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A CHAPTER

FROM THE STORY OF

PAULINE PARSONS

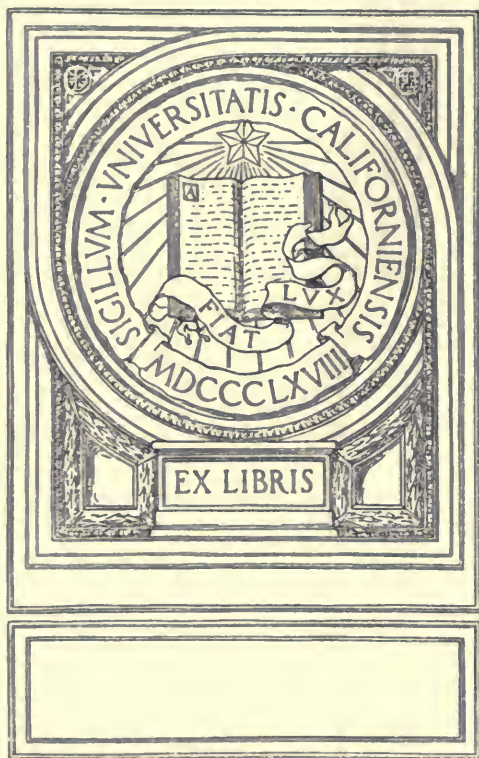
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THEOPHILUS BRASS

THERE can be no  
hope of progress or  
freedom for the  
people without the un-  
restricted and complete  
enjoyment of the right  
of free speech, free press  
and peaceful assembly.

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A CHAPTER  
FROM THE STORY OF  
PAULINE PARSONS

BY  
THEOPHILUS BRASS



ASHLAND, MASS.  
WILLIAM P. MORRISON  
1916

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U S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# PAULINE PARSONS

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## PREFACE

During the last decade writers upon the higher life of man who claim to have transcendental sanctions for their theories whether frankly conservative or ostensibly radical have been growing in courage and have even proclaimed that the positive and agnostic attitude of the last century is a thing permanently of the past.

During the same period the utterances of politicians of a certain type have disclosed a growing distrust of democracy. The distrust has, naturally, been implied rather than expressed, and has evinced itself mainly in more or less covert suggestions that we accept a new definition of democracy. We are still to have government for the people—it is said—but by experts instead of by the people; and by corporate experts not at all responsible to us or by government experts only indirectly so, or by both.

Is there any connection between the two tendencies? And is either or both to be regarded as in the line of progress? Or are they to be regarded as reactions from a previous upward swing to be followed later by another advance?

In the following conversation some suggestions are made that may help to answer these questions.



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## CHARACTERS

THE OCCASION: *The dinner given by Miss Parsons on the 9th of June, 190— at her residence on Essex Neck.*

### THE PEOPLE

MISS PAULINE PARSONS, *the hostess, an heiress of crystal mind and tender heart, said to be betrothed to Prince Friedrich of Hohenblenheim.*

MRS. MERLIN, *her aunt and chaperon.*

MRS. OLIVIA ORTON, *another aunt, a believer in supermen.*

MRS. LURTON, *a timorous liberal.*

MRS. HARDY, *a mystic.*

MISS BARBARA FLEMING, *a clever butterfly.*

MISS ELSINGHAM, *rich and philanthropic; a conservative.*

MISS ELSACK, *a lecturer on feminism and eugenics.*

MR. SOUNDER, *a pragmatist.*

MR. RANSOM, *a transcendental idealist of the Hegelian type.*

PROFESSOR HARDY, *a transcendental idealist of the Kantian type.*

MR. BARLOW, *Miss Parsons' new business secretary, an agnostic positive idealist.*

COMMODORE LURTON, *a liberal business man.*

MR. CONDOR, *a captain of industry.*

MR. CRANDALL, *a conservative lawyer, interested in the operations of the banking house of Bemis & Co.; an idealist except in the matter of making his living.*

MR. ROBERT LOVERING, *a liberal lawyer.*

MR. CHARLES BOYD, *Miss Parsons' cousin; a partisan admirer of Mr. Barlow.*

PROFESSOR MANN, *a biologist.*

PROFESSOR WALTHALL, *an economist.*

MR. A. PUFFINGTON PUFF, *essayist, lecturer and novelist; a social lion.*

THE CIRCUMSTANCES: *In view of Miss Parson's approaching departure from America for good, a powerful group of financiers headed by Bemis & Co., have concluded that the Parsons' mill property is a melon ripe for cutting,*

*and have laid their plans to buy it, incorporate and sell it to the public. But Miss Parsons, who comes of fighting forbears, objects and has given her secretary the task of devising means of resistance and a plan to share profits with her employees.*

## A CHAPTER FROM THE STORY OF PAULINE PARSONS

### I

"Am I surrounded by pragmatists, Mr. Barlow? Are you a pragmatist, too?" asked Miss Fleming.

"No. I'm not. I'll keep your communications open on this side. Go on and pound him. I've been listening. You have him beaten if you push your advantage," he replied with laughing encouragement.

"Have I really? Do you think I had the better of the argument?"

"You certainly had."

"But I've fired my last shot."

"Then make a general charge along the whole front."

"Mercy! That sounds most militant. I'm afraid," said Barbara mendaciously.

"I mean just sum up what you have been saying. Tell him pragmatism is an old vice which we are steadily trying to shake off, not a new virtue to be embraced—that it is intellectual anarchy founded on the false premise that man and each man is the center of the universe—but a Machiavelian anarchy fomented to save authority from responsibility to law. That a good definition of intellectual progress would be getting rid of pragmatic—that is perspective—points of view and pragmatic dogmas."

Mr. Barlow was aware of his tendency to make speeches and had made many resolutions to refrain but in the presence of temptation he invariably forgot his resolutions.

"Oh, but the pragmatists deprecate the use of abstraction, dogma and all that sort of thing!" objected Barbara. "You see I like to take the opposite side from that of the person with whom I am conversing. Do you think that is a sign of intellectual instability?"



"Not at all—you simply assume an attitude of philosophic doubt," said Mr. Barlow smiling approvingly into the girl's eager eyes. It was at this moment that Pauline turned her eyes towards them for the second or third time. With each inspection she had become more disturbed. It seemed to her as if Mr. Barlow and Miss Fleming were carrying on a most desperate flirtation.

"I'm not surprised at Barbara. She is a regular coquette. But I am surprised at him. I thought he was more cool-headed than to allow himself to be fooled by the first pretty girl that makes eyes at him. But then he's not used to girls. I ought not to have seated her next to him. Mercy, though! I don't see why I should bother. I don't have to constitute myself his guardian just because he's my secretary. He's old enough to take care of himself. But then he doesn't know how heartless girls can be. I wonder what they find so interesting to talk about. There! Just look at that! He's as bad as she is."

Mr. Barlow's smile was particularly appreciative just then for the girl's eyes were looking soulfully into his. Miss Fleming was indeed a coquette. With all her higher education she was still an essential woman. Man was her rightful prey.

Pauline could see Mr. Barlow's smile. But she could see his smile only—the smile she had come to regard as her personal property. She could not see his eyes for they were looking down into Miss Fleming's. Hence she could not see that there was missing in them a meaning that was never missing when they looked into hers. Pauline's slim fingers clutched nervously the delicate lace fan in her lap.

"Mr. Barlow!" said Miss Fleming appreciatively. "What a nice compliment!"

Then she gave a rippling laugh and tapped him on the arm with her fan.

The one in Pauline's lap—poor thing—had to suffer in consequence.

"How times have changed, Mr. Barlow," said Miss Fleming. "If a man had said that to my grandmother she would have thought him a queer stick. But I like it. We like it. We like men to take us seriously. Now to return to our discussion. Isn't man the center of the universe—to man?"

"Yes—in so far as his needs as they develop are his guide

to the best form in which to express the truth as it is discovered. But he is not the center of the universe as an isometric fact; nor are his needs dogmatically preconceived, to be taken as the criterion of positive, substantive truth or even of the best way of expressing it in 'shorthand.' "

"There! You use the word dogma again. But the pragmatist abjures dogma—even scientific dogma," laughed Barbara. "Does he not?"

"It's one thing to swear off on dogma and another to be a total abstainer," said Mr. Barlow. "What is a dogmatist? One is he who has a preconceived theory of things, constructed without regard to things as they seem—or with regard to things as they seem but with and upon the assumption of a known relation of phenomena to a postulated Absolute. A scientific hypothesis however bold is very different. It must fit, explain, be consistent with things as experienced up to date—known facts. It cannot outlive a single contradictory fact. It is constantly put to the touchstone of new facts—to be, in consequence, strengthened in belief, modified or thrown upon the scrap heap. Another kind of dogmatist is one who holds on to a once scientific hypothesis after it should be consigned to the scrap heap. The anthropocentric conception of the universe was once scientific—as science was then. It fitted all the facts as men know them. As adverse facts accumulated—as isometric views of the universe gradually qualified perspective views, the dogmatists—some of them—just ignored them—others fell back upon anthropocentric theories of the universe based upon postulates of the relation between phenomena and an assumed Absolute. Now comes another faction of the same cult who claim to hanker after facts. But it seems that they hanker after those facts only which support desirable propositions. Empirical pragmatists we have had with us always. They have been the main obstacles to progress since the beginning. But now comes the dogmatic pragmatist with his so-called scientific method of eliminating undesirable propositions. First determine whether a proposition is fruitful or not, he says. On that determination will depend whether it is true or not. But since there is no certain way of determining the fruitfulness of a proposition without first determining whether it is true—of the greatest possible probability—I think I am warranted in speaking of pragmatic dogma."

"You are one of the Rocky Mountain toughs, evidently, Mr. Barlow," commented Miss Fleming.

"No—nor one of the tenderfeet either. I claim to be just a harmless frontiersman."

"Frontiersman! Splendid! I seem to see what you mean. But tell me about him. Professor James forgot the frontiersman."

"Dealers in the dilemma often do forget. The frontiersman refuses to admit that he has to choose between 'going by facts' and 'going by principles.' He 'goes by facts' but draws principles from them. He 'goes by principles' but by principles based on facts. He is neither an empiricist nor a rationalist—but a rational empiricist."

"Is not a proposition true just in so far as it is fruitful?" demanded Mr. Sounder, Miss Fleming's late antagonist.

"Possibly—just in so far as it is fruitful—but just in so far as it is true it is at least potentially fruitful," replied Mr. Barlow. "If you can prove that a proposition is neither fruitful nor potentially fruitful you prove, perhaps, that it has no practical truth. But it does not follow that a proposition that is alleged to be fruitful is true or that a proposition that is alleged to be barren is not true. Your philosophy is based at best on a syllogism of four terms."

"But, Mr. Barlow," said Miss Fleming, "I understand that pragmatism has mainly to do with propositions that cannot in their nature be decided on intellectual grounds—propositions about which there is no evidence—chiefly propositions of morals and religion."

"As to morals, Miss Fleming, if there is no evidence there is no duty—we have only the spur of feeling without the bridle of knowledge," answered Mr. Barlow. "As to religion—as to any proposition upon which there really is no evidence the pragmatic method is quite proper. But do the pragmatists confine themselves to that class of propositions? James in 'Pragmatism' deals largely with questions as to which there is at least some evidence."

"But you cannot brush away the notion of fruitfulness so easily as you seem to think, Mr. Barlow," resumed Mr. Sounder. "You must admit that science 'frames her propositions with great arbitrariness'—having in mind that they must be made fruitful. Pragmatists simply emphasize the settled habit of science."



"What you say of science is true, Mr. Sounder," said the secretary. "But you pragmatists do not simply emphasize—you expand the habit of science into something quite different and quite improper. To describe a state of facts in some degree of completeness may require five hundred words or ten thousand words and from that up to a full description of the known universe. But we have not time to do that nor is it necessary where everybody has a single eye to gaining the truth. We may and do describe a state of facts in a short sentence perhaps, the statement to be taken in connection with the tacit context understood to be part of it. The scientific spirit requires us to use that short statement of the facts which is most fruitful—fruitful in the sense of simplifying, clarifying truth, banishing confusion, connecting the state of facts with the whole body of truth. But the pragmatist pads the word fruitful out into the sense of melioristic—having a beneficial effect upon the souls of men. He does not stop even there. Having translated fruitfulness in form into meliorism he goes on to adopt meliorism as a criterion of substantive truth itself—as controlling not merely the form of description but also the state of facts we are attempting to describe. But however we describe them the facts remain the same—they just are. We cannot bend the facts to our needs, we must bend our needs to the facts. Science does not distinguish between good truth and bad truth. To say that there is any truth that we dare not know is to preach a philosophy of cowardice."

"But that is just what James says about facts," exclaimed Mr. Sounder. "He says somewhere in his 'Pragmatism' for instance, that sensations 'are neither true nor false; they simply are. It is only what we say about them, only the names we give them, our theories of their source and nature and remote relations, that may be true or not.' And in his chapter on The Notion of Truth he says 'the "facts" themselves meanwhile are not true. They simply *are*. Truth is the function of the beliefs that start and terminate among them.'"

"Yes, I have all that in mind," said Mr. Barlow. "The whole chapter on 'The Notion of Truth,' barring some flashes which taken without the context might be objected to, is excellent—but not the special property of pragmatists. Moreover it is an excellent illustration of the inarticulateness and unreality of your method. It seems to give Professor James

great pleasure to know that facts, still, just are—while he proceeds to substitute fear for reason in the interpretation of them.”

“Fear and cowardice are harsh words, Mr. Barlow.”

“But there is some dignity in fear—I withdraw the word cowardice,” replied the secretary. “If you do not found your melioristic theory of truth on fear, it seems to me you are thrown back on some such triviality as æstheticism or culture collecting or religious feeling of a higher type but still of the same general kind that thrives only in the light of stained glass windows.”

“Illustrate, Mr. Barlow!” demanded Barbara.

“On what other ground does Professor James advance meliorism as a reason for postulating the freedom of the will than fear that man if he comes to believe in determinism will lose his sense of dignity and responsibility and so morally perish? And does he not reject the theory of evolution—having first repeated that old libel that it leads to materialism—on the ground that if he believes in evolution, he will have to share Mr. Balfour’s melodramatic gloom over the universal death to follow?”

“But these are metaphysical problems, are they not?” asked Mrs. Orton across the table. “James so classifies them in his ‘Pragmatism.’”

“But how can you say that the belief in a mechanical evolution is not materialistic?” asked Mr. Crandall who sat next to Mrs. Orton on her right. Mr. Crandall was an idealist—except in the matter of earning his bread.

“At any rate it is mechanical—without soul,” suggested Miss Elsingham, from Pauline’s end of the table.

