REASON AND MORALS.

An Enquiry into the First Principles of Ethics.

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Contents.

The Argument.

The theme of what follows is, in brief, (a) that Reason may be regarded as the capacity of an individual to adapt his behaviour to the conditions of real life, (b) that at a certain stage in the evolution of man real life consists of group or common life, in which there is invariably found a code of moral regulations, and (c) that at this stage it is still Reason which marks the capacity of an individual to observe these moral regulations, without which group life itself is impossible. It is suggested, therefore, that to be moral and to be reasonable reflect the same fundamental capacity in human beings, that is, the capacity of adapting one's behaviour to the facts of real life. On this hypo--thesis, it is claimed, the conceptions of ethical theory are freed from much of their traditional obscurity, the opposed schools of ethical thought in the past are more readily intelligible, and the significance of morality it--self can be envisaged from a new, but legitimate and fruit--ful, standpoint.

Chapter I.

THE APPROACH TO ETHICS.

1.

Ethics and Group Life.

If it is life in general which supplies philosophy with its problems, it seems to be group life more particularly from which originate the questions of Ethics. It is only because human beings, at a certain stage in their history, come to live together in groups that Ethics achieves its place in the sun at all. The size of the group may of course vary considerably, from a mere family, or enlarged tribal family, to a civic community, or even a great civil-ized nation. But, independently of size, it is the mere fact that some type of group life is being maintained which accounts for the emergence of something specifically ethical. Primitive taboos, rites, ceremonies, as well as the customs and laws and conventions of organised communities, are all concerned, in the last analysis, with the relations between members of a group. It is the existence and maintenance of the group which bring them into being, and it is only in re-ference to this group that their development and significance

can be understood.

There are, it is clear, many questions which are suggested by the fact of group life itself. Sociologists, for in--stance, may attempt to reconstruct the historical stages of group-evolution, surmising perhaps a primitive horde as the earliest form of human association. Philosophers, again, may seek to explain the ultimate origin of group life, sur--mising perhaps a primitive 'social contract' as its source. Psychologists may refer for their part to a 'herd instinct' or to some similar native disposition in man, in terms of which social life is supposed to explain itself. But all such questions reach out into territory lying beyond Ethics proper. Ethics is concerned with the accomplished fact of group life, rather than with its antecedents, historical, philosophical, or psychological. For it is on the emerg--ence of group life that the content of Ethics first comes into being.

The explanation of the complete dependence of Ethics on group life is simply that moral restraint on the part of the individual is necessary for common life to be possible at all. It is clear, too, that individuals, if they accept certain restrictions on their behaviour, if they postpone or deny the gratification of certain of their impulses, if they adapt their conduct generally to the prevailing customs of their group, are enabled in this way, and in this way alone,

to attain, ultimately, the greatest satisfaction of their own desires. Indeed it is difficult to see how a group could begin to function, much less survive for any length of time, if each member in it followed lawlessly the immediate gratif--ication of his every craving. It was pointed out by Socrates, long ago, that even a band of robbers could not maintain itself as an efficient unit unless each member of the band accepted some restriction on his very lawlessness. "If they had been perfectly evil", Socrates remarks, "they would have laid hands upon one another: but it is evident there must have been some remnant of justice in them, which enabled them to combine." (Republic of Plato, p.352C) What Socrates means by 'justice', in this context, is not justice in the narrow sense of impartial or fair distribution, but justice as the most general principle of morality. It would seem, then, that a code of morals is necessarily bound up with the maintenance of some group, and that group life itself is only possible if the members of the group observe in their conduct certain moral restraints, however elementary these may be. Whatever the full significance of Ethics may show itself eventually to be, morality can be said to constitute, at the very least, one condition without which social life is impossible.

The actual fact of social or common life is of course seldom called into question. As Mill writes, "The social

state is at once so natural, so necessary, and so habitual to man, that, except in some unusual circumstances or by an effort of voluntary abstraction, he never conceives himself otherwise than as a member of a body." (J.S.Mill, Utilitar--ianism, Chap.III) But it is important for Ethics to place the fact in the very forefront of its analysis, and to re--cognise as a consequence that even the simplest moral judg--ment has a social reference. If it were conceivable that a human being could live wholly by himself, and for himself, never entering into relations with any other living creature, it would be quite meaningless to describe his conduct as 'good' or 'bad', 'right' or 'wrong', 'moral' or 'immoral'. If the conduct, in other words, does not affect other living beings, there is no standard by which it can be morally app--raised. Even the preservation of the individual's life, which some of his actions, such as the storage of food, might aid, could not be judged 'good' or 'moral' unless it affected the lives of other beings. It is only in a setting of, or with an implied reference to, some group or community that moral predicates can be legitimately applied to the behaviour of individuals. In short, the dependence of morals on group life constitutes the foundation, as it is the natural point of departure, for all enquiry into the significance of Ethics.

2.

Ethics as Philosophical.

Ethics is apparently, at first glance, an empirical or inductive science. Its business is to collect the various facts about morality, to classify the different kinds of moral customs which have been practised by different peoples in past ages, to present, in short, what Taylor called a 'Phenomenology of Morals', for subsequent critical analysis and reflection. Such an empirical survey should lead to conclusions of great general importance. If it is found, for instance, that every known code forbids one individual to kill another in the same group, freely, in pursuit of private lust for blood, it may be inferred that the prohib--ition of murder is a fundamental moral law. Or if it is established by historical records that certain moral practices have been accompanied by the prosperity or cultural develop--ment of a group, while other practices have apparently been followed by the degeneration or even extinction of the group, it may be inferred that the conception of moral 'progress' is a valid one, and that to attempt to trace an evolution in morals is more than a merely interesting exercise in imagin--ative creation. Such hypotheses, indeed, may well be the only scientific way in which the mass of available data can be resumed or classified.

But Ethics as an empirical science has its limitations. All the above survey of morals leaves out of its purview what is really the main problem of Ethics. That problem, to which everything else is preliminary merely, or subsid--iary, is simply, What is the significance of the fact that there <u>are</u> moral codes at all? It is this question which constitutes the real crux of ethical theory. The empirical survey is of secondary importance. Perhaps its chief in--terest lies in its bearing on history and sociology, for it offers a clue to the general conditions under which human societies have flourished or languished in the past, a clue which some historians of civilization have tended to ignore. The main task of Ethics, however, is something other than this. It is directed not simply to the collation of diff--erent moral codes, but to the explanation of the fact that there <u>are</u> moral codes in existence at all. What, for in--stance, does that fact indicate about the nature of man? Does it imply his possession of a 'moral sense', of a 'soul', does it imply his 'free-will'? Does it point to the ne--cessity of a social setting for the realisation of life? If reflection suggests, as it sometimes appears to do, that the effort to carry out some moral purpose, the struggle to win a victory over selfish impulse or passion, are among the most poignant features of the whole of experience, is there

here a clue to the ultimate significance of human life or to the character of human destiny? What, too, does the fact of morality imply with regard to the world, or with re--gard to Reality?

It is in questions of this kind, then, that the philos--ophical aspect of Ethics most clearly emerges. To reflect on the fact of morality, to estimate what place in the scheme of things is occupied by the moral life, is necessarily to touch on the most ultimate problems of philosophy. That is why Ethics, traditionally, is bound up with Metaphysics. In the greatest ethical teachers, in Plato, in Spinoza, in Kant, Ethics and Metaphysics constitute a single philosophical con--struction. Often, indeed, it has been in the fact of the moral life that a solution to some metaphysical impasse has been finally won. Even in Pragmatism, where abstractions such as Truth or Reality are held to be dependent for their meaning on the ends of practical life, "the foundations of metaphysics are actually found to lie in ethics", Schiller writes. (Humanism, p.10) In other words, "Pragmatism awards to the ethical conception of Good supreme authority over the logical conception of True and the metaphysical con--ception of Real... Our apprehension of the Real, our com--prehension of the True, is always effected by beings who are aiming at the attainment of some Good." (ibid.p.8)

There is, then, quite clearly, a legitimate philosophical standpoint in Ethics. The fact of morality is what is given. The task of Ethics is to interpret that fact, in terms of human nature and human capacities, if that be poss--ible, but above all to envisage the fact in its widest philosophical implications.

This does not mean, it should be added, that Ethics as philosophical is a product of abstract thought, an à priori construction of the mind, which is independent of the actual data of moral history. The description of Ethics as a norm--ative science often carries with it this misleading suggest--ion. It is implied that reflection presents us with some 'norm' or standard of its own, not connected with the facts of existing moral systems. This norm or ideal then ranks as a higher kind of entity than the mere facts of the moral life, and Ethics has a tendency to become remote or trans--cendental. Such a result, however, is wholly due to verbal abstraction, to what James called 'vicious intellectualism'. There are actions which are called 'good', and it is conven--ient to frame an abstract conception of 'goodness' for fac--ility in discussing these actions. But 'goodness' remains an abstract conception. It is not a real entity, from which can be logically deduced conclusions regarding actual facts in the world. The ideals, or norms, or laws of Ethics,

therefore, are the product of reflection, but they are reached inductively, from the study of past and present moral codes, just as the laws of physical science are reached from the study of the material universe. There is a phil--osophical standpoint in Ethics, an attempt to discover the ultimate significance of Ethics; but it proceeds from the concrete facts of morality, not from the purely logical im--plications of abstract concepts. Ethics, in short, may set up an ideal or norm, but that ideal should be a type of actual life, to be tested by such knowledge as is possessed both of human nature and of the world with which that nature is in relation.

3.

Ethics and Psychology.

Since moral regulations apply to the conduct or behaviour of men, and there is a special science of human behaviour, psychology, it is natural to approach ethical enquiry by seeking to discover its relation to the more general, psy--chological standpoint. It is difficult, however, to state just which part of behaviour belongs to Ethics, and which admits only of psychological analysis. There is probably no acceptable line of rigid demarcation. The traditional

ascription of 'voluntary' action to Ethics and reflex or in--stinctive action to psychology rests on a classification of conduct which is no longer tenable. It is in fact the con--text of an action which really determines whether or not there is an ethical colouring: and almost every conceivable action, even a cough or a gesture, may in some specific con--text have genuine moral significance. In other words, it is what was called above the 'social reference' of an action on which depends, ultimately, the possibility of moral criticism.

The exact distinction, then, between ethical conduct and that which is only psychological may be left in this general form for the present. What emerges as quite indisputable is the one fact that moral behaviour, whatever else can be said about it, is in the first instance human behaviour. The moral life, it is evident, takes place within a psychological framework or setting. It occurs under conditions which are fixed by the nature of the human agent. It is because of this that the approach to the interpretation of morals may be said to lie most naturally by way of psychology.

It is necessary to indicate, however, just how much this implies. It implies, for instance, that there are certain psychological prolegomena, certain preliminary facts about the nature of man, about the conditions under which his

moral life proceeds, which are relevant to Ethics. These conditions may be perhaps compared to the rules by which a game is conducted. It is not implied in the least, however, that the psychological analysis of behaviour can yield a complete explanation of its moral character, any more than the physiological or neural analysis of a man's movements will explain why he goes for a walk. To examine the psy--chological setting within which moral behaviour takes place merely constitutes a useful, relevant, but preliminary task. It is like reading the rules of a game before beginning to test the possibilities of the game in actual practice. It is, in fact, to glance at the technical, material means by which moral achievement is made possible, just as through a bow and the strings of a violin there may be realised the exquisite beauty of a musical composition.

Traditionally, there is a certain body of psychological doctrine which has played an important part in the analysis of moral behaviour. There is, for instance, the fundamental dualism of body and soul, flesh and spirit, sensuous desire and reason. Conceptions such as those of the 'will', the 'appetites', the 'rational self', have bulked largely in ethical description. The springs of action have been re--garded as the 'desire for pleasure', or as 'self-love', or even as 'benevolence'. Loose expressions have constantly

been used with reference to the 'play of motives', the force of 'habit', the realisation of 'ends' or 'purposes', and even the conception of a supreme end or 'summum bonum'. All such language, it is very evident, conceals a mass of psychological hypotheses, not all of which are compatible with the present findings of psychology itself. It seems probable, therefore, that there may be found in the progress and refinement of recent psychological analysis an important clue, at any rate, to a clearer understanding of the moral life. Progress in psychology, it seems, must ultimately be reflected in the outlook of Ethics too.

It is indeed from recent psychological analysis that the main stimulus to reconstruction of Ethics comes. The traditional conceptions which form the basis of ethical theory have been modified considerably in recent years, as the result of at least three distinct phases of psychological work. These are as follows:-

(a) The study of <u>instinct</u> in human beings and of its function in determining behaviour (notably, among English writers, by Graham Wallas, Drever, and McDougall) has offered a challenge to the belief that Reason is the supreme arbiter of human conduct. The instincts, according to McDougall, are "the sources of energy, which set the ends and sustain the course of all human activity", while intellectual or

rational processes are but "the servants, instruments, or means" of these instinctive forces. (McDougall, Social Psy-chology, p.3) In other words, it is the instincts, it is claimed, which are the prime movers of human actions, the raw material of human character, whereas Reason enters only at a later stage, to justify what has been carried through by some instinctive driving power. The ethical problem, therefore, is not, as was so long imagined, to explain how rational beings sometimes act immorally, or unreasonably, but rather to explain how creatures endowed with the strongest egoistic impulses ever come to act morally or reasonably at all.

(b) Again, the theories associated with Freud and Psycho-analytic doctrine have suggested that human behaviour is sometimes the expression of 'unconscious' wishes, that is, wishes which are not acknowledged by the conscious, waking self, but which have been 'repressed' to a different system of the mind, where they still function actively. Character-traits, too, on this theory, often go back for their ex-planation to features of the earliest development of the individual which are now unconscious. It is evident, then, that the place of Reason in human conduct recedes still further on such a view, and that the whole question of moral responsibility appears in a new, and apparently destructive, light. Man's ethical or cultural attainments now show

themselves to be merely a thin and easily broken through veneer. The under-layers of primitive egoism and crudity, so far from having been destroyed by education, are held to be continuously active in each one of us, seeking an outlet in all kinds of displaced or substituted forms.

(c) Finally, the psychology which flourishes in America under the designation of 'Behaviorism', and which was mainly associated at its inception with J.B.Watson, attempts to interpret human conduct without having recourse to the con--ceptions of 'conscious' purpose or motive at all. The traditional notion of 'desire' (as involving consciousness of an object and the recognition of the object as a good) is clearly unable to survive this kind of psychology. Desire becomes, as in Bertrand Russell's exposition of the creed, (Analysis of Mind. Chap. III) "a characteristic of a certain series of movements or behaviour-cycle", and the initial stimulus to such a cycle is an impulsion from behind, not an attraction from the future, such as is implied in the notion of 'consciousness of an end'. A complete Ethics in terms of Behaviorism will no doubt be one of the curiosities of philosophical liter--ature in the near future.

These distinct tendencies, then, in current psychological work have combined to make necessary some general re-casting of the traditional prolegomena to Ethics. No hard and fast

dividing line can now be drawn, apparently, between purely instinctive conduct, on the one hand, and voluntary or rat--ional conduct, on the other. The whole account of the springs of action requires re-statement . The traditional doctrine on this subject, if not so much dead weight handed on from one text-book to another, has at least to be modified in quite essential respects. Perhaps the most convenient beginning in this task is to be found in the examination of a conception recently introduced into modern psychology, the conception, namely, of what is called the Reality--Principle. What connection has this conception with moral behaviour?

Chapter II.

MORAL CONDUCT AND THE REALITY-PRINCIPLE.

1.

The Reality and Pleasure Principles.

A person's behaviour is said to be in conformity with the Reality-principle when it is, in ordinary language, sensible or practical: that is, when the person does not act to satisfy some purely selfish impulse, which urges in--sistently for its immediate gratification, but behaves in a way which at once allows for the claims of other people and takes cognisance of the actual situation in which the person finds himself. If a clerk has only £1, for instance, in his possession, with no prospect of any addition to his financial resources for a week, and has to pay for his meals separately during the intervening days, it would not be con--forming to the Reality-principle to spend ten shillings on a single meal, to satisfy some momentary extravagant impulse. However delightful the satisfaction of this impulse, the be--haviour is properly regarded as foolish or unpractical.

But human beings are so constituted that they find it, in

the beginning at any rate, difficult to follow the Reality--principle. In the first years of its life a child follows it very little at all. It follows rather what is called the Pleasure-principle. Its behaviour, in other words, is directed to the immediate satisfaction of every impulse as it arises, and its actions are determined by very little else than the strength of these impulses at each particular moment. It is the nature of the world in which the child finds itself that prevents the unbroken dictatorship of the Pleasure--principle. That world is such that impulses cannot always be satisfied as soon as they arise. A limit is set to the sway of the Pleasure-principle not only by the claims of other people but by the resistance of the physical environ--ment of the child. It is this limit or check which thus gives birth to the Reality-principle.

The latter, however, is evidently not so much a new or different kind of principle as a transformed, modified, or more complicated edition of the Pleasure-principle. It is an edition or version, too, which comes eventually to replace the older form. The way in which this replacement is effected can best be described in the words of Freud, to whom the use of these psychological conceptions in the first in--stance belongs. "The Ego learns", Freud writes, "that it must inevitably go without immediate satisfaction, postpone

gratification, learn to endure a degree of pain, and alto--gether renounce certain sources of pleasure. Thus trained, the Ego...is no longer controlled by the Pleasure-principle, but follows the Reality-principle, which at bottom also seeks pleasure --- although a delayed and diminished pleasure, one which is assured by its realization of fact, its relation to Reality." (Freud, Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, p.299) In another work Freud expresses his view in this way. The Reality-principle, he writes, "without intending to renounce the ultimate attainment of pleasure, demands and carries through the postponement of satisfaction... as a long détour towards pleasure." (Freud, Beyond The Pleasure--Principle, p.5)

It is, however, only after long training, which extends far into adult life, that an individual can reach the stage of acting habitually in accordance with the Reality-principle. Not until then, indeed, is he fitted to take his place in the community to which he belongs, as a socialised, moralised being. Some of a person's impulses, notably in modern societies those connected with the sexual instincts, undergo certain important developments in their conflict with the Reality-principle. They may prove of such exceptional strength that they even follow crudely the Pleasure-principle throughout most of the person's life. Or they may be

diverted from their original goal so as to subserve some social or cultural end. All native impulses, however, re--sist the domination of the Reality-principle at grave peril to the welfare of the individual. For to follow the Reality--principle is not simply dictated by prudence. It is vital to the wellbeing, and indeed the survival, of the individual.

To adapt oneself to the facts of Reality, to recognise that the world has certain stubborn qualities, has a kind of inner Law or Necessity, against which psychic activity, such as wishing or imagining, is in itself impotent, is quite imperative, if the individual is to maintain himself alive at all. He cannot stand out against the inexorable laws and properties of the real world, and survive. Just as, from the standpoint of biology, the maintenance of life depends on successful adjustment to the physical environment, so, from the somewhat wider standpoint suggested here, recognition of the facts or conditions of the real social medium in which a person lives is what determines the existence of that person as a competent unit in a civilized community. If he insists on gratifying his every impulse in flagrant defiance of the claims of other people or in wilful blindness to the actual facts of real life, the social group to which he belongs will remove or destroy him. For society cannot tolerate in its adult members an egoism too markedly childish: and a certain

minimum of conformity to the Reality-principle is the in--dispensable condition on which participation in the social enterprise is alone rendered possible for mankind.

2.

The Concept of Pleasure.

