

Discussions

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Tuesday, August 11.

8.45 A.M. PROFESSOR ADAMS, "Public Commissions considered as a Conservative Solution of the Monopoly Question."

10 A.M. PROFESSOR TOY, "Religious Reformers and Founders."

5 P.M. MRS. WHITE, "Vivisection."

Wednesday, August 12.

8.45 A.M. PROFESSOR ADAMS, "Review of Industrial History and Doctrine."

10 A.M. PROFESSOR ADLER, "The Correlation of Moral Instruction with Other Branches, especially with the Teaching of History."

5 P.M. PROFESSOR TOY, *concluding lecture*, "The Ethical Element in Religion."

DISCUSSIONS.

[Following the excellent suggestions of our correspondent, whose letter appears below, as well as our own judgment, it is our purpose to insert hereafter, under the present head, brief contributions, together with editorial observations such as from time to time are offered or suggested to us by our correspondents, or are brought to our notice by current controversy. Contributions bearing upon either ethical theory or ethical practice, of a length suitable to this department, are cordially solicited.—EDS. INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS.]

THE MORAL ASPECT OF "TIPS" AND "GRATUITIES."

IT occurs to a reader of the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS that it would be a very good thing if that journal were to add a department for the discussion of such ethical topics as are not of sufficient importance to demand an article to themselves. Nearly every question of conduct is in some of its aspects a question of ethics, and is capable of having light thrown upon it by such persons as are thoroughly familiar with ethical principles, and have formed the habit of applying them correctly to particular instances,—in other

words, by such persons as have knowledge and trained reasoning powers. There is hardly a dinner-table where some question of conduct does not come to discussion in regard to which people are found to have widely different views, and concerning which they would gladly know, while their interest in the subject is warm, what are the opinions of the professional expounders of ethical doctrine. It is not that they will be in too great haste to accept those opinions, but that they are anxious to know how the arguments by which they are influenced will stand the criticism of experts. There is hardly any question upon which ethical considerations have any bearing that is really trivial. It has been well said by a recent writer on logic that whenever we come to a wrong conclusion, we injure ourselves, not only by the wrongness of the conclusion, but in one (or both) of two other ways as well: either there has been an error in our method of referring this instance to a leading principle,—in which case we have weakened our reasoning powers,—or else the leading principle has been itself wrong, and by appealing it we have increased its force; for we cannot use as actual guides the principles which lie more or less vaguely in our minds without strengthening, to some extent, their hold upon us. In case the principles are ethical principles, there are hardly any wrong ones whose hold upon us we can afford to have strengthened.

As an example of the kind of question I mean, take the subject of giving fees to our inferiors when they perform some service for us for which they are (or ought to be) otherwise well paid. This is a question which always awakens warm interest whenever it enters a conversation. I insist upon it that the way in which it is settled is a matter of very grave consequence. It is certain to have an immense effect, one way or the other, upon dignity of character in a large number of human beings. The most important difference between the people of this country and those of the older civilizations, according to those foreigners who have studied us, is that in this country one person may be as good as another as regards essential worth of character. Now, it would seem to be impossible that this subjective feeling of worth and dignity could

continue to exist among individuals who have accustomed themselves to taking fees. If it were a question of waiters in restaurants and hotels alone it would be one thing, but the custom of making little presents to menials (one cannot avoid calling them menials as soon as they begin to accept little presents) is sure to extend itself over countless others of the relations between the rich and the poor, if it once gets a foothold. Are we willing, simply because a few thoughtless rich people, returning from Europe, find the European custom the most conducive to their comfort, to give up our manly American custom of straightforward pay for straightforward service? In the April number of the JOURNAL OF ETHICS, Mr. Leslie Stephen quotes Mr. Lowell's noble words descriptive of America,—“she that lifts up the manhood of the poor,”—and plainly says that the thing that grates most painfully upon him in his own country is the servility of the lower classes. Is any sacrifice involving possible comfort, or possible imputation of meanness, too great to make to preserve uninjured, in however slight a degree, a quality which is one of our country's most important distinctions?

On the other hand, that this view of the matter is not “absolute ethics” is apparent from the fact that in Japan a totally different sentiment prevails. The Japanese (as Miss Bacon has just shown in her charming little book on “Japanese Girls and Women”) consider that it is plain buying and selling that is degrading, and that compensation for service of all kinds should always be in the form of a present. The only gentlemanly way in which a cup of tea can be taken in a restaurant is by leaving a *douceur* of a few cents in payment on the tray. Has ethics anything to say as to which is, in reality, the higher ideal of conduct?

But even if it were admitted that the no-fee plan is the better one, is not individual observance of it absolutely without effect? Is not the opposite custom so firmly established already that there is no possibility of changing it, for one thing; and, if it were not, is not the nature of the custom such that what one person does is unseen by, and consequently ineffective upon, what another person does? If the latter is

the case, is there any principle which requires us to do what inflicts immediate loss upon our neighbor, and immediate discomfort upon ourselves, for the sake of theoretical considerations upon which our conduct is admittedly ineffective?

