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TH. RIBOT AND MODERN PSYCHOLOGY.*

BY EDWARD SOKAL.

“THIRTY years ago, the assertion that psychology was yet in its childhood, and had little prospect of growing out of it, would have been scouted as paradoxical, and a criticism of this kind would have been deemed amply refuted by a reference to the numerous treatises which have appeared since Locke’s time on all the various activities of the human mind. But to-day this assertion is not at all paradoxical. Our point of view has become a different one, and although we justly acknowledge that the old psychologists have rendered great services in many directions, have definitively settled many mooted points, and have exhibited in their analyses remarkable penetration and acumen, yet we can now regard their work as scarcely anything more than attempts.

“The new spirit of the natural sciences has also penetrated psychology. And the question is asked whether a mass of acute remarks, fine analyses, elegantly presented observations on the normal state of the mind, and metaphysical hypotheses presented as truths, form an articulated system, a true science, and whether we should not justly resort to some more exact method.

“In this manner a separation has been effected between the new and the old psychology which has daily grown more distinct, and although to all appearance the old psychology is still vigorous and active, its days are numbered. In the new environment which has arisen about it, its conditions of existence are different; its methods are not adequate to the constantly increasing difficulties of its problems, and to the constantly growing demands of the scientific spirit: it still lives on its past. In vain do its foremost representatives proclaim that we should investigate the facts, and should give due attention to experience; sincere as their concessions are, they produce nothing, and in the actual work are not fulfilled. The moment they put their hands to the task the irresistible desire for pure speculation takes possession of them. Furthermore, any condition of things which is radically wrong does not admit of

reformation, and the old psychology must perish as the consequence of its self-contradictory character. No endeavors to adapt it to the demands of the times can deceive us in this matter; its fundamental character, as may be shown in very few words, always remains the same. It is permeated with the metaphysical spirit, it is the ‘science of the soul’; self-observation, analysis, inference, are its favorite methods; it mistrusts the biological sciences, accepts their help only unwillingly and when forced to do so, and is ashamed of the help which it receives from them. Peevish and morose like all that is old and weak, it yearns only for seclusion and quiet.”

In these words, Th. Armand Ribot summarised, in the year 1879, the situation of the speculative school in psychology, and presents in sharp and rigid contrast thereto the programme of his own scientific activity. The abyss of physico-philosophical doubt which the speculative era opened up had never been bridged by the speculative philosophy, and its solutions were woefully disproportionate to the comprehensive scope of the problems proposed. In company with the band of great scientific discoverers who were sent forth from the laboratory of Johannes Müller, Th. Ribot holds that all compromise with the nature-philosophy of the past decades is impossible, and all struggle with them practically purposeless: there can be no discussion with representatives of such thought, for neither principles nor methods, neither language nor purposes, are the same. But while men like Helmholtz and Du Bois-Reymond, whose talents were especially adapted to observation and experiment, unceasingly promoted the new method by great discoveries, Ribot, who is fundamentally a dialectician and who was educated in the school of abstract philosophical thought, arrived at the new view of things only with great labor and at a subsequent period.

It will not, therefore, be surprising, if early and natural habits of thought did not adapt themselves in every respect to the changed point of view. Despite his great and sincere admiration for the experimental method, we cannot find in a single work of Ribot’s a description of even one experiment which he has independently conducted. In the method which is pe-

* From *Die Gegenwart*.

cularly his, of sounding a problem on all sides before actually attacking it, he proves himself a master of analysis; the art which he possesses and handles with a skill amounting to virtuosity, of revealing and thoroughly illuminating unclear ideas, may be accepted as a model of dialectical skill. In a word, he has placed the intellectual qualities of a past epoch in the service of modern science, and we shall now show by a brief discussion of his works how fruitful this union has been.

The first works of Th. Ribot are of a critical-historical character. Mindful of the saying that the history of a science is the science itself, he attempts, in two detailed monographs on English and German experimental psychology, to tell us the brief past of this "science of the future." The slow march, the devious and winding paths which psychology has followed, appear to him, from a psychological point of view, easily intelligible, for he bitterly laments that one should really be mathematician, physicist, physiologist, and pathologist, and should have a perfect command of the results and especially of the methods of all the experimental sciences in order to take up with any prospect of success psychological investigations. If, therefore, the results of psychological inquiry have not as yet been very great, this, in his opinion, speaks neither against its methods, nor against its representatives; the progress of scientific knowledge is in a much higher degree than we ordinarily imagine, a function of the time.

