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## THE RELATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE COMMUNITY.\*

BY WILHELM WUNDT.

[CONTINUED.]

### II. RATIONALISM AND UTILITARIANISM. THEIR CONCEPTIONS OF RELIGION, ETHICS, LANGUAGE, AND STATE UNTENABLE.

Hegel's ideas have left behind many traces in modern political science. If the representatives of the so-called "organic-states-doctrine," (which holds that the state is an organism) do not merely apply the idea of the organism to the political whole,—against which no objection is to be made,—but are concerned also according to the example of Plato and the Platonic theories of earlier centuries, in searching out special relations between the organs of the individual organism and the parts of the administration of states, these attempts at reviving the public interest in the community, produce exactly the opposite effect to that intended. Social organisms are deprived of their peculiar dignity, when they are made enlarged images of individuals.

In a similar sense, the modern social theory has used the so-called "real analogies," with greater wisdom, in that it seeks to explain social phenomena by means of well-known physiological processes. Such comparisons as e. g. those of economic intercourse with change of matter, may be permissible and useful so long as one limits himself to illustrating compound by simple phenomena that are like them in certain qualities. But as soon as the analogy is used not merely as an appropriate representation, but transforms itself into a constant relation between the social and the corresponding physiological processes, the danger of false analogies might be greater than their didactic advantage.

We can hardly censure juridical statesmen if many among them still continue to prefer to the phantastic constructions of the older organic states doctrine as well as to the physiological analogies of modern sociology, the contract theory, which if it be both psy-

chologically impossible and historically untrue, is, at least, from a legal point of view, clearly conceived. Analogies are indeed generally of doubtful value. But if they are at all applicable, a comparison of the state and its magistrates to a business company and its employes, will be more instructive than a renewal of the old Platonic opinion that the state is nothing but a man of vast proportions.

I attempt no decision, as to how extensive a rôle those old philosophic antitheses, still play in the differences of opinion existing to-day between jurists and sociologists, between Romanists and Germanists. They are often less concerned about the great communities of nation and state than about such corporations as can arise voluntarily, within a national and political community at the call of special social purposes. Psychological contemplation, conformably to its general task will be necessarily limited to those social bonds that have arisen naturally and which therefore, in some form, everywhere determine the order of human life. But whatever other estimate may be placed upon its value, the psychological view of the subject has the one advantage over the concept developments of philosophy that it is secure from the danger of losing sight entirely of the relations between the individual and the whole or of explaining them away to mere analogies. For Psychology throughout has at command only the attributes of individual consciousness as the ultimate principle of explanation and yet at the same time, she is everywhere referred by experience to the limits of the experience and the work of the individual. In opposition to such standpoints, which are limited fundamentally like the juridical and the political to the phenomena of legal and political life, psychology is perhaps in the fortunate condition of being able to procure for comparison other products of the intellectual life of a significance of a similarly universal validity and thus explain the more difficult by the more simple, although she must stand modestly in the rear when the solution of particular practical problems is in question.

In fact, legal order and the state constitute only highly developed forms of a common life, that early expresses itself in the one language uniting a national

\* This is the substance of a lecture delivered as an oration by Professor Wundt on the birthday festival of the King of Saxony. The oration was published in the *Deutsche Rundschau*.

or race community, in its peculiar religious and mythological views, finally in ethical rules that have a binding force for all. Although, according to the current conception, these phenomena are of earlier origin than state and law, yet, they certainly belong with state and law to that same class of spiritual creations, for whose origin a multitude of individuals living together is indispensable; and they are especially analogous in this that ethics includes rules, and rules can to some extent be regarded as the first steps of a legal order and a state organisation.

Now it is a remarkable fact that the rationalism of the eighteenth century universally embraced notions concerning the origin of language, religion, and morals, that correspond perfectly to the theory of the social contract. Language was regarded as a system of signs, arbitrarily devised for the understanding and expression of thought. Religions, they said, are founded by wise, moral teachers; or they are, according to the favorite reversal of this conception by the radical free-thinkers of the revolutionary age, the fraudulent inventions of cunning priests, who seek, by these means, to keep the people in darkness and dependence. Similarly myths and sagas are said to be poems which were intentionally invented sometimes for educational purposes, and sometimes for the propagation of fraud and deception. But from as many causes as the phenomena of the common life may be derived, all these explanations were one in this that those products of the national spirit were supposed to be thought out by individuals for the purposes for which they can be used at the present stage of civilisation; and that the attributes of man, since time inconceivable, conform exactly to the mode of thinking of the enlightened philosopher of the eighteenth century. The utilitarian considerations of a philosophy whose faith in its own unsurpassability has scarcely ever been reattained, appeared to be a truth quite axiomatic and of universal validity; it was deemed hardly possible, that there ever could have been men who felt and thought otherwise.