“Isn’t Mr. Balfour’s gloomy picture of the end of dissolution warranted?” asked Mrs. Lurton. The Commodore’s lady had a heart full of love for her fellows. Though inclined to be liberal in her beliefs she had clung stubbornly to her faith in the spiritual reality of those mansions in the skies which would some day shelter the poor and needy.

“Do you mean to say that you cannot do as you want, Mr. Barlow?” This from Miss Elsack, the lecturer and writer on feminism and eugenics. She had never found any difficulty in believing in both moral eugenics and free will.

“But Professor James’s book does not pretend to be a contribution to science,” asserted young Professor Hardy,

from Mrs. Merlin's end of the table. "It is a discourse upon philosophy."

"Just what do you mean by empirical pragmatism, Barlow?" asked Bob Lovering, who sat directly opposite Mr. Barlow.

At this bombardment of queries, Mr. Barlow, who had been entirely oblivious of the fact that others than Miss Fleming and Mr. Sounder were listening to him, cast a startled look around the table. Once more he regretted his propensity to make speeches.

"It is strange, Miss Parsons," said Professor Mann, "how mature men can take the serious interest Mr. Barlow seems to take in fundamental speculation."

"It is strange, Professor," agreed Pauline, "if the fundamentals are floated in the air. But if they are founded upon solid ground it seems to me that a reasoned theory must help a man's work."

"You surprise me, Miss Parsons," and the Professor looked his surprise. "I have no time for fundamentals and I had supposed that you were of the kind to urge taking hold of the work at hand and letting the idlers philosophize."

"I certainly do not approve of philosophising at the expense of the work at hand," said Pauline. "But my observation is that even the busiest people inevitably construct their philosophies between strokes—but too much upon the authority of these very idlers. Perhaps a few strokes would not be missed and the time well spent in rounding up the results of their own thought."

"But what is the good of it?"

"Well, it seems to me that if a man's philosophy is haphazard his influence in the world will be haphazard; if it is unreal he may be a positive drag. If a man's philosophy fits itself to real life and has a clarifying effect you will find him always pushing the work of the world forward instead of sometimes forward and sometimes backward."

During this colloquy between Pauline and Professor Mann the bombardment of Mr. Barlow continued.

"This is splendid!" cried Barbara in high spirit. "We will have a regular debate. But one question at a time, please. I shall appoint myself moderator of the meeting; because it was I who discovered Mr. Barlow. I foresee that this is going to be the most enjoyable dinner ever."



"The idea!" said Pauline to herself. "*My* secretary!"

Then she remembered that Miss Fleming did not know that Mr. Barlow was her secretary. Pauline had never been in the habit of introducing Phœbe Lenham as her secretary. She had decided to adopt the same course as to Mr. Barlow. Outside of the immediate family only Bob and Constance Lovering, Charles Boyd and Mr. Crandall knew of Mr. Barlow's status. Pauline had not told even Mrs. Orton that he was her secretary. Her aunt was not always considerate of the feelings of those whom she considered subordinates and the time had been too short to explain Mr. Barlow's danger points.

Mrs. Orton was a believer in supermen—not merely in the Nietzschean men of blood and iron but in all big men who made little men drill in regiments.

"Anyway she has not discovered the *man*," added Pauline to herself.

"Now, Mr. Barlow," said Barbara crisply, "tell us—is the theory of evolution a metaphysical speculation? And is the question of free will a metaphysical speculation?"

"There must be others here who are better able to answer these questions," protested Mr. Barlow.

"No—not at all. It's easy to see you know what you are talking about," insisted Barbara. "Besides, if we had everybody putting in his answer we should have just a lot of loose talk—as we so often have when we discuss such subjects as these. Come, Mr. Barlow."

"And why not answer my question about pragmatism before we leave that topic, Barlow?" asked Bob.

"Address the chair, please," quoth Barbara. "However, I think Bob's is a good suggestion. But the answer must be final on that branch of the subject."

All eyes were turned upon Miss Parsons' secretary. He glanced towards the head of the table. But it happened that Mr. Puff had chosen that moment to inform Pauline that an American could not listen long to the smoking-room talk of the London clubs without feeling ashamed of the influences his country had had on political methods over there—if members were paid no gentleman could afford to enter politics.

So Mr. Barlow could not catch Miss Parsons' eye.

## II

"Well, then, Miss Fleming. I will do the best I can," he said. "I mean by empirical pragmatists, Lovering, those who from time immemorial have been in the habit of confusing the issue, talking off the point, arguing about words instead of the ideas conveyed by them, in general kicking up a dust to hide the truth, without going through the formality of seeking a fundamental, philosophical or scientific warrant for loose thinking to convenient ends."

"Now, Mr. Barlow—the theory of evolution and metaphysics," prompted Barbara when he had come to a stop.

He glanced again towards the head of the table. This time he caught Pauline's eye, but there was no message in it either of approval or disapproval.

"It seems to me, then," he began with an air of resignation, and not a little disturbed at the lack of expression in Miss Parsons' eyes, "that the best guide to clear thinking ever devised was the division of man's intellectual activities into two main fields: the inquiry as to what are, if any, the laws of appearance—phenomena; and the inquiry what is the Ultimate and Absolute Reality behind appearance. The first is the domain of science—or of philosophy if you mean by philosophy, as Spencer does, completely unified science. The second field is the domain of the old philosophy—ontology and metaphysics—and of religion. Now to put the theory of evolution—the theory of orderly progress throughout the domain of phenomena—within the domain of metaphysics seems to me the grossest kind of confusion in thought, Mrs. Orton. If I am wrong—if this is clear thinking—then my mental equipment is unfit for discussion with those who so classify our speculations."

"You are perfectly correct, Barlow," said Bob. "The theory of evolution, however speculative, is wholly a matter of science—even if it is bad speculation—and of course I do not believe that it is bad."

"Then as to determinism, or as James calls it, inaccurately, fatalism, and free will," continued Mr. Barlow, "if this is a metaphysical question then the question whether

there are any sciences of the higher life of man is a metaphysical question. And here, Miss Elsack, we come to the answer to your inquiry. Of course I can do as I want. Not only that but I cannot do anything else. My will—the name, not of a faculty, but of a process, the process of turning desire into action—is absolutely under the control of my preponderating desires. If there is anything ‘free’ it is desire, not will. If human desires are free, Mrs. Orton, it is useless to study them as if they can be reduced to fruitful order. Ethics, economics, psychology and all kindred studies become empty pastimes. Prohibitive law is effective only because it happens so. Punishments may any day be regarded as prizes and prizes as punishments. About human conduct that is just the output of several hundred million kaleidoscopic wills working under no common principles and, severally, under no continuing principles, without order without any past that counts—causeless and without reactive effect, you can frame no answerable questions. Politics and slap-jack you may class together.”

“Then do we mean just nothing at all when we speak of one having a strong will,” asked Miss Elsack.

“We mean an immense deal. We mean roughly that he knows what he wants and is sufficiently steadfast in his sterner desires to act along more or less consistent lines.”

“And by one with a weak will that his desires do not stay put long enough to keep him plugging at it?” added Barbara. “He is never sure that any particular game is worth the candle.”

“Excellent!” exclaimed Mr. Barlow, looking appreciatively into her animated face.

Pauline’s little hands worked nervously with the fan in her lap.

“If you are going to be moderator you must not take sides, Barbara,” said Charles.

“Order!” exclaimed Barbara. Then she resumed.

“Now, Mr. Barlow, tell Miss Elsingham and Mr. Crandall why it is a libel to speak of the theory of evolution as materialistic—or mechanical.”

Mr. Barlow laughed a little nervously and cast another inquiring glance toward the head of the table. He felt that for a “social surplus” he was tarrying too long in the lime light. But Pauline’s face though cold and irresponsible held



no veto in it. In fact a slight smile—the society woman's ever-ready veil—was taken by her secretary as giving him her permission to proceed.

"If you mean by mechanical a theory of orderly progress, Miss Elsingham," he said, "the term is proper enough. But if you insist on the term without soul having in mind a scheme of finished monotony, stagnation so far as human interest and human opportunity is concerned, you must remember that though man is compelled to work the machine it would not work without man. As to the term materialistic—"

"Oh, I don't see that—about the working of the machine," interrupted Miss Elsingham.

"Nor I. It's just fatalism—nothing else—if the will is not free to change—to construct," concurred Mr. Crandall.

"And there is no novelty in the world!" from Miss Elsack.

"No, fatalism—" began Mr. Barlow, answering Mr. Crandall.

"Now, Barbara—that isn't fair. You should not allow Mr. Barlow to answer these last questions first," said Mrs. Lurton.

"Have patience. Mr. Barlow will answer them all in due time," promised Barbara.

"I'm afraid you're riding for a fall if you pin your faith to my ability to answer all these questions, Miss Fleming."

"Come, Mr. Barlow, you won't go back on me now after I've appointed myself moderator?" she challenged.

"Well, then, I think we have to look at it in this way, Mr. Crandall," said Mr. Barlow. "When a new belief fastens itself upon one it initiates some change in one's character. One will act differently after the new belief is established than before. If the new belief is that human conduct has its inexorable laws, and this new belief only half understood, causes a man to relax his efforts, to let down, to think that things will happen anyway, whether he acts or not, he becomes a fatalist. If, on the other hand, this new belief stimulates a man to act appropriately to the end to be gained, knowing that without the cause the effect will not happen, he embraces something so different from fatalism that it may be said to be the antithesis of fatalism."

"Illustrate, Mr. Barlow, I have to have concrete examples," said Miss Elsingham.

"The fatalist says the fates have decreed whether I shall feast tomorrow or not. Therefore it makes no difference whether or not I work today. His mistake is in believing that fate decrees effects without their causes. He forgets that if fate has decreed that he shall feast tomorrow it has also decreed that he shall work today—or some other cause—that if by his not working today, it appears that fate has decreed that he was not to work today then it may also turn out that it has decreed that he shall not feast tomorrow. But the sole effect upon a man of a clear understanding of causation as applied to conduct is that if he would feast tomorrow, then there must be a cause appropriate to the effect—such as work today. And similarly, if he desires that men shall be politically wise he will understand that it cannot be accomplished by eliminating political exercise. He will frown at all specious plans for good government which is not also responsible government. And so as to all questions of conduct. It is the believer in free will rather—"

"But the fatalist may think that though he does not work today, some one else may provide the feast tomorrow," suggested Professor Hardy with a patronizing smirk. He had overheard Mrs. Merlin telling Mr. Ransom that Mr. Barlow was her niece's new secretary. He had also observed Pauline's cold little smile and had drawn from it a different inference than the secretary's.

"Mr. Hardy, this is an interesting discussion. We have no time to consider every grotesque meaning you can give to words," snapped Barbara. "Try and grasp the idea—which is that fate does not decree effects without causes."

"I'm afraid the Professor's objection must be taken as an example of empirical pragmatism," laughed Bob Lovering.

"Still Mr. Hardy's question does seem to suggest the temporizing tendency of fatalism," ventured Miss Elsack diffidently shifting her glance from Barbara's face. She was not afraid of an audience but she was conscious of standing in some awe of Miss Fleming.

"The man Professor Hardy introduces is not a fatalist," interposed Mr. Barlow appealing apologetically to Miss Fleming—and thereby causing Pauline's fingers to clutch her fan again. "He acknowledges, at least unconsciously, that there must be conditions precedent to his feasting, only he prefers to trust to the bounty of others instead of his own



labor. So far as he is conscious of any philosophy he is a determinist but his earmark is indolence and he would be indolent, probably, whatever his philosophy."

"Now you were going to say something about the believer in free will, Mr. Barlow," suggested Barbara.

"I was going to say that it is the believer in free will rather than the determinist who must feel the uselessness of effort—because of the trivial consequences of effort—its short range. See the different effects the two beliefs must have upon a man who has had a long run of bad luck, as we call it. To the man who denies causation in human affairs, it is just luck—he believes in chance—there is nothing to do but hope for better luck—he may flounder around and make a fuss but he can have no faith in the far-reaching effects of conduct since there can be no effects that impinge upon the will of others or react upon his own will—thereby binding them. Most likely he becomes a hopelessly discontented member of society without any thought of remedy. The most he can hope to effect is a temporary palliative. But the believer in the reign of causation over human conduct regards his so-called bad luck as a consequence of his lack of adjustment to his environment. There must be something the matter with him or something the matter with human institutions. If he concludes that the trouble is with his own conduct the conclusion must have a characteristic effect upon his future conduct. If he concludes that the trouble is with human institutions he becomes a more or less active agitator for their change. Whatever his quality as an agitator—whether guided by gross selfishness or by an enlightened self-interest—he is not, at any rate, a fatalist. It is the man who believes in free will who is the more likely to play the part generally given to the fatalist. And so it seems plain—to me at least—that though men are compelled—by their desires—to work the machine it will not work unless men work it just because without causes there are no effects. Men do construct, they do create, but not out of nothing. With better knowledge and wider sympathies they recreate the past. There is the novelty, Miss Elsack—not the kaleidoscopic novelty that might come of free and irresponsible wills but the orderly novelty of articulated construction. As a matter of fact practically all men—especially almost all civilized men—live and work in the belief in cause and effect as the highest law

of conduct—each man individually impelled by the belief that if his personal efforts cease his personal results will not accrue and that if he misses opportunity that particular opportunity will never come again—other opportunities may come—that certain one will have gone by forever. He knows that what he wants he must set about getting.”

“All except happiness—he knows that the best way to attain happiness is *not* to set about getting it,” suggested Mr. Ransom with sly amusement.

It seemed to be a hit and there was a general laugh. Mr. Ransom’s pronouncements upon ethical theory were accepted by his many admirers as finality.

“At least, I presume you are an evolutionary hedonist and swallow the paradox with the rest of hedonist doctrine,” added this new disputant.

Mr. Barlow seemed for the moment silenced.

“I think we must postpone Mr. Barlow’s reply to your suggestion, Mr. Ransom, until after he has disposed of the libel of materialism and of Mr. Balfour’s gloomy picture,” said Barbara.

“I think I will answer Mr. Ransom now if you don’t mind, Miss Fleming,” said Mr. Barlow with another deferential look that too, was not lost upon Pauline. Then he added with a laugh, “since it seems that there is no escape for me in the end.”

“Very well, Mr. Barlow—if it is more convenient,” permitted Miss Fleming.

“Then, Mr. Ransom, it seems to me that we attain happiness by going after it just as we obtain other things. We enjoy the happiness that comes from the indulgence in wine by drinking wine. We enjoy the delight of contemplating our own good deeds by doing good deeds, and we attain the greatest joy of all, the sympathetic joy in the happiness of others brought about by our action, by giving happiness to others but just in so far as we are conscious of giving happiness to others for the purpose of enhancing our own happiness we lose the finest flavor of that greatest joy of all. We obtain the finest flavor by doing the things which cause it. So if we are conscious of trying for the result we do not get the result because that is not the way to get it. That is all there is to the paradox. It seems to me that your implication that evolu-

tionary hedonists must admit that it is an exception to causation is ill-founded."

