaction much greater than all the pleasures of the world. True, but it is this kind of explanation which appears artificial to me.

Brutus condemned his sons to death and had them executed, because he considered it as his duty. We may doubt whether it really was his duty, but he certainly did it because he considered it as his duty; and who will deny that it was a most painful duty which gave pleasure to nobody and contributed nothing to the general happiness of Rome; it only tended to preserve that spirit of Roman sternness which made the Romans fit not only to conquer but also to rule the world, and to evolve for the first time in history an in-

ternational code of laws and a standard of justice. The Romans suffered much from the impulse natural to them; and I am inclined to believe that they never attained a greater happiness than other nations. If happiness is the ultimate test of morality, Cyrene was superior in morality to Sparta, and Sybaris to Athens.

Can we say that the Spartans, or the Romans were prompted in their actions by a desire for pleasure, that sternness was a pleasure to them? I should say that we cannot. Is the fighting cock impelled to fight by a desire for pleasure, and does the pleasure of fighting really outweigh in his opinion the pains of his wounds and the fear of danger when confronted with superior enemies? It appears to me that in animals as well as in man there are many impulses the motives of which rise from the nature, from the character of the creature, which cannot be explained as a pursuit of happiness. The fighting cock must fight under given circumstances because it is his nature. Certain structures are in his brain that impel him to fight. Does the stone fall to the ground because it gives it pleasure, or doesn't it rather fall because it must fall in agreement to its nature? How often does it happen that a man follows an irresistible impulse, although he knows that it will give him pain. Thus it happens that men of good intentions commit evil actions, and rascals sometimes act morally, in spite of themselves; not at all with the desire to avoid pain or to gain pleasure, but simply because the impulse to act in this way lives in their soul. It is a part of their nature, and under given circumstances they cannot help letting that impulse pass into act, even though they know that they will have to regret the effects of the deed. It will in many persons take a long time and much exercise of will till this knowledge acquires sufficient strength as a motive for prohibiting actions which will be regretted.

Every science deals with a certain province of nature or it limits its inquiries to a special abstraction. Thus mechanics deals with motions. Purely mechanical motions do not even exist. The mechanical aspect of motions excludes many properties which are inseparably connected with the things in motion. But the method of abstraction is a limitation, indispensable to science; it is the method by which alone we can comprehend the world. Ethics, it appears to me is no less limited to a peculiar aspect and to a special province, than are for instance zoology, botany, or mathematics, geodesy, etc. Ethics deals with all those impulses of the soul which in the popular expression are comprised under the name of duty, conscience, the ought, or moral sense. Obedience to these impulses is sometimes pleasurable, sometimes painful; yet whether they are accompanied with pleasure or pain is of secondary importance in ethics. The pleasurable and painful elements in man's actions do not belong

to the abstraction of ethics. They need not and they cannot be excluded from ethics, but they are of secondary importance and do not constitute the properly moral element. We might just as well speak of colors when discussing mechanical laws. We may say that yellow gold will outweigh an equal mass of white silver. But the yellowness of gold and the whiteness of silver have nothing to do with the weight. Thus pleasure and pain are qualities which are inseparably connected with moral actions, and it is certainly advisable to consider their relation to the strength of motives. Yet to search in them for the standard of morality would be as wrong as to set up yellowness as a unit of weight.

The investigations of modern psychology, it appears to me, throw much light upon the mechanical apparatus of soul-activity. An impulse placed into the mind of a man by suggestion prompts to action with the same necessity as, for instance, a wound-up spring exercises a pressure and sets a clock in motion. For example a hypnotized subject receives the suggestion to stab one of the physicians present; a piece of card-board is given her instead of a dagger and she commits the deed with the imaginary weapon. The stabbed physician pretends to be dead, and the woman is asked why she committed the murder. "He was a bad man," she answered. "But is that a sufficient reason to kill a man?" the woman was asked. "In this case it is," she said, "for he attempted to assault me." The action is done because the impulse exists; the motives are often invented afterwards; and the attempt to explain all actions as intended to pursue happiness appears to me as such an after-invention. A scientific explanation should show how the different impulses, and especially how the ethical impulses, that which we have defined as superindividual motives, develop. If we are to define the feeling attending the performance of something that could not be avoided, not only as satisfaction but even as happiness, in that case only should we have to concede that all ethical aspirations are pursuits of happiness. The Buddhist monk who does not believe in personal immortality, and inflicts most cruel tortures upon himself to atone for the sin of existence would in that case have to be said to pursue happiness. Pursuit of happiness would then be identical with any kind of action.