In his "English Psychology of To-day," which appeared in 1870, Ribot discusses in some detail the works of the two Mills, of Herbert Spencer, Alexander Bain, and George Lewes, who were at that time almost unknown in France. This book, which within a few years was translated into most of the civilised languages of Europe, contributed so much to the circulation of these authors, that it was by this fact almost rendered superfluous. In a brilliant and fascinating manner it depicts to us the history, method, and aims of the English psychology, it emphasises with especial force the predilection of the same for general systems, its predominantly descriptive character, but it also expressly mentions its lack of really experimental foundations and the hypothetical features of the majority of its assumptions. Especially remarkable in our opinion is the essay on Herbert Spencer, as whose enthusiastic admirer and adherent Ribot confesses himself.

In contrast to the "organic" psychology of the English, which, resting on the general hypothesis of evolution, explains the psychical phenomena as the highest form of existence and as the most complicated of all natural processes, because in point of time the last, the German psychology has always set itself a different problem. The psychology of Germany has

adopted the analytical method, and has borrowed its points of view, as well as its technical forms, from the physical sciences. It exhibits generally a greater endeavor after precision; especially the employment of experiment; the quantitative determination of facts (experiment demanding numbers and measures); a more restricted field of research; a preference for monographs instead of large compendious treatises. This distinction of German and English psychology, which at first glance seems strange, is, as we see, perfectly well-founded in the nature of things. As in art and in public life, so the national character is expressed not less distinctly in science.

In the period of time between the publication of the works on English and German psychology (1870-1879) two larger treatises appeared bearing the titles "Psychological Heredity" and "The Philosophy of Schopenhauer," which are of great importance for an understanding of Ribot's development.

The first is the only sacrifice which Ribot made to his speculative tendencies. The second is a complete liberation from them.

Heredity—habit—conservation of force: these are the three apparently unrelated phenomena between which Ribot in the conclusion of his work on heredity endeavors to construct a bridge. "Considered from a philosophical point of view heredity appears to us as a fragment of a much higher and more general law, of a law of the universe, and its cause should be sought in the mechanism of the universe. Any thing that has been, must always be; hence, in the individual, habit and memory, and in the race, heredity. It is simply a case of that ultimate law which physicists call the conservation of energy, and metaphysicians universal causality." We must see that the idea here indicated is capable of a much more concrete expression, and it receives such in fact later from Ribot's own hands. In the form in which it is here expressed the principle is nothing but a pure speculative hypothesis and bears on its face all the marks which Ribot gives as characteristic of such: it is definite, it is clear, circumscribed, distinct, and—undemonstrable.

Undemonstrable! This is the word which after a detailed exposition of Schopenhauer's philosophy he utters as his final criticism of it. And how any one in seriousness or in conviction could believe and defend things which are undemonstrable appears to him in the course of his development more and more unintelligible. From now on, metaphysics is to him a kind of belief in a second scientific revelation; its history, the history of error.

In 1881 Ribot began his series of epoch-making works on the pathology of psychic phenomena with the "Diseases of Memory." These works, despite

their medical titles, are of an entirely theoretical character. The attempt is made in them, in opposition to the customary views on this subject, to found the doctrine of the normal functions on the consideration of their pathological excesses, to view the phenomena of psychical disease as undeveloped and therefore less complicated forms of mental activity.

To the old psychology, memory is a special faculty of the soul, a most remarkable and totally mysterious mental capacity of preserving, reproducing, and arranging, perspective in the past, images and ideas. As Ribot had already suggested in his treatise on heredity, and as it was later more minutely developed by Professor Hering in his brilliant address on "Memory as a General Function of Organised Matter,"* true psychical memory is at bottom only a special case of a much more general phenomenon of "organic" memory, as it is met with in habit, in heredity, and in the instinct of newborn animals. This organic memory is a property of every living cell. Its especial modification, as psychic memory, is exclusively the property of the cerebral cell.

The chief merit of Ribot's work on memory is in our judgment this, that it has brought order into the numberless and complicated facts of the psycho-pathological literature belonging in this field, in such a manner that only things of importance are emphasised, yet everything that can throw light on the normal mechanism of memory is thoroughly exhausted in the concise space of one hundred and sixty octavo pages. The results at which Ribot arrived at the conclusion of his researches are by no means self-evident truisms, but are apparently even paradoxical—veritable Columbus eggs in science. One example will be enough to support this assertion. It is that of the so-called "law of regression" which Ribot formulated to express the course of the disturbances of memory :

"In cases of general dissolution the loss of memories follows an invariable order : recent facts, then ideas in general, then emotions, then acts.