"Still the fact remains that if you set about getting the highest happiness you do not get it," persisted Mr. Ransom. "Words however cleverly manipulated will not explain away the fact—or alleged fact."

"You state the fact incorrectly," answered Mr. Barlow. "If you consciously set about getting that which is a result of unconscious, spontaneous effort you will not get it."

"Still I—"

"Cut it! Everybody sees it but you," said Charles. Like the law Charles was no respecter of persons.

Mr. Ransom looked about him. Seeing no evidence that others were with him in desiring further exposition of the matter, he subsided.

"Now, Mr. Barlow, as to the materialistic implications in the theory of evolution," prompted Barbara.

"As to the term materialistic you must keep in mind that the theory of evolution has only to do with phenomena," resumed the secretary. "It has nothing to say about the Ultimate and Absolute Reality. Whether you mean by the theory of evolution just the theory that all things phenomenal, inorganic, organic and super-organic, have evolved and are evolving in an orderly way which may be studied and in large measure understood by men; or whether you mean some particular formula of evolution, as Spencer's; the theory in either case may be entertained by men who hold to the most diverse views, guesses, beliefs, dogmas—whatever you call them—about the Absolute—and even by one who clothes his Absolute in all kinds of human attributes and calls it a personal God provided only that he adds not capriciousness to his attributes. It may be entertained by the man who postulates an Absolute of some kind or by a man who postulates that there is no Absolute or by the thorough going agnostic who declines to postulate either that there is or is not some such entity behind phenomena or by a man who postulates that the phenomenal is just the functioning of the Will of the Absolute. All may hold to the theory of evolution of things—whether they are *just* phenomenal things or real things or only the unfoldings of the Absolute. Only they who postulate a capricious Absolute whether just a capricious Absolute Reality or a capricious personal God are



precluded from holding to a belief in evolution generally and only they who believe in free will are precluded from belief in the evolution of man in his psychological, ethical and social nature. Even they who proclaim a priori rules and set these up as an Absolute of another kind are debarred in so far only. Because of their fundamental postulates of that which transcends and lies behind phenomena, if anything does transcend and lie behind phenomena—or because of their refusal or neglect to postulate—none are precluded. It therefore seems to me utterly idle to call an evolutionist a materialist—since materialists, idealists, atheists, theists, agnostics and every other kind of ‘ist’ except capricionists and free willists may be evolutionists. Whether one is a materialist or not depends upon his belief or postulate as to the Absolute—if he postulates anything.”

“But if he postulates nothing—isn’t he a materialist?” asked Miss Elsingham.

“Certainly not. He may fall back upon his admission that there may be an Absolute.”

“But how can you assume to cram evolution—as applicable to the mind and soul—down the throat of the absolute idealist?” asked Mrs. Ransom.

“I don’t. But it is the only medium of circulation that is at all acceptable to all except libertarians, whether it is acceptable as hard cash or only as fiat money.”

“Absolute idealists, however, do discuss the conduct of man—and independently of evolution, as applicable to the mind and soul,” persisted Mr. Ransom. “I instance the ethics of T. H. Green and his school. Man’s experience being but the unfolding of the Will of the Absolute his duty consists in self-realization as part of the Absolute, or, in terms of conscious experience, self-realization as part of the Social Whole.”

“If Green’s Absolute were not, as he contends, a capricious Absolute but one which unfolded in accordance with law—its own law if you will—in an orderly way, then an evolutionist could have no quarrel with him—whether or not he would quarrel with the evolutionist,” answered Barlow. “The unfolding being an orderly one and pictured in the conscious experience of man we go right on studying the laws of the conscious experience of man including his necessary conduct—that is, we study evolution as applicable to the mind and

soul of man. If the positive knowledge about man's mental and moral development which we thus gain is also knowledge about the orderly unfoldment of the Absolute Will, that is interesting, but the important gain is increased knowledge of ourselves, not of the Absolute. Again if, gaining positive knowledge about moral adjustment of man to man and to environment, we find we can express adjustment in terms of self-realization in relation to the social whole that may be a convenient form of expression, but the important thing is that we have learned our duty to ourselves and to each other as individuals. The social whole apart from the individuals which compose it is nothing—with them it's nothing more than the total of the relations between them. But Green takes great pains to prove—to his satisfaction and that of his followers—that his Absolute is a capricious Absolute—in the sense that the unfoldment of its Will is at the mercy of the free will of its individual parts. We must then exclude Green from the discussion of conduct since according to his view there is nothing to discuss—there being no order in conduct. But he is excluded not as an absolute idealist but as a capricionist."

"There you go! You materialists can see no order but mechanical order," said Mr. Ransom. "You ignore the power of ideals. You cannot see the ideal order."

"Your last remark seems to imply that the will is not free before the power of ideals. That is true but it seems a strange one for a capricionist to entertain," rejoined Mr. Barlow. "Evolutionists more than any others recognize the power of ideals—whether such an one as the ideal that we form just before tossing off a cocktail or that which moves us to relieve suffering or recede from a course of injustice. But we have our minds upon those ideals which actually do move men, ideals of pleasure to be enjoyed or pain to be escaped. We eschew invented ideals that have no impelling effect upon men—such an one, for instance, as the ideal of self-realization as part of the Social Whole. That ideal never moved and never can move anyone to action—that is otherwise than through the proximate ideal of calculated happiness, well-being, pleasure to be attained, in such way, by the actor."

"Calculated or spontaneous," suggested Barbara.

"No, Miss Fleming—not in self-realization," insisted Mr. Barlow. "There is spontaneous happiness in sympathy with

the joy of one or more fellow beings but none in adjustment to the idealists Social Whole—the feelingless shell.”

“Isn’t it a little too sweeping, Barlow, to say that the ideal of self-realization cannot move to action?” asked Bob. “Granted that no one can know what to do in order to realize one’s self as part of a Social Whole emptied of the individuals who compose it; still the teachers of the cult do point out what they say are the courses of conduct which will result in or are the result of self-realization or are coördinate with it. May we not be moved by mistake?”

“True. We may be moved by mistake,” answered Mr. Barlow. “But observe that I said only that the ideal of self-realization can move no one otherwise than through the proximate ideal of pleasure for the actor. Whether we are moved by mistaken or correct practice the proximate ideal is the pleasure of the actor—usually calculated but as the true moral goal is approached tending to become spontaneous—ever the proximate impelling ideal but to be smothered in consciousness by sympathy for others. No one can realize himself or do anything else, unless he wants to and the very essence of wanting to is the calculated or spontaneous motive of self-betterment. Whether your ultimate moral ideal is self-realization as part of an ideal Social Whole or is the highest and most complete happiness for all individual men your proximate ideal is the resultant of your conflicting desires—self-betterment—pleasure. As to the two ultimate moral ideals it may be left to the opinion of mankind which is the better; that of the absolute idealist barren of every thing that human breasts crave; or that of the better and ever better happiness of all—the ideal of the evolutionary hedonist.”

“Good boy, Barley,” cried Charles, clapping his hands. “You are some orator—believe me.”

“Behave yourself Charlie Boyd,” commanded Barbara.

“I’m behaving myself. Great heavens! What kind of a meeting is this if a fellow can’t applaud?”

“You were not applauding seriously.”

“I was,” quoth Charles. “You make me tired, Barbara. You seem to think you are burdened with the duty of personally conducting Barley through this discussion. Why Pauline—”

But here he caught a warning glance from Pauline.



## III

"Let's see," said Barbara, undisturbed. "I think we have strayed from the subject of the materialistic aspect of evolution."

"To come back to that topic, Mr. Barlow," said Mr. Walthall, "let me suggest that there are those who believe that life, intelligence, the soul, are mere functions of matter, have evolved from matter. There has been some question whether Spencer did not hold to this opinion or hypothesis as a tenable scientific hypothesis. At least it would come within the domain of the phenomenal—it is often stated that there will be forthcoming scientific demonstration of it. But can you successfully maintain that one who holds such an hypothesis is not a materialist?"

"If it should turn out to be a fact it would be a fact whether materialistic in its implication or not," suggested Bob.

"Of course. I am not a pragmatist. My reading leads me to pretty much the same general conclusions as those which Mr. Barlow has outlined. But I confess that the establishing of such a fact would, it seems to me, have a materialistic implication and speaking for myself, it would have a very depressing effect."

"We biologists do not cross our bridges until we come to them," suggested Professor Mann in a superior manner.

"Not being biologists, but just human in our weaknesses, neither do we, Professor," replied Mr. Walthall good-humoredly. "But we confess to a curiosity about the bridges. I should like to hear what Mr. Barlow has to say about it—whether he thinks there is a bridge or that we shall have to plunge into the cold stream."

"What do you say, Mr. Barlow?" asked Mrs. Lurton, who was as deeply concerned about this point as about Mr. Balfour's gloomy picture of dissolution.

"There is a bridge for me," replied the secretary, "and for all who see in materialism a mere spectre. Suppose it be actually established that life, intelligence, soul have evolved from matter—what is established? Simply that matter is

capable of taking such form as to be conscious of itself. Its conscious experience then is just conscious experience—the succession of states of consciousness—just appearance, phenomenal. We are no nearer to the Absolute or wiser about it than before—we still see it through the veil of the mind. We cannot now any more than before push the mind to one side and look directly upon that which may cause conscious changes—the Absolute Reality or whatever you may call it—if there is any such Reality. Then—”

“Oh, but there you give your whole case away, Mr. Barlow,” broke in Mrs. Lurton. “After relying upon the Absolute Reality to save us from the spectre of materialism now you speak as if there may be no Absolute Reality!”

“I have to look all the possibilities in the face even if one of them does destroy my case,” replied Mr. Barlow. “While the theory of evolution does not deny the Absolute neither does it require it. Then the question arises whether, if there is no Absolute behind phenomena—if matter is just what it appears to be—stone, iron, carbon, atoms, electrons, and not the manifestations of an Absolute Reality—and if, further, it later becomes scientifically certain that mind, intelligence, soul are just functions of such gross, real, matter—then, I say, the question arises whether, in such case, the implication of evolution is materialistic. I think it is. But so is it of every other theory of the nature of things. Under the supposition materialism is an implication of the facts—no more binding upon an evolutionist than on any other observer or dreamer. But a belief in the materialistic nature of things would be unfortunate. Though the spur to right doing would not be dulled, though the moral goal towards which evolution points would still be our goal, so long as man inhabited the earth, still a great deal of the joy of life would be taken away and an end would be made to the hope of immortality. Fortunately we do not have to accept the supposition as true—and never shall have to accept it as true. Should science prove that mind is just a function of matter we shall have to accept that as true—to deny it would be just to hide our heads ostrich-like in the sand. But we will never have to admit that appearance is reality. We can never push the veil of the mind aside even so much as to see that it is not a veil—that there is nothing behind it. While we have no right to postulate the Absolute as positive knowledge upon which



to found systems of ethics or other rules for the guidance of man, we have a right to personal religious belief in such an existence and that appearance is but its manifestations. Nor does this appeal to meliorism as a criterion of emotional belief about that of which we have and can have no positive knowledge—any more than the arbitrariness in the form in which science frames positive truth—propose meliorism or fruitfulness as a proper criterion of substantive, positive truth. But in that domain into which science can never intrude—the domain of the Unknowable, behind the veil—the appeal to meliorism as a criterion of faith is a legitimate one.”

“I fear, Mr. Barlow, that biology can lend no support to the postulate of the Absolute. The interpretations of consciousness are real and the only knowledge we can have.”

“I postulate nothing as to the Absolute,” replied Mr. Barlow. “I am a thoroughgoing agnostic and I thought I had made it plain that I believe the interpretations of consciousness to constitute the only knowledge we can have. But there is a difference between knowledge and faith. If you assert that the interpretations of consciousness are real then it is you who postulates. If biologists have any evidence of such a proposition, then, high as has been my admiration for biologists it has fallen far short of their deserts for they are not merely great scientists—they are nothing less than magicians.”

At which Mr. Walthall laughed quietly but with every evidence of satisfaction. It was evident too that the rest of the company, including those who had crossed swords with him earlier in the discussion sympathized with Mr. Barlow in his position against the biologist.

“It does you fellows good to get a jolt now and then,” said the economist.

At which Professor Mann merely shrugged his shoulders—it was useless to argue with one who was not a biologist.

“But how can you say that a materialistic belief would not dull the spur to right doing, Mr. Barlow?” asked Miss Elsack.

“Since Mr. Barlow has proved that the theory of evolution is not materialistic and that no one need run away from any positive truth whatever for fear of the materialistic bogie, he need not answer that question,” said Barbara in judicial manner. “But—”

There was a general laugh at this sustained claim of right to guide the discussion with a firm hand.

"Order!" she cried. "We have to limit the discussion. But I think it would be interesting to have Mr. Barlow's answer to Miss Elsack's question—if he is willing to answer."

"But I asked a question sometime ago that is still unanswered," protested one.

"And so did I," said another.

"And I want to know too—how does Mr. Barlow, materialist or no, get away from Mr. Balfour's picture of dissolution after evolution has run its course?" said Mrs. Lurton.

"Why may we not found a system of ethics upon the nature of the Absolute? You cannot push a system such as Green's to one side with a mere manifesto." This from Mr. Ransom.

"To me ethics has to do with men's souls and therefore reaches beyond the veil—mere worldly experience is not a sufficiently broad basis for it," said Miss Elsingham.

"Mercy! We have enough matter for discussion to keep us here all night," exclaimed Barbara. "I guess we shall have to cut out your question, Miss Elsack."

"But if Mr. Barlow can explain why a materialistic philosophy would not dull the spur to right doing it would, it seems to me, throw some light on the other difficulties," persisted Miss Elsack.

"What do you say Mr. Barlow?" asked Barbara.

"There must be others here who can answer these questions so much more clearly than I can—I ought not to be made to monopolize the conversation—really—"

Mr. Barlow cast another look of inquiry toward the girl at the head of the table.

"The company is interested, Mr. Barlow," said Pauline, with another cold little smile. "I really think that you must put aside your modesty and do your part."

"Put aside my modesty!" repeated Mr. Barlow to himself. "And here I have been doing most of the talking for an hour! Satire! I never would have thought it of her. Well, the only thing to do is to go on. Perhaps some lucky turn may start them into general conversation again. It would have come about some time ago but for this pestiferously persistent moderator."

