

Essays on political economy : being a sequel to papers which appeared in the 'Cornhill Magazine' / by John Ruskin.

Contributors

Ruskin, John, 1819-1900.
Simon, Sir John, 1816-1904
Royal College of Surgeons of England

Publication/Creation

London : Parker, Son, and Bourn, 1862[-1863]

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/pm2qrk5r>

Provider

Royal College of Surgeons

License and attribution

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by The Royal College of Surgeons of England. The original may be consulted at The Royal College of Surgeons of England. where the originals may be consulted. This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

15.
Ruskin's Political Economy
from FRASER'S

MAGAZINE

FOR

TOWN AND COUNTRY.

Nº CCCXCIII.

SEPTEMBER, 1862.



LONDON:

PARKER, SON, AND BOURN, WEST STRAND.

SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS AND NEWSMEN IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

HALF-A-CROWN.

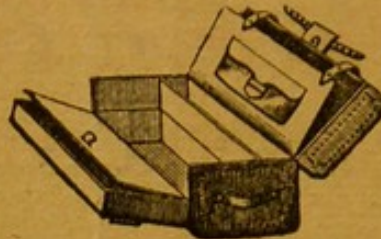
PRIZE MEDAL AWARDED.

ALLEN'S PATENT PORTMANTEAUS.

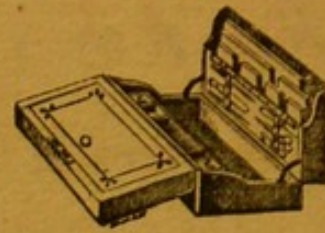
Illustrated Catalogues of 500 other Articles, by post for 2 Stamps.



ALLEN'S PATENT BAG.



ALLEN'S PATENT QUADRUPLE PORTMANTEAU.



DESPATCH-BOX DESK.



SOLID LEATHER DRESSING CASE.

* EXTENSIVE NEW SHOW ROOMS. *



RAILWAY PORTMANTEAU.



DRESSING BAG.



LADY'S WARDROBE PORTMANTEAU.



DRESSING BAG.

**J. W. ALLEN, MANUFACTURER AND PATENTEE,
22 and 31, West Strand, London, W.C.**

Allen's Illustrated Catalogue of Officers' Portable Bedsteads, Drawers, Chairs, Canteens, and every requisite for the Barrack-room, Camp, and Field, by post for 2 Stamps.



MOURNING.—THE LONDON GENERAL MOURNING WAREHOUSE, 247 and 249, REGENT STREET.—The Proprietors of this Establishment, in respectfully addressing themselves to the attention of the Nobility, the Gentry, and the Public, beg leave to renew their thanks for the extraordinary support they have received. Every article necessary for a complete outfit of Mourning, for either the Family or Household, may be had here, and made up, if required, at the shortest notice; whilst the attendance of competent persons connected with the Establishment upon families of rank, and of every respectable denomination, enables the Proprietors or their assistants to at once suggest or supply everything necessary for the occasion, and suited to any grade or condition of the community. Skirts, &c., for Widowhood, and for Family Mourning, are always kept made up, and a note descriptive of the relation of the parties to the deceased will ensure at any time the proper supply of Mourning being forwarded, both as to quality and distinction, according to the exigencies of the case, it being needful only to send dresses for patterns, when every requisite will be carefully prepared and chosen to render the appointments complete.

**THE LONDON GENERAL MOURNING WAREHOUSE,
Nos. 247 and 249, Regent Street, W., two doors from Oxford Street.**

nants, but or
vowel were I
Or was it the
length measu
and reckoned
according to
The difficulty
insuperable, a
less.

Leaving the
for scholars to
come back to
hexameter upon
fishman, about
thing, and to
is altogether i
least, I posit
speak of the
speak of the
utter make up
case is, in fac
Munro's. For
of Virgil has
the rules of p
have no meani
a meaning in
pronunciation
pronunciation
ciple is in man
able, and the
which, as spok
violated the la
by me, accord
ber of what w
be committed
any faculty wh
intellectual.
and *mater*; b
taught, absurd
them) like our
one pretend th
hearing *pater*
quires a long
requires a sho
both *common*
nounced either
just as *natura*
the mute follo
a combination
uttered rapidly
being capable,

In these there
intelligible—an
delicately plays
changes, demanding no acquired know-
ledge to explain it to the ear, except a
knowledge of the intention of the metre,
—the general law which governs it. And
the result (in spite of four false quantities,
which I confess with shame that I have
always made in reading the lines, and

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MORNING POST.

SIR,—I speak in no disparagement of clergymen when I say they are not practical men. They are men—and I would not wish it otherwise—who obey the dictates of the heart in preference to the suggestions of the head. A striking illustration of this is given in the rev. gentleman who has just travelled to London to carry back £500 to quell a riot at Stalybridge, which really reads like a gentleman travelling up from some watery district down the country with a barrel of water to extinguish a great conflagration in London.

I believe, sir, the time is come when the mischief arising, and which, not for the first time by many, has arisen from the excessive manufacture of cotton goods, must be met promptly and dealt with sternly, if you would prevent a catastrophe of fearful magnitude. The danger of neglect is great, the continuance of charity is perilous in the extreme, and the notion of keeping multitudes in idleness and dependence to wait the convenience of wealthy mill-owners is futile and absurd. We shall never again require the extraordinary number of hands in the cotton fabrics that we have hitherto employed; we have divided our trade, and wisely, with France, Belgium, and other nations, and our further wisdom now will be best proved by our reducing our mills and our hands more nearly to those wants which may be likely to be of constant or nearly equal recurrence, and no longer seeking, by monstrous efforts and nightly toils, to grasp at a trade which, so taken, only hardens the heart and destroys a fine race of people—only enriches or ruins, as it may be, a limited number of individuals, and every seven or ten years throws thousands of workmen on the country in beggary and misery.

You are now in a difficulty from which there is but one escape: you must use the funds left to send out of the country every man and family from the cotton factory district willing to go, and you must next induce men to go by making the alternative of stopping at home one of steady and painful labour. You will find this tell quickly, for as soon as the millowners perceive that you cease to keep workmen on funds from the public to wait their convenience, and that they will be likely to have too few practised hands for their kind of work left in the country, they will come to an understanding to take on a number of hands on Indian or other cotton, not at the high wages of former days, but at living wages, so as to relieve the country of the expense of feeding an idle population, and the workmen from the degradation of living on charity, and so restoring to comfort and self-respect a race of people honoured the most by being helped only so far as always to leave them room to show how capable they are of helping themselves.—Your obedient servant.

ONE WHO KNOWS EVERY MANUFACTURING TOWN IN ENGLAND. J. J. R.

music gives. Mr. Munro would have me believe that an acquired knowledge of the rules of playing on the pianoforte might, by a mental process, be so superinduced upon the sense of the sounds actually emitted by an instrument false in every note, that to one who knew that the keys

ch the
r feels
Ipsa
, &c.,
him,
false
e days
ed or
mity.
e dur
e said
astra
e pro
ght to
l false
making
ed, do
i and
ng by
ity of
can-
thout
nce to
been
dision
vel of
mans
vowel,
lotter
th us
The
, &c.,
city—
e law
e sc
iesce),
rule—
Ipsa
y that

may be
of the
le the
a won-
them-
neters,
ifferent
at they
des not
not to

—tūm,
of exqui-
re which

were rightly touched, even though he did not know what the sounds themselves ought to be, the result would be a feeling of 'wondrous harmony.' But I think he will hardly induce two musicians to make the experiment—one playing, the other reading and listening; and yet the mental feat would be much easier to them than the analogous mental feat which he supposes to be unconsciously performed

by all modern scholars; for the musicians have a clear conception of what the sounds ought to be, and if the instrument were silenced, could hear them in their minds: whereas the scholar only hears a jangle, and believes that the sound would be melodious if the instrument were rightly tuned, but has no conception whatever of the sort of sounds which the rightly-tuned instrument would make.

J. S.

ESSAYS ON POLITICAL ECONOMY.

Being a Sequel to Papers which appeared in the 'Cornhill Magazine.'

BY JOHN RUSKIN.

AS domestic economy regulates the acts and habits of a household, political economy regulates those of a society or State, with reference to the means of its maintenance.

Political economy is neither an art nor a science,* but a system of conduct and legislature, founded on the sciences, directing the arts, and impossible, except under certain conditions of moral culture.

By the 'maintenance' of a State is to be understood the support of its population in healthy and happy life; and the increase of their numbers, so far as that increase is consistent with their happiness. It is not the object of political economy to increase the numbers of a nation at the cost of common health or comfort; nor to increase indefinitely the comfort of individuals, by sacrifice of surrounding lives, or possibilities of life.

The assumption which lies at the root of nearly all erroneous reasoning on political economy,—namely, that its object is to accumulate

money or exchangeable property,—may be shown in few words to be without foundation. For no economist would admit national economy to be legitimate which proposed to itself only the building of a pyramid of gold. He would declare the gold to be wasted, were it to remain in the monumental form, and would say it ought to be employed. But to what end? Either it must be used only to gain more gold, and build a larger pyramid, or to some purpose other than the gaining of gold. And this other purpose, however at first apprehended, will be found to resolve itself finally into the service of man—that is to say, the extension, defence, or comfort of his life. The golden pyramid may perhaps be providently built, perhaps improvidently; but, at all events, the wisdom or folly of the accumulation can only be determined by our having first clearly stated the aim of all economy, namely, the extension of life.

If the accumulation of money,

* The science which in modern days has been called Political Economy is in reality nothing more than the investigation of the phenomena of commercial operations. It has no connexion with political economy, as understood and treated of by the great thinkers of past ages; and as long as it is allowed to pass under the same name, every word written by those thinkers—and chiefly the words of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, and Bacon—must be either misunderstood or misapplied. The reader must not, therefore, be surprised at the care and insistence with which I have retained the literal and earliest sense of all important terms used in these papers; for a word is usually well made at the time it is first wanted; its youngest meaning has in it the full strength of its youth; subsequent senses are commonly warped or weakened; and as a misused word always is liable to involve an obscured thought, and all careful thinkers, either on this or any other subject, are sure to have used their words accurately, the first condition, in order to be able to avail ourselves of their sayings at all, is a firm definition of terms.

or of exchangeable property, were a certain means of extending existence, it would be useless, in discussing economical questions, to fix our attention upon the more distant object—life—instead of the immediate one—money. But it is not so. Money may sometimes be accumulated at the cost of life, or by limitations of it; that is to say, either by hastening the deaths of men, or preventing their births. It is therefore necessary to keep clearly in view the ultimate object of economy; and to determine the expediency of minor operations with reference to that ulterior end.

It has been just stated that the object of political economy is the continuance not only of life, but of healthy and happy life. But all true happiness is both a consequence and cause of life: it is a sign of its vigour, and means of its continuance. All true suffering is in like manner a consequence and cause of death. I shall therefore, in future, use the word 'Life' singly: but let it be understood to include in its signification the happiness and power of the entire human nature, body and soul.

That human nature, as its Creator made it, and maintains it wherever His laws are observed, is entirely harmonious. No physical error can be more profound, no moral error more dangerous, than that involved in the monkish doctrine of the opposition of body to soul. No soul can be perfect in an imperfect body; no body perfect without perfect soul. Every right action and true thought sets the seal of its beauty on person and face; every wrong action and foul thought its seal of distortion; and the various aspects of humanity might be read as plainly as a printed history, were it not that the impressions are so complex that it must always in some cases—and, in the present state of our knowledge, in

all cases—be impossible to decipher them completely. Nevertheless, the face of a consistently just, and of a consistently unjust person, may always be rightly discerned at a glance; and if the qualities are continued by descent through a generation or two, there arises a complete distinction of race. Both moral and physical qualities are communicated by descent, far more than they can be developed by education (though both may be destroyed for want of education), and there is as yet no ascertained limit to the nobleness of person and mind which the human creature may attain, by persevering observance of the laws of God respecting its birth and training.

We must therefore yet farther define the aim of political economy to be 'The multiplication of human life at the highest standard.' It might at first seem questionable whether we should endeavour to maintain a small number of persons of the highest type of beauty and intelligence, or a larger number of an inferior class. But I shall be able to show in the sequel, that the way to maintain the largest number is first to aim at the highest standard. Determine the noblest type of man, and aim simply at maintaining the largest possible number of persons of that class, and it will be found that the largest possible number of every healthy subordinate class must necessarily be produced also.

The perfect type of manhood, as just stated, involves the perfections (whatever we may hereafter determine these to be) of his body, affections, and intelligence. The material things, therefore, which it is the object of political economy to produce, and use (or accumulate for use), are things which serve either to sustain and comfort the body, or exercise rightly the affections and form the intelligence.*

* It may be observed, in anticipation of some of our future results, that while some conditions of the affections are aimed at by the economist as final, others are necessary to him as his own instruments: as he obtains them in greater or less degree his own farther work becomes more or less possible. Such, for instance, are the fortifying virtues, which the wisest men of all time have, with more or less of distinctness, arranged under the general heads of Prudence, or Discretion (the spirit which discerns and

Whatever truly serves either of these purposes is 'useful' to man, wholesome, healthful, helpful, or holy. By seeking such things, man prolongs and increases his life upon the earth.

On the other hand, whatever does not serve either of these purposes,—much more whatever counteracts them,—is in like manner useless to man, unwholesome, unhelpful, or unholy; and by seeking such things man shortens and diminishes his life upon the earth. And neither with respect to things useful or useless can man's estimate of them alter their nature.

Certain substances being good for his food, and others noxious to him, what he thinks or wishes respecting them can neither change their nature, nor prevent their power. If he eats corn, he will live; if nightshade, he will die. If he produce or make good and beautiful things, they will 're-create' him; (note the solemnity and weight of the word); if bad and ugly things, they will 'corrupt' or break in pieces—that is, in the exact degree of their power, kill him. For every hour of labour, however enthusiastic or well intended, which he spends for that which is not bread,

adopts rightly); Justice (the spirit which rules and divides rightly); Fortitude (the spirit which persists and endures rightly); and Temperance (the spirit which stops and refuses rightly); or in shorter terms still, the virtues which teach how to consist, assist, persist, and desist. These outermost virtues are not only the means of protecting and prolonging life itself, but they are the chief guards or sources of the material means of life, and are the visible governing powers and princes of economy. Thus (reserving detailed statements for the sequel) precisely according to the number of just men in a nation, is their power of avoiding either intestine or foreign war. All disputes may be peaceably settled, if a sufficient number of persons have been trained to submit to the principles of justice. The necessity for war is in direct ratio to the number of unjust persons who are incapable of determining a quarrel but by violence. Whether the injustice take the form of the desire of dominion, or of refusal to submit to it, or of lust of territory, or lust of money, or of mere irregular passion and wanton will, the result is economically the same;—loss of the quantity of power and life consumed in repressing the injustice, as well as of that requiring to be repressed, added to the material and moral destruction caused by the fact of war. The early civil wars of England, and the existing war in America, are curious examples—these under monarchical, this under republican institutions—of the results of the want of education of large masses of nations in principles of justice. This latter war, especially, may perhaps at last serve for some visible, or if that be impossible (for the Greeks told us that Plutus was blind, as Dante that he was speechless), some feelable proof that true political economy is an ethical, and by no means a commercial business. The Americans imagined themselves to know somewhat of money-making; bowed low before their Dollar, expecting Divine help from it; more than potent—even omnipotent. Yet all the while this apparently tangible, was indeed an imaginary Deity;—and had they shown the substance of him to any true economist, or even true mineralogist, they would have been told, long years ago,—'Alas, gentlemen, this that you are gaining is not gold—not a particle of it. It is yellow, and glittering, and like enough to the real metal,—but see—it is *brittle*, cat-gold, "iron firestone." Out of this, heap it as high as you will, you will get so much steel and brimstone—nothing else; and in a year or two, when (had you known but a little of right economy) you might have had quiet roof-trees over your heads, and a fair account at your banker's, you shall instead have to sleep a-field, under red tapestries, costliest, yet comfortless; and at your banker's find deficit at compound interest.' But the mere dread or distrust resulting from the want of the inner virtues of Faith and Charity among nations, is often no less costly than war itself. The fear which France and England have of each other costs each nation about fifteen millions sterling annually, besides various paralyses of commerce; that sum being spent in the manufacture of means of destruction instead of means of production. There is no more reason in the nature of things that France and England should be hostile to each other than that England and Scotland should be, or Lancashire and Yorkshire; and the reciprocal terrors of the opposite sides of the English Channel are neither more necessary, more economical, nor more virtuous than the old riding and reiving on opposite flanks of the Cheviots, or than England's own weaving for herself of crowns of thorn from the stems of her Red and White Roses.

so much possibility of life is lost to him. His fancies, likings, beliefs, however brilliant, eager, or obstinate, are of no avail if they are set on a false object. Of all that he has laboured for, the eternal law of heaven and earth measures out to him for reward, to the utmost atom, that part which he ought to have laboured for, and withdraws from him (or enforces on him, it may be) inexorably that part which he ought not to have laboured for. The dust and chaff are all, to the last speck, winnowed away, and on his summer threshing-floor stands his heap of corn; little or much, not according to his labour, but to his discretion. No 'commercial arrangements,' no painting of surfaces nor alloying of substances, will avail him a penny-weight. Nature asks of him calmly and inevitably, What have you found, or formed—the right thing or the wrong? By the right thing you shall live; by the wrong you shall die.

To thoughtless persons it seems otherwise. The world looks to them as if they could cozen it out of some ways and means of life. But they cannot cozen it: they can only cozen their neighbours. The world is not to be cheated of a grain; not so much as a breath of its air can be drawn surreptitiously. For every piece of wise work done, so much life is granted; for every piece of foolish work, nothing; for every piece of wicked work, so much death. This is as sure as the courses of day and night. But when the means of life are once produced, men, by their various struggles and industries of accumulation or exchange, may variously gather, waste, restrain, or distribute them; necessitating, in proportion to the waste or restraint,

accurately so much more death. The rate and range of additional death is measured by the rate and range of waste, and is inevitable;—the only question (determined mostly by fraud in peace, and force in war) is, Who is to die, and how?

Such being the everlasting law of human existence, the essential work of the political economist is to determine what are in reality useful or life-giving things, and by what degrees and kinds of labour they are attainable and distributable. This investigation divides itself under three great heads;—the studies, namely, of the phenomena, first, of WEALTH; secondly, of MONEY; and thirdly, of RICHES.

These terms are often used as synonymous, but they signify entirely different things. 'Wealth' consists of things in themselves valuable; 'Money,' of documentary claims to the possession of such things; and 'Riches' is a relative term, expressing the magnitude of the possessions of one person or society as compared with those of other persons or societies.

The study of Wealth is a province of natural science:—it deals with the essential properties of things.

The study of Money is a province of commercial science:—it deals with conditions of engagement and exchange.

The study of Riches is a province of moral science:—it deals with the due relations of men to each other in regard of material possessions; and with the just laws of their association for purposes of labour.

I shall in this paper shortly sketch out the range of subjects which will come before us as we follow these three branches of inquiry.

SECTION I.—WEALTH.

Wealth, it has been said, consists of things essentially valuable. We now, therefore, need a definition of 'value.'

Value signifies the strength or 'availing' of anything towards the sustaining of life, and is always twofold; that is to say, prima-

rily, INTRINSIC, and secondarily, EFFECTUAL.

The reader must, by anticipation, be warned against confusing value with cost, or with price. Value is the life-giving power of anything; cost, the quantity of labour required to produce it; price, the

quantity of labour which its possessor will take in exchange for it. Cost and price are commercial conditions, to be studied under the head of money.

Intrinsic value is the absolute power of anything to support life. A sheaf of wheat of given quality and weight has in it a measurable power of sustaining the substance of the body; a cubic foot of pure air, a fixed power of sustaining its warmth; and a cluster of flowers of given beauty a fixed power of enlivening or animating the senses and heart.

It does not in the least affect the intrinsic value of the wheat, the air, or the flowers, that men refuse or despise them. Used or not, their own power is in them, and that particular power is in nothing else.

But, in order that this value of theirs may become effectual, a certain state is necessary in the recipient of it. The digesting, breathing, and perceiving functions must be perfect in the human creature before the food, air, or flowers can become of their full value to it. The production of effectual value, therefore, always involves two needs: first, the production of a thing essentially useful; then the production of the capacity to use it. Where the intrinsic value and acceptant capacity come together there is Effectual value, or wealth; where there is either no intrinsic value, or no acceptant capacity, there is no effectual value; that is to say, no wealth. A horse is no wealth to us if we cannot ride, nor a picture if we cannot see, nor can any noble thing be wealth, except to a noble person. As the aptness of the user increases, the effectual value of the thing used increases; and in its entirety can co-exist only with perfect skill of use, or harmony of nature. The effectual value of a given quantity of any commodity existing in the world at any moment is therefore

a mathematical function of the capacity existing in the human race to enjoy it. Let its intrinsic value be represented by x , and the recipient faculty by y ; its effectual value is $x y$, in which the sum varies as either coefficient varies, is increased by either's increase,* and cancelled by either's absence.

Valuable material things may be conveniently referred to five heads:

1. Land, with its associated air, water, and organisms.
2. Houses, furniture, and instruments.
3. Stored or prepared food and medicine, and articles of bodily luxury, including clothing.
4. Books.
5. Works of art.

We shall enter into separate inquiry as to the conditions of value under each of these heads. The following sketch of the entire subject may be useful for future reference.

1. Land. Its value is twofold.

A. As producing food and mechanical power.

B. As an object of sight and thought, producing intellectual power.

A. Its value, as a means of producing food and mechanical power, varies with its form (as mountain or plain), with its substance (in soil or mineral contents), and with its climate. All these conditions of intrinsic value, in order to give effectual value, must be known and complied with by the men who have to deal with it; but at any given time and place, the intrinsic value is fixed: such and such a piece of land, with its associated lakes and seas, rightly treated in surface and substance, can produce precisely so much food and power, and no more.

Its surface treatment (agriculture) and substance treatment (practical geology and chemistry) are the first roots of economical science. By surface treatment, however, I mean more than agriculture as commonly understood; I mean

* With this somewhat strange and ungeometrical limitation, however, which, here expressed for the moment in the briefest terms, we must afterwards trace in detail,—that $x y$ may be indefinitely increased by the increase of y only; but not by the increase of x , unless y increase also in a fixed proportion.

land and sea culture;—dominion over both the fixed and the flowing fields;—perfect acquaintance with the laws of climate, and of vegetable and animal growth in the given tracts of earth or ocean, and of their relations to those of other districts; such relations regulating especially the production of those articles of food which, being in each particular spot producible in the highest perfection, will bring the best price in commercial exchanges.

B. The second element of value in land is its beauty, united with such conditions of space and form as are necessary for exercise, or pleasant to the eye, associated with vital organism.

Land of the highest value in these respects is that lying in temperate climates, and boldly varied in form; removed from unhealthy or dangerous influences (as of miasm or volcano); and capable of sustaining a rich fauna and flora. Such land, carefully tended by the hand of man, so far as to remove from it unsightlinesses and evidences of decay; guarded from violence, and inhabited, under man's affectionate protection, by every kind of living creature that can occupy it in peace, forms the most precious 'property' that human beings can possess.

The determination of the degree in which these two elements of value can be united in land, or in which either element must, or should, in particular cases, be sacrificed to the other, forms the most important branch of economical inquiry respecting preferences of things.

2. Buildings, furniture, and instruments.

The value of buildings consists, *A.* In permanent strength, with convenience of form, of size, and of position; so as to render employment peaceful, social intercourse easy, temperature and air healthy. The advisable or possible magnitude of cities and mode of their distribution in squares, streets, courts, &c.; the relative value of sites of land, and the modes of structure which are healthiest and most perma-

nent, have to be studied under this head.

B. The value of buildings consists secondarily in historical association and architectural beauty, of which we have to examine the influence on manners and life.

The value of instruments consists *A.* In their power of shortening labour, or otherwise accomplishing (as ships) what human strength unaided could not. The kinds of work which are severally best accomplished by hand or by machine;—the effect of machinery in gathering and multiplying population, and its influence on the minds and bodies of such population; together with the conceivable uses of machinery on a colossal scale in accomplishing mighty and useful works, hitherto unthought of, such as the deepening of large river channels;—changing the surface of mountainous districts;—irrigating tracts of desert in the torrid zone;—breaking up, and thus rendering capable of quicker fusion edges of ice in the northern and southern Arctic seas, &c., so rendering parts of the earth habitable which hitherto have not been so, are to be studied under this head.

B. The value of instruments is, secondarily, in their aid to abstract sciences. The degree in which the multiplication of such instruments should be encouraged, so as to make them, if large, easy of access to numbers (as costly telescopes), or so cheap as that they might, in a serviceable form, become a common part of the furniture of households, is to be considered under this head.

3. Food, medicine, and articles of luxury. Under this head we shall have to examine the possible methods of obtaining pure and nourishing food in such security and equality of supply as to avoid both waste and famine: then the economy of medicine and just range of sanitary law: finally the economy of luxury, partly an æsthetic and partly an ethical question.

4. Books. The value of these consists,

A. In their power of preserving

and communicating the knowledge of facts.

B. In their power of exciting vital or noble emotion and intellectual action. They have also their corresponding negative powers of disguising and effacing the memory of facts, and killing the noble emotions, or exciting base ones. Under these two heads we have to consider the economical and educational value, positive and

negative, of literature;—the means of producing and educating good authors, and the means and advisability of rendering good books generally accessible, and directing the reader's choice to them.

5. Works of art. The value of these is of the same nature as that of books, but the laws of their production and possible modes of distribution are very different, and require separate examination.

SECTION 2.—MONEY.

Under this head, we shall have to examine the laws of currency and exchange; of which I will note here the first principles.

Money has been inaccurately spoken of as merely a means of circulation. It is, on the contrary, an expression of right. It is not wealth, but a documentary claim to wealth, being the sign* of the relative quantities of it, or of the labour producing it, to which, at a given time, persons or societies are entitled.

If all the money in the world, notes and gold, were destroyed in an instant, it would leave the world neither richer nor poorer than it was. But it would leave the individual inhabitants of it in different relations.

Money is, therefore, correspondent in its nature to the title-deed of an estate. Though the deed be burned, the estate still exists, but the right to it has become disputable.

The worth of money remains unchanged, as long as the proportion of the quantity of existing money to the quantity of existing wealth or available labour which it professes to represent, remains unchanged.