It should be added here, perhaps, that while these con--ceptions of the Pleasure and Reality principles, as thus used, offer a convenient description of behaviour control, they are not an altogether exact statement of the facts. A loose usage of the expression 'Pleasure-principle', for in--stance, may suggest that the doctrine of Hedonism is being expounded. This is not, however, implied. Strictly, the principle which has been called Pleasure-principle should be called the Impulse-satisfaction principle. The concept of 'pleasure' is an abstraction. It is the name given to a certain tone, or affective character, which is experienced in some types of activity. Its presence, as Aristotle suggests, is a sign of successful functioning on the part of the organism. As McDougall expresses it, "The correlation of pleasure with success or with progress toward the end of action, and of displeasure with failure and thwarting of action, must be accepted as fundamental, an ultimate fact of

mind, as ultimate as Newton's laws of motion or the gravit-ation of matter." (McDougall, An Outline of Psychology, p. 191)

It is not, then, the search for pleasure which is a fund-amental principle of behaviour, but the tendency to satisfy impulses, or to relieve the tension which an unsatisfied impulse involves. It is only the fact that such relief of tension is marked by pleasurable tone, that it constitutes in fact what is meant by pleasure, which makes it possible to regard pleasure itself as the end of activity. The expression 'Pleasure-principle', then, is an example of this convenient, but strictly inaccurate, usage. It must be emphasised, therefore, that no theory of Hedonism is implied by the above adoption of the expression. The distinction between follow-ing the Pleasure-principle and following the Reality-principle is to be more accurately described as the dis-tinction between satisfying impulses directly, immediately, by purely psychical means if possible, and satisfying impulses only to the extent that their satisfaction is compatible with the facts of the world and the claims of other people.

It is in this sense, then, that the conception of the Pleasure-principle should alone be understood. The concept-ion of the Reality-principle requires elucidation also, and to a much greater extent, for it raises still more important difficulties of its own.

3.

The Concept of Reality.

The conception 'Reality-principle' raises more difficult questions, because it is the concept of Reality round which centres the fundamental problem of Metaphysics. Is it valid, that problem runs, to refer to "the facts and conditions of the world in which one lives" as Reality? Are these facts and conditions objective entities, existing independently of human activity or perception, or are they themselves not simply products of that activity ? Are the laws and pro--perties of molecules, as reached by physical or chemical science, real truths, or are they not just formulations, hypotheses, conjectures, in short, subjective constructions determined wholly by the principles of the human understand--ing? It is evident that the use of the concept of Reality conceals certain definite metaphysical assumptions: and it is necessary to make these explicit before an ethical theory is developed which rests on them as a basis. In what sense, then, is it valid to use the concept of Reality?

Everything we can predicate in life is at least mediated, in virtue of its being predicated, by our mental apparatus: and it would seem that an analysis of mental process must be the first step towards determining the function of the concept

of Reality. Now if we try to describe the existence with which we have immediate acquaintance, and reconstruct, on the basis of introspection, the inner character of our mental life, we can find no more expressive image than that of a flow or stream of activity, a 'continuous flux', in Bergson's phrase, of processes which are called psychical. This flow of activity is the inner functioning, of which our observable behaviour is taken to be the outward expression. It is activity which is felt, or experienced, or 'enjoyed', in the technical sense, and represents to us the working and the pattern of what is called the life-impulse. The activity, if we examine it, seems to move in obedience to an inner tension of the organism, and is directed to the diminution or removal of that tension. The tension may be a comparat--ively simple one, such as hunger or thirst, or it may be exceedingly complex, such as the vague longings of an artist in the throes of creation. Partial or complete success in removing tension is reflected in a lightening of effort, to which, as we saw above, the name 'pleasurable' is given. In less exact, but more familiar terms, we may say that the activity is directed to satisfying the wants of the organism, these wants being, in the first instance, the instinctive impulses, the primary biological needs, of the individual.

Now at what is probably an early point in the flow of

this activity-stream there makes itself introduced a certain resistance to what was hitherto a smoothly-flowing, even movement. Psychical activity, however much repeated, varied, or stressed, finds itself unable to remove certain tensions. The summoning of all its resources, for instance, in reviving former satisfaction-of-hunger-activity, to call it so, will not of itself remove a present hunger-tension. In other words, psychical activity is very soon punctuated by certain checks, or impediments, in its flow, and these checks (in spite of the truth behind Auto-Suggestion doctrine) may prove stubborn, unyielding, intractable. On the emergence of every such check the flow of the activity-stream undergoes some alteration, some change of direction: some increase of ten--sion, it may be, and consequent stress, or, eventually, some diminution of tension and the resumption of the smooth pro--gression of the activity-stream along its own path to the attainment of its goal.

A distinction thus forces itself into the child's exper--ience, at an early point, between two characteristics of its activity-stream. That stream, on the one hand, flows evenly along on some occasions, without a break in its tenour, without resistance to its movement. It is charact--erised, on the other hand, by periodic checks or impediments, which, while themselves merging into its flow, do not fit

into it as smoothly and accomodatingly as the remainder. In this distinction there is foreshadowed the later clear-cut division of an 'inner' world of psychical processes, a world of psychical reality, and an 'outer' world of physical ob--jects, a world of physical or material reality. What has happened, it seems, is that the activity-stream finds it convenient, perhaps imperative, to project these impediments or intractable features in its flow. It conceives them as 'outside' itself, and later (though very much later) as in--dependent of itself.

When the child begins to reflect, he seeks to understand the source of these 'independent' phases of his experience. In so far as he has reached the conception of a 'source' by attributing the inner flow of psychical activity to himself, (originally in the third person, it is to be noted, as the result of imitation), he proceeds to attribute these outer or independent features of the flow to other selves, and regards them as the activity of beings or organisms similar to himself in every respect. Everything hypostasized in this way is conceived, at first, as alive, human, animate. The toys of the child, the physical environment of the savage, are all endowed with the properties and functions of human beings. But later reflection conceives some elements to be inanimate objects, or 'things'. At a still more

sophisticated stage of knowledge these may be described as 'forces' or 'ethereal vibrations' or 'stimuli which impinge on the sensory receptors of the organism'. By whatever name they are known, however, they are the projection of what was experienced originally as a check, or impediment, or at any rate a distinctive feature in the continuous activity-stream of psychical life.

It is in this way, then, as far as the process can be re--constructed, that there is eventually formed the conception of a 'world' or 'reality' other than the self. These re--current phases in the flow of the activity-stream which stand out from the remainder as distinctive are most simply dealt with by the conjecture that they originate in 'outer' objects or forces, commonly assumed to exist in their own right, in--dependently of the experiencer. Ultimately these outer ob--jects are regarded as forming a totality or universe, and it is to this that the name Reality strictly applies.

On this analysis, too, it is clear that the conception of Reality ranks as a conjecture or hypothesis. It is forced on the experiencer as the best way of handling awkward facts, as the best way of interpreting and controlling his exper--ience. But it is so consistently vindicated throughout the whole of life that it has become the very bedrock of all our beliefs and mental habits, even of our mental structure.

Only in a philosopher do people regard with indulgence (no doubt tempered with amusement) the suggestion that the con--cept of Reality is of hypothetical or conjectural origin. To common sense nothing seems so certain as the Reality of an external world, independent of the thought of individuals.@

@ It is perhaps useful to indicate here the different in--terpretations which philosophy has suggested with regard to this problem, and how these conform to the analysis above. Material reality, it was shown, is, in the first instance, a distinctive phase of experience. If it is conceived also as existing independently of experience, does it follow that there are two material realities, one about which nothing can be known, and one mediated by experience, or phenomenal? Or are there two distinct streams, or flows, or worlds, one of ideas and one of things, which correspond in some way, or resemble each other? Again, if we concentrate on experience as a single stream, which is what is given, and if material reality is admittedly <u>at least</u> experience, should we not regard it as merely experience, with certain forms of Idealism?

The salient facts in the whole question are the activity--stream and its threefold character. As activity-stream it constitutes what is called the Ego. One phase of the stream may be regarded as self-explanatory, another requires re--ference to the body, another requires reference to a Reality. All are phases of the stream, however, as Solipsism points out. The third is a phase of the stream, as Subjective Idealism points out. It is possible to abstract the Reality reference, and treat it as an independent entity, the Realists insist. But this, it is replied, is merely a convenient abstraction for pragmatic purposes, and ignores the fact that the Reality <u>reference</u> is secondary to the <u>being</u> of Reality as a phase of the activity-stream. The discussions, it is evident, can be carried out to the greatest degree of minute and subtle epistemological analysis. But it is sufficient, for the purposes of the present theory of Ethics, to give the above outline merely, with the supplement contained in the rest of this chapter.

4.

Reality as Physical and Social.

In this conception of Reality, as it is formed by a member of a civilized group, there can be distinguished two aspects, which it is proposed to call physical and social. The conception of Reality is of course most familiar to us as the conception of something physical. It is the concept--ion of a world which possesses certain definite character--istics, which exhibits certain sequences and uniformities, which expresses fixed laws of nature, impervious in their operation to all forms of mere psychical activity, such as hoping or imagining or wishing. When we speak of following the Reality-principle, too, we usually mean to adapt one's behaviour to this physical aspect of Reality. It is indeed just the one object of the earliest education of a child to ensure that he will appreciate and recognise this physical character of Reality, for his safety and survival very clearly depend on knowledge of this kind. If a child remains ignor--ant of these physical laws, and calmly plays, say, with matches and dynamite, or attempts to swallow an inedible toy, he is plainly courting immediate disaster.

But the conception of Reality may be said to have a social aspect also. This consists of the economic, moral, and

cultural conditions prevailing in the community to which the individual belongs. It seems legitimate to regard these conditions as an aspect of Reality, because they are just as impervious to the wishes of the individual as are physical facts. To follow the Reality-principle will therefore signify to conform to social as well as to physical facts. It is not difficult to show how such conformity to social Reality is as necessary for safety and survival as is the appreciation of physical Reality. If a person refuses, for instance, to accomodate himself to the facts of the economic system under which his group lives, accepting neither its conditions of employment nor its loopholes of charity, he is plainly courting starvation and death. There is what is often aptly designated a grim economic barrier, in modern civilized communities, which constitutes for most people a formidable aspect of Reality. Similarly, if a person refuses to live in at least outward conformity to the social con--ventions and moral regulations of his group, he will be ostracised, or segregated, or even destroyed.

There is, in short, an aspect of Reality which is <u>social</u> in character, and to adapt one's behaviour to social Reality is as vital for the welfare and survival of the individual as is the recognition of physical laws. The education which is furnished by parents, teachers, religious institutions,

and by all the myriad agencies comprised in one's social heritage, has for its main object to secure, on the part of every member of the community, that obedience to social laws without which the community could not itself exist. Reality, it is clear, has these two.distinguishable aspects, the physical and the social: the laws and properties of the material world, and the intangible, but equally adamant, con--ditions of social or common life. To adapt oneself to both is the very first prerequisite for survival.

5.

The Real and The Actual.

There is another, and perhaps more important,corollary to the account given above of the way in which the conception of Reality is formed. It is a conception the content of which develops. To common sense, for instance, Reality is a world of concrete objects, such as trees, rivers, mountains, stars, and the like. To scientific analysis it is a system of atoms, elements, molecules, or constellations. In the most recent physics and philosophical speculation it has acquired a still stranger garb, as in Einstein or Alexander. It would seem, then, that these different contents of the conception of Reality are properly to be regarded as working hypotheses

or approximations, rather than Reality itself. One way of representing this fact conveniently is to treat the content of Reality itself as an ideal, and, adapting the terminology of Hegel, to treat the different conceptions of the content of Reality which are conjectured at different stages of know--ledge as belonging to what might be called Actuality. The Real and the Actual are thus distinct conceptions. The Actual stands for the content of a conception of the Real at some particular point in the psychical flow. It is the Real, if we like, as mediated by experience. The flow of experience may be called, in Hegelian phraseology, 'existence' : but the mass of empirical elements which constitute existence or Actuality are not to be simply identified with Reality. The Actual is some formulated conception of the Real, rather than the Real itself. The Real, to repeat, is an ideal.

The use of the concept of Reality, it is now evident, does conceal a definite metaphysical doctrine. What the above corollary implies might be crudely represented in imagery of an elementary kind by comparing the Real to the summit of a mountain peak, towards which there is a gradual ascent, that is, experience. The path of the ascent stands for the Actual, that which gives a foothold whereby the psychical flow is at once controlled and guided. To follow the Reality-principle, on such an image, would signify to follow the path of the

Actual, rather than the airy tracks of pure psychical wishing, imagining, hallucination. Strictly, therefore, we should speak of the Actuality-principle, not the Reality-principle.

But even the use of such an image fails to convey the full nature of the Real and its relation to the Actual. For it is the Real which animates the Actual. It is only in so far as the Actual is animated by the Real, and embodies something of it, that the Actual itself has significance. The Real is not a separate edition of the Actual. It is implicit in the Actual, it <u>is</u> the Actual, the 'this' and 'now' , suffused with complete understanding. The 'particular' is never merely a 'particular', but is a partial expression of the universality from which it derives its significance.

It is no doubt a crucial task for any philosophical system which takes this standpoint to explain how a relation of this type is possible. Many explanations have been suggested, from the idealism of Socrates and Plato down to that of Hegel and his followers. But it is, in the last resort, a post--ulate, a hypothesis, a faith, reached by forcing reflection to its very limits, and by attempting to envisage the process of life and experience in their entirety. It seems, when we do this, as though life itself consisted in just this effort to reach the Real. It is a contest in which the goal is the full and adequate grasping of Reality. Life <u>is</u> the

effort at progressive attainment or comprehension of the Real. Why or how this should be remains insoluble for speculative thought. To probe further into the problems of what it is that is comprehending the Real, or why there should be this cooperative relationship between the activity of mind and Reality, is to tread in a morass of metaphysics in which there is very little sure foothold.

It must be emphasised, however, that to ignore the dis--tinction just drawn between the Real and the Actual leads to inevitable confusion. The disputes between Pragmatism and Idealism illustrate this. Schiller, for instance, argues that all recognition of fact is provisional, relative to our purposes and inquiries. "Our knowing", he writes, "is driven and guided at every step by our subjective interests and preferences, our desires, our needs and our ends." From this statement, which is strictly applicable only to the psychol--ogical impulse behind the processes of knowing, Schiller goes on to a statement about the content of knowledge, about Reality. He holds that "the direction of our effort, itself determined by our desires and will to know, enters as a necessary and ineradicable factor into whatever revelation of Reality we can attain." In other words, "to some extent the world is of our making." (Humanism, pp.9,10-11, 12)

But does it follow from the fact of a change in our con-

-ceptions of Reality that Reality is itself changing? It may be admitted that our conceptions of Reality are connected with one another, that one working hypothesis suggests another, less inadequate, that a later conception at once includes and corrects conceptions which have preceded it. It is this fact indeed which gives plausibility to the statement that "our effort is a necessary factor in the revelation of Reality". But this does not imply in the least that Reality changes as our experience changes. The content of our conceptions of Reality no doubt varies as our experience varies, but a part--icular content cannot be simply identified with Reality itself. To assume that there are real laws or properties of molecules, that there is a Reality or Necessity which in cooperation with human functioning appears as experience, is, it has been shown, the basis of all reflective interpretation of life. It is just as essential to assume that different conceptions of Reality are judged to be different because they approximate more or less to that Reality which is the ultimate explanation of the whole of experience.

It is easy to ridicule the conception of Reality in this sense, and to identify it with the immutable Being of the Eleatics or the abiding Ousia of Plato. But the conception of Reality is not necessarily the conception of something transcendental. It is a conception framed to interpret

experience, and it is just the name for the most complete conjectural interpretation of experience which can be given. Once it is granted that something other than psychical act--ivity is necessarily presupposed in experience, it follows that a distinction can be legitimately drawn between the Actual and the Real. The one step supplements the other, and carries the possibility of interpreting experience a stage further.

Such, then, is a provisional justification for the use of the concept Reality, and an explicit statement of the meta--physical assumptions involved in the expression "to follow the Reality-principle". The conception of Reality, it may be repeated, has been regarded as a conjecture, or hypothesis, but a hypothesis which acquires in the course of experience the greatest certainty possible in human knowledge. It was suggested that Reality can be distinguished as physical and social, and it was shown that the content of the conception varies or develops. To follow the Reality-principle, which is the condition of survival, thus signifies to adapt oneself to actual life, or to the laws of physical and social Reality, as these laws have been formulated, or understood, at any stage in human evolution.

Chapter III.

REASON AND MORALS.

1.

The Nature of Reason.

Since to conform to Reality is, as we have seen, the one fundamental condition of survival, it is natural that the capacity in man by virtue of which this conformity is poss--ible should rank as supremely important. The name given to the capacity varies. Descartes called it 'good sense', something which he held to be "naturally equal in all men", and to be in fact the mark of distinction between animals and human beings. (Discourse on Method, Part One). In present--day mental tests it is known as 'intelligence', and can even, by a series of ingenious devices and mathematical correlations, be represented quantitatively. The name for it, however, which is rooted most firmly in common speech is Reason. To follow the Reality-principle is equivalent, we may say, to what is conveyed by the expression "to be reasonable". In other words, reason, in its most general usage, stands for that capacity of an individual in virtue of which he can adapt his behaviour to meet the conditions of the world in which he lives.

That reason has this supreme importance for the practical business of living seems to be abundantly testified by the ordinary use of the word. Those, for instance, whose capacity of reason has been impaired, or who have lost their reason altogether, are just those persons who are no longer able to adjust themselves to the complex conditions of their life and surroundings. That is why the community does not allow them to mix freely with their fellows. Similarly, to call a person 'unreasonable' indicates a belief that the person so called is acting in a selfish, self-centred, obstinate fash--ion, incompatible either with the real facts of his situat--ion, or with the claims of other people. To 'reason' with such a person is to try and make him perceive those facts or claims. It is significant that it is invariably taken for granted that the perception, in the case of reasonable beings, will necessarily be followed by behaviour more adapted to Reality. Reason, then, would seem to be the most appropriate name for this capacity of an organism to adapt its behaviour to Reality, or, in the original phraseology, to follow the Reality-principle.

This is no doubt more readily apparent with regard to physical Reality. If a person believes, for instance, that twice two are five, or that playing with burning matches is a healthy pastime, he is evidently 'unreasonable'. Reality

is so constituted that twice two are not five, and that burning matches are dangerous. But it is equally true of social Reality. If a person firmly believes, in spite of a situation plainly incompatible with the belief, that he is the Emperor of China, he is again 'unreasonable'. The social conditions under which he lives are such that he is not the Emperor of China. In both cases, physical and social, to be unreasonable conveys the same meaning, and the use of the expression rests on the same grounds. The criterion of what is reasonable lies, ultimately, in Reality, under one aspect or the other.

Reason, on this view, is evidently a capacity of the in--dividual which grows or develops, not a faculty complete from the beginning, with categories which are incapable of analysis. It is a capacity which has been evolved in the organism because of its supreme survival-value. The Prag--matic standpoint, it is only fair to note, has in this conn--ection supplied a useful corrective to any purely abstract conception of reason. Schiller writes, for instance, "I cannot but conceive the reason as being, like the rest of our equipment, a weapon in the struggle for existence and a means of achieving adaptation. " (Humanism, p.7) So Dewey, "The genuine heart of reasonableness lies in effective mastery of the conditions which <u>now</u> enter into action." (Human Nature

and Conduct, p.67) The nature of reason, in other words, is capable of analysis. Its categories are to be explained in terms of past experience. They must reflect that Reality or Necessity, that Nature of Things, from the need of under--standing which reason has been evolved.