"Come, Mr. Barlow, we are waiting," urged the pestiferously persistent one.

"It seems to me then," he began, "that the relation of the soul to ethics, the relative advantage of speculation about the Absolute and of generalization from experience as a foundation for ethics and the lack of effect on right doing of a materialistic philosophy may all be answered together. I will do the best I can. The fundamental thing to note is that what does guide our conduct is our desires. Owing to the necessity of adjusting ourselves to our social environment, that is of living together in a society which is growing more and more complex, and owing to the greater power this complex social life gives us to represent to ourselves painfully and pleurably the sorrows and joys of our fellow-beings and our own postponed harm and welfare, we are gradually coming to be moved by desires which take greater and greater account of the welfare of others and our own postponed welfare. The result is that we find ourselves upon an infinite journey towards that moral goal where there will be no pain and no evil where 'duty will become synonymous with pleasure' and 'right conduct will become instinctive and spontaneous.' There is nothing new in all this—it is familiar to you and I just restate it as the basis of the answer to the three questions. I can answer yours now, Miss Elsack. Materialistic belief could in no way affect the confirmed habit of man to seek pleasure and avoid pain—if it did it would just destroy the race, not dull its morals. Given that life-preserving habit, moral progress is certain. Please remember, Miss Elsack, that I am just defending a chance remark I made about materialism—not defending materialism. Let me repeat—emphatically—that no man at any time need turn his back on any teaching of science for fear that it leads to materialism. It cannot lead to materialism for any man who holds to the melioristic faith in an Ultimate and Absolute Reality beyond the reach of science. But—and here is the answer to your question, Miss Elsingham,—the things that man has to do with in this existence on this earth are the things that science has to do with. It's no business of men to save their souls. Their duty and growing pleasure is to love their neighbors as themselves and act accordingly—having due regard to the kind of neighbor—to be just and honest, to vote right and to do just such other concrete things as



conscience in the light of latest information orders. If incidentally our souls are saved so much the better. They are very much more likely to be saved in that way than by conduct primarily intended to save them. There is another 'paradox.' In short, though the soul reaches on beyond the veil—I believe that—our duty is here and now along lines which may be determined here and now from our experiences here and now and past. Neglect the teachings of earthly and finite experience for vain guesses about the purposes of the Unknowable Ultimate and Absolute Reality beyond the veil and you do so not for the good—it seems to me—but at the peril of your soul. And the answer to your question, Mr. Ransom, is but little different. Based upon a crude and little understood experience, we have conscience—that outgrowth of rules of thumb about right conduct. As with more experience we come to better understand what makes for the welfare of the individual and society—meaning by society not an ideal entity but the individuals of which it is composed—we will direct a more searching gaze upon those rules of thumb and whip them into more accurate rules of reason; to which the conscience will give a more ungrudging, unquestioning sanction than it ever gave the rules of thumb within which it has grown. But the welfare of men has to do, now, just with finite existence on this earth—about his welfare beyond the veil we know nothing. So we have at hand in our finite experience all that is needed to teach us, though slowly, what makes for the welfare of each and all. Have we any right to trifle with the welfare of men by allowing presumptuous guessers about the Absolute to impose their pronouncements of duty upon us if their pronouncements are at variance with the teachings of our growing experience?"

"Emphatically, no!" said Lovering. "Besides trifling with the welfare of men it would amount to establishing a new hierarchy in control of men's consciences. Even now in this twentieth century you find cultivated—if not intelligent—men—or perhaps mostly women—giving their consciences into the control of the priests of new revelations. Fortunately, the overwhelming mass of men are well founded in the plain teachings of experience that good or bad conduct has to do with the well being of individuals on this earth."

"And still more fortunately this," added Mr. Barlow. "Regardless of theory it is the ideal of the well being of

individuals that in fact does move us. And though we do, still, personify the Church, the State, the City, Labor, Capital, we are becoming more and more inquisitive about the individuals connoted by these personifications."

"We are disposed to find the nigger in the wood-pile," suggested Charles.

"That's it, Charles," said Mr. Barlow. "So it is reasonable to hope that though it is said that the Common Good of the Social Whole has no individual beneficiaries, we shall want to know whether it has not in fact some secret beneficiaries, or at least may not readily come to be the agency of secret beneficiaries—granting that at present it may be entertained as an unselfish if meaningless ideal."

"But you are wrong in saying that there are no beneficiaries of the Common Good of the Social Whole. Its beneficiaries are all men," answered Mr. Ransom.

"Then hedonists can have no quarrel with the Common Good. For it means the same as the highest happiness of all. The only test we have of benefits is to reckon them in happiness. The only question between us then is how are we going to determine the Common Good—the highest happiness? Shall we take someone's authoritative statement about it? Or shall we go on slowly but surely working it out through the interplay of egoistic and altruistic impulses, aided by advancing knowledge and wider sympathies growing out of more and more complex experience? Whatever may be the theory, the latter will be the way we actually will determine it—unless—"

"Unless?"

"Unless a wide-spread disgust with the pseudo-individualism which is masquerading as individualism should dispose men to accept temporarily authority as their guide and a fetich as a substitute for sympathy and knowledge—in sheer despair of the ability of democracy to work out its just ends. The same evils which tend to make men socialists in economics might, conceivably, make them the slaves of a plausible cult, well designed—through its pronouncements by authority—to become a new cloak for old exploitation."

## IV

"You refer to the failure of individualism," supplemented Miss Elsack.

"So phrased—but better phrased as the success of fake-individualism—its too inveterate hold upon its privileges. Individualism is something we are working towards—but have not as yet enjoyed except for brief intervals and in outlying spots of civilization. The history of the world has been the history of the exploitation of the weak, the meek, the generous, the patriotic, and I have to add the cowardly and ignorant by governments for the benefit of the selfish few who have made it their business to be the government or to control government. We can only attain true individualism by taking government out of its partnership with individuals—so that it won't pay selfish schemers to make the effort to control it. It is the magnificence of the prizes that have been gained and are still to be gained through the control of government that makes it so difficult to shake off the evils which are nursing socialism and its appropriate ethic."

"Are you a follower of Nietzsche, Mr. Barlow?" asked Mrs. Orton, in such evident sincerity that Mr. Crandall shot a look of astonished inquiry in her direction.

"Doesn't she know about him?" he asked himself.

"Indeed no, Mrs. Orton. I can think of no man of whose views I can say with more enthusiasm 'I dissent.'"

"I gathered from your previous remarks that you were an individualist," rejoined Mrs. Orton serenely unconscious that she was fencing with her niece's secretary.

"I am," said Mr. Barlow, laughing, "but I take the liberty of reading Nietzsche out of the party. His is the brand of fake-individualism which preceded the present commercial brand. It is several centuries out of date. It belongs to the era of feudalism when bullies and schemers made it their business to be the government. Now the best they can do—at least in our country—is to control the government and that not continuously. Nietzsche's individualism is the individualism of the determined self-seeker in a race of docile

slaves. To Americans it can be but a curiosity. Here democracy has too firm a hold—and is making it firmer.”

“That is, your individualism favors a large measure of collective control and standardization—at least looks forward to it,” suggested Professor Walthall.

“Control, yes, but not much standardization, and control as means, not as an end; and as a means to a particular end, individual freedom,” answered Mr. Barlow. “Even if our end were efficiency—and it is not—it would be folly to curb competition—that is, to standardize—until there appeared to be some perfection in sight. I don’t see any perfection around. But our true end is individual freedom—because happiness is an individual thing, not a collective thing. But we cannot have more individual freedom than will hang together and the cement that binds it—pending character growth—is collective control, and, where necessary, collective effort. We need the cement but we need to remember that the structural material is the individual’s right to the pursuit of happiness; and as he sees it, not as some other sees it for him.”

“But are not the majority of us always wrong, as Ruskin says?” asked Miss Elsingham. “Do we not need leaders to point out the best good of the whole?”

“The majority of us are always wrong about art and usually wrong about how to accomplish what we want, but always right about what we want. We may need leaders to ‘show us’—I mean the full strength of the slang expression—how to accomplish what we want. But when you have a people reduced to such docility as to sacrifice their individual happiness to the good of a whole not determined by themselves but by some overbearing dominant will then there is no length of madness to which they may not be driven.”

“But democracy must organize or it will succumb to the superior organization of rival political systems,” Mr. Ransom suggested.

“By all means let it organize. That is different from being organized. Whenever we hear a man speak of democracies being organized we may put it down that he does not know what democracy is. We have even heard Germany spoken of as a democracy; because—if it is true—all alike, rich and poor, noble and peasant, have to make equal sacrifice to ‘one great purpose.’ To such observers democracy



means equal burdens. Equal benefits do not seem to them to be of any importance; nor what the one great purpose is; nor whose arbitrary purpose."

"I fear, Mr. Barlow," interposed Professor Hardy, "your patriotism—and permit me to say that though it is very refreshing, it seems to me also rather naïve—leads you to idealize the American form of democracy—to the disparagement of other forms."

"The forms based on equal burdens only?" asked Barlow. "I am willing to stake my reputation for hard-headedness upon my rejection of democracies of that kind. But I do not idealize the American form of democracy because I do not believe that even we have as yet attained that form of government—though we are likely to be the first to attain it."

"Not a democracy, Mr. Barlow!" exclaimed Miss Elsingham.

"No—not while our purposes are subject to the veto of say nine judges not directly responsible to us who have arrogated to themselves under the name of 'loose construction' the power to amend a written constitution. Before we can call our form of government real democracy we must either make these judges responsible to us or shift the power of amendment into the exclusive and unmistakable charge of a representative body."

"Elect the Supreme Court!" exclaimed Crandall in a tone of shocked surprise.

"Not necessarily—if it is to be exclusively a court. But if it is to continue to be a constitutional convention it seems to me that that reform is inevitable."

"But the Supreme Court has repeatedly declared that the Constitution speaks today in the same terms as when it was adopted. The Court has simply applied its abiding principles to new conditions."

"A convenient fiction—on a par with the fiction that judicial expansion of the common law is the common law. But, fiction or not, expansion of the common law in the absence of statute is a function proper to a court; expansion of a constitution is not—that is in a democracy."

"But it seems to me, Mr. Barlow," persisted Mr. Ransom, "that there is a strong tendency amongst thinking people towards the democratic ideal of equal submission of all to 'one great purpose.'"



"If under the influence of disengenuous or tender-minded Germanophiles we ever retrograde to the German type of intelligence so far as to lose the substance of democracy—equal benefits as well as equal burdens, real benefits, not fetich benefits—I think it is nevertheless safe to believe that we shall never lose the form—nominal control of the bureaucracy. We shall never again throw our caps in the air and huzza for the king. You have only to note how the popular hero drops out of view after he has pitched a few losing games, or said or done a few unpopular or tactless things to realize how impersonal is our admiration for men. With at least nominal control of the beaureaucracy—the real special beneficiary of the 'one great purpose' or else the conduit through which the special beneficiaries receive their benefits—we shall always be in an advantageous position to take up again the forward movement."

"But you do not really, look for any such retrogression!" exclaimed Charles Boyd.

"It's too much like prophecy either to look for it or to shut one's eyes to the possibility of temporary softening of the brain. Progress does not run in a straight line. It's easier to locate the straight line from the curve than to locate the next turn of the curve."

"Modern research in Mendelism brings out not the least evidence of the gradual evolution of masses of men," here interrupted Professor Mann.

"And what is your inference, Professor?" inquired Mr. Barlow.

"That they tend to degenerate rather than progress—that the fate of democracy hangs upon the character of its leaders."

"If you will excuse my frankness, Professor, it seems to me that biologists should be less catholic in their conclusions. Or if they will make formulas about masses of men they should check up their biology with history. If I have read history to any purpose there are two things that stick out of it—the gradual improvement in the morals of mankind and the gradual assumption of masses of men to drive their so-called leaders before them. The would-be leader of today who does not keep his ear to the ground is a foregone failure."

"He would be a joke," added Bob.

"Nevertheless there is a feeling in the chancellories of Europe that our experiment in government is doomed to fail," said Mr. Puff, "and because of that very lack of discipline—that resentfulness of the masses against anything that looks like leadership, independent leadership."

"It is in the chancellories of Europe, if anywhere, that you would look for that mournful feeling, Mr. Puff," replied Mr. Barlow with a smile.

"The opinions of trained administrators is not to be sneered at," protested Mr. Puff.

"They are no doubt valuable as to men who are willing to be 'administered' but they are not so valuable as to men who are gradually, if somewhat fitfully, learning the game themselves."

"But—"

"I think, Mr. Puff," interrupted the ruthless moderator, "that we all understand the difference in the view points of yourself and Mr. Barlow. It would do no good to thresh the matter further."

"But, Barbara, would Mr. Barlow deny that discipline is necessary to progress," demanded Mrs. Orton.

"What do you say, Mr. Barlow?" questioned the moderator.

"Self-discipline is necessary to progress, Mrs. Orton," said Mr. Barlow. "But discipline imposed by others may bring the very antithesis of progress. At best—when properly imposed—it is a mere stop-gap, pending the moral growth of individuals to the requirements of their social environment, and tending to check that growth."

"To return to the subject of socialism, Miss Fleming," said Miss Elsack, "I would like to ask Mr. Barlow if it will cure the evils why oppose it?"

"Let it come—in so far as it is a cure—if we cannot rid ourselves of fake-individualism in any other way," replied the secretary. "The essence of individualism, after all, is not economic but moral. We can for mutual benefit give up the right—or privilege—of each to accumulate as much property as he wants in any way he can and still retain the essential, fundamental right to moral independence—the right of each to work out his own moral salvation or go to the devil in any way he pleases. But I don't, myself, see how there can be moral independence under a government which controls all the

means of livelihood—either directly or through regulated corporations. The reason I say let socialism come is because it will come—in so far as we do not otherwise get rid of the evils. In the future as in the past the desire to put an end to the special privileges which crop out of government partnership with those who control it will raise in some cases the ideal of a government which is the partner of none and in others the ideal of a government which is the partner of all. Between these two extremes of political thought it seems to me the great mass of men will vote as practical opportunists and the two ideals working alternately or together will evolve the state of the future—a state in which there will be a larger measure of government ownership of some agencies of production and government interference with some individual activities, and, on the other hand, a larger measure of non-interference with other agencies and other activities—in short organized individualism. It seems to me that the more stubbornly privilege hangs on the more government we shall have. Corporations breed bureaucracies. An impatient despair of the ability of democracy to rid itself of dollar diplomacy, dollar politics and dollar standards in general might not only lead men to vote long steps towards socialism in economics but also throw them into temporary moral insanity—causing them to give a kind of religious adhesion to the Common Good of the Social Whole. As a new fetich it would be all the more attractive to a diseased public mind because emotionless and vaguely supposed to be founded upon a philosophy of imposing emptiness.”

