

We desire to offer our congratulations to Mr. Barnard Thornton Hodgson on his well-deserved promotion, and we feel sure that the ability and courtesy which he displayed as Secretary will characterise his work as a Commissioner. We desire to congratulate Dr. Charles Hubert Bond also, who, as Honorary General Secretary, was so well known to the Association.

It cannot be otherwise than a great advantage to the Commission, with its increasing responsibility and important work, that a physician of Dr. Bond's professional attainments and experience has been chosen.

Dr. Bond's abilities are too well known to require recapitulation. We need only draw attention to his work in connection with the revision of the Association Tables, and the fidelity and enthusiasm with which he has carried out the duties of Honorary General Secretary. His intervention in our debates and deliberations tended to clear the atmosphere, and he was always ready with some practical suggestions.

His skill as an organiser and his high ideals of what a modern asylum should be are exemplified in Long Grove, whose present state is a striking testimony to the efficacy of his labours for the advancement of all that is best in the proper care and treatment of the insane.

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## Part II.—Reviews and Notices.

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*Conduct and its Disorders: Biologically Considered.* By CHARLES ARTHUR MERCIER, M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S., etc. London: Macmillan & Co., 1911. Pp. 377. Price 10s.

Dr. Mercier has again broken new ground in this treatise on Conduct. He had already given us works on insanity, psychology, criminal responsibility, law and logic; and all his books have not only been a gain to the subjects he handled, but, without exception, have added to the great body of English literature. His form as well as his matter is always good. All that he has written has exhibited, in an abundant degree, clarity, force, eloquence, original thought, and individuality. He never leaves any doubt as to his meaning. It must be a source of pride to all psychiatrists and contributors to the *Journal of Mental Science* that they have among their number at least two men (Maudsley and Mercier) who have touched the highest point of literary style, of expert knowledge and of philosophic medicine. Our science and art is so intimately connected with human nature and life in all departments

that mankind may fairly demand of us help and insight in regard to many matters beyond our speciality. Our study and experience enable us to see social problems from a point of view different from any other scientists, and we are bound to put this at the service of our fellow men. I would say that Dr. Mercier's book on Conduct embodies the highest evolution of this duty. No one but an expert in our department could have written some of its chapters. The whole book makes for moral conduct in the highest sense, for advance in our social life, and for the *mens sana in corpore sano*. Dr. Mercier has specialised a new department of science which he calls "Praxiology," or the systematised and scientific study of human conduct. "The study of conduct never has been systematised; there is no science of human conduct." This book is an attempt to organise and systematise our knowledge of human conduct. "The principle on which the investigation of human conduct is here made is the biological principle." He says: "My aim is merely to describe and explain," but he does far more than that; he generalises and systematises our knowledge, and no one can read his book without being made himself to think on the subject. It is full of suggestions in every page, and I have never read a book in which I have put so many marks of assent or interrogation. Throughout, the book is earnest and rings true. It cannot fail to add to its author's already great reputation as a thinker, a scientist, and a man of literature. It may well be said of him—*Nihil quod tetigit non ornavit*.

As we read the book the idea constantly occurs: This is so clear and obvious that it seems strange that previous writers and thinkers have not told it to us before, but it is high praise for any man to explain the every-day, the common-place, and the obvious in so complicated and wondrous a thing as human life. Even as we read the title the thought occurs: "Why, human conduct is the matter which all history, biography, and fiction has been trying to elucidate and expound throughout the ages. Can anything more be said about it than has already been said by the world's greatest minds?" It appears that something more can be said of it—something original, practical, and extremely useful—and that has now been said by Dr. Mercier in this book, whose aim is not theoretical only but intensely practical. No sociologist, no moralist, no psychologist, and no Christian but should be acquainted with the principles and facts so vividly expounded and described by the author. It should well mark an era in our own science of psychiatry, and we trust it will be used as a text-book by the students of our universities.