To-day we readily surrender the assertion that language arose by agreement. But it easily escapes our observation, that the opinion that state and law rest upon a necessarily presupposed contract between individuals, contains a circle of errors of a similar character. This distinction in the criticism of theories which are perfectly analogous to one another and which have issued from the same general conception of human relations, certainly has reasons that are good and not to be undervalued.

If new forms of state arise to-day among civilised nations, such forms can win a universal legal sanction only by constitutional contracts. It is plain, there-

fore, that this actual existence of state contracts, has a more real significance for the formation of the state, than perhaps the possibility of inventing a language like Volapük has for the origin of language. But first those legal acts which lend to the existence of a state its legal sanction, do not, in the least, under present relations, embrace the conditions of their origin, but that sanction itself is possible only upon the basis of conditions that cohere with the totality of qualities and historical events of a national community. Thus the New German Empire could not have arisen had not the community of will of the German races which strove after this unification, existed prior to the treaties between the states and the princes. In a civilised community, every new political creation needs a legal sanction to insure it against attacks from within and without. But this sanction is the last not the first member in the circle of the factors of origin; and among primitive relations it is wholly lacking. The natural race community, when the overtowering will of a single leader is added, is here sufficient to engender a political organisation.

But what is the significance of speaking of a contract "tacitly concluded," where no contract whatever exists? I suppose one could with the same right trace language back to a "tacit agreement." In view of this actual development the old debated question whether law is of earlier origin than the state or *vice versa* proceeds in about the same line as the famous zoological question, whether the egg was prior to the hen. Law and state arose, not as new creations, suddenly and without preparation, but they issued from the rules of ethics and the primitive forms of the race-community. As soon as this latter received the character of a state, definite rules of ethics became the fundamental essentials of a legal order, and again as soon as ethics became condensed into law, the community, which subjected itself to legal rules, developed at the same time from a mere horde of people into a politically organised national community.

If national and state communities are not arbitrary creations, if they are not artificially compounded bodies, as Thomas Hobbes once called them, but evolutionary products of primitive forms of common life, the active powers of this life are to be sought elsewhere than upon the basis of those utilitarian considerations, to which, according to the rationalistic philosophy of the previous century, which is even yet influential, all the intellectual impulses of the human race are said to owe their origin. The fundamental conditions for the origin of the spiritual creations of a community, are nowhere so plainly visible as in language, not only in its dependence on the qualities of individuals, but also in its being different from that which the individual as such can produce.

Impulsive movements which have their source in the perceptions and affections of the individual consciousness are possible, indeed, without any relation to the environment and without stimulation by the same. They are the natural products of the spiritual and corporeal organisation of the individual man. But such movements of expression, can become language only when they arise in a community, where the members live amid the same external and internal conditions, so that the sensations and perceptions, which one member finds in himself, are also not lacking in the other, and so that the sound-movement, to which, perceptions and affections impel the first are an expression of common experience directly intelligible to the ear of the other.

Thus language is a creation of individuals and yet infinitely more. For it can only arise when the intellectual life is common and directly experienced as such. Therefore language truly is a product of the collective mind, and as it is related to the impulsive expressions of individual sensations, which give themselves vent in natural interjections and other involuntary movements of expression, just so is the collective mind related to individual minds conceived as isolated.

As language possesses no existence outside of those who speak it, so also the collective mind is no spiritual being, which lives and develops outside of individuals, but it is the intellectual association of individuals themselves. But for just this reason it is also infinitely more than a sum of individuals. As little as a language could arise from a mere collection of individual sounds of expression, just so little is an intellectual, associative life conceivable without that primitive equality of intellectual processes in the members of the community, by means of which through an exchange of sentiments and ideas the spiritual life of the individual is stimulated and strengthened by the life of its environment in order to retroact in its turn with similar power upon the collective spirit of the community.

