

have now at most but a personal interest as a revelation of their author's character; but they produced a result of some importance, inasmuch as the more practical members of the fellowship, growing out of harmony with the founder's individualism and finding little profit in his metaphysics, broke away and formed the Fabian Society. Though there is irony in this play of circumstances by which a stalwart individualist and contemner of modern economics thus became the cause of the Fabian policy of insinuating collectivist doctrine into English politics, the incident shows how much may be accomplished by a visionary, provided that he is in earnest about his ideals and has the power of exciting enthusiasm and affection in others.

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DECADENCE: HENRY SIDGWICK MEMORIAL LECTURE. By the Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour, M. P. Cambridge: University Press, 1908. Pp. 62.

Why do communities decay? Mr. Balfour suggests in this lecture that in cases like that of the Roman Empire the ordinary political causes assigned by historians do not account for all the facts, and that some obscure cause, analogous to senescence in physical organisms, is at work. This cause we can only call decadence without further explanation. It is impossible, however, to say whether decadence is more or less normal than progress; all we can be sure of is that some races (such as those of the East) are constitutionally incapable of advancing beyond a certain point. As for western civilization, Mr. Balfour thinks it likely that the modern alliance between science and industry has introduced a new social factor which is perhaps strong enough to counteract any tendency toward decadence that may exist.

Mr. Balfour makes for his discourse the apology that it is tentative and interrogative and does not pretend to be an adequate treatment of an interesting theme. It is indeed often desirable—on an occasion commemorative of Henry Sidgwick it would be peculiarly fitting—that one who has studied a subject should make known what he thinks about it even when his conclusions are provisional or incomplete. Mr. Balfour's apology has all the air of being the apology of an inquirer in this

dilemma; but what it really covers is a quite different kind of "tentativeness"—that, namely, which consists in making remarks at large on a vaguely defined subject; and consequently it is best received in silence.

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ANTI-PRAGMATISME, *Examen des droits respectifs de l'aristocratie intellectuelle et de la démocratie sociale*. Par Albert Schinz, professeur à l'Université de Bryn Mawr (Pennsylvania). 1 vol. in-8° de la *Bibliothèque de Philosophie contemporaine*. Paris: Félix Alcan, éditeur.

The book is divided into three parts.

The first is a criticism of pragmatism from a philosophical standpoint, which Emile Boutroux, the well-known author of *Science et Religion*, characterized as "très net, très vigoureux, et qui apporte de la clarté dans une question très embrouillée." Instead of summarizing Prof. Schinz's whole argument, let us only call attention to the distinction which he considers fundamental and is the cause, according to him, of the whole quarrel about pragmatism. On pages 26 to 36 he distinguishes between what he calls "scientific" pragmatism and "moral" pragmatism. James and his followers have tried hard to identify their cause with that of the recent school of Poincaré, in France. A law, an idea, is not true or false in itself, but only relatively to us; it is true, or rather becomes true only when it yields results to the investigator. Prof. Schinz says that, thanks to the vagueness of the word "result," pragmatists have been able to impose upon us this identification, but as a matter of fact there is incompatibility between Poincaré and James: Poincaré means an idea is true when it yields *scientific* results, while James (without saying it explicitly, but it is the spirit of all his writings on pragmatism) really means that an idea is true when it carries with it valuable *moral* results. So, of course, there is an abyss between the two conceptions. Poincaré never had the remotest idea of allowing any moral preoccupations to interfere with the search for truth.

Whether James would admit that this interpretation of Schinz is correct, I do not know. I doubt it very much. But certainly the arguments brought forward here and elsewhere