Dr. Mercier begins his book by discriminating the different forms of action and the study of "ends and purposes." His eleven varieties of action might perhaps have been reduced in number without detriment by the fusion of two or three of them. They range from the spontaneous movements of the amoeba up to the original and elaborate happenings in the life of the man of genius. In treating of instinctive action he thus points out the effects of the coming in of reason: "The first result of the importation of reason into instinctive action is, then, this suspension of the immediate or direct pursuit of the end; it imports a power of suspending, checking, controlling, restraining, or inhibiting instinctive action. This power of inhibition is inseparable from the

exercise of reason. It is an integral part of reasoned action, and the more reasoning employed the more and more of inhibition is involved in the action. Reason means first of all choice ; it implies a selection between alternatives, and however rapidly the choice may be made there is always some interval of time occupied in making the selection."

Dr. Mercier directs special attention to the fact that the study of conduct is especially important in education and in psychiatry. "It is, however, in the study and treatment of insanity that a systematic knowledge of conduct is most necessary, for insanity is, in the main, disorder of conduct, and for disorder to be estimated order must first be known." "The psychiatric physician, whose function it is to treat disorders of conduct, not only makes no systematic study of conduct, but denies that such a study is desirable, even if he admits that such a study is possible." Some of us would not admit that the latter two statements are quite correct. In my clinical teaching I used to tell my students to observe, first, what the patients did, second, what they looked like, and third, what they said, and every one of us, as a matter of fact, studies the conduct of our patients. Ever since Dr. Mercier began to insist that mental disease chiefly consisted in conduct I have impressed those views on my students, and in the witness-box I have often quoted them. Throughout the book Dr. Mercier draws illustrations from psychiatry of his various theses. He speaks of the altered conduct of the dement, of his disregard of decency, conventionality and order in his conduct, and of his tendency to reversions of conduct, towards that of primitive man and even animals. He especially draws attention to the loss of self-control, which he places, as I place it, as the most essential characteristic of the insane.

In treating of the varieties of action the author has a very interesting and convincing chapter on "Instinct and Reason, their Distinctions and their Relationships." Scientists will generally agree with the conclusions he arrives at. The next ten chapters, which form the basis of the whole treatise, analyse social conduct in an exhaustive manner, following it out in its innumerable forms. The psychological and scientific subtilty of Dr. Mercier's mind is exercised and evidently delights in the analysis and systematisation of the various forms of human conduct. To the ordinary reader it may sometimes seem as if the distinctions were overdrawn and that the sub-classes of conduct might have been more merged, but the more one reflects on the subject the less those objections obtrude themselves. Self-conservative conduct, social conduct, the social instinct, social inhibition, shyness, self-consciousness, ambition, pride, vanity, conceit, suavity, patriotism, spontaneous and elicited morality, chastity, modesty, courtship, jealousy, marital and filial conduct, are headings which show the immense and thorough range of the author's investigations. It is all most interesting reading. It promotes self-analysis and reflection in the reader's mind.

All who know Dr. Mercier's axiomatic, epigrammatic, and sometimes paradoxical mode of putting things, sometimes experience violent feelings of disagreement with him, but that is really one charm of his writing. For instance, he says, "Self-denial and self-restraint as ends in themselves are no more desirable than burying bones, or ringing church bells or learning Latin." The author would no doubt find this very easy to

prove to himself in his subtle and somewhat ultra-logical way, but yet the proposition as it stands either shocks or amuses the common mind by its apparent absurdity, as does the following definition: "Work is doing what you don't like, play is doing what is pleasant to do and what we would rather do than not." Those dicta obviously need enormous qualifications, but some of us would have more serious differences with Dr. Mercier than this. For instance, he habitually reverses the order of precedence of the two great instincts of living beings, namely, of the love of life and of reproduction. He says, "It matters not, therefore, whether we take the reproductive activities, as the most primitive to which all others are secondary and subsidiary, or the self-supporting or self-conservative which are a necessary preliminary to the reproduction." This sounds, and is, a contradiction in terms. All organisms must first seek for nourishment for their own support and development before they can reproduce. Among the higher animals and in man, self-conservative motives are stronger than reproductive motives. Self is a greater thing even than sex and is more loved, but those are, after all, spots on the sun.

He dwells on a fact little realised when he says: "The influence of the community upon each of its members is primarily inhibitory. The condition of living in a community is the surrender of some of the freedom of individual action, and correspondingly the effect on the individual of the presence of his fellows has an inhibitory effect; it limits his action."