If the wealth increases, but not the money, the worth of the money increases; if the money increases, but not the wealth, the worth of the money diminishes.

Money, therefore, cannot be arbitrarily multiplied, any more than title-deeds can. So long as the existing wealth or available labour

is not fully represented by the currency, the currency may be increased without diminution of the assigned worth of its pieces. But when the existing wealth, or available labour is once fully represented, every piece of money thrown into circulation diminishes the worth of every other existing piece, in the proportion it bears to the number of them, provided the new piece be received with equal credit; if not, the depreciation of worth takes place exclusively in the new piece, according to the inferiority of its credit.

When, however, new money, composed of some substance of supposed intrinsic value (as of gold), is brought into the market, or when new notes are issued which are supposed to be deserving of credit, the desire to obtain the money will, under certain circumstances, stimulate industry: an additional quantity of wealth is immediately produced, and if this be in proportion to the new claims advanced, the value of the existing currency is undepreciated. If the stimulus given be so great as to produce more goods than are proportioned to the additional coinage, the worth of the existing currency will be raised.

Arbitrary control and issues of currency affect the production of wealth, by acting on the hopes and fears of men, and are, under certain circumstances, wise. But the issue of additional currency to meet the exigencies of immediate expense, is merely one of the disguised forms

Always

* *Money*, and necessarily, an imperfect sign; but capable of approximate accuracy if rightly ordered.

of borrowing or taxing. It is, however, in the present low state of economical knowledge, often possible for governments to venture on an issue of currency, when they could not venture on an additional loan or tax, because the real operation of such issue is not understood by the people, and the pressure of it is irregularly distributed, and with an unperceived gradation.

Finally. The use of substances of intrinsic value as the materials of a currency, is a barbarism;—a remnant of the conditions of barter, which alone can render commerce possible among savage nations. It is, however, still necessary, partly as a mechanical check on arbitrary issues; partly as a means of exchanges with foreign

nations. In proportion to the extension of civilization, and increase of trustworthiness in Governments, it will cease. So long as it exists, the phenomena of the cost and price of the articles used for currency, are mingled with those of currency itself, in an almost inextricable manner; and the worth of money in the market is affected by multitudinous accidental circumstances, which have been traced, with more or less success by writers on commercial operations: but with these variations the true political economist has no more to do than an engineer fortifying a harbour of refuge against Atlantic tide, has to concern himself with the cries or quarrels of children who dig pools with their fingers for its ebbing currents among the sand.

SECTION 3.—RICHES.

According to the various industry, capacity, good fortune, and desires of men, they obtain greater or smaller share of, and claim upon, the wealth of the world.

The inequalities between these shares, always in some degree just and necessary, may be either restrained by law (or circumstance) within certain limits; or may increase indefinitely.

Where no moral or legal restraint is put upon the exercise of the will and intellect of the stronger, shrewder, or more covetous men, these differences become ultimately enormous. But as soon as they become so distinct in their extremes as that, on one side, there shall be manifest redundancy of possession, and on the other manifest pressure of need,—the terms 'riches' and 'poverty' are used to express the opposite states; being contrary only in the manner of the terms 'warmth' and 'cold'; which neither of them imply an actual degree, but only a relation to other degrees, of temperature.

Respecting riches, the economist has to inquire, first, into the advisable modes of their collection; secondly, into the advisable modes of their administration.

Respecting the collection of national riches, he has to inquire,

first, whether he is justified in calling the nation rich, if the quantity of money it possesses relatively to that possessed by other nations be large, irrespectively of the manner of its distribution. Or does the mode of distribution in any wise affect the nature of the riches? Thus, if the king alone be rich—suppose Cræsus or Mausolus—are the Lydians and Carians therefore a rich nation? Or if one or two slave-masters be rich, and the nation be otherwise composed of slaves, is it to be called a rich nation? For if not, and the ideas of a certain mode of distribution or operation in the riches, and of a certain degree of freedom in the people, enter into our idea of riches as attributed to a people, we shall have to define the degree of fluency or circulative character which is essential to their vitality; and the degree of independence of action required in their possessors. Questions which look as if they would take time in answering. And farther. Since there are two modes in which the inequality, which is indeed the condition and constituent of riches, may be established—namely, by increase of possession on the one side, and by decrease of it on the other—we have to inquire, with respect to

any given state of riches, precisely in what manner the correlative poverty was produced: that is to say, whether by being surpassed only, or being depressed also; and if by being depressed, what are the advantages, or the contrary, conceivable in the depression. For instance, it being one of the commonest advantages of being rich to entertain a number of servants, we have to inquire, on the one side, what economical process produced the riches of the master; and on the other, what economical process produced the poverty of the persons who serve him; and what advantages each (on his own side) derives from the result.

These being the main questions touching the collection of riches, the next, or last, part of the inquiry is into their administration.

They have in the main three great economical powers which require separate examination: namely, the powers of selection, direction, and provision.

A. Their power of **SELECTION** relates to things of which the supply is limited (as the supply of best things is always). When it becomes matter of question to whom such things are to belong, the richest person has necessarily the first choice, unless some arbitrary mode of distribution be otherwise determined upon. The business of the economist is to show how this choice may be a wise one.

B. Their power of **DIRECTION** arises out of the necessary relation of rich men to poor, which ultimately, in one way or another, involves the direction of, or authority over, the labour of the poor; and this nearly as much over their mental as their bodily labour. The

business of the economist is to show how this direction may be a Just one.

C. Their power of **PROVISION** or 'preparatory sight' (for pro-accumulation is by no means necessarily pro-vision), is dependent upon their redundancy, which may of course by active persons be made available in preparation for future work or future profit; in which function riches have generally received the name of capital; that is to say, of head-, or source-material. The business of the economist is to show how this provision may be a Distant one.

The examination of these three functions of riches will embrace every final problem of political economy;—and, above, or before all, this curious and vital problem, —whether, since the wholesome action of riches in these three functions will depend (it appears), on the Wisdom, Justice, and Farsightedness of the holders; and it is by no means to be assumed that persons primarily rich, must therefore be just and wise,—it may not be ultimately possible so, or somewhat so, to arrange matters, as that persons primarily just and wise, should therefore be rich?

Such being the general plan of the inquiry before us, I shall not limit myself to any consecutive following of it, having hardly any good hope of being able to complete so laborious a work as it must prove to me; but from time to time, as I have leisure, shall endeavour to carry forward this part or that, as may be immediately possible; indicating always with accuracy the place which the particular essay will or should take in the completed system.



FRASER'S MAGAZINE.

SEPTEMBER, 1862.

ESSAYS ON POLITICAL ECONOMY.

Being a Sequel to Papers which appeared in the 'Cornhill Magazine.'

By JOHN RUSKIN.

THE last paper having consisted of little more than definition of terms, I purpose, in this, to expand and illustrate the given definitions, so as to avoid confusion in their use when we enter into the detail of our subject.

The view which has been taken of the nature of wealth, namely, that it consists in an intrinsic value developed by a vital power, is directly opposed to two nearly universal conceptions of wealth. In the assertion that value is primarily intrinsic, it opposes the idea that anything which is an object of desire to numbers, and is limited in quantity, may be called, or virtually become, wealth. And in the assertion that value is secondarily dependent upon power in the possessor, it opposes the idea that wealth consists of things exchangeable at rated prices. Before going farther, we will make these two positions clearer.

I. First. All wealth is intrinsic, and is not constituted by the judgment of men. This is easily seen in the case of things affecting the body; we know, that no force of fantasy will make stones nourishing, or poison innocent; but it is less apparent in things affecting the mind. We are easily—perhaps willingly—misled by the appearance of beneficial results obtained by industries addressed wholly to the gratification of fanciful desire; and apt to suppose that whatever is widely coveted, dearly bought, and pleasurable in possession, must be included in our definition of wealth. It is the more difficult to

quit ourselves of this error because many things which are true wealth in moderate use, yet become false wealth in immoderate; and many things are mixed of good and evil,—as mostly, books, and works of art,—out of which one person will get the good, and another the evil; so that it seems as if there were no fixed good or evil in the things themselves, but only in the view taken, and use made of them.

But that is not so. The evil and good are fixed in essence and in proportion. They are separable by instinct and judgment, but not interchangeable; and in things in which evil depends upon excess, the point of excess, though indefinable, is fixed; and the power of the thing is on the hither side for good, and on the farther side for evil. And in all cases this power is inherent, not dependent on opinion or choice. Our thoughts of things neither make, nor mar their eternal force; nor—which is the most serious point for future consideration—can they prevent the effect of it upon ourselves.

Therefore, the object of the special analysis of wealth into which we have presently to enter will be not so much to enumerate what is serviceable, as to distinguish what is destructive; and to show that it is inevitably destructive; that to receive pleasure from an evil thing is not to escape from, or alter the evil of it, but to be *altered by* it; that is, to suffer from it to the utmost, having our own nature, in that degree, made evil also. And it will be shown

farther, that, through whatever length of time or subtleties of connexion the harm is accomplished, (being also less or more according to the fineness and worth of the humanity on which it is wrought), still, nothing *but* harm ever comes of a bad thing.

So that, finally, wealth is not the accidental object of a morbid desire, but the constant object of a legitimate one.* By the fury of ignorance, and fitfulness of caprice, large interests may be continually attached to things unserviceable or hurtful; if their nature could be altered by our passions, the science of Political Economy would be but as the weighing of clouds, and the portioning out of shadows. But of ignorance there is no science; and of caprice no law. Their disturbing forces interfere with the operations of economy, but have nothing in common with them; the calm arbiter of national destiny regards only essential power for good in all it accumulates, and alike disdains the wanderings of imagination and the thirsts of disease.

II. Secondly. The assertion that wealth is not *only* intrinsic, but dependent, in order to become effectual, on a given degree of vital power in its possessor, is opposed to another popular view of wealth;—namely, that though it may always be constituted by caprice, it is, when so constituted, a substan-

tial thing, of which given quantities may be counted as existing here, or there, and exchangeable at rated prices.

In this view there are three errors. The first and chief is the overlooking the fact that all exchangeableness of commodity, or effective demand for it, depends on the sum of capacity for its use existing, here, or elsewhere. The book we cannot read, or picture we take no delight in, may indeed be called part of our wealth, in so far as we have power of exchanging either for something we like better. But our power of effecting such exchange, and yet more, of effecting it to advantage, depends absolutely on the number of accessible persons who can understand the book, or enjoy the painting, and who will dispute the possession of them. Thus the actual worth of either, even to us, depends no less on their essential goodness than on the capacity existing somewhere for the perception of it; and it is vain in any completed system of production to think of obtaining one without the other. So that, though the great political economist knows that co-existence of capacity for use with temporary possession cannot be always secured, the final fact, on which he bases all action and administration, is that, in the whole nation, or group of nations, he has

* Few passages of the book which at least some part of the nations at present most advanced in civilization accept as an expression of final truth, have been more distorted than those bearing on Idolatry. For the idolatry there denounced is neither sculpture, nor veneration of sculpture. It is simply the substitution of an 'Eidolon,' phantasm, or imagination of Good, for that which is real and enduring; from the Highest Living Good, which gives life, to the lowest material good which ministers to it. The Creator, and the things created, which He is said to have 'seen good' in creating, are in this their eternal goodness always called Helpful or Holy: and the sweep and range of idolatry extend to the rejection of any or all of these, 'calling evil good, and good evil,—putting bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter,' so betraying the first of all Loyalties, to the fixed Law of life, and with resolute opposite loyalty serving our own imagination of good, which is the law, not of the dwelling, but of the Grave, (otherwise called the law of error; or 'mark missing,' which we translate law of 'Sin'), these 'two masters,' between whose services we have to choose, being otherwise distinguished as God and 'Mammon,' which Mammon, though we narrowly take it as the power of money only, is in truth the great evil Spirit of false and fond desire, or 'Covetousness, which is Idolatry.' So that Iconoclasm—image- or likeness-breaking—is easy; but an idol cannot be broken—it must be forsaken, and this is not so easy, either in resolution or persuasion. For men may readily be convinced of the weakness of an image, but not of the emptiness of a phantasm.

to deal with, for every grain of intrinsic value produced he must with exactest chemistry produce its twin grain of governing capacity, or in the degree of his failure he has no wealth. Nature's challenge to us is in earnest, as the Assyrian's mock; 'I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them.' Baviaca's paces are brave, if the Cid backs him; but woe to us, if we take the dust of capacity, wearing the armour of it, for capacity itself, for so all procession, however goodly in the show of it, is to the tomb.

The second error in this popular view of wealth is that, in estimating property which we cannot use as wealth, because it is exchangeable, we in reality confuse wealth with money. The land we have no skill to cultivate, the book which is sealed to us, or dress which is superfluous, may indeed be exchangeable, but as such are nothing more than a cumbrous form of bank-note, of doubtful and slow convertibility. As long as we retain possession of them, we merely keep our bank-notes in the shape of gravel or clay, of book leaves, or of embroidered tissue. Circumstances may perhaps render such forms the safest, or a certain complacency may attach to the exhibition of them;—into both these

advantages we shall inquire afterwards; I wish the reader only to observe here, that exchangeable property which we cannot use is, to us personally, merely one of the forms of money, not of wealth.

The third error in the popular view is the confusion of guardianship with possession; the real state of men of property being, too commonly, that of curators, not possessors of wealth. For a man's power over his property is at the widest range of it, fivefold; it is power of Use, Administration, Ostentation, Destruction, or Bequest: and possession is in use only, which for each man is sternly limited; so that such things, and so much of them, are well for him, or Wealth; and more of them, or any other things, are ill for him, or Illth. Plunged to the lips in Orinoco, he shall drink to his thirst measure,—more, at his peril; with a thousand oxen on his lands, he shall eat to his hunger measure,—more, at his peril. He cannot live in two houses at once; a few bales of silk or wool will suffice for the fabric of all the clothes he can ever wear, and a few books will probably hold all the furniture good for his brain.* Beyond these, in the best of us but narrow capacities, we have but the power of administering, or if for harm, *mal-administering*, wealth (that is to say, distributing, lending,

* I reserve until the completion and collection of these papers, any support by the authority of other writers of the statements made in them; were, indeed, such authorities wisely sought for and shown, there would be no occasion for my writing at all. Even in the scattered passages referring to this subject in three books of Carlyle's:—*Sartor Resartus*; *Past and Present*; and the *Latter Day Pamphlets*; all has been said that needs to be said, and far better than I shall ever say it again. But the habit of the public mind at present is to require everything to be uttered diffusely, loudly, and seven times over, before it will listen; and it has exclaimed against these papers of mine, as if they contained things daring and new, when there is not one assertion in them of which the truth has not been for ages known to the wisest, and proclaimed by the most eloquent of men. It will be a far greater pleasure to me hereafter, to collect their words than to add to mine; Horace's clear rendering of the substance of the preceding passages in the text may be found room for at once,

Si quis emat citharas, emptas comportet in unum
Nec studio citharæ, nec Musæ deditus ulli;
Si scalpæ et formas non sutor, nautica vela
Aversus mercaturis, delirus et amens
Undique dicatur merito. Qui discrepat istis
Qui nummos aurumque recondit, nescius uti
Compositis; metuensque velut contingere sacrum?

With which it is perhaps desirable also to give Xenophon's statement, it being clearer

or increasing it);—of exhibiting it (as in magnificence of retinue or furniture),—of destroying, or, finally, of bequeathing it. And with multitudes of rich men, administration degenerates into curatorship; they merely hold their property in charge, as Trustees, for the benefit of some person or persons to whom it is to be delivered upon their death; and the position, explained in clear terms would hardly seem a covetable one. What would be the probable decision of a youth on his entrance into life, to whom the career hoped for him was proposed in terms such as these: 'You must work unremittingly, and with your utmost intelligence, during all your available years; you will thus accumulate wealth to a large amount; but you must touch none of it, beyond what is needful for your support. Whatever sums you gain beyond those required for your decent and moderate maintenance shall be properly taken care of, and on your death-bed you shall have the power of determining to whom they shall belong, or to what purposes be applied?'

The labour of life, under such conditions, would probably be neither zealous nor cheerful; yet the only difference between this position and that of the ordinary capitalist is the power which the latter delights in supposing himself to possess, and which is attri-

buted to him by others, of spending his money at any moment. This pleasure, taken in the imagination of power to part with that with which we have no intention of parting, is one of the most curious though commonest forms of the *Eidolon*,[†] *Phantasm*,[‡] of Wealth. But the political economist has nothing to do with this idealism, and looks only to the practical issue of it,—namely, that the holder of wealth, in such temper, may be regarded simply as a mechanical means of collection; or as a money-chest with a slit in it,* set in the public thoroughfare;—chest of which only Death has the key, and probably Chance the distribution of contents. In his function of lender (which, however, is one of administration, not use, as far as he is himself concerned), the capitalist takes, indeed, a more interesting aspect; but even in that function, his relations with the state are apt to degenerate into a mechanism for the convenient contraction of debt;—a function the more mischievous, because a nation invariably appeases its conscience with respect to an unjustifiable expense by meeting it with borrowed funds,—expresses its repentance of a foolish piece of business by letting its tradesmen wait for their money,—and always leaves its descendants to pay for the work which will be of the least service to them.†

than any English one can be, owing to the power of the general Greek term for wealth, 'useable things.'

1734
Metre a
mistake of
printer

* Ταῦτά ἄρα ὄντα, τῷ μὲν ἐπισταμένῳ χρῆσθαι αὐτῶν ἐκάστοις χρήματά ἐστι, τῷ δὲ μὴ ἐπισταμένῳ, οὐ χρήματα· ὡσπερ γε αὐλοὶ τῷ μὲν ἐπισταμένῳ ἀξίως λόγον ἀδελῆν χρήματά εἰσι, τῷ δὲ μὴ ἐπισταμένῳ οὐδὲν μᾶλλον ἢ ἀχρηστοὶ λίθοι, εἰ μὴ ἀποδιδόιτό γε αὐτοῖς. * * * Μὴ πωλούμενοι μὲν γὰρ οὐ χρήματά εἰσιν οἱ αὐλοὶ· (οὐδὲν γὰρ χρήσιμοι εἰσι) πωλούμενοι δὲ χρήματα· Πρὸς ταῦτα δ' ὁ Σωκράτης εἶπεν, ἣν ἐπίστηται γε πωλεῖν. Εἰ δὲ πωλοῖη αὐτὸς πρὸς τοῦτον ὃς μὴ ἐπίστηται χρῆσθαι, οὐδὲ πωλούμενοι εἰσὶ χρήματα.

* The orifice being not merely of a receptant, but of a suctional character. Among the types of human virtue and vice presented grotesquely by the lower animals, perhaps none is more curiously definite than that of avarice in the Cephalopod; a creature which has a purse for a body; a hawk's beak for a mouth; suckers for feet and hands; and whose house is its own skeleton.

† It would be well if a somewhat dogged conviction could be enforced on nations as on individuals, that, with few exceptions, what they cannot at present pay for, they should not at present have.

Quit of these three sources of misconception, the reader will have little farther difficulty in apprehending the real nature of Effectual value. He may, however, at first not without surprise, perceive the consequences involved in the acceptance of our definition. For if the actual existence of wealth be dependent on the power of its possessor, it follows that the sum of wealth held by the nation, instead of being constant or calculable, varies hourly, nay, momentarily, with the number and character of its holders; and that in changing hands, it changes in quantity. And farther, since the worth of the currency is proportioned to the sum of material wealth which it represents, if the sum of the wealth changes, the worth of the currency changes. And thus both the sum of the property, and power of the currency, of the State, vary momentarily as the character and number of the holders. And not

only so, but a different rate and manner of variation is caused by the character of the holders of different kinds of wealth. The transitions of value caused by the character of the holders of land differ in mode from those caused by character in holders of works of art; and these again from those caused by character in holders of machinery or other working capital. But we cannot examine these special phenomena of any kind of wealth until we have a clear idea of the way in which true currency expresses them; and of the resulting modes in which the cost and price of any article are related to its value. To obtain this we must approach the subject in its first elements.

Let us suppose a national store of wealth, real or imaginary (that is to say, composed of material things either useful, or believed to be so), presided over by a Government,* and that every workman, having produced any article

* The reader is to include here in the idea of 'Government,' any branch of the Executive, or even any body of private persons, entrusted with the practical management of public interests unconnected directly with their own personal ones. In theoretical discussions of legislative interference with political economy, it is usually, and of course unnecessarily, assumed that Government must be always of that form and force in which we have been accustomed to see it;—that its abuses can never be less, nor its wisdom greater, nor its powers more numerous. But, practically, the custom in most civilized countries is, for every man to deprecate the interference of Government as long as things tell for his personal advantage, and to call for it when they cease to do so. The request of the Manchester Economists to be supplied with cotton by the Government (the system of supply and demand having, for the time, fallen sorrowfully short of the expectations of scientific persons from it), is an interesting case in point. It were to be wished that less wide and bitter suffering (suffering, too, of the innocent) had been needed to force the nation, or some part of it, to ask itself why a body of men, already confessedly capable of managing matters both military and divine, should not be permitted, or even requested at need to provide in some wise for sustenance as well as for defence, and secure, if it might be (and it might, I think, even the *rather* be), purity of bodily aliment, as well as of religious conviction? Why, having made many roads for the passage of armies, they may not make a few for the conveyance of food; and after organizing, with applause, various schemes of spiritual instruction for the Public, organize, moreover, some methods of bodily nourishment for them? Or is the soul so much less trustworthy in its instincts than the stomach, that legislation is necessary for the one, but inconvenient to the other?

There is a strange fallacy running at this time through all talk about free-trade. It is continually assumed that every kind of Government interference takes away liberty of trade. Whereas liberty is lost only when interference hinders, not when it helps. You do not take away a man's freedom by showing him his road—nor by making it smoother for him (not that it is always desirable to do so, but it may be); nor even by fencing it for him, if there is an open ditch at the side of it. The real mode in which protection interferes with liberty, and the real evil of it, is not in its 'protecting' one person, but in its hindering another; a form of interference which invariably does most mischief to the person it is intended to serve, which the Northern Americans are about uncomfortably to discover, unless they think better of it.

There is also a ludicrous confusion in many persons' minds between protection and

involving labour in its production, and for which he has no immediate use, brings it to add to this store, receiving from the Government, in exchange, an order either for the return of the thing itself, or of its equivalent in other things,* such as he may choose out of the store at any time when he needs them. Now, supposing that the labourer speedily uses this general order, or, in common language, 'spends the money,' he has neither changed the circumstances of the nation nor his own, except in so far as he may have produced useful and consumed useless articles, or *vice versa*. But if he does not use, or uses in part only, the order he receives, and lays aside some portion of it; and thus every day bringing his contribution to the national store, lays by some per-centage of the order received in exchange for it, he increases the national wealth daily by as much as he does not use of the received order, and to the same amount accumulates a monetary claim on the Government. It is of course always in his power, as it is his legal right, to bring forward this accumulation of claim, and at once to consume, destroy, or distribute, the sum of his wealth. Supposing he never does so, but dies, leaving his claim to others, he has enriched the State during his life by the quantity of wealth over which that claim extends, or has, in other words, rendered so much additional life possible in the State, of which additional life he bequeaths the immediate possibility to those whom he invests with his claim. Supposing him to cancel the claim, he would distribute this possibility of life among the nation at large.

We hitherto consider the Government itself as simply a conservative power, taking charge of the wealth entrusted to it.

But a Government may be far other than a conservative power. It may be on the one hand constructive, on the other destructive.

If a constructive, or improving power, using all the wealth entrusted to it to the best advantage, the nation is enriched in root and branch at once, and the Government is enabled for every order presented, to return a quantity of wealth greater than the order was written for, according to the fructification obtained in the interim.† This ability may be either concealed, in which case the currency does not completely represent the wealth of the country, or it may be manifested by the continual payment of the excess of value on each order, in which case there is (irrespective, observe, of collateral results afterwards to be examined) a perpetual rise in the worth of the currency, that is to say, a fall in the price of all articles represented by it.

But if the Government be destructive, or a consuming power, it becomes unable to return the value received on the presentation of the order.

This inability may either (A) be concealed by meeting demands to the full, until it issue in bankruptcy, or in some form of national debt;—or (B) it may be concealed during oscillatory movements between destructiveness and productiveness, which result on the whole in stability;—or (C) it may be manifested by the consistent return of less than value received on each presented order, in which case

encouragement; they differ materially. 'Protection' is saying to the commercial schoolboy, 'Nobody shall hit you.' 'Encouragement,' is saying to him, 'That's the way to hit.'

* The question of equivalence (namely, how much wine a man is to receive in return for so much corn, or how much coal in return for so much iron) is a quite separate one, which we will examine presently. For the time, let it be assumed that this equivalence has been determined, and that the Government order in exchange for a fixed weight of any article (called, suppose, *a*), is either for the return of that weight of the article itself, or of another fixed weight of the article *b*, or another of the article *c*, and so on.

† The reader must be warned in advance that the conditions here supposed have nothing to do with the 'interest' of money commonly so called.

there is a consistent fall in the worth of the currency, or rise in the price of the things represented by it.

Now, if for this conception of a central Government, we substitute that of another body of persons occupied in industrial pursuits, of whom each adds in his private capacity to the common store: so that the store itself, instead of remaining a public property of ascertainable quantity, for the guardianship of which a body of public men are responsible, becomes disseminated private property, each man giving in exchange for any article received from another, a general order for its equivalent in whatever other article the claimant may desire (such general order being payable by any member of the society in whose possession the demanded article may be found), we at once obtain an approximation to the actual condition of a civilized mercantile community, from which approximation we might easily proceed into still completer analysis. I purpose, however, to arrive at every result by the gradual expansion of the simpler conception; but I wish the reader to observe, in the meantime, that both the social conditions thus supposed (and I will by anticipation say also, all possible social conditions,) agree in two great points; namely, in the primal importance of the supposed national store or stock, and in its destructibility or improveability by the holders of it.

I. Observe that in both conditions, that of central Government-holding, and diffused private-holding, the quantity of stock is of the same national moment. In the one case, indeed, its amount may be known by examination of the persons to whom it is confided; in the other it cannot be known but by exposing the private affairs of every individual. But, known or unknown, its significance is the same under each condition. The riches of the nation consist in the abundance, and their wealth depends on the nature of this store.

II. In the second place, both con-

ditions (and all other possible ones) agree in the destructibility or improveability of the store by its holders. Whether in private hands, or under Government charge, the national store may be daily consumed, or daily enlarged, by its possessors; and while the currency remains apparently unaltered, the property it represents may diminish or increase.