This does not imply, of course, that there is nothing fixed in the character of reason. Just as the organism possesses sense-organs and pre-rational tendencies, instinct--ive dispositions which have been imposed on its structure in the course of evolution, and now seem rigid, unalterable, ineradicable, so reason may itself be regarded as exhibiting certain definite characteristics, or categories, which have likewise become rigid, crystallised, as the result of their age-long transmission. It is the business of Logic to make explicit these categories of reason, but some of the Post--Kantian logicians have gone further, and endowed them with creative power, taking the effect for the cause. What is being emphasised here, therefore, is that these categories reflect that Reality or Necessity for the appreciation and understanding of which reason has been evolved. It may be said that the categories are objective and universal. They are, admittedly, but it should be remembered that these characteristics apply, strictly and in the last resort, to Reality. It is only in so far as Reality has imposed its

nature on the structure of the organism, on the mental equip--ment of the species, that these qualities (universality, objectivity, and the like) can be attributed to reason. The 'Laws of Thought', for instance, are universal, objective, prior to experience: but the ultimate explanation of their character is just that some permanence must be assumed in the world, in Reality, if predication is to be possible. It was in a philosophical setting of Heraclitean and Sophistic views about Reality that Plato and Aristotle were led to formulate these Laws of Thought. It is the nature of Reality, in short, which has determined the ways by which thinking must proceed.

The categories, then, are residual traces of the effort of the organism to grasp and conform to Reality. They are, as it were, clues, successful hypotheses, which reason has now made its own. The detailed analysis of reason, the statement of the technical elements out of which its fabric is woven, need not be more exactly indicated here. A strik--ing analysis has, for example, been presented by Rignano, in his recently-translated 'Psychology of Reasoning'. But, in the most general terms, reason seems to be bound up with the characteristics of life itself, and to consist essentially in a process of synthesis or integration.@

@ A fuller account of this whole theme is contained in section 62 of my essay on "The Unconscious",(London, 1923).

We may shortly define reason, then, for our present needs, as just the capacity of the organism to maintain itself, at a certain stage of development, in its relations with the real world: the capacity to appreciate the properties of the physical world and the conditions of social life: and the capacity of adapting its behaviour to those properties and those conditions. The fact that reason is regarded as the supreme capacity of human beings, as that which differentiates them, in fact, from other creatures, reflects the unique survival-value which the evolution of the capacity entails. The categories, it has further been argued, are genetically related to Reality. But their appropriation has been now so thoroughly rooted in the structure of the organism, in reason, that there is a virtual identity between the Real and the Rational, as the famous dictum of Hegel suggests.

2.

Reason and Morals.

The argument which is contained in the different sections of the above discussion may now be stated in summary form, as follows:-

(a) Reality, to which the individual must adapt his be--haviour, on peril of destruction, signifies not only the

physical world, but, in the case of members of an organised community, signifies a system of certain social conditions as well. These social conditions, regarded generally, (the relation between them, for instance, between economic and moral conditions, is considered below), constitute the data of morals. They are, even at first glance, conditions which are essential to the possibility of common or group life. They furnish, it might be said, a more complicated expression of Reality. At a certain stage in human evolution, the stage at which social life has emerged, Reality displays this new aspect. It now comprises the customs, the laws, the conventions, in short, the morality, of the group in which the individual lives.

(b) In virtue of a capacity which is known as reason, and which is the most important capacity the organism possesses, the individual is enabled to adapt his behaviour to Reality, in both its physical and social aspects. In the former case, successful adaptation ranks as practical or scientific knowledge, perhaps as common sense. In the latter case, it ranks as goodness, virtue, morality.

(c) Thus to be moral, that is, to have insight into the conditions of social life, and to be reasonable, are ex-pressions of the same fundamental capacity in human beings. To obey the regulations of one's group, to respect the claims

of one's fellows, in short, to be honest and unselfish and decent, does not spring from a 'moral sense' which is diff--erent from anything else in the human constitution, but re--flects, in the last analysis, the measure of one's capacity of reason, of adapting one's behaviour to the facts of social Reality, of controlling impulses and following the Reality--principle.

It should be added, even at this stage, that the dis--tinction drawn above between the Real and the Actual has an important implication with regard to social Reality. It implies that the existing moral customs or practices of a community, the empirical content of social Reality at any time and place, are to be regarded as a formulation of the Real, or an approximation to the Real. They constitute the moral currency which has been created by the reason of some particular community to make social life, or at least its conception of social life, possible. It is not in the least legitimate, therefore, to regard them as merely so much antiquated lumber, no longer of use, which can be swept aside by the ardent social reformer as irrelevant for his purposes, or even as impediments in his path. They are more properly to be regarded as the most valuable tools which the reformer can find, the very instruments, in fact, by which he may attain his improved or more reasonable conception of social Reality.

Existing systems of morality may vary, just as existing systems of physics vary. But there is a substantial basis of proved and accepted doctrine in both. Neither a new theory in physics, nor a new experiment in moral and social practice, can be suddenly put forward, with any hope of winning acceptance, if it bears no relation to the existing structures of physics and morality, as these have commended themselves to the reason of men. It would seem, then, that the Actual, in morals, should stand for the attempt to embody social Reality, and that the Real, in morals as in knowledge, represents an ideal, at once the goal and the inspiration of the process.

Such, then, is the argument to which these early chapters point. The thesis which has been stated offers a preliminary clue to the significance of morals. Some of the traditional conceptions of Ethics will now be examined in the light of this thesis, and the fuller implications of the thesis will be shown by contrasting it with certain historical views to which it bears, at first sight, a resemblance.

Chapter IV.

MORALITY AND LAW.

1.

The Identity of Morality and Law.

It would seem to follow, from the theory which has now been outlined, that the regulations of morality are simply the conditions essential to social life. If this is so, there appears to be no difference between morality and law. For law is just that body of conditions which a community regards as essential to its maintenance. Yet it seems as though we do recognise some difference between law and morality. Sometimes morality appears to be very much wider than law. As the Roman jurist Paul puts it, 'non omne quod licet honestum est'. It is occasionally possible to be dishonest without stepping outside legal requirements. We often impute, for example, to certain sharp practices of business or finance, which may be not actually illegal, a taint of doubtful morality. On the other hand, law some--times appears to be wider than morality. It deals, for in--stance, with such things as the control of traffic and the collection of income-tax, the 'moral' significance of which is perhaps not immediately evident. Law and morality,

therefore, seem certainly distinct. When the Greek poet makes his Antigone appeal, in a famous phrase, from the law of her country to those ἄγραπτα κἀσφαλῆ θεῶν νόμιμα, (Sophocles, Antigone, 454-5) the "unwritten but immutable laws of God", the contrast comes out in vivid colouring. How, then, can a theory of morals be valid, if it implies that law and morality are virtually the same thing?

It may be replied, in the first place, that it is ex-ceedingly difficult to state the exact criterion by which law <u>is</u> to be differentiated from morality. It has been suggested, (for instance, by Kant, in his 'Science of Right'), that law is concerned only with the external actions of an individual, or rather, with his actions considered merely as outward events, whereas morality is concerned with the actions as inner determinations of the will, as expressing motives. Law can compel a person to pay his debts, that is, it can regulate the outward action. But it cannot, on such a view, ensure that the payment results from a <u>moral</u> motive, from the recognition that some moral principle is involved. As Caird comments, "It is obvious that Jurisprudence, in the strict sense of the word, reaches so far as, and no farther than, the possibility of compulsion." (Philosophy of Kant, II.p.298) In Kant's own words, "Legal right.. must base

itself firmly on the principle of the possibility of an ex-ternal compulsion... Right and claim to apply compulsion are therefore the same thing." (ibid.pp.298-299)

But this suggested criterion does not stand the test of deeper analysis. Law does concern itself with more than the external action. It enquires, for example, into intentions, which indeed, especially in criminal law, are just what give to an action its specific legal character. To restrict law to the external action would be to make it simply a branch of physical science. Besides, law itself may be said to supply a motive, or inner determination, for behaviour, inas-much as the knowledge that violation of the law involves penalty or suffering may conceivably act as a determining influence on a person's conduct. Further, to treat the outward expression of behaviour as an isolated or abstract element, unrelated to its context of motive, impulse, purpose, intention, and all the organic structure of human character and dispositions which give it meaning and life, can at most be a convenient, practical mode of classific-ation. It cannot withstand critical analysis.

Granted, however, that there is no exact line of diff-erentiation possible between law and morality, does it follow that they are identical? If they are indeed ident-ical, why do they appear so certainly to be different?

They are identical, it seems, with respect to the function in human affairs which they fulfil. In the last analysis, law and morality do express the same fundamental need in human life. Nothing in law, it is clear, can be said really to lack moral significance. Traffic control, the rule of the road, the law of inheritance or conveyance of property, even the collection of income-tax, are all directed to sub--serve the maintenance and the welfare of the community, which is a moral end. Law and morality appear to be diff--erent because they give effect to this common moral end in different degrees. The conditions under which law is realised, its generality, its impersonal character, its inevitable use of rigid language and the consequent difficulty of interpretation, all combine to accentuate the apparent contrast between law and morality. Law seems static, alien, stagnant, while moral principles seem to be as fluid and as mobile as the living substance in which they develop.

The ultimate source of law, however, is just this very growth of moral principles, this effort of reason to form--ulate the conditions of social Reality. Law has its roots in the living soil of moral development. It seems to lag behind morality because it embodies the conception of social Reality which belongs to a particular stage of human pro--gress. It is like a photograph, which records the living

personality in what was simply a momentary phase of its continuous growth. But it is in reason, in the moral con--sciousness, that the ultimate source of law is to be found. Law and morality, so far from being in any sense divorced, coincide both in origin and in function. The apparent difference between them merely signifies that law is a specially conditioned form of morality. As general and as static it can reflect only partially what is in essence a living, dynamic growth.

2.

Morals and Jurisprudence.

The view just suggested is in harmony with the standpoint of the Roman jurists. For their definitions of law clearly indicate a conception of the underlying identity between law and morality. At the beginning of Justinian's Institutes, for example, we read that 'Justitia est constans et perpetua voluntas, jus suum cuique tribuens', that is, "Justice is the spirit which always, without intermission, assigns to each person his due". Such a definition, it has often been noted, belongs almost wholly to moral philosophy. 'Voluntas' is reminiscent of Aristotle's ἕξις προαιρετική, and the words 'jus suum cuique tribuens' take us back to the opening pages

of Plato's Republic, where a similar definition of justice is attributed to the poet Simonides. Again, the other de--finition of law, 'Jus est ars boni et aequi', that is, "Justice is the craft of what is good and equitable", which Celsus formulates, and Ulpian so warmly commends, makes law quite evidently an embodiment of morality. Indeed the source of the great, massive strength of Roman Jurisprudence lies very largely in its close blending of law and morality.

But the most significant fact of all, in this connection, is the place of Equity in the development of law. In Roman law, the 'Jus Civile' or positive body of laws applicable to Roman citizens came gradually to be modified in practice by the 'Jus Gentium' or 'Jus Naturale', that is, a 'Law of Nature' which was supposed to be prescribed for all mankind by the light of natural reason. It was under the influence of Greek philosophy, no doubt, (if Stoicism, with its strong Eastern or Semitic element, can strictly be called Greek), that the Jurists were led to find this basis of equity in reason. But the development of Roman law, and of this 'Jus Naturale' or Equity in particular, shows quite clearly that the ultimate source of law and morality was held to be the same. That this analysis is sound seems also to be con--firmed by the history of modern Jurisprudence. The moral basis of law was consistently identified with this very 'Jus

Naturale' or 'Law of Nature'. This is the standpoint of Aquinas, for instance, of the Schoolmen and Canonists, notably of Hooker, (where the Law of Nature is regarded as the Law of God), of Grotius, founder of International Law, of Locke, where, as Ritchie remarks, the idea of a Law of Nature forms almost the whole background of his thought. Vico had designated it the "conscience of mankind", from which, he holds, law emanates, and in and through which alone society can exist.

Again, in the metaphysical analysis of law, or the 'Rechtsphilosophie', as it is called, of the Continental jurists, it has been emphasised time and again that law, like morality, is founded on reason. What these writers call 'Naturrecht', or Law of Nature, is a vague formula for what has been called above 'Social Reality', comprising those ideal social conditions which constitute at once the source of evolving positive law and the criterion by which that law is tested. Law derives, in other words, from the moral life, from the rational conception of social Reality. Thus Krause defines 'Recht' as "the organic whole of the outward condition necessary to the rational life", and Henrici holds, "Right is that which is really necessary to the maintenance of the material conditions essential to the existence and perfection of human personality". (Quoted in Green, Principles of Political Obligation, section 11, footnote).

There seems, then, to be abundant evidence for the view that law is rooted in morality. The end and the criterion of law, it is clear, are essentially moral conceptions. In the work of Green just quoted, law is regarded as "the con--dition of a positive realisation of the moral capacity". Or if we expand, as in Pollock, the old definition of law given by Celsus (Jus est ars boni et aequi), law can be aptly described as "so.much of the permanent principles of moral justice as is reduced or reducible to a technical system" (Pollock, Oxford Lectures, p.22). In the more vivid phrasing of Hegel, law is "the scaffolding, or rather the rudimentary framework, of society and moral life." It is the first stage, in his system, of what he calls Objective Spirit, that is, "the harmonious life of the social organism." Just as law can realise this ideal only partially, for the reasons indicated above, so, in Hegel's view, there is a corresponding inadequacy in the merely subjective aspect of morality, or private conscience. But in Social Ethics, or 'Sittlichkeit', that is, in what was designated above the ideal of Social Reality, or, in other words, the moral or rational life of the community, there is for Hegel a reconciliation of law and morality, of inner and outer, and they reveal their under--lying unity and identity.

From these different sources, therefore, there is ample

justification for the view that law and morality fulfil the same function in the development of organised human society. The apparent difference between them reflects the difference in the conditions under which they function. Law is necessarily general, impersonal, rigid, whereas moral prin-ciples are living, progressive, dynamic. But the ultimate inspiration of both is the same, namely, that spark of collective reason in human beings which represents for us the main clue that we possess to the nature of life itself.

Chapter V.

FREEDOM.

1.

The Springs of Action.

In the argument which was developed above with regard to the replacement of the Pleasure-principle by the Reality--principle, it was tacitly assumed that the individual has the power of postponing or denying the gratification of his impulses. In the traditional language of Ethics (at least, modern Ethics) free-will or freedom has been taken for granted.

But the conception of freedom raises certain problems of its own. To maintain, on the one hand, that man possesses the power of doing whatever he pleases, in defiance of natural law, or of the effects of habit, or of the limitations imposed on him in virtue of his innate endowment or environment, seems an exaggeration which only the completely unreflective judg--ment will dare to countenance. On the other hand, to follow the solution that seems to have commended itself to many writers, since the time of Spinoza, and to displace the emphasis in the concept from a power of acting or refraining

from acting to the particular content of action or kind of action performed, to hold, in other words, that man is not free, but is becoming free, seems to be no more than tacitly abandoning the substance for what is in this case a part--icularly unsatisfying shadow. Popular belief, law, theology, all cling to, and attempt to vindicate, a conception of freedom, which, if crude, is at least real and satisfying. Nothing probably has contributed more to the discredit and suspicion with which Psycho-analysis, for instance, is commonly viewed than its alleged inconsistency with freedom. What, then, is the bearing of the theory of morals suggested above on the problem of freedom?

The simplest approach to the question lies in an analysis of the ultimate springs of action. The primary necessity which is imposed on the human organism by the conditions of Reality can be described very generally as the control of stimulation. (In the more technical language of thermo--dynamics every system is said to tend to equilibrium). Now the human organism, in its effort to win success in the control of stimulation, evolved in the course of time a nervous system, and through this nervous system there funct--ions something we call mind, or a mental apparatus. In psychological terms, stimuli which necessitate the inter--vention of mind are known as wants, or appetites, or desires,

or, again very generally, as impulses. Impulses, then, signify present tensions of the organism, and the business of the organism is to try and relieve those tensions and so attain relative equilibrium. This is known as satisfying impulses. An impulse which is in process of being satisfied, or which has not yet been wholly satisfied, is what is known as a 'feeling'.

Certain ways of solving tensions hit the mark so com--pletely that they become mnemically engraved in the structure of the organism. These are called habits, as, for instance, eating or drinking, and represent means of relieving tension, modes of response, which the organism has originally devised and now retains as permanent features of its being. The power or capacity in virtue of which the organism originally forms habits constitutes an essential character of life, or, as it has been called above, reason. These habits, it may be noted, are always operative, even when not specially em--phasised. Habits of walking, for instance, are what de--termine judgments of distance, and habits of drinking affect a person's response to curative factors during, say, an attack of influenza. The organism, above all, is a unity, and its growth consists in the power of greater and greater integration, more and more complete adaptation in the face of an environmental situation becoming constantly more

complex. The function of habits is to subserve this capacity for integration.

Such is the basis of the account of action given above, in less exact terms, as the replacement of the Pleasure--principle by the Reality-principle. The instinctive im--pulses constitute the tensions which prompt the organism to action. The solution of tension is marked by a state of relative equilibrium, or by a 'pleasurable' tone: the crude sway of the Pleasure-principle yields to a more complicated, but more efficient phase of the principle, known as the Reality-principle: and the capacity in man by which con--formity to the Reality-principle is attained is simply the capacity of Reason. This is the psychological background on which the question of free-will or freedom has to be met.

It is evident, then, that freedom must be closely related to reason. Free-will has in fact been assumed in the ascription to human beings of a capacity of reason. Since, too, reason has been regarded as the characteristic mark of the life-impulse itself, freedom and life are evidently akin also, perhaps synonymous. Is this apparent identity of freedom, reason, life, really tenable?

2.

Freedom and Reason.

Much of the difficulty in the conception of free-will has

arisen from the misleading psychological abstraction of a 'will', and the exclusive emphasis on freedom of the will. This abstraction of a specific function of willing from the unified activity of the organism is responsible for the in--numerable artificial problems of motived or motiveless choice, determination of the will by antecedents, and the like. A methodological postulate of Determinism in mental life is assumed to contradict the freedom of an abstract 'will'. But in reality will is not a faculty which can be thus isolated. What will stands for is just the most fundamental capacity of the organism, the core or essence of a self or character. Will, in short, is simply a phase of reason. It emphasises the moment of activity, whereas reason suggests the abstract description of the capacity, or the capacity as potential. Both will and reason are just distinguishable aspects of the one fact. A particular volitional act is no more than a constriction, a localising, a concentrating of the general integrative capacity of the organism known as reason. To will something is to focus at a particular point, where a specific tension has been located, the requisite resources or mnemically engraved potentialities, of the organism.

That will is thus essentially bound up with reason can be readily shown also if will is contrasted with wish. To

wish is to follow a psychical process, which recks nothing, or practically nothing, of Reality, but, as in day-dreaming, flits inconsequentially from one image to another. To will, on the other hand, is to take cognisance of Reality, and to conceive or execute behaviour which fits into a world of real facts and other people. It is the criterion of reason, or the Reality-principle, which marks the distinction between them. Will, in short, is just reason regarded as at some specific moment of action.

To speak of free-will may be permissible, then, if it is remembered that the 'free' part of the conception expresses that general characteristic of the organism known as its capacity of reason, and the 'will' part of the conception is an abstraction, a dramatic or figurative isolation of the organism in the moment of functioning. It is in the cap--acity of reason to adapt behaviour to the facts of Reality that the nature of freedom is alone revealed. Man is free because and if he is reasonable, and the measure of his rational insight into the conditions of the world in which he lives is the measure of his freedom.