If the happiness attained or attainable were to be considered as the standard of measurement for the morality of actions, we should have to call the preparation for a ball extremely moral. Likewise, if the utility of an act were to be considered as the standard of measurement, the invention of the sewing machine would as such be a moral act. I do not deny that the wish to spread joy and also the aspiration to make oneself useful are moral; but neither the happiness

nor the usefulness attainable by this or by that act constitutes the properly moral element. The properly moral element is an entirely different kind of abstraction. It consists of those motives or impulses to action which regulate conduct, not from the egotistic standpoint, but from the standpoint of a greater whole, to which the person who acts belongs.

Is there any doubt about progress being a law of the development of the human race? It can fairly be assumed that all the aspirations which serve the progress of the race, are to be considered as moral impulses. Nevertheless, it is very doubtful whether progress will bring more happiness. One thing is sure: Progress will bring more comforts, and together with an increase of comforts, it brings more wants. Life having more wants causes greater troubles in satisfying the wants. If there is any increase of happiness, there will certainly be a greater increase in sensitiveness to pain; and the condition of a savage who feels no need to cover his nakedness, is enviable in comparison to the wretchedness of a civilized man, if he fails somehow in his struggle for existence. If happiness is to be considered as the standard of measurement for morality, I doubt greatly whether it would not be more moral to keep humanity in a state of childhood and ignorant innocence. Pessimism indeed, as represented by Schopenhauer and his followers, considers the development of individual life as the original sin, as the initial *faux pas*, the first wrong step of the "will to live." Sin, according to Germany's neo-Buddhistic philosopher, is individual existence, and the meed of sin is all the evils of individual existence, pain, old age, and death, and the happiness aspired for is a mere illusion.

If happiness, or joy, or pleasure, were indeed the standard of morality, I am inclined to say, that it would be better if the All were a mere play of unfeeling forces, developing and dissolving again solar systems in their luminous grandeur without evolving feeling and thinking beings on the surface of planets. The problem in ethics, however, it appears to me, is not how to set up a standard of morality of our own in contradiction to the laws of nature, but how to conform to the laws of nature. Science leads to Monism, and Monism teaches us to consider ourselves as a part of nature. The standard of morality cannot be derived from man's likes or dislikes; it cannot be based upon the separateness, the individuality, of his existence. Ethics can rest only upon the recognition of natural laws. We must know how nature operates in the universe, how nature produces us, how she moulds us, and we must comprehend that all our individual actions are acts of nature.

If God is defined as the All in so far as it is a cosmos of orderly laws, we shall find that the old orthodox

morality contains more truth than might appear from the standpoint of an unbeliever. Hedonism, Utilitarianism, Eudemonism, or any other system that has arisen in opposition to the old orthodox ethics of the dogmatic religions, represent an important phase in the further evolution of ethical ideas, but for the mere sake of overcoming their adversary they discard together with the errors of supernaturalism, the valuable truth that is contained in the ethics of the old religions. The merits of these ethical systems of opposition should not be underrated; but it appears to me that they have not solved the problem. We must search for a solution of the ethical problem in a higher synthesis of the old ethics of orthodox religion, and the oppositional ethics of all the different happiness-theories. It is this higher synthesis which we have attempted to present in our solution of the Ethical Problem.