Therefore the common life is never a mere accumulation of individual effects. I would not even like to compare it to a multiplication,—if it were permissible to illustrate these things by mathematical symbols,—since multiplication always produces only magnitudes of the same character as the original. The spiritual creations of the community on the contrary are new creations, the cause of whose origin, it is true, lies in individuals, but they present qualitatively as well as quantitatively new values. This relation could perhaps be symbolised through that of complex numbers to integrals, since complex numbers would not exist without integrals, in contrast to which they notwithstanding present a qualitatively new, conceptual domain, to which one would never obtain through mere operations of quantitative multiplication.

Language however is by no means such a function of common life, which must be presupposed as an indispensable medium for the production of common views and rules of action, so that it should be judged differently than the very spiritual life-content itself which it helps to beget. The contrast between form and content of our thought, from which such an acceptance of a greater primitiveness of language is inferred, is an abstraction useful for certain purposes but it ought not to embarrass the insight into the real connection of phenomena.

Language is possible as an intelligent form of expression of ideas only because these ideas themselves and the feelings and impulses attached to them are common, so that the sound used by the individual is immediately comprehended as the fit representation of what all feel. The domain of a common language, therefore, includes in and for itself a common life with all that belongs to it. Religious views, customs, conceptions of right cannot, therefore, be regarded as a common life-content, which could only arise after a more perfect development of language and perhaps also in another way and with intellectual powers other than they, but all intellectual life is, so far as we are able to trace it back, one entirety inseparably united in all of its essentials; and here as in other fields nothing can so seriously embarrass comprehension as the frequent mistake of transferring logical distinctions, which owe their origin to our conceptual method of representing things, to the things themselves.

It is a vain task to imagine, what man was or could have been ere he possessed a language and common views of life finding expression in language, and in general ere he was a social being. We not only know nothing of such an isolated existence of individuals, but besides we cannot even think of man with the attributes, which he actually possesses, as thus having ever existed. We may accept an animal existence of man prior to the possession of language, yet even here some kind of common life similar perhaps to such states as we know of among certain associations of animals, must have existed, if the anthropoid should develop into man. For as the life phenomena of the community everywhere depend upon the intellectual powers of individuals, so the latter need, none the less, a collective life by which every individual development is sustained and conditioned in its work. But the special national community to which the individual belongs is also in its turn subject to the conditions of the historical development in which it arose, and which act upon it unceasingly during its continuance and decline. Thus the individual life is a passing wave upon the stream of national life, flowing along through the centuries, with which it finally mingles in the immeasurable ocean of the intellectual life-totality of humanity.

How worthless, contrasted with this view, which is everywhere stated so clearly by the facts of intellectual development, appear the conceptions of rationalism and utilitarianism, with their theories of contract and invention according to which the individual man, unchangeable as the rock in the billowy sea, is supposed to withstand the influences assailing him from without, to be thrust hither and thither by them, to be united indeed with others of his like into conglomerates, but himself always only a whole, always without other aim than to maintain himself. To be sure the defenders of this doctrine have rarely acknowledged the practical consequences to which it leads. For it is, fortunately, peculiar to one-sided ethical theories that they are continually refuted by the practical life of their adherents.

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]

#### NATURE AND MORALITY.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE ETHICAL VIEWS OF JOHN  
STUART MILL.

[CONCLUDED.]

#### IV. THE ANTHROPOMORPHIC STANDPOINT OF MR. MILL.

Mr. Mill in opposing the conclusions drawn from an anthropomorphic conception of nature, imperceptibly slips into the same erroneous position. He treats nature as if it were a person and arraigns nature for immorality. He looks upon every progress as a further aberration from nature and speaks of the lower stages of savage life as "the times when mankind were nearer to their natural state." Thus he easily proves that nature is chaos and that civilisation is a conquest of man over nature. As if man were not a part of nature! "To dig, to plough, to build, to wear clothes," Mr. Mill declares, "are direct infringements of the injunctions to follow nature."

If we accepted Mr. Mill's usage of the word nature, which deliberately excludes man's exertions from the sphere of the natural, we should have to declare that man's entire being is "supernatural." The adversaries of Mr. Mill may very well thank him for his method of attack, for he furnishes evidence in support of the very conception he so eagerly attempts to overthrow. It is, of course, allowable to use the concept nature in this restricted sense, as Mr. Mill does. We may define our words as we please; but if we were to limit the word nature always to the lower stages of natural evolution, we should recognise the truth that the "supernatural" naturally grows from the natural. The supernatural has been regarded as having come into nature from spheres beyond by some extra-mundane intercession; and we discard the idea of supernaturalism simply and solely in order to avoid this misconception. If by "supernatural" is understood that

higher kind of nature which evolves from the lower stages of nature, we shall entertain no objection to the word.