"In cases of partial dissolution, (in the case best known, the forgetting of signs,) the loss of memories follows an invariable order : proper names, common names, adjectives and verbs, interjections, gestures.

"In the two cases the order is identical. It is a regression from the most recent to the oldest, from the complex to the simple, from the voluntary to the automatic, from the less organised to the better organised.

"We have brought our law into connection with this physiological principle, 'Degeneration first strikes that which has been last formed,' and with this psychological principle, 'The complex disappears before the simple, because it has been less often repeated in experience.'"

We here see a number of facts, which by themselves are highly remarkable, brought together in a

law which is almost self-evident, reduced, so to say, to a common denominator—a model of apposite explanation.

Whilst in his work on "Memory," Ribot could retain and employ points of view which are generally familiar, he is, in his "Diseases of the Will" and his "Diseases of Personality," on much more unstable ground. Although we speak daily of acts of will and of individual consciousness, it would yet be almost impossible to give anything like a description of these phenomena, such as any one could easily give for facts of memory. In both cases it is difficult—indeed, almost impossible—to decide whether we are concerned with elementary and especial contents of consciousness, or with a secondary or derived phenomenon ; in both cases, in fact, even Ribot's researches have led to a substantially negative result.

In the mind of the natural inquirer there can be no doubt that the processes which take place in the nervous system like all other known phenomena of the universe, are subject to the law of the conservation of energy, that they form an uninterrupted non-displaceable series whose last member is determined by the first. The external stimuli which strike our senses are propagated as internal products in our brains, they proceed as centrifugal impulses to the motory nerves, and are discharged outwardly in the form of motions which are infinitely varied. By this mechanical explanation we must abide, for as yet it is the only one which renders a fraction of the phenomena of the world, though not all, intelligible. It is our only anchor of hope in this apparently lawless chaos of things. And agreeably to the words of the immortal author of the "Mécanique céleste" there can exist in the lawfulness of natural phenomena no contradiction, except such as our ignorance imports into it.

These in outline are the assumptions from which Ribot proceeds in his observation of the phenomena of will, and which he seeks to carry out, step by step, in his work. He shows that in every act of the will there are two factors which can be well distinguished : the state of consciousness, the "I will," which establishes the situation, but in itself is wholly powerless : and a highly complicated psycho-physiological mechanism which sets free motory and inhibitory impulses. He shows us that in pathological cases now this and now that factor can be lost, that in the first instance the irresistible fixed ideas, and in the second, the disease aboulia arises. And he closes his exposition with this sentence : "*La volonté n'est pas la cause de sien.*"

It is not to be denied that this conception of psychological states as mere epiphenomena of certain cerebral processes is of great service to the economy of science, but it can also not be denied that the "dou-

* A translation of this memoir was published in Vol. I of *The Open Court*, Nos. 6 and 7, pp. 141 and 169.

ble nervous process" is as yet simply an unproved hypothesis. The attempt has been made in two ways to get beyond this; first, by the return to the old assumption of a will, which has the power to act on the psychical machine; and second, in the recent books of Janet and Binet, "L'automatisme psychologique" and "Les altérations de la personnalité," and also in the works of others, by the theory of the so-called "double ego." Not only certain nervous processes, but all such, are accompanied on this hypothesis by consciousness, by a consciousness which is distributed, as it were, in strata among different egos. We merely mention this theory, as we do not see in it any substantial promotion of our knowledge.

In closing this description of Ribot's life-work, we must not forget to mention a short treatise on the "Psychology of Attention,"* which explains attention as a purely motor activity, and, last but not least, we must mention his long editorship of the *Revue philosophique*. At present he is engaged, as he informs the author of this article, in writing a new book, which is to be called "La psychologie de sentiments."

If we glance again over Th. Ribot's scientific career, we cannot refrain from yielding to it our sincere admiration. We see in him one of the most ingenious and most brilliant path-finders in one of the most difficult provinces of modern science.

THE RELIGION OF SCIENCE, A CATECHISM.

MYTHOLOGY AND RELIGION.

What is the attitude of the religion of science towards other religions?

The religion of science is not hostile to the spirit of the traditional religions: on the contrary, being their matured product, it regards them as harbingers that prepare the way.

The dogmatic religions are mythologies which attempt to teach the truth in parable and allegory. They are prophecies of the religion of truth.