“But what do you mean by temporary insanity?” asked Mr. Walthall. “Would not insanity of that kind be more or less permanent—come to look like sanity?”

“The insanity would last just as long as the rank and file of men found supreme pleasure in sacrificing every other pleasure to the alleged good of an emotionless Social Whole. But this pleasure would eventually pall upon them and they would begin again to compare rations and hours of work and hours of leisure; to get back again to the things that can be measured in individual experience and individual feeling.”

“There, Mr. Barlow, you use the word experience again, but where do you make any allowance for spiritual experience, psychical experience?” asked Mrs. Hardy. “I cannot see but that you ignore a wide field of experience—especially in con-

nection with your statement, a few minutes ago, that we have at hand in our finite experience all that is needed to teach us what makes for the welfare of each and all."

"Reported psychical experiences which can be subjected to the observation or experiment of others ought not to be excluded, Mrs. Hardy," said Mr. Barlow. "But if they do not fit into the body of our more or less well established knowledge—especially if they contradict such fundamentals as the law of causation and the uniformity of nature, the evidence upon which they rest must be regarded with suspicion."

"But people sneer and refuse to observe. We can lead the horse to water but we cannot make him drink."

"You cannot make him drink what seems to him imaginary water—especially if he has already had his fill of real water. Since I know that I can go from Essex Head to Boston by train you cannot blame me if I do not take a great deal of interest in the rumor that there is a man in town who has a magic carpet."

That the company in general was not much concerned about evidence of a private and mystical kind which could not be spread upon the records was indicated by a ripple of laughter following Mr. Barlow's illustrations.

## V

"You spoke a few moments ago, Mr. Barlow, of conscience giving a more unquestioning, ungrudging sanction to new rules of reason than to the old rules of thumb within which it has grown," began Mr. Crandall as soon as the laughter had died away. "How do you make out that conscience can change its allegiance from the rules within which it has grown—or rather—if I understand correctly, the teachers of natural ethics—around which it has crystalized?"

"But Barbara when are you going to make Mr. Barlow take note of Mr. Balfour's gloomy picture of dissolution?" asked Mrs. Lurton scenting another long digression.

"Postpone your gloom for awhile, dear Mrs. Lurton," answered Barbara, laughing. "All in due time. But it has been a good deal more important to know about conscience and a



possible temporary insanity that may seize us any minute, now, than about dissolution which can scarcely be recognized as within the field of practical politics."

There was a generous burst of laughter at this sally in which all even Mrs. Lurton joined—all except Pauline.

"It isn't fair to make light of his explanations," said the latter to herself indignantly. "There is not another man here who could answer all those questions so clearly."

But apparently Mr. Barlow did not take Miss Fleming's sally as aimed at him for he laughed as heartily as the others and at her request took up the discussion again as seriously as ever—a discussion which seemed, too, to hold the interest of the company.

"I think it is more accurate to say that conscience has grown up within the rules of conduct than that it has crystalized around any particular rules, Mr. Crandall," he resumed. "That is, conscience is the feeling of obligation under which we live to conform to those utilitarian rules of thumb to which, we have been taught in childhood, our fellow-men, the law and the church expect us to conform—supplemented by such modifications of our childhood's teaching as our own mature experience of utility leads us to adopt. It has grown up through ages of conformity to the teachings of childhood. It does not everywhere and at all times command obedience to one code par excellence but commands obedience to the code of the place and the day—whatever it is—vaguely recognized as having a utilitarian sanction in the main and subject more or less to amendment in accordance with our personal experience. The less clearly a man recognizes the basis of utility in the code the more binding it is upon him, and the less likely he is to feel the binding force of amendments suggested by the utilitarian evidence of the day—that is, he is likely to think of the code as something revealed complete in the beginning or intuitive and forever unchangeable. On the other hand the more clearly he recognizes the utilitarian inspiration of the code the more likely he is to substitute amendments of his own intelligent adoption—though not necessarily of his own discovery. It seems to me that men generally are coming to recognize that utilitarian considerations, however falsely weighed, have always been at the bottom of our old rules of thumb. More and more, too, we are coming to see that utilitarian service to men, as distinguished from institutions and personifications, and to men

generally, as distinguished from those classes whose selfish interests largely molded the old rules of thumb must be the inspiration of the new rules of reason. So, I think, we are going to see very great changes in the code. These changes will go hand in hand with our more intelligent hold upon estimates of justice and with our wider and keener sympathies. Conscience as ever will command substantial obedience to the code of the day and all the more effectively and exclusively if the utilities of the new code appeal to men's estimates of justice and their sympathies. When the code was eye for eye and tooth for tooth, conscience commanded obedience, but the sympathies of the moral pioneers of that day must have rebelled. When the code becomes a command of mercy and help, conscience again will say obey and it will be backed by sympathy and a more understanding sense of justice—duty becoming ever more and more a pleasure and the growth of character gradually making conscience unnecessary and obsolete."

"Ah, but you forget Leslie Stephens' admission that while progress solves old problems and discords and extirpates old evils there are always coming up new problems and new discords and new evils," protested Professor Hardy.

"New problems—yes. But problems do not become discords and evils if they are promptly and justly solved. We have the problems now but without the character to want to solve them honestly and justly and sympathetically or to take pleasure in the results if they cross our grosser passions. But as the animal heritage is outgrown the problems will seem simpler and the solutions will appeal to pleasure of a higher kind."

"But suppose a new set of rules not based upon utility at all—say based upon the ideal of self-realization as part of the Social Whole. Then conscience would ally itself with those rules," suggested Mr. Ransom.

"To a degree and for a time—according to how many of us have permanently graduated from the tutelage of authorities and outgrown the worship of phrases," answered Mr. Barlow. "No doubt—supposing the moral insanity to give the new code a good start—there would be many people whose consciences would conform to the blind Ought of their childhood's lessons little qualified by enlightened estimates of utility. But it would take little leaven to leaven the whole lump. Speculation would at once begin anew as to why conduct should be called good simply because some authority vouchsafed its

making for the Common Good of the Social Whole, if, in fact, it did not appear to benefit individuals generally and equitably, but only benefited certain favored individuals or certain chosen institutions."

"But you just assume that it would not benefit individuals generally—according to place in the Social Whole," said Mr. Ransom.

"According to place in an invented or assumed Social Whole—or a Social Whole of the Medes and Persians—is not equity," replied Mr. Barlow. "If, however, it turned out that in effect the self-realization code did make for the benefit of individuals generally and equitably then men would soon cast away the shell and hold on to the kernel."

"But would the two codes be any different? Would not the concrete rules of conduct be the same under either code? If so, why quibble about descriptive phrases?" asked Professor Mann.

"The code of men individually responsible to themselves and to each other, growing through responsibility more intelligent and sympathetic and to have more in mind the welfare of individuals one and all on this earth and that only must eventually differ from that imposed upon us by men—however good and great—to whom we delegate the right or duty of arbitrarily expounding the Common Good of the Social Whole," answered Mr. Barlow. "One assesses individual burdens and benefits only, the other if it assesses individual burdens and benefits at all does so in relation to an arbitrary factor which vitiates all results."

"See here, Barlow," broke in Commodore Lurton, who had as yet taken no part in the discussion. "You believe, for the reasons you give, which I consider sound, that the Common Good notion even if enthroned in ethical and political thought would have but a short reign."

"Yes."

"As I understand it," added Barbara, "conscience commands obedience to the code of the day, subject to private amendment. The more the code ignores utilities for individuals the stronger would be the pull of private amendment back to an utilitarian individualistic code; because, regardless of theories and phrases—the shells—only such a kernel would permanently satisfy our growing intelligence and sympathies."

It seemed to Pauline that Barbara had summed up her



secretary's exposition very cleverly and this irritated her even more than had, a few minutes before, Miss Fleming's apparent lack of serious consideration of his views.

"Good! Very well expressed," said the Commodore. "You well preface the question I want to ask. It is whether we as practical men and women have not been giving too much time tonight to the discussion of the possibility of fundamental error creeping in—error to which I feel sure the ordinary voter is giving no ear—and which if it did creep in would as you show work its own cure. And as to the pragmatic method too, I feel that it would work its own cure—from sheer inability of men to get together on any common ground for discussion of our affairs."

"Oh! I think these questions are very interesting—and proper to discuss at length, Commodore," exclaimed Barbara. "If not, it is my fault, not Mr. Barlow's, for it is I who have brought out his interesting views in such detail."

"Interesting and proper enough—academically," said Mr. Lurton. "But are they of practical import? I ask Mr. Barlow what practical advantage there is in digging into fundamentals—and I am not a pragmatist either."

"Although fundamentally crooked thinking will eventually cure itself, Commodore," replied Mr. Barlow, "it may in the meantime do a great deal of harm. When you find a professor of philosophy breaking into politics with a pragmatic attack upon the teachings of political economy\* it seems to me of very practical concern. It shows the danger of letting down the bars of scholarly restraint upon those whose position seems to qualify them as expert witnesses. It shows how pragmatism may lend a jaunty air of respectability to every intellectual flunky who has his master's axe to grind. Then—"

"Good!" cried Bob.

"Hear! Hear!" from Charles.

"Then, as to the self-realization method," continued Mr. Barlow. "It is studied seriously in our universities as a possible method. It seems to me that I have shown that it is meaningless or false. But its viciousness consists in its degenerating tendency. It tends to fit men for regimentation to make them contented and ambitionless. Then there are the terms 'Common Good' and 'Social Whole.' They sound well.

\*W. Caldwell in the *Nineteenth Century*, Nov., 1912.



In the mouths of those whose interests lie in exploitation they are powerful pieces of clap-trap. I have not sought to press my views upon the company, Commodore, but have been as it were personally conducted by our very capable moderator."

Mr. Barlow bowed gravely to Miss Fleming. Pauline's fingers clutched her fan again.

"Such being the case," he added, "I make no apologies for expressing them frankly."

"And ably," added the Commodore. "And there does seem to be a practical side to the matters. I should certainly feel concerned to see our people turned into a docile flock of sheep."

"Yet I am surprised to find you showing so little faith in the sagacity of the voters, Barlow," said Crandall sarcastically, "those individuals who are getting on so famously in sympathy and intelligence."

"When you have a just cause before a jury, Crandall, is it your habit to let the jury dissect the testimony of the adverse experts unaided, or do you help them by cross-examination and by putting on your own experts?"

"There's one for you, Crandall," laughed Bob.

"And you must remember, too, Crandall, that the electorate is a jury that has not only to weigh the evidence but to pass on the qualification of the experts. It has no judge to assist it."

"I imagine the electorate will need all the assistance you can give it, Mr. Barlow," said Professor Mann, sarcastically, "and then some."

"I see no more reason for pessimism than for cavalier optimism, Professor Mann," said Mr. Barlow. "You must remember that the jury at any particular juncture is limited. It is only a small number of the voters whose verdict counts all the time—those who are unselfishly and intelligently arrayed against every special interest. They and the voters in the border land of light constitute the jury. The selfish interests check each other more or less; the labor union against the capital union; the Roman hierarchy against the socialist and the fake-individualist against both; the liquor interests against the would-be regulators of private morals; the would-be regulators against all forms of commercialized vice; the civil service reform beurocrat against the spoilsman; the spoilsman against the beurocrat. The voters interested in any little selfishness are few compared to the great numbers

selfish enough in their own way but opposed to that particular selfishness. It seems to me that the immediate hope of progress lies in the fact that most of us will be willing to give up our privileges and arrogances in order that we may preserve our rights."

"And the more remote hope?" queried Mr. Walthall.

"In the improvement of our pleasures. In other words in character growth."

"Exactly—the adjustment of feeling to environment growing more complex."

"You are a disciple of Professor Westermarck?" inquired Professor Hardy. "You believe that morals are wholly a matter of feeling."

"Not exactly. Of course knowledge alone never caused a man to lift his little finger—it fructifies in conduct only by guiding desire. But as a matter of fact knowledge does guide desire. Therefore it seems to me that Professor Westermarck is in error in affirming that there is no science of what ought to be. Man, having discovered that he is evolving morally, cannot help inquiring what kinds of conduct will realize his desires and what kinds of conduct will retard them. The principles underlying the answers to those inquiries will constitute the science of what he ought to do. Herbert Spencer—"

"Realize his desires! Merciful heavens! Morals!" gasped Mr. Puff. "I call it the breaking away from all morals."

"True it is a breaking away from the morals of selfish authority and to some extent from utilitarian rules of thumb—but it is the adoption of the morals of knowledge. I have already named the goal we must, under the compulsion of our very nature, desire to reach—the greatest happiness for all—with which will come the smothering of the sense of duty in pleasure. More than forty years ago Herbert Spencer, in his famous letter to John Stuart Mill wrote that it is the business of moral science to deduce from the laws of life and the conditions of existence what kinds of action necessarily tend to produce happiness and what kinds to produce unhappiness and that these deductions are to be regarded as rules of conduct and are then to be conformed to, irrespective of a direct estimation of happiness or misery. There, it seems to me, is the high-water mark of ethical thought. If, under the impulse of more or less ignorant groping for happiness hampered by the

ethical proclamations of authority, we have come this far towards the goal, how much swifter will be our pace when we consciously bring the understanding to the aid of feeling? Not only will our ought be an ought of understanding but under the more certain enjoyment of the higher satisfactions which knowledge will insure character will grow very much more rapidly than in the past. That is, though we shall have a science of the ought the rules will be a mere stop-gap pending character growth."

## VI

"Yet one of the great masters of your school, Mr. Barlow," said Mr. Ransom, "came at last to cry out that the human soul has asked for Theology not for Dynamics."

"Then let human souls do as that of John Fiske did—give to our knowledge of appearances any transcendental interpretations they crave and believe," replied Mr. Barlow. "Behind the veil science cannot intrude and meliorism is the sole criterion. But let not the soul then deduce Moral Dynamics from such interpretations—still less, Moral Statics."

"But, Barlow, you do not put the Absolute to one side by disposing of the ghostlike Absolute of the neo-Hegelians," exclaimed Professor Hardy. "The Absolute is not a ghostlike existence but is an eternal rule that is to bind every will in its aim to attain the real world. The Absolute is not an existence but is 'valid,' 'it is not a thing but an obligation which prescribes beforehand the standards and the ideals of every individual endeavor.' It is the function of philosophical, critical idealism, which began with Kant and which by proclaiming the 'absolute character of the ideals of the will' offers the real bulwark against materialistic positivism, 'to deduce from the character of the world-positing will the particular demands which are binding for every possible search of truth, beauty, morality and religion.' It is true that the only world that we can know is the world of our experience but this world is determined by the thought forms of our understanding, and as to ideal values man's intuitions must ever bind his acquired knowledge. Your views about the changing allegiance of the

conscience are only too impressive evidence of the danger in materialistic positivism."