Nature is not a person and natural laws are not the decrees of a personal being. The order of nature is not a scheme designed for an end. Nevertheless nature has an aim. Every process of nature has an aim, every motion has a certain direction and if all the natural processes are viewed as a whole, they possess in their entirety also an aim. Our scientists have formulated the general aim of nature and call it evolution. If we look upon nature as a person, we are led to absurdities, but if we look upon nature not only as purposeless but also as aimless, we sink into a bottomless pit of errors and confusion.

Nature being no person, we cannot speak of nature as being moral or immoral. Nature is non-moral. Persons alone, individual beings, can be moral or immoral; and morality is nothing but the intentional conformity to nature and to the order of nature.

It has been said that God is moral. There is no sense in speaking of God as moral—unless it be in popular language where the usage of the phrase is to be regarded as an excusable and allowable poetic license (within certain limits even quite legitimate). God can only be called the standard of morality. God is non-moral; man only, if he conforms to the will of God, can be said to be moral.

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Mr. Mill in arraigning nature for being beset with all kinds of vices, disorder, uncleanness, and cowardice, is very emphatic in denouncing her injustice.

He says:

"It is one of Nature's general rules, and part of her habitual injustice, that 'to him that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not, shall be taken even that which he hath.' The ordinary and predominant tendency of good is towards more good. Health, strength, wealth, knowledge, virtue, are not only good in themselves but facilitate and promote the acquisition of good, both of the same and of other kinds. The person who can learn easily, is he who already knows much: it is the strong and not the sickly person who can do everything which most conduces to health; those who find it easy to gain money are not the poor but the rich; while health, strength, knowledge, talents, are all means of acquiring riches, and riches are often an indispensable means of acquiring these. Again, *e converso*, whatever may be said of evil turning into good, the general tendency of evil is towards further evil. Bodily illness renders the body more susceptible of disease; it produces incapacity of exertion, sometimes debility of mind, and often the loss of means of subsistence. All severe pain, either bodily or mental, tends to increase the susceptibilities of pain for ever after. Poverty is the parent of a thousand mental and moral evils. What is still worse, to be injured or oppressed, when habitual, lowers the whole tone of the character. One bad action leads to others, both in the agent himself, in the bystanders, and in the sufferers. All bad qualities are strengthened by habit, and all vices and follies tend to spread. Intellectual defects generate moral, and moral, intellectual; and every intellectual or moral defect generates others and so on without end."

It is certainly true that "to him that hath shall be given, but from him that hath not, shall be taken even that which he hath;" but it is perfectly useless to complain about it. It is neither justice nor injustice, but it is a law of nature or if you prefer the expression, but it is the will of God; and *we* have to mind it.

To speak of the injustice of nature is just as anthropomorphic as to speak of the morality of God. Mill's mistake is that he argues from an antiquated theological standpoint which is, even among theologians, not at all the universally accepted view.

Morality may be described as our attempts to improve the given state of nature, but it certainly can never improve the order of nature. All the improvements we can make upon the given state of nature, have to be based upon the unalterable order of nature, and he who attempts to formulate any rules of action, be it in the department of industrial enterprises, in social and political reform, or in the realm of moral aspirations, will have to do it after a careful study of facts. The irrefragable laws of nature form the immovable basis upon which we have to take our stand. Whatever action we undertake, before we plan or devise, we must take heed of the laws to which we have to conform. The laws of nature and among them the moral laws, are not flexible, they are stern and immutable. If we cannot understand the nature of things in scientific abstractness, and if (in order to understand the earnest necessity that the moral law must be obeyed) we represent the order of nature as a personal being, it will be well to remember the parable of Christ in which he compares God to a hard man, reaping where he has not sown and gathering where he has not strewed. If we have received one talent only, there is but one way to keep that one talent; we must go and trade with the same and make with it another talent. But if the very knowledge that we have to deal with a hard man, induces us to be afraid, so as to go and hide that one talent in the earth, then, that one talent will be taken from us.

The parable of the talents is very instructive. Its doctrine seems severe on the poor, especially those who are poor in spirit; but it is just as much severe on the rich. Christ spoke to the poor and his application was made so as to impress their minds, that he who has received little is no less responsible for that little, than he who has received much for the much he has received. "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required, and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." If Christ had spoken to the rich, the learned, and the great, he might have made a different application of the parable and might have told them of the servant who having received five talents had not only buried but wasted the rich gift. There are perhaps more men

ruined through having received too much than by having received too little. The temptations are greater in the former case, and the dire necessity of the latter case often exercises a wholesome and educating influence.