It is perhaps relevant to notice here how this view of the identity between reason and freedom is confirmed from Law. Law makes use of the concept of 'responsibility', as the equivalent of moral freedom, and the criterion of

responsibility is invariably the possession of reason. Only those persons are deemed to be legally responsible for their actions who are fully reasonable, that is, are not minors, lunatics, etc. There are, too, degrees of responsibility in law, as in the infliction of wrongs on another person : and in this connection it is again reason which provides the test. "The rule is", we read in Erskine, "that every one must be held liable for the natural and probable consequences of his act or default, and that there the liability stops. The only criterion that can be suggested is that the result must be such as might have been foreseen by a reasonable man" (Erskine, Principles of the Law of Scotland, 20th edition, p. 102).

Law requires in fact the exercise of reasonable care in all the ordinary activities of life, and the plea of thought--lessness is by itself deemed insufficient to secure exemption from legal penalties. As the maxim has it, 'ignorantia juris neminem excusat'. In short, law takes its stand upon the view that the members of a community who are fit to partic--ipate in social life are reasonable beings and therefore responsible or free: that in virtue of their reason or freedom they can adapt their conduct to the facts or claims of Reality: and that the measure of their adaptation must corr--espond in every predictable event with what is implied in

"the exercise of reasonable care". The whole doctrine of legal responsibility evidently supports the view of reason and freedom suggested above. Similarly, the justification of punishment can only come from the assumption of reason in the wrong-doer. The recollection of the punishment, it is intended, will serve to ensure a greater measure of adaptation to the Reality-principle, or control of purely selfish im--pulses: in short, the exercise of a greater degree of reason. Thus McDougall points out in one place, "While we rightly punish children and animals, we do not punish madmen" (Social Psychology, p.232).

3.

Unreasonable Action and Freedom.

It may be questioned, however, whether this view, valid as it apparently is in the sphere of law, holds good in Ethics also. If freedom is just the capacity of acting reasonably, why, it will be asked, does the capacity so often yield to some overmastering impulse, and how is the fact of such 'unreasonable' behaviour compatible with the possession of reason and freedom?

It may be replied, in the first place, that Reality has been distinguished as physical and social. Now in the case

of physical Reality, while it is the mark of reason to grasp and conform to physical facts or laws, it is sometimes found that in certain people psychical elements are so strong that the people in question ignore the testimony of physical Reality in some respect or other. They are a prey to super--stitions or prejudices, they are perhaps the victims of some strange hallucination. Thus some primitive religions induce a belief in the causal relation between propitiation of a goddess and an excellent harvest, while many quite reasonable persons attributed the sudden death of Lord Carnarvon in 1923 to a malign spirit of the dead Egyptian monarch whose tomb he had violated.

May not a similar psychological analysis apply to social Reality also? To conform to that aspect of Reality con--stituted by moral regulations is, as we have seen, likewise the mark of reason. But in this sphere too certain in--stinctive impulses are so strong in some people that they fail to grasp, or ignore, the testimony of social Reality. They plunge headlong into a career of unscrupulous wealth--begetting, or they become petty offenders, or even, in the course of time, hardened criminals. The psychological pro--cesses, however, seem to be the same in the case of both aspects of Reality. The one class of persons is imperfectly reasonable in respect to physical Reality, the other class is

imperfectly reasonable with regard to social Reality.

It is true, of course, that there is a difference in the consequences of intellectual and of moral unreasonableness. A minimum of rational behaviour in respect to the physical world is such an immediate practical necessity that the standard in this sphere is apparently higher than in the other. It is easier, for instance, to grasp the danger to life from exposure to an earthquake than to perceive the social collapse which would accompany the violation of moral principles to any large extent. But in both spheres it is the exercise of reason which is the one condition of in--dividual and social maintenance. What is being stressed, in short, is simply that, at the stage of complexity in the evolution of life which is marked by the emergence of social order, there can be discerned the functioning of a capacity known as reason, and that in virtue of the possession of this capacity man seeks to adapt his behaviour to the facts of Reality, both physical and social; more especially, it is in virtue of this capacity that man is able to control his im--pulses, to postpone their immediate satisfaction, and even to forego the attainment of certain impulse-satisfactions altogether, in order to secure, consciously or unconsciously, the survival and stability of his group.

It may be pointed out, also, that reason operates only

within certain limitations, set by the constitution of the organism itself. The analogy of the rules of a game may again be adduced. Just as there are definite rules govern--ing a game, to which every player must strictly adhere, but within the requirements of which there is scope for the greatest differences of skill, proficiency, talent: so, it would seem, there are definite facts concerning human nature, its physical powers, its instinctive dispositions, the plast--icity of the nervous system, from which facts there is no escape nor appeal, but within which may be exhibited the greatest differences in reasonable behaviour. It is the distinction, in a slightly modified form, between Ethics and Psychology. The facts about human nature are material for psychological analysis. The task of such analysis is to reveal the springs of conduct, the mechanisms of character--formation, the tortuous paths along which impulses proceed, how they are deflected from their original goal and perhaps sublimated, and so, in a word, to disclose the entecedents of a present particular tendency to action. But all this psy--chological analysis, it is evident, only applies to the rules or limits under which reason functions. It leaves intact, undisputed, unaffected, the bare capacity of reason, and in consequence freedom, with which Ethics is primarily con--cerned.

No amount of psychological analysis, in fact, can justify the hypothesis of Determinism in morals, any more than such analysis can afford a complete explanation of moral be--haviour. The standpoint of the two sciences is altogether distinct. Determinism stands for a postulate of method, a necessary assumption for the scientific treatment of that construction of experience with which psychology deals. If an element in that construction is to be 'explained', it must be regarded as the result of antecedents, as related causally to other elements in the system. Otherwise no scientific treatment of mental activity is possible. But the stand--point of Ethics is quite distinct. The possibility of ethical or moral judgment rests simply on man's capacity of reason, and whatever the ultimate object of the moral judg--ment may be, (a particular action, or a habit, or character as a whole), it is not explained by being given its place in the psychological construction of experience. The moral standpoint is, What amount of rational insight into the con--ditions of social life does this action reveal? In so far as the action is reasonable, judged by the first principles of social Reality, it is free. Determinism, which is a postulate of method, has no meaning in Ethics. All action, if it is to be treated psychologically, must be regarded as having been determined. But all action, if it is to be

made the subject of moral appraisal, must be regarded as the expression of reasonableness, greater or less: and the measure of reasonableness is the measure of moral freedom.

There is nothing incompatible with freedom, then, in the fact that some behaviour is unreasonable. No one would deny that there is skill involved in the game of chess, for ex--ample, on the ground that some people who have practised the game for many years are poor players. If we would appreciate the possibilities of a game, we study its finest exponents. Similarly, if we would understand the nature of reason or freedom, we must go to the lives of great statesmen or wise rulers, to men of outstanding character or achievements: for these embody the highest reach of human capacity known.

There are vast differences in moral reasonableness, that is, in moral development or stature, just as there are vast differences in mental or intellectual stature. It is even possible, indeed, that such differences can themselves be correlated, and that there is actually an exact correspond--ence between the stages or reason in the two spheres. Thus petty offenders are usually defective in reason or intell--igence: and some experimental work has been carried out (reference to which is made, for instance, in McDougall's "National Welfare and National Decay") which even suggests an exact correspondence between certain mental traits and

certain moral qualities.

It may still be objected, however, at this point, that many rogues are exceptionally intelligent persons, and that many very clever people are highly immoral. Is it not quite arbitrary, it may be asked, to use the same term, reasonable--ness, in reference to both moral and mental spheres? Is it not still more arbitrary to imagine that there is any exact equation between them?

The reply to this objection is that we commonly use diff--erent criteria in estimating moral and intellectual attain--ments, and that the criterion by which we judge a rogue to be clever is not the criterion by which moral reasonableness is to be judged. An unscrupulous but successful financier of a modern community is deemed clever, or intellectually reasonable, because of his <u>success</u>. But the test of moral reasonableness is not success in amassing wealth. It is rather the measure of a man's insight into social Reality, that is, the wellbeing of the community as a whole. It may be that, on this view, the unscrupulous financier is markedly unreasonable, and that he owes his success (an ephemeral, accidental success, dependent on some particular standard of the age, in this case an economic one) just to that blind insistence on the gratification at all costs of selfish im--pulses, which overrides consideration for the claims of

other people, and which constitutes the very essence of im-
-perfect grasp of social Reality. Success, in short, is not
the criterion of reasonableness, any more than of right-
-eousness, if by success is meant economic prosperity. It
is in the light of a person's adjustment to Reality, to the
conditions of social life, to the welfare and healthy devel-
-opment of his community, that his reasonableness is to be
judged, and from this point of view there is no contradiction
in using the same term 'reasonable' in reference to both the
intellectual and the moral spheres.

If it be asked, why is it more reasonable to be moral and
unselfish than to use all one's resources in furthering one's
own personal ends, irrespectively of the welfare of others,
the answer can only be that reason is the capacity of con-
-forming to social Reality, and that social Reality consists
of the welfare of the community, perhaps of all mankind, not
of any single individual only.

We may conclude, then, that reason has at least an analog-
-ous function in the mental and moral spheres, and that in
both spheres 'unreasonable' behaviour can be interpreted on
the same psychological principles. Above all, the concept-
-ion of freedom is not rendered untenable by the fact of
unreasonable behaviour in moral matters. Just as the dis-
-coveries of scientific enquiry and the results of historical

or intellectual criticism are open to all men, in the degree to which their reason has developed and grown capable of understanding them, so all can share in the treasures of their moral heritage, their moral tradition, and even enrich that tradition with the fruits of their own vision, in the degree to which they have learned to act in accordance with reason, and to adapt their conduct to the facts of social Reality. This is the significance of freedom, and this is its ground. Freedom is neither magic power nor capricious license. It is neither an academic abstraction nor an unreal projection, the reverse side to the consciousness of impot--ence. It is bound up with the very birthright and supreme endowment of human beings, with that capacity in virtue of which both social and cultural life have emerged, with the ultimate force or impulse which is at the very root of all human striving and human development.

Chapter VI.

FIRST PRINCIPLES IN ETHICS.

1.

Moral Progress.

The argument hitherto has made use of conceptions which have been stated only in very vague form, notably the ex--pressions 'social Reality', 'conditions of social life', 'regulations essential to the possibility of group-life'. If these are what morality signifies, morality signifies, apparently, anything at all. For even the most casual glance at the history of men shows that social life has been main--tained, temporarily at least, under the greatest diversity of moral regulations. The laws and customs which have pre--vailed at different times, among different communities, seem almost to be legion. Scholars and travellers are still adding to our knowledge of them, and many classical accounts of them, such as those of Hobhouse and Westermarck, are already the familiar data of Ethics itself. If we find, then, as we do, that certain practices, such as slavery and infanticide, have been compatible with social life, and even with social life of a brilliant cultural level, by what right

can such practices be 'morally' condemned? They have apparently been "conditions of social life", and no criterion has been indicated as yet in virtue of which they can be shown to be 'unreasonable' or 'immoral'.

A certain light is thrown on this question if we consider first of all the analogy which has been constantly emphasised above between social and physical Reality. It is clear that the variety of moral codes in human societies can be paralleled by an equally bewildering variety of intellectual or scient--ific conceptions. The capacity of reason, it seems, in its endeavour to reach the laws and properties of physical Real--ity, that is, Truth, has given birth to many theories which later have been recognised as crude or tentative. The ultimate nature of Reality is best represented, we saw above, as an ideal, of which the scientific hypotheses current in any age are to be regarded only as a more or less inadequate formulation. Yet in spite of this fact no one doubts that there <u>are</u> ultimate laws or properties of physical Reality, however imperfectly these laws may have been grasped, and however diversified men's conceptions of them may appear. By analogy, then, it seems possible to understand "conditions of social life" or laws of social Reality as ultimate laws in a similar sense. In this sphere, too, the capacity of reason, in its endeavour to grasp the laws of social Reality,

has given birth to many practices which later have been re-cognised as tentative or crude. The ultimate nature of social Reality, that is, in ethical terms, Goodness, is likewise best regarded as an ideal, of which the moral customs current in any age are only a more or less inadequate form-ulation. However imperfectly, therefore, the character of social Reality may have been grasped, and however diversified may appear the conceptions and moral customs practised by groups of all ages, there seems no reason to doubt that there are here also ultimate laws or conditions which constitute the nature of social Reality.

It would seem, then, on this analogy, that the criterion in virtue of which, say, slavery and infanticide are to be judged immoral is to be found in the same way as the crit-erion of physical Reality. It is not a new problem, but a new aspect, rather, of the one problem. It is evidently analogous to the criterion whereby we judge the scientific conceptions of Aristotle less adequate than the formulation of Galileo, or deem the Newtonian laws of motion less adequate than the theory of Relativity propounded by Einstein.

It has to be admitted, of course, that the problem of the moral criterion is much more complicated than that of the physical. The discovery and proof of moral laws, it is evident, present far greater difficulties than the discovery

and proof of physical laws. To verify a new conception of social Reality may involve many ages of human experiment, and speculation in these matters cannot be subjected to the same immediate test of the laboratory as can speculation in physics or chemistry. The examples of Prohibition in America or of Communism in Russia, within our own time, ill--ustrate very vividly the peculiar difficulties in moral or social experiment.

Hence the progress in reaching a more adequate conception of social Reality seems slow and uncertain, as compared with the progress in physical science. Most important of all, the very principles by which the fact of such progress is to be determined are far less understood or accepted in the case of social Reality. Yet on the empirical side it seems that the history of man <u>does</u> warrant the hypothesis of moral pro--gress, and that there is sufficient evidence to justify an attempt to formulate the first principles of morals. Just as there have been landmarks in the growth of scientific knowledge, and a succession of brilliant enquirers who have laboured to win some new vision of truth, so there have been landmarks in the history of moral development, and a succ--ession of great poets and prophets who have proclaimed a new gospel of Goodness. The vision from Sinai, the teaching of the Hebrew prophets, the 'pagan' teaching of Socrates and

the Stoics, the coming of Christianity, the Renaissance and the French Revolution, the spread of democracy, these surely belie man's moral poverty or sloth, and give ground for that faith in moral progress which is the light of human life.

Nor is it sufficient to undermine this faith by pointing to man's failures in the past. In the few thousand years of civilized life there have been, it is true, many cultures. Each has run its appointed cycle, and collapsed apparently into nothingness. If Spengler's famous theory is correct, and these cultures are to be regarded as isolated phenomena, sporadic attempts to achieve conditions of social Reality, the fate of the modern Euro-American civilization, which represents the latest experiment in social Reality, is pro--bably as gloomy as Spengler and his disciples paint it. The next experiment, in Russia perhaps, may be more success--ful. But it should be remembered that it is really by contact and interaction that a culture is born and develops. Our own Western attempt has been founded not apart from its predecessors but on their very ruins. The hypothesis of a world culture tradition (with its original source probably in Egypt, as Perry has lately suggested, in his "Children of the Sun") seems far more justified by the evidence than the hypothesis of independent culture-cycles, springing up some--how or other and eventually dying, self-sufficient organisms

which leave no seed.

It is a legitimate task for Ethics, then, to sift out the principles which underlie moral progress from the mass of empirical data available. It is only fair to add, however, that even in writers who adopt this empirical standpoint, and more particularly in the Ethics of Pragmatism, the assumption of first principles at all in this connection is disputed. It will be necessary, therefore, to examine now whether the Pragmatic claim is itself valid, before the argument can be developed any further.

2.

A Defence of Ethical Principles.

The standpoint of Pragmatic Ethics is in many important respects similar to the position hitherto outlined here. It is characteristic of Pragmatism, for instance, to keep morals in the closest relation to actual life, rather than to find moral principles in an "unreal and transcendental" world, to quote Dewey's phrase. (Human Nature and Conduct, p.50) Dewey holds that morals spring from "the make-up and working of human forces", (p.3), and that they are bound up with the facts of the environment in which these forces operate. But Dewey lays almost exclusive emphasis on the importance of

this social environment in forming moral habits or ideals. He regards the problem of moral effort as solely one of re--constructing or re-making this environment. He writes, for example, in one place, "Individuals with their exhortations, their preachings and scoldings, their inner aspirations and sentiments have disappeared, but their habits endure, because these habits incorporate objective conditions in themselves. So will it be with <u>our</u> activities. We may desire abolition of war, industrial justice, greater equality of opportunity for all. But no amount of preaching good will or the golden rule... will accomplish the results. There must be change in objective arrangements and institutions. We must work on the environment not merely on the hearts of men. To think otherwise is to suppose that flowers can be raised in a desert or motor cars run in a jungle. Both things can happen and without a miracle, but only by first changing the jungle and desert." (ibid.pp.21-22)

The standpoint behind all this is to some extent akin to that which emphasised above varying conceptions or formulat--ions of social Reality. But how is an improved conception of social Reality reached? How, to take Dewey's illustrat--ions, are the jungle and the desert to be changed? Are there no first principles for dealing with jungles or deserts? More generally, granted that the task of moral

effort is to re-fashion the social environment, is the re--fashioning not to be guided by any principles of ethical progress?

Pragmatism shrinks from admitting anything so remote from practical affairs as 'first principles'. It construes social Reality in its immediate connotation, as that which was called above social Actuality. Just as the Real, for Pragmatic theory of knowledge, is that which is actually present in any particular act of knowing, so that is socially Real which forms part of any existing social environment. It follows that the entire stress of moral effort is laid by Pragmatism on some immediate change in social conditions, no guidance whatever being offered with regard to the principles by which such change is to be affected. To believe in a single, fixed and final good, for instance, is, Dewey holds, "an intellectual product of that feudal organization which is disappearing historically and of that belief in a bounded, ordered cosmos, wherein rest is higher than motion, which has disappeared from natural science" (Reconstruction in Phil--osophy, p.162). Pragmatism refuses to be preoccupied with general conceptions. Action for its own sake is taken to be the solution of all difficulties. As Carlyle's famous dictum urges, "Produce! Were it but the pitifullest in--finitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's

name! " (Sartor Resartus, The Everlasting Yea).

Dewey himself is thoroughly inconsistent, because he admits the conception of progress, as consisting in an "increment of meaning", but nowhere distinctly states what the criterion of that increment is to be. "Progress", he writes, "is present reconstruction adding fullness and distinctness of meaning". "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof". "Every situation has its own measure and quality of progress". "Progress means increase of present meaning", and the categ--orical imperative should read, "So act as to increase the meaning of present experience." Finally, "Till men give up the search for a general formula of progress they will not know where to look to find it" (Human Nature and Conduct, pp.281-283).

Not only so, but the word 'principle' itself is anathema to Pragmatism. It is a "eulogistic cover for the fact of tendency." All that tendency imports is the "probable effect of a habit in the long run". It is sheer human con--ceit, Dewey argues, to imagine there is any higher guarantee for the goodness of an action, that is, to imagine that Ethics can lay down any first principles by reference to which actions can be morally appraised. The role of chance is not to be omitted. "Luck, accident, contingency, plays its part." To imagine that there is any validity in such

conceptions as those of abstract justice or equality or liberty is to make morals that unreal and transcendental science, divorced from the actual facts of life, which was criticised above. Worst crime of all, "it is the source of all 'idealistic' utopiahs" (ibid.pp.49, 47-48, 50).

