THE RELATION OF POLITICAL ECONOMY TO MORAL SCIENCE.

Nowadays, when almost every man has a voice in deciding political questions, the leading principles, at least, of political economy should be very generally known. That every one who is called upon to exercise the right of franchise should give himself up to a very exhaustive study of the science cannot be expected : but almost every one (in Canada and America at any rate) reads newspaper articles on subjects which involve economic principles. It is then obviously of the greatest importance that newspaper editors should be students of political economy, and especially that they should recognize its re-.2 lation to moral science.

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Now unfortunately, Adam Smith, who is justly called the founder of political economy, and who has exercised a great influence on all subsequent English writers, failed to observe this relation, indeed he systematically excluded all moral considerations. Henry Fawcett, a sincere admirer of Smith, speaks in the introductory remarks of his Manual of Political Economy, of "the accusation which is so constantly brought against political economy, that it is a science which encourages selfishness and degrades the best feelings of human nature." The fact that this accusation is so constantly made is very significant. In the course of this article I shall endeavor to trace the cause of such a charge to the neglect of subordinating Political Economy to Morals.

To point out the errors in a science so vast is a task that might well appal the most egotistical; but it may not be presumptuous on the part of a young student of this most important science, to indicate briefly the difference between the views of Catholic economists and those of Protestant writers. The more so, as we have in English few, if any, exponents of what may be called the Catholic school of political economists.

These writers justly claim that society is composed of, and exists for individuals. Therefore the individual gives up none of

his natural rights by becoming a member of society: that is to say becoming a citizen. This is directly opposed to those whose tendency is to believe that the individual exists for society, - witness, the claim made by many that the state, ashead of society, may not only compel a father to educate his child, (which is but just,) but to educate him in a manner determined by the state.

It may be said that, as far as political economy is concerned, this is irrelevant. Not so. The constitution of society must necessarily affect any system of political economy, even admitting that it has to deal only with the material welfare of society. In a society where obtain christian principles, and equality of all before the law, the material order must be manifestly different from that of a society founded on the pagan principle of slavery and the spoliation of the weak by the strong.

To facilitate the attainment of the ultimate end of the individual, therefore, is, or should be, the aim of society. What is the ultimate end of man? Christians can give but one answer; — to attain eternal Salvation. Among the material means for its attainment the first and most important is wealth. Now "to investigate the laws which govern the production, distribution and exchange of wealth" is, undoubtedly, the object of political economy. But such investigation without regard to moral science tends to justify "the accusation so constantly brought against political economy that it encourages selfishness and degrades the best feelings of human nature.

When economists speak of the price of labor as regulated by the law of supply and demand, and of the laborer as they would of a piece of machinery, they may say that the law of supply and demand holds good when applied to labor as well as to anything else, and that it is only as a piece of machinery in the production of wealth that political economy has to deal with the laborer. Of course, if we ac-