If justice means that every servant, whether he increases the talents he has received or buries them in the earth, should in the end receive an equal share, Mr. Mill would be justified in denouncing the course of nature as unjust. But it appears to me advisable that any one who thus indicts the very order of nature for injustice, imagining that the whole universe is wrong and he alone and perhaps also a few fellow beings of his with him are right, should first revise the logic of his conception of justice; for it is in such a case most probable that on close scrutiny he will somewhere discover a flaw in his idea of justice.

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Mr. Mill's objection to basing ethics upon nature was made to oppose a theological conception of ethics. Our traditional religions, we must know, are in their intentions monistic, they are dualistic only if the allegory of their symbols is taken as literal truth. In opposing the theology of traditional religions Mr. Mill attacked erroneously their very heart, the monistic meaning of their doctrines instead of striking at the dualistic interpretation of their mythology. Thus if Mr. Mill were right in his objection to basing ethics upon nature—i. e. upon the unalterable, the eternal in nature, upon the law of nature or to use the religious and most pregnant term, upon God—if Mr. Mill were right, there would be two alternatives left: Either there is no ethics at all, which view Mr. Mill would not accept, or the dualistic interpretation of theology is correct, that ethics is an extramundane factor.

When ethics and the conditions of ethical ideals are found and can be proved to be an immanent part of nature, the dualistic interpretation of the old religions will have to be surrendered while their monistic meaning which is after all the core and living spirit of all religious aspirations will appear in a stronger light than ever. P. C.

#### USE AND BEAUTY IN SCIENCE.

BY S. V. CLEVENGER, M. D.

In his "Essay on Beauty," Ralph Waldo Emerson says:

"Astrology interested us for it tied man to the system. Instead of an isolated beggar, the farthest star felt him, and he felt the star. However rash and however falsified by pretenders and traders in it, the hint was true and divine, the soul's avowal of its large relations, that climate, century, remote natures as well as near are part of its biography. Chemistry takes to pieces but it does not construct. Alchemy which sought to transmute our elements into another, to prolong life, to arm with power,—that was in the right direction. All our sciences lack a human side. The tenant is more than the house. Bugs, and stamens, and spores on

which we lavish so many years, are not finalities, and man, when his powers unfold in order, will take nature along with him and emit light into all her recesses. The human heart concerns us more than the peering into microscopes, and is larger than can be measured by the pompous figures of the astronomer."

Had Emerson's broad intellect been engaged in scientific directions he would have been heartily ashamed of having written such stuff. Herbert Spencer writes that science opens up new beauties in the universe to which the uninstructed are blind. Hugh Miller, Herschel, Faraday, Tyndall, Huxley, could have made Emerson's heart leap for joy at their revelations, and his writings would have been enhanced in their power for good.

The very reverse of Emerson's idea is true.

Astrology and alchemy with other "philosophies" of the days of sorcery, the black art by which one creature hoped to be able to take foul advantage of another, were emanations of the night of time, when burnings at the stake were frequent alike for thinkers and witches. The horoscope is still cast by Indian fakirs, and astrology thrives there amidst appropriate surroundings. And doubtless Emerson would have opened his eyes in surprise if asked whether he preferred to live in the land of jungles and the suttee rather than among spectacles and baked beans.

Looking back over the evolution of the sciences, it is plain that in astrology and alchemy, it was not the love of science that actuated these studies; the object primarily was puerile. The philosopher's stone, which would transmute all metals into gold; the elixir vitæ, which was to confer everlasting youth, were the absurd things sought for, and so in the search, expeditions throughout the world were actuated by greed and love of power. The march of Coronado hunting for the seven golden cities, Ponce de Leon's childish rambles through Florida looking for the fountain of youth, are instances in point.

It is quite probable that among the ancient Roman, Greek, and Egyptian priests many physical laws were understood, but the only use they made of them was to deceive the people and enrich themselves. Among the vast multitude of to-day such a thing as cultivating a science for its own sake or to benefit the public would seem absurd, and so the medical student of lesser calibre would complain upon being compelled to learn chemistry and botany, and especially bacteriology, when in many instances all these bear directly upon general medicine.