Is this extreme view tenable? Is the attempt to form-ulate first principles in Ethics not merely difficult, but thoroughly unsound in its very inception?

Pragmatism carries its dislike of theorizing too far, in this connection. There may be some usefulness, from the standpoint of immediate action, in emphasising the actual change which a situation requires, and in refusing to waste time over the discovery of what first principles are in-volved. But it is surely evident that the immediate action, the change itself, expresses some idea or principle, however imperfectly thought out. The real choice is not between action and theorizing, but between action which expresses a vaguely realised, imperfectly understood principle, or idea, and action which expresses an idea or principle more fully, more thoroughly understood. First principles are not ne-cessarily the barren abstractions, the academic playthings, of which Pragmatism gives such a travesty. They are the mainsprings of practice itself, the standards by which "increment of meaning" can alone be estimated.

Action which changes a situation, which relieves a present tension in a momentarily satisfactory way, may ultimately be more dangerous than no action at all. Yet Pragmatism allows of no criterion by which any choice can be made. If a person is extremely heated, for instance, as the result of violent exercise, and immediately quenches his thirst with a glass of iced water, he has 'done something', he has "in--creased the meaning of his present experience", without having recourse to those barren abstractions, the first prin--ciples of bodily health and functioning. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof". It is sheer human conceit, according to Pragmatism, to imagine that remote first prin--ciples about the circulation of the blood should enter into action of this kind. Does not such an instance show clearly that all action is prompted by <u>some</u> idea or principle, how--ever crudely or vaguely conceived? What justification can there be, therefore, for preferring a less adequate idea, a less clearly understood idea, to one which is more adequate and more distinctly realised?

Further, it follows from the Pragmatic hostility to first principles, and from the exclusive emphasis on the social environment in shaping moral practice, that moral progress, assuming that the conception is permitted at all, reduces to a matter of pure accident. If no legitimate place exists

for reasoned thinking out of a situation and for action in accordance with general principles, the happenings of life must be just the product of chance, of something arbitrary. Dewey, it is highly significant to notice, does not shrink from this conclusion. "It is one of the ominous aspects of the history of man". We must face it, he writes, and re--cognise "how little the progress of man has been the product of intelligent guidance, how largely it has been a by-product of accidental upheavals." "We have depended upon the clash of war, the stress of revolution, the emergence of heroic in--dividuals, the impact of migrations generated by war and famine, the incoming of barbarians, to change established institutions." (Human Nature and Conduct, p.101)

Reasoning of this kind cannot withstand critical scrutiny. No doubt it is possible, for some limited purpose in view, to treat war and revolution and the rest as ultimate facts. But the historian who would interpret has data as widely as possible cannot afford to regard these dramatic upheavals as discontinuous variations, real beginnings, springing up from nowhere, with no prior cause, great adamant rocks of bare action, devoid of any connection with human aspirations and human strivings. War and revolution and the others re--present rather the converging, the localising, the meeting--points, of ideas which have long been surging in men's

hearts, of conditions which have long been moulding men's thoughts. It is the idea, the thought, the principle, which comes to a head in one of these dramatic outbursts. The outburst is only symbolic, an outward sign, evidence of the thought which it embodies. To take it as an ultimate fact, caused by nothing in particular, a mere casual or arbitrary by-product from which more human liberty or more human happiness or more human justice has fortunately, but quite accidentally, accrued, is no more than a gratuitous confession of impotence. It is to deny that a more complete analysis is possible or profitable because analysis up to a certain point offers a convenient halting-place. It is to confuse the immediate or predisposing factor with a complete causal explanation. It is to take as ultimate fact what is in itself only a partial and momentary phase of one continuous process.

There is no justification, then, is may be concluded, for denying the validity of an attempt to formulate ethical principles. Such an attempt must not be simply the exer--cise of pure reflection on what can be logically deduced from an à priori concept of Duty, nor will it be the formal statement of the principles of an Ethics which is unreal and abstract and transcendental. The Pragmatic standpoint is a useful and necessary corrective to the excessively barren

products of a great deal of traditional ethical speculation. It is clear that Ethics cannot be legitimately lifted out of the actual setting of human forces and human institutions within which it may be said to exist. But within this field there is room, and need, for a broad, general survey of the facts, and for an attempt to reach the principles which those facts reveal.

Chapter VII.

LIFE AND EQUALITY.

1.

Security of Life.

It is clear from the above discussion that the search for first principles, or the attempt to formulate the crit--erion of moral progress, must proceed by surveying the different forms of social order that have been known in the past, and by sifting out those features which have apparently conduced to the survival of the group from those which have apparently conduced to its weakening or destruction. Such a survey cannot be wholly detached from preconceived ideas. Just as some vague hypothesis informs the outlook in every inductive survey, so, in Ethics, some such formulas as "The greatest Happiness of the greatest number" or "Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness", constitute the kind of pre--conception meant. The exact problem, therefore, in the present connection is not so much the formulation of new principles as the examination of those principles which are universally felt to be fundamental. Experience presents us with many forms of social order, many attempts to express social Reality. It is from conclusions based on this

experience that the starting-point of an enquiry into ethical principles must be taken. Can these conclusions be sus--tained by appeal to the widest range of knowledge and the most searching criticism or analysis?

The first principle of Ethics, then, can be described as Security of Life. The degree of effectiveness with which the physical maintenance and security of the group are achieved measures the possibility of cultural attainment. We may say that the need for security of life, as expressed in the prohibition of murder, constitutes the first principle of morality. It is clear that if the members of a group were permitted to kill each other whenever their impulses prompted, no social or common life would be possible at all. Nor can any instance be adduced from history of a group which sanctioned indiscriminate killing and succeeded in maintain--ing itself. The need for security of life is such a fund--amental feature of social Reality that it may be said to rank as a moral truth, analogous to those elementary truths about physical Reality, such as the law that fire burns, or the statement that "two plus two equals four". It is immediately verifiable, a condition, in short, without which social life can nowhere and at no time be maintained.

The curious sect of the Thags, who practised murder as a sacred religious rite to their Goddess, and were completely

untroubled by any moral scruples in the prosecution of their task, does not contradict what has been claimed. For the Thags confined their victims to non-Thags, and there is no question in their case of a group which permitted promiscuous internal killing. Practices of human sacrifice are a mod--ified form of this same class of rite, and leave the ar--gument similarly unaffected.

The Ethics of Buddhism constitute perhaps a more inter--esting problem. The vision of Gautama seems to be crudely expressible in this way. Suffering is the necessary con--comitant of existence: suffering comes from desire: and the only adequate way of removing desire is to cease existing. The end of life, therefore, is Nirvana, the negation of desire or thought. It might seem, too, that a theory which raises 'equilibrium' to be the goal of mental activity, as was suggested above, logically implies some such ideal of nothingness, since with every increase of complexity in the situation to which the organism responds the possibility of attaining equilibrium recedes more and more.

But it has to be remembered that security of life is a first principle of morals only on the assumption that social order, that is, the maintenance of the human species, is necessary. Ethics has been shown, above, to be essentially bound up with the maintenance of common or group life. If

it is denied that there is any justification for the main-
-tenance of life there is obviously no room for Ethics.
Conditions of social life are only worth enquiry if it is
granted that social life is itself the all-inclusive good.
Nor is the argument from an abstract sense of the concept
'equilibrium' any more valid. For equilibrium does not
mean the absolute cessation of activity. It means activity
which represents the maximum adjustment possible within the
given situation. Even in thermodynamics, from which the
concept was borrowed, it is not a static ideal. (Theoret-
-ically, at minus 273 degrees, all existence ceases: but
such a limit merely states the given outer circumference, as
it were, of the circle within which theorizing takes place).
In moral matters, it is within a setting composed of life
and its maintenance that ethical theory proceeds, and it is
only with reference to that setting that it is even relevant.
It is difficult to see on what grounds the maintenance of
life can be denied a good, because it constitutes the one
all-inclusive setting from which grounds or arguments derive
their validity.

The prohibition of murder, then, is a first principle of
morals, or a 'moral law'. It applies of course only to
human life, since it is the existence of the human species
which is the ultimate goal: and in most modern communities

men's impulses to kill have been diverted from human ob-
-jects on to animal ones, with socially valuable results.
The vivisection controversy, in so far as it is a moral one,
is simply decided on the view that it is the existence of
the human species, with all that this implies, and not the
existence of life in all forms, life as such, which is the
moral end. The Cartesians were sound in their practice, at
least, however doubtful the automaton theory of animal life
from which they proceeded.

No existing form of social Reality, it must be admitted,
is wholly free from occasional violations of this moral in-
-junction to refrain from murder. But the rarity of such
violations is a good test of the moral stability of the
group in question, and of the sensitiveness, perhaps, of the
moral consciousness of the members of the community. On
the reverse side, at any rate, that is, the taking of life
by the group or society where the existence of the group has
been threatened, this sensitiveness is very clearly shown.
The number of crimes, for instance, now punishable by death
shows, in Britain, a striking contrast to the position even
a hundred years ago. It seems as if the conviction were
growing that human life represents the supreme moral end,
and that only in the most extreme necessity should the group
destroy that which is the very condition of moral attainment.

2.

Sex-Regulation.

Closely connected with security of life is the regulation of sexual impulses. The necessity for this is not perhaps so immediately obvious as in the case of murder, but it is really prior to murder. Probably, in other words, the im--pulse to murder had its roots originally in sex-desire.@ It is clear, at any rate, that among the strongest impulses of human beings are those derived from the sexual instincts. Their strength is such that, as was noted above, they prove the least amenable to control by the Reality-principle: and it is the imperfect control of these impulses which leads to a very large proportion of social maladjustment. Now, even on biological grounds alone, the control of sexual instincts is imperative to the maintenance of the group: and such control becomes more and more severe as the group achieves an increasing measure of cultural development.

It is natural to find, then, that beneath the diversity of all known moral codes there is a common fact of sex--regulation. Its details vary considerably, and often the control is punctuated by periodic outbursts of license,

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@ Bovet's "The Fighting Instinct" (1923) shows, for instance, how there is originally always a close relation between the sexual and the fighting impulses.

masked in some cases even under the guise of 'religion'. Sometimes a man is permitted several wives, sometimes a woman is permitted several husbands (as, for example, among the Nairs of the Malabar Coast). But, whatever the details or the degree of the restraint imposed, a marriage-tie of some kind is an invariable feature of successful group--maintenance. The regulation of sex-impulses, then, would seem to constitute another fundamental condition of social life, another 'moral law'. Even in Platonic or modern forms of Communism the principle of regulation is not ignored. Indeed, the fact that the word morality has in popular usage an almost exclusively sexual connotation would seem to in--dicate that regulation of sex-impulses is the most fund--amental condition of all, in social Reality. Thus, among the Jewish people, it is customary to read a portion of the Mosaic Law on every occasion of public worship, and it is not a little significant that on the Day of Atonement, which is the most important occasion in the whole religious life of the people, the portion traditionally read is that section in Leviticus which deals with the forbidden relations or forbidden degrees in marriage.

There are, then, elementary moral laws of this kind, or basic conditions essential to the very possibility of social life and the maintenance of the species. But just as the

physical universe is conceived as an interrelated system, so the conditions of social Reality cannot be stated any more exactly in abstraction, but constitute an interrelated whole. To ascertain, therefore, which particular sex-regulations are most likely to secure social wellbeing is not feasible at this stage. The claim of the Eugenists to have formulated a better expression of social Reality has to be examined in the light of all the other principles involved. It is not suff--icient to decide, with the 'stunt' Press, that Peers should marry Chorus-girls, or to point out, with the American psy--chologist Knight Dunlap, that cabaret-girls are recruited from just the most desirable type of mates for intellectuals. Details of this kind can only be adjudged when the nature of social Reality has been elucidated more thoroughly.

3.

The Principle of Equality:

The most notable feature which can be detected in the data from which the moral criterion is constructed consists in an increase of the range of persons who participate equally in the privileges of group life. If, then, there are any first principles at all in moral science, any fund--amental tendencies the operation of which is revealed in

the successive expressions of social order which the history of man exhibits, this principle of equality must rank as the most significant of all. The conception of 'liberty' makes perhaps a more vivid appeal to sentiment, because the very existence of social life seems to run counter to the crude notion of absolute freedom. But the logical ground of liberty itself is equality. It is only because human beings have equal worth, and should not therefore suffer restrict--ions from which other people are freed, that the concept of liberty seems such a self-evident principle of Ethics.

The great moral revolutions in the history of Western civilizations can be legitimately interpreted as simply attempts to realise more and more completely this condition of Equality. It was, for instance, an integral feature of Stoic teaching. "We are all fellow-subjects", writes Aurelius, "and, as such, members of one body-politic." "The first principle in man's constitution is community." (The Thoughts of Marcus Aurelius, IV.4, and VII.55) It was the salient mark of Christian teaching that it insisted on the absolute worth of the individual, high or low. The basis of the Jus Naturale, which constituted, as was pointed out above, the strength of Roman Jurisprudence, was again the tacit belief that men are equal. The same conception was the inspiration behind Magna Charta, behind the American

Declaration of Independence, behind the Declaration of the Rights of Man at the revolutionary epoch in the history of France. It is, too, the main source of that moral appeal which is so vividly enforced in the writings of the founders of British Socialism. For the industrial organisation of modern societies has long outgrown the moral categories by which it was originally informed, and the glaring inequalities of Distribution which are now its concomitant constitute one of the admitted imperfections in modern formulations of social Reality.

Writers on Ethics have of course themselves been conscious of the place of equality in the moral life, and have given it emphasis in different ways. It is implied, for instance, in Kant's deduction of the categorical imperative of duty from the nature of rational beings. "Act", Kant's maxim runs, "so as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of others, always as an end, never merely as a means." This can be justified only if a basis of equality is assumed, that is, if all human beings are assumed to have equal, absolute worth. Similarly, in the formula of Utilitarianism, "Every one to count for one and no one for more than one", the same principle of equality is presupposed. Sidgwick expresses it in only a slightly modified form. In Green's "Prolegomena", again, there is a detailed analysis of the development of the

moral ideal, and it is suggested that such development con-sists in "a gradual extension... of the range of persons to whom the common good is conceived as common." The limit of this extension must, it is shown, coincide with the whole of humanity, so that part at least of the criterion of moral development is the measure in which other people are included as equally participating in a construction of social Reality. "It is not", Green writes, "the sense of duty to a neighbour, but the practical answer to the question Who is my neighbour? that has varied" (Prolegomena to Ethics, section 207). It is evident, then, that this extension of duty to the whole of humanity rests on an implied principle of universal human equality, and that, in these various formulations, equality is tacitly assumed as the underlying first principle of Ethics.

But, as stated in these forms, the principle of equality has a certain abstractness. As Dewey points out, in a different context, "Ideals of justice or peace or equality... are not things self-enclosed to be known by introspection. Like thunderbolts and tubercular disease and the rainbow they can be known only by extensive and minute observation of consequences incurred in action." (Human Nature and Conduct, p.57) The conception of equality in particular is so vague that it lends itself very readily to intellectual abuse and

to misinterpretation. The doctrine of 'Natural Rights', for instance, associated with Rousseau and eighteenth century political thought, rests on a radically abstract conception of equality. The equality of men does not imply, as this theory assumes, that each individual has a certain quotum of rights (such as the right to live, to marry, to enjoy per--sonal freedom) simply in virtue of having been born, and that law or society dare not interfere with the enjoyment of these rights. Such an interpretation of equality lays all the emphasis on 'rights', and ignores the correlative con--ception of 'duties', which rights necessarily imply. It exaggerates the role of the individual, and depreciates the role of society, in the attainment of moral or social order. It is only within the setting of a social order that rights or duties have any meaning at all.

Again, equality does not imply that every member of a group should have exactly the same amount of possessions, as crude expositions of socialism at one time suggested. It is not to be imagined that human beings are an aggregate of indistinguishable units or dots, exactly the same in every respect. As Hegel showed, in his 'Philosophy of Right', equality should not be construed as an abstract sameness or bare identity. If equality implies anything at all with regard to possessions, it can only be in respect to the

possibility of ownership. All men are equal in the sense that they are possible possessors, but this is not incompat--ible with there being differences between individuals in the amount of possessions they own, provided that, as Hegel says, such differences reflect differences of talent, energy, character, in short, the various elements which go to con--stitute personality.

Any merely abstract interpretation of equality, then, must omit something of the full nature of this moral principle. Where, then, can it be studied more concretely? Where, to return to Dewey's phrase, can 'extensive and minute observ--ation of consequences incurred in action' be carried out in connection with equality?

There are partial embodiments of equality in the actual institutions and sentiments of past or present societies. In particular, the working of Democracy, which is at first sight perhaps more a political than an ethical conception, affords the best clue to the moral implications of equality. For the life of the democratic communities in Europe and America and the British Colonies offers the mearest approach to the attainment of equality that the history of men can as yet reveal. It is a far cry from the Athens of Pericles to New York of to-day. But what was confined to a few privileged citizens in the former is now the common possession of literally millions of the great community that comprises the latter.

4.

The Working of Democracy.

Democracy as a form of government, or a technical system of political administration, is comparatively old in the history of the world. But in Ethics its application is not so familiar. Yet democracy embodies the very essence of the moral ideal. It was "to make the world safe for democracy" that an American idealist, in the European War, urged his countrymen to give their lives on the soil of France and Belgium. In this sense the democratic sentiment is the fundamental principle of Ethics, a passionate conviction of men's hearts, a faith which is the driving power behind all efforts to maintain and improve social life.

The most clearly marked feature of the democratic sentiment, as it is embodied in, say, present-day America, is the attempt to secure equality of opportunity for every member of the community. It is tacitly understood that each individual, whatever his birth or parentage, is entitled to strive for all the prizes which his group has to offer. If he is able to appropriate the best in life, the conditions of the group are such that the appropriation is made possible. Striking instances of this are a feature of American industrial life. Men born with no privilege of caste or influence have become,

through sheer grit or genius, great pioneers of business and leaders of industry, triumphing over every obstacle of nature or circumstance. The only condition of success, in the truly democratic or moral community, should lie in men's ability and determination to succeed. In America, theoret--ically, a condition of this kind is more nearly realised than anywhere else. The sentiment of democracy <u>is</u> taken for granted, universally, like religion in a priest. Only the evils incidental to modern industrial development, and the loopholes offered to the weaknesses of human nature by this factor, have partly impaired the realisation in practice of the moral sentiment which originally inspired the community. But, on the positive side, there is an amazing freedom from conventional or artificial restrictions on the attainment of industrial success.

Equality of opportunity, however, does not mean that <u>all</u> differences between members of the democratic community are obliterated. On the contrary, it serves to enhance diff--erences of ability or actual achievement. There are no artificial distinctions, for instance, in America, no peer--ages nor hereditary titles, but there are real differences between individuals, and the test of these differences is just the test of actual capacity or achievement. This cor--ollary of the truly democratic sentiment is probably what

underlies the cult (or catchword) of 'efficiency'. A man is measured by his efficiency, by the way he does what he professes to be able to do.@ The community guarantees an opportunity to reap the rewards of efficiency, and measures the distinction between its members by the degree of effic--iency to which each attains, estimated in terms of some common standard. Democracy is not, therefore, synonymous with slackness or ease. Even the great natural resources of America do not sustain its population without the keenest effort on the part of the citizens. As was said of Murger's Bohemia, 'Vae Victis' is perhaps a not unfitting motto to stand outside the gates of the modern democratic community also. But, such being the general temper of the community, there is usually as a consequence an atmosphere of eager, pulsing life, a spirit of enterprise or adventure, which spring from the basis of equal opportunity, and are inspired by the legitimate hope of great and worthy prizes. The best in life is within the reach of all, if a man has the endurance and the capacity to attain it.