"Danger to what, Mr. Hardy," asked Miss Fleming.

Lovering laughed and gave Barbara an appreciative glance. But Professor Hardy merely shrugged his shoulders.

"Permit me once more to say," said Barlow, "that I have not tried to dispose of the ghostlike Absolute nor do I wish to dispose of your Absolute rule. Of course our experience is 'determined by the thought forms of our understanding' and of course there are obligations 'which prescribe beforehand the standards and the ideals for every individual endeavor.' These are just other ways of saying that man's intelligence and feeling and conduct are within the jurisdiction of natural law. There is no room for difference between us here nor for difference with Mr. Ransom—to whom this all means the unfolding of the Absolute. Your friends, Mr. Ransom's friends and my friends all stand together here. Our common enemy is the capricionist. But when we come to the method by which we make these thought forms of our understanding, the obligatory ideals, the natural laws in short, of use to us in this life, there we differ. Your friends and Mr. Ransom's friends wish to proclaim what my friends wish to discover. But as long as you proclaim just what we discover there need be no quarrel between us. It is only when you invent the world-positing will or the Moral Reason, or give to the conscience a character it has not in order that by divorcing us from the ordinary understanding and its powers of generalization you may have a plausible sanction under the guise of laying the spectre of materialism to make proclamations in support of the very flesh and blood of materialism—it is only there that we join issue. But the outcome will not be uncertain. The real faculty, the understanding is bound to win against imaginary faculties, the Moral Reason and world-positing will—and all other imaginary agents of an objective Law-giver."

"Ah! The flesh and blood of materialism!" repeated Lovering impressively. "There you have the right name for calling upon the name of God to vouch for the judge-made right to revel in luxury while others starve."

"At any rate, Mr. Barlow is sound in rejecting the objective source of the moral law," said Professor Mann to Pauline.

"But he does not reject it, Professor Mann," protested Pauline, her eyes bright with enthusiasm. The clean-cut dis-



tinctions of her secretary appealed to her logical mind; and his ability in debate gave her new pleasure in her sense of proprietorship. "He rejects the imaginary agents of the Law-giver, not the Law-giver. Mr. Barlow is as he has said, a thoroughgoing agnostic. It is idle to argue about the Law-giver. It is for the individual soul to believe."

"But are we not conscious of the fact that we have binding moral intuitions?" asked Miss Elsingham, addressing Barlow.

"We are conscious of moral feeling to which the name intuition was given long before its nature was understood or it was supposed to have a history. If by continuing to regard it as an intuition you mean to assert that it existed full grown in the earliest forms of life, or even in the breasts of the first men, and will be no more highly developed in the breasts of men of the future, then it is obvious that there are no intuitions of that sort. If you mean by intuition eternal rules hovering, as it were, in the objective absolute waiting to be experienced and generalized by the understanding and the feelings, or, in the phraseology of Professor Hardy's school, posited by the will of the individual as he develops intellectually and emotionally, then you speak of something that either has the same message for the individual as his feelings and ordinary understanding have for him, or else its messages have no other or better warrant than the unsupported authority of the volunteer interpreter of the intuitions. Nor will the knowledge of right and wrong ever become intuitive. In the domain of morals it is only the feelings that become spontaneous; and long before knowledge however certain—that a particular kind of conduct is wrong—can become intuitive the characteristic feeling will have forestalled it. That is, character growth will have made knowledge of secondary importance only—for purposes of discussion and instructing, admonishing and restraining the young and morally defective."

"Yet just now learned opinion seems to be swinging back to the rationalist view," suggested Professor Walthall.

"That now, a half a century after Spencer's *Psychology* and thirty years after the *Data of Ethics*, there should be serious preaching of intuitions as a means of divorcing men from the generalizing faculty only shows how hard put to it are the opponents of the progress that must follow in the wake of positive agnostic idealism. They point the finger of denunciation at a spectre of materialism and so distract attention

from the real materialism of unjust rules in support of property and place."

"Is it fair to impugn motives, Mr. Barlow?" asked Mr. Ransom.

"I do not impugn motives, Mr. Ransom," replied Mr. Barlow, directing a level glance at the learned gentleman. "The corrupt man is not the worst obstacle to democracy and progress."

"But you speak as if the fact that intuitions have differed in the past and differ now is an argument against their validity," said Professor Hardy. "Are you warranted in so doing? Because some savages can count only five does that fact destroy the validity of the multiplication table? May we not take the intuitions of the developed man as the standard?"

"If you can find the developed man, I will not quarrel as to whether his pronouncements are derived a priori or a posteriori," replied Mr. Barlow, dryly.

When the laughter that rippled round the table had subsided, he continued:

"The fact that the savage can count only to five and has never heard of the multiplication table is no argument against its validity because the truth of the multiplication table may be demonstrated—with as great certainty as we can demonstrate anything—by generalization. The coexistences underlying the table have been found to be valid in an almost infinite number of cases and have never once been found invalid. Since the coexistences of the multiplication table have been established by an almost infinitely long *enumerationem simplicem*, amply verified, it would be strange if they had the same status in the thought of the descendants of men that had never generalized about these coexistences as in the thought of the descendants of ancestors who had. The difference in the attitude towards the multiplication table is just what you would expect towards a product of generalization. But such difference is fatal to an allegation of coexistence which is not the product of generalization. For if it is not the product of generalization and not universally accepted what is the basis of its claim upon our acceptance? The very fact that constant appeals have to be made to the feelings and the 'ordinary understanding' in behalf of the 'notion' of duty, is in itself proof that there is no such 'notion.'"

"Now, Mr. Barlow, won't you please give an illustration of

some change of rules and the transference of the allegiance of conscience of which you speak?" requested Miss Elsingham.

Mr. Barlow knit his brows.

"I had in mind, while I was speaking, one that will no doubt arouse a good deal of criticism and open up an entirely new field of discussion," he said.

"Fire away, Barlow," said the Commodore. "We may not all agree with you but we all are robust enough to stand any ordinary shock."

"My illustration will not call for intellectual or moral robustness," replied Mr. Barlow, laughing, "but for a certain amount of sportsmanlike disregard for pocketbook protests."

"Go ahead, Barlow. We will try to nerve ourselves against even that shock—far more grievous to most of us than any fears of the materialistic bogie."

"Well, then, for instance," began the secretary, "it seems to me that with better, clearer, knowledge of ideal utilities we are quite likely to adopt a modified set of rules about the relation of the public to private property. If we do it will be but a very short time before these new rules will become as binding upon conscience as the old rules. As to one form of private property we can almost see men's consciences change their allegiance. I mean that form known as good will. There was a time not long ago when no one questioned a man's property right in the so-called good will of his business and his right to sell it. Had any one proposed to prohibit his selling it most likely a successful appeal could have been made to men's consciences not to lend themselves to such an unjust interference with his property rights. Now, however, after so much good will has been disposed of to the investing public in the form of so-called watered stock, and when from time to time legislation is sought by wage-earners and consumers not interested in the investment, which legislation would have a tendency to confiscate or rather destroy this good will—by destroying the earnings which furnish the dividends upon the stock issued against it—conscientious men are no longer generally agreed as to the property rights in it. A great many men now feel bound by conscience not to lend themselves to the perpetuation of burdens upon wage-earners and consumers in order that the so-called good will may be made secure."

"But these investors paid their good money for this good will," exclaimed Mr. Condor, a new participant in the debate.



"I can't see where there is a chance for conscience to be in doubt."

Mr. Condor had taken no interest in the discussion of fundamentals but dividends were things about which he had settled convictions.

"True," assented Mr. Barlow. "It is a pity that we ever allowed the sale of these enormous blocks of property—largely ephemeral. We would not now, or soon, have to decide upon which of two innocent—though not equally innocent—classes we shall allow the loss to fall—loss which on the other side of the ledger shows up in profit to the sellers of the good will and to the promoters of the sales."

"Do you mean to insinuate, sir, that frauds have been perpetuated in selling this good will to the public?" asked Mr. Condor, with some indignation. "I am speaking, of course, of such sound dividend paying securities—or with reasonable prospects of dividends—as houses say like—er—Bemis & Co.—have been distributing to the investing public. I don't mean issues with nothing behind them—clearly fraudulent."

"But what do you mean, Mr. Barlow, by the expression 'not equally innocent'?" asked Miss Elsingham. "Of course the buyers of these securities are perfectly innocent."

"Pardon me, Miss Elsingham, if I answer Mr. Condor first," said Mr. Barlow. "My answer to his question will, I think, lead to the answer to yours. The issues I refer to, Mr. Condor, are just such issues as Bemis & Co., and other equally reputable houses have been floating. It seems to me that Mr. Bemis and his kind are of the most baneful influences of our times, but I would not go so far as to use the term frauds in connection with their operations. In fact, I go so far as to say that there has been no fraud. They have been operating with perfect conscientiousness—so far as I know—probably the conscientiousness of ignorance. They have even been under the impression, I believe, that they have been doing a great public service while at the same time making very large profits for themselves. They have thought that they had bricks of real gold to sell to the public. It is a fact, however, that they have sold the public the gold-bricks of the vernacular. This so-called good will which they have sold to the investing public has consisted, I think, of these elements:—first real good will, the personal hold the original owners had upon the confidence of their customers; second, in almost all cases, privileges,



such as the privilege of monopoly in operating a public utility or the privilege of exploiting bound consumers handed over to them by tariff legislation; third, in the case of a combination of several competing businesses the capital value of expected increased profits due to higher prices consequent upon the elimination of competition or to the saving of the wages of discharged supernumeraries, or both; and fourth, in all cases, the capital value of the difference between what the wage-earners produce—measured by their capability to produce in a favorable location under good management, adequately paid—admittedly somewhat indefinite—and what they get in wages. None of these four elements have permanent value—but no doubt most of the buyers of these securities issued against them have thought they were buying permanent value. You see then, Miss Elsingham, that the innocence of the purchasers rests mainly on the plea of ignorance and cannot be compared in faultlessness with that, for instance, of the wage-earners who have been mainly the victims of circumstances—to the continuance of which they are in no way bound to agree. And it seems to me it will appear to be the duty—if indeed not the pleasure—of many disinterested citizens to help them to readjust conditions.”

“Rather radical opinions, Mrs. Orton, to be held by the secretary of one whose interests are so far-reaching as your niece’s,” suggested Mr. Crandall to Pauline’s aunt.

“Secretary? Pauline’s? Mr. Barlow?” demanded Mrs. Orton in staccato—but in a low tone.

“Yes. Did you not know?”

“No. I had not heard—and his manner—it has been that of one who had the power behind the opinions.” Mrs. Orton looked with renewed interest at her niece’s secretary. “I have supposed that he was some well-to-do philanthropist.”

“I imagine he has counted upon the power of your niece’s fortune,” said Mr. Crandall, dryly. “But, if I am any judge of faces, Miss Parsons will have a mind and a will of her own as to that.”

“I have noticed that Pauline seems displeased,” said Mrs. Orton. “No wonder! The assurance of the man! It is astounding!”

## VII

"But you speak of the value of the wage-earner's product under good management favorably located and adequately paid, as being admittedly indefinite," suggested Bob. "Does not that allow room for the permanency of a considerable part of the fourth item?"

"Yes—varying according to the ability of the dominant managing element of the corporation, its capital connections and the favorableness of its location, and so forth. I did not mean to intimate that the fourth item would in all cases be eliminated though in some cases it will be eliminated and in all cases reduced. That is, unless we permit combinations in the control of capital which may prevent it flowing freely to entrepreneurs of ability who are eager to compete for labor, though on an advancing wage scale. I should add, also, that of course another great wave of improvement in the arts would tend to take care of advances in wages and so for a time check the shrinkage in profits. And of course, too, I except the disturbing factor of changes in the gold production."

"Why, man, your fourth item is just the reward of brains," exclaimed Mr. Condor.

"Unquestionably—brains applied to conditions," agreed Mr. Barlow. "But you can't deliver the brains with the shares—nor the conditions in abiding form."

"Just what are these conditions, Barlow?" asked Bob. "I'm a little rusty."

"The conditions are these, I take it," replied the secretary. "During the last seventy-five years or so there has been an extraordinary improvement in the arts which has increased the product of a laborer under efficient direction to many times what it was at the beginning of the era. But wages though they have increased materially have not increased in anything like the ratio to the increased product. If capital were not blind—if it sought the most efficient entrepreneurs and them only, and there were free competition between the entrepreneurs, their eagerness to use profitably all of the capital at their disposal would have made them such active bidders in

the wage market that wages would have advanced considerably more. But unfortunately only a small portion of the capital flows into the hands of the most efficient entrepreneurs and a large part of it flows into the hands of even the most incompetent. The latter can afford to pay no more in wages than their ability enables them to get out of the workers. If they pay more they fail. They have had to pay no more because the demand for laborers by the more competent entrepreneurs has been checked by their limited capital—while at the same time the wage market has been further glutted during the same period by the following of the home industries into the factory by the women. They are, however, gradually having to pay more and the least competent are being gradually weeded out. You see then, Miss Elsingham, that the fourth item is as Mr. Condor says, the reward of brains, but it is a reward that depends on conditions. The purchaser of shares in the capitalization of this item having failed to buy the brains with the shares and moreover, having failed to assure themselves of the permanency of the conditions, cannot be held to be innocent purchasers as against the workers who have been retarded by the conditions and who may be expected to oppose attempts to make the conditions permanent. The wiser—and least innocent—of the investors, I imagine, have frankly hoped that concentrated control of the flow of capital into accredited channels would both furnish a satisfactory substitute for brains and secure the permanency of the conditions.”

“And the tendency now will be—will continue to be—the securing to the wage earners of a larger part of the ‘product,’” supplemented Bob.

“Yes. As long as combinations in the control of capital are not permitted to prevent its flowing freely to the use of entrepreneurs of ability who are eager to reap the profit—wages of superintendence—consisting of the difference between what they can make wage earners produce under their management and what they have to pay them in market wages, the rate of wages will, other things being equal, tend upward. There are several influences which tend to accelerate the bringing of wages and product closer together—the activity of the trade unions and growing public sympathy with their aims as long as they act within reason—the elimination of children from the wage market—the shortening of the hours of labor—

the prohibition of unsuitable labor for women, and of all labor for very young women—ability of men, as they receive higher wages, to marry early and support their wives and children—especially their daughters—at home. But above all, the most material factor will be the seeing to it that there are no combinations to keep capital from reaching the hands of able independent entrepreneurs willing to operate on a smaller margin of profit.”