Is mythology injurious?

Mythology in itself is not injurious; on the contrary, it is a necessary stage in the evolution not only of religion, but also of science. Man's mode of conveying thought is essentially mythological. All language is based upon similes and we shall perhaps never be able to speak without using figures of speech.

The religion of science does not come to destroy the mythologies of old religion; it does not come to destroy but to fulfil.

What is the nature of the mythology of science?

Science no less than religion had to pass and, in many of its fields, is still passing, through a mytholog-

ical period; and this mythological period is often marked by fantastic notions and extravagant vagaries. Astrology preceded astronomy, and alchemy preceded chemistry.

It is a great mistake of the chemist to look down upon the alchemist, and of the astronomer to speak with contempt of the astrologer of former ages. It is a sign either of narrowness or of a lack of information to revile our ancestors because they knew less than we. Baron Liebig was the greatest chemist of his times; yet he speaks with profound respect of the aspirations and accomplishments of the alchemists. Those upon whose shoulders we stand deserve our thanks not our contempt. Let us not despise the anthropoid from whose labors man has risen to the height of a human existence!

The mythology of science still clings to us to-day.

When does mythology become injurious?

Mythology becomes injurious as soon as it is taken as the truth itself.

Mythology thus produces that self sufficient spirit of dogmatism which prevents further inquiry into truth.

What is the origin of the mythological religions?

The historical religions were founded at a time when science and its methods of inquiry did not as yet exist. Yet religion was wanted. People cannot live without spiritual support and solace and guidance. And as the old Egyptians instinctively discovered such tools as the lever and other simple instruments helpful to them in their work long before they understood the principles of these contrivances; as mankind in general instinctively invented language as a means of communication without having any philological knowledge, and even without the least inkling of the laws of grammar and logic: so some prophets rose among our ancestors preaching to them some simple rules of conduct which they had instinctively found when pondering on the miseries caused by criminal and ruthless behavior.

The nobler conduct, preached by prophets and enforced by the evil consequences of sin, raised mankind to a higher ground. Men learned to feel and appreciate the truth of the religious authority which proclaims the moral commands; and the religious convictions thus established proved even in their imperfect form an invaluable source of solace and help in the tribulations of life.

Does the law of evolution apply to religion also?

Religion develops according to natural laws. Not only the human body and all living creatures, but also such intangible and spiritual entities as science, law, language, and social institutions are products of evolution, and religion forms no exception.

* The authorised English translation of this work and of *The Diseases of Personality* are published by The Open Court Publishing Co., Chicago, Ill.

The hypotheses of science are often formulated with the help of analogies, and these analogies contain figurative expressions. We speak for instance of electric currents, as if electricity were a fluid. This method of using analogies which is of great service in scientific investigations must not be taken as real science: it is the mythology of science.

The mythology of science is no less indispensable in the realm of investigation than it is in the province of religion; but we must not forget that it is a means only to an end, the ideal of scientific inquiry being and remaining a simple statement of facts.

While we may be able to free ourselves from the shackles of mythology in science and philosophy, must we, perhaps, still retain them in religion?

The progress of religion in this direction will be the same as in science and philosophy.

Progress of science means the formation of new ideas, and the purification of our old ideas. The mythological elements must be separated from the pure statement of facts, the latter being the grain, the former the chaff; the latter are the truth, the former our mythologies, being the methods of reaching the truth.

The chaff is the husks, and grain cannot grow without the wholesome protection of the husks. The truth contained in mythological allegories is their all-important element, which has to be sifted out and preserved. The rest is to be discarded; it has served an educational purpose and will have to be relegated to the history of science.

Religious progress, no less than scientific progress, is a process of growth, it is an increment of truth, and also a cleansing from mythology.

Religion is a world-conception regulating man's conduct. Our world-conception grows with every new information, and all those new ideas from which we derive moral rules of conduct become religious ideas.

As science began with the crude notions of primitive animism, so did religion begin with a mythology full of superstition. And the ideal of religion is the same as that of science, it is an increase of truth as well as a liberation from mythological elements. The more complete our knowledge is, the less is our need of hypotheses, and mythological expressions can be replaced by exact statements of fact. Both science and religion are to be based upon a concise but exhaustive statement of facts, which is to be constantly enlarged by a more complete and more accurate experience.

The ultimate goal of religious development is the recognition of the truth with the aspiration to live in conformity to the truth.

Mythology which is conceived to be the truth itself is called paganism.