@ The curious quantitative outlook of the American is per--haps explicable on this ground. The measurement of eff--iciency is most simply obtained by reference to some common standard, such as money or figures. An American sees nothing in the least grotesque or even unsuitable in judging Caruso, say, to have been a greater artist than McKormack, because the former commanded bigger fees than the latter.

It is important, of course, not to confuse what is in-
-herent or essential in the working of democracy with certain
by-products which are merely transitional, due to the com-
-parative immaturity of all existing democracies. The effect
of the democratic outlook is, to begin with, a process of
diffusion, or levelling, and the movement from above down-
-wards seems more noticeable at first than the movement from
below upwards. The main effect, therefore, of a tentative
democracy seems to be to introduce more uniformity, more
imitation, more monotony of type. It is curious to observe,
for instance, in a city like New York the uniformity of men's
clothes, the monotony of rows and rows of identically con-
-structed apartment houses, the gregariousness of the people's
mental and social responses.

Illustrations of the same fact, in rather a different dress,
are found in the spread of 'popular' science and philosophy
in a mass of widely-read journals, and in the character even
of American scientific work. For in that sphere there is
much more detailed, highly specialised and minute record of
facts than there is attempt to correlate results in the light
of first principles. It is as if there were a democratic
suspicion of first principles as too exclusive, too aristo-
-cratic. In Sociology, which American writers have made
very largely their own, this is specially marked. In

Philosophy, reference has already been made to a similar characteristic of Pragmatism, the chief American movement in recent times. The whole philosophy of James, in fact, is an apotheosis of democracy, a criticism of the 'vicious in--tellectualism' of idealistic or aristocratic systems: and its constant emphasis is on the side of 'radical empiricism', on the side of actual facts, on the sordid and muddy streaks of real life.

All this, however, represents only one aspect of the whole situation. There is in addition a movement really percept--ible towards a higher diffused standard of well-being and culture. On the physical or material side it is very clearly marked. The standard of living, the facilities for rapid transportation, the material comforts and inventions of the age, have nowhere been so fully developed and utilised as in the democratic communities. The realms of music, too, and of art, of opera and the drama, are less exclusively the possession of a single leisured class. In every sphere it is as if the highest point and the lowest were being grad--ually pressed together to meet each other in a middle level, and as if, with the abolition of extremes at either end, the subsequent process were to consist in a raising of this level, as the common possession of every member of the comm--unity.

Directness and simplicity of outlook are characteristic of American democracy also. Accidental or trivial factors are quickly brushed aside, and essentials clearly envisaged. This leads, on the one hand, to a certain absence of feel-ing for tradition or for the amenities of social life, and to a certain almost callousness of outlook. Nothing is sacred, not even marriage or religion or death. On the other hand, the simplicity of outlook often degenerates into mere credulity, and some of the Greek philosophers' analyses of the dangers of democracy are illustrated in America. The relation between the sexes is an interesting feature of the system. Men concentrate all the results of their business ability on the adornment of their mates, and the women, recognising apparently the fundamental importance of their function as mates, place upon themselves a much more exact-ing standard in personal attractiveness than elsewhere, (this is meant of course to apply generally and diffusedly, not to a special class only), and turn themselves out with remarkable charm. There is very little glamour or false sentiment about the marriage-tie. The life of the commun-ity, however, is a real partnership between men and women, and the frank comradeship of the sexes reflects the direct-ness of outlook from which it ultimately springs.

Life, then, in the truly democratic community has a

certain stimulus and intensity. Where every source of human betterment and culture, every channel of recreation or achievement, are within the reach of all, in the measure of their capacity to utilise them, life is full to overflowing. The knowledge of great rewards open to all, the feeling of participation in a vast common enterprise of ambition and daring, bestow on the individual a consciousness of power which is exhilarating. If the full significance of the democratic conception could be thoroughly realised, and its implications completely incorporated in the actual every-day lives and habits of men and women, the community would be magnificently alive, electric, pulsing. Democracy, in short, is not an obstacle to the development of personality. So far from weakening individual initiative it affords it the very strongest stimulus. The range and scope of the de--velopment of personality are enlarged, its field of ex--pression widened and enriched. For personality is not a mysterious something which flowers in isolation. It is in the range and degree to which an individual has assimilated the social environment, the extent to which he has made his own that common wealth of social tradition and achievement into which he is born and among the expressions of which he lives, that he attains the highest reaches of his own development.

Such, then, is a more concrete account of equality as the fundamental principle of Ethics. Social Reality, it may be said, should be judged by this criterion at any rate, namely, the range of persons who participate equally in the life of the group and its privileges. Equality of opp--ortunity has as its correlate, we have seen, differences of natural capacity and endowment. But, within that setting of different abilities and different capacities, equality is the fundamental principle in morals.

Chapter VIII.

THE CHIEF GOOD OR END.

1.

The Conception of a Chief Good.

It has been shown now that there are elementary moral laws, such as the prohibition of murder, regulation of sex--relations, and the like, which may be said to comprise the conditions essential to the possibility of social life. It has been claimed also that the formal presupposition of moral progress is the principle of equality. There now emerges the question of the content of social life. Granted that every member of a group should have equal opportunity, the question remains, equal opportunity for what? In other words, what is the end of the life of the community? In addition to elementary laws regarding security of life, which are common to all moral codes, there is an immense variety of moral regulations revealed by the history of Ethics. The basic, common laws are readily explicable. But what of the subsequent divergence? What is the criterion in virtue of which this content can be morally appraised?

It might be said that this variety of detail merely re--flects the different conceptions of social Reality that

have prevailed in different places at different times, or that, since the formulation of a moral code represents the effort of reason to discover the essential conditions of social life, and reason is itself a developing capacity, it is only natural to find that the conception of these social conditions has varied. In other words, the diversity in moral regulations reflects differing degrees of reason, or differing forms of rational insight into the conditions of social life. Each race or community, it might be said, has a certain native stock of mental endowment, which enables it to attain a certain degree of rational adjustment to the en--vironment with which it is confronted. It is a matter of group intelligence.

But such a reply leaves still undecided the criterion by reference to which degrees of rational adjustment are to be themselves appraised. There are such things as group in--telligence tests. Is there any ultimate test by which the different conceptions of social life can be placed in a scale of reasonableness? Granted that the content of different social orders is more or less rational, what kind of content marks an increase in rationality, an advance in the attainment of social Reality? If complete equality among the members of a community were realised, and all had equal opportunities of participating in social life, would

such a community be perfectly moral, independently of the kind of life each were free to follow? Is there no 'higher' and 'lower', no 'better' and 'worse', in the content of social life?

It is this question which the traditional conception of the 'summum bonum' or chief good is designed to meet. The question cannot be dismissed, in the phrase of Dewey quoted above, as "an intellectual product of the feudal organisation", because the Greeks envisaged it in the same way. The view which has the main backing of common-sense, and which has at the same time distinguished literary and philosophical support, is the view that Happiness is the ultimate end of social life. That form of society is more reasonable, it may be urged, or higher, or better, according as it produces more happiness among its members. Is this view adequate?

2.

Happiness as the End.

It is unnecessary to elaborate here the traditional ob-jections which have been brought against Hedonism, from the Cyrenaic or Epicurean forms of the creed down to the most recent expressions in Universalistic Hedonism. It may be pointed out again that Pleasure is in itself an abstraction.

It marks the removal or diminution of tension, the control of stimulation, and the pleasurable tone of specific modes of response has an ultimate biological significance for the survival of the individual. But to set up a definite entity, the feeling of pleasure, as the end of action, is merely verbal abstraction, and the interminable disputes about Hedonism which presuppose such an entity are wholly unreal and profitless. The springs of action, we have seen, are the instinctive impulses, the most prolific source of tension within the organism, and the removal of tension, or satis--faction, as it is usually called in ethical terms, is the only possible end of action for an individual. The ethical problem is really distinct from this altogether. It is, Which impulses of individuals should the community permit to be satisfied, and what form of satisfaction is to be favoured?

Even on the psychological side, Hedonism is a confused statement of the facts. It is no doubt biologically sig--nificant that a pleasurable tone characterises responses which remove or decrease tension. That fact offers an im--portant indication for future guidance and discrimination in behaviour. But it is not in the least a sufficient warrant for hypostasizing an abstraction, pleasure, as the end of action. It is the removal of some <u>particular</u> tension, the satisfaction of some particular impulse, which is

invariably the end of action. Thus it is sometimes asked, in these discussions of Hedonism to which reference has been made, Can we choose to do an action which will not be pleas--urable? The question seems to present difficulty only be--cause two conceptions are confused, (a) the satisfaction which the resolving of every tension necessarily yields to an individual, and (b) pleasure in the abstract. We cannot choose to do anything except resolve some present tension, and success in this is pleasurable. But we <u>can</u> (and in point of fact nearly always <u>do</u>) choose to resolve a tension which involves leaving unresolved certain other tensions. It then appears as if the resultant state were on balance not pleasurable, or as if we had chosen to do something not pleasurable.

It should be remembered that the present tensions which affect an individual depend on the past experience of the organism. They are fed and increased by present removal, and those tensions which have been resolved in the past, to the accompaniment of pleasurable tone, tend to recur in a still stronger measure. This fact, which again is readily explicable on biological grounds, accounts for the supposed desire of pleasure which action is held to reveal. The removal of tension is always pleasurable, but there is no fixed entity 'pleasure' which can be sought in its own

right. The organism tends to remove those tensions which have been efficiently treated in the past, not to procure an abstract something called pleasure.

Again, the paradox of Hedonism, as it is called, or the fact that, as Bradley puts it, pleasure is found there most where it is least sought, is readily interpreted on this analysis. What is signified by the paradox is simply that the organism, in its so-called search for pleasure, is attempting to resolve a tension immediately and narrowly and directly, without incorporating into its response the full complexity of its nature. If a tension is complex (for in--stance, the impulse of a trained musician to hear good music) it cannot be resolved immediately or wholly by a simple re--sponse, (for instance, listening to a barrel-organ). Such a simple response is not accompanied by pleasurable tone, and this is the ground for the view that the search for pleasure defeats its own end. But even here, it may be noted, there <u>are</u> simple tensions, such as those of hunger or thirst or of the senses, where a simple reponse <u>does</u> prove adequate to resolve them, and where a pleasurable tone does follow. On the traditional view, these would have to be classified as an exception to the paradox of Hedonism (as is done, for in--stance, by Sidgwick, Methods of Ethics, I.IV.2). But on the present analysis they illustrate the importance of the

complexity of the tension in question as the deciding factor.

Further, feeling varies with the degree of tension it re--presents, and the satisfaction of a very acute tension, such as a keen appetite or thirst, affords a more intense relief than if the tension had been simpler or less acute. This shows that any abstract discussion of 'feeling' as an entity separable from the total content of consciousness, to use Green's phrase, is profitless and indeed irrelevant.

On all these grounds, then, Hedonism cannot be accepted as an accurate account even of individual behaviour. The im--portance of pleasurable tone as a sign of successful funct--ioning, its value as a guide to future action, have perhaps rendered it easy to isolate what appears to be a common factor in all useful response, and to elevate this abstraction to become the 'end' of conduct. But if psychological Hedonism is vulnerable, the Ethical Hedonism which rests on it can be still less justified. If the hypothesis which Hedonism suggests regarding individual human nature, and the statement it makes regarding the law which regulates individual funct--ioning, are themselves not accurate, the transition from psychological Hedonism to Ethical Hedonism, to the view that pleasure is the moral end, something one ought to seek, seems thoroughly arbitrary. What is implied in the conception of 'ought' or 'duty'?

3.

The Concept of Duty.

It has been maintained above that morality is essentially bound up with social or group life. The conception of duty, therefore, or of 'ought', can only be interpreted with re-ference to some form of group life. If this is done, it appears to rest on two facts, (a) that individual impulses, individual desires or hopes or ambitions, do actually clash in practice with the security, the survival, the well-being, of the group as a whole, and (b) that individuals come, as the result of training or suggestion or reflection, to identify their own wellbeing with that of their group, and to subordinate their own desires, in the event of a clash, to the wellbeing of the community. The reason that such a clash is possible must simply be the fact that human life has not always been social, and that in the period of evolution which preceded social life man acquired impulses which are now deeply rooted in his structure, but which are definitely non-social, or selfish, or egoistic. In the effort to adapt behaviour to Reality, that is, to the conditions of social life, man is unable to gratify all these selfish impulses directly, but in virtue of his reason he is able to deny or postpone certain satisfactions. This is what makes social

life possible at all, and this is what introduces the fact of duty or 'ought'.

What duty involves, then, is the identification of per--sonal wellbeing with social order, and the subordination, in consequence, of personal or egoistic impulses. If it is asked, Why should a man subordinate his own personal im--pulses to the welfare of his group? the only logically adequate answer is that social life is necessary even for the bare existence and wellbeing of the individual. It is possible, of course, to maintain that the concept of duty requires for its interpretation some metaphysical or relig--ious hypothesis which places the end of the moral life out--side the moral life itself. The importance for practical life, at the present stage of development, of a religious hypothesis in particular is so great that no society could stand the strain of its removal. Even the moral reliance of a Kant does not despise the doctrines of Christianity, and the effects of the 'Religion of Humanity', the bare service of mankind, have been negligible in their influence on the lives of the great majority. The best test will probably be provided in the future development of Religion in Russia. But, formally, the essence of duty can be most simply de--scribed as the preference for common life, with all that it implies, over the immediate satisfaction of selfish or

egoistic impulses, and the actual content of duty for any individual reflects the social conditions of his community, the measure of his rational insight into the nature of social Reality.

The fact that moral effort is so often associated with devotion to others, with renunciation of private satis--factions, with self-sacrifice, is thus readily intelligible. It testifies to the great strength of egoistic impulses, as well as to the imperative necessity for their regulation, if social life is to be maintained. But, it need scarcely be pointed out, it is only within an implied social context that asceticism can have moral significance. Outside of such a context its interest concerns abnormal psychology almost exclusively, where its antecedents in what is called the 'masochistic' aspect of certain impulses are traced. It is not valid, therefore, to take Duty or Righteousness as the end of social life, or to find in self-sacrifice and renunciation, for their own sake, the ultimate moral good. But, within this setting of social life, the concept of duty, with its corollary of renunciation, <u>does</u> emphasise a fund--amental feature of moral analysis. The bare concept of duty, in other words, does not solve the problem of the chief good or end: but it serves at least to indicate the gap in the transition from psychological to ethical Hedonism.

It might be urged that duty, or the 'categorical imper--ative', is itself only a datum for psychological analysis. It refers, it might be said, to factors of individual de--velopment, to the way in which there develop in a person moral feelings, opinions, standards, ideals, under the in--fluence of social habits or institutions or laws, parental authority, unconscious or repressed desires. But this is again to ignore the specific feature of the ethical problem. No amount of psychological statement about human functioning or development can be substituted, without fallacy, for an explanation of that subordination of personal to social wellbeing which constitutes the formal nature of duty.

The facts are not in any way obscure. When it is pointed out by Socrates, for instance, that some pleasant things are not good, what is meant is that the satisfaction of certain egoistic impulses must be postponed or denied, in the interests of social order. When a person says, "No, I won't do that, it is not right", what is implied is that the person associates 'right', in virtue of his past training, social heritage, reflection, with that which is essential to the wellbeing and maintenance of his group, or even of humanity, and that he has identified his own ultimate welfare with this welfare of his group or of humanity. In short, Hedonism as the moral end represents confused analysis. The

facts point quite clearly to the dependence of the moral end on social life, not to the application of a psychological law (inaccurately stated at that) about individual functioning to the wholly distinct problem of Ethics proper. The real problem of Ethics is the significance of the existence of laws, social habits, and the rest. Whether it be maintained that these are an expression of something in human nature, in life, or testify to a soul, or to some religious doctrine, or whether it be even maintained that they are the product of external and accidental factors, physical or geographical or economic, it is their social implication which sets the ethical problem: and psychological analysis of individual development, beyond which Hedonism cannot legitimately pass, does not furnish an adequate interpretation of moral conduct.

4.

Increase of Complexity in Life.

If Happiness, then, is not an accurate account of the Chief Good, what is the end which social life subserves? What mark or characteristic of social order makes that order more rational, or higher, or better? Can we find an ob--jective test, for instance, in cultural products, such as literature, music, art, and the like?

These objective products, when analysed, seem to be re--ducible to what is merely an increase of complexity in social order. Cultural and civilized life are in the last resort only a more complex form of social existence than that which subserves merely physical welfare. For the maintenance of these more complex conditions there are required more numerous, more varied, and more delicately sensitive moral regulations. Primitive or elemental virtues, like courage and sincerity, have to be supplemented in modern communities by tactfulness and diplomacy. The different forms of social life,.then, and the varying conceptions of social Reality which the history of Ethics reveals, can be classified as embodying greater or less complexity in the adjustment of men to their environment.

But, it will be urged, is complexity the <u>only</u> standard by which forms of social life can be differentiated? Is there not an intrinsically higher and lower? Are some forms of life not intrinsically good? In traditional terms, are some pleasures not higher than others? Is there not a difference of kind?

There does not seem to be any way of establishing a valid difference of kind among pleasures. It is often taken as obvious that pleasures <u>do</u> differ in kind. Even Mill admits such a difference, though it weakens the basis of his whole

ethical position. Mackenzie, for instance, writes, "That certain forms of will are higher or better than others, may almost be said to be the fundamental assumption of Ethics. Now it follows from this that certain desires, or certain universes of desire, are higher or better than others." (Manual of Ethics, p.210). But, on a strict analysis, the so-called higher pleasures, that is, the pleasures of the intellectual or artistic worlds, are merely more complex than the lower pleasures, those of the senses.

An example of the difference intended can probably be found most clearly in music. Musicians would be unanimous in regarding the pleasure afforded by Beethoven's Fifth Symphony as 'higher' than the pleasure afforded by a popular ditty. But if it is remembered that the question centres round a concrete situation, rather than an abstract entity called pleasure; if the function of the instinctive im-pulses as the real springs of action be recalled: and if it is realised that the crux of the problem is the nature of the tension or incomplete adjustment in the organism which it is the business of the response to remove; then, even in the instance given, no difference save one of complexity can be detected. It is clear that tensions vary in their degree of complexity, and that the removal or 'satisfaction' of one tension may be more complete, more adequate, more 'kathartic',

to use a term current in Aesthetics, than the removal of a simpler tension. The popular ditty, to take our example, has a very elementary appeal, and removes a very simple tension. It satisfies the child, the untrained musician, the sophist--icated person in his moments of relaxation. But the Beet--hoven symphony presupposes, for its successful appeal, not only musical training, but a far wider range of experience in general, and removes or decreases tension which is the product of a far greater number of incipient impulses. That is why it seems to us to give a 'higher' satisfaction. It is higher, in the sense that it approximates more nearly to the complete removal of the most complex tension. It is this fact which is the ground of the conception of 'absolute' or 'intrinsic' value in aesthetic satisfaction, and it is this difference of complexity in the removal of tension which is the source of the belief that pleasures differ in kind.