P. C.

#### NO DECALOGUE IN POLITICS.

A GRAVE and reverend senator, high priest in the Sanhedrim of his party, recently declared that the decalogue had no place in politics. In this rollicking maxim he proclaimed the brazen doctrine that in the warfare of American partyism the rules of ethics have been suspended "by unanimous consent." Arm in arm, the rival party potentates march along together, and keep step to the music of that sentiment. An ominous illustration of its pernicious power is presented in Illinois to-day. The legislature elect is almost evenly divided on party lines, the republicans having a trifling majority in the Senate, and the democrats a small majority in the House, but neither side feels confident of its ability to elect a United States senator. In this uncertainty the democrats thought it would be good politics to "unseat" a few republican members of the House, and thus obtain for the democratic candidate a majority on joint ballot. Accordingly, notice of contest was served on the members who were to be thrown out, and the patriotic scheme was much admired.

As soon as the notices were served, the republicans denounced this illegal and unconstitutional strategy, as they called it, but prudently concealed a few trump cards in their own sleeves, and these they did not show until the latest moment permitted by the rules of the play. On the very last day allowed by law, they filed notice of contest on four democrats elected to the State Senate, with an implied threat that if the democrats in the House attempt to play four stolen kings, the republicans in the Senate will play four stolen aces against them. In other words, if the democrats "unseat" republicans in the House, the republicans will unseat a corresponding number of democrats in the Senate, according to the military law of reprisals, where the general of one army having hanged a prisoner, the general of the opposite army hangs one also to balance the account. A leading republican journal in Chicago thus explains the situation, "The meaning of these contests is that every time a democratic majority in the House ousts a republican, a Republican Senate will exercise the *lex talionis* and oust a democrat." In this game of *lex talionis* the right of the threatened members to their seats is not thought worthy of consideration by the partisans of either side, because "the decalogue has no place in politics."

If every day in the year was a Fourth of July devoted to pyrotechnics in speech and gunpowder, we could not conceal from the world, nor from ourselves, the unhealthy condition of our government when the legislature, its most important branch, denies

justice on principle. Not only in the State legislatures, but also in Congress, the right to a contested seat is determined, not by the evidence, but according to the dictates of party necessity and the hunger of political clans. In the present Congress one party outnumbered the other just enough to organize the House and elect a Speaker, but not enough to constitute a "working majority." It therefore became necessary to "unseat" a few of the opposition members, in order that a quorum for the dispatch of business might safely be relied on. That all the contests were fairly decided according to the merits may be true, but the unpleasant feature in their trial is that the ayes and noes are alike tainted with suspicion when they divide by party lines on a simple question of evidence.

The only matter for decision in a contested election case is, which of the contestants was elected, not which of them ought to have been elected according to partisan opinion. If a horse or a house were the subject of dispute, the judgment would not be on party lines; but according to the very right of the matter as manifested by the proof. A jurymen would be dishonored should he render a verdict according to his political affinity with the plaintiff or defendant; but let him go to Congress, and he will give his verdict there according to such affinity; and what is worse, he is tacitly required by his constituents to do so. This immorality overflows politics, enters into business, and corrupts all the elements of our social constitution. If we may have two ethical codes, one for the Court House, and another for the State House, we may have two opposite religions, one for the Church and the other for the Shop; as indeed, some of us have.

Probably the most attenuated and refined ethical distinction known to casuistry is that which enables a man to occupy with an easy conscience a stolen seat in Congress, when at the same time he would scorn to wear a stolen overcoat; but the difference is due not to any keenness of moral perception, but to the objective consequence. The man who would steal the seat would steal the overcoat if he could do so with the same impunity.

A few years ago Mr. Black and Mr. White were opposing candidates for Congress in one of the Western States. Mr. White was elected, and duly counted out by the returning board, who gave the certificate of election to Mr. Black. On a contest it was shown that Mr. White had been defrauded by the sinister device of "throwing out" a couple of townships on some frivolous technicality, but the wrong was so manifest and palpable that the Committee on Elections, although of the same party faith as Mr. Black, promptly found that he was not elected, and that Mr. White was; yet with deliberate injustice they cheated him out of the seat, by withholding their finding from the House. They refused to make a report, and did not make it for two years, nor until that Congress was about to expire. On the last day of its existence, and about an hour before its final dissolution, they brought in their report, and gave Mr. White the seat which they had permitted a usurper to occupy for two years. The reason given for this act of political grand larceny was that their party majority in the House was so small that if they should seat Mr. White and unseat Mr. Black it would make a difference of two votes on a division, and really they could not spare Mr. Black until the last hour of that Congress.