Paganism is the notion that the parable is the mean-

ing it involves, that the letter is the spirit, that mythology is the truth.

It is certainly no error to believe that virtue, justice, beauty, love, and other ideas have a real and true existence in reality. They whose spiritual eyes are too dim to see and to understand their being, will be greatly benefited by the representations of the artist and the poet, who present those ideals to us, the former in our imagination, the latter visibly in marble as personal beings, as gods. There is no wrong in similes, there is no fault to be found with parables. But he who believes that these gods are personal beings, he who takes the mythology to be the actual truth, is under the spell of a gross misconception, and this misconception is paganism.

Paganism leads to idolatry. He who worships the symbol is an idolater.

The dogmatic religions of to-day are still under the spell of paganism; and even Christianity, the highest, the noblest, and most humane of all religions, is not yet free of idolatry,—a fact which appears in many various customs and ceremonies. Sacrifices have been abandoned, but prayer, adoration, and other institutions still indicate the pagan notion that God is like a human being, that he takes delight in receiving honors, and that upon special considerations he will change his decrees and reverse the order of nature for the sake of those whom he loves.

The religion of science does away with paganism and idolatry.

The religion of science rejects the religion of adoration, and prescribes only one kind of worship—the worship in spirit and in truth which consists in obeying the authority of moral conduct.

The religion of science rejects all the vain repetitions of such prayers as attempt to change not our will but the will of God. Those prayers only are admitted by the religion of science which set our souls in harmony with the authority of conduct, which consists in self-discipline and teach us to say with Jesus of Nazareth "Not our, but Thy will be done!"

What are the sources of religious truth?

The religion of science knows of no special revelations; it recognises only the revelation of truth, open to all of us; as it appears in our experience, viz., in the events of nature surrounding us, and also in the emotions of our own heart.

Religion is not due to a supernatural revelation, but to the same natural revelation to which science owes its existence.

The form of the established religions is mythological, for its founders spoke in parables, and the allegorical form of their teachings was quite adapted to the age in which they lived.

New problems have arisen with the growth of science. The mythology of our religions has become palpably untenable, and we are no longer satisfied with the dogmas extracted from parables.

Is there any conflict between religion and science?

True science and true religion can never come in conflict. If there is any conflict between religion and science, it is a sign that there is something wrong in either our science or our religion, and we shall do well to revise them both.

This is the conflict that at present obtains between science and religion. The infidel laughs at the impostures of religion, while the bigot demands an implicit surrender of reason.

The infidel as well as the bigot are under the erroneous impression that the mythology of religion is religion itself.

What is to be done?

The bigot demands that science be muzzled, and the infidel proposes to eradicate religion.

Shall we follow the bigot who wants the errors of paganism to continue? Or shall we follow the infidel? Shall we root out science, because it is not as yet free from mythology? Shall we eradicate mankind because there are traces of barbarism left in our institutions, even to-day? Shall we abandon religion because it still retains some of the superstitious notions of paganism?

We follow neither the bigot nor the infidel, but propose confidently to advance on the road of progress. It is the course prescribed by nature, which willingly or unwillingly we shall have to pursue.

The ideal towards which every religious evolution tends, is to develop a Religion of Truth. And this ideal can be reached only through an honest search for the truth with the assistance of the scientific methods of inquiry.

Christianity possesses an ideal which is called "the invisible church." Even the most devout Christians are aware of the fact that the present condition of the church is not the realisation of its ideal. The ideal of the invisible church can find its realisation only in the religion of science.

A SOCIALISTIC SCHEME.

BY MORRISON I. SWIFT.

THE first day of May, 1900, should be fixed upon as the time for changing the present industrial system. Affairs between Capital and Labor are rushing rapidly to a destructive crisis, and some definite rational policy must be quickly decided upon, towards which all scattered and otherwise dangerous energies can be massed.

This policy is for the working classes to determine that on the first of May, 1900, all owning managers of industry shall be changed into managing partners with the workers, the workers be-

coming joint owners with the managers, and the managers becoming merely their representatives.

There are seven years in which to prepare for this change. The owners and managers should be invited to meet with the workers to organise the details of the new system. Many would immediately and gladly respond, and these, in conference with the working people, would frame plans to which other managers would consent upon understanding them. The best of the managers would not wait until the year 1900 before establishing the partnership, and when the movement began, many would be converted to it, whom paper plans could not convince. In less than seven years more than half the industries of the country might be partnership industries.