Products of culture, then, such as art and literature and music, do not afford in themselves an objective criterion of social orders. They afford rather a measure of the degree of complexity which those social orders attained. It is doubtful, in fact, whether the intrusion of aesthetic ex--perience into the ethical problem is warranted at all. For the whole sphere of Art is not so much a primary, self--explanatory reality as a reflection of the social conditions

under which a community lives. Art is a form of phantasy life, a compensation for the need of conformity to the Reality-principle: and its content is always closely related to the existing social and economic conditions from which it is a refuge. Art is in fact secondary --- it may, and does, affect the primary social life with which Ethics is concerned, but it cannot be substituted for the latter. To enforce this truth moralists like Plato have even exaggerated the secondariness of Art, and at times subordinated it wholly to morality.

5.

Conclusions.

One fact which emerges now from this whole discussion of the Chief Good is that the end of social life can be ex--pressed only in terms of life itself. What makes possible the greatest security of life for the human species is the criterion of better or worse forms of social order. The conceptions of 'higher' and 'better' in ethical judgment simply refer to the degree of social colouring an action has. It is not only the fact of some social reference which de--termines moral significance at all, but it is the amount of social reference which determines the degree of moral worth.

Murder is a more serious offence than drunkenness, because murder strikes more effectively at the maintenance of social order. It is wrong, we feel, to consider exclusively per--sonal or even exclusively family interests in preference to the interests of a wider civic or national group. Again, the basis of such international morality as has been admitted to be valid is the implied social reference coinciding with the whole of humanity. As Bosanquet points out, in a rather different connection, the group in question cannot be limited even to present humanity. (Some Suggestions in Ethics, Chap. II) It is, in the last resort, the existence of the human species which is in question. What subserves this more adequately is the ethical criterion by reference to which 'better' and 'worse' have meaning.

Another fact which has emerged is that the main clue to the nature of life which experience affords is increase of complexity, synthesis, integration. The nature of the life--impulse, whatever else it may be, is at least a tendency to ever wider and wider integration, to more and more complete mastery or assimilation of the physical and social environ--ment in which the impulse has its being. In the whole of experience the one general characteristic which reflection detects is just this principle of synthesis. Not only thought and action spring from a sense of incompleteness, but

every activity of the mind, even religion and philosophy and art, may be said to illustrate this fundamental synthetic character of life.

There is, then, no criterion save the biological one, and no Chief Good save the existence of the human species. The biological significance of pleasure or Happiness accounts for the prevalence of the view that Happiness is the end. It affords a rough account of the facts, and it is only when the exact implications of the view are tested that its in--adequacy is revealed. The cultural products of a society illustrate the tendency in life to complexity, and, though not in themselves the ultimate end, afford a clue to the kind of life the society has attained. The ethical end involves self-sacrifice and righteousness on the part of individuals, but Duty has no meaning save in reference to the ultimate end which social life subserves.

It may seem that to find in life itself the ultimate crit--erion is merely a confession of ignorance. But it is all that the facts warrant. The criterion may be made more vivid if it is expressed as "the full realisation of human capacities", or "the perfection of human character". But even these forms, which are the main alternatives to the Happiness view sanctioned by Ethics, are just the biological criterion over again. It is simplest, and most accurate,

to recognise only what is essential in the data of morals. It is clear that moral effort is conditioned by the fact of social life, that the content of moral regulations reflects the kind of social life a community envisages, that the supreme ethical principle is equality of opportunity to live and realise their nature on the part of all human beings, and that the ultimate end of social life itself is only to be conjectured from such indications of the life-impulse as experience presents. In the last resort, it is the exist--ence of the human species, with all that is implied in human life, that affords a criterion to determine the moral worth of all forms of social order.

Chapter IX.

MORALS AND VALUE.

1.

Naturalism in Morals.

It may be urged at this point that the view of morals suggested is merely a new form of a long discredited creed, that of 'naturalism' in morals, because it reduces to the level of mere self-interest or the existence of the species or some kind of expediency that which is really above all such considerations. Morality, it is often maintained, is of intrinsic value, apart from all questions of promoting the security of life and the survival of the species. If we make morals nothing more than an instrument for the main--tenance of common life, or even for the survival of the species, we ignore, it may be said, something of the grandeur, the solemnity, of the moral life. Not only so, but we leave unexplained all that emotional intensity and warmth with which the moral sentiments are so often associated. It seems, in fact, as if, in reducing morality to certain ob--jective conditions of social Reality, analogous to physical laws, we may have omitted the one feature of the moral life

which is most fundamental of all. How, then, can it be adequate to reduce morality to the product of merely natural factors?

It may be replied to this, in the first instance, that to make the existence and maintenance of social life, or the survival of the human species, the ultimate moral end is **not** to have reduced morality to mere expediency. There is no implication that morality is something secondary, or sub--ordinate, deriving its value from an end outside its own nature. What has been implied is that the existence and maintenance of social life are to be regarded as the direct, the inevitable expression of the nature of the life-impulse itself. It is not simply useful, or desirable, or expedient, that men should live in groups, and that as a consequence moral or cultural or more complex conditions of life should be realised. The nature of the life-impulse, we must rather say, is such that no other result is conceivable.

Thus, S.Alexander formulates the criterion of the morally valuable, in an article on 'Natural Selection in Morals', as the fact that "such a plan of life is adapted to the con--ditions of existence", that under it "society reacts with--out friction upon its surroundings", and "can be in equilibrium with itself". This view is evidently somewhat similar to the view maintained above, though Alexander does

not write either in the article quoted or in his 'Moral Order and Progress' from a similar psychological background. When, therefore, the question is asked, (as by Mackenzie, in crit--icism of Alexander's position), "Why should we desire that society should be in equilibrium with itself?" (Manual of Ethics, p.252) the sufficient, and the only possible answer to the question, is that this is the way life is constituted. The nature of life appears from the patterns of its working, we have seen, and all that reflection or analysis can do is to trace and reconstruct the patterns, not speculate on their origin.

It has of course often been emphasised in philosophy that social life is the clearest pattern of the life-impulse known. Social life, in other words, is the indispensable condition of individual development. The character of the life-impulse is to realise itself in individuals <u>through a social medium</u>. The 'individual' in isolation is an ab--straction, a fragment torn from its context, the product of imaginative construction. Individuality can be expressed only in and through the myriad agencies of a social setting. Hence whatever moral regulations are essential to the poss--ibility of social life are at the same time essential to the possibility of self-development. They cannot be regarded as matters of expediency, for that would imply that the

individual could develop through some alternative means. Morality, therefore, is bound up with the very root fact of human existence, the ultimate datum of life or experience. It is a pattern of the working of that persistent effort, that striving after self-maintenance, that nisus or conatus, which is the most vivid representation to us of the life--impulse.

This view of morals, then, by no means detracts from the intrinsic or absolute value of the moral struggle. On the contrary, inasmuch as it makes morality an inevitable outcome of the life-impulse, it may be claimed that it provides the only legitimate basis on which the sovereign worth of the moral struggle can be maintained. For the conception of value can be derived, in the last resort, only from the fact of life itself.

2.

The Concept of Value.

If we are not to resort to intellectualism, or mysticism, we must be content to find the source of value in human experience, and the verbal trappings of philosophical mys--tery with which the conception is so often clothed must be discarded. To argue that value is indefinable can only

mean, in Bosanquet's phrase, that the structure of valuable things has not been analysed. What has value must always be an element in human experience. Bosanquet himself re-gards it as the character of being wanted by a human being; what has value is the object of desire, that in which we find ourselves affirmed. It has the property of satisfactori-ness. (Suggestions in Ethics, Chap.III) "We understand", he writes elsewhere, "that all which is valuable must lie within the whole of conscious experience.... We adhere to Plato's conclusion that objects of our likings possess as much of satisfactoriness --- which we identify with value --- as they possess of reality and trueness." (The Principle of Individuality and Value, pp.316-7) This view may be not unfairly regarded as an expression, in ethical terms, of the biological criterion used above. What enhances or sustains life is the ultimate source of the attribution of value.

Similarly, those who have discussed the conception on the psychological side reach the same conclusion. The only common element which can be detected in all experiences re-garded as of value is "an affective state we call agreeable or pleasurable" (Everett, Moral Values, Chap.V). It is bound up with what is known as the pleasure-displeasure series. Wundt in this connection tends to emphasise the character of excitement-depression, or tension-relief, while

Royce speaks of restlessness-quiescence. But the funda--mental fact which is at the root of all these different forms of expression is just the biological criterion used above. Control of stimulation, satisfaction of impulse, relief of tension, are just different ways of describing the fundamental activity of the organism, the task which is im--posed upon it by its relation to Reality. It can only be with reference to this task and its more or less successful prosecution, estimated in terms of maintenance of life, that the concept of value can be understood.

Thus Paulsen writes, "If there were no satisfaction and its opposite, all striving would cease, and everything would be indifferent to us. But what does this mean except that feelings of pleasure ultimately determine all distinctions of value?" (Paulsen, System of Ethics, pp.256-7) So in Lotze, there is a famous passage (Microcosmus, I.p.250) where he compares from the standpoint of value a crushed worm, writhing in pain, and an angel, with consummate in--telligence, but no feeling, to establish his view that value depends on feeling. Feeling in fact is for Lotze "the only source of the judgment of value", and its char--acteristic is just "the apprehension of the value of ob--jects in terms of pleasure and pain". (Henry Jones, The Philosophy of Lotze, pp.55,53-4)

But it may be urged, as by Everett, in the work quoted, that pleasure or feeling, although an essential element in value, is not the whole of value. There is also, it is said, an "objectified, ideational aspect".

If we analyse what is meant, however, in this expression, it reduces, in the last resort, to no more than a reference to Reality. The ultimate condition of the realisation of value is of course the real world in which human striving takes place. The pleasurable or feeling element in, say, day-dreams or hallucinations is not accompanied by this re--ference to Reality, at least directly: and it could be plausibly maintained that such psychical activity has no direct value in consequence. The organism, in its effort to maintain itself, is in relation to a Reality, with laws and characteristics of which we have some approximate form--ulations. Impulses or tensions, in other words, have a content, and whatever the nature of life may be, it is at any rate only known to us in its struggle with a Reality. If the problem of value be retained on a concrete level of organism adapting itself to the conditions of Reality, and if pure abstractions be avoided with regard to both 'feeling' and 'pleasure' in themselves and with regard to 'ideal con--tent', the ultimate source of value is seen to be none other than life itself. As Bosanquet himself concludes, "The

world of Reality is the world of values" (Suggestions in Ethics, Chap.III).

It follows, then, that if the expression 'absolute value' is to have a concrete meaning, it must refer to that which directly enhances and sustains the life of the human species. In philosophical terms, the judgment of existence is not only itself a judgment of value, but is actually the ultimate source of all values. The fact of life is the one datum, the one whole, the one all-inclusive and all-comprehensive being within which every phase of experience lies. The implications and full nature of the life-impulse, it has been urged, can only be found in the concrete patterns of its working, in the embodiments of its activity. The moral struggle is a phase of this pattern, in some respects the most fundamental phase of all for the understanding or de--ciphering of the pattern. It can legitimately be said, therefore, to possess absolute value, or intrinsic worth, for the conception of value itself derives from the pattern of the workings of life, and within that pattern alone has meaning. Moral values, in short, are real, are absolute, simply because the moral life represents an attempt to realise something fundamental in the ultimate fact of human existence. This may be 'naturalism' in morals, but it is not the reduction of morality to mere expediency: and the

former set of objections raised at the beginning of this chapter are thus seen to have no valid force.

3.

Morals and Moral Emotions.

There was, however, another set of objections raised, to the effect that the above interpretation of morality does not account for the emotional warmth and intensity with which the moral sentiments are suffused. In reply to this, there are several factors of psychological and biological interest which may be adduced.

(a) The moral sentiments are closely related, for instance, in the scheme of McDougall, to that primary emotion which accompanies the operation of the parental instinct. This 'tender emotion', as it is called, is held by McDougall to be the ultimate source of altruism and devotion and all those unselfish characteristics which go to constitute morality. The parental instinct, on its receptive and conative sides, undergoes a vast extension in the course of human develop--ment. Not only the sight of one's own helpless offspring, but the sight of all weakness and helplessness and suffering comes, in time, to evoke the same response. Although, too, the instinct was originally maternal, the character has been

transmitted, partially at least, to men as well. "Parental love", McDougall writes, "must always appear an insoluble riddle and paradox if we do not recognise this primary emotion, deeply rooted in an ancient instinct of vital im--portance to the race". "From this emotion and its impulse to cherish and protect spring generosity, gratitude, love, pity, true benevolence, and altruistic conduct of every kind; in it they have their main and absolutely essential root, without which they would not be" (Social Psychology, pp.70-1). It is, then, the specific emotion which marks this instinct that gives rise to moral indignation and the other emotional adjuncts of the moral judgment. The strength of moral feeling, on this view, is rooted in a basis of instinct.

It should perhaps be added that such a view is relevant, whatever classification of instincts be adopted. Even if McDougall's scheme be rejected (and there is a growing tend--ency to regard it as somewhat arbitrary) and even if it be deemed unwarranted to group under a simple parental instinct the various specialised impulses into which this instinct subdivides, the significance of the affective or emotional element, which is all that is in question here, remains un--altered.

(b) Again, it is noticeable that moral regulations are imposed on the growing child at the most impressionable

period of his life (did not Jowett once remark that the origin of morality is in the nursery?), and that they are usually associated with feelings of tenderness and love, of authority or power on the part of those who hand on the moral tradition, of submission and trust on the part of those who receive it. All of these feelings delve into the deepest soil of psychic life and development. For psychic affect attaches itself not only to the original ideas with which it was associated, but radiates over a wider field as well. It is impossible, in fact, to sift out the emotional elements which are attached to morality pure and simple and the elem--ents which are derived from its relation to subjective factors. Mill gives an interesting analysis of Conscience, which is worth quoting in the present connection. He suggests that "in that complex phenomenon as it actually exists, the simple fact is in general all encrusted over with collateral associations, derived from sympathy, from love, and still more from fear... from self-esteem, desire of the esteem of others, and occasionally even self-abasement". This extreme complication, he points out, "is the origin of the sort of mystical character which... is apt to be attrib--uted to the idea of moral obligation" (Utilitarianism, Chap. III). It is probable, indeed, that the Ego-Ideal, which represents the moral heritage of an individual, and which is

the rock against which the instinctive impulses fling themselves, producing conflict, derives very largely from the father, or father-substitute: and it is even possible that in the emotional relations characteristic of the parental tie, in the case of any individual, we may find the clue to the emotional quality of his moral reactions in later life.

(c) There is, too, a somewhat speculative suggestion which has been worked out by Freud in an essay called "Totem and Tabu", which may perhaps be mentioned here. There is, according to Freud, a striking analogy between the absolute character of the moral imperative and the nature of strongly repressed or unconscious desires. Such unconscious factors, as illustrated in neuroses, are quite impervious to conscious argument or attack, and exhibit the same categorical quality as the command of duty. Is the analogy, then, of deeper import? Freud thinks it is, and, from a study of the earliest origins of group life, the primitive family or tribe or horde, relates the sense of guilt or sin in man, which is the beginning and basis of morality, to antecedents largely unconscious, those, namely, belonging to what is called the Oedipus Complex. The theory is that the content of this Greek myth represents a phase of universal human experience, which in the normal adult life of a civilized member of a community has been repressed and is unconscious. The

'immoral' character of the myth rouses an answering echo in the Unconscious, and though the individual has long renounced consciously the desires which Oedipus realises, he feels a vague sense of guilt for which he can offer no explanation in terms of conscious life. Freud suggests, in other words, that perhaps "the sense of guilt of mankind as a whole, which is the ultimate source of religion and morality, was acquired in the beginnings of history through the Oedipus complex" (Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis, p.279).

So much disputed theory is implied in this suggestion that it is best not to stress it here. But it points to another possible source of the emotional intensity with which the moral life is suffused.

(d) Further, if moral regulations are ultimately ex-plicable, as has been maintained, in terms of their survival value, it is not difficult to understand how an acquired social habit or disposition may have been formed, in the course of evolution, (however difficult it may be to under-stand the technical physical means by which such a disposition is formed or transmitted), which will have, attached to it, a certain emotional intensity. For that emotional intensity will represent the affective accompaniment of the leading instinctive tendencies of the organism, the self-preservative instincts. The self can only be preserved, it has been

shown, in and through a social medium, so that morality, which is what makes that social medium possible, comes natur--ally, in time, to take on the tone, the colouring, of the self-preservative instincts, that is, the warmth which attache to life itself. (The hypothesis of affective tone, which can be displaced, and attach itself to dispositions not originally accompanying it, is again of course implied.)

(e) Finally, this same relation between morality and the life of the group accounts for the close connection between morality and religion which the history of man exhibits. Religion seems historically to have been the great instrument of social control and social cohesion, to have provided an external, powerful, and independent support for the sanction of those moral regulations essential to the possibility of common life. On this view, then, it would seem that morality may have acquired some of its emotional character by associat--ion with, or by transference of, that emotional intensity which belongs to the religious experience. Religion is thus not so much morality tinged with emotion as morality is practical necessity endowed with religious emotion.

It is, then, by psychological and biological considerations of this kind that the great strength and intensity of the moral sentiments can be interpreted. Analysis on these lines does not imply in the least that the fundamental importance

and worth of the moral life have been weakened. The emotional aspect of the moral life <u>is</u> a legitimate subject for psychological treatment, and constitutes a distinct problem altogether from that of the significance of the existence at all of moral laws, habits, dispositions. The former belongs to the study of individual development, the latter touches on the entire history of man and on the value and destiny of the human species. 'Naturalism in morals,' inasmuch as it offers a setting freed from either mysticism or dogmatic rationalism, provides the most adequate basis on which the dignity and worth of the moral life can themselves be vindicated.

Chapter X.

MORALS AND ECONOMICS.

1.

Economic Determinism.

It is necessary to return now to the conception which has been designated 'Social Reality', and to indicate the relation between its moral or cultural content and its economic con--tent. For Social Reality was defined above as "the economic, moral, and cultural conditions which prevail in the community to which the individual belongs", and although the subsequent discussion of Reality suggested a modification in one aspect of this definition, the fact of both economic and moral con--ditions in Social Reality was not affected. The term morals, in fact, has been used throughout the argument in a generic sense, to include all the conditions of social life. It is the legitimacy of this usage which must now be made clear. Is it valid to refer to economic conditions as part of Social Reality? Are such conditions essential to the possibility of social life, and therefore subject to moral judgment? Or are they not distinct from morality, independ--ent of it altogether, perhaps themselves the very source of morals?

It is evident that economic conditions can be included legitimately under the generic term morals, as that term has been defined. For it was shown that morality is bound up essentially with the relations between the members of a group, and economic conditions, in the last analysis, are just relations between members of a group, or between classes of individuals within the group. Buying and selling, pro--duction and distribution, whatever else they involve, are at least relations between people. Economic conditions, too, seem to be a very fundamental part of social life. They embody those basic, material means by which the physical maintenance of the group is secured and the natural wants of the community satisfied. The economic facts seem to be the very foundation of social order, that on which moral or cultural life is built. There is abundant justification, then, for regarding economic conditions as part of Social Reality, and indeed a highly important part.

But the problem raised cannot be dismissed by this purely arbitrary definition of the conceptions involved. It is not sufficient to admit that the economic factor is important. Is it not the economic conditions, it may be asked, which actually determine the kind of social or cultural life a group can realise? Are moral conditions not themselves the product of prior economic factors?

