

Browne to make quite sure of it put his share into his coat pocket. About a week later Mrs. B. had the plumbers going through the house and they decided that it was defective drainage—but it wasn't! After we had breakfast we were both in better humour and our misfortunes were forgotten in the pleasant prospects now before us. The weather was beautiful, a cloud here and there only gave the sky a brighter blue and we felt sure of a fine day. The pretty lake surrounded by rough hills sparkled and danced as though it were filled with fish and every one of them was winking at us and chuckling to think how green we must be if we had any hope of catching them. Before we left the house, I suggested to Browne that it would be a good plan to take some potatoes with us and that then we could build a fire and roast them in the ashes. Baked potatoes seemed to have rather a pleasant sound to Browne so we took a small tin painful and I volunteered to act as cook, thinking by this means, to keep myself well smoked and so be free from the mosquitoes and also recollecting the story of the wily Esop and the basket of bread, with what result the sequel will show. We had decided to try the stream this time, as Browne said that trout always preferred rough water. Now it may be stated generally, that rough water is usually associated with rough land and I think that if Browne's remark be true, the trout that inhabited that stream must have been reared in the lap of luxury—that they were rocked I am certain! The stream ran at the bottom of a deep ravine with a thick growth of brushwood covering the banks on either side. Here and there a fallen log, green and mossy, formed a bridge of charming picturesqueness but doubtful stability, while the stately monarchs of the forest cast their cool shadows on the rocks below, forming a retreat damp, cool and admirably adapted to the cultivation of a large, healthy and energetic variety of mosquito. Behold us then at the top looking down into this ravine—Browne carrying his fishing rod, the tackle and the fish basket, while I carried a rod, a bag of biscuits, a pail of potatoes and a supplementary can of worms for my own use. As I have said, the bank was steep; I might add that as there were many pines about, it was also slippery, so that when I started to go down, the conundrum as to how with my two hands I was to carry four such clumsy parcels, was settled for me on the spot—I went down on the broad of my back followed at intervals by sections of the fishing rod and Early Rose potatoes, for I clung desperately to the bait from experience, and to the biscuits from intuition, and we three arrived at the bottom *en masse*. When I had disengaged myself I found Browne about half way down the bank clinging desperately to a pine and appearing very much amused. For some time afterwards he found sufficient amusement in the resinous condition of his hands, to prevent him from enjoying my misfortunes. I had been stopped by the brushwood along the bank and when I had collected my rod and the potatoes I found that I was in a very poor position for fishing. Browne had found an open spot farther down the stream and was having a grand time, for now and then he would call to me that there was a beauty,—what did I think of that? and at intervals I heard “—lost it again,” and then he would call to me “just lost a lovely four pounder” or “biggest yet,” for I notice that the very large fish have a remarkable capacity for getting on to the hook and off again. I thought I saw a most tempting spot a few yards below on the opposite side of the stream and as there was a fallen log close by, which I trusted would carry me over I determined to “go below.” The mosquitoes must not be forgotten, their attacks were unceasing and by this time they literally swarmed about me, for I have always found myself particularly toothsome to these pests. Laden as before with the rod and biscuits in one hand and the two tins in the other I started on my transit, obscured like Venus—but by a cloud of mosquitoes. As the log was ancient and slippery I decided that “discretion was the better part of valour” and started on all fours. I was progressing very favourably and was about half way across when something caught my trousers. The engines stopped and the entire machine was at a standstill. I dared not turn around to see what was the matter for I should certainly have slipped off the log; both hands were occupied and the mosquitoes took a deliberated advantage of my unguarded position, and I am now convinced that they are utterly devoid of nobility of character. I tried to back out but as the trousers were a fixture, this only had the effect of exposing my nether extremities to the minions of H. S. M. Browne was out of sight by this time and it was useless to seek for assistance in that quarter, so making up mind to one grand effort towards making the transit a success I started forward: there was a short struggle as to which should give way but finally my tailor's handiwork triumphed, the twig broke and I reached the shore without further adventure very warm and affectionately accompanied by my friends the minions. I tied my head up in a handkerchief as closely as I could and then set to work at last to fish. Think not that my misfortunes were now at an end and that I was at last to stand like the fisherman in the picture books undisturbed on the shore and draw in “the finny treasures of the deep” as fast as I could cast my line. “You may take a horse to the water but you can't make him drink,” and similarly I had now taken the bait to the fish but I couldn't make them bite. I set down the tins and the bag of biscuits, carefully arranged my line and rod, baited the hook dropped it neatly into the stream and stood in breathless suspense waiting for a nibble. There! steady! I really felt a bite and I stood on tiptoe anxiously awaiting further developments. Suddenly I felt what I thought a splendid nibble and energetically whipped the line out of the water, then I saw a little fish come about a foot above the surface and fall back with a

splash, while my line sailed upward and wound itself around a branch high in the air.

