

CYCLOPÆDIA
OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE,
POLITICAL ECONOMY,
AND OF THE
POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES,

BY THE BEST AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN WRITERS.

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more, that is, its rules are considered less with reference to the single sovereign, diplomate or naval officer, than to the nation which is represented by either of them. Besides, the correct view is becoming more widely accepted, that the rules of ceremony and the claims arising from them, are rules and claims not of right but of manners. This sentence expresses our view of the future significance of ceremonial in the intercourse of nations. Ceremonial will retain in the future, also, its significance for the representatives of states, just as the rules of politeness are of high value in the intercourse between cultured men, but its precepts will disappear more and more from international law.—BIBLIOGRAPHY. Bluntschli, *Modernes Völkerrecht*, § 171, note, §§ 188, 189; Heffter, *Völkerrecht*, § 193 ff., 218 ff.; Martens' *Guide diplomatique*, 5th ed. by Geffcken, I., pp. 122 ff., 196 ff., 207 ff.; II., pp. 10 ff., 113 ff. 320 ff. STRAUCH.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. Mr. McCulloch, the English economist, thus defines a chamber of commerce: "An assembly of merchants and traders where affairs relating to trade are treated of," and Bouvier in his "Law Dictionary" as follows: "A society of the principal merchants and traders who meet to promote the general commerce of the place." There are several establishments of this kind in France. In the United States, the term, "Chamber of Commerce," or "Board of Trade," is frequently applied to an institution which would be more appropriately called "Exchange" or "'Change." The economic utility of these institutions will be treated of in the article EXCHANGE, which see. E. D.

CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES. (See AGENT, DIPLOMATIC.)

CHARITY, Private. Economists reject public or state charity as producing incomparably more evil than good. This has sufficed to bring upon their doctrines the accusation of extolling egoism, of stifling feelings of charity, of undervaluing generosity and devotion. Happily these accusations are as stupid as they are odious, a fact which may be shown without difficulty.—We shall first examine the arguments put forward by the two most eminent defenders of public charity, Lamartine and Thiers. Says Lamartine, in his *Le Conseiller du Peuple*: "Are fraternity and charity virtues? They are. Then society itself ought to exercise these two virtues; society should not, as is pretended by economists, who have no religion but arithmetic, free itself from these great duties and let misery and death take their course." Thiers, in his report to the French legislative assembly on public assistance, brings up the same considerations: "If the individual has virtues, can not society have them too? To our thinking, the answer is not doubtful. We must not look upon the state as a cold, senseless,

heartless being. The collection of members composing the nation, as they may be intelligent, courageous, polished, may be humane, charitable, as well as individuals themselves."—What is society? If it be the collection of members composing the nation, it is clear that this collection will unite in themselves the total of all the virtues possessed by each one of the individuals composing it. If it is wished to personify the collection, and to make of it that creature of the mind called society or the state, it is absurd to attribute to this being which has no existence, an action independent of that of all the members composing the nation. If, however, we understand by society or the state the government, the question is changed altogether; and we must no longer ask whether charity being a virtue in the individual, is not equally a virtue in society, but whether it is proper, moral and advantageous to have charity practiced by the government, or whether it is even possible for the government to practice charity at all. We say not. It is very evident that charity and fraternity are virtues only when they are free and spontaneous. State and, therefore, forced, charity is not a virtue, it is a tax. Now, the sacrifice imposed on some in favor of others clearly loses the character of *charity*. The legislator has no merit in the case, for all he has to do is to cast his vote in its favor. The executive power or the tax collector has still less, for, instead of giving, he retains a part of the gift as pay for his services. Neither has the tax payer, since he contributes only in spite of himself. Where can we find here the conditions of charity: a *benevolent inspiration followed by a voluntary sacrifice on the part of him who feels it?* Is not that a strange kind of charity whose acts are performed by the tax gatherer and policeman?—Economists who, according to Lamartine, have no religion but arithmetic, have always shown themselves filled with pity for the sufferings of their neighbors, as profound as that which he himself felt; and if we look into the lives of the most illustrious among them, Quesnay, Turgot, Malthus, Smith, J. B. Say, Charles Comte, etc., we shall find a series of acts of noble disinterestedness, of devotion to truth, to justice and the unfortunate classes, worthy to be held up to all men animated by real philanthropy.—Economists are specially occupied with the means of dispensing exact justice to every man, and with diminishing misery by acting on the causes which produce it; but they know that preventive measures will never be enough to eradicate it: that there will always exist in society a great number of individuals absolutely incapable of obtaining for themselves enough to escape from the sufferings brought on by indigence, and whose support can never be assured except through the wealth created by others; that, consequently, feelings of pity, benevolence and charity will always be indispensable; and that too much force and activity can not be given them when there is a question of solacing unmerited misfortune.—But