The first question, then, which we have to put under our simple conception of central Government, namely, 'What store has it?' is one of equal importance, whatever may be the constitution of the State; while the second question—namely, 'Who are the holders of the store?' involves the discussion of the constitution of the State itself.

The first inquiry resolves itself into three heads:

1. What is the nature of the store?
2. What is its quantity in relation to the population?
3. What is its quantity in relation to the currency?

The second inquiry, into two:—

1. Who are the Holders of the store, and in what proportions?
2. Who are the Claimants of the store, (that is to say the holders of the currency,) and in what proportions?

We will examine the range of the first three questions in the present paper; of the two following, in the sequel.

1. QUESTION FIRST. What is the nature of the store? Has the nation hitherto worked for and gathered the right thing or the wrong? On that issue rest the possibilities of its life.

For example, let us imagine a society, of no great extent, occupied in procuring and laying up store of corn, wine, wool, silk, and others such preserveable materials of food and clothing; and that it has a currency representing them. Imagine farther, that on days of festivity, the society discovering itself to derive satisfaction from pyrotechnics, gradually turns its attention more and more to the manufacture of gunpowder; so that an increasing number of labourers, giving what time

they can spare to this branch of industry, bring increasing quantities of combustibles into the store, and use the general orders received in exchange to obtain such wine, wool, or corn as they may have need of. The currency remains the same, and represents precisely the same amount of material in the store, and of labour spent in producing it. But the corn and wine gradually vanish, and in their place, as gradually, appear sulphur and saltpetre; till at last, the labourers who have consumed corn and supplied nitre, presenting on a festal morning some of their currency to obtain materials for the feast, discover that no amount of currency will command anything Festive, except Fire. The supply of rockets is unlimited, but that of food, limited in a quite final manner; and the whole currency in the hands of the society represents an infinite power of detonation, but none of existence.

This statement, caricatured as it may seem, is only exaggerated in assuming the persistence of the folly to extremity, unchecked, as in reality it would be, by the gradual rise in price of food. But it falls short of the actual facts of human life in expression of the depth and intensity of the folly itself. For a great part (the reader would not believe how great until he saw the statistics in detail) of the most earnest and ingenious industry of the world is spent in producing munitions of war; gathering, that is to say the materials, not of festive, but of consuming fire; filling its stores with all power of the instruments of pain, and all affluence of the ministries of death. It was no true *Trionfo della Morte* which men have seen and feared (sometimes scarcely feared) so long;—wherein he brought them rest from their labours. We see and share another and higher form of his triumph now. Task-master, instead of Releaser, he rules the dust of the arena no less than of the tomb; and, content once in the grave whither man went, to

make his works to cease and his devices to vanish,—now, in the busy city and on the serviceable sea, makes his work to increase, and his devices to multiply.

To this doubled loss, or negative power of labour, spent in producing means of destruction, we have to add in our estimate of the consequences of human folly, whatever more insidious waste of toil there is in production of unnecessary luxury. Such and such an occupation (it is said) supports so many labourers, because so many obtain wages in following it; but it is never considered that unless there be a supporting power in the product of the occupation, the wages given to one man are merely withdrawn from another. We cannot say of any trade that it maintains such and such a number of persons, unless we know how and where the money, now spent in the purchase of its produce, would have been spent, if that produce had not been manufactured. The purchasing funds truly support a number of people in making This; but (probably) leave unsupported an equal number who are making, or could have made That. The manufacturers of small watches thrive at Geneva;—it is well;—but where would the money spent on small watches have gone, had there been no small watches to buy?

If the so frequently uttered aphorism of mercantile economy—'labour is limited by capital,' were true, this question would be a definite one. But it is untrue; and that widely. Out of a given quantity of funds for wages, more or less labour is to be had, according to the quantity of will with which we can inspire the workman; and the true limit of labour is only in the limit of this moral stimulus of the will, and of the bodily power. In an ultimate, but entirely impractical sense, labour is limited by capital, as it is by matter—that is to say, where there is no material, there can be no work,—but in the practical sense, labour is limited only by the great original capital*

* The aphorism, being hurried English for 'labour is limited by want of capital,' involves also awkward English in its denial, which cannot be helped.

of Head, heart, and hand. Even in the most artificial relations of commerce, it is to capital as fire to fuel: out of so much fuel, you *can* have only so much fire; but out of so much fuel you *shall* have so much fire,—not in proportion to the mass of combustibles, but to the force of wind that fans and water that quenches; and the appliance of both. And labour is furthered, as conflagration is, not so much by added fuel, as by admitted air.

For which reasons, I had to insert, above, the qualifying 'probably;' for it can never be said positively that the purchase-money, or wages fund of any trade is withdrawn from some other trade. The object itself may be the stimulus of the production of the money which buys it; that is to say, the work by which the purchaser obtained the means of buying it, would not have been done by him, unless he had wanted that particular thing. And the production of any article not intrinsically (nor in the process of manufacture) injurious, is useful, if the desire of it causes productive labour in other directions.

In the national store, therefore, the presence of things intrinsically valueless does not imply an entirely correlative absence of things valuable. We cannot be certain that all the labour spent on vanity has been diverted from reality, and that for every bad thing produced, a precious thing has been lost. In great measure, the vain things represent the results of roused indolence; they have been carved, as toys, in extra time; and, if they had not been made, nothing else would have been made. Even to munitions of war this principle applies; they partly represent the work of men who, if they had not made spears, would never have made pruning hooks, and who are incapable of any activities but those of contest.

Thus then, finally, the nature of the store has to be considered under two main lights; the one, that of its immediate and actual utility; the other, that of the past national character which it signi-

fies by its production, and future character which it must develop by its use. And the issue of this investigation will be to show us that Economy does not depend merely on principles of 'demand and supply,' but primarily on what is demanded, and what is supplied.

II. QUESTION SECOND. — What is the quantity of the store in relation to the population?

It follows from what has been already stated that the accurate form in which this question has to be put is—'What quantity of each article composing the store exists in proportion to the real need for it by the population?' But we shall for the time assume, in order to keep all our terms at the simplest, that the store is wholly composed of useful articles, and accurately proportioned to the several needs for them.

Now it does not follow, because the store is large in proportion to the number of the people, that the people must be in comfort; nor because it is small, that they must be in distress. An active and economical race always produces more than it requires, and lives (if it is permitted to do so) in competence on the produce of its daily labour. The quantity of its store, great or small, is therefore in many respects indifferent to it, and cannot be inferred from its aspect. Similarly an inactive and wasteful population, which cannot live by its daily labour, but is dependent, partly or wholly, on consumption of its store, may be (by various difficulties, hereafter to be examined, in realizing or getting at such store) retained in a state of abject distress, though its possessions may be immense. But the results always involved in the magnitude of store are, the commercial power of the nation, its security, and its mental character. Its commercial power, in that according to the quantity of its store may be the extent of its dealings; its security, in that according to the quantity of its store are its means of sudden exertion or sustained endurance; and its character, in that certain conditions of civilization cannot be

attained without permanent and continually accumulating store, of great intrinsic value, and of peculiar nature.

Now, seeing that these three advantages arise from largeness of store in proportion to population, the question arises immediately, 'Given the store—is the nation enriched by diminution of its numbers? Are a successful national speculation, and a pestilence, economically the same thing?'

This is in part a sophistical question; such as it would be to ask whether a man was richer when struck by disease which must limit his life within a predicable period, than he was when in health. He is enabled to enlarge his current expenses, and has for all purposes a larger sum at his immediate disposal (for, given the fortune, the shorter the life, the larger the annuity); yet no man considers himself richer because he is condemned by his physician.

The logical reply is that, since Wealth is by definition only the means of life, a nation cannot be enriched by its own mortality. Or in shorter words, the life is more than the meat; and existence itself, more wealth than the means of existence. Whence, of two nations who have equal store, the more numerous is to be considered the richer, provided the type of the inhabitant be as high (for, though the relative bulk of their store be less, its relative efficiency, or the amount of effectual wealth, must be greater). But if the type of the population be deteriorated by increase of its numbers, we have evidence of poverty in its worst influence; and then, to determine whether the nation in its total may still be justifiably esteemed rich, we must set or weigh, the number of the poor against that of the rich.

To effect which piece of scale-work, it is of course necessary to determine, first, who are poor and who are rich; nor this only, but also how poor and how rich they are! Which will prove a curious thermometrical investigation; for we shall have to do for gold and

for silver what we have done for quicksilver—determine, namely, their freezing point, their zero, their temperate and fever-heat points; finally, their vaporescent point, at which riches, sometimes explosively, as lately in America, 'make to themselves wings':—and correspondently, the number of degrees below zero at which poverty, ceasing to brace with any wholesome cold, burns to the bone.

For the performance of these operations, in the strictest sense scientific, we will first look to the existing so called 'science' of Political Economy; we will ask it to define for us the comparatively and superlatively rich, and the comparatively and superlatively poor; and on its own terms—if any terms it can pronounce—examine, in our prosperous England, how many rich and how many poor people there are; and whether the quantity and intensity of the poverty is indeed so overbalanced by the quantity and intensity of wealth, that we may permit ourselves a luxurious blindness to it, and call ourselves, complacently, a rich country. And if we find no clear definition in the existing science, we will endeavour for ourselves to fix the true degrees of the Plutonic scale, and to apply them.

QUESTION THIRD. What is the quantity of the store in relation to the Currency?

We have seen that the real worth of the currency, so far as dependent on its relation to the magnitude of the store, may vary within certain limits, without affecting its worth in exchange. The diminution or increase of the represented wealth may be unperceived, and the currency may be taken either for more or less than it is truly worth. Usually it is taken for more; and its power in exchange, or credit-power, is thus increased (or retained) up to a given strain upon its relation to existing wealth. This credit-power is of chief importance in the thoughts, because most sharply present to the experience, of a mercantile community: but the conditions of its

stability* and all other relations of the currency to the material store are entirely simple in principle, if not in action. Far other than simple are the relations of the currency to that 'available labour' which by our definition (p. 790) it also represents. For this relation is involved not only with that of the magnitude of the store to the number, but with that of the magnitude of the store to the mind, of the population. Its proportion to their number, and the resulting worth of currency, are calculable; but its proportion to their will for labour is not. The worth of the piece of money which claims a given quantity of the store, is, in exchange, less or greater according to the facility of obtaining the same quantity of the same thing without having recourse to the store. In other words, it depends on the immediate Cost and Price of the thing. We must now, therefore, complete the definition of these terms.

All cost and price are counted in Labour. We must know first, therefore, what is to be counted as Labour.

I have already defined labour to be the Contest of the life of man with an opposite.† Literally, it is the quantity of 'Lapse,' loss, or failure of human life caused by any effort. It is usually confused with

effort itself, or the application of power (opera); but there is much effort which is merely a mode of recreation, or of pleasure. The most beautiful actions of the human body, and the highest results of the human intelligence, are conditions, or achievements, of quite unlabourious, nay, of recreative, effort. But labour is the suffering in effort. It is the negative quantity, or quantity of de-feat which has to be counted against every Feat, and of de-fect which has to be counted against every Fact, or Deed of men. In brief, it is 'that quantity of our toil which we die in.'

We might, therefore, *à priori*, conjecture (as we shall ultimately find), that it cannot be bought, nor sold. Every thing else is bought and sold for Labour, but labour itself cannot be bought nor sold for anything, being priceless.‡ The idea that it is a commodity to be bought or sold, is the alpha and omega of Politico-Economic fallacy.

This being the nature of labour, the 'Cost' of anything is the quantity of labour necessary to obtain it;—the quantity for which, or at which, it 'stands' (constat). It is literally the 'Constancy' of the thing;—you shall win it—move it—come at it—for no less than this.

Cost is measured and measurable only in 'labor,' not in 'opera.'§ It

* These are nearly all briefly represented by the image used for the force of money by Dante, of mast and sail,—

'Quali dal vento le gonfiate vele
Caggiono avvolte, poi ch'è l'alber fiacca
Tal cadde a terra la fiera crudele.'

The image may be followed out, like all of Dante's, into as close detail as the reader chooses. Thus the stress of the sail must be proportioned to the strength of the mast, and it is only in unforeseen danger that a skilful seaman ever carries all the canvas his spars will bear; states of mercantile languor are like the flap of the sail in a calm,—of mercantile precaution, like taking in reefs; and mercantile ruin is instant on the breaking of the mast.

† That is to say, its only price is its return. Compare 'Unto this Last,' p. 80, and what follows.

‡ The object of Political Economy is not to buy, nor to sell labour,—but to spare it. Every attempt to buy or sell it is, in the outcome, ineffectual;—so far as successful, it is not sale, but Betrayal; and the purchase money is a part of that typical thirty pieces which bought, first the greatest of labours, and afterwards the burial field of the Stranger; for this purchase-money, being in its very smallness or vileness the exactly measured opposite of the 'vilis annona amicorum,' makes all men strangers to each other.

§ Cicero's distinction, 'sordidi quæstus, quorum operæ, non quorum artes emuntur,' admirable in principle, is inaccurate in expression, because Cicero did not practically know how much operative dexterity is necessary in all the higher arts;

does not matter how much *power* a thing needs to produce it; it matters only how much *distress*. Generally the more the power it requires, the less the distress; so that the noblest works of man cost less than the meanest.

True labour, or spending of life, is either of the body, in fatigue or pain; of the temper or heart (as in perseverance of search for things,—patience in waiting for them,—fortitude or degradation in suffering for them, and the like), or of the intellect. All these kinds of labour are supposed to be included in the general term, and the quantity of labour is then expressed by the time it lasts. So that a unit of labour is ‘an hour’s work’ or a day’s work, as we may determine.*

Cost, like value, is both intrinsic and effectual. Intrinsic cost is that of getting the thing in the right way; effectual cost is that of get-

ting the thing in the way we set about it. But intrinsic cost cannot be made a subject of analytical investigation, being only partially discoverable, and that by long experience. Effectual cost is all that the political Economist can deal with; that is to say, the cost of the thing under existing circumstances, and by known processes.

Cost (irrespective of any questions of demand or supply) varies with the quantity of the thing wanted, and with the number of persons who work for it. It is easy to get a little of some things, but difficult to get much; it is impossible to get some things with few hands, but easy to get them with many.

The cost and value of things, however difficult to determine accurately, are thus both dependent on ascertainable physical circumstances.†

but the cost of this dexterity is incalculable. Be it great or small, the ‘cost’ of the mere authority and perfectness of touch in a hammer stroke of Donatello’s, or a pencil-touch of Correggio’s, is inestimable by any ordinary arithmetic. (The best masters themselves usually estimate it at sums varying from two to three or four shillings a day, with wine or soup extra.)

* Only observe, as some labour is more destructive of life than other labour, the hour or day of the more destructive toil is supposed to include proportionate rest. Though men do not, or cannot, usually take such rest, except in death.

† There is, therefore, observe, no such thing as cheapness (in the common use of that term), without some error or injustice. A thing is said to be cheap, not because it is common, but because it is supposed to be sold under its worth. Everything has its proper and true worth at any given time, in relation to everything else; and at that worth should be bought and sold. If sold under it, it is cheap to the buyer by exactly so much as the seller loses, and no more. Putrid meat, at twopence a pound, is not ‘cheaper’ than wholesome meat at sevenpence a pound; it is probably much dearer; but if, by watching your opportunity, you can get the wholesome meat for sixpence a pound, it is cheaper to you by a penny, which you have gained, and the seller has lost. The present rage for cheapness is either, therefore, simply and literally, a rage for badness of all commodities, or it is an attempt to find persons whose necessities will force them to let you have more than you should for your money. It is quite easy to produce such persons, and in large numbers; for the more distress there is in a nation, the more cheapness of this sort you can obtain, and your boasted cheapness is thus merely a measure of the extent of your national distress.

There is, indeed, a condition of apparent cheapness, which we confuse, in practice and in reasoning, with the other; namely, the real reduction in cost of articles by right application of labour. But in this case the article is only cheap with reference to its *former* price, the so called cheapness is only our expression for the sensation of contrast between its former and existing prices. So soon as the new methods of producing the article are established, it ceases to be esteemed either cheap or dear, at the new price, as at the old one, and is felt to be cheap only when accident enables it to be purchased beneath this new value. And it is no advantage to produce the article more easily, except as it enables you to multiply your population. Cheapness of this kind is merely the discovery that more men can be maintained on the same ground; and the question, how many you will maintain in proportion to your means, remains exactly in the same terms that it did before.

A form of immediate cheapness results, however, in many cases, without distress,

But their price is dependent on the human will.

Such and such a thing is demonstrably good for so much. And it may demonstrably be had for so much.

But it remains questionable, and in all manner of ways questionable, whether I choose to give so much.*

This choice is always a relative one. It is a choice to give a price for this, rather than for that;—a resolution to have the thing, if getting it does not involve the loss of a better thing. Price depends, therefore, not only on the cost of the commodity itself, but on its relation to the cost of every other attainable thing.

Farther. The *power* of choice is also a relative one. It depends not merely on our own estimate of the thing, but on everybody else's estimate; therefore on the number and force of the will of the concurrent buyers, and on the existing quantity of the thing in proportion to that number and force.

Hence the price of anything depends on four variables.†

1. Its cost.
2. Its attainable quantity at that cost.
3. The number and power of the persons who want it.

4. The estimate they have formed of its desirableness.

(Its value only affects its price so far as it is contemplated in this estimate; perhaps, therefore, not at all.)

Now, in order to show the manner in which price is expressed in terms of a currency, we must assume these four quantities to be known, and the 'estimate of desirableness,' commonly called the Demand, to be certain. We will take the number of persons at the lowest. Let A and B be two labourers who 'demand,' that is to say, have resolved to labour for, two articles, *a* and *b*. Their demand for these articles (if the reader likes better, he may say their need) is to be absolute, existence depending on the getting these two things. Suppose, for instance, that they are bread and fuel, in a cold country, and let *a* represent the least quantity of bread, and *b* the least quantity of fuel, which will support a man's life for a day. Let *a* be producible by an hour's labour, but *b* only by two hours' labour.

Then the *cost* of *a* is one hour, and of *b* two (cost, by our definition, being expressible in terms of time). If, therefore, each man worked

from the labour of a population where food is redundant, or where the labour by which the food is produced leaves much idle time on their hands, which may be applied to the production of 'cheap' articles.

All such phenomena indicate to the political economist places where the labour is unbalanced. In the first case, the just balance is to be effected by taking labourers from the spot where the pressure exists, and sending them to that where food is redundant. In the second, the cheapness is a local accident, advantageous to the local purchaser, disadvantageous to the local producer. It is one of the first duties of commerce to extend the market, and thus give the local producer his full advantage.

Cheapness caused by natural accidents of harvest, weather, &c., is always counter-balanced, in due time, by natural scarcity, similarly caused. It is the part of wise government, and healthy commerce, so to provide in times and places of plenty for times and places of dearth, as that there shall never be waste, nor famine.

Cheapness caused by gluts of the market is merely a disease of clumsy and wanton commerce.

* Price has been already defined (pp. 787, 788) to be the quantity of labour which the possessor of a thing is willing to take for it. It is best to consider the price to be that fixed by the possessor, because the possessor has absolute power of refusing sale, while the purchaser has no absolute power of compelling it; but the effectual or market price is that at which their estimates coincide.

† The two first of these variables are included in the *x*, and the two last in the *y*, of the formula given at p. 81 of 'Unto this Last,' and the four are the radical conditions which regulate the price of things on first production; in their price in exchange, the third and fourth of these divide each into two others, forming the Four which are stated at p. 136 of 'Unto this Last.'

both for his corn and fuel, each would have to work three hours a day. But they divide the labour for its greater ease.* Then if A works three hours, he produces 3 *a*, which is one *a* more than both the men want. And if B works three hours, he produces only $1\frac{1}{2}$ *b*, or half of *b* less than both want. But if A works three hours and B six, A has 3 *a*, and B has 3 *b*, a maintenance in the right proportion for both for a day and half; so that each might take half a day's rest. But as B has worked double time, the whole of this day's rest belongs in equity to him. Therefore the just exchange should be, A giving two *a* for one *b*, has one *a* and one *b*;—maintenance for a day. B giving one *b* for two *a*, has two *a* and two *b*;—maintenance for two days.

But B cannot rest on the second day, or A would be left without the article which B produces. Nor is there any means of making the exchange just, unless a third labourer is called in. Then one workman, A, produces *a*, and two, B and C, produce *b*:—A, working three hours, has three *a*;—B, three hours, $1\frac{1}{2}$ *b*;—C three hours, $1\frac{1}{2}$ *b*. B and C each give half of *b* for *a*, and all have their equal daily maintenance for equal daily work.

To carry the example a single step farther, let three articles, *a*, *b*, and *c* be needed.

Let *a* need one hour's work, *b* two, and *c* four; then the day's work must be seven hours, and one man in a day's work can make 7 *a*, or $3\frac{1}{2}$ *b*, or $1\frac{3}{4}$ *c*.

Therefore one A works for *a*, producing 7 *a*; two B's work for *b*, producing 7 *b*; four C's work for *c*, producing 7 *c*.

A has six *a* to spare, and gives two *a* for one *b*, and four *a* for one *c*. Each B has $2\frac{1}{2}$ *b* to spare, and gives $\frac{1}{2}$ *b* for one *a*, and two *b* for one *c*.

Each C has $\frac{7}{4}$ of *c* to spare, and

gives $\frac{1}{2}$ *c* for one *b*, and $\frac{1}{4}$ of *c* for one *a*.

And all have their day's maintenance.

Generally, therefore, it follows that if the demand is constant,† the relative prices of things are as their costs, or as the quantities of labour involved in production.

Then, in order to express their prices in terms of a currency, we have only to put the currency into the form of orders for a certain quantity of any given article (with us it is in the form of orders for gold), and all quantities of other articles are priced by the relation they bear to the article which the currency claims.

But the worth of the currency itself is not in the slightest degree, founded more on the worth of the article which it either claims or consists in (as gold) than on the worth of every other article for which the gold is exchangeable. It is just as accurate to say, 'so many pounds are worth an acre of land,' as 'an acre of land is worth so many pounds.' The worth of gold, of land, of houses, and of food, and of all other things, depends at any moment on the existing quantities and relative demands for all and each; and a change in the worth of, or demand for, any one, involves an instantaneously correspondent change in the worth of, and demand for, all the rest—a change as inevitable and as accurately balanced (though often in its process as untraceable) as the change in volume of the outflowing river from some vast lake, caused by change in the volume of the inflowing streams, though no eye can trace, nor instrument detect motion either on its surface, or in the depth.

Thus, then, the real working power or worth of the currency is founded on the entire sum of the relative estimates formed by the population of its possessions; a

* This 'greater ease' ought to be allowed for by a diminution in the times of the divided work; but as the proportion of times would remain the same, I do not introduce this unnecessary complexity into the calculation.

† Compare 'Unto this Last,' p. 115, *et seq.*

change in this estimate in any direction (and therefore every change in the national character), instantly alters the value of money, in its second great function of commanding labour. But we must always carefully and sternly distinguish between this worth of currency, dependent on the conceived or appreciated value of what it represents, and the worth of it, dependent on the *existence* of what it represents. A currency is true, or false, in proportion to the security with which it gives claim to the possession of land, house, horse, or picture; but a currency is strong or weak, worth much, or worth little, in proportion to the degree of estimate in which the nation holds the house, horse, or picture which is claimed. Thus the power of the English currency has been, till of late, largely based on the national estimate of horses and of wine: so that a man might always give any price to furnish choicely his stable, or his cellar; and receive public approval therefore: but if he gave the same sum to furnish his library, he was called mad, or a biblio-maniac. And although he might lose his fortune by his horses, and his health or life by his cellar, and rarely lost either by his books, he was yet never called a Hippo-maniac nor an Oino-maniac; but only Biblio-maniac, because the current worth of money was understood to be legitimately founded on cattle and wine, but not on literature. The prices lately given at sales for pictures and MSS. indicate some tendency to change in the national character in this respect, so that the worth of the currency may even come in time to rest, in an acknowledged manner, somewhat on the state and keeping of the Bedford missal, as well as on the health of Caractacus or Blink Bonny; and old pictures be considered property, no less than old port. They might have been so before now, but that it is more difficult to choose the one than the other.

Now, observe, all these sources of variation in the power of the currency exist, wholly irrespective

VOL. LXVI. NO. CCCXIII.

of the influences of vice, indolence, and improvidence. We have hitherto supposed, throughout the analysis, every professing labourer to labour honestly, heartily, and in harmony with his fellows. We have now to bring farther into the calculation the effects of relative industry, honour, and forethought; and thus to follow out the bearings of our second inquiry: Who are the holders of the Store and Currency, and in what proportions?

This, however, we must reserve for our next paper—noticing here only that, however distinct the several branches of the subject are, radically, they are so interwoven in their issues that we cannot rightly treat any one, till we have taken cognizance of all. Thus the quantity of the currency in proportion to number of population is materially influenced by the number of the holders in proportion to the non-holders; and this again, by the number of holders of goods, or wealth, in proportion to the non-holders of goods. For as, by definition, the currency is a claim to goods which are not possessed, its quantity indicates the number of claimants in proportion to the number of holders; and the force and complexity of claim. For if the claims be not complex, currency as a means of exchange may be very small in quantity. A sells some corn to B, receiving a promise from B to pay in cattle, which A then hands over to C, to get some wine. C in due time claims the cattle from B; and B takes back his promise. These exchanges have, or might have been, all effected with a single coin or promise; and the proportion of the currency to the store would in such circumstances indicate only the circulating vitality of it—that is to say, the quantity and convenient divisibility of that part of the store which the *habits* of the nation keep in circulation. If a cattle breeder is content to live with his household chiefly on meat and milk, and does not want rich furniture, or jewels, or books—if a wine and corn grower maintains himself and

U

his men chiefly on grapes and bread;—if the wives and daughters of families weave and spin the clothing of the household, and the nation, as a whole, remains content with the produce of its own soil and the work of its own hands, it has little occasion for circulating media. It pledges and promises little and seldom; exchanges only so far as exchange is necessary for life. The store belongs to the people in whose hands it is found, and money is little needed either as an expression of right, or practical means of division and exchange.