Only one thing is necessary for this result: the working people must firmly resolve, that after April, 1900, they will not work under the present organisation of industry. If they are by that time united in this purpose, those selfish capitalists who have not voluntarily accepted the partnership plan, will be constrained to yield. If they cannot get men to work for them their plants will spoil.

The first step to this end is to form a society embracing as many citizens, men and women, of this country, as wish to see the inevitable industrial revolution accomplished peaceably. Every working man and woman will be of this number. They wish their fair share of the product of their industry, they also wish to obtain it without the shedding of blood. They will therefore join in the support of this peaceful method. All intelligent people of every class will join it, for they are coming to see that society must be reorganised from its base to satisfy the modern sense of justice or even to survive.

Society must be saved from chaos by a strong, sufficient effort. Therefore, let meetings be held to organise this movement; let societies be everywhere founded with this clear aim in view, to make the working people partners in all industries in the year 1900.

Other and further developments of the industrial revolution can be accomplished afterwards or at the same time. This will be a tangible beginning, broad enough not only for all progressive forces thus far organised to unite upon, but broad enough for those unorganised up to this time; sufficiently evolutionary and sufficiently revolutionary for the next seven years. While working for their own specific ends as before, all reformers can coöperate for this common end.

This plan has little machinery. Social leaders can establish societies where they are, over the whole country, and these can afterwards be federated with some central direction.

To hold the object clearly in mind is all that is necessary for this organisation. But as many circumstances are driving labor to frenzy, the time for immediate and universal action has come.

REMARKS BY GENERAL TRUMBULL.

I HAVE had the privilege of reading in manuscript the plan of Mr. Swift, in order that I might make a few comments on its merits and its defects as a scheme of social change.

The policy advocated by Mr. Swift is not new. More than fifty years ago it was adopted by the English Chartists assembled in their National Convention. They solemnly resolved to reverse the social order by paralysing business for thirty days; and this thirty days was beatified as the "Sacred Month." On the first day of the "Sacred Month" all work of every kind was to cease, and it was confidently proclaimed that before the end of it the revolution would be accomplished, "without the shedding of blood."

The impossibility of the scheme became apparent as soon as the Chartists attempted to fix a day for the beginning of the "Sacred Month." They never could agree upon a day, and for want

of such agreement the "Sacred Month" was perpetually postponed. The plan, long ago abandoned in England is now revived in America, and the beginning of the "Sacred Month" is definitely appointed for the first day of May, 1900.

It is very easy for the working classes to determine that on the first of May, 1900, "all owning managers of industry shall be changed into managing partners with the workers, the workers becoming joint owners with the managers," but suppose the "owning managers" determine otherwise, what then? In that case, "the working people must resolve that after April, 1900, they will not work under the present organisation of industry." Thus the scheme degenerates into a mere strike. This amounts to a resolution that the workingmen will not eat after April, 1900. We might as well resolve that after the first of May there shall be no more rain.

There are two obstacles in the way of the plan; the "owning managers" would not agree to it, neither would the workingmen. The workingmen prefer a specific sum as wages to any coöperative scheme that involves a risk of loss. They have no confidence in their own skill to manage a great industry, and they believe that a thousand of them owning and operating a factory would never agree among themselves either as to the hours of labor or as to a division of profits, and especially as to an apportionment of losses.

Much has been written about the "profit sharing" policy but nothing about the "loss sharing" plan, yet this latter is the more important because the fear of loss is the chief obstacle to coöperative industry. The laborers in a great factory would not accept it as a gift on the basis of profit and loss and the surrender of wages. They will accept a plant on the "profit sharing" plan, but if they are to take the risk of losses also, they will prefer the certainty of wages.

None of the parties to be reconciled by it would be satisfied with it, and we must wait for its realisation until the world is peopled with wiser and better men.

Mr. Swift's reform applies only to the finished product, such as a New England cotton factory. This being already built and furnished with water-power and machinery, the operatives may just as well "determine" to have it for themselves as not, but the scheme has no application to a prospective industry, such, for instance, as the building of a new railroad, or, for the matter of that, the building and equipping of a new cotton factory, or a ship. Here is a grave difficulty, which I commend to the studious consideration of Mr. Swift.

Besides, the communism of property must precede the communism of industry, for what use is it that laborers work in common unless they own the land, the buildings, and all the raw materials of production? Here is an obstacle in the way of Mr. Swift; an impediment that cannot be removed in seven years nor in seventy. More men are property owners in the United States than in any other country in the world, and for that reason the right of private property has become a sentiment firmly established in the American mind. That sentiment will weaken, of course, as property, and especially land, becomes monopolised by a few, but it will not be extinguished in our generation, and perhaps never.

