

# TORCH OF REASON.



"TRUTH BEARS THE TORCH IN THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH."—*Lucretius.*

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## A Noble Life.

**W**ISDOM and wealth and fame are glorious things, And each may grace a life to which it brings Its treasures to be shared—not garnered pelf— No life is noble with only good of self! Whoso on earth a noble life would live Must toil to aid, and gather still to give; Succor the weakling, smooth the rugged ways, And with wise bounty sweeten all the days He hath with man; so laying down his staff, A noble life shall be his epitaph.

## Justice.

BY DR. PAUL TOPINARD.

**T**HERE are few words whose signification has varied so much from antiquity to the present day, and so well reflects the customs of the time. In its present highest stage it is a pure human conception, which in its most widely accepted meaning is equivalent simply to possessing or receiving what is one's dues.

Let us see if there is anything in nature corresponding to this idea. A body rolls through space, enters our atmosphere, becomes incandescent by the friction, and bursts into fragments. A storm arises, the oak is torn out by its roots, the reed bends and straightens again. A wolf pursues a stag, which flees; the one runs to eat, the other not to be eaten; both exert their powers to the utmost; the victorious wolf is recompensed for his perseverance, the stag succumbs through his insufficient powers of respiration. The Tasmanians lived happily; the whites invade their island, massacre them, and appropriate their territory. At bottom all these cases are one. Everywhere that takes place which must take place conformably to the conditions and the forces in action. Nature witnesses impassively and indifferently the phenomena of which she is the theatre. The incandescent body, the oak, the stag, the Tasmanian—none has greater weight than the other in the balance. To living bodies, as to inert bodies, nothing is due; there is no justice.

Let us now look at the individual, and place ourselves at his point of view. He possesses his particular organization, of which he is not the author, and which it is without his power to relinquish. As Spencer said, "he is subjected to the effects of his own nature and of the conduct which it involves."

It is due to him, therefore, that his acts should have the conse-

quences which they logically imply, that he should reap what he has sown. Upon this condition only is he responsible. If his ego has been deceived, if he has wrongly judged what is best to do, if he has suffered habit to produce the act, and has not intervened to modify it, if he was distracted or indolent at the moment, if he has reasoned falsely, he suffers the consequences. But if he has been correct in his forecast and judgement, the benefit and the profits belong to him. This is the conformity of ends to acts—organic or physiological justice.

In the case of the wolf just mentioned, it was justice that its perseverance was crowned with success, whereas in the case of the stag, it was unjust that, having put forth his utmost powers to escape the danger, it was after all devoured. A mother carries her infant during the period of gestation, brings it forth in pain, nurses it, and lavishes her care upon it; it is unjust that she is not recompensed and that the child dies. But the following is a complicated case.

Two men struggle with weapons which each has at his disposal. The one has greater courage, the other greater skill. Each has a claim upon recompense, but one of them conquers. Where is the justice? From the point of view of nature there is none, for both have obeyed their organization. The stronger has conquered the weaker. But from the particular point of view of each, justice has been done for him who, having put forth his utmost powers, has succeeded; and injustice has been done to him who, having achieved the same end, is nevertheless vanquished. Individual justice, therefore, is relative. Yet even in this restricted form it has wide import and applicability, for it engenders personal responsibility, and so becomes the moving cause, par excellence, of all human activity, involving the reward or punishment of acts, and impelling the ego to be ever alert for intervening, for adapting its commands to the circumstances, and for looking to its interests. If there were no such justice sanctioning responsibility, personal conduct would be without a rudder.

It may be asked if this responsibility has aught to do with the acts or with the intentions which have inspired the acts. Certainly habits frequently assert themselves without intervention on the part of the ego, but in not interfering it has done wrong and should

suffer the consequences. Acts are the only material which lends itself to judgement. Intentions, and the motives from which they spring cannot be analyzed; they form an inextricable labyrinth. The ego and its acts, whatever they be, are solidary and compact.

We have now come to society. Solidarity, as has been said, involves duties on the part of the individual, while reciprocally society has duties which it owes to individuals. Each in its turn is bound to receive its due. Hence social justice—or the regulations which control and sanction the relations between the two transacting parties. It is a necessity, at once theoretical and practical, for the perfect functioning of these relations, just as above individual justice assured the perfect functioning of the relations between acts and their effects. It renders the individual responsible to society and society responsible to the individual. It is the sanction of the two responsibilities.

But we have seen that theoretically all individuals stand upon an equal footing in society—that is to say, have the same rights and the same duties; for which reason social justice is sometimes defined as the law of equal liberty. On the other hand, social rights, and still more so, social duties, at least such as society judges to be most indispensable, are precisely defined by the laws, as are also the punishments which insure their observance, but not the rewards which crown their fulfillment, for to these little thought is given. And hence this other definition: social justice is the law itself, or from another point of view, the apparatus and the means designed to insure obedience to the laws.

Let us recapitulate. There is no justice in nature. In the individual, and with respect to that individual, a relative justice exists, which is entirely physiological and is the sanction of his acts, the source of his responsibility, the stimulant to his activity.

In society a conventional but necessary justice exists, without which all would be anarchy, which is the sanction of the correctness of the social body to individuals, and likewise their guarantee.

Nothing, we believe, shows more clearly the profound difference existing between nature, the individual, and society, than the different acceptance in these three cases of the words which we have just ex-

amined. We might stop here and conclude directly regarding the questions which were restated at the beginning of the present chapter, but we must first insist upon a few points in the mechanism of the social evolution which we have skimmed in the preceding chapters. [—Science and Faith.

## Value of Coercion in Education.

BY HERBERT SPENCER.

**E**DUCATION has for its object the formation of character. To curb restive propensities, to awaken dormant sentiments, to strengthen the perceptions and cultivate the tastes, to encourage this feeling and repress that, so as finally to develop the child into a man of well proportioned and harmonious nature—this is alike the aim of parent and teacher. Those, therefore, who advocate the use of authority, and if need be—force in the management of children, must do so because they think these the best means of compassing the desired object—formation of character. Paternity has to devise some kind of a rule for the nursery. Impelled partly by the creed, partly by custom, partly by inclination, paternity decides in favor of a pure despotism, proclaims its word to the supreme law, anathematizes disobedience, and exhibits the rod as the final arbiter in all disputes. And of course this system of discipline is defended as the one best calculated to curb restive propensities, awaken dormant sentiments, &c., &c., as aforesaid. Suppose, now, we inquire how the plan works. An unamiable little urchin is proposing his own gratification regardless of the comforts of others—is perhaps annoyingly vociferous in his play; or is amusing himself by teasing a companion; or is trying to monopolize the toys intended for others in common with himself. Well; some kind of interposition is manifestly called for. Paternity, with knit brows, and in a severe tone, commands desistance—visiting any thing like reluctant submission with a sharp "Do as I bid you"—if need be, hints at whipping or the black hole—in short carries coercion, or the threat of coercion, far enough to produce obedience. After sundry exhibitions of preverse feeling, the child gives in; showing, however, by its sullenness the animosity it entertains. Meanwhile paternity pokes the fire and com-