“Do I gather that you favor combinations of wage earners while opposing combinations of capitalists?” asked Crandall, one of whose clients was having trouble with organized labor.

“I do—under existing conditions.”

“How do you justify that position?” demanded Crandall tartly.

“To mention just one ground—because one kind of combination has become so powerful that it scarcely hides its consciousness of power to force its will upon the will of the electorate while the other has barely started to accomplish a raising of the standard of living where it will do the most good,” replied Mr. Barlow.

“Do you say that it is nothing to have raised wages to such a level that they are a crushing burden upon our industries?” asked Mr. Condor, who ever evinced a tender regard for our industries.

“While there are so many men who cheerfully assure us that they are worth to our industries twenty-five thousand dollars or more a year, I fail to grow much excited over the burden imposed by a wage of five dollars a day received by heads of families.” There were some sly smiles at this counter of Mr. Barlow’s for it was generally understood that Mr. Condor’s salary was fifty thousand dollars.

“Do you make no allowance for difference in service?” asked the sponsor for industry.

“I do. But there is room for liberal recognition of difference in service within very much narrower limits. Under a civilization as artificial as ours it is reasonable to inquire whether our measurements of difference in service are not largely artificial,” responded the secretary.

“But, at any rate, such discrimination is class legislation—you can’t get away from that.” This from Professor Walthall.

“I make no attempt to get away from it. Practically all legislation now is class legislation—in the main regulating the



status of classes made by past legislation. The only party which is entitled to that 'cry' is the party of anarchy. All that the rest of us—who believe that rules are needed to enable us to live happily and peacefully together in society—may demand is class legislation that is just—and the safe-guards against the classes becoming castes."

"But is it just to discriminate between combinations of capitalists and combinations of wage earners?" asked the Professor.

"That depends upon how you discriminate. There is nothing inherently unjust in discriminating between things that are different. On the contrary there is *prima facie* injustice in not discriminating between them."

"How do you make out that they are different?" demanded the Professor.

"Because one is of such little political power that new and ancient judicial interpretations to its hurt still go unchecked by the legislature, while the other has practically dictated the policies of government and is a real danger to the state; because one is a combination of individuals to whom the state has not only given no aid but who have had from the beginning to work against the prejudice of feudal and then commercialized law only slowly becoming humanized, while the other is a combination of individuals into whose hands the state has given the most powerful tool ever handled by men—the corporation. One ought to oppose trade unions whenever they act in detriment to the rights of others, but his opposition will be on distinctly different grounds than the grounds of his opposition to combinations of capitalists—using this tool as a weapon. An attempt to classify the two things together is an absurdity on its face."

"The framers of the Sherman Anti-Trust law classified them together," suggested Mr. Crandall.

"It is no less an absurd classification because of that," answered Mr. Barlow. "Compromises though often necessary are usually imperfect. Take away from the capitalists the tool we have given them and without which their combinations would be powerless for evil—then there may be reason in classing together the two kinds of combinations."

"Do you favor abolishing corporations?" demanded Crandall.

"No. On the contrary, I believe in improving them. Cor-

poration laws are good examples of class legislation—but beneficent legislation, so long as we insist that the corporation be used as a tool, not as a weapon. I have little doubt but that we shall find means to insure this.”

“But the labor unions may incorporate too if they wish,” said Crandall.

“True. But if they did they would embrace many disadvantages and no advantages. The immunities of corporations are designed for capitalists not laborers. Should the state offer incorporated labor immunities of value to laborers, laborers might incorporate and then there might be more reason to legislate in one breath about the two classes of corporations. Even then, however, they would be distinctly different things.”

“But is there not danger that the trade unions may become a great political power?” asked Professor Walthall.

“When that threatens we shall know what to do with them.”

“It may be too late.”

“I have no fear of that. But at any rate it is a risk that we must take—because of the aid they can give and are giving us in handling the power that is dangerous now.”

“Yet such a competent observer as E. Sereno Martin, the economist, is of the opinion that modern business cannot be carried on successfully except by these big combinations of capital operating along lines of coöperation rather than competition,” said Crandall.

“First noting the difference between growth and combination I can say further only that having in mind no specific argument of Mr. Martin’s, I am unable to refute it,” said Mr. Barlow.

“Leave his arguments to one side. Are not his opinions valuable just as opinions?” persisted Crandall in a somewhat overbearing manner.

“His opinions have no weight with me,” said Mr. Barlow. “On the contrary Mr. Martin’s affirmative opinion upon any economic proposition about which I had no other evidence, I should take as *prima facie* evidence that the proposition is not true.”

“You astonish me! Mr. Martin’s articles in the *Mirror* are generally held to be weighty contributions to political opinion upon economic subjects. How do you justify such a broad criticism as you have just made?” demanded the lawyer.

“If I knew that a man believed the earth to be flat, I

should distrust his opinion upon any proposition in astronomy. So knowing of Mr. Martin's belief that the artificial diversion of industry from profitable into unprofitable channels is an economic advantage, I distrust his opinion upon any other economic subject," said Mr. Barlow.

"Does not that savor rather too much of the *argumentum ad hominem*—coming from one who is such a stickler about logic?" asked Mr. Crandall dryly.

"Not at all," replied Mr. Barlow. "We are talking about opinions."

"Good one, Barlow! Good," cried Lovering.

"I confess you have a quicker wit than mine, Lovering," sneered Crandall. "I don't see the distinction."

"Do you mean to tell me that you, Crandall, one of the keenest trial lawyers in Boston, do not see that it holds good out of the court room as well as in it that opinion as of an expert is not to be admitted in evidence until the witness qualifies as an expert?" demanded Lovering. "If he qualifies as an ignoramus instead his opinion is valueless?"

"Ignoramus is a harsh word," said Crandall, coloring. He was aware that the shoe fitted his own foot if it fitted Mr. Martin's.

"To Barlow, Martin is an ignoramus on economics and it is in Barlow's mind that you are trying to get admission for Martin's opinion."

"But leaving technicalities to one side is it not a fact that we need these big combinations?" asked Mr. Condor, addressing the secretary.

"No. Size alone is of no value. What we want is size with ability. Growth under conditions of competition and the maintenance of position under the ever-present pressure of competition are guarantees of ability to meet the needs of the times. But combination resulting from stock shuffling carries absolutely no guarantee of any industrial ability—only expertness in financial intrigue. In the noncompetitive environment which can be brought about over night you have just the state of affairs in which continued success may be built upon exploitation instead of service."

"But under proper regulation the people have a sure protection against exploitation," persisted Mr. Condor.

"At the cost of keeping Big Business constantly in politics with all the possibilities of corruption corresponding to the

magnificence of the prizes; plutocracy and bureaucracy hand in glove dividing the power and the spoils—the attempted perpetuation of that fake-individualism which must surely find its Nemesis in the crumbling of the whole structure built upon private property,” replied Mr. Barlow. “Without competition the whole thing comes down to a mere matter of opinion expressed at the polls—if fortunately not with arms. Dividends not constantly subject to the test of competition are just things for arbitrary measurement. A public living in an atmosphere of corruption and dollar politics will in the end make short work of them. Having no characteristic test, even conscientious voters will have doubts whether particular dividends have not outlived service.”

“That is your opinion,” said Crandall, with a slight accent upon the last word.

“Just good for what it is worth,” laughed Mr. Barlow. “Prophecy is always gratuitous.”

“But right is right with conscientious people—whether dividends have outlived service or not,” protested Miss Elsack.

“If you mean legal right that may be easily changed, Miss Elsack,” replied Mr. Barlow. “If you mean moral right, then one who comes into the court of morality must do so with clean hands.”

“But isn’t that a harsh way of putting it?” inquired Miss Elsingham. “Much of the wealth has been earned with clean hands.”

“A great part of the wealth of the country has been earned honestly and with benefit to the country, but no one has an unconditional moral right to his pound of flesh.”

“I have been much interested in your views, Mr. Barlow,” said Professor Walthall. “I want to have another talk with you one of these days if we can arrange it. I am particularly interested in your distinction between combinations of unaided individuals and combinations of individuals into whose hands the state has given a tool without sufficient guarantees that it be not used as a weapon. But I want to ask here whether these combinations of corporate wealth (or by means of corporate wealth) will not work out their own cure? One of my colleagues is making an extended study of some of those which have failed and have been re-organized and I believe he concludes that our fear of them is unnecessarily hysterical—that as with all other contrivances of men the badly managed ones



are sure to go to the wall. Is there not value in that conclusion?"

"Does he mean by badly managed, badly managed from the point of view of the shareholders?" asked Mr. Barlow.

"Well—yes—I believe he does," replied Mr. Walthall with a laugh, and he added, "and your question gives me your answer."

"Eh? I don't see it," from Mr. Condor.

"Why, it is this, Mr. Condor," said the professor. "Those who like Mr. Barlow are rather more interested in the wage earner and the raising of the standard of living where it will do the most good—and in the consumer perhaps—than in the receiver of dividends are afraid of the successful combinations, not the failures."

"If that is Mr. Barlow's view, he is certainly frank in his partisanship against property," snapped Mr. Condor with a glance of disapproval at the secretary.

"That is my view, Mr. Condor. But don't misunderstand. I have no prejudice against the receiver of dividends. I contend merely that there is nothing so sacred about dividends that we are bound to safeguard them at the expense of others."

"Miss Parsons' secretary evidently feels that he has over-shot his mark," said Mr. Crandall, in a low tone to Mrs. Orton. "At this particular time, your niece's intentions are of great moment to the business world. During the last few days there has been considerable misgiving felt amongst those who are striving for coördination of effort lest your niece had fallen under an adverse influence as harmful to her own interests as to the business welfare of the country. But what I have seen tonight satisfies me that the street—er—that is—the business world has been unnecessarily alarmed."

"The business world need never have felt uneasy," said Mrs. Orton, with the positiveness of conviction. "My niece is too strong a character to yield to the influence of an idle, talkative observer."

"At any rate he has not lasted," thought Crandall cheerfully to himself.

## VIII

"To go back a bit, Mr. Barlow," said Commodore Lurton, taking advantage of the pause which followed the secretary's last words, "you speak of men supporting their wives and daughters at home. But the women no longer want that life of idleness—as they call it—they want to be out in the world working shoulder to shoulder with the men—sharing their burden, as they say."

"It seems to me," replied Mr. Barlow, "that women take a narrow view of life who see no alternative between working for gain and idleness. As to what the women—the overwhelming majority of them—want, my own observation leads me to believe, Commodore, that they do not want to be out in the men's world working shoulder to shoulder with them. I think it must be a matter of common notice that wherever the means are ample the women actually do make the home and the work of the world that is not for profit their sphere."

"But why not let us express our wishes with our ballots?" asked Miss Elsack. "Then you won't have to rely upon common observation."

"I am willing, Miss Elsack—provided you impose no gratuitous burden on women who believe that on the whole men have represented them chivalrously, justly, manfully, if not always intelligently; who are absorbed in the carrying of women's burden; and are willing to leave to men those burdens which men are especially fit to carry."

"How are we going to exercise the franchise without imposing the duty upon unwilling women?"

"I don't know, Miss Elsack," laughed Mr. Barlow. "There is a chance for women to demonstrate their skill in constructive politics."

"Do you mean to assert that women are not as fit as men to exercise the franchise," asked Miss Elsack.

"I say it without apology for I do not think it at all uncomplimentary to your sex—I do."

"Mr. Barlow! Do you mean to tell me that the common bar-room loafers are better fit to vote intelligently than—

than—" Miss Elsack's eyes circled the table, hesitated a moment on the face of the fair hostess but wandered on and finally met the intelligent eyes of Barbara Fleming—"than our capable moderator?"

"Do you judge of two gardens, Miss Elsack, by a weed from one and a rose from the other?" asked Mr. Barlow.

Under the inspiration of the general clapping of hands at the compliment to the charming moderator, Mr. Barlow may have looked into her eyes with somewhat warmer approval than was absolutely necessary. At any rate Pauline thought so. Her fingers played ruthlessly with the lace of the delicate fan and a chill settled upon her heart. After all, what she had taken for his adoration for herself was just a temperamental regard for women—perhaps enhanced by natural deference to an employer.

"But to prohibit young women from working for wages—isn't that an unwarranted interference with individual liberty—even though there be adequate provision—to which I suppose you would agree—for exceptional cases?" asked the Commodore.

"Of course there must be elasticity, Commodore," said Mr. Barlow. "As to individual liberty, I suppose there is not a person in this country who is not in some degree restrained in his liberty. The question is whether the restraint is for the greater good of the greater number—in the opinion of the greater number persistently expressed at the polls. Moreover, since there is no inalienable or natural right to incorporate and therefore no such right to contract with corporations, the matter of regulating contracts between individuals and corporations, practically the only contracts requiring regulation, is not a case of interfering with individual liberty at all but a matter of regulating state-made status. I have not noticed that legislatures or courts have given any consideration to that point but it seems to me to be controlling."

"But, in speaking of corporations as in the category of status, you seem to forget the decision in the Dartmouth College Case," objected Crandall.

"Don't you miss the point, Crandall?" asked Barlow. "That decision settled no political question for believers in democracy. The fact that the people rested satisfied with a practical way of repudiating it—by further legislation—binds

no one outside of the narrow domain of academic corporation law."

Lovering laughed.

"But in the cases where both parties are individuals—regulation there is clearly an interference with individual liberty," suggested Commodore Lurton.

"And therefore to be undertaken if at all upon different grounds than where one party is a corporation. It seems to me that individuals may and ought to be left as much as possible to free contract."

"You are a queer individualist, Mr. Barlow!" growled Mr. Condor.

"In an era of fake-individualism, real individualism is bound to look queer," admitted the secretary.

"But a little while ago you spoke rather disparagingly of discipline imposed by others," suggested Professor Mann.

"As to its effect upon progress," amended Mr. Barlow. "But where individual progress lags—where individuals fail to grow to the requirements of the social environment—discipline is necessary as a stop-gap, pending wider individual progress. I am not, however, advocating radical prohibitions for the purposes of raising wages. Majorities do things whether they are justified or not. But the more immoral or inexpedient a proposed measure is, the less likely is it that majorities in favor of it will be persistent enough to make it effective. Probably no measure of labor prohibition grounded upon the sole purpose of raising wages could come anywhere near attracting a substantial majority of the electorate to its support. But persistent majorities are supporting conservative, though constantly widening prohibitions, upon the score of public health. And possibly there may be some day persistent majorities in favor of prohibitions in behalf of a better standard of living. But the very conservative movement now observable towards raising the age for child labor—on grounds of public health—especially if on the same grounds some weight is given to the difference of sex—will probably have great and cumulative effect on wages. If a few men send their children out to earn part of the family income the effect on wages is such that other men have to do likewise. Prohibit men from sending their younger children out to earn wages and the effect is such that other men can and voluntarily will keep their older children at school. The effect on wages is cumulative."