Dr. Mercier's whole treatment of the question of morals is original and highly instructive. He says: "Conduct that is regarded as immoral and wrong is conduct injurious either to the community as a whole or to individual members or classes of the communities or to the stirp. These, I say, are the qualities in conduct that are respectively approved and called right or moral or disapproved or called wrong and immoral." He divides his subject into "spontaneous" morality and "elicited" morality. Both this definition and this distinction may, I think, be capable of controversion. Is there no innate feeling of right and wrong apart from approval or disapproval by others? Is there no such thing as a moral instinct? Is there no harm that is done by immoral conduct or thought to the inner self apart altogether from harm to the community or the approval or disapproval of self or others? He seems to admit this when he says: "The highest and truest morality is that which is dictated by the internal factor alone, that which is followed from an instinctive desire to do what is believed and felt to be right, to avoid and repel that which is believed or felt to be wrong."

"To thine own self be true;  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

The whole life and writings of Marcus Aurelius, the purest type of the Stoic school of philosophy, are surely a vivid illustration of the independence of the moral ideas of any other form of approbation than that of the inner self. Therefore the author's dictum that "The instinct to do what we believe to be right merely because it is right" is, in other words, an instinctive desire for self-approval, is putting the moral idea

on too low a basis. Less can we agree with the following: "As has been shown the root of morality is social advantage." The following axiom should be very consolatory to the wearers of the hobble skirt: "Following the fashion has its origin in that biological necessity for uniformity of action on the part of members of a community." When Dr. Mercier lays down the principle that "History is one long record of resistance to change of custom, resistance that has always been strenuous, often sanguinary, and was at last overcome," he no doubt realises that this is only a half truth, and that, put in the converse way, it would be equally in accordance with historical fact, but then explicit statement is the very soul and life of the author's writings, and to him are quite irresistible. "Friendship cancels obligation on the one side and the expectation of return on the other" is a good example of a charming epigram worthy of Montaigne.

Dr. Mercier says—"The disintegrating fact of difference of opinion is of great moment. Its centrifugal action between man and man, not being counteracted by the gravitation of sympathy, would overpower mere pressure from without and cannot therefore be permitted to exist. However much we may deplore the suppression of the researches of Roger Bacon, of Bruno, of Galileo and of many another pioneer and martyr of science, we cannot but recognise that scientific research is harmless in highly organised communities only, and that the first necessity for a community is its own preservation. If Roger Bacon and Bruno and other rare spirits of early times, who were so much in advance of those times, had been permitted to carry on unchecked the researches which so attracted them and have made their names immortal, it is possible, nay, it is probable, that the result would have been a division of opinion that would have been altogether destructive of the communities in which they lived, and that for every century that discovery was retarded by the destruction of the leaders, a millenium would have elapsed ere knowledge would have reached its present state of advancement." But might not unchecked researches have greatly hastened our present civilisation?

I would run this review to an altogether inordinate length were I to extract half the gems that occur in the book. "Female chastity is a great national asset." "The combative man is approved and honoured while the meek are disapproved and despised in spite of the great inheritance that they are to expect." Another of his half truths is thus expressed in treating of racial conduct: "The need of continuing the race is, as has been said, probably the root from which all modes of conduct have grown. It is the ultimate end of all organic life and the primary motive of all conduct."

Dr. Mercier's chapter on sexual modesty is by far the best exposition of this profoundly important and most interesting quality of humanity that I have met with. I have often wished to write such an exposition myself, but have always failed in the attempt.

I think the author's definition of religious conduct as being "divisible into two categories—religious observances, whose object is the propitiation of the Deity and the rendering of worship and honour and the carrying out of the behests that the religion inculcates," should be

supplemented by a third object, which is the quickening and strengthening of the subjecting feeling of reverence—reverence not only for the Deity but for the good, the old and the great among mankind. Dr. Mercier's power of eloquent writing finds its acme in the paragraph on page 267 on renunciation: "To share the advantages of common life in any degree; to taste the sweets of companionship; to gain the advantage of common action against enemies; of protection in helplessness; of nurture in sickness; of nourishment in poverty and starvation; to enjoy the delights of being approved, admired, applauded, loved; to attain the rare and more refined states of rendering services to others; to participate in the luxuries and glories of an advanced civilisation; for all these advantages a price must be paid, and the price is renunciation."

