

*MARTINEAU'S TYPES OF ETHICAL THEORY.**

It is a gratifying proof that the scientific study of ethics is receiving considerable attention in England, that the work before us, although consisting of two large volumes, has come to a second edition within the year. Dr. Martineau does, indeed, refuse to "treat ethics as a science, giving account of that which *is*. It would be nearer the truth to call it an *act*, or system of rules directed upon an *end*." Without discussing this question of terminology, it is at least certain that every subject can be treated in a scientific manner or spirit; and we have had more contributions to such a treatment of ethics during the last twenty years than for a very long time before.

Dr. Martineau's book has a character of its own. It is neither a history nor an exposition of the author's own theory of morals, although it partakes of both characters. We greatly need a good history of ethics. We have a good many partial and fragmentary accounts of the development of ethical teaching, such as the portion of Zeller's History of Early Greek Philosophy which deal with this department; Mr. Lecky's History of Christian Morals; and Dr. McCosh's account of the Scottish Philosophy. But a work which does for ethics what the work of Ueberweg does for philosophy in general, is still lacking, and is much to be desired. Dr. Martineau has not given us this; but he has made an important contribution to it in the selection and criticism of types of ethical doctrine, which he has given us in the present volume. He has also done something towards elaborating a rational and spiritual theory of ethics, in opposition to the physiological and evolutionary theories which have of late been, somewhat absurdly, taking to themselves the name of ethics.

Dr. Martineau apologizes for neglecting to provide what might seem to be a necessary preparation for a theory like his, by giving an exposition of the nature of free-will and of the existence of God. A theory like his, he says, that is "elicited from mere interpretation of the moral consciousness, is open to the charge of depending upon an act of faith: it collapses at once for any one who persuades himself that the moral consciousness is not to be believed. Unless he can accept his inward assurance of free-will and of a Divine authority in right, the whole organism of deduced rules lies in ruins." We are quoting these words of Dr. Martineau's, not because we sympathize with the supposed objection, but that we may let the intending reader know what he may expect.

Dr. Martineau postulates a belief in God and in liberty, and he bases his whole ethical teaching upon these foundations; and surely he is right. Apart from God and free-will, moral obligation is a mere phrase which has no substantial meaning. The harmonious action of the powers of body and soul, producing beneficent effects upon the agent and others, are, in the absence of such belief, no more moral in the strict and proper sense of that word, than masculine vigour or feminine beauty.

Ethics, according to Dr. Martineau, has to do with man's character and conduct. It may be defined, he says, as "the doctrine of human character." Taking man's ordinary moral judgments as a body of ethical facts, it is "the aim of ethical science, to strip from them their accidental, impulsive, unreflecting character; to trace them to their ultimate seat in the constitution of our nature and our world; and to exhibit, not as a concrete picture, but in its universal essence, the ideal of individual and social perfection. To interpret, to vindicate, and to systematise the moral sentiments, constitutes the business of this department of thought."

He next points out that ethics must "run out beyond the circle of mere introspection, in order to determine the objects in whose presence man continually stands, the relations he bears to them, and the dealings he has with them." These objects may be expressed in two words, Nature and God, understanding by Nature the totality of perceptible phenomena, and by God the eternal ground and cause whose essence they express.

Such being the case, the question arises as to the starting-point of the inquiry. Shall the mind begin with itself, or shall it start from the objects around it? And this, he says, is no trifling question, as it might appear, for it makes the whole difference between "the most opposite schools of opinion, between an objective and a subjective genesis of doctrine, between ancient and modern philosophy."

We recommend a very careful study of the whole Introduction, and especially of the part in which these statements occur, because it is here that we learn the author's philosophical or ethical method. He sums up his conclusions as follows: "In the last resort, the difference, I believe, will be found to consist in this: that when self-consciousness is resorted to as the primary oracle, an assurance is obtained and carried out into the scheme of things, of a free preferential power; but when the external

whole is the first interrogated, it affords no means of detecting such a power, but, exhibiting to the eye of observation a course of necessary evolution, tempts our thought to force the same type of development upon the human soul. In the one case, we obtain a volitional theory of nature; in the other, a naturalistic theory of volition; and in the resulting schemes of morals the great difference is impressed, that according to the respective modes of procedure, the doctrine of proper responsibility is admitted or denied." Accordingly, Dr. Martineau divides all ethical methods into two classes.