If the change is desirable let us adopt it at once. Why should the working-classes wait until the year 1900 before becoming "joint owners" of the mills and factories, the ships and shops, the railroads and the farms? If I have any share in any social reform why should I be deprived of it for seven years? If I am by right a partner in any of the profitable industries of Chicago I want my dividends now.

I am personally interested in the theory of Mr. Swift, because according to that theory I am now, and have been for many years, a stockholder in a great railroad running from Montreal into the New England States. I was one of its original builders. I worked for many weeks with a wheelbarrow, pick, and shovel,

to make the roadbed on which the cars now run, and I shall be very glad if the engineers, and firemen, and brakemen, and switchmen, and conductors, and clerks "determine" to become joint owners of the road, provided that I am admitted into the partnership as one of its original builders. And will they kindly pay me the back dividends long due? Surely the men who build a plant are as much entitled to a share of it as the men who work inside of it after it is done.

Here is another difficulty. What share in the new industrial system is to go to bricklayers, carpenters, painters, hod-carriers, railroad laborers, builders of ships, and the multitudes of constructive workers who cannot become joint owners with the "owning managers," because there is nothing for them to own? And one question more: When the operatives have made themselves joint owners of a cotton factory, or any other factory, will they give work to laborers out of a job, or will they make the factory a monopoly of their own?

As a mere ideal aspiration the general plan appears to be beneficent, because it calls for better conditions of the laboring men; but the scheme is impossible.

"I can call spirits from the vasty deep," said Owen Glendower. "Why, so can I," said Hotspur; "or so can any man. But will they come when you do call for them?" Experience teaches us that they will not; neither will revolutions. The declaration that a new social order shall begin on a certain day is like the imperious command that King Canute gave to the sea. We can just as effectively appoint a certain day for a cyclone.

A new social order means a new society, and where is the promise that the American people will do in the year 1900 what they refuse to do now? Not on any particular day can we reverse the social conditions evolved through the travail of ten thousand years. As well might the apple-trees determine to bear nothing but oranges on and after the first of May, 1900. The promise of a man that seven years hence he will begin to be somebody else is ridiculous, but not more so than the promise of society to change its character on some future First of May.

THE NEW LAUREATE.

BY LOUIS BELROSE, JR.

Zounds, what a glorious chance to poetize!
Not one has missed it, every soul has bowed
And cut his little caper to the crowd,
And now they wait to see who'll get the prize.

Why waits the Judge? Would not the time suffice
Wherein to write one name, long called aloud
By all the birds of spring, one name avowed
Where'er the sea salutes the approving skies?

An heir remaining, does the law bequeath
Upon condition that his years have run
With only praise on all the winds that breathe?

You seek a star beside the noonday sun;
Laurel in hand, you ask which brow to wreath;
Great ears of Midas, man, there is but one!

NOTES.

We present in this issue of *The Open Court* an article by Edward Sokal, translated from the German, on "Th. Ribot and Modern Psychology."

It is certainly a good sign of the times that Ribot finds such an enthusiastic apostle of his psychological views in the country of critics, and I expect that Mr. Sokal's lucid exposition will contribute much towards making the new conception popular. But I cannot refrain from noticing that, in our opinion, Mr. Sokal is

mistaken when he says that according to Ribot the psychological states which are "mere epi-phenomena of certain cerebral processes," have to be regarded as a "double nervous process." Mr. Sokal adds, "It cannot be doubted that the double nervous process "is as yet an unproved hypothesis."

We do not recollect any passage in Ribot's works in which he speaks of a "double nervous process." He speaks of "*la théorie qui considère la conscience comme un simple phénomène.*" His conception of psychological states as phenomenal or epi-phenomenal, means that consciousness is a superadded element which, according to conditions, may or may not be connected with the act. The motor-nerves act whenever irritated by a proper stimulant. This action is conscious if the conditions are present, and unconscious if they are absent. It is not known to us that Ribot calls the physiology of these conditions a double nervous process.

A man who is under the influence of some intoxicant may walk about and act in the same way as one in full possession of his consciousness. The conditions of consciousness are disturbed. On the other hand, the state of consciousness which accompanies the action is in itself of no efficacy. The normal condition of a man is such that when he says "I will do this," his muscles obey the order, but if the action of his nervous system is impaired by the disease known as aboulia he may again and again pronounce the words "I will do it" without being able to execute the motions. The psychical condition in which a man feels the impulse of willing and pronounces the words "I will" is one thing while the execution of motions is another.