It is true, but not often thought of, "that in every militant community—in every community that has had to sustain itself by strife with others, and has triumphed, some religion is a dominant factor." "The fanatical religions have been uniformly successful against those in whom its fervour has been lukewarm." He states that it is "the fundamental function of religion to frown upon, discountenance and restrict the two other primary modes of conduct that conflict with social conduct, this is the biological function of religion." "The origin of religious observance is in the desire to propitiate a being who is malignant. I know of no primitive religion in which the deities are conceived as benignant." I would rather put it that there is a biological necessity and quality in all humanity that may be called religious instinct, which exists as a fact in man like the social instinct, the appetite for food, for sex, etc., and that this is the foundation of all religious observances and a sure proof that religion is a real necessity for mankind. Dr. Mercier's biological explanations of the celibacy of the clergy in many religious bodies and their antagonism to investigation and research, and of the self-torture of the religious devotee, are no doubt correct, but they will not be well received by the professional religionists.

The chief criticism which I would venture to make on Dr. Mercier's whole position is this, that he does not attach sufficient importance to emotion as being the primary origin of conduct. Biological and psychological facts all point to this. In man and the higher animals it is feeling which chiefly dominates conduct and sets the muscular apparatus into action. Emotion is as much a biological factor in man as instinct is in the lower animal life, and it influences conduct at every point. Man has over fifty muscles, which I call "mind-muscles," in the face and eye and larynx, whose chief function it is to express emotion, and thus produce instantaneous action or conduct. Darwin's great work on *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* has settled once for all the connection of action and emotion. The later school of psychologists—James and Ribot particularly—would put muscular action causative and first, and conscious emotion second in sequence, but that theory is yet unproved and is very difficult to prove. In a second edition of the work I trust Dr. Mercier may make the relation of emotion to conduct more clear than he has done in this. The nearest approach to the expression of this great

truth is when Dr. Mercier treats of desire. But then desire does not cover the whole field of emotion. It is a restricted emotion directed to the attainment or possession of an object from which pleasure is expected. It is a passion excited by the love of an object. I would place the feelings in the following order of intensity—emotion, desire, craving, their results being self-conservative, social and racial conduct.

If the readers of the *Journal of Mental Science* desire to experience an exquisite pleasure, to be stimulated to many new lines of thought, and to receive explanations of many obscure facts in their daily experience, they will read this charming and most illuminating book.

T. S. CLOUSTON.

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*Formal Logic: A Scientific and Social Problem.* By F. C. S. SCHILLER, M.A., D.Sc. London: Macmillan, 1912. Price 10s.

The whole history of literature presents no parallel to the almost simultaneous appearance of this book and my *New Logic*. The simultaneous presentation of Natural Selection by Darwin and Wallace was intentional and designed. Both had been working at the subject unknown to one another for years; but their agreement was known to Darwin, at any rate, before publication. Adams and Leverrier published almost simultaneously their discovery of Neptune; but the discovery was not, like that of Darwin and Wallace, the contradiction of a doctrine until then universally accepted; it was merely an application of a doctrine already in vogue. But that a doctrine that has been universally accepted for more than two thousand years, that has been received and passed on by generation after generation without question and without doubt for that enormous length of time, should at last be violently attacked root and branch, lock, stock, and barrel, by two antagonists within a month of one another, and without consultation, agreement, or collusion between the authors, is, as far as I know, entirely unprecedented.

The agreement is as close, in many respects, in point of matter as it is in point of time. Dr. Schiller and I both attack formal and traditional logic all along the line, in every principle and in every detail; we both find in it the same defects, the same futilities, the same contradictions; we both identify the same principles as those on which an efficient and valid logic ought to depend; we both use actually, in some cases, the same illustrations and the same allusions. We both call to our aid the story of the Emperor's clothes from Hans Christian Andersen.

Such an agreement seems to me highly significant. It seems to me to indicate the close of one epoch and the beginning of another. It seems to me to show that a revulsion against the doctrine and methods of traditional logic is "in the air." It seems to me that the fulness of time is come; that the generations and years and days of traditional logic are accomplished; that the time is ripe for a revolution; that the minds, not only of Dr. Schiller and myself, but of many others, are dissatisfied with logic as it is taught, and unconvinced by it; and that its downfall is at hand. If there are two who are so far moved by