If we had room or inclination for criticism, we should perhaps plead for another classification, making three distinct methods of inquiry—the metaphysical, the physical, and the psychological. Dr. Martineau does, in fact, expound these three methods in the order in which they are here given. But he places the first two under the class of unpsychological theories, so that the metaphysical is thus placed nearer to the physical than to the psychological. It is, however, impossible to criticise the details of the book in this place. Those who wish to do so may be recommended to the pages of the quarterly philosophical magazine, *Mind*, where they will find some very acute criticisms by Professor H. Sidgwick.

As regards the book in general, it is admitted to be one of the most important contributions to ethical science recently given to the world. In respect to the author's own theory, it comes very near, as he tells his readers, to the teaching of Kant, although with less of that author's somewhat empty ethical dogmatism. We may further draw attention to an interesting correspondence between the author and Mr. Herbert Spencer placed at the end of the second volume of this edition. C.

JOTTINGS ALONG THE C. P. R.

SATURDAY, the 26th of June, was certainly the perfection of a travelling day. During the early part of the week, Toronto had been enveloped in mist and gloom, and the sun had scarcely deigned to show his face. Having a long journey by land and water in contemplation, I was inclined to welcome weather so unusual to our first summer month as a favourable augury of what Nature held in reserve for me; nor was I disappointed when Saturday morning broke clear, bright, and cool, with heavy masses of soft, fleecy clouds drifting so high overhead that they held no thought of storm or shower in their gray depths. At 10.15 a.m. I made my way to the Union Station, having previously secured a through return ticket to Victoria (the first one probably issued from the office at Toronto), and embarked upon the branch of the C. P. R. which runs to Owen Sound and connects with the Canadian Pacific boats at that place. The parlour-car was well filled, and I was fortunate in meeting with friends who were bound for some distant spot near Fort McLeod, and meant, like myself, to stop over at Winnipeg; so that they could act as companions and protectors by the way.

There was no dust, and a delicious air, and as the train sped on its way I felt I had been exceptionally fortunate in the date I had chosen for my journey. At Carleton Junction, the C. P. R. had an opportunity of practically illustrating its maxim of "Parisian politeness:" a passenger expressed a desire to get off and change a ten-dollar bill, which he was permitted to do; but he slipped on again so quietly, into the smoking carriage instead of his own seat, that his return was overlooked, and a vigorous search instituted for him which delayed the train some twenty minutes, much to the amusement of his fellow-passengers. When he was discovered, vials of wrath were poured over him, but the principle of "Parisian politeness" had been carried out all the same. After this trifling diversion, the train got again under way, and steamed through some pretty rolling land between Cheltenham and Inglewood, in the county of Grey; then on past the Forks of the Credit, made famous by two celebrated picnics. The scene looked unchanged since I saw it last; and as we crossed the lofty wooden bridge which spans the Credit River, I felt as if I must descend and enter the wooded dell so plainly visible from the car window.

A few moments more and the train slowly mounted the heavy grade to the top of the valley, and at Orangeville we halted for dinner; then on again through an ugly, flat, well-wooded district, very suggestive of timber limits, to Owen Sound, which we reached at 3.30 p.m. punctually, and found the "Alberta" lying at her wharf, on the other side of the platform, not a stone's throw from the train. We proceeded to extricate ourselves and rugs from the mysteries of the parlour-car seats and embark upon the solid steel vessel, which inspires confidence at a glance. The "Alberta" is a first-class screw steamship of 1,179 tons, built on the Clyde, and brought out to this country three years ago for service on the upper lakes. Her machinery is particularly fine, and consists of two large compound engines, fourteen hydraulic engines, and one electric engine,

*Types of Ethical Theory. Second edition. Two volumes. Oxford: Clarendon Press. New York: Macmillan and Company. Toronto: Williamson and Company.