But in proportion as the habits of the nation become complex and fantastic (and they may be both, without therefore being civilized), its circulating medium must increase in proportion to its store. If every one wants a little of everything,—if food must be of many kinds, and dress of many fashions,—if multitudes live by work which, ministering to fancy, has its pay measured by fancy, so that large prices will be given by one person for what is valueless to another,—if there are great inequalities of knowledge, causing great inequalities of estimate,—and finally, and worst of all, if the currency itself, from its largeness, and the power which the possession of it implies, becomes the sole object of desire with large numbers of the nation, so that the holding of it is disputed among them as the main object of life:—in each and all of these cases, the currency enlarges in proportion to the store, and as a means of exchange and division, as a bond of

right, and as an expression of passion, plays a more and more important part in the nation's dealings, character, and life.

Against which part, when, as a bond of Right, it becomes too conspicuous and too burdensome, the popular voice is apt to be raised in a violent and irrational manner, leading to revolution instead of remedy. Whereas all possibility of Economy depends on the clear assertion and maintenance of this bond of right, however burdensome. The first necessity of all economical government is to secure the unquestioned and unquestionable working of the great law of Property—that a man who works for a thing shall be allowed to get it, keep it, and consume it, in peace; and that he who does not eat his cake to-day, shall be seen, without grudging, to have his cake to-morrow. This, I say, is the first point to be secured by social law; without this, no political advance, nay, no political existence, is in any sort possible. Whatever evil, luxury, iniquity, may seem to result from it, this is nevertheless the first of all Equities; and to the enforcement of this, by law and by police-truncheon, the nation must always primarily set its mind—that the cupboard door may have a firm lock to it, and no man's dinner be carried off by the mob, on its way home from the baker's. Which, thus fearlessly asserting, we shall endeavour in next paper to consider how far it may be practicable for the mob itself, also, in due breadth of dish, to have dinners to carry home.

ERRATUM.—No. cccxc. p. 790, line 2nd from bottom, for '*moneys*,' read '*always*.'



that he should not fall in with enough grass and water for them on his road to Cooper's Creek. His party wandered on until the end of April, without reaching Cooper's Creek. Two of them being dead and one on the point of death, Wright was just about to return to the Darling, when he fell in with Brahe and his three companions, who were coming from the depôt with twelve horses and six camels. Wright and Brahe revisited the depôt in company, but, unfortunately, did not examine the *cache*, no alteration having, through an oversight, been made in the inscription which indicated it when Burke's last despatch was deposited. On the journey back to Menindie, one of Brahe's party died. Howitt, who had been commissioned to track the expedition, alarm being felt in Melbourne at the long time which had elapsed without tidings of it, met Brahe, who had been sent on by Wright with despatches. He returned with Brahe to Melbourne; his party was strengthened, and at its head he made the discoveries we have already related. He was then commissioned to convey the remains of Burke and Wills to Melbourne—a mistaken manifestation of respect, we must think—the noble fellows should

have been left to slumber in the soil they had consecrated by their heroism.

The commissioners appointed to report upon their fate have saddled Wright with the main responsibility of the 'whole of the disasters of the expedition, with the exception of the death of Gray.' Howitt's was not the only expedition organized to search for the missing explorers; one sent out by South Australia discovered the graves and remains of several Europeans who had been killed after a sharp conflict, and partially eaten by the blacks. The South Australian leader naturally thought that the picked skeletons were those of Burke's party. Under this impression he was led on to fancy that he could detect traces of camels in the neighbourhood of the place in which the graves were found. Who *were* their tenants is, we believe, still a mystery.

In conclusion, the good land which Burke and Wills discovered is rapidly being settled, and a new colony, with a capital on the Gulf of Carpentaria, will probably soon be formed. Its 'anniversary day' should be made that on which the brave wanderers from the Yarra Yarra first found the waters of the Flinders salt.*

R. R.

* Landsborough and M'Kinlay, two of those sent out in search of the Victorian explorers, have, like them, completely traversed Australia; one starting from the north, the other from the south. The flood which turned M'Kinlay from his prescribed course proves that sudden liquidity, rather than permanent aridity, is the real characteristic calculated to deter squatters from settling in Central Australia. According to the last Australian advices, Howitt was expected to reach Melbourne in November, bringing with him the remains of the two gallant fellows whose feats and fates we have chronicled.



ESSAYS ON POLITICAL ECONOMY.

Being a Sequel to Papers which appeared in the 'Cornhill Magazine.'

BY JOHN RUSKIN.

IT will be seen by reference to the last paper that our present task is to examine the relation of holders of store to holders of currency; and of both to those who hold neither. In order to do this, we must determine on which side we are to place substances such as gold, commonly known as bases of currency. By aid of previous definitions the reader will now be able to understand closer statements than have yet been possible.

The currency of any country consists of every document acknowledging debt which is transferable in the country.

This transferableness depends upon its intelligibility and credit. Its intelligibility depends chiefly on the difficulty of forging anything like it;—its credit much on national character, but ultimately always on the existence of substantial means of meeting its demand.

As the degrees of transferableness are variable, (some documents passing only in certain places, and others passing, if at all, for less than their inscribed value), both the mass and, so to speak, fluidity, of the currency, are variable. True or perfect currency flows freely, like a pure stream; it becomes sluggish or stagnant in proportion to the quantity of less transferable matter which mixes with it, adding to its bulk, but diminishing its purity. Substances of intrinsic value, such as gold, mingle also with the currency, and increase, while they modify, its power; these are carried by it as stones are carried by a torrent, sometimes momentarily impeding, sometimes concentrating its force, but not affecting its purity. These substances of intrinsic value may be also stamped or signed so as to become acknowledgments of debt, and then become, so far as they operate independently of their intrinsic value, part of the real currency.

Deferring consideration of minor forms of currency, consisting of documents bearing private signature, we will examine the principle of legally authorized or national currency.

This, in its perfect condition, is a form of public acknowledgment of debt, so regulated and divided that any person presenting a commodity of tried worth in the public market, shall, if he please, receive in exchange for it a document giving him claim to the return of its equivalent, (1) in any place, (2) at any time, and (3) in any kind.

When currency is quite healthy and vital, the persons entrusted with its management are always able to give on demand either,

A. The assigning document for the assigned quantity of goods. Or,
B. The assigned quantity of goods for the assigning document.

If they cannot give document for goods, the national exchange is at fault.

If they cannot give goods for document, the national credit is at fault.

The nature and power of the document are therefore to be examined under the three relations which it bears to Place, Time, and Kind.

1. It gives claim to the return of equivalent wealth in any Place. Its use in this function is to save carriage, so that parting with a bushel of corn in London, we may receive an order for a bushel of corn at the Antipodes, or elsewhere. To be perfect in this use, the substance of currency must be to the maximum portable, credible, and intelligible. Its non-acceptance or discredit results always from some form of ignorance or dishonour: so far as such interruptions rise out of differences in denomination, there is no ground for their continuance among civilized nations. It may be convenient in one country to use chiefly copper

for coinage, in another silver, and in another gold,—reckoning accordingly in centimes, francs, or sequins: but that a French franc should be different in weight from an English shilling, and an Austrian zwanziger vary in weight and alloy from both, is wanton loss of commercial power.

2. It gives claim to the return of equivalent wealth at any Time. In this second use, currency is the exponent of accumulation: it renders the laying up of store at the command of individuals unlimitedly possible;—whereas, but for its intervention, all gathering would be confined within certain limits by the bulk of property, or by its decay, or the difficulty of its guardianship. 'I will pull down my barns and build greater,' cannot be a daily saying; and all material investment is enlargement of care. The national currency transfers the guardianship of the store to many; and preserves to the original producer the right of re-entering on its possession at any future period.

3. It gives claim (practical, though not legal) to the return of equivalent wealth in any Kind. It is a transferable right, not merely to this or that, but to anything; and its power in this function is proportioned to the range of choice. If you give a child an apple or a toy, you give him a determinate pleasure, but if you give him a penny, an indeterminate one, proportioned to the range of selection offered by the shops in the village. The power of the world's currency is similarly in proportion to the openness of the world's fair, and, commonly, enhanced by the brilliancy of external aspect, rather than solidity of its wares.

We have said that the currency consists of orders for equivalent goods. If equivalent, their quality

must be guaranteed. The kinds of goods chosen for specific claim must, therefore, be capable of test, while, also, that a store may be kept in hand to meet the call of the currency, smallness of bulk, with great relative value, is desirable; and indestructibility, over at least a certain period, essential.

Such indestructibility, and facility of being tested, are united in gold; its intrinsic value is great, and its imaginary value greater; so that, partly through indolence, partly through necessity and want of organization, most nations have agreed to take gold for the only basis of their currencies;—with this grave disadvantage, that its portability enabling the metal to become an active part of the medium of exchange, the stream of the currency itself becomes opaque with gold—half currency and half commodity, in unison of functions which partly neutralize, partly enhance each other's force.

They partly neutralize, since in so far as the gold is commodity, it is bad currency, because liable to sale; and in so far as it is currency, it is bad commodity, because its exchange value interferes with its practical use. Especially its employment in the higher branches of the arts becomes unsafe on account of its liability to be melted down for exchange.

Again. They partly enhance, since in so far as the gold has acknowledged intrinsic value, it is good currency, because everywhere acceptable; and in so far as it has legal exchangeable value, its worth as a commodity is increased. We want no gold in the form of dust or crystal; but we seek for it coined, because in that form it will pay baker and butcher. And this worth in exchange not only absorbs a large quantity in that use,* but

* The waste of labour in obtaining the gold, though it cannot be estimated by help of any existing data, may be understood in its bearing on entire economy by supposing it limited to transactions between two persons. If two farmers in Australia have been exchanging corn and cattle with each other for years, keeping their accounts of reciprocal debt in any simple way, the sum of the possessions of either would not be diminished, though the part of it which was lent or borrowed were only reckoned by marks on a stone, or notches on a tree; and the one counted himself accordingly, so many scratches, or so many notches, better than the other. But

greatly increases the effect on the imagination of the quantity used in the arts. Thus, in brief, the force of the functions is increased, but their precision blunted, by their unison.

These inconveniences, however, attach to gold as a basis of currency on account of its portability and preciousness. But a far greater inconvenience attaches to it as the only legal basis of currency. Imagine gold to be only attainable in masses weighing several pounds each, and its value, like that of malachite or marble, proportioned to its largeness of bulk;—it could not then get itself confused with the currency in daily use, but it might still remain as its basis; and this second inconvenience would still affect it, namely, that its significance as an expression of debt, varies, as that of every other article would, with the popular estimate of its desirableness, and with the quantity offered in the market. My power of obtaining other goods for gold depends always on the strength of public passion for gold, and on the limitation of its quantity, so that when either of two things happen—that the world esteems gold less, or finds it more easily—my right of claim is in that degree effaced; and it has been even gravely maintained that a discovery of a mountain of gold would cancel the National Debt; in other words, that men may be paid for what costs much in what costs nothing. Now, it is true that there is little chance of sudden

convulsion in this respect; the world will not rapidly increase in wisdom so as to despise gold, and perhaps may even desire it more eagerly the more easily it is obtained; nevertheless, the right of debt ought not to rest on a basis of imagination; nor should the frame of a national currency vibrate with every miser's panic and every merchant's imprudence.

There are two methods of avoiding this insecurity, which would have been fallen upon long ago, if, instead of calculating the conditions of the supply of gold, men had only considered how the world might live and manage its affairs without gold at all.* One is, to base the currency on substances of truer intrinsic value; the other, to base it on several substances instead of one. If I can only claim gold, the discovery of a golden mountain starves me; but if I can claim bread, the discovery of a continent of corn-fields need not trouble me. If, however, I wish to exchange my bread for other things, a good harvest will for the time limit my power in this respect; but if I can claim either bread, iron, or silk at pleasure, the standard of value has three feet instead of one, and will be proportionately firm. Thus, ultimately the steadiness of currency depends upon the breadth of its base; but the difficulty of organization increasing with this breadth, the discovery of the condition at once safest and most convenient† can only be by long analysis, which must for the present be deferred.

it would soon be seriously diminished if, discovering gold in their fields, each resolved only to accept golden counters for a reckoning; and accordingly, whenever he wanted a sack of corn or a cow, was obliged to go and wash sand for a week before he could get the means of giving a receipt for them.

* It is difficult to estimate the curious futility of discussions such as that which lately occupied a section of the British Association, on the absorption of gold, while no one can produce even the simplest of the data necessary for the inquiry. To take the first occurring one,—What means have we of ascertaining the weight of gold employed this year in the toilettes of the women of Europe (not to speak of Asia); and, supposing it known, what means of conjecturing the weight by which, next year, their fancies, and the changes of style among their jewellers, will diminish or increase it?

† See, in Pope's epistle to Lord Bathurst, his sketch of the difficulties and uses of a currency literally 'pecuniary'—

'His Grace will game—to White's a bull be led,' &c.

Gold or silver* may always be retained in limited use, as a luxury of coinage and unquestionless standard, of one weight and alloy among all nations, varying only in the die. The purity of coinage, when metallic, is closely indicative of the honesty of the system of revenue, and even of the general dignity of the State.†

Whatever the article or articles may be which the national currency promises to pay, a premium on that article indicates bankruptcy of the government in that proportion, the division of its assets being restrained only by the remaining confidence of the holders of notes in the return of prosperity to the firm. Incontrovertible currencies, those of forced acceptance, or of unlimited issue, are merely various modes of disguising taxation, and delaying its pressure, until it is too late to interfere with its causes. To do away with the possibility of such disguise would have been among the first results of a true economical science, had any such existed; but there have been too many motives for the concealment, so long as it could by any artifices be maintained, to permit hitherto even the founding of such a science.

And indeed, it is only through evil conduct, wilfully persisted in, that there is any embarrassment either in the theory or working of currency. No exchequer is ever embarrassed, nor is any financial question difficult of solution, when people keep their practice honest, and their heads cool. But when governments lose all office of pilotage, protection, scrutiny, and witness; and live only in magnificence of proclaimed larceny, effulgent mendacity, and polished mendacity: or when the people, choosing Speculation (the s usually redundant

in the spelling) instead of Toil, pursue no dishonesty with chastisement, that each may with impunity take his dishonest turn; and enlarge their lust of wealth through ignorance of its use, making their harlot of the dust, and setting Earth the Mother at the mercy of Earth the Destroyer, so that she has to seek in hell the children she left playing in the meadows,—there are no tricks of financial terminology that will save them; all signature and mintage do but magnify the ruin they retard; and even the riches that remain, stagnant or current, change only from the slime of Avernus to the sand of Phlegethon;—quicksand at the embouchure;—land fluently recommended by recent auctioneers as ‘eligible for building leases.’

Finally, then, the power of true currency is fourfold.

1. Credit power. Its worth in exchange, dependent on public opinion of the stability and honesty of the issuer.

2. Real worth. Supposing the gold, or whatever else the currency expressly promises, to be required from the issuer, for all his notes; and that the call cannot be met in full. Then the actual worth of the document (whatever its credit power) would be, and its actual worth at any moment is to be defined as being, what the division of the assets of the issuer, and his subsequent will to work, would produce for it.

3. The exchange power of its base. Granting that we can get five pounds in gold for our note, it remains a question how much of other things we can get for five pounds in gold. The more of other things exist, and the less gold, the greater this power.

4. The power over labour, exercised by the given quantity of the

* Perhaps both; perhaps silver only. It may be found expedient ultimately to leave gold free for use in the arts. As a means of reckoning, the standard might be, and in some cases has already been, entirely ideal.—See Mill's *Political Economy*, book iii. chap. 7, at beginning.

† The purity of the ~~stater~~ and sequin were not without significance of the state of intellect, art, and policy, both in Athens and Venice;—a fact first impressed upon me ten years ago, when, in ~~daguerreotyping~~ Venetian architecture, I found no purchasable gold pure enough to gild them with, but that of the old Venetian sequin.

drachma. — *Taking daguerreotypes of

base, or of the things to be got for it. The question in this case is, how much work, and (question of questions) *whose* work, is to be had for the food which five pounds will buy. This depends on the number of the population, on their gifts, and on their dispositions, with which, down to their slightest humours, and up to their strongest impulses, the power of the currency varies; and in this last of its ranges—the range of passion, price, or praise, (*converso in pretium Deo*), is at once least, and greatest.

Such being the main conditions of national currency, we proceed to examine those of the total currency, under the broad definition, 'transferable acknowledgment of debt;*' among the many forms of which there are in effect only two, distinctly opposed; namely, the acknowledgments of debts which will be paid, and of debts which will not. Documents, whether in whole or part, of bad debt, being to those of good debt as bad money to bullion, we put for the present these forms of im-

posture aside (as in analysing a metal we should wash it clear of dross), and then range, in their exact quantities, the true currency of the country on one side, and the store or property of the country on the other. We place gold, and all such substances, on the side of documents, as far as they operate by signature;—on the side of store as far as they operate by value. Then the currency represents the quantity of debt in the country, and the store the quantity of its possession. The ownership of all the property is divided between the holders of currency and holders of store, and whatever the claiming value of the currency is at any moment, that value is to be deducted from the riches of the storeholders, the deduction being practically made in the payment of rent for houses and lands, of interest on stock, and in other ways to be hereafter examined. At present I wish only to note the broad relations of the two great classes—the currency-holders and store-holders.† Of course they are

* Under which term, observe, we include all documents of debt which, being honest, might be transferable, though they practically are not transferred; while we exclude all documents which are in reality worthless, though in fact transferred temporarily, as bad money is. The document of honest debt, not transferred, is merely to paper currency as gold withdrawn from circulation is to that of bullion. Much confusion has crept into the reasoning on this subject from the idea that withdrawal from circulation is a definable state, whereas it is a gradated state, and indefinable. The sovereign in my pocket is withdrawn from circulation as long as I choose to keep it there. It is no otherwise withdrawn if I bury it, nor even if I choose to make it, and others, into a golden cup, and drink out of them; since a rise in the price of the wine, or of other things, may at any time cause me to melt the cup and throw it back into currency: and the bullion operates on the prices of the things in the market as directly, though not as forcibly, while it is in the form of a cup, as it does in the form of a sovereign. No calculation can be founded on my humour in either case. If I like to handle rouleaus, and therefore keep a quantity of gold, to play with, in the form of jointed basaltic columns, it is all one in its effect on the market as if I kept it in the form of twisted filigree, or, steadily amicus lamnæ, beat the narrow gold pieces into broad ones, and dined off them. The probability is greater that I break the rouleau than that I melt the plate; but the increased probability is not calculable. Thus, documents are only withdrawn from the currency when cancelled, and bullion when it is so effectually lost as that the probability of finding it is no greater than of finding new gold in the mine.

† They are (up to the amount of the currency) simply creditors and debtors—the commercial types of the two great sects of humanity which those words describe; for debt and credit are of course merely the mercantile forms of the words 'duty' and 'creed,' which give the central ideas: only it is more accurate to say 'faith' than 'creed,' because creed has been applied carelessly to mere forms of words. Duty properly signifies whatever in substance or act one person owes to another, and faith the other's trust in his rendering it. The French '*devoir*' and '*foi*' are fuller and clearer words than ours; for, faith being the passive of fact, *foi* comes straight through sides from *fio*; and the French keep the group of words formed from the infinitive—*feri*,

partly united, most monied men having possessions of land or other goods; but they are separate in their nature and functions. The currency-holders as a class regulate the demand for labour, and the store-holders the laws of it; the currency-holders determine what shall be produced, and the store-holders the conditions of its production. Farther, as true currency represents by definition debts which will be paid, it represents either the debtor's wealth, or his ability and willingness; that is to say, either wealth existing in his hands transferred to him by the creditor, or wealth which, as he is at some time surely to return it, he is either increasing, or, if diminishing, has the will and strength to reproduce. A sound currency therefore, as by its increase it represents enlarging debt, represents also enlarging means; but in this curious way, that a certain quantity of it marks the deficiency of the wealth of the country from what it would have been if that currency had not existed.* In this respect it is like the detritus of a mountain; assume that it lies at a fixed angle, and the more the detritus, the larger must be the mountain; but it would have been larger still, had there been none.

Finally, though, as above stated, every man possessing money has usually also some property beyond what is necessary for his imme-

diat wants, and men possessing property usually also hold currency beyond what is necessary for their immediate exchanges, it mainly determines the class to which they belong, whether in their eyes the money is an adjunct of the property, or the property of the money. In the first case the holder's pleasure is in his possessions, and in his money subordinated, as the means of bettering or adding to them. In the second, his pleasure is in his money, and in his possessions only as representing it. In the first case the money is as an atmosphere surrounding the wealth, rising from it and raining back upon it; but in the second, it is as a deluge, with the wealth floating, and for the most part perishing in it. The shortest distinction between the men is that the one wishes always to buy, and the other to sell.

Such being the great relations of the classes, their several characters are of the highest importance to the nation; for on the character of the store-holders depends the preservation, display, and serviceableness of its wealth;—on that of the currency-holders its nature, and in great part its distribution; on that of both, its reproduction.

The store-holders are either constructive, neutral, or destructive; and in subsequent papers we shall, with respect to every kind of wealth, examine the relative power of the store-holder for its improve-

'se fier,' 'se défier,' 'défiance,' and the grand following 'défi.' Our English 'affiance,' 'defiance,' 'confidence,' 'diffidence,' retain accurate meanings; but our 'faithful' has become obscure from being used for 'faithworthy,' as well as 'full of faith.' 'His name that sat on him was called Faithful and True.'

Trust is the passive of true saying, as faith is the passive of due doing; and the right learning of these etymologies, which are in the strictest sense only to be learned 'by heart,' is of considerably more importance to the youth of a nation than its reading and ciphering.

* For example, suppose an active peasant, having got his ground into good order and built himself a comfortable house, finding still time on his hands, sees one of his neighbours little able to work, and ill lodged, and offers to build him also a house, and to put his land in order, on condition of receiving for a given period rent for the building and tithe of the fruits. The offer is accepted, and a document given promissory of rent and tithe. This note is money. It can only be good money if the man who has incurred the debt so far recovers his strength as to be able to take advantage of the help he has received, and meet the demand of the note; if he lets his house fall to ruin, and his field to waste, his promissory note will soon be valueless: but the existence of the note at all is a consequence of his not having worked so stoutly as the other. Let him gain as much as to be able to pay back the entire debt; the note is cancelled, and we have two rich store-holders and no currency.

ment or destruction; and we shall then find it to be of incomparably greater importance to the nation in whose hands the thing is put, than how much of it is got; and that the character of the holders may be conjectured by the quality of the store, for such and such a man always asks for such and such a thing; nor only asks for it, but if to be bettered, betters it: so that possession and possessor reciprocally act on each other through the entire sum of national possession. The base nation asking for base things sinks daily to deeper vileness of nature and of use; while the noble nation, asking for noble things, rises daily into diviner eminence in both; the tendency to degradation being surely marked by *ἀραξία*, carelessness as to the hands in which things are put, competition for the acquisition of them, disorderliness in accumulation, inaccuracy in reckoning, and bluntness in conception as to the entire nature of possession.

Now, the currency-holders always increase in number and influence in proportion to the bluntness of nature and clumsiness of the store-holders; for the less use people can make of things the more they tire of them, and want to change them for something else, and all frequency of change increases the quantity and power of currency; while the large currency-holder himself is essentially a person who never has been able to make up his mind as to what he will have, and proceeds, therefore, in vague collection and aggregation, with more and more infuriate passion, urged by complacency in progress, and pride of conquest.

While, however, there is this obscurity in the nature of possession of currency, there is a charm in the *absoluteness* of it, which is to some people very enticing. In the enjoyment of real property others must partly share. The groom has some enjoyment of the stud, and the gardener of the garden; but the

money is, or seems shut up; it is wholly enviable. No one else can have part in any complacencies arising from it.

The power of arithmetical comparison is also a great thing to unimaginative people. They know always they are so much better than they were, in money; so much better than others, in money; wit cannot be so compared, nor character. My neighbour cannot be convinced I am wiser than he is, but he can that I am worth so much more; and the universality of the conviction is no less flattering than its clearness. Only a few can understand, none measure, superiorities in other things; but everybody can understand money, and count it.

Now, these various temptations to accumulation would be politically harmless if what was vainly accumulated had any fair chance of being wisely spent. For as accumulation cannot go on for ever, but must some day end in its reverse—if this reverse were indeed a beneficial distribution and use, as irrigation from reservoir, the fever of gathering, though perilous to the gatherer, might be serviceable to the community. But it constantly happens (so constantly, that it may be stated as a political law having few exceptions), that what is unreasonably gathered is also unreasonably spent by the persons into whose hands it finally falls. Very frequently it is spent in war, or else in a stupifying luxury, twice hurtful, both in being indulged by the rich and witnessed by the poor. So that the *mal tener* and *mal dare* are as correlative as complementary colours; and the circulation of wealth, which ought to be soft, steady, strong, far-sweeping, and full of warmth, like the Gulf stream, being narrowed into an eddy, and concentrated on a point, changes into the alternate suction and surrender of Charybdis. Which is indeed, I doubt not, the true meaning of that marvellous fable, 'infinite,' as Bacon said of it, 'in matter of meditation.'*

* It is a strange habit of wise humanity to speak in enigmas only, so that the highest truths and usefulest laws must be hunted for through whole picture-galleries

This disease of desire having especial relation to the great art of Exchange, or Commerce, we must, in order to complete our code of first principles, shortly state the nature and limits of that art.