This is not an hypothesis but such are the facts.

The idea that psychical states are to be considered as epi-phenomenal is not a proposition which is original with M. Ribot. It is, so it appears to us, an important and fundamental part of his psychical views, but it is not a peculiarity of his theories. Spinoza was, perhaps, the first to point out that we know two attributes of existence which he calls extension and thought. Later philosophers (Leibnitz), and in recent times, Clifford, Lewes, Huxley, Romanes, and others have again and again called attention to the fact that feelings are not motions and motions not feelings. Feelings are not, and cannot be changed into, motions. Feelings may be another aspect of motion. What I feel as a feeling may appear to a physiologist, supposing that he could look into my brain, as a nervous motion. But certainly feelings cannot be regarded as somehow interrupting the mechanical action of the brain. The mechanism of the brain is mechanical throughout, and if we could look into a brain we would see no feelings but only brain-motions.

We grant that the term epi-phenomenal as a signification of the realm of feelings is not very commendable, because it suggests the idea that feelings are a mere redundant by-play of nerve-actions, and this idea is wrong. Yet Ribot has been careful to forestall such misapprehension of the term. He says in his "Diseases of Personality" (English translation by The Open Court Publishing Co., p. 14 et seqq.):

"There is one weak point in the hypothesis of consciousness as a [mere] phenomenon. Its most convinced partisans have defended it in a form that has caused them to be called the theorists of pure automatism. According to their favorite comparison, consciousness is like the sparks from a steam-engine, lighting it up at intervals, but having no effect upon its speed. Consciousness, thus, does not produce action any more than the shadow that accompanies the steps of the traveler. We have no objection to these metaphors, viewed purely as vivid illustrations of the doctrine in question; but taken in a strict sense they are exaggerated and inexact. Consciousness in itself and through itself is really a new factor, and in this there is nothing either mystical or supernatural.

"Volition is always a state of consciousness—the affirmation that a thing must either be done or prevented; it is the final and clear result of a great number of conscious, sub-conscious, and unconscious states; but once affirmed, it becomes a new factor in the life of the individual, and, in the assumed position, it marks a series, i. e. the possibility of being recommenced (begun over again), modified, prevented. Nothing similar exists in regard to automatic acts that are not accompanied by consciousness. Novelists and poets,

who usually are good observers of human nature, have frequently described that well-known situation, in which a passion—whether love or hatred—long brooded over, unconscious, ignorant of itself, at last bursting forth, recognises, affirms itself, becomes conscious. Then its character changes; it either redoubles in intensity or is crossed by antagonistic motives. Here, likewise, consciousness is a new factor, which has modified the psychological situation. One may by instinct, that is, through unconscious cerebration, solve a problem, but it is very possible that some other day, at another moment, one will fail in regard to an analogous problem. If, on the contrary, the solution of any problem is attained through conscious reasoning, a failure will scarcely occur in a second instance; because every step in advance marks a gained position, and from that moment we no longer grope our way blindly. This, however, does not in the least diminish the part played by unconscious work in all human discoveries.

"These examples taken at hazard may suffice to show, that the above-mentioned metaphors are true of each state of consciousness *taken in itself*. In itself, indeed, it is but a light without efficacy, merely the simple relation of an unconscious work; but in relation to the future development of the individual it is a factor of the first order. . . . Consciousness itself is but a phenomenon, only an accompaniment. . . . But if the state of consciousness leaves a vestige, a registration in the organism, in such case it does not act merely as an indicator, but as condenser. The metaphor of an automaton is no longer acceptable. This being admitted, many objections to the theory of a consciousness-phenomenon fall to the ground of themselves. The theory is completed, without having been weakened."

The office of *The Open Court* has been moved from the Nixon Building on La Salle street to "The Monon," 320-326 Dearborn street.

Macmillan & Co. have just published a pretty little volume by F. Marion Crawford, entitled "The Novel: What It Is." One can find in this little book a great many suggestions, which to the mind that has never thought on these subjects will be very helpful. Mr. Crawford presents some excellent arguments, from the literary point of view, against the didactic novel, or *Tendenzroman*. He discloses the mistakes of the ultra-realistic school, and pleads the cause of the "eternally human" idea: the novel must be the expression of real phases of the human heart, and ethical rather than æsthetic. A picture of Mr. Crawford precedes the book.

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