(To be continued.)

SOME REFLECTIONS ON A RECENT ESSAY ON PURE ETHICS, WITH A THEORY OF THE MOTIVE.

This *brochure*, concerning which we intend to offer a few remarks, was got up in a nice style, suitable for distribution. It consists of little over a dozen pages, a rather small space in which to fully treat of a subject of such importance and magnitude as *Pure Ethics*. It may well be questioned how far the usefulness of short essays in general, extends, and more especially of short essays upon profound subjects. In the present instance the effect produced is a disappointment upon coming to the end of the sketch to find that there has been practically nothing proved. The arguments are sparse throughout, and one finds oneself lapsing through a slippery collection of statements, whose establishment has not been attempted. Neither do we notice any new departure in the treatment of the subject by the author, while a certain vagueness overshadows the whole.

Commencing with a division of the subject into Absolute and Relative Ethics, the author draws the following distinction between an absolutely good deed and one relatively good: “Either the deed is good of itself, no matter by whom and in what surroundings done, or it is good relatively to the intention of the actor, who does it with a beneficial motive.” A specific deed, good of itself, no matter by whom or in what surroundings done, to our mind does not exist. As Spinoza says: “In considering what is the true or the chief good, it is to be observed that good and evil are only relative terms. Nothing regarded in its own nature is to be called either perfect or imperfect; especially when we are satisfied that good and evil which happens does so according to an eternal order and fixed laws of nature.” It is the same old fallacy to which Socrates, in his day, drew attention. In considering deeds in this connection, it must be granted that we have to do only with reasonable deeds. With unreasonable deeds we have nothing to do. But all reasonable deeds must have some purpose in view, in so far, at least, as they are voluntarily performed, and, therefore, all voluntary deeds may be considered relatively to the persons performing them, or the persons upon whom or for whom they are performed. If the deed be involuntary, it must be considered in connection with the person or persons whom it affects. All good is relative, and to say that a deed is good, or in fact to conceive of such a thing at all, without considering also the participants in the act, is an absurdity. A good act is good for something or somebody, and not simply because it conforms to a certain standard and for no other and deeper reason. Supposing the moral law to take its authority merely from the command of an all-powerful Being, and supposing no punishment to follow upon disobedience of it, it would not be reasonable to call all actions which conformed to this law right and all others wrong. If, however, a severe punishment followed upon disobedience, we should then say that all actions performed in conformity with it were good, that is to say good for the person performing them, and all others bad. There is in reality no deed absolutely good without a consideration of the participation in it.

The three objections raised against the happiness theory are the following:—

I. That pleasure is far too low an element to be in any form identical with good. II. That pleasurable desire is selfish in essence, whereas right motive is not. III. That such theories overlook the binding force, or obligation, which attaches to laws of duty.

In the first place we should like to know what is meant by happiness being a low element. The Utilitarian may well retort that if happiness is low, so is good. On the one hand it is asserted, and satisfactorily enough proved, that true happiness is good, while on the other it is assumed that happiness is a very low thing. It cannot be that the Appreciators have confounded true happiness with sensual pleasures, and yet it seems a very foolish statement to say that happiness is low, while all the time it will hardly be admitted that good ends in anything but happiness. We have never known a Christian believing in Heaven who thought of it as a place of misery, and most Christians do their good actions with the sole view of getting to Heaven. Good actions often imply temporary unpleasantness, but who will deny that happiness redounds to the agent in the end? If the result of good actions was misery in the present, and misery in the future, we should like to know who would perform them for their own sakes?

The second objection contains two statements, first, that pleasurable desire is selfish in essence; secondly, that right motive is not. Now, supposing the former of those to be true, it remains to prove the second. We assert on the contrary that all right motive is selfish, if by selfishness, we understand a consideration for one's own true happiness. To each man his own final happiness is of the greatest importance, a statement which is in accordance with the saying of the Lord, “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” It is unfortunate that the word selfish, which must be applied equally to this Scriptural doctrine as to the theory of the Egoist, has another and less desirable signification.

The third objection is a mere statement which has never been proved. Proceeding to notice the connection of Christianity with the happiness theory, the author asserts as follows:—“If the charges made by the Appreciators are correct, there is a drawn battle between Christianity and the