Chemistry sprang from alchemy, and astronomy from astrology. At first the facts that were discovered could not be used and so they were mainly regarded as curiosities. Eventually these neglected discoveries were found to be of great use. Had it been possible for the childish ancient philosophers to have

developed the sciences to their present status, most of them would have certainly made selfish and oppressive uses of their knowledge. As knowledge is slow of growth, so it broadens the intellect of its votaries, making them more merciful and considerate, particularly nowadays when scientific fakirism is not so possible as in olden times; and so it would seem that as fast as the world deserves the comforts afforded by science it receives them, and no faster.

Probably even in the future if the elixir vitæ were compounded and immortality were thus placed in the grasp of everyone, no one would be so foolish as to use it, for all would realise that perpetual life would be perpetual suffering.

Franklin was asked once, what was the good of the discovery of the galvanic spark. He asked, "What is the good of a baby?" That baby has since grown to giant size. The vast accumulation of scientific facts by which the world is to-day beautified and made more comfortable have been piled up amid sneers and opposition. The olden searcher for knowledge wanted to make a short cut to power over his fellow men; the student of to-day learns to spread his knowledge as a means of helping himself through helping others. So as intellects broaden, men find that by all working for the common good, the individual good would be best conserved.

Imagine Nero or Cleopatra with all our present scientific knowledge and resources at command, would they not have made the earth a pitiable planet? But this knowledge cannot be owned by any single mind, and hence working in unison for the common good is the result of the existence of that knowledge.

As science gradually inculcated altruism, perforce, the teleologist idea would be that as fast as the world deserved good things it received them, but the more rational view would be that the comforts and conveniences of the peaceful arts and sciences were the product of mental broadening, and that egoism developed into an altruism through selfish realisation that individual interests are best secured through individuals seeking the general good.

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#### CURRENT TOPICS.

THE Australian voting system was again tested in Chicago at the recent City election, and was condemned as a ruinous failure by the curbstone patriots who formerly taught the citizen how to vote, and chastised him when he voted wrong. Sadly, the story goes, as I copy it from the papers, that "Even in the 9th and 6th wards only a few eyes were bunged up, and a few hats smashed, while the policemen looked the other way." And the 5th ward, which,—I quote again the plaintive wail of the papers—"the sunset of an election day formerly found suffused with blood and arnica, was peaceful and stagnant as the south branch of the Chicago river." The dramatic appearance of an imaginary Good Samaritan with a bottle of arnica at "the sunset of an election day" is well managed by the reporter, as it relieves the sombre gloom

of the story, and antithetically presents to us the bane and the antidote, the sore and the salve together. There is a legend of that same 5th ward, fabulous I think, although said to be well authenticated, that a man once got his head broke there on election day for voting wrong, and died under the correction. It was shown at the inquest by a surgeon that the skull of the deceased was no thicker than an egg shell, whereupon the jury brought in a verdict of "temporary insanity, and saved him right," on the ground that a man with a skull no thicker than an egg shell had no business trying to vote in the 5th ward. In kindly tribute to the days of "auld lang syne" the reporter gives a word of sympathy to the policemen "who leaned up against the doorways and grumbled because the good old days were gone. They did not know whom to club. Under the uncertainties of the Australian system they might have injured some of their own friends." I am sorry for the policemen thus embarrassed, but in the midst of the gloom I sing with Charles Mackay, "Who mourns for the days that are gone? I' faith, good friend, not I."

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The subject of debate before the Milwaukee Ministers' Association at its recent meeting, was the smooth and easy marriage laws of Wisconsin, whereby all the runaway couples from other states are invited to cross the border and get married without banns, or leave, or license. By reason of this liberality the marrying trade has grown to be a thriving industry in Milwaukee, greatly to the profit of clergymen, who it has been irreverently said were sometimes overzealous in duty, and "tied the hymeneal knot" for lovesick boys and girls without asking any embarrassing questions, provided the fees were paid. Hundreds of elopers from Chicago get married in Milwaukee, and our people rightfully complain of this, not as a matter of morals, but as a species of unfair competition very injurious to the Chicago marrying trade. The Milwaukee ministers, in answering the accusation, threw the blame upon the lax marriage laws of Wisconsin, which caused the wicked hackmen of Milwaukee to tempt the clergy by hauling runaway couples to the "parsonage," and helping the minister to unite them in "the holy bonds of matrimony" for a share of the marriage fee. The Rev. Mr. Parkhurst thus exposed the depravity of the hackmen; "The hackman," he said, "first located ministers as near the railway station as possible, and ascertained what hours they could usually be found in, next he found out whether the minister asked too many searching questions of the runaway couples, and lastly he made sure that the minister would make a division of the marriage fees. If that was satisfactory the hackman then became a regular runner for that minister and took all his trade to him." The conference was very properly shocked at the conduct of the hackmen, and a committee was appointed to prepare an address to the public explaining the attitude of the ministers on the runaway marriage question.

