

the general welfare of the community by promoting the prosperity of this humble but always worthy member of it. The brotherhood of man, and that sort of thing, you know. Nay, my brother; but the filthy Mongolian has *de bait* in his pocket. A few more coins of the realm remain in our citizen's pocket, than otherwise, when his nakedness gets itself a Chinese pocket to keep them in. A citizen kangaroo with a pocket in the honest skin of him were a desideratum, compared with such a one. Perhaps the dollar motive, the most vulgar and seductive of all the varying forms of self-interest, is the ruling passion of mankind. Behold the point of view and the logic of the thing. If I can save a dollar, what have the interests of my town and townsfolk got to do with me!

Further illustrations of this phase of our subject could be multiplied: For instance, in the matter of charity subscription lists published in the newspapers, and from political public life. Was it altogether cynicism in good old Dr. Samuel Johnson which prompted his aphorism: "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel"? The statesman (save the mark) serves his country. But what about the party of the other part, and who serves him?

Such questions as these next suggest themselves: Can any action be wholly disinterested? Can conduct, ostensibly union peaceable, be wholly good which has a motive that is bad? Conversely, can there be an appropriate motive for conduct which is morally wrong? Is it right to do evil with intent to accomplish good thereby: for instance, to tempt the commission of crime in order to secure evidence and a conviction? This is often done, and is called, erroneously, we think, the detection of crime. Such speculations as are here suggested must be passed by, for it is not the present purpose to attempt any discussion of the ethical quality and import of conduct and motive in any particular. But such questions are of far-reaching importance and of much interest, whether applied to public or to private polity, and much casuistry has been expended upon them, in the Church and State.

It is worth noting that conduct without motive is a possibility, for there are instances where motive seems to disappear from conduct and to be succeeded by mere habit or custom. Man is a creature of habit, an easy prey to it, and in certain particulars may be dominated by it altogether in his actions.

"Darling," said she, "do you love me as much as ever?"

"Yes, dearie," said he, with his nose buried in his newspaper.

That ought to have satisfied her, but she had to ask: "Why?"

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"Oh, I dunno. Habit, I suppose."

Can anyone imagine a more distressing illustration of the power of habit than this?

Again: birth, education and environment may mould character and habits of thought to the exclusion of motive or reason for what we are and what we hold to. Take our politics again. The Lord Chancellor in "Iolanthe" sings:—

"Every little girl or boy that's born alive  
Is born Liberal or Conservative."

This holds good, oftentimes, for religion. And you shake the average man's so-called convictions on anything debatable before you will jar him in his religious or political tenets, which are the most important for him and for society. Conduct divorced from motive is often of a dangerous tendency because impulsive and unreasoning.

Good is it for us that at times, as one has said, "our action is overmastered and characterized above our will by the law of nature. We aim at a petty end quite aside from the public good, but our act arranges itself by irresistible magnetism in a line with the poles of the world."

"There is a divinity which shapes our ends, rough hew them as we will."

### TOUGHT TO BE RIGHT.

First Lady (off for a journey)—I hope we've got the right train.

Second Lady—I asked seventeen trainmen and ninety-seven passengers if this train went to Blankville, and they all said yes, so I guess we're all right.

Noblesse Oblige.—"What are you staring at, Nellie?"—"Oh, please, ma'am, with your hair like that and your diamonds, you do look so like Lady Plantaganet Gingham that I was own maid to! Are you any relation, ma'am?"—"No—at least, no near relation. But you can have that pink silk shirt-waist of mine, Nellie."—Puck.

We should have to run naked in the woods, were we to strip ourselves of all we have borrowed from others.