As the currency conveys right of choice out of many things in exchange for one, so Commerce is the agency by which the power of choice is obtained; and countries producing only timber can obtain

of dreams, which to the vulgar seem dreams only. Thus Homer, the Greek tragedians, Plato, Dante, Chaucer, Shakspeare, and Goethe, have hidden all that is chiefly serviceable in their work, and in all the various literature they absorbed and re-embodyed, under types which have rendered it quite useless to the multitude. What is worse, the two primal declarers of moral discovery, Homer and Plato, are partly at issue; for Plato's logical power quenched his imagination, and he became incapable of understanding the purely imaginative element either in poetry or painting, he therefore somewhat overrates the pure discipline of passionate art in song and music, and misses that of meditative art. There is, however, a deeper reason for his distrust of Homer. His love of justice, and reverently religious nature made him dread, as death, every form of fallacy; but chiefly, fallacy respecting the world to come (his own myths being only symbolic exponents of a rational hope). We shall perhaps now every day discover more clearly how right Plato was in this, and feel ourselves more and more wonderstruck that men such as Homer and Dante (and, in an inferior sphere, Milton), not to speak of the great sculptors and painters of every age, have permitted themselves, though full of all nobleness and wisdom, to coin idle imaginations of the mysteries of eternity, and mould the faiths of the families of the earth by the courses of their own vague and visionary arts: while the indisputable truths respecting human life and duty, respecting which they all have but one voice, lie hidden behind these veils of phantasy, unsought and often unsuspected. I will gather carefully, out of Dante and Homer, what of this kind bears on our subject, in its due place; the first broad intention of their symbols may be sketched at once. The rewards of a worthy use of riches, subordinate to other ends, are shown by Dante in the fifth and sixth orbs of Paradise; for the punishment of their unworthy use, three places are assigned; one for the avaricious and prodigal whose souls are lost (Hell. Canto 7); one for the avaricious and prodigal whose souls are capable of purification (Purgatory. Canto 19); and one for the usurers, of whom none can be redeemed. (Hell. Canto 17.) The first group, the largest in all hell, (*gente piu che altrove troppa*), meet in contrary currents, as the waves of *Charybdis*, casting weights at each other from opposite sides. This weariness of contention is the chief element of their torture; so marked by the beautiful lines beginning *Or puoi, figliuol, &c.*: (but the usurers, who made their money inactively, sit on the sand, equally without rest, however, '*Di qua, di la toccarrien*,' &c.) For it is not avarice but contention for riches, leading to this double misuse of them, which, in Dante's light, is the unredeemable sin. The place of its punishment is guarded by Plutus 'the great enemy,' and '*la fièra crudele*,' a spirit quite different from the Greek Plutus, who though old and blind, is not cruel, and is curable, so as to become far-sighted. (*ὁ τρυφλὸς ἀλλ' ὁξὺ βλέπων*.—Plato's epithets in first book of the Laws.) Still more does this Dantesque type differ from the resplendent Plutus of Goethe in the second part of Faust, who is the personified power of wealth for good or evil; not the passion for wealth; and again from the Plutus of Spenser, who is the passion of mere aggregation. Dante's Plutus is specially and definitely the spirit of Contention and Competition, or Evil Commerce; and because, as I showed in my last paper, this kind of commerce 'makes all men strangers,' his speech is unintelligible, and no single soul of all those ruined by him has recognizable features.

(*La sconescente vita—*

Ad ogni conoscenza or li fa bruni).

On the other hand, the redeemable sins of avarice and prodigality are, in Dante's sight, those which are without deliberate or calculated operation. The lust, or lavishness, of riches can be purged, so long as there has been no servile consistency of dispute and competition for them. The sin is spoken of as that of degradation by the love of earth; it is purified by deeper humiliation—the souls crawl on their bellies; their chant, 'my soul cleaveth unto the dust.' But the spirits here condemned are all recognizable, and even the worst examples of the thirst for gold, which they are compelled to tell the histories of during the night, are of men swept by the passion of avarice into violent crime, but not sold to its steady work.

The precept given to each of these spirits for its deliverance is—Turn thine eyes

*compare
figl. "qua"
sustina turbare*

** soccorriero*

for their timber silk and gold; or, naturally producing only jewels and frankincense, can obtain for them cattle and corn. In this function commerce is of more importance to a country in proportion

to the limitations of its products and the restlessness of its fancy;—generally of greater importance towards Northern latitudes.

Commerce is necessary, however, not only to exchange local pro-

to the lucre, (lure) which the Eternal King rolls with the mighty wheels. Otherwise, the wheels of the 'Greater Fortune,' of which the constellation is ascending when Dante's dream begins. Compare George Herbert,

Lift up thy head;
Take stars for money; stars, not to be told
By any art, yet to be purchased.

And Plato's notable sentence in the third book of the *Polity*:—'Tell them they have divine gold and silver in their souls for ever; that they need no money stamped of men—neither may they otherwise than impiously mingle the gathering of the divine with the mortal treasure, for through that which the law of the multitude has coined, endless crimes have been done and suffered; but in theirs is neither pollution nor sorrow.'

At the entrance of this place of punishment an evil spirit is seen by Dante, quite other than the 'Gran Nemico.' The great enemy is obeyed knowingly and willingly; but this spirit—feminine—and called a Siren—is the 'Deceitfulness of riches,' ἀπάτη πλοῦτος of the gospels, winning obedience by guile. This is the Idol of Riches, made doubly phantasmal by Dante's seeing her in a dream. She is lovely to look upon, and enchants by her sweet singing, but her womb is loathsome. Now, Dante does not call her one of the Sirens carelessly, any more than he speaks of Charybdis carelessly, and though he had only got at the meaning of the Homeric fable through Virgil's obscure tradition of it, the clue he has given us is quite enough. Bacon's interpretation, 'the Sirens, or pleasures,' which has become universal since his time, is opposed alike to Plato's meaning and Homer's. The Sirens are not pleasures, but Desires: in the *Odyssey* they are the phantoms of vain desire; but in Plato's vision of Destiny, phantoms of constant Desire; singing each a different note on the circles of the distaff of Necessity, but forming one harmony, to which the three great Fates put words. Dante, however, adopted the Homeric conception of them, which was that they were demons of the Imagination, not carnal (desire of the eyes; not lust of the flesh); therefore said to be daughters of the Muses. Yet not of the muses, heavenly or historical, but of the muse of pleasure; and they are at first winged, because even vain hope excites and helps when first formed; but afterwards, contending for the possession of the imagination with the muses themselves, they are deprived of their wings, and thus we are to distinguish the Siren power from the power of Circe, who is no daughter of the muses, but of the strong elements, Sun and Sea; her power is that of frank, and full vital pleasure, which if governed and watched, nourishes men; but, unwatched, and having no 'moly,' bitterness or delay, mixed with it, turns men into beasts, but does not slay them, leaves them, on the contrary, power of revival. She is herself indeed an Enchantress;—pure Animal life; transforming—or degrading—but always wonderful (she puts the stores on board the ship invisibly, and is gone again, like a ghost); even the wild beasts rejoice and are softened around her cave; to men, she gives no rich feast, nothing but pure and right nourishment,—Pramnian wine, cheese, and flour; that is, corn, milk, and wine, the three great sustainers of life—it is their own fault if these make swine of them; and swine are chosen merely as the type of consumption; as Plato's ὄν πολίς, in the second book of the *Polity*, and perhaps chosen by Homer with a deeper knowledge of the likeness in variety of nourishment, and internal form of body.

'Et quel est, s'il vous plaît, cet audacieux animal qui se permet d'être bâti au dedans comme une jolie petite fille?

'Hélas! chère enfant, j'ai honte de le nommer, et il ne faudra pas m'en vouloir. C'est . . . c'est le cochon. Ce n'est pas précisément flatteur pour vous; mais nous en sommes tous là, et si cela vous contrarie par trop, il faut aller vous plaindre au bon Dieu qui a voulu que les choses fussent arrangées ainsi: seulement le cochon, qui ne pense qu'à manger, a l'estomac bien plus vaste que nous, et c'est toujours une consolation.' (*Histoire d'une Bouchée de Pain*, Lettre ix.)

But the deadly Sirens are in all things opposed to the Circean power. They promise pleasure, but never give it. They nourish in no wise; but slay by slow

Note omitted
the whole
of the world
λυγρὸν
with respect to
the phantasmal
of lives &
sub-fields of
desire.

ducts, but local skill. Labour requiring the agency of fire can only be given abundantly in cold countries; labour requiring suppleness of body and sensitiveness of touch only in warm ones; labour involv-

ing accurate vivacity of thought only in temperate ones; while peculiar imaginative actions are produced by extremes of heat and cold, and of light and darkness. The production of great art is limited

death. And whereas they corrupt the heart and the head, instead of merely betraying the senses, there is no recovery from their power; they do not tear nor snatch, like Scylla, but the men who have listened to them are poisoned, and waste away. Note that the Sirens' field is covered, not merely with the bones, but with the *skins* of those who have been consumed there. They address themselves, in the part of the song which Homer gives, not to the passions of Ulysses, but to his vanity, and the only man who ever came within hearing of them, and escaped untempted, was Orpheus, who silenced the vain imaginations by singing the praises of the gods.

It is, then, one of these Sirens whom Dante takes as the phantasm or deceitfulness of riches; but note further, that she says it was her song that deceived Ulysses. Look back to Dante's account of Ulysses' death, and we find it was not the love of money, but pride of knowledge, that betrayed him; whence we get the clue to Dante's complete meaning: that the souls whose love of wealth is pardonable have been first deceived into pursuit of it by a dream of its higher uses, or by ambition. His Siren is therefore the Philotimé of Spenser, daughter of Mammon—

‘Whom all that folk with such contention
Do flock about, my deare, my daughter is—
Honour and dignitie from her alone
Derived are.’

By comparing Spenser's entire account of this Philotimé with Dante's of the Wealth-Siren, we shall get at the full meaning of both poets; but that of Homer lies hidden much more deeply. For his Sirens are indefinite, and they are desires of any evil thing; power of wealth is not specially indicated by him, until, escaping the harmonious danger of imagination, Ulysses has to choose between two practical ways of life, indicated by the two *rocks* of Scylla and Charybdis. The monsters that haunt them are quite distinct from the rocks themselves, which, having many other subordinate significations, are in the main Labour and Idleness, or getting and spending; each with its attendant monster, or betraying demon. The rock of gaining has its summit in the clouds, invisible, and not to be climbed; that of spending is low, but marked by the cursed fig-tree, which has leaves but no fruit. We know the type elsewhere; and there is a curious lateral allusion to it by Dante when Jacopo di Sant' Andrea, who had ruined himself by profusion and committed suicide, scatters the leaves of the bush of Lotto degli Agli, endeavouring to hide himself among them. We shall hereafter examine the type completely; here I will only give an approximate rendering of Homer's words, which have been obscured more by translation than even by tradition—

‘They are overhanging rocks. The great waves of blue water break round them; and the blessed Gods call them the Wanderers.

‘By one of them no winged thing can pass—not even the wild doves that bring ambrosia to their father Jove—but the smooth rock seizes its sacrifice of them.’ (Not even ambrosia to be had without Labour. The word is peculiar—as a part of anything is offered for sacrifice; especially used of heave-offering.) ‘It reaches the wide heaven with its top, and a dark-blue cloud rests on it, and never passes; neither does the clear sky hold it in summer nor in harvest. Nor can any man climb it—not if he had twenty feet and hands, for it is smooth as though it were hewn.

‘And in the midst of it is a cave which is turned the way of hell. And therein dwells Scylla, whining for prey: her cry, indeed, is no louder than that of a newly-born whelp; but she herself is an awful thing—nor can any creature see her face and be glad; no, though it were a god that rose against her. For she has twelve feet, all fore-feet, and six necks, and terrible heads on them; and each has three rows of teeth, full of black death.

‘But the opposite rock is lower than this, though but a bow-shot distant; and upon it there is a great fig-tree, full of leaves; and under it the terrible Charybdis sucks down the black water. Thrice in the day she sucks it down, and thrice casts it up again; be not thou there when she sucks down, for Neptune himself could not save thee.’

The reader will find the meaning of these types gradually elicited as we proceed.

to climates warm enough to admit of repose in the open air, and cool enough to render such repose delightful. Minor variations in modes of skill distinguish every locality. The labour which at any place is easiest, is in that place cheapest; and it becomes often desirable that products raised in one country should be wrought in another. Hence have arisen discussions on 'International values' which will be one day remembered as highly curious exercises of the human mind. For it will be discovered, in due course of tide and time, that international value is regulated just as inter-provincial or inter-parishional value is. Coals and hops are exchanged between Northumberland and Kent on absolutely the same principles as iron and wine between Lancashire and Spain. The greater breadth of an arm of the sea increases the cost, but does not modify the principle of exchange; and a bargain written in two languages will have no other economical results than a bargain written in one. The distances of nations are measured not by seas, but by ignorances; and their divisions determined, not by dialects, but by enmities.

Of course, a system of international values may always be constructed if we assume a relation of moral law to physical geography; as, for instance, that it is right to cheat across a river, though not across a road; or across a lake, though not across a river; or over a mountain, though not across a lake, &c.:—again, a system of such values may be constructed by assuming similar relations of taxation to physical geography; as, for instance, that an article should be taxed in crossing a river, but not in crossing a road; or in being carried over a mountain, but not over a ferry, &c.: such positions are indeed not easily maintained when once put in logical form: but one law of international value is maintainable in any form; namely, that the farther your neighbour lives from you, and the less he understands you, the more you are bound to be true in your dealings with him; because your

power over him is greater in proportion to his ignorance, and his remedy more difficult in proportion to his distance.

I have just said the breadth of sea increases the cost of exchange. Exchange, or commerce, as such, is always costly; the sum of the value of the goods being diminished by the cost of their conveyance, and by the maintenance of the persons employed in it; so that it is only when there is advantage to both producers (in getting the one thing for the other), greater than the loss in conveyance, that the exchange is expedient. And it is only justly conducted when the porters kept by the producers, (commonly called merchants) look only for pay, and not for profit. For in just commerce there are but three parties—the two persons or societies exchanging and the agent or agents of exchange: the value of the things to be exchanged is known by both the exchangers, and each receives equivalent value, neither gaining nor losing (for whatever one gains the other loses). The intermediate agent is paid an equal and known per-centage by both, partly for labour in conveyance, partly for care, knowledge, and risk; every attempt at concealment of the amount of the pay indicates either effort on the part of the agent to obtain exorbitant per-centage, or effort on the part of the exchangers to refuse him a just one. But for the most part it is the first, namely, the effort on the part of the merchant to obtain larger profit (so-called) by buying cheap and selling dear. Some part, indeed, of this larger gain is deserved, and might be openly demanded, because it is the reward of the merchant's knowledge, and foresight of probable necessity: but the greater part of such gain is unjust; and unjust in this most fatal way, that it depends first on keeping the exchangers ignorant of the exchange value of the articles, and secondly, on taking advantage of the buyer's need and the seller's poverty. It is, therefore, one of the essential, and quite the most fatal, forms of usury; for usury means merely taking an exorbitant sum for the use of any-

thing, and it is no matter whether the exorbitance is on loan or exchange, in rent or in price—the essence of the usury being that it is obtained by advantage of opportunity or necessity, and not as due reward for labour. All the great thinkers, therefore, have held it to be unnatural and impious, in so far as it feeds on the distress of others, or their folly.* Nevertheless, attempts to repress it by law, (in other words, to regulate prices by law so far as their variations depend on iniquity, and not on nature) must for ever be ineffective; though Plato, Bacon, and the First Napoleon—all three of them men who knew somewhat more of humanity than the ‘British merchant’ usually does, tried their hands at it, and have left some (probably) good moderate forms of law, which we will examine in their place. But the only final check upon it must be radical purifying of the national character, for being, as Bacon calls it, ‘concessum propter duritiem cordis,’ it is to be done away with by touching the heart only; not, however, without medicinal law—as in the case of the other permission, ‘propter duritiem.’ But in this, more than in anything (though much in all, and though in this he would not himself allow of their application, for his own laws against usury are sharp enough), Plato’s words are true in the fourth book of the *Polity*, that neither drugs, nor charms, nor burnings, will touch a deep-lying political sore, any more than a deep bodily one; but only right and utter change of constitution: and that ‘they do but lose their labour who think that by any tricks of law they can get the better of these mischiefs of intercourse, and see not that they hew at a Hydra.’

And indeed this Hydra seems so unslayable, and sin sticks so fast between the joinings of the stones of buying and selling, that ‘to trade’ in things, or literally ‘cross-give’ them, has warped itself, by the instinct of nations, into

their worst word for fraud; for, because in trade there cannot but be trust, and it seems also that there cannot but also be injury in answer to it, what is merely fraud between enemies becomes treachery among friends: and ‘trader,’ ‘traditor’ and ‘traitor’ are but the same word. For which simplicity of language there is more reason than at first appears; for as in true commerce there is no ‘profit,’ so in true commerce there is no ‘sale.’ The idea of sale is that of an interchange between enemies respectively endeavouring to get the better one of another; but commerce is an exchange between friends; and there is no desire but that it should be just, any more than there would be between members of the same family. The moment there is a bargain over the pottage, the family relation is dissolved:—typically, ‘the days of mourning for my father are at hand.’ Whereupon follows the resolve ‘then will I slay my brother.’

This inhumanity of mercenary commerce is the more notable because it is a fulfilment of the law that the corruption of the best is the worst. For as, taking the body natural for symbol of the body politic, the governing and forming powers may be likened to the brain, and the labouring to the limbs, the mercantile, presiding over circulation and communication of things in changed utilities, is symbolized by the heart; which if it harden, all is lost. And this is the ultimate lesson which the leader of English intellect meant for us (a lesson, indeed, not all his own, but part of the old wisdom of humanity), in the tale of the *Merchant of Venice*; in which the true and incorrupt merchant,—kind and free, beyond every other Shakspearian conception of men,—is opposed to the corrupted merchant, or usurer; the lesson being deepened by the expression of the strange hatred which the corrupted merchant bears to the pure one, mixed with intense scorn,—

‘This is the fool that lent out

* Hence Dante’s companionship of Cahors, *Inf.*, canto xi., supported by the view taken of the matter throughout the middle ages, in common with the Greeks.

money gratis; look to him, jailor,' (as to lunatic no less than criminal) the enmity, observe, having its symbolism literally carried out by being aimed straight at the heart, and finally foiled by a literal appeal to the great moral law that flesh and blood cannot be weighed, enforced by 'Portia' ('Portion'), the type of divine Fortune,* found, not in gold, nor in silver, but in lead, that is to say, in endurance and patience, not in splendour; and finally taught by her lips also, declaring, instead of the law and quality of 'merces,' the greater law and quality of mercy, which is not strained, but drops as the rain, blessing him that gives and him that takes. And observe that this 'mercy' is not the mean 'Misericordia,' but the mighty 'Gratia,' answered by Gratitude, (observe Shylock's leaning on the, to him detestable, word *gratis*, and compare the relations of Grace to Equity given in the

second chapter of the second book of the *Memorabilia*); that is to say, it is the gracious or loving, instead of the strained, or competing manner, of doing things, answered, not only with 'merces' or pay, but with 'merci' or thanks. And this is indeed the meaning of the great benediction 'Grace, mercy, and peace,' for there can be no peace without grace, (not even by help of rifled cannon),† nor even without triplicity of graciousness, for the Greeks, who began but with one Grace, had to open their scheme into three before they had done.

With the usual tendency of long repeated thought, to take the surface for the deep, we have conceived these goddesses as if they only gave loveliness to gesture; whereas their true function is to give graciousness to deed, the other loveliness arising naturally out of that. In which function Charis becomes Charitas;‡ and has a name and praise even greater than

* Shakspeare would certainly never have chosen this name had he been forced to retain the Roman spelling. Like Per-lita, 'lost lady,' or Cordelia, 'heart-lady,' Portia is 'fortune' lady. The two great relative groups of words, Fortuna, fero, and fors—Portio, porto, and pars (with the lateral branch, op-portune, im-portune, opportunity, &c.), are of deep and intricate significance; their various senses of bringing, abstracting, and sustaining being all centralized by the wheel (which bears and moves at once), or still better, the ball (spera) of Fortune,—'Volve sua spera, e beata si gode:' the motive power of this wheel distinguishing its goddess from the fixed majesty of Necessitas with her iron nails; or ἀνάγκη, with her pillar of fire and iridescent orbits, fixed at the centre. Portus and porta, and gate in its connexion with gain, form another interesting branch group; and Mors, the concentration of delaying, is always to be remembered with Fors, the concentration of bringing and bearing, passing on into Fortis and Fortitude.

† Out of whose mouths, indeed, no peace was ever promulgated, but only equipoise of panic, highly tremulous on the edge in changes of the wind.

‡ The reader must not think that any care can be misspent in tracing the connexion and power of the words which we have to use in the sequel. Not only does all soundness of reasoning depend on the work thus done in the outset, but we may sometimes gain more by insistence on the expression of a truth, than by much wordless thinking about it; for to strive to express it clearly is often to detect it thoroughly; and education, even as regards thought, nearly sums itself in making men economise their words, and understand them. Nor is it possible to estimate the harm which has been done, in matters of higher speculation and conduct, by loose verbiage, though we may guess at it by observing the dislike which people show to having anything about their religion said to them in simple words, because then they understand it. Thus congregations meet weekly to invoke the influence of a Spirit of Life and Truth; yet if any part of that character were intelligibly expressed to them by the formulas of the service, they would be offended. Suppose, for instance, in the closing benediction, the clergyman were to give its vital significance to the word 'Holy,' and were to say, 'the Fellowship of the Helpful and Honest Ghost be with you, and remain with you always,' what would be the horror of many, first at the irreverence of so intelligible an expression, and secondly, at the uncomfortable entry of the suspicion that (while throughout the commercial dealings of the week they had denied the propriety of Help, and possibility of Honesty,) the person whose company they had been asking to be blessed with could have no fellowship with knaves.

that of Faith or Truth, for these may be maintained sullenly and proudly; but Charis is in her countenance always gladdening (Aglaia), and in her service instant and humble; and the true wife of Vulcan, or Labour. And it is not until her sincerity of function is lost, and her mere beauty contemplated instead of her patience, that she is born again of the foam flake, and becomes Aphrodité; then only capable of joining herself to War and to the enmities of men, instead of to labour and their services. Therefore the fable of Mars and Venus is chosen by Homer, picturing himself as Demodocus, to sing at the games in the court of Alcinous. Phæacia is the Homeric island of Atlantis; an image of noble and wise government, concealed, how slightly! merely by the change of a short vowel for a long one in the name of its queen; yet misunderstood by all later writers, even by Horace in his 'pinguis Phæax que,' &c. That fable expresses the perpetual error of men in thinking that grace and dignity can only be

reached by the soldier, and never by the artizan; so that commerce and the useful arts have had the honour and beauty taken away, and only the Fraud† and Pain left to them, with the lucre. Which is, indeed, one great reason of the continual blundering about the offices of government with respect to commerce. The higher classes are ashamed to deal with it; and though ready enough to fight for, (or occasionally against) the people,—to preach to them—or judge them, will not break bread for them; the refined upper servant who has willingly looked after the burnishing of the armoury and ordering of the library, not liking to set foot in the larder.

Farther still. As Charis becomes Charitas on the one side, she becomes—better still—Chara, Joy, on the other; or rather this is her very mother's milk and the beauty of her childhood; for God brings no enduring Love, nor any other good, out of pain; nor out of contention; but out of joy and harmony.‡ And in this sense, human

* As Charis becomes Charitas, the word 'Cher,' or 'Dear,' passes from Shylock's sense of it (to buy cheap and sell dear) into Antonio's sense of it: emphasized with the final *i* in tender 'Cheri,' and hushed to English calmness in our noble 'Cherish.'

† While I have traced the finer and higher laws of this matter for those whom they concern, I have also to note the material law—vulgarly expressed in the proverb, 'Honesty is the best policy.' That proverb is indeed wholly inapplicable to matters of private interest. It is not true that honesty, as far as material gain is concerned, profits individuals. A clever and cruel knave will in a mixed society always be richer than an honest person can be. But Honesty is the best 'policy,' if policy mean practice of State. For fraud gains nothing in a State. It only enables the knaves in it to live at the expense of honest people; while there is for every act of fraud, however small, a loss of wealth to the community. Whatever the fraudulent person gains, some other person loses, as fraud produces nothing; and there is, besides, the loss of the time and thought spent in accomplishing the fraud, and of the strength otherwise obtainable by mutual help (not to speak of the fevers of anxiety and jealousy in the blood, which are a heavy physical loss, as I will show in due time). Practically, when the nation is deeply corrupt, cheat answers to cheat; every one is in turn imposed upon, and there is to the body politic the dead loss of the ingenuity, together with the incalculable mischief of the injury to each defrauded person, producing collateral effect unexpectedly. My neighbour sells me bad meat: I sell him in return flawed iron. We neither of us get one atom of pecuniary advantage on the whole transaction, but we both suffer unexpected inconvenience;—my men get scurvy, and his cattle-truck runs off the rails.

‡ 'τὰ μὲν οὖν ἄλλα ζῶα οὐκ ἔχουσιν αἰσθῆσιν τῶν ἐν ταῖς κινήσει τάξεων οὐδὲ ἀταξίων, οἷς δὲ ῥυθμὸς ὄνομα καὶ ἁρμονία· ἡμῖν δὲ οὗς εἵπομεν τοὺς θεοὺς (Apollo, the Muses, and Bacchus—the grave Bacchus, that is—ruling the choir of age; or Bacchus restraining; "sæva tene, cum Berecynthio cornu, tympana," &c.) συγχορὲντας δίδασθαι, τοὺτους εἶναι καὶ τοὺς διδωκοτάς τὴν ῥυθμὸν τε καὶ ἁρμόνιον αἰσθῆσιν μεθ' ἡδονῆς . . . χόρους τε ἀναγομένους παρὰ τῆς χαρᾶς ἰμψυτον ὄνομα.'—Laws, book ii.

VOL. LXVI. NO. CCCXCVI.

and divine, music and gladness, and the measures of both, come into her name; and Cher becomes full-vowelled Cheer, and Cheerful; and Chara, companioned, opens into Choir and Choral.

And lastly. As Grace passes into Freedom of action, Charis becomes Eleutheria, or Liberality; a form of liberty quite curiously and intensely different from the thing usually understood by 'Liberty' in modern language: indeed, much more like what some people would call slavery: for a Greek always understood, primarily, by liberty, deliverance from the law of his own passions (or from what the Christian writers call bondage of corruption), and this a complete liberty: not having to resist the passion, but making it fawn upon, and follow him—(this may be again partly the meaning of the fawning beasts about the Circean cave; so, again, George Herbert—

Correct thy passion's spite,
Then may the beasts draw thee to happy
light)—

not being merely safe from the Siren, but also unbound from the mast. And it is only in such generosity that any man becomes capable of so governing others as to take true part in any system of national economy. Nor is there any other eternal distinction between the upper and lower classes than this form of liberty, Eleutheria, or benignity, in the one, and its opposite of slavery, Douleia, or malignity, in the other; the separation of these two orders of men, and the firm government of the lower by the higher, being the first conditions of possible wealth and

economy in any state,—the Gods giving it no greater gift than the power to discern its freemen, and 'malignum spernere vulgus.'