Besides cultivating a lordly condescension in the rich and servility in the poor, there is a third class of people upon whose happiness the custom of feeling has a marked influence. The moderately well-dressed people are quite sure of being neglected by all but superhumanly virtuous waiters for the sake of those persons from whom large fees may be expected. Is this a state of things which the moralist, whose motto is to be, according to Mr. Leslie Stephen, "social equality except for cause," can endure to see fastened upon us without a protest?

It is thus that I heard this question debated *pro* and *con* the other day by a company of people who had all, in the words of William James, "a strong vocation for the moral life," but who were unable to convince each other that one way was better than another in this matter. Has a *Journal of Ethics* anything to say upon the question? Whoever thinks it a question of insignificant importance may well reflect upon those other noble words of Mr. Lowell's:

"In life's small things be resolute and great
To keep thy muscle trained: know'st thou when Fate
Thy measure takes, or when she'll say to thee,
'I find thee worthy; do this deed for me?'"

CHRISTINE LADD FRANKLIN.

COMMENT ON THE FOREGOING.

The interesting letter of Mrs. Franklin introduces to our readers a topic that has wider social bearings than appear on the surface. In *Westermann's Monatshefte* for April, 1882 (pp. 82-100), Rudolf v. Ihering, the famous Göttingen jurist, author of "Der Zweck im Recht," presented to the German public, for the first time, what one may call a relatively scientific view of the social significance and consequences of "Das Trinkgeld." The tale, as told by v. Ihering, is an impressive one. The widely-extended mischief done by so seemingly insignificant a custom is depicted by an expert in social problems with extraordinary vigor and persuasiveness. Paulsen, in his "Ethik" (1st ed., p. 423; 2d ed., p. 446), mentions v. Ihering's "Interessante Studie" with approval, and apparently full agreement. A little consideration, for the rest, shows how suggestive the custom of "tips" and "gratuities" is of certain very general processes

that accompany social evolution. Of these processes, viz., of the growth of all customs of fixed compensation for services rendered, and of the relatively abnormal growths that are opposed to these customs, v. Ihering himself, a good while before the publication of the essay on "Trinkgeld," gave an instructive account in his "Zweck im Recht" (vol. i., Leipzig, 1877), in chap. vii., "Die Sociale Mechanik" (see, in particular, pp. 109-127, 149-165, 199-212). In the second volume of the same treatise (published in 1883), v. Ihering specifically names for the first time the custom of giving *Trinkgeld* (as a case of irregular compensation or pretended compensation) on p. 246; condemns it as an *Unsitte* on p. 251, and summarily suggests his whole case against it (with a reference to the article above referred to) on p. 284 of the same volume. He calls the custom, "this marvellous bastard of wages and alms." In the article in the *Monatshefte* he denounces very effectively the utterly anarchical character of the custom, its entire irregularity and capriciousness. His reference is, of course, to the custom as it exists in Germany. It is not, he points out, payment for service as such. If it were, we should pay the cook rather than the waiter in the restaurant. "Our first criterion is, that whoever wants a gratuity from us must seek us out; we do not seek him out. The social compulsion that forces from us the gratuity depends on personal meeting and immediate contact. It is simply the situation that drives us to the act." If this is already an irregularity; if we pay our gratuity not for service rendered, but because of the accident of the presence of the man that we are to pay, the rest of the caprices of custom in the matter are very skilfully exposed and ridiculed by our author. "There is no other social creation so without principle as this custom; every effort to carry through any rule about it fails; every time one has to come back to the fact that so the fashion is, and that is all there is to be said." Such caprice governs all the decisions as to *when* and *how* and *whom* to pay. As for the actual social mischief wrought under the German conditions by *Trinkgeld*, v. Ihering makes some rather startling revelations, based upon his own observations. In sum, our author quite deprives his topic of the amusing and relatively trivial character that it is generally supposed to possess. In his hands it becomes a highly serious affair.

So much for an indication of what has been said about the subject. There is, to be sure, little reason to fear in the United States either the elaborate caprices of custom that v. Ihering describes, or the degree of evil that he depicts as possible and even as actual under continental conditions. The practical means suggested by v. Ihering for diminishing and finally remedying the evil are, therefore, hardly called for at present in America. It is interesting to find that he hopes for most aid in the matter from the healthy influence of the best part of the English travelling public upon continental hotels.

If the personal opinion of the writer of this comment as to the present situation of the problem in America is of any value, it may be as well to say that he sees in the custom of gratuities, as it at present exists among us, a minor and actually rather harmless social abnormality,—although certainly a social abnormality. But, as v. Ihering's paper shows, the custom at its worst becomes very decidedly mischievous. In no case, however, is the affair one for merely individual interference. If a reform is needed, only such co-operative means as v. Ihering himself suggests can be effective. If we think that it harms the manhood of

our waiters to "tip" them in this irregular fashion, let us say so, and, perhaps, some time move all together to end the custom. But let not the individual traveller try to convert to manhood the individual waiter, by insisting, against the custom of the place where he happens to find himself, upon his own "ideal social ethics," to the extent of refusing the expected "tip." If the mischief is ever shown to be considerable, let us meet it by organized devices, such as v. Ihering proposes. His plans, to be sure, are too elaborate for discussion here.