"But won't higher wages simply mean higher prices?" asked the Commodore.

"No. There is in general no connection between higher wages and higher prices until wages become so high that the supply of products is effected through the unwillingness of entrepreneurs to operate at the prevailing rate of profit. The rate of profit—wages of superintendence—is not fixed, unalterable. It depends upon the willingness of entrepreneurs to sell their time and ability at the prospective price. As the rate of wages goes up, the rate of the wages of superintendence will, other things being equal, come down. Of course if further great advances in the arts should add still more to the productiveness of the wage earner, wages of superintendence would increase unless ordinary wages kept pace with or outstripped this increased productiveness. The principal thing is to prohibit such control of capital by means of the powerful tools to which I have referred that it may easily be restricted to the use of entrepreneurs bound by gentlemen's agreements or in any other way to maintain profits."

"Apparently you do not hold to the theory, Mr. Barlow, that after interest, rent and wages of superintendence are paid the wage earners get all the rest—that is, they get all they produce," suggested Professor Walthall.

"Certainly I do—but in making that statement one must not yield to the notion that the wages of superintendence is a fixed charge that must be paid at all events and at an unchangeable rate. It is equally true to say that after rent, interest and wages are paid the entrepreneur gets all the rest—but there again we must not get the notion that wages is a fixed charge to be paid at all events and at an unalterable rate. The better way to express it is to say that after rent and interest are paid the wage earner and the entrepreneur between them get all the rest—dividing it between them in proportion to their relative advantage in bargaining—that is, in dependence upon the supply and demand for laborers and entrepreneurs. The supply of wage earners at a price constitutes the demand for entrepreneurs—if the price goes up some of the entrepreneurs who were operating on the ragged edge of failure will fall, if it goes down some men who could not formerly operate at a profit now can and they become entrepreneurs. On the other hand the supply of entrepreneurs at a price constitutes the demand for wage earners. If there are

too many to maintain profits those who can will outbid those who cannot pay higher wages—directly or indirectly through lower prices. If there are not enough the pressure of the supply of wage earners will lower wages.”

“You have considerable faith in abstractions, Mr. Barlow,” observed Mr. Sounder, the pragmatist.

“Yes, I find most men, even pragmatists, carry abstractions to the polls. The harm is not in abstractions, but in false or unreal abstractions.”

“Then the supply of capital has nothing to do with the rate of wages,” suggested Bob.

“On the contrary it has everything to do with it—and also with the rate of wages of superintendence. But it has nothing to do with the relation between the rate of wages and the rate of wages of superintendence except in so far as it blindly seeks the less competent entrepreneurs or can be so controlled as to be largely diverted to the special use of entrepreneurs—mainly corporations centrally controlled—associated together for profit protection.”

“But do you not overlook the fact, Mr. Barlow, that there are many industries where even the most efficient and most advantageously placed entrepreneur works on a very small margin of profit?” asked the Commodore thoughtfully.

“I have not overlooked these cases,” replied Mr. Barlow. “But I regard them not as typical, but exceptional. Of course where the mal-adjustment of wages to product does not exist there need be no readjustment,” said Mr. Barlow. “Where trades unions have been unusually effective, for instance, and have advanced wages somewhat adequately in comparison with the increased power to produce, there will be less room for an advance in wages. Again, where the price of the product has been kept down by law so that at a higher scale of wages no entrepreneurs would be found willing to continue to operate, as in the case of some public utilities, the result of a general advance of wages would be either that the public would have to pay more for the product—in these cases, usually, service—or the state would have to take over such enterprises and operate them at a loss. But the typical condition of industry is that where the laborer working under the most fruitful management gets such a small part of his product and the entrepreneur such a large part that there results an unstable equilibrium which, unless we allow the control of capital to the use

of combinations, is in time bound to be destroyed by mere competition. 'This aside from any steps the public may take as to the labor of women and children.

"In Europe they do not look upon leadership as a crime," Mr. Puff here interposed indignantly.

"I thought I had made it plain, Mr. Puff, that I—" began Mr. Barlow.

"You have, it seems to me, a distorted notion about our great financial leaders," interrupted Mr. Puff. "They feel as deeply as the muck-raking reformers—but they keep their heads."

"Nobody denies, Mr. Puff," said Mr. Walthall, "that in your 'Captain of Industry and the Radical' you have drawn a pretty picture of the effect of a pipe, good tobacco and a cheerful campfire, upon the driving energies of the man of action. But what is needed is not sentiment, nor even a sense of justice, but enlightened self-interest and even if it is only a little enlightened it will help."

"And Mr. Barlow has not been classifying men by vocations," amended Barbara. "He has been discussing principles. Every man, whatever his calling, may take his stand on either side of a proposition according to its merits."

"There is no question where gentlemen should stand on the labor question," quoted Mr. Puff.

"True," replied Miss Fleming dryly, "and so we come around to the old question, what is a gentleman?"

The general laugh at this counter did not encourage Mr. Puff to continue the series of bulletins from the old world with which, from time to time, he had essayed to save the dinner from being a failure. He had come prepared to be the lion of the evening. The fair hostess, he thought, had listened to his pronouncements from the smoking rooms of London clubs, continental chancellories and the ruling classes of Europe with appreciation. But Miss Fleming had guided the discussion with a firm hand—she seemed as pestiferously persistent to Mr. Puff as she did to Mr. Barlow.



## IX

"You admit, Mr. Barlow, that a rise in wages would eliminate some entrepreneurs," observed Mr. Condor.

"I don't admit it, exactly—I assert it," laughed Mr. Barlow.

"That is, the tendency of higher wages is to concentrate business in stronger hands," crisply.

"Yes."

"But is not that one of the things you complain of?" triumphantly.

"No. There is no objection to concentration based on growth—on competitive ability, service, free enterprise—and dependent upon the continuance of those elements. The objection is to concentration by artificial combination through the shuffling of stock certificates leading to control of capital and the perpetuation of incompetency privileged or otherwise and to dividends upon incompetence. In short, the objection is to concentration in weak hands."

"Barlow, you are my man!" quoth Bob.

"Eh?"

"I want you to address us at one of the Saturday luncheons of the Layman's Law Club."

"Oh, no, Lovering. I cannot do that. The circumstances—you know them—make it quite impossible for me to do that."

But Bob, who did know the circumstances—and knew where the real power of disposal lay—turned an inquiring look towards the head of the table.

Pauline, notwithstanding the chill about her heart, had followed Mr. Barlow's explanations with increasing interest—guessing that they were prophetic of the results of the task she had set him—the devising of a scheme for profit-sharing. She was about to give a favorable answer to Bob's appeal when unfortunately Miss Fleming pushed her personality into the foreground of Pauline's jealous demand upon the exclusive allegiance of her secretary.

"Oh, Mr. Barlow, you must! I insist! It was I who discovered you and I have a right to insist. Of course,\* Bob,



you will have Mr. Barlow speak on one of your ladies' days and will ask me. I can't expect to be moderator, but I have a right to expect a seat of honor. Nothing like asking for what you want is there, Mr. Barlow. Come now, speak up. Tell Bob he must give me the seat of honor."

"Really, Miss Fleming, if it were not quite impossible for me to do this I should feel flattered to—it has not been my retailing of views—largely second hand—your management—er—keen appreciation of the point under—"

The fan in Pauline's lap had an unpleasant moment.

"Can't you manage it, Pauline?" asked Bob.

"Mr. Barlow really has a great deal to do, Bob," replied the young hostess as calmly as she could. "I don't believe—I think he had better not undertake the exposition of his theories in public."

The words were hardly out of her mouth before, catching a momentary glance from her secretary, she realized that he had taken them as a public reproof. Contrition followed upon irritation and she would have attempted to put a different meaning upon her words. But in the disturbed state of her feelings she could think of no addendum that would not turn apparent criticism into apparent apology for his theories.

Barbara turned a puzzled face from Pauline's to that of Mr. Barlow. Not knowing the relation between them, she could not understand Bob's appeal to their hostess nor her assumption of right to decide it.

"Well, I don't quite understand—but it's not my party, so—there, I have an idea. Let's have another dinner just like this—with orderly discussion of topics worth while. Everybody listen! I invite you all to dine with us in Newport—say four weeks from tonight—if that suits everybody. How will that suit you, Mr. Barlow? You cannot plead work at night as an excuse—I shan't allow it. I shall have one or two others—worthy of your steel. Not that the men and women here tonight have not been keen enough. But we must have new issues raised. You will accept, Pauline? And you, Mr. Barlow—first of all we must find a night to suit you. Will four weeks from tonight suit you?"

Realizing that he was not at his own disposal and that he was in disgrace with his mistress because of his forwardness in expressing his opinions, Mr. Barlow's embarrassment had

grown apace with the unfolding of Miss Fleming's plan for an adjourned discussion.

"I fear that you will think it very unappreciative of me—but you must not take it that way—circumstances beyond my control—it is really—impossible—"

"Oh, no, Mr. Barlow. You must not decline. That evening is just a suggestion. But there are several others, one of which must surely suit your convenience."

Mr. Barlow looked very uncomfortable. Pauline was quick to seize the opportunity to undo the impression her former words had raised in her secretary's over-sensitive imagination.

"I accept, for one, Barbara," she said. "And four weeks from tonight will suit me very well—if it fits the engagements of the others. And if you will leave it to me I think—I know—that I can promise to—to persuade Mr. Barlow to be one of the party. He is very busy—I happen to know—but I will produce him. He can't refuse to be my escort."

She caught Mr. Barlow's eye and was pleased to see the look of relief in it. However, he did not permit himself to believe that his indiscretion was to be overlooked.

"She has accepted just to save my face. She will find some excuse later," he told himself.

"That is very nice of you, Pauline," said Barbara—her face nevertheless indicating her mystification. "And it is so necessary to have Mr. Barlow present that I shall leave him to your persuasion. But I am very much displeased with him—for not accepting my invitation directly."

And she gave Mr. Barlow a look of pretended disapproval.

"Then perhaps this is a convenient moment to adjourn to the music room," said Pauline, preparing to rise.

"Oh, but Pauline—Barbara—my question! Mr. Barlow has not answered it," exclaimed Mrs. Lurton.

But Pauline had caught an appealing look from her secretary and in spite of Mrs. Lurton's protest arose. She knew now that all Mr. Barlow's courage and self-confidence had evaporated. Though she still felt uneasy at having pained him by her apparent disapproval and determined to make it plain to him at the very earliest moment possible that he had misunderstood, she was conscious of a certain amount of elation in the knowledge that his moods were so sensitive to her touch.

"Since our thoughts have turned to more practical con-

cerns, Mrs. Lurton, I think the others may not be interested in the answer to your question," she said apologetically to that lady. "But I hereby order Mr. Barlow to answer you privately forthwith."

Having seen her guests comfortably disposed to listen to the music, Pauline, observing Bob seated alone near the doorway into the drawingroom, took a seat beside him. She became aware at once that Mrs. Lurton had captured Mr. Barlow. They were seated just without the music room and her secretary was speaking.

"So I would not let Mr. Balfour's gloomy forebodings worry me if I were you, Mrs. Lurton—nor any alleged bugaboos of philosophical materialism, so-called. We know nothing of dissolution on a universal scale. That this world may sometime be a dead world is probable enough, but that the whole universe will revert to chaos, or that the gain man makes on this earth will be lost to the universe or to him is not implied in any theory of evolution that I know of—certainly not in Spencer's. But the main thing is to remember that science, positive knowledge, all important to us here, tells us nothing about the Absolute. 'God is in his heaven' just the same though we allow no man's theories about him to guide our conduct."

"I cannot tell you how much good you have done me, Mr. Barlow," said Mrs. Lurton, putting her hand impulsively upon his arm. "I have always leaned towards beliefs based on the solid foundations of experience—they seem so much more satisfying, so much more real and above all so much more fruitful—but I have been constantly under that chilling sense of hopelessness—you know—that questioning:

'What is it all if we all of us end but in being our own corpse-coffins at last,  
Swallow'd in Vastness, lost in Silence, drown'd in the deeps  
of a meaningless Past?

What but a murmur of gnats in the gloom, or a moment's  
anger of bees in their hive?"

I see now that authoritative interpretation of the Vastness is beyond our powers, but the interpretations of this world are just the interpretations we are in this world fit to make."



"Let me congratulate you on the acquisition of your new secretary, Pauline," said Bob in a low tone. "This has been a most stimulating discussion."

"Oh, Bob, thank you!" responded Pauline, her eyes beaming with pleasure. "Mr. Barlow is just the kind of secretary a person in my circumstances needs. And don't you see that he has reached the fundamental obstacles to democratic progress, real individualism, positive idealism? Every philosophy which seeks to divorce us from the 'ordinary understanding with which we generalize' substituting something that needs interpretation by proclamation is a tool in the hands of the pseudo-individualists who hope to continue to govern the world for their personal pleasure or profit. If these volunteer administrators of men are thorough-going intuitionists or intuitionists of the Kantian type they favor straight-out plutocracy or straight-out feudalism or a combination of them—as they lean more heavily upon the divine foundations of private property or upon the divine right of kings. If they are of the Hegelian type they believe in safe-guarding their ends by a hand-in-glove arrangement with a controlled bureaucracy. If they are pragmatists they see that systematic transcendentalism does not appeal to the multitude—the growing political power—and want to be free to appeal now to science, now to transcendentalism, again, perhaps, to mysticism, as it suits the temper, knowledge, prejudices, interests or even the pressing needs of the electorate."

"Yes, facile pens may easily be hired to make appropriate suggestion to those who are always too ready to play the part of Esau," commented Lovering.

"Of course, as Mr. Barlow says," continued Pauline, "the a priori philosophers may be perfectly honest—the corrupt and selfish are not the worst enemies to progress."

"There is going to be plenty of novelty watching the little old world take the curves," said Lovering after a moment's pause.

"And, with better knowledge of the 'laws of life and the conditions of existence,' trying to keep it near the straight line," added Pauline.



## ERRATA

*P. 7, line 32. Parson's should read Parsons'.*

*P. 11, line 24. know should read knew.*

*P. 37, line 1. disengenuous should read disingenuous.*

*line 12. beaurcaucracy should read bureaucracy.*

*line 17. The comma (,) after really should be omitted.*

*P. 45, lines 40 and 41. beaurocrat should read bureaucrat.*

*P. 55, line 16. purchaser should read purchasers.*

*line 17. There should be a comma (,) after item.*

*line 18. The comma (,) after moreover should be omitted.*

*P. 67, line 24. quoted should read quoth.*

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Every philosophy

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