The examination of this form of Charis must, therefore, lead us into the discussion of the principles of government in general, and especially of that of the poor by the rich, discovering how the Graciousness joined with the Greatness, or Love with Majestas, is the true Dei Gratia, or Divine Right, of every form and manner of King; *i. e.*, specifically, of the thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, and powers of the earth:—of the thrones, stable, or 'ruling,' literally right-doing powers ('*rex eris, recte si facies:*') of the dominations, lordly, edifying, dominant and harmonious powers; chiefly domestic over the 'built thing,' domus, or house; and inherently twofold Dominus and Domina; Lord and Lady: of the Principedoms, pre-eminent, incipient, creative, and demonstrative powers; thus poetic and mercantile, in the '*princeps carmen deduxisse*' and the merchant-prince: of the Virtues or Courages; militant, guiding, or Ducal powers: and finally of the Strengths or Forces pure; magistral powers, of the More over the less, and the forceful and free over the weak and servile elements of life.

Subject enough for the next paper, involving 'economical' principles of some importance, of which, for theme, here is a sentence, which I do not care to translate, for it would sound harsh in English, though, truly, it is one of the tenderest ever uttered by man; which may be meditated over, or rather *through*, in the meanwhile, by any one who will take the pains:—

* Ἀρ' οὖν, ὥσπερ ἵππος τῷ ἀνεπιστήμονι μὲν ἐγχειροῦντι δὲ χρῆσθαι ζημία ἐστίν, οὕτω καὶ ἀδελφός, ὅταν τις αὐτῷ μὴ ἐπιστάμενος ἐγχειρῇ χρῆσθαι, ζημία ἐστί;



John Ruskin. *Præterita*

1886-

vol 1. 12 chap

II. 12 "

III. 4 "

Diecta

2 ps

1886

Val d'Arno.

1 - Nicholas the Pisan

2 - John the Pisan

3 - Shields and Apron

4 - Parted per Vale

5 - Pax Vobiscum

6. Marble Couchant

7. Marble Rampant

8. Franchise

9. The Tyrrhene Sea

10. Val d'Arno

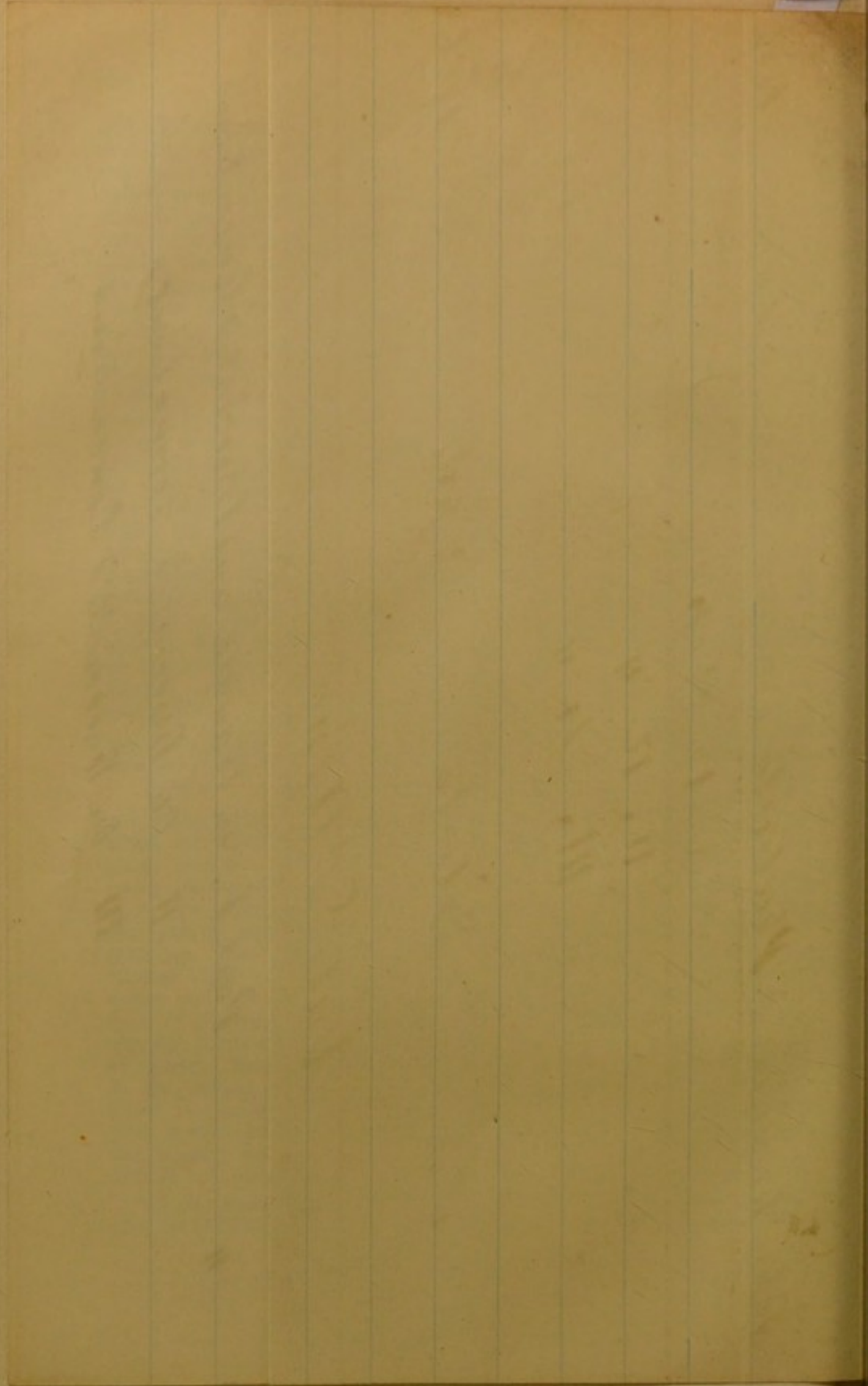
Bible of Amiens

1881

Part I. on Banded and Brecciated Concretions

II On Brecciated Formations

III On Brecciated Concretions



- John Ruskin. Giotto and his Works in Padua. 3 Parts. 1854
- { " Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century 1884
- 2 lectures, delivered at the London Institution
- 1 " Rec. Raphaelitism 1857
- 2 " Notes on some of the Principal Pictures
- 1 " of the Royal Academy 1866
- " " 1857
- " " 1858
- " " 1859
- 2 " Political Economy (Kaiser's Magazine) 1862
- { Lecture 1 Love's Meinie 1873
- " " " 1873
- " " " 1881
- " Prosperina Part VII 1882
- " " " VIII 1882
- " " " IX 1886
- 5, 5, 5. Deucalion " VIII 1883
- " Notes on the Turner Gallery 1856
- " Guide - Academy of Fine Arts, Venice 1882
- " " " " 1883
- " Notes on Drawings by the late Sir W. Turner R. 1878
- " " " Samuel Peacock Museum. 1879-80

1882
1886
1883

VIII
IX
VIII

5.5.9. Deucalion

Notes on the Turner Gallery 1886
Guide - Academy of Fine Arts, Venice 1882
" " " " " 1883

Notes on Drawings by the date J. M. W. Turner R. S. 1878
" " " Samuel Prout & Wm. Hunt. 1879-80

ESSAYS ON POLITICAL ECONOMY.

Being a Sequel to Papers which appeared in the 'Cornhill Magazine.'

BY JOHN RUSKIN.

IT remains, in order to complete the series of our definitions, that we examine the general conditions of government, and fix the sense in which we are to use, in future, the terms applied to them.

The government of a state consists in its customs, laws, and councils, and their enforcements.

I. CUSTOMS.

As one person primarily differs from another by fineness of nature, and, secondarily, by fineness of training, so also, a polite nation differs from a savage one, first by the refinement of its nature, and secondly by the delicacy of its customs.

In the completeness, or accomplishment of custom, which is the nation's self-government, there are three stages—first, fineness in method of doing or of being;—called the manner or moral of acts; secondly, firmness in holding such method after adoption, so that it shall become a habit in the character: *i.e.*, a constant 'having' or 'behaving,' and, lastly, practice, or ethical power in performance and endurance, which is the skill following on habit, and the ease reached by frequency of right doing.

The sensibility of the nation is indicated by the fineness of its customs; its courage, patience, and temperance by its persistence in them.

By sensibility I mean its natural perception of beauty, fitness, and rightness; or of what is lovely, decent, and just: faculties dependent much on race, and the primal signs of fine breeding in man; but cultivable also by education, and necessarily perishing without it. True education has, indeed, no other function than the development of these faculties, and of the relative will. It has been the great error of modern intelligence to mistake science for education. You do not educate a man by telling him what he knew not, but by making him what he was not.

And making him what he will remain for ever: for no wash of weeds will bring back the faded purple. And in that dyeing there are two processes—first, the cleansing and wringing out, which is the baptism with water; and then the infusing of the blue and scarlet colours, gentleness and justice, which is the baptism with fire.

The customs and manners of a sensitive and highly-trained race are always Vital: that is to say, they are orderly manifestations of intense life (like the habitual action of the fingers of a musician). The customs and manners of a vile and rude race, on the contrary, are conditions of decay: they are not, properly speaking, habits, but incrustations; not restraints, or forms, of life; but gangrenes;—noisome, and the beginnings of death.

And generally, so far as custom attaches itself to indolence instead of action, and to prejudice instead of perception, it takes this deadly character, so that thus

Custom hangs upon us with a weight
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life.

This power and depth are, however, just what give value to custom, when it works with life, instead of against it.

The high ethical training of a nation being threefold, of body, heart, and practice, (compare the statement in the preface to *Unto this Last*,) involves exquisiteness in all its perceptions of circumstance,—all its modes of act,—and all its occupations of thought. It implies perfect Grace, Pitifulness, and Peace; it is irreconcilably inconsistent with filthy or mechanical employments,—with the desire of money,—and with mental states of anxiety, jealousy, and indifference to pain. The present insensibility of the upper classes of Europe to the aspects of suffering, uncleanness, and crime, binds them not only into one responsibility with

the sin, but into one dishonour with the foulness, which rot at their thresholds. The crimes daily recorded in the police courts of London and Paris (and much more those which are *unrecorded*) are a disgrace to the whole body politic;* they are, as in the body natural, stains of disease on a face of delicate skin, making the delicacy itself frightful. Similarly, the filth and poverty permitted or ignored in the midst of us are as dishonourable to the whole social body, as in the body natural it is to wash the face, but leave the hands and feet foul. Christ's way is the only true one: begin at the feet; the face will take care of itself.

Yet, since necessarily, in the frame of a nation, nothing but the head can be of gold, and the feet, for the work they have to do, must be part of iron, part of clay;—foul or mechanical work is always reduced by a noble race to the minimum in

quantity; and, even then, performed and endured, not without sense of degradation, as a fine temper is wounded by the sight of the lower offices of the body. The highest conditions of human society reached hitherto, have cast such work to slaves;—supposing slavery of a politically defined kind to be done away with, mechanical and foul employment must in all highly organised states take the aspect either of punishment or probation. All criminals should at once be set to the most dangerous and painful forms of it, especially to work in mines and at furnaces,† so as to relieve the innocent population as far as possible: of merely rough (not mechanical) manual labour, especially agricultural, a large portion should be done by the upper classes;—bodily health, and sufficient contrast and repose for the mental functions, being unattainable without it; what

* 'The ordinary brute, who flourishes in the very centre of ornate life, tells us of unknown depths on the verge of which we totter, being bound to thank our stars every day we live that there is not a general outbreak, and a revolt from the yoke of civilization.'—*Times* leader, Dec. 25, 1862. Admitting that our stars are to be thanked for our safety, whom are we to thank for the danger?

† Our politicians, even the best of them, regard only the distress caused by the failure of mechanical labour. The degradation caused by its excess is a far more serious subject of thought, and of future fear. I shall examine this part of our subject at length hereafter. There can hardly be any doubt, at present, cast on the truth of the above passages, as all the great thinkers are unanimous on the matter. Plato's words are terrific in their scorn and pity whenever he touches on the mechanical arts. He calls the men employed in them not even human—but partially and diminutively human, 'ἀνθρωπίσκοι,' and opposes such work to noble occupations, not merely as prison is opposed to freedom, but as a convict's dishonoured prison is to the temple; (escape from them being like that of a criminal to the sanctuary), and the destruction caused by them being of soul no less than body.—*Rep.* vi. 9. Compare *Laws* v. 11. Xenophon dwells on the evil of occupations at the furnace (root of βάνανσος), and especially their 'ἀσχολία, want of leisure'—*Econ.* i. 4. (Modern England, with all its pride of education, has lost that first sense of the word 'school'; and till it recover that, it will find no other rightly.) His word for the harm to the soul is to 'break' it, as we say of the heart.—*Econ.* i. 6. And herein also is the root of the scorn, otherwise apparently most strange and cruel, with which Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare always speak of the populace; for it is entirely true that in great states the lower orders are low by nature as well as by task, being precisely that part of the commonwealth which has been thrust down for its coarseness or unworthiness (by coarseness I mean especially insensibility and irreverence; the 'profane' of Horace); and when this ceases to be so, and the corruption and profanity are in the higher instead of the lower orders, there arises, first, helpless confusion; then, if the lower classes deserve power, ensues swift revolution, and they get it: but if neither the populace nor their rulers deserve it, there follows mere darkness and dissolution, till, out of the putrid elements, some new capacity of order rises, like grass on a grave; if not, there is no more hope, nor shadow of turning, for that nation. Atropos has her way with it.

So that the law of national health is like that of a great lake or sea, in perfect but slow circulation, letting the dregs fall continually to the lowest place, and the clear water rise; yet so as that there shall be no neglect of the lower orders, but perfect supervision and sympathy, so that if one member suffer, all members shall suffer with it.

necessarily inferior labour remains to be done, as especially in manufactures, should, and always will, when the relations of society are reverent and harmonious, fall to the lot of those who, for the time, are fit for nothing better. For as, whatever the perfectness of the educational system, there must remain infinite differences between the natures and capacities of men; and these differing natures are generally rangeable under the two qualities of lordly, (or tending towards rule, construction, and harmony), and servile (or tending towards misrule, destruction, and discord); and, since the lordly part is only in a state of profitability while ruling, and the servile only in a state of redeemableness while serving, the whole health of the state depends on the manifest separation of these two elements of its mind: for, if the servile part be not separated and rendered visible in service, it mixes with and corrupts the entire body of the state; and if the lordly part be not distinguished, and set to rule, it is crushed and lost, being turned to no account, so that the rarest qualities of the nation are all given to it in vain.* The effecting of which distinction is the first object, as we shall see presently, of national councils.

II. LAWS.

These are the definitions and bonds of custom, or, of what the nation desires should become custom.

Law is either archic,† (of direction), meristic, (of division), or critic, (of judgment). Archic law is that of appointment and precept: it defines what is and is not to be done.

Meristic law is that of balance and distribution: it defines what is and is not to be possessed. Critic law is that of discernment and award: it defines what is and is not to be suffered.

If we choose to class the laws of precept and distribution under the general head of 'statutes,' all law is simply either of statute or judgment; that is, first the establishment of ordinance, and, secondly, the assignment of the reward or penalty due to its observance or violation.

To some extent these two forms of law must be associated, and, with every ordinance, the penalty of disobedience to it be also determined. But since the degrees and guilt of disobedience vary, the determination of due reward and punishment must be modified by discernment of special fact, which is peculiarly the office of the judge, as distinguished from that of the lawgiver and law-sustainer, or king; not but that the two offices are always theoretically, and in early stages, or limited numbers, of society, are often practically, united in the same person or persons.

Also, it is necessary to keep clearly in view the distinction between these two kinds of law, because the possible range of law is wider in proportion to their separation. There are many points of conduct respecting which the nation may wisely express its will by a written precept or resolve; yet not enforce it by penalty; and the expedient degree of penalty is always quite a separate consideration from the expedience of the statute, for the statute may often be better enforced by mercy

* 'ὀλίγη, καὶ ἄλλως γιγνομένης.' The bitter sentence never was so true as at this day.

† Thetic, or Thesmic, would perhaps be a better term than archic; but liable to be confused with some which we shall want relating to Theoria. The administrators of the three great divisions of law are severally Archons, Merists, and Dicasts. The Archons are the true princes, or beginners of things; or leaders (as of an orchestra); the Merists are properly the Domini, or Lords (law-wards), of houses and nations; the Dicasts properly the judges, and that with Olympian justice, which reaches to heaven and hell. The violation of archic law is ἁμαρτία (error), πονηρία (failure), or πλημμέλεια (discord). The violation of meristic law is ἀνομία (iniquity). The violation of critic law is ἀδικία (injury). Iniquity is the central generic term; for all law is fatal; it is the division to men of their fate; as the fold of their pasture, it is νόμος; as the assigning of their portion, μοῖρα.

than severity, and is also easier in the bearing, and less likely to be abrogated. Farther, laws of precept have reference especially to youth, and concern themselves with training; but laws of judgment to manhood, and concern themselves with remedy and reward. There is a highly curious feeling in the English mind against educational law: we think no man's liberty should be interfered with till he has done irrevocable wrong; whereas it is then just too late for the only gracious and kingly interference, which is to hinder him from doing it. Make your educational laws strict, and your criminal ones may be gentle; but, leave youth its liberty, and you will have to dig dungeons for age. And it is good for a man that he wear the yoke in his youth: for the yoke of youth, if you know how to hold it, may be of silken thread; and there is sweet chime of silver bells at that bridle rein; but, for the captivity of age, you must forge the iron fetter, and cast the passing bell.

Since no law can be in a final or true sense established, but by right, (all unjust laws involving the ultimate necessity of their own abrogation,) the law-giving can only become a law-sustaining power in so far as it is Royal, or 'right doing';—in so far, that is, as it rules, not mis-rules, and orders, not dis-orders, the things submitted to it. Throned on this rock of justice the kingly power becomes established and establishing; 'θεῖος,' or divine, and, therefore, it is literally true that no ruler can err, so long as he is a ruler, or ἄρχων οὐδεὶς ἀμαρτάνει τότε ὅταν ἄρχων ᾖ; (perverted by careless thought, which has cost the world somewhat,

into 'the king can do no wrong'). Which is a divine right of kings indeed, and quite unassailable, so long as the terms of it are 'God and my Right,' and not 'Satan and my Wrong,' which is apt, in some coinages, to appear on the reverse of the die, under a good lens.

Meristic law, or that of the tenure of property, first determines what every individual possesses by right, and secures it to him; and what he possesses by wrong, and deprives him of it. But it has a far higher provisory function: it determines what every man should possess, and puts it within his reach on due conditions; and what he should not possess, and puts this out of his reach conclusively.

Every article of human wealth has certain conditions attached to its merited possession, which, when they are unobserved, possession becomes rapine. The object of meristic law is not only to secure every man his rightful share (the share, that is, which he has worked for, produced, or received by gift from a rightful owner), but to enforce the due conditions of possession, as far as law may conveniently reach; for instance, that land shall not be wantonly allowed to run to waste, that streams shall not be poisoned by the persons through whose properties they pass, nor air be rendered unwholesome beyond given limits. Laws of this kind exist already in rudimentary degree, but needing large development: the just laws respecting the possession of works of art have not hitherto been so much as conceived, and the daily loss of national wealth, and of its use, in this respect, is quite incalculable.* While, finally, in certain conditions of a nation's pro-

* These laws need revision quite as much respecting property in national as in private hands. For instance: the public are under a vague impression, that because they have paid for the contents of the British Museum, every one has an equal right to see and to handle them. But the public have similarly paid for the contents of Woolwich arsenal; yet do not expect free access to it, or handling of its contents. The British Museum is neither a free circulating library, nor a free school: it is a place for the safe preservation, and exhibition on due occasion, of unique books, unique objects of natural history, and unique works of art; its books can no more be used by everybody than its coins can be handled, or its statues cast. Free libraries there ought to be in every quarter of London, with large and complete reading-rooms attached; so also free educational institutions should be open in every quarter of London, all day long and till late at night, well lighted, well catalogued, and rich in contents both of art and natural

gress, laws limiting accumulation of property may be found expedient.

Critic law determines questions of injury, and assigns due rewards and punishments to conduct.*

Therefore, in order to true analysis of it, we must understand the real meaning of this word 'injury.'

We commonly understand by it any kind of harm done by one man to another; but we do not define the idea of harm: sometimes we limit it to the harm which the sufferer is conscious of, whereas much the worst injuries are those he is unconscious of; and, at other times, we limit the idea to violence, or restraint, whereas much the worse forms of injury are to be accomplished by carelessness, and the withdrawal of restraint.

'Injury' is then simply the refusal, or violation of, any man's right or claim upon his fellows: which claim, much talked of in modern times, under the term 'right,' is mainly resolvable into two branches: a man's claim not to be hindered from doing what he should; and his claim to be hindered from doing what he should not; these two forms of hindrance being intensified by reward, or help and fortune, or Fors, on one side, and punishment, impediment, and even final arrest or Mors, on the other.

Now, in order to a man's obtaining these two rights, it is clearly needful that the *worth* of him should

be approximately known; as well as the *want* of worth, which has, unhappily, been usually the principal subject of study for critic law, careful hitherto only to mark degrees of de-merit, instead of merit;—assigning, indeed, to the deficiencies (not always, alas! even to these) just fine, diminution, or (with the broad vowels) damnation; but to the efficiencies, on the other side, which are by much the more interesting, as well as the only profitable part of its subject, assigning in any clear way neither measurement nor aid.

Now, it is in this higher and perfect function of critic law, enabling as well as disabling, that it becomes truly kingly or basilican, instead of Draconic: (what Providence gave the great, old, wrathful legislator his name?): that is, it becomes the law of man and of life, instead of the law of the worm and of death—both of these laws being set in everlasting poise one against another, and the enforcement of both being the eternal function of the lawgiver, and true claim of every living soul: such claim being indeed as straight and earnest to be mercifully hindered, and even, if need be, abolished, when longer existence means only deeper destruction, as to be mercifully helped and recreated when longer existence and new creation mean nobler life. So that what we vulgarly term reward and punishment will be found to

history. But neither the British Museum nor National Gallery are schools; they are treasuries; and both should be severely restricted in access and in use. Unless some order is taken, and that soon, in the MSS. department of the Museum (Sir Frederic Madden was complaining of this to me only the other day), the best MSS. in the collection will be destroyed, irretrievably, by the careless and continual handling to which they are now subjected.

* Two curious economical questions arise laterally with respect to this branch of law, namely, the cost of crime, and the cost of judgment. The cost of crime is endured by nations ignorantly, not being clearly stated in their budgets; the cost of judgment patiently, (provided only it can be had pure for the money,) because the science, or perhaps we ought rather to say the art, of law, is felt to found a noble profession, and discipline; so that civilized nations are usually glad that a number of persons should be supported by funds devoted to disputation and analysis. But it has not yet been calculated what the practical value might have been, in other directions, of the intelligence now occupied in deciding, through courses of years, what might have been decided as justly, had the date of judgment been fixed, in as many hours. Imagine one half of the funds which any great nation devotes to dispute by law, applied to the determination of physical questions in medicine, agriculture, and theoretic science; and calculate the probable results within the next ten years.

I say nothing yet, of the more deadly, more lamentable loss, involved in the use of purchased instead of personal justice,—ἐπακτῶ παρ' ἄλλων—ἀπορία οἰκείων.

resolve themselves mainly into help and hindrance, and these again will issue naturally from true recognition of deserving, and the just reverence and just wrath which follow instinctively on such recognition.

I say, 'follow,' but in reality they are the recognition. Reverence is but the perceiving of the thing in its entire truth: truth reverted is truth revered (*vereor* and *veritas* having clearly the same root), so that Goethe is for once, and for a wonder, wrong in that part of the noble scheme of education in Wilhelm Meister, in which he says that reverence is not innate, and must be taught. Reverence is as instinctive as anger;—both of them instant on true vision: it is sight and understanding that we have to teach, and these are reverence. Make a man perceive worth, and in its reflection he sees his own relative unworth, and worships thereupon inevitably, not with stiff courtesy, but rejoicingly, passionately, and, best of all, *restfully*: for the inner capacity of awe and love is infinite in man; and when his eyes are once opened to the sight of beauty and honour, it is with him as with a lover, who, falling at his mistress's feet, would cast himself through the earth, if it might be, to fall lower, and find a deeper and humbler place. And the common insolences and petulances of the people, and their talk of equality, are not irreverence in them in the least, but mere blindness, stupefaction, and fog in the brains,* which pass away in the degree that they are raised and purified: the first sign of which raising is, that they gain some power of discerning, and some patience in submitting to their true counsellors and governors; the modes of such discernment forming the real 'constitution' of the state, and not the titles or offices of the discerned person; for it is no matter, save in degree of mischief, to what office a man is appointed, if he can-

not fulfil it. And this brings us to the third division of our subject.

III. GOVERNMENT BY COUNCIL.

This is the determination, by living authority, of the national conduct to be observed under existing circumstances; and the modification or enlargement, abrogation or enforcement, of the code of national law according to present needs or purposes. This government is necessarily always by council, for though the authority of it may be vested in one person, that person cannot form any opinion on a matter of public interest but by (voluntarily or involuntarily) submitting himself to the influence of others.

This government is always twofold—visible and invisible.

The visible government is that which nominally carries on the national business; determines its foreign relations, raises taxes, levies soldiers, fights battles, or directs that they be fought, and otherwise becomes the exponent of the national fortune. The invisible government is that exercised by all energetic and intelligent men, each in his sphere, regulating the inner will and secret ways of the people, essentially forming its character, and preparing its fate.

Visible governments are the toys of some nations, the diseases of others, the harness of some, the burdens of more, the necessity of all. Sometimes their career is quite distinct from that of the people, and to write it, as the national history, is as if one should number the accidents which befall a man's weapons and wardrobe, and call the list his biography. Nevertheless, a truly noble and wise nation necessarily has a noble and wise visible government, for its wisdom issues in that conclusively. 'Not out of the oak, nor out of the rock, but out of the temper of man, is his polity;' where the temper inclines, it inclines as Samson by his pillar, and draws all down with it.

* Compare Chaucer's 'villany' (clownishness).

'Full foul and chorlish seemed she,
And eke villanous for to be,
And little coude of norture
To worship any creature.'

Visible governments are, in their agencies, capable of three pure forms, and of no more than three.

They are either monarchies, where the authority is vested in one person; oligarchies, when it is vested in a minority; or democracies, when vested in a majority.