J. R.

NOTES ON CURRENT PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

OUR contemporary, the *Monist*, a quarterly magazine published in Chicago, is working in the broad field of general science and philosophy after a fashion that cannot fail to be of very great service. The paths of the two quarterlies—the *Monist* and our own JOURNAL—are sufficiently separated for us easily to avoid actual concurrence, and still near enough together for us to feel constant co-operation. Worthy of every acknowledgment is the skill of the indefatigable editor, Dr. Paul Carus, in gathering so wide and representative a company of thinkers about his editorial table, to discuss together the problems of the day. In the April number, Professor Jos. LeConte discusses the burning question of the moment, the "Factors of Evolution," suggesting in somewhat characteristic fashion the direction in which, according to him, we should look for a reconciliation of the "Lamarckians," as they are now so often called, and their opponents. That the problem of Professor LeConte's paper is one of great moment for the future of practical ethics, he himself suggests, and the suggestion is one that readers of Mr. Ball's recent little monograph, entitled, "Are the Effects of Use and Disuse Inherited?" will readily appreciate. Only, perchance, Professor LeConte's optimistic reconciliation of the Lamarckians and their opponents is rather too confident a solution of the very grave practical issue that seems to be involved in the controversy raised by Galton and by Weissman, and further developed through Professor James's treatment of the mental aspects of the whole matter in his recent "Psychology." The contributions of Professor Lombroso to recent numbers of the *Monist* carry with them the authority of his name and the waywardness of his

brilliant powers. They consist, in the main, of "Illustrative Studies in Criminal Anthropology."

THE *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* contains, in the second number of Volume IV. for the present year, an interesting study of Thomas Carlyle, by Professor Wilhelm Dilthey, of Berlin. Dilthey expresses a gentle surprise that the English have felt so much "interest in the domestic affairs of Carlyle." Germans, he says, do not share this interest, and the fact that Mrs. Carlyle had to do so much domestic work, to her own dissatisfaction, "leaves us [Germans] altogether indifferent (*lässt uns vollkommen kalt*)." Dilthey's own interest in Carlyle is, first, to review his general relation to German literature; and, second, to sketch the development of his thought sufficiently to "determine his place in the movement of the transcendental philosophy in Europe." That this place was mainly one of an ethical character is obvious. Dilthey makes much of Carlyle's practical efficiency. "Carlyle started upon the path that modern England has pursued: appeal to the laborers,—an effort to come to honorable understanding and co-operation with them. His work upon Chartism did an extraordinary service to England." "He found in our own Transcendental Philosophy," continues Dilthey, "the means of giving a reflective form to the faith that was in him; and to this philosophy he gave a new and effective expression, whereby it was enabled to become a power in social conflicts. Hereby he comes to occupy a significant place in the context of those spiritual movements that grew out of the Transcendental Philosophy." At this moment, when Carlyle's historical significance is unjustly neglected among us, Dilthey's essay comes as a serviceable reminder.

THE fourth number of the sixth volume of Wundt's "*Philosophische Studien*" contains a paper, by Johannes Schubert, on "Adam Smith's Moral Philosophy." The first section of the paper discusses the "Evolution of Moral Philosophy, from Shaftesbury to Hume." The second section treats of Smith's own views; the third section is devoted to a brief summary

and estimate. The key-note of the paper, as is natural in a study appearing in Wundt's own laboratory journal, is the thought of Adam Smith's significance as psychological analyst of the moral consciousness. Smith's doctrine is a "Gefühlsmoral,"—a doctrine of the "moral sentiments" of the most "consistent" and yet "natural" sort ("Zwanglosester Art"). The few psychological inconsistencies that occur here and there are slight errors, which do not alter the general effect. Especially does Schubert praise the skill of Adam Smith's deduction of justice. In the frequent comparisons with Kant, Schubert, as psychological student, easily gives the preference to Smith, whose purpose it is, after modern fashion, "to bring all the facts of the region of experience that is in question into the most consistent organization possible." Nevertheless, Smith's theory has the defect of giving insufficient attention to the specific problems of the will. Taken, however, in its wholeness, Smith's theory makes upon us now "an incomparably better impression than it would have made some decades ago, when ethics, to use an expression of Schopenhauer's, was still slumbering on the pillow that Kant had placed under its head." Finally, as an apparently faithful disciple of Wundt, Schubert blames the "extreme individualism" of Smith, which was, to be sure, a characteristic of his century, and points out that the new psychological school of ethical students works in the lines that have led Wundt to his definition of the "Gesamtwillen," or Universal Will. We should be glad, indeed, if our mention of Schubert's excellent paper attracted any reader's attention afresh to the ever-suggestive "Moral Sentiments" of Smith, so much neglected nowadays,—so worthy of attention always.

J. R.