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The Milwaukee hackmen, being wiser than the clergymen, have not had any meeting to complain of the Wisconsin marriage laws. They think it better to say nothing, lest the legislature interfere with the runaway couple business, an important "home industry," very profitable to the hackmen, the clergymen, and the hotel keepers of Milwaukee. One of them, a metaphorical sort of man, treated the good resolutions of the Milwaukee Ministers' Association as of no more honesty than a party platform, and he said, "There's nothing in 'em. We know our business. We do the hauling, say nothing, and saw wood. There's plenty of ministers that want our trade, and we know it. All they want is for us fellows to say nothing." Another, equally cunning, but broader in mental scope, and more profound in learning, said "There's a good bit in it for the hackmen and the ministers too. More Chicago people come up here to get spliced than anybody knows of. They come in on one train, get tied, and away they go

back on the next train. Now I claim that's a good thing for the town; it's foreign capital coming in and nothing going out." That sentiment is worthy of Adam Smith or Stuart Mill, and it reveals to us in homely grammar a political economist and statesman. That the man who uttered it should waste himself in hack driving is wonderful. Why he is not a member of Congress I cannot understand. And look at the skill by which he dispenses with the middleman, and brings the producer and the consumer closer together. "We used to take these 'moonshine' couples to the hotels," he said, "but now we deliver the goods direct." In the tone of a moralist and with the sneer of a cynic he finished his remarks by saying, "I guess the ministers won't hurt themselves by trying to have a new marriage law passed."

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I desire to add by way of postscript, and as a hint to the Milwaukee ministers in case they have not heard of it, that the Rev. S. F. Butts, deacon of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Cumberland, Maryland, has been suspended by the Presiding elder of the district, for practices like those charged upon the ministers of Milwaukee, except that in the case of Mr. Butts, he obtained a monopoly of the marrying trade, by means of a secret agreement with hackdrivers for a division of the marriage fees, thus excluding his reverend brethren from a fair share of the business. According to the dispatches, which I quote *literatim*, "Mr. Butts stood in with the hackdrivers and cornered the marriage market. The other ministers could not understand how it was that their colleague did all the business while they were left out in the cold." It was six months before they found him out, during the whole of which time "Butts had all the marriages he could attend to," and was rolling in wealth, or according to the pathetic story which describes his rise and fall, "He alone married more than half the out-of-town couples and was making money handily, when the other preachers got on to his methods and preferred charges with the Presiding elder. Butt's suspension followed."

\* \* \*

Did you ever think about the vast quantity of genius annually wasted on the newspapers by merely local reporters who are not paid for originality or style, but merely to "write it up." Probably not, but I have, and I tell you there is enough of it if saved in book form to make literary fame for a hundred men. And let me tell you another thing, there *are* men of literary fame who steal a good deal of it and sell it for money as their own. When a friend shows me a bit of good work, either in prose or poetry, and tells me that he just "threw it off" last night, I praise him openly to his face, while secretly I doubt his word; and if the composition is extremely good, I suspect that it is due to the oil and the toil of many nights, and the thought of many days. But when there is only one evening between the deed and the printed story of it, then I know that the writer of the story "threw it off last night," and I give him credit accordingly; as, for instance, the account of yesterday's election which I find in this morning's paper; and which I thank the reporter for presenting to me in a well-fitting dress, with flowers of humor and fancy in the button hole, and embroidery of rhetoric where such adornment ought to be. Like a dash of Worcestershire sauce on a tender steak, is the sarcasm, pungent and refined, which excites my appetite when I read that the voters of a certain ward, "objected to Cooper because he wore a silk hat and went into good society." What further description of that ward is necessary? I see its alleys and courts, and beer saloons as in a photograph, and I know without looking at the returns what became of Cooper. So, there is equal pictorial strength, and saving of words too, mind you, for which economy I am told the reporter gets no pay, in the description of a winning candidate, who, "proud and victorious, tramped down Ashland avenue, with his big red face divided by a triumphant smile." There is high art in that, for I know without looking that the victorious

candidate is a saloon keeper, and I see him laughing clear across his face from ear to ear. "His face divided by a smile" is humorous poetry, worthy of Butler, and I maintain there is no more expressive line in Hudibras.