But these three forms are not only, in practice, variously limited and combined, but capable of infinite difference in character and use, receiving specific names according to their variations; which names, being nowise agreed upon, nor consistently used, either in thought or writing, no man can at present tell, in speaking of any kind of government, whether he is understood, nor in hearing whether he understands. Thus we usually call a just government by one person a monarchy, and an unjust or cruel one, a tyranny; this might be reasonable if it had reference to the divinity of true government; but to limit the term 'oligarchy' to government by a few rich people, and to call government by a few wise or noble people 'aristocracies,' is evidently absurd, unless it were proved that rich people never could be wise, or noble people rich; and farther absurd because there are other distinctions in character, as well as riches or wisdom (greater purity of race, or strength of purpose, for instance), which may give the power of government to the few. So that if we had to give names to every group or kind of minority, we should have verbiage enough. But there is but one right name—'oligarchy.'

So also the terms 'republic' and 'democracy' are confused, especially in modern use; and both of them are liable to every sort of miscon-

ception. A republic means, properly, a polity in which the state, with its all, is at every man's service, and every man, with his all, at the state's service—(people are apt to lose sight of the last condition), but its government may nevertheless be oligarchic (consular, or decemviral, for instance), or monarchic (dictatorial). But a democracy means a state in which the government rests directly with the majority of the citizens. And both these conditions have been judged only by such accidents and aspects of them as each of us has had experience of; and sometimes both have been confused with anarchy, as it is the fashion at present to talk of the 'failure of republican institutions in America,' when there has never yet been in America any such thing as an institution, but only defiance of institution; neither any such thing as a *res-publica*, but only a multitudinous *res-privata*; every man for himself. It is not republicanism which fails now in America; it is your model science of political economy, brought to its perfect practice. There you may see competition, and the 'law of demand and supply' (especially in paper), in beautiful and unhindered operation.* Lust of wealth, and trust in it; vulgar faith in magnitude and multitude, instead of nobleness; besides that faith natural to backwoodsmen,—'lucum ligna,'—perpetual self-contemplation, issuing in passionate vanity; total ignorance of the finer and higher arts, and of all that they teach and bestow;† and the discontent of energetic minds unoccupied, frantic with hope of uncomprehended change, and progress they know not whither;‡—

* Supply and demand! Alas; for what noble work was there ever any audible 'demand' in that poor sense (Past and Present). Nay, the demand is not loud even for ignoble work. See 'Average earnings of Betty Taylor,' in *Times* of 4th February of this year: 'Worked from Monday morning at 8 A.M., to Friday night at 5.30 P.M. for 1s. 5½d.—*Laissez faire*.'

† See Bacon's note in the *Advancement of Learning*, on 'didicisse fideliter artes' ('but indeed the accent had need be upon "fideliter"'). It taketh away vain admiration of anything, which is the root of all weakness; for all things are admired either because they are new, or because they are great, &c.

‡ Ames, by report of Waldo Emerson, expressed the popular security wisely, saying 'that a monarchy is a merchantman, which sails well, but will sometimes strike on a rock, and go to the bottom; whilst a republic is a raft, which would never sink, but then your

these are the things that have 'failed' in America; and yet not altogether failed—it is not collapse, but collision; the greatest railroad accident on record, with fire caught from the furnace, and Catiline's quenching 'non aquâ, sed ruinâ.' But I see not, in any of our talk of them, justice enough done to their erratic strength of purpose, nor any estimate taken of the strength of endurance of domestic sorrow, in what their women and children suppose a righteous cause. And out of that endurance and suffering, its own fruit will be born with time; and Carlyle's prophecy of them (June, 1850), as it has now come true in the first clause, will in the last.

America, too, will find that caucuses, division-lists, stump-oratory, and speeches to Buncombe will not carry men to the immortal gods; that the Washington Congress, and constitutional battle of Kilkenny cats is there, as here, naught for such objects; quite incompetent for such; and, in fine, that said sublime constitutional arrangement will require to be (with terrible throes, and travail such as few expect yet) remodelled, abridged, extended, suppressed; torn asunder, put together again;—not without heroic labour, and effort quite other than that of the stump-orator and the revival preacher, one day.

Understand, then, once for all, that no form of government, provided it be a government at all, is, as such, either to be condemned or praised, or contested for in anywise but by fools. But all forms of government are good just so far as they attain this one vital necessity of policy—that the wise and kind, few or many, shall govern the unwise and unkind; and they are evil so far as they miss of this, or reverse it. Nor does the form in any case signify one whit, but its *firmness*, and adaptation to the need; for if there be many foolish persons in a state, and few wise, then it is good that the few govern; and if there be many wise and few foolish, then it is good that the many govern; and if many be wise, yet one wiser, then it is good that one should govern; and

so on. Thus, we may have 'the ant's republic, and the realm of bees,' both good in their kind; one for groping, and the other for building; and nobler still, for flying, the Ducal monarchy of those

Intelligent of seasons, that set forth
The aery caravan, high over seas.

Nor need we want examples, among the inferior creatures, of dissoluteness, as well as resoluteness, in government. I once saw democracy finely illustrated by the beetles of North Switzerland, who by universal suffrage, and elytric acclamation, one May twilight, carried it that they would fly over the Lake of Zug; and flew short, to the great disfigurement of the Lake of Zug,—*Κανθάρον λιμήν*—over some leagues square, and to the close of the cockchafer democracy for that year. The old fable of the frogs and the stork finely touches one form of tyranny; but truth will touch it more nearly than fable, for tyranny is not complete when it is only over the idle, but when it is over the laborious and the blind. This description of pelicans and climbing perch, which I find quoted in one of our popular natural histories, out of Sir Emerson Tennant's *Ceylon*, comes as near as may be to the true image of the thing:—

Heavy rains came on, and as we stood on the high ground, we observed a pelican on the margin of the shallow pool gorging himself; our people went towards him, and raised a cry of 'Fish! fish!' We hurried down, and found numbers of fish struggling upward through the grass, in the rills formed by the trickling of the rain. There was scarcely water to cover them, but nevertheless they made rapid progress up the bank, on which our followers collected about two baskets of them. They were forcing their way up the knoll, and had they not been interrupted, first by the pelican, and afterwards by ourselves, they would in a few minutes have gained the highest point, and descended on the other side into a pool which formed another portion of the tank. In going this distance, however, they must have used muscular exertion enough to have taken them half a mile on

feet are always in the water.' Yes, and when the four winds (your only pilots) steer competitively from the four corners, *ὡς δ' ὅτ' ὀπωρινὸς βορέης φορέησιν ἀκάνθας*, perhaps the wiser mariner may wish for keel and wheel again.

level ground; for at these places all the cattle and wild animals of the neighbourhood had latterly come to drink, so that the surface was everywhere indented with footmarks, in addition to the cracks in the surrounding baked mud, into which the fish tumbled in their progress. In those holes which were deep, and the sides perpendicular, they remained to die, and were carried off by kites and crows.

But whether governments be bad or good, one general disadvantage seems to attach to them in modern times—that they are all costly. This, however, is not essentially the fault of the governments. If nations choose to play at war, they will always find their governments willing to lead the game, and soon coming under that term of Aristophanes, *‘κάπηλοι ἀσπίδων,’* ‘shield-sellers.’ And when (*πῆμ’ ἐπὶ πῆματι*) the shields take the form of iron ships, with apparatus ‘for defence against liquid fire,’—as I see by latest accounts they are now arranging the decks in English dockyards,—they become costly biers enough for the grey convoy of chief-mourner waves, wreathed with funeral foam, to bear back the dead upon; the massy shoulders of those corpse-bearers being intended for quite other work, and to bear the living, and food for the living, if we would let them.

Nor have we the least right to complain of our governments being expensive, so long as we set the government to do precisely the work which brings no return. If our present doctrines of political economy be just, let us trust them to the utmost; take that war business out of the government’s hands, and test therein the principles of supply and demand. Let our future sieges of Sebastopol be done by contract—no capture, no pay—(I am prepared to admit that things might sometimes go better so); and let us sell the commands of our prospective battles, with our vicarages, to the lowest bidder; so may we have cheap victories and divinity. On the other hand, if we have so much suspicion of our science that we dare not trust it on military or spiritual business, it would be but reasonable to try whether some authoritative hand-

ling may not prosper in matters utilitarian. If we were to set our governments to do useful things instead of mischievous, possibly even the apparatus might in time come to be less costly! The machine, applied to the building of the house, might perhaps pay, when it seems not to pay, applied to pulling it down. If we made in our dockyards ships to carry timber and coals, instead of cannon, and with provision for the brightening of domestic solid culinary fire, instead of for the averting of hostile liquid fire, it might have some effect on the taxes? Or if the iron bottoms were to bring us home nothing better than ivory and peacocks, instead of martial glory, we might at least have gayer suppers, and doors of the right material for dreams after them. Or suppose that we tried the experiment on land instead of water carriage; already the government, not unapproved, carries letters and parcels for us; larger packages may in time follow;—parcels;—even general merchandise? why not, at last, ourselves? Had the money spent in local mistakes and vain private litigation, on the railroads of England, been laid out, instead, under proper government restraint, on really useful railroad work, and had no absurd expense been incurred in ornamenting stations, we might already have had,—what ultimately it will be found we must have,—quadruple rails, two for passengers, and two for traffic, on every great line; and we might have been carried in swift safety, and watched and warded by well-paid pointsmen, for half the present fares.

‘ὦ Δημίδιον, ὅρας τὰ λαγῶ’ ἃ σοι φέρω?’ Suppose it should turn out, finally, that a true government set to true work, instead of being a costly engine, was a paying one? that your government, rightly organized, instead of itself subsisting by an income tax, would produce its subjects some subsistence in the shape of an income dividend!—police and judges duly paid besides, only with less work than the state at present provides for them.

A true government set to true work!—Not easily imagined, still less obtained, but not beyond human

hope or ingenuity. Only you will have to alter your election systems somewhat, first. Not by universal suffrage, nor by votes purchaseable with beer, is such government to be had. That is to say, not by universal *equal* suffrage. Every man upwards of twenty, who had been convicted of no legal crime, should have his say in this matter; but afterwards a louder voice, as he grows older, and approves himself wiser. If he has one vote at twenty, he should have two at thirty, four at forty, ten at fifty. For every one vote which he has with an income of a hundred a year, he should have ten with an income of a thousand, (provided you first see to it that wealth is, as nature intended it to be, the reward of sagacity and industry,—not of good luck in a scramble or a lottery). For every one vote which he had as subordinate in any business, he should have two when he became a master; and every office and authority nationally bestowed, inferring trustworthiness and intellect, should have its known proportional number of votes attached to it. But into the detail and working of a true system in these matters we cannot now enter; we are concerned as yet with definitions only, and statements of first principles, which will be established now sufficiently for our purposes when we have examined the nature of that form of government last on the list in the previous paper,—the purely 'Magistral,' exciting at present its full share of public notice, under its ambiguous title of 'slavery.'

I have not, however, been able to ascertain in definite terms, from the declaimers against slavery, what they understand by it. If they mean only the imprisonment or compulsion of one person by another, such imprisonment or compulsion being in many cases highly expedient, slavery, so defined, would be no evil in itself, but only in its abuse; that is, when men are slaves, who should not be, or masters, who should not be, or under conditions which should not be. It is not, for instance, a necessary condition of slavery, nor a desirable one, that

parents should be separated from children, or husbands from wives; but the institution of war, against which people declaim with less violence, effects such separations,—not unfrequently in a highly permanent manner. To press a sailor, seize a white youth by conscription for a soldier, or carry off a black one for a labourer, may all be right, or all wrong, according to needs and circumstances. It is wrong to scourge a man unnecessarily. So it is to shoot him. Both must be done on occasion; and it is better and kinder to flog a man to his work, than to leave him idle till he robs, and flog him afterwards. The essential thing for all creatures is to be made to do right; how they are made to do it—by pleasant promises, or hard necessities, pathetic oratory, or the whip, is comparatively immaterial. To be deceived is perhaps as incompatible with human dignity as to be whipped, and I suspect the last instrument to be not the worst, for the help of many individuals. The Jewish nation thrived under it, in the hand of a monarch reputed not unwise; it is only the change of whip for scorpion which is inexpedient; and yet that change is as likely to come to pass on the side of licence as of law; for the true scorpion whips are those of the nation's pleasant vices; which are to it as St. John's locusts—crown on the head, ravin in the mouth, and sting in the tail. If it will not bear the rule of Athena and her brother, who shepherd without smiting (*οὐ πληγῇ νέμοντες*), Athena at last calls no more in the corners of the streets; and then follows the rule of Tisiphone, who smites without shepherding.

If, however, by slavery, instead of absolute compulsion, is meant the purchase, by money, of the right of compulsion, such purchase is necessarily made whenever a portion of any territory is transferred, for money, from one monarch to another: which has happened frequently enough in history, without its being supposed that the inhabitants of the districts so transferred became therefore slaves. In this, as in the former case, the dispute seems

about the fashion of the thing, rather than the fact of it. There are two rocks in mid-sea, on each of which, neglected equally by instructive and commercial powers, a handful of inhabitants live as they may. Two merchants bid for the two properties, but not in the same terms. One bids for the people, buys *them*, and sets them to work, under pain of scourge; the other bids for the rock, buys *it*, and throws the inhabitants into the sea. The former is the American, the latter the English method, of slavery; much is to be said for, and something against, both, which I hope to say in due time and place.

If, however, slavery mean not merely the purchase of the right of compulsion, but the purchase of the body and soul of the creature itself for money, it is not, I think, among the black races that purchases of this kind are most extensively made,

or that separate souls of a fine make fetch the highest price. This branch of the inquiry we shall have occasion also to follow out at some length; for in the worst instance of the 'Βίων πρᾶσις' we are apt to get only Pyrrhon's answer—τί φῆς;—ἐπιράμην σε; **Ἀδελον*.

The fact is that slavery is not a political institution at all, but an inherent, natural, and eternal inheritance of a large portion of the human race—to whom, the more you give of their own will, the more slaves they will make themselves. In common parlance, we idly confuse captivity with slavery, and are always thinking of the difference between pine-trunks and cowslip-bells, or between carrying wood and clothes-stealing, instead of noting the far more serious differences between Ariel and Caliban, and the means by which practically that difference may be brought about.*

* The passage of Plato, referred to in note, p. 442, in its context, respecting the slave who, well dressed and washed, aspires to the hand of his master's daughter, corresponds curiously to the attack of Caliban on Prospero's cell, and there is an undercurrent of meaning throughout, in the *Tempest* as well as in the *Merchant of Venice*; referring in this case to government, as in that to commerce. Miranda ('the wonderful,' so addressed first by Ferdinand, 'Oh, you wonder!') corresponds to Homer's Arete: Ariel and Caliban are respectively the spirits of freedom and mechanical labour. Prospero ('for hope'), a true governor, opposed to Sycorax, the mother of slavery, her name, 'Swine-raven,' indicating at once brutality and deathfulness; hence the line—

'As wicked dew as e'er my mother brushed, with raven's feather,'—&c.

For all these dreams of Shakespeare, as those of true and strong men must be, are 'φαντάσματα θεῖα, καὶ σκιά τῶν ὄντων'—phantasms of God, and shadows of things that are. We hardly tell our children, willingly, a fable with no purport in it; yet we think God sends his best messengers only to sing fairy tales to us, all fondness and emptiness. The *Tempest* is just like a grotesque in a rich missal, 'clasped where paynims pray.' Ariel is the spirit of true liberty, in early stages of human society oppressed by ignorance and wild tyranny: venting groans as fast as mill-wheels strike; in shipwreck of states, fearful; so that 'all but mariners plunge in the brine, and quit the vessel, then all afire with me,' yet having in itself the will and sweetness of truest peace, whence that is especially called 'Ariel's' song, 'Come unto these yellow sands'—(fenceless, and countless—changing with the sweep of sea—'vaga arena.' Compare Horace's opposition of the sea-sand to the dust of the grave: 'numero carentis'—'exigui;' and again compare 'animo rotundum percurrisse' with 'put a girdle round the earth')—and there, *take hands*, courtesied when you have, and kissed the wild waves whist: (mind it is 'cortesia,' not 'curtsey,') and read 'quiet' for 'whist,' if you want the full sense. Then may you indeed foot it feely, and sweet spirits bear the burden for you—with watch in the night, and call in early morning. The power of liberty in elemental transformation follows—'Full fathom five thy father lies, of his bones are coral made.' Then, giving rest after labour, it 'fetches dew from the still vext Bermoothes, and, with a charm joined to their suffered labour, leaves men asleep.' Snatching away the feast of the cruel, it seems to them as a harpy, followed by the utterly vile, who cannot see it in any shape, but to whom it is the picture of nobody, it still gives shrill harmony to their false and mocking catch, 'Thought is free;' but leads them into briars and foul places, and at last hollas the hounds upon them. Minister of fate against the great criminal, it joins itself with the 'incensed seas and shores'—the sword that layeth at it cannot hold, and may 'with mocked at stabs as soon kill the still closing waters, as diminish one dowe that is in its

I should dwell, even in these prefatory papers, at somewhat more length on this matter, had not all I would say, been said already in vain (not, as I hope, ultimately in vain), by Carlyle, in the first of the *Latter-day Pamphlets*, which I commend to the reader's gravest reading; together with that as much neglected, and still more immediately needed, on model prisons, and with the great chapter on 'Permanence,' (fifth of the last section of 'Past and Present,') which sums what is known, and foreshadows,—or rather fore-lights, all that is to be learned, of National Discipline. I have only here farther to examine the nature of one world-wide and everlasting form of slavery, wholesome in use, as deadly in abuse—the service of the rich by the poor.

As in all previous discussions of our subject, we must study this relation in its simplest elements, in order to reach its first principles.

The simplest state of it is, then, this:* a wise and provident person

works much, consumes little, and lays by store; an improvident person works little, consumes all the produce, and lays by no store. Accident interrupts the daily work, or renders it less productive; the idle person must then starve, or be supported by the provident one,—who, having him thus at his mercy, may either refuse to maintain him altogether, or, which will evidently be more to his own interest, say to him, 'I will maintain you, indeed, but you shall now work hard, instead of indolently, and instead of being allowed to lay by what you save, as you might have done, had you remained independent, I will take all the surplus. You would not lay it up for yourself; it is wholly your own fault that has thrown you into my power, and I will force you to work, or starve; yet you shall have no profit, only your daily bread.' This mode of treatment has now become so universal that it is supposed the only natural—nay, the only possible one;

plume.' As the guide and aid of true love, it is always called by Prospero 'fine' (the French 'fine'—not the English), or 'delicate'—another long note would be needed to explain all the meaning in this word. Lastly, its work done, and war, it resolves itself to the elements. The intense significance of the last song, 'Where the bee sucks,' I will examine in its due place. The types of slavery in Caliban are more palpable, and need not be dwelt on now: though I will notice them also, severally, in their proper places;—the heart of his slavery is in his worship: 'That's a brave god, and bears celestial—liquor.' But, in illustration of the sense in which the Latin 'benignus' and 'malignus' are to be coupled with Eleutheria and Douleia, note that Caliban's torment is always the physical reflection of his own nature—'cramps' and 'side stitches that shall pen thy breath up—thou shalt be pinched—as thick as honeycombs;' the whole nature of slavery being one cramp and cretinous contraction. Fancy this of Ariel! You may fetter him, but you set no mark on him; you may put him to hard work and far journey, but you cannot give him a cramp.

Of Shakespeare's names I will afterwards speak at more length: they are curiously—often barbarously—mixed out of various traditions and languages. Three of the clearest in meaning have been already noticed. Desdemona, 'δυσδαιμονία,' 'miserable fortune,' is also plain enough. Othello is, I believe, 'the careful;' all the calamity of the tragedy arising from the single flaw and error in his magnificently collected strength. Ophelia, 'serviceableness,' the true lost wife of Hamlet, is marked as having a Greek name by that of her brother, Laertes; and its signification is once exquisitely alluded to in that brother's last word of her, where her gentle preciousness is opposed to the uselessness of the churlish clergy—'A ministering angel shall my sister be, when thou liest howling.' Hamlet is, I believe, connected in some way with 'homely,' the entire event of the tragedy turning on betrayal of home duty. Hermione (ἑρμα), 'pillar-like' (ἡ εἶδος ἔχε χρυσῆς Ἀφροδίτης). Titania (τιτάνη), 'the queen;' Benedict and Beatrice, 'blessed and blessing;' Valentine and Proteus, enduring (or strong), (valens) and changeful. Iago and Iachimo have evidently the same root—probably the Spanish Iago, Jacob, 'the supplanter.' Leonatus, and other such names, are interpreted, or played with, in the plays themselves. For the interpretation of Sycorax, and reference to her raven's feather, I am indebted to Mr. John R. Wise.

* In the present general examination I concede so much to ordinary economists as to ignore all innocent poverty. I assume poverty to be always criminal, the conceivable exceptions we will examine afterwards.

and the market wages are calmly defined by economists as 'the sum which will maintain the labourer.'

The power of the provident person to do this is only checked by the correlative power of some neighbour of similarly frugal habits, who says to the labourer—'I will give you a little more than my provident friend:—come and work for me.'

The power of the provident over the improvident depends thus primarily on their relative numbers; secondarily, on the modes of agreement of the adverse parties with each other. The level of wages is a variable function of the number of provident and idle persons in the world, of the enmity between them as classes, and of the agreement between those of the same class. It depends, from beginning to end, on moral conditions.

Supposing the rich to be entirely selfish, it is always for their interest that the poor should be as numerous as they can employ and restrain. For, granting the entire population no larger than the ground can easily maintain,—that the classes are stringently divided,—and that there is sense or strength of hand enough with the rich to secure obedience; then, if nine-tenths of a nation are poor, the remaining tenth have the service of nine persons each;* but, if eight-tenths are poor, only of four each; if seven-tenths are poor, of two and a third each; if six-tenths are poor, of one and a half each; and, if five-tenths are poor, of only one each; but, practically, if the rich strive always to obtain more power over the poor, instead of to raise them,—and if, on the other hand, the poor become continually more vicious and numerous, through neglect and oppression,—though the range of the power of the rich increases, its tenure becomes less secure; until, at last, the measure of

iniquity being full, revolution, civil war, or the subjection of the state to a healthier or stronger one, closes the moral corruption and industrial disease.

It is rare, however, that things come to this extremity. Kind persons among the rich, and wise among the poor, modify the connexion of the classes: the efforts made to raise and relieve on the one side, and the success of honest toil on the other, bind and blend the orders of society into the confused tissue of half-felt obligation, sullenly-rendered obedience, and variously-directed, or misdirected, toil, which form the warp of daily life. But this great law rules all the wild design of the weaving; that success (while society is guided by laws of competition) signifies always so much victory over your neighbour as to obtain the direction of his work, and to take the profits of it. This is the real source of all great riches. No man can become largely rich by his personal toil.† The work of his own hands, wisely directed, will indeed always maintain himself and his family, and make fitting provision for his age. But it is only by the discovery of some method of taxing the labour of others that he can become opulent. Every increase of his capital enables him to extend this taxation more widely; that is, to invest larger funds in the maintenance of labourers,—to direct, accordingly, vaster and yet vaster masses of labour, and to appropriate its profits. There is much confusion of idea on the subject of this appropriation. It is, of course, the interest of the employer to disguise it from the persons employed; and for his own comfort and complacency he often desires no less to disguise it from himself. And it is matter of much doubt with me, how far the foolish arguments used habitually

* I say nothing yet of the quality of the servants, which, nevertheless, is the gist of the business. Will you have Paul Veronese to paint your ceiling, or the plumber from over the way? Both will work for the same money; Paul, if anything, a little the cheaper of the two, if you keep him in good humour; only you have to discern him first, which will need eyes.

† By his art he may; but only when its produce, or the sight or hearing of it, becomes a subject of dispute, so as to enable the artist to tax the labour of multitudes highly, in exchange for his own.

on this subject are indeed the honest expressions of foolish convictions,—or rather (as I am sometimes forced to conclude, from the irritation with which they are advanced) are resolutely dishonest, wilful, sophisms, arranged so as to mask to the last moment the real state of economy, and future duties of men. By taking a simple example, and working it thoroughly out, the subject may be rescued from all but determined misconception.

Let us imagine a society of peasants, living on a river-shore, exposed to destructive inundation at somewhat extended intervals; and that each peasant possesses of this good, but imperilled ground, more than he needs to cultivate for immediate subsistence. We will assume farther (and with too great probability of justice), that the greater part of them indolently keep in tillage just as much land as supplies them with daily food;—that they leave their children idle and untaught; and take no precautions against the rise of the stream. But one of them (we will say only one, for the sake of greater clearness) cultivates carefully all the ground of his estate; makes his children work hard and healthily; uses his spare time and theirs in building a rampart against the river; and at the end of some years has in his storehouses large reserves of food and clothing, and in his stables a well-tended breed of cattle.

The torrent rises at last—sweeps away the harvests and many of the cottages of the careless peasantry, and leaves them destitute. They naturally come for help to the provident one, whose fields are unwasted, and whose granaries are full. He has the right to refuse it them: no one disputes this right. But he will probably not refuse it; it is not his interest to do so, even were he entirely selfish and cruel. The only question with him will be on what terms his aid is to be granted.

Clearly, not on terms of mere charity. To maintain his neighbours in idleness would be his ruin and theirs. He will require work from them, in exchange for their maintenance; and, whether in kindness or

cruelty, all the work they can give. Not now the three or four hours they were wont to spend on their own land, but the eight or ten hours they ought to have spent. But how will he apply this labour? The men are now his slaves—nothing less. On pain of starvation, he can force them to work in the manner, and to the end he chooses. And it is by his wisdom in this choice that the worthiness of his mastership is proved, or its unworthiness. Evidently, he must first set them to bank out the water in some temporary way, and to get their ground cleansed and resown; else, in any case, their continued maintenance will be impossible. That done, and while he has still to feed them, suppose he makes them raise a secure rampart for their own ground against all future flood, and rebuild their houses in safer places, with the best material they can find; being allowed time out of their working hours to fetch such material from a distance. And for the food and clothing advanced, he takes security in land that as much shall be returned at a convenient period.

At the end of a few years, we may conceive this security redeemed, and the debt paid. The prudent peasant has sustained no loss; but is no richer than he was, and has had all his trouble for nothing. But he has enriched his neighbours materially; bettered their houses, secured their land, and rendered them, in worldly matters, equal to himself. In all true and final sense, he has been throughout their lord and king.