The case above mentioned, which is a real one, with the exception of the names, shows that we have one code of ethics for public life and another for our private conduct. Mr. Black knew from the beginning that he was not elected and that Mr. White was, yet he held on to the seat for two years on the pitiful plea that he did not steal it himself, that the returning board stole it, and forced it upon him by a fraudulent certificate. Evidently he had no faith in his own plea, because had the returning board "held up" Mr. White, robbed him of his watch, and slipped it into Mr. Black's pocket, he would have scorned to keep it, and yet he appropriated property belonging to Mr. White which was of

greater value than a watch, a seat in the American Congress, nor did he surrender it until it was utterly worn out and useless. Mr. Black stood high in the community, and according to the ethics of his time he passed current among his neighbors as an honest man; but he was not an honest man, and the political system which offered him an opportunity to do wrong, and gave him not only immunity but credit for doing it, is radically defective and immoral.

The critic of any social wrong must expect to be confronted by the question, "What are you going to do about it? It's easy to pull down but not so easy to build up. Give us a remedy, not an ideal, abstract remedy, such as 'honesty,' for instance, but a suggestion of some real substantial act or deed, of legislation or agreement in which all parties can unite." This demand is not always reasonable, for in a case like the present it ought to be enough to expose a vicious practice and require that it shall cease; but if a remedy must be offered, let us consider the English plan. When the right to a seat in the British Parliament is contested, the matter is tried outside, before a judicial tribunal absolutely impartial, just as though it were a suit in replevin concerning a disputed horse. No matter what may be the party sympathies or the party necessities inside the house, the claimant of a seat there is absolutely certain to have the contest honestly decided according to the law and the evidence. No delay is permitted, for his claim is a privileged question, and in a few weeks at farthest the contest is at an end, the lawfully elected member sworn in, and the usurper turned out.

It is no objection to the plan, that by the Constitution of the United States each house of Congress is the judge of the election and qualification of its own members. This is the law of the British Constitution also, and in the exercise of that power, and in order that partisan decisions may be avoided, the House of Commons has provided for the trial of contested seats by a non-partisan court; the verdict of the court is adopted by the House as the very right of the matter, and there an end. M. M. TRUMBULL.

#### BOOK NOTICES.

The October number of the *Revue de Belgique* contains an article on the Ethical Societies of this country, by Prof. P. Hoffmann.

*Shall the Bible be read in our Public Schools?* is the title of a pamphlet by Dr. Richard B. Westbrook, the President of the American Secular Union. Its argument, which is comprised in nine sections, covers the whole ground of controversy and may be summarized as the want of common agreement as to the constitution, contents, and teaching of the Bible; the character and associations of its moral teaching and its valuelessness to attain the aim desired; the unlawfulness, under the secular principle of the Federal and State Constitutions of Bible reading in State Schools. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.)

The "Comité d' Etudes Morales" founded in Paris, November 4th, 1890, invites the co-operation of groups and federations of Freethinkers, Masonic Lodges, etc. Its programme includes the following topics: 1) Morality, Right, and Duty—Egoism and Altruism; 2) Scientific Authority—Liberty of Conscience—Observation—Reasoning; 3) Justice—Reciprocal Duties—Responsibility—The Rights of Man and Social Safeguard; 4) The Useful and the Just—Individual Interest and General Interest—Joint Responsibility; 5) Matter, Force, and Life—Humanity, Society, and the Family—Social Equality; 6) Education and Instruction—The True, the Good, and the Beautiful. The Committee proposes to collect from books and other sources precepts suitable for the education of children of both sexes, to be classified under the heads of science, wisdom, morality, and honor.

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