I was engaged in showing some of the pearls cast before swine by nameless and undistinguished reporters, when I was interrupted by a call to lunch, and I will now continue the subject with a few additional instances from that same election story. "Peaceful as a tramp in a haystack," said of the 23rd ward, is a picturesque description that saves a multitude of words. I cannot imagine anything more sleepy, quiet, and careless than a tramp in a haystack; and the comparison is poetical too. Of a certain candidate, notorious for his expansive liberality on election days, I learn that "About 2 o'clock he went to his house on 20th street and laid in a new stock of campaign arguments in small denominations." I put in the italics because I think them well deserved. No coarse and ugly dead-wall statement there, but a delicate and genteel euphemism which tells it all in a vivid and effective way. It is the bright rapier instead of the dull club. The munificence of that candidate is made visible in the same artistic style, so delightful to read, and so easy to understand. thus: "Then he went to the saloon of Jan Novak and put up for a new freshet of beer, which soon had the neighborhood in a sloppy condition." Not kegs of beer, nor barrels of beer as a commonplace reporter would have had it, but a "freshet" of beer; and the poetical exaggeration is ingeniously corroborated by the further testimony that the neighborhood was made "sloppy" with beer, and by this evidence the fact of the freshet proved. I have read, in another paper, another account of that same election. It contains just as much information as the one I have spoken of in these comments; but there is no yeast of witty imagination in it, to "raise" it, and make it light, and easy of digestion. It is dull, soggy, inelastic dough, and altogether too much of it.

M. M. TRUMBULL.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### THE PROBLEM OF NECESSITY.

To the Editor of *The Open Court* :

REPLYING to the request of Mr. John Maddock to name a fact "not precisely determined by law," permit me to suggest the Asymptote, the ratio of diameter and circumference; and generally any fact for whose accurate finding intellect is baffled. Action and reaction are as equal, contrary, and simultaneous in mentality as in mechanics. Man is unquestionably the resultant of all the countless influences which have focused the past in his being. Is it inconceivable that he possesses a volition,—utterly unprovable though it be,—resident in his nature, and yet of a different order, of an order as infinite and eternal (and paradoxical) as the insoluble subtlety of the antinomy?

HUDOR GENONE.

[The instances of Hudor Genone for proving the existence of something "not precisely determined by law" are not well selected, for the ratio of diameter to circumference and also the asymptote are most unequivocally determined by law. We cannot arithmetically express the ratio of diameter to circumference in all its actual determinedness. All the calculations made of  $\pi$ , although they are more than sufficiently exact for any practical purposes, are theoretically considered mere approximations. But  $\pi$  itself is nevertheless precisely determined by law.

Mr. Maddock, it seems to me, denies that man has volition. We should not say so. It is a fact that man has volition. This is not unprovable as says Hudor Genone; on the contrary, it is provable, and this volition, being "resident in his nature" or rather "his nature itself" is exactly that which determines man's actions. We do not see why man's volition should be of a different order,

why it alone should be eternal and the rest of nature not, why it alone should be branded as paradoxical while the rest of nature is regarded as intelligible.—Ed.]

### NOTES.

A very welcome letter comes to us from Mr. George Julian Harney, of England, whose "Notes on Books," and other things in *The Newcastle Chronicle* are such delightful reading. Mr. Harney has made some valuable contributions to *The Open Court* and would have made more were it not that for several months he has been seriously ill. We rejoice to learn from his letter that the opening spring has tempered Mr. Harney's pains, and that his health is much improved. There is yet some good work remaining for him to do.

George Julian Harney is an historic personage, and was a conspicuous figure in England fifty years ago. He has a strong memory and if he would write or dictate his reminiscences they would be an interesting and valuable contribution to the political history of England. Harney, seventy-five, and Thomas Cooper eighty-eight, are the last surviving leaders of the Chartist movement, the precursor of all the political, and many of the social reforms which have been achieved in England during the reign of Queen Victoria. They got imprisonment for blazing the way, while the Gladstones and the Russells, and the Palmerston's, who followed, got the glory. Harney, Hetherington, Holyoake, Richard Carlisle, and a few others gave England a free press. They sold unstamped newspapers, went to prison for the deed, but won their battle after all. We trust that Mr. Harney will find renewed health and vigor in the sunshine of spring.

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