economists deny that public charity is a means of supporting and developing these sentiments. On the contrary, they are convinced that it tends to weaken them continually, to blot them out, by apparently diminishing the necessity for them, by adding to the suggestions of egoism plausible pretexts against generous impulse. They are convinced that charity practiced by individuals or free associations would be more extensive and powerful in proportion to the decrease of state interference in the collection and distribution of relief; that this interference tends to suppress the principal stimulant to charity and the condition which can best assure its efficacy, by destroying direct relations between the benefactor and the benefited; that by this state interference the individuals assisted are bound to feel grateful only to the law, that is to say, to no one, and that, by making assistance obligatory to those who render it, they naturally dispose those who receive it to look upon it as a right; that thenceforth relief loses all character of uncertainty or contingency and that the poor classes accustom themselves to count on it, and yield more and more to improvidence, idleness and other vices, productive of misery; that, in this way, public charity engenders more evils than it can cure.—Charity consists in interesting one's self in the misfortunes of others, and in the making of sacrifices to diminish them. When it is freely practiced it can present no danger; the sacrifices are generally proportioned to the resources of those who make them, and no one can count on them positively; they have not the inconvenience of lessening the preventive effects of penalties attached to misconduct and habits generating misery. But if charity is imposed by the law, what shall be its limit? What part of the penalties on improvidence, etc., will be left in force? That will depend on the opinions, the disposition, the caprice of the legislator. Lamartine, for example, wished to bind the state to begin 500 million francs worth of public works. Louis Blanc understood popular fraternity in a wider sense. He wanted all the shops to be taken by the state and put at the disposition of associated workmen. On another occasion, Barbès and Sobrier, "considering that fraternity is not an empty word, and that it ought to manifest itself in acts," wanted a tax of a milliard of francs on capitalists for the benefit of workmen. It is evident that if this principle of fraternity or public assistance be once admitted, its consequences have no assignable limits, and might extend until one-half of the population was despoiled in favor of the other half.—Such are the motives which have caused economists to reject public charity and oppose all measures tending to give it a greater extension than it already has; but far from wishing to weaken the feeling of charity by this action, or restrain charity freely practiced, they claim, on the contrary, that they give it more intensity and breadth, for they contend that the interference of the law, in place of rendering the sources of charity more

abundant, tends inevitably to exhaust them. Political economy does not approve of state rule, either in the practice of charity or in the church, or in industry. It maintains and demonstrates that but for the unfortunate claim of governments to direct these different branches of social activity, we should be more charitable, more religious and more industrious.

AMBROISE CLÉMENT.

CHARITY, Public. 1. *Principles and Effects of Public Assistance.* Mutual aid is a precept dictated by the best sentiments of human nature and which the very constitution of society renders necessary.—Misfortune excites our pity. Natural law prescribes to us the duty of relieving it, and religion most imperatively recommends it. Christianity is instinct with a tender affection for those whom it calls "the suffering members of Christ." "Help one another!" Does not this command, without which society is impossible, flow from the divine precept: "Love one another?" Moreover, in a political society founded, on the one hand, on the principle of responsibility which leaves each man to the consequences of his faults and makes misery the punishment of improvidence and vice, and on the other, on the principle of inequality which is indispensable to order and progress, but the effect of which is to permit involuntary wretchedness—a wretchedness which falls, as a burden, inevitably on those possessed of assured and ample means of subsistence—the whole question is, how and in what form that assistance shall be given. Shall it remain purely individual, that is to say, in the hands of individuals acting with their own resources alone, and coming into direct contact with the poverty-stricken? Shall it be the work of voluntary associations, which afford more abundant and more regular aid? Shall it be made a matter of public concern by the county or city, or shall it have for organ that collective being known as the state? It is evident that the science of politics is not less interested in the solution of these questions than political economy and morals. They are questions which involve the power, the wealth and the safety almost of the nation. A faulty distribution of assistance by exhausting the sources of public wealth, and by destroying much productive power, strikes a blow, not seldom serious, at the health and vitality of the entire social body. Too many examples, from the days when assistance was dealt out in Rome to the time of the poor laws of England, bear witness to the truth of this statement. It is therefore of the highest political importance to know what rule is to be followed here in a matter thus delicate and dangerous, in which the least error may lead to cruel suffering. Not to relieve misery, and to relieve it by unwise means, are two lines of conduct equally exposed to engender the hatred which divides classes of men, and gives rise to dark discontent and revolution. We shall therefore endeavor to establish, first of all, as clearly and precisely as we can, the prin-