We will next trace his probable line of conduct, presuming his object to be exclusively the increase of his own fortune. After roughly recovering and cleansing the ground, he allows the ruined peasantry only to build huts upon it, such as he thinks protective enough from the weather to keep them in working health. The rest of their time he occupies first in pulling down and rebuilding on a magnificent scale his own house, and in adding large dependencies to it. This done, he follows the example of the first great Hebrew financier, and in exchange for his continued supply of

corn, buys as much of his neighbours' land, as he thinks he can superintend the management of; and makes the former owners securely embank and protect the ceded portion. By this arrangement, he leaves to a certain number of the peasantry only as much ground as will just maintain them in their existing numbers: as the population increases, he takes the extra hands, who cannot be maintained on the narrowed estates, for his own servants; employs some to cultivate the ground he has bought, giving them of its produce merely enough for subsistence; with the surplus, which, under his energetic and careful superintendence, will be large, he supports a train of servants for state, and a body of workmen, whom he educates in ornamental arts. He now can splendidly decorate his house, lay out its ground magnificently, and richly supply his table, and that of his household and retinue. And thus, without any abuse of right, we should find established all the phenomena of poverty and riches, which (it is supposed necessarily) accompany modern civilization. In one part of the district, we should have unhealthy land, miserable dwellings, and half-starved poor; in another, a well-ordered estate, well-fed servants, and refined conditions of highly-educated and luxurious life.

I have put the two cases in simplicity, and to some extremity. But though in more complex and qualified operation, all the relations of society are but the expansion of these two typical sequences of conduct and result. I do not say, observe, that the first procedure is entirely right; still less, that the second is wholly wrong. Servants, and artists, and splendour of habitation and retinue, have all their use, propriety, and office. I only wish the reader to understand clearly what they cost; that the condition of having them is the subjection to you of a certain number of imprudent or unfortunate persons (or, it may be, more fortunate than their master), over whose destinies you exercise a boundless control. 'Riches' mean eternally and essen-

tially this; and may heaven send at last a time when those words of our best-reputed economist shall be true, and we shall indeed 'all know what it is to be rich;' that it is to be slave-master over farthest earth, and over all ways and thoughts of men. Every operative you employ is your true servant: distant or near, subject to your immediate orders, or ministering to your widely-communicated caprice,—for the pay he stipulates, or the price he tempts,—all are alike under this great dominion of the gold. The milliner who makes the dress is as much a servant (more so, in that she uses more intelligence in the service) as the maid who puts it on; the carpenter who smooths the door, as the footman who opens it; the tradesmen who supply the table, as the labourers and sailors who supply the tradesmen. Why speak of these lower services? Painters and singers, (whether of note or rhyme,) jesters and story-tellers, moralists, historians, priests—so far as these, in any degree, paint, or sing, or tell their tale, or charm their charm, or 'perform' their rite, for pay,—in so far they are all slaves; abject utterly, if the service be for pay only; abject less and less in proportion to the degrees of love and of wisdom which enter into their duty, or can enter into it, according as their function is to do the bidding and the work of a man;—or to amuse, tempt, and deceive a child.

There may be thus, and, to a certain extent, there always is, a government of the rich by the poor, as of the poor by the rich; but the latter is the prevailing and necessary one, and it consists, observe, of two distinct functions—the collection of the profits of labour from those who would have misused them, and the administration of those profits for the service either of the same person in future, or of others; or, as is more frequently the case in modern times, for the service of the collector himself.

The examination of these various modes of collection and use of riches will form the third branch of our future inquiries; but the key to the

whole subject lies in the clear understanding of the difference between selfish and unselfish expenditure. It is not easy, by any course of reasoning, to enforce this on the generally unwilling hearer; yet the definition of unselfish expenditure is brief and simple. It is expenditure which, if you are a capitalist, does not pay you, but pays somebody else; and if you are a consumer, does not please you, but pleases somebody else. Take one special instance, in further illustration of the general type given above. I did not invent that type, but spoke of a real river, and of real peasantry, the languid and sickly race which inhabits, or haunts—for they are often more like spectres than living men—the thorny desolation of the banks of the Arve. Some years ago, a society formed at Geneva offered to embank the river for the ground which would have been recovered by the operation; but the offer was refused by the (then Sardinian) government. The capitalists saw that this expenditure would have 'paid,' if the ground saved from the river was to be theirs. But if, when the offer that had this aspect of profit was refused, they had nevertheless persisted in the plan, and merely taking security for the return of their outlay, lent the funds for the work, and thus saved a whole race of human souls from perishing in a pestiferous fen (as, I presume, some among them would, at personal risk, have dragged any one drowning creature out of the current of the stream, and not expected payment there for), such expenditure would have precisely cor-

responded to the use of his power made, in the first instance, by our supposed richer peasant—it would have been the king's, of grace, instead of the usurer's, for gain.

'Impossible, absurd, utopian!' exclaim nine-tenths of the few readers whom these words may find.

No, good reader, *this* is not utopian: but I will tell you what would have seemed, if we had not seen it, utopian on the side of evil instead of good; that ever men should have come to value their money so much more than their lives, that if you call upon them to become soldiers, and take chance of bullet, for their pride's sake, they will do it gaily, without thinking twice; but if you ask them, for their country's sake, to spend a hundred pounds without security of getting back a hundred-and-five,* they will laugh in your face.

Not but that also this game of life-giving and taking is in the end, somewhat more costly than other forms of play might be. Rifle practice is, indeed, a not unhealthy pastime, and a feather on the top of the head is a pleasing appendage; but while learning the stops and fingering of the sweet instrument, does no one ever calculate the cost of an overture? What melody does Tityrus meditate on his tenderly spiral pipe? The leaden seed of it, broad cast, true conical 'Dents de Lion' seed—needing less allowance for the wind than is usual with that kind of herb—what crop are you likely to have of it? Suppose, instead of this volunteer marching and countermarching, you were to

* I have not hitherto touched on the subject of interest of money; it is too complex; and must be reserved for its proper place in the body of the work. (I should be glad if a writer, who sent me some valuable notes on this subject, and asked me to return a letter which I still keep at his service, would send me his address.) The definition of interest (apart from compensation for risk) is, 'the exponent of the comfort of accomplished labour, separated from its power;' the power being what is lent: and the French economists who have maintained the entire illegality of interest are wrong; yet by no means so curiously or wildly wrong as the English and French ones opposed to them, whose opinions have been collected by Dr. Whewell at page 41 of his *Lectures*; it never seeming to occur to the mind of the compiler, any more than to the writers whom he quotes, that it is quite possible, and even (according to Jewish proverb) prudent, for men to hoard, as ants and mice do, for use, not usury; and lay by something for winter nights, in the expectation of rather sharing than lending the scrapings. My Savoyard squirrels would pass a pleasant time of it under the snow-laden pine-branches, if they always declined to economize because no one would pay them interest on nuts.

do a little volunteer ploughing and counterploughing? It is more difficult to do it straight: the dust of the earth, so disturbed, is more grateful than for merely rhythmic footsteps. Golden cups, also, given for good ploughing, would be more suitable in colour: (ruby glass, for the wine which 'giveth his colour' on the ground, as well as in the cup, might be fitter for the rifle prize in ladies' hands); or, conceive a little volunteer exercise with the spade, other than such as is needed for moat and breastwork, or even for the burial of the fruit of the leaden avena-seed, subject to the shrill Lemures' criticism—

Wer hat das Haus so schlecht gebaut?

If you were to embank Lincolnshire now—more stoutly against the sea? or strip the peat of Solway, or plant Plinlimmon moors with larch—then, in due hour of year, some amateur reaping and threshing?

'Nay, we reap and thresh by steam, in these advanced days.'

I know it, my wise and economical friends. The stout arms God gave you to win your bread by, you would fain shoot your neighbours,—and God's sweet singers with;* then you invoke the fiends to your farm-service; and—

When young and old come forth to play
On a sulphurous holiday,
Tell how the darkling goblin sweat
(His feast of cinders duly set),
And, belching night, where breathed the morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
That ten day-labourers could not end.

But we will press the example

closer. On a green knoll above that plain of the Arve, between Cluse and Bonneville, there was, in the year 1860, a cottage, inhabited by a well-doing family—man and wife, three children, and the grandmother. I call it a cottage, but in truth, it was a large chimney on the ground, wide at the bottom, (so that the family might live round the fire), with one broken window in it, and an unclosing door. The family, I say, was 'well-doing,' at least, it was hopeful and cheerful; the wife healthy, the children, for Savoyards, pretty and active, but the husband threatened with decline, from exposure under the cliffs of the Mont Vergi by day, and to draughts between every plank of his chimney in the frosty nights.

'Why could he not plaster the chinks?' asks the practical reader. For the same reason that your child cannot wash its face and hands till you have washed them many a day for it, and will not wash them when it can, till you force it.

I passed this cottage often in my walks, had its window and door mended, sometimes mended also a little the meal of sour bread and broth, and generally got kind greeting and smile from the face of young or old; which greeting, this year, narrowed itself into the half-recognizing stare of the elder child, and the old woman's tears; for the father and mother were both dead,—one of sickness, the other of sorrow. It happened that I passed not alone, but with a companion, a practised English joiner, who, while these

* Compare Chaucer's feeling respecting birds (from Canace's falcon, to the nightingale, singing 'Domine, labia—' to the Lord of Love) with the usual modern British sentiments on this subject. Or even Cowley's:—

'What prince's choir of music can excel
That which within this shade does dwell,
To which we nothing pay, or give,
They, like all other poets, live
Without reward, or thanks for their obliging pains!
'Tis well if they become not prey.'

Yes; it is better than well; particularly since the seed sown by the wayside has been protected by the peculiar appropriation of part of the church-rates in our country parishes. See the remonstrance from a 'Country Parson,' in the *Times* of June 4th (or 5th; the letter is dated June 3rd), 1862:—'I have heard at a vestry meeting a good deal of higgling over a few shillings' outlay in cleaning the church; but I have never heard any dissatisfaction expressed on account of that part of the rate which is invested in 50 or 100 dozens of birds' heads.'

people were dying of cold, had been employed from six in the morning to six of the evening, for two months, in fitting the panels without nails, of a single door in a large house in London. Three days of his work taken, at the right time, from the oak panels, and applied to the larch timbers, would have saved these Savoyards' lives. He would have been maintained equally; (I suppose him equally paid for his work by the owner of the greater house, only the work not consumed selfishly on his own walls;) and the two peasants, and eventually, probably their children, saved.

There are, therefore, let me finally enforce, and leave with the reader this broad conclusion,—three things to be considered in employing any poor person. It is not enough to give him employment. You must employ him first to produce useful things; secondly, of the several (suppose equally useful) things he can equally well produce, you must set him to make that which will cause him to lead the healthiest life; lastly, of the things produced, it remains a question of wisdom and conscience how much you are to take yourself, and how much to leave to others. A large quantity, remember, unless you destroy it, *must* always be so left at one time or another; the only questions you have to decide are, not what you will give, and what you will keep, but when, and how, and to whom, you will give. The natural law of human life is, of course, that in youth a man shall labour and lay by store for his old age, and when age comes, should use what he has laid by, gradually slackening his toil, and allowing himself more frank use of his store, taking care always to leave himself as much as will surely suffice for him beyond any possible length of life. What he has gained, or by tranquil and unanxious toil continues to gain, more than is enough for his own need, he ought

so to administer, while he yet lives, as to see the good of it again beginning, in other hands; for thus he has himself the greatest sum of pleasure from it, and faithfully uses his sagacity in its control. Whereas most men, it appears, dislike the sight of their fortunes going out into service again, and say to themselves,—‘I can indeed nowise prevent this money from falling at last into the hands of others, nor hinder the good of it, such as it is, from becoming theirs, not mine; but at least let a merciful death save me from being a witness of their satisfaction; and may God so far be gracious to me as to let no good come of any of this money of mine before my eyes.’ Supposing this feeling unconquerable, the safest way of rationally indulging it would be for the capitalist at once to spend all his fortune on himself, which might actually, in many cases, be quite the rightest as well as the pleasantest thing to do, if he had just tastes and worthy passions. But, whether for himself only, or through the hands and for the sake of others also, the law of wise life is, that the maker of the money should also be the spender of it, and spend it, approximately, all, before he dies; so that his true ambition as an economist should be, to die, not as rich, but as poor, as possible, calculating the ebb tide of possession in true and calm proportion to the ebb tide of life. Which law, checking the wing of accumulative desire in the mid-volley,* and leading to peace of possession and fulness of fruition in old age, is also wholesome, in that by the freedom of gift, together with present help and counsel, it at once endears and dignifies age in the sight of youth, which then no longer strips the bodies of the dead, but receives the grace of the living. Its chief use would (or will be, for men are indeed capable of attaining to this much use of their reason), that some temperance and measure will

* καὶ πέναν ἡγουμένους εἶναι μὴ τὸ τὴν οὐσίαν ἐλάττω ποιεῖν, ἀλλὰ τὸ τὴν ἀπληστίαν πλείω.—*Laws*, v. 8. Read the context and compare. ‘He who spends for all that is noble, and gains by nothing but what is just, will hardly be notably wealthy, or distressfully poor.’—*Laws*, v. 42.

be put to the acquisitiveness of commerce.* For as things stand, a man holds it his duty to be temperate in his food, and of his body, but for no duty to be temperate in his riches, and of his mind. He sees that he ought not to waste his youth and his flesh for luxury; but he will waste his age, and his soul, for money, and think it no wrong, nor the *delirium tremens* of the intellect any evil. But the law of life is, that a man should fix the sum he desires to make annually, as the food he desires to eat daily; and stay when he has reached the limit, refusing increase of business, and leaving it to others, so obtaining due freedom of time for better thoughts. How the gluttony of business is punished, a bill of health for the principals of the richest city houses, issued annually, would show in a sufficiently impressive manner.

I know, of course, that these statements will be received by the modern merchant as an active border rider of the sixteenth century would have heard of its being proper for men of the Marches to get their living by the spade instead of the spur. But my business is only to state veracities and necessities; I neither look for the acceptance of the one, nor promise anything for the nearness of the other. Near or distant,

the day will assuredly come when the merchants of a state shall be its true 'ministers of exchange,' its porters, in the double sense of carriers and gate-keepers, bringing all lands into frank and faithful communication, and knowing for their master of guild, Hermes the herald, instead of Mercury the gain-guarder.

And now, finally, for immediate rule to all whom it concerns.

The distress of any population means that they need food, house-room, clothes, and fuel. You can never, therefore, be wrong in employing any labourer to produce food, house-room, clothes, or fuel: but you are *always* wrong if you employ him to produce nothing, (for then some other labourer must be worked double time to feed him); and you are generally wrong, at present, if you employ him (unless he can do nothing else) to produce works of art, or luxuries; because modern art is mostly on a false basis, and modern luxury is criminally great.†

The way to produce more food is mainly to bring in fresh ground, and increase facilities of carriage;—to break rock, exchange earth, drain the moist, and water the dry, to mend roads, and build harbours of refuge. Taxation thus spent will annihilate taxation, but spent in war, it annihilates revenue.

* The fury of modern trade arises chiefly out of the possibility of making sudden fortune by largeness of transaction, and accident of discovery or contrivance. I have no doubt that the final interest of every nation is to check the action of these commercial lotteries; and that all great accidental gains or losses should be national,—not individual. But speculation absolute, unconnected with commercial effort, is an unmitigated evil in a state, and the root of countless evils beside.

† It is especially necessary that the reader should keep his mind fixed on the methods of consumption and destruction, as the true sources of national poverty. Men are apt to watch rather the exchanges in a state than its damages; but the exchanges are only of importance so far as they bring about these last. A large number of the purchases made by the richer classes are mere forms of interchange of unused property, wholly without effect on national prosperity. It matters nothing to the state whether, if a china pipkin be rated as worth a hundred pounds, A has the pipkin and B the pounds, or A the pounds and B the pipkin. But if the pipkin is pretty, and A or B breaks it, there is national loss, not otherwise. So again, when the loss has really taken place, no shifting of the shoulders that bear it will do away with the fact of it. There is an intensely ludicrous notion in the public mind respecting the abolishment of debt by denying it. When a debt is denied, the lender loses instead of the borrower, that is all; the loss is precisely, accurately, everlastingly the same. The Americans borrow money to spend in blowing up their own houses. They deny their debt; by one third already, gold being at fifty premium; and will probably deny it wholly. That merely means that the holders of the notes are to be the losers instead of the issuers. The quantity of loss is precisely equal, and irrevocable; it is the quantity of human industry spent in explosion, plus the quantity of goods exploded. Honour only decides *who* shall pay the sum lost, not whether it is to be paid or not. Paid it must be, and to the uttermost farthing.

The way to produce house-room is to apply your force first to the humblest dwellings. When your bricklayers are out of employ, do not build splendid new streets, but better the old ones; send your pavours and slaters to the poorest villages, and see that your poor are healthily lodged before you try your hand on stately architecture. You will find its stateliness rise better under the trowel afterwards; and we do not yet build so well as that we need hasten to display our skill to future ages. Had the labour which has decorated the Houses of Parliament filled, instead, rents in walls and roofs throughout the county of Middlesex; and our deputies met to talk within massive walls that would have needed no stucco for five hundred years,—the decoration might have been better afterwards, and the talk now. And touching even our highly conscientious church building, it may be well to remember that in the best days of church plans, their masons called themselves ‘logeurs du bon Dieu;’ and that since, according to the most trusted reports, God spends a good deal of His time in cottages as well as in churches, He might perhaps like to be a little better lodged there also.

The way to get more clothes is—not, necessarily, to get more cotton. There were words written twenty years ago which would have saved many of us some shivering had they been minded in time. Shall we read them?

‘The Continental people, it would seem, are importing our machinery, beginning to spin cotton and manufacture for themselves, to cut us out of this market and then out of that! Sad news indeed; but irremediable. By no means the saddest news—the saddest news is, that we should find our national existence, as I sometimes hear it said, depend on selling manufactured cotton at a farthing an ell cheaper than any other people. A most narrow stand for a great nation to base itself on! A stand which, with all the Corn-Law abrogations conceivable, I do not think will be capable of enduring.

‘My friends, suppose we quitted

that stand; suppose we came honestly down from it and said—“This is our minimum of cotton prices; we care not, for the present, to make cotton any cheaper. Do you, if it seem so blessed to you, make cotton cheaper. Fill your lungs with cotton fur, your heart with copperas fumes, with rage and mutiny; become ye the general gnomes of Europe, slaves of the lamp!” I admire a nation which fancies it will die if it do not undersell all other nations to the end of the world. Brothers, we will cease to undersell them; we will be content to equal-sell them; to be happy selling equally with them! I do not see the use of underselling them: cotton-cloth is already twopence a yard, or lower; and yet bare backs were never more numerous among us. Let inventive men cease to spend their existence incessantly contriving how cotton can be made cheaper; and try to invent a little how cotton at its present cheapness could be somewhat justlier divided among us.

‘Let inventive men consider—whether the secret of this universe does after all consist in making money. With a hell which means—“failing to make money,” I do not think there is any heaven possible that would suit one well. In brief, all this Mammon gospel of supply-and-demand, competition, *laissez faire*, and devil take the hindmost’ (foremost, is it not, rather, Mr. Carlyle?), ‘begins to be one of the shabbiest gospels ever preached.’ (In the matter of clothes, decidedly.)

The way to produce more fuel is first to make your coal mines safer, by sinking more shafts; then set all your convicts to work in them, and if, as is to be hoped, you succeed in diminishing the supply of that sort of labourer, consider what means there may be, first of growing forest where its growth will improve climate; then of splintering the forests which now make continents of fruitful land pathless and poisonous, into faggots for fire;—so gaining at once dominion sunwards and icewards. Your steam power has been given you (you will find eventually) for work such as that; and not for excursion trains, to give the labourer

a moment's breath, at the peril of his breath for ever, from amidst the cities which you have crushed into masses of corruption. When you know how to build cities, and how to rule them, you will be able to breathe in their streets, and the 'excursion' will be the afternoon's walk or game in the fields round them. Long ago, Claudian's peasant of Verona knew, and we must yet learn, in his fashion, the difference between *via* and *vita*.

'But nothing of this work will pay?'

No; no more than it pays to dust your rooms, or wash your doorsteps. It will pay; not at first in currency, but in that which is the end and the source of currency,—in life; (and in currency richly afterwards). It will pay in that which is more than life,—in 'God's first creature, which was light,' whose true price has not yet been reckoned in any currency, and yet into the image of which all wealth, one way or other, must be

cast. For your riches must either be as the lightning, which,

begot but in a cloud,
Though shining bright, and speaking loud,
Whilst it begins, concludes its violent race;
And, where it gilds, it wounds the place;

or else as the lightning of the sacred sign, which shines from one part of the heaven to the other. There is no other choice; you must either take dust for deity, spectre for possession, fettered dream for life, and for epitaph, this reversed verse of the great Hebrew hymn of economy (Psalm cxii.):—'He hath gathered together, he hath stripped the poor, his iniquity remaineth for ever.' Or else, having the sun of justice to shine on you, and the sincere substance of good in your possession, and the pure law and liberty of life within you, leave men to write this better legend over your grave:—

'He hath dispersed abroad. He hath given to the poor. His righteousness remaineth for ever.'

The present paper completes the definitions necessary for future service. The next in order will be the first chapter of the body of the work.

These introductory essays are as yet in imperfect form; I suffer them to appear, though they were not intended for immediate publication, for the sake of such chance service as may be found in them. But hoping afterwards to enlarge and illustrate them with fuller notes, I have too much spared at present the labour, always very irksome to me, of press correction; some amusing arrangements of type have resulted, such as the rare Greek metre in which Xenophon—sent as I thought in unmistakeable manuscript, but without sufficient warning of his prosaic character—appears in p. 268. 'Phantasm, or of wealth,' for 'or phantasm of wealth,' in the second column of the same page; 'learning' for 'leaning,' said of Shylock's speech, p. 754; 'toccarien' for 'soccorrien,' p. 749; (I forgot to compare Virgil's 'quæ maxima turba' with Dante's 'gente troppa,' quoted just before;) and 'ἀναγόμεναι' for 'ἀνομακέναι,' p. 755, are perhaps worth note for correction. 'Taking daguerreotypes,' instead of 'daguerreotyping,' in p. 745, line 2 from bottom, will make the sentence grammar; and I ought to have written 'drachma' instead of 'stater' two lines before; for though Aristophanes, in the celebrated passage of the *Clouds*, which best illustrates the point in question, speaks of gold, the Attic silver was the true standard when the state was prospering. The first note in p. 755 is misplaced; it belongs to the tenth line from the bottom of the second column in that page; and it requires a word or two in further illustration. The derivation of words is like that of rivers: there is one real source, usually small, unlikely, and difficult to find, far up among the hills; then, as the word flows on and comes into service, it takes in the force of other words from other sources, and becomes itself quite another word—even more than one word, after the junction—a word as it were of many waters, sometimes both sweet and bitter. Thus the whole force of our English 'charity' depends on the guttural in 'charis' getting confused with the c of the Latin 'carus'; thenceforward throughout the middle ages, the two ideas ran on together, and both got confused with St. Paul's ἀγάπη, which expresses a different idea in all sorts of ways; our 'charity' having not only brought in the entirely foreign sense of almsgiving, but lost the essential sense of contentment, and lost much more in getting too far away from the 'charis' of the final Gospel benedictions. For truly it is fine Christianity we have come to, which professing to expect the perpetual grace of its Founder, has not itself grace enough to save it from overreaching its friends in sixpenny bargains; and which, supplicating evening and morning the forgiveness of its own debts,

goes forth in the daytime to take its fellow-servants by the throat, saying,—not 'Pay me that thou owest,' but 'Pay me that thou owest me *not*.'

Not but that we sometimes wear Ophelia's rue with a difference, and call it 'Herb o' grace o' Sundays,' taking consolation out of the offertory with—'Look, what he layeth out, it shall be paid him again.' Comfortable words, indeed, and good to set against the old royalty of Largesse—

'Whose moste joie was, I wis,
When that she gave, and said, "Have this."'

Again; the first root of the word faith being far away in *πίστω*, (compare my note on this force of it in *Modern Painters*, vol. v. p. 255,) the Latins, as proved by Cicero's derivation of the word, got their '*facio*' also involved in the idea; and so the word, and the world with it, gradually lose themselves in an arachnoid web of disputation concerning faith and works, no one ever taking the pains to limit the meaning of the term: which in earliest Scriptural use is as nearly as possible our English 'obedience.' Then the Latin '*fides*,' a quite different word, alternately active and passive in different uses, runs into '*foi*,' '*facere*,' through '*-ficare*,' into '*fier*,' at the end of words; and '*fidere*' into '*fier*' absolute; and out of this endless reticulation of thought and word rise still more finely reticulated theories concerning salvation by faith—the things which the populace expected to be saved from, being indeed carved for them in a very graphic manner in their cathedral porches—but the things they were expected to believe being carved for them not so clearly.

Lastly, I debated with myself whether to make the note on Homer longer by examining the typical meaning of the shipwreck of Ulysses, and his escape from Charybdis by help of her figtree; but as I should have had to go on to the lovely myth of Leucothea's veil, and did not care to spoil this by a hurried account of it, I left it for future examination; and three days after the paper was published, observed that the reviewers, with their usual useful ingenuity, were endeavouring to throw the whole subject back into confusion by dwelling on the single (as they imagined) oversight. I omitted also a note on the sense of the word *λυγρὸν*, with respect to the pharmacy of Circe, and herb-fields of Helen, (compare its use in *Odyssey*, 17, 473, &c.,) which would further have illustrated the nature of the Circean power. But, not to be led too far into the subtleties of these myths, respecting them all I have but this to say: Even in very simple parables, it is not always easy to attach indisputable meaning to every part of them. I recollect some years ago, throwing an assembly of learned persons who had met to delight themselves with interpretations of the parable of the prodigal son (interpretations which had up to that moment gone very smoothly) into high indignation, by inadvertently asking who the unprodigal son was, and what was to be learned by his example. The leading divine of the company (still one of our great popular preachers) at last explained to me that the unprodigal son was a lay figure, put in for dramatic effect, to make the story prettier, and that no note was to be taken of him. Without, however, admitting that Homer put in the last escape of Ulysses merely to make his story prettier, this is nevertheless true of all Greek myths, that they have many opposite lights and shades; they are as changeful as opal, and like opal, usually have one colour by reflected, and another by transmitted, light. But they are true jewels for all that, and full of noble enchantment for those who can use them; for those who cannot, I am content to repeat the words I wrote four years ago, in the appendix to the *Two Paths*—

'The entire purpose of a great thinker may be difficult to fathom, and we may be over and over again more or less mistaken in guessing at his meaning; but the real, profound, nay, quite bottomless and unredeemable mistake, is the fool's thought, that he had no meaning.'