This is the view which, in its more general form, has had so many distinguished exponents, and which constitutes what is known as the materialistic interpretation of history. The clearest expression of it, from the economic standpoint, is probably that of Karl Marx, and, in the French writers, the view itself is usually described as Economic Determinism. The substance of the view is given shortly in the 'Manifesto of the Communist Party', a joint production of Marx and Engels. The latter, in a subsequent preface to this docu--ment, says that the fundamental proposition which forms its nucleus belongs wholly to Marx, and consists of the view that "in every historical epoch the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organisation necess--arily following from it, form the basis upon which it is built up, and from which alone can be explained the political and intellectual history of that epoch". In other words, history is the result of economic facts. Changes in the social life of men are caused by changes in the conditions of production. "The hand-mill", Marx writes, "will give you society with the feudal lord (suzerain); the steam-mill will give you society with the industrial capitalist" (Marx, Misery of Philosophy, p.99).

On this view, it is not only legal and political relations which reflect the material conditions of life. The method

of production in material existence "conditions the general social, political, and spiritual evolution of life". Marx compares his theory, in 'Capital', to that of Darwin. Just as Darwin showed how the organs of plants and animals owe their character to their utility in sustaining life, or their 'survival-value', so, Marx suggests, his own theory offers an analogous or supplementary account of the importance of man's productive organs. It is these that are at the basis of all social organisation, and that not only sustain physical life, but condition social relations, mental evolution, and even morality and religion. "It is, in reality", Marx writes, "much easier to discover by analysis the earthly core of the misty creations of religion than it is, conversely, to develop from the actual relations of life the correspond--ing celestialised forms of those relations. The latter is the only materialistic, and therefore the only scientific method" (Capital, English Translation, II.p.367,note).

Now if an economic determinism of this kind be accepted as the complete and final analysis of the movement of history, the whole theory of morals suggested above, with its hypothesis of a free, creative capacity of reason in man, falls to the ground. Human development would not be regarded as the unfolding of a creative, integrative life--tendency, but would become merely the play of vast,

impersonal, economic forces, in the face of which human striving is impotent and the notion of human power a mere conceit. Marx does not shrink from this conclusion. In one place he writes, "Men make their own history, but they make it not of their own free will, not in conditions chosen by themselves: they make it in conditions given and trans--mitted. The tradition of all the ages that are dead weighs like a veritable Alpine peak on the brain of the living."@

@ It is curious to find that a similar note of Determinism characterises the philosophical speculations of Freud, who, like Marx, is of Jewish birth. It is not only that Freud emphasises psychological determinism as a postulate of method. But in a recent work he writes, "The existence of a general impulse towards higher development in the plant and animal world can certainly not be established... Many of us will also find it hard to abandon our belief that in man himself there dwells an impulse towards perfection, which has brought him to his present heights of intellectual prowess and ethical sublimation, and from which it might be expected that his development into superman will be ensured. But I do not believe in the existence of such an inner impulse, and I see no way of preserving this pleasing illusion" (Beyond the Pleasure-Principle, p.52).

It is significant also that in the greatest speculative Jew of all, Spinoza, it is again just this note of cosmic determinism which gives to his creed its distinctive mark. Summing up the results of Book I of the Ethics, Spinoza writes, "I have shown that God necessarily exists...that all things have been predetermined by Him, not, indeed, from freedom of will or from absolute good pleasure, but from His absolute nature or infinite power".

A suggestion with regard to the significance of this Jewish emphasis on Determinism is offered below.

Is, then, the Marxian interpretation of history warranted? Does it follow, because changes in the machinery or technique of production alter the relations between members of a group, that the principles of morality themselves depend on these economic changes? May the interpretation not rather be that the economic conditions comprise the material setting, the medium, within which moral principles seek to find an expression, and that this medium is even itself moulded and influenced by these moral principles?

The latter view seems much more in accordance with the facts. It has been claimed above that there <u>are</u> moral principles, conditions essential to the possibility of social life: and it is evident that these principles do not operate in a vacuum. They are revealed only in a setting or medium; and this setting consists not only of the psychological facts relevant to the human organism, but of the material or industrial or economic institutions and relations in the group. It is in and through these that moral principles are expressed. The economic relations may favour the real--isation of moral principles, or they may prove detrimental to such realisation. But they do <u>not</u> create the moral principles. The nature of these is independent of changes in the setting in which they operate. In large-scale or in small-scale production it is still a fundamental principle

of morality that all should have equal opportunity. It may be admitted that the extent to which equality can be realised in a community depends on the kind of economic system that community has devised. But equality itself, and all the principles of morality, as fundamental to the very existence of social life, are legitimately regarded as objective and universal, independent of changes in the medium in which they find partial expression.

There is, in short, confusion in the Marxian analysis between (a) the system of industrial or economic institutions and the relationships involved in these, and (b) fundamental principles, moral relationships, conditions essential to social life. No doubt changes in the machinery of product-ion affect the degree to which morality can be realised. Such changes usually involve transition from one system of relationships to another. But what morality signifies is not merely the kind of actual relationships which do in fact subsist in some particular community at some particular stage of development, but those basic principles, such as security of life, regulation of sex-impulses, equality of opportunity, which are, in the last analysis, the necessary conditions of the survival of the human species. If economic changes make the realisation of these principles difficult, perhaps impossible, the society will perish sooner or later. For

moral principles are the <u>essential</u> conditions of social wellbeing, and must be distinguished, as has been shown above, from their formulations, their approximations, their partial or inadequate expression, which reflect the economic and psychological setting characteristic of some particular epoch. If the nature of morality itself, of these moral principles, can be explained at all, it can only be by re--ference to the nature of the human organism, and to the nature of the life-tendency or nisus. All that the economic milieu affects is the degree or extent to which morality can be effectively embodied, in some concrete form of social or common life.

@ The suggestion may be offered here that the general em--phasis on Determinism is connected with, and perhaps char--acteristic of, what might be called the Jewish 'Weltan--schauung'. It can scarcely be without significance that Spinoza, Marx, and Freud, who are the apostles of the creed in the cosmic sphere, the sphere of history, and the sphere of mind, respectively, are all Jewish by birth and race. Although the two former were outcasts, in a sense, there is good evidence for the belief that the characteristics of a people's genius are specially well-marked in its renegades.

The Jews, as the people of Religion, of Law, have an innate tendency to the deterministic attitude. For the essence of the religious outlook is submission to external powers and the attitude which stresses human impotence and helplessness as compared with the divine omnipotence.

May it not be that philosophical Determinism, in the instances mentioned, represents merely a substituted outlet

for this innate religious disposition? It is certainly noteworthy that the doctrine of each of these thinkers has been received more as a religious gospel than anything else. Renan refers to the Spinozistic creed as the "truest vision ever had of God". Caird and Santayana both refer to the strongly marked Hebraistic tone of Spinoza's philosophy. "The impulse to speculative enquiry in Spinoza", Caird writes, is identical, or in close analogy,with that which in the history of mankind has been the origin and secret nerve of what we mean by the word 'religion'" (Caird, Spinoza, p.25). One of the most puzzling conceptions in Spinoza, that of "infinite modes", goes back really to Philo-Judaeus, the Jewish Alexandrian philosopher and contemporary of Jesus, though the source of Spinoza's acquaintance with Philo's works is unknown to the present writer. Possibly the Jewish Talmudic and Cabbalistic literature, in which Spinoza was of course versed as a youth, offers a connecting link.

Again, Marxism has been promulgated with a fervour more appropriate to a new salvation than to the sober statement of economic facts. Even the adherents of Psycho-analysis, it has often been remarked, exhibit a kind of religious attitude to the work of the Master, and treat outside criticism as little less than impious.

Whatever the worth of this suggestion, however, the logocal character of the Economic Determinism criticised above remains questionable. It is in many respects an instance of 'post hoc ergo propter hoc'. It is clear, at any rate, that material factors do not <u>produce</u> moral principles. They are rather, as has been urged, the setting or milieu within which these principles find partial and inadequate expression.

2.

<u>Economic and Moral Laws</u>.

The history of economic development, and the growth of economic science, confirm this view also. In early, simple forms of group life the priority of moral principles is

taken for granted. Relationships within the family or tribe, ties of blood, social factors, constitute the formal organisation of the group, and such economic development as exists falls under this prior system of relationships. The Biblical laws of the Jewish people, for instance, representing to some extent a Patriarchal state of society, definitely clothe with a moral colouring many details of economic re--gulation. There is, for instance, the institution of the Jubilee, or fiftieth year, (Leviticus, XXV.), and the re--demption of the land. One's near relative, for example, a brother, must not be treated as a bond-servant, but only as a hired labourer, in the event of his becoming poor. Comm--ercial transactions are to be conducted on a moral basis. "If thou sell aught to thy neighbour, or buy aught of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not overreach one the other... but thou shalt be afraid of thy God". (ibid. 14, 17).

But as economic development progresses, as the wants of a community increase, and the means of satisfying these wants become more highly organised and specialised, the distinction between moral and economic factors makes itself felt. As the order of society grows more complex, the life of large numbers of the community is divorced from the soil, and more and more individuals assemble in cities. It is then that the economic structure of the society undergoes its most

searching and critical test. If it does not allow adequate expression for those moral principles which are essential to the possibility of social life, the society gradually dis--integrates and collapses. This, apparently, is one of the factors which contributed to the fall of Rome. In so far as the causes of that decline were internal, due to the failure of life in the community, they can be most probably attributed to economic factors, to the destructive effects of an economic development which had lost sight of the moral principles essential to social life. The Romans themselves seem to have been partly conscious of this, in the later days of the Republic. But the reforms proposed were too late to check the forces of disintegration.

Why is it that economic or industrial complexity should prove fatal to social life on a large scale? Apparently the task of maintaining a great community makes a constantly increasing strain or exaction on the moral qualities of the individuals who compose that community. Men are moral, that is, reasonable with regard to social life, up to a certain point. In a comparatively simple economic structure, of a mainly agrarian type, that point is not exceeded. The conditions of life are such that individual maintenance and social needs prove easily harmonised, and no excessive calls are made on the unselfishness, the moral reasonableness, of

the individual. The persistence of a system such as that of China through so many centuries is probably due to factors of this kind. The government, Professor Douglas writes, "may be described as a patriarchal despotism... All this carries us back to a very primitive state of society, to one which probably existed among the Chinese immigrants who first settled on the plains of China, and which has been perpetuated down to the present day unaltered and without interruption." The case of the Jewish people might be said to provide a 'negative instance' of what has been suggested, for internal economic pressure has been absent in their modern wanderings, and they have not suffered the accompanying decline in life.

It seems, in short, as if there are fundamental moral principles necessary for social life: that as a society in--creases in numbers its first task, that of maintaining it--self in food, involves the construction in most cases of a complex economic system: that in the working of this system loopholes are offered for the expression of man's selfish, or unreasonable, impulses, to a degree that he cannot resist: that as a result the economic structure becomes topheavy, subversive of those fundamental moral principles essential to social life: and that, when this has reached a certain point, the society is unable to defend itself against attack from without, and eventually collapses. It is clear, thus,

that Marx and the Economic Determinists did point out a tremendously important factor in human history. But the relation between the economic and the moral is not the causal one suggested by Marx. It is rather, as has just been in--dicated, a relation of structure on basis.

In the latest experiment of humanity in cultural or civilized life, the Euro-American or Western type, the clash between economic development and fundamental moral principles has reached such an acute stage that its removal constitutes now the most urgent problem for practical statesmanship. When the first symptoms of the disease were noticed, in its present phase, its progress was stayed by an era of Colonial expansion. But even the beginnings of economic science point to an implicit recognition of the malady. For the movement associated with the French Physiocrats of the eighteenth century, with its doctrines of freedom of trade and industrial life, culminating in the policy of laisser-faire, was at bottom an attempt to re-introduce moral principles into the sphere of economic life. Let there be 'natural liberty', let all individuals have equal opportunity, let there be perfectly free competition, let natural forces regulate human life, these were the morally unimpeachable sentiments which inspired the doctrine. A background of this kind is char--acteristic of Adam Smith himself, and, in a limited way and

with reference to the special problems discussed by each, of Ricardo and Malthus.

The economic results, however, have outpaced the capacity of man's moral powers to handle and control them. As economic progress entered upon its present phase, and as the extraordinary effects of the Industrial Revolution were embodied in large scale production, in factory towns, in huge modern cities divorced from any tradition or any con--tact with the soil, the economic structure of society, and the relationships within it, overshadowed, and left far in the background, those fundamental moral principles on which the possibility of social life rests. The unreasonableness of human beings, that is, the impulses which prompt to greed and selfishness, to power and egoism, to individual agg--randisement, received an opportunity they could not resist, and moral sentiments have been almost submerged beneath the colossal structure of economic production. Dazzled by the tools which invention placed in their hands, men concent--rated on mass production, leaving the human or moral re--lationships incidental to this development to look after themselves, or to adjust themselves in the course of time by some divine providence.

The moral consciousness of men, however, has to some extent been roused now to the dangers in the situation.

It is true that at first economic science interpreted the facts somewhat narrowly. The fiction of a 'purely economic' man was invoked, a being who acts, that is, wholly from self--interest, and who, in his business life, is completely immune from the considerations involved in moral or human relation--ships. The fallacy in this, however, was soon evident. Such an 'economic' man is only an abstraction. The conduct of business is never wholly divorced from moral considerations. A reputation for honesty, 'good-will', are economic assets of considerable worth, and even the most unscrupulous profiteer or employer recognises that there is some limit necessary even to the expression of his impulses towards self--aggrandisement.

This does not imply, of course, that economic science should be a branch of Ethics, or that there is no justific--ation for the attempt of economic science to isolate that aspect of human behaviour and human relationships with which it is concerned. On the contrary, since economic science is a construction of social life or of human relationships from a definite aspect, its very abstraction enables it to envisage its problems and state the terms of their solutions more simply and more exactly than would otherwise be possible. But what has to be remembered is that economic laws refer only to that abstract simplification of social life with

which the economist deals. In problems which are social, an element of uncertainty must enter into the economist's conclusions. Factors of psychological and ethical import have been ignored, and necessarily ignored. But they affect the conclusions nevertheless. The Capital Levy, for instance, which is at present the practical policy of one section of British Parliamentarians, may not be econ--omically feasible, (though the evidence is so conflicting that no opinion is of much worth), but it is generally agreed that the psychological effects of the proposal to introduce the scheme might very well prove fatal to it at the outset. In a word, although it is an 'economic' problem, the main source of its appeal is its moral aspect, and the weakness of the project is largely psychological, that is, the way in which owners of large amounts of capital will react to the new situation.

The limitation of the purely economic standpoint, then, is admittedly necessary for certain purposes. But that limitation must be recognised in the attempt to solve con--crete problems of government. It is significant, at any rate, that we find in recent economic doctrine itself more and more recognition of the importance of the moral basis of social life. This moral renaissance now centres very largely round the problem of Distribution, rather than, as

in Ruskin and the earlier writers, on the demoralising effects of mass-production and the division of labour. The glaring inequalities which have attended the growth of modern economic methods and tendencies have reached the stage of constituting a festering sore in the social body. Every other problem of social reform depends for its solution to some extent on the problem of Distribution, and it is not perhaps too much to say that the survival of Western culture itself is bound up with the possibility of reconciling economic distribution with the principles of morality essential to social life.

Chapter XI.

THE RATIONAL TRADITION IN ETHICS.

1.

Socratic Ethics.

If the view of morals suggested above is now compared with some of the traditional theories in the history of Ethics which it resembles, such comparison will serve to elucidate the exact implications of the present view and will throw light on the problems which these traditional views fail to solve. In the first place, the view that it is reason which is the capacity concerned in moral matters goes back to the classical doctrine of the Greeks. Even before the time of Socrates there seems to have been a strongly-marked intellectual tone about Greek moral theory. Homer and Herodotus, the lyric poets and the dramatists, often refer to sin as a kind of mental blindness. "The essence of sin", Adam writes, with reference to Homer, "is πλεονεξία, self-seeking, or self-assertion... It would appear to be a breach of the golden law of moderation.... The sinner is a fool or a madman, rather than a knave."(Adam, The Religious Teachers of Greece, p.50). Similarly, in Pindar, sin is

again egoism, induced in a man not so much by Zeus or Fate, as by himself. In Aeschylus, sin is "a kind of disease or madness, (νόσος φρενῶν, Pers.752) which fastens on the soul of the sinner, confounding his intelligence so that he can no longer discriminate between right and wrong" (ibid.p.145).

It is in Socrates, however, that the view becomes most explicit. That virtue is knowledge, and vice ignorance, constitutes indeed the most characteristic feature of Socratic Ethics. Thus in the Protagoras Socrates says, "You have admitted that men err in their choice of pleasures and pains, that is, in their choice of good and evil, from defect of knowledge... and you are also aware that the erring act which is done without knowledge is done in ignorance" (Protagoras, p.357). In other words, there is, on this view, no native viciousness in human beings. Their wicked--ness springs simply from lack of sufficient knowledge. "No man voluntarily pursues evil, or that which he thinks to be evil. To prefer evil to good is not in human nature: and when a man is compelled to choose one of two evils, no one will choose the greater when he may have the less" (ibid.p. 358). Again, in the Euthydemus, Socrates asks the two dis--tinguished Sophists, "Can you make a good man...even of one who is not convinced" (that is, convinced that he ought to learn of them)"either because he imagines that virtue is a

thing which cannot be taught at all, or that you are not the teachers of it? Has your art power to persuade him that virtue can be taught?" The Sophists,(Euthydemus and Dionysodorus), answer emphatically in the affirmative. (Euthydemus, p.274) In short, Socrates seems to have held that the 'good' act presupposes knowledge, and that where there is knowledge the good act inevitably follows, a native tendency for goodness being assumed to be inherent in all mankind. Socratic moral doctrine has thus quite definitely an intellectual colouring.

The main criticism that has been directed against the view of Socrates is twofold. As a fact of ordinary experience, to know the good, or the right course of action, does <u>not</u> always lead to its execution in practice. 'Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor', is the oft-quoted line in this connection. Only the exigencies of an abstract theory, it seems, can make it possible to gloss over such an obvious contradiction. In the second place, if virtue is knowledge, what kind of knowledge is it? In Socratic doctrine virtue and knowledge seem to be nothing but abstract conceptions, definable simply in terms of each other. What is the con--crete content of that knowledge which is knowledge of the good, or virtue?

With regard to the former criticism, that know ledge of

what is right does not always lead to right action, it may be admitted at once that the fact is indisputable. But the Socratic paradoxes rest on a purely abstract, unreal concept--ion of knowledge. It is implied that reason, or knowledge, is something fixed, complete, comprehensive, so that a man is said to be reasonable, or to have knowledge, with the implic--ation that he necessarily, in all circumstances, acts with the maximum of reasonableness. The difficulty that then emerges is simply a logical or intellectual one, having no real ground in the actual experience from which the concept--ions have been formed.

On the view which has been maintained above, reason is not something fixed or complete. It does not reach its full stature at birth. It is rather a capacity which grows and develops, which can be graded according to its degree of com--plexity, its power of integration or synthesis. It very often, however, breaks down, as it were, or falls short of the ideal, the maximum degree of reasonableness. There is, then, no paradox in the fact that we may know what is right and not do it. The strength of certain instinctive impulses is so great, we saw, that reason, or the effort to grasp the conditions of social Reality, is sometimes overpowered. The fact which Ovid describes in the line quoted above simply means that an impulse which urges to its immediate satisfaction

is preferred to one which is compatible with the wider con-
-text of social claims. Reason functions within limits, limits which are set by the nature of the organism and the past experience of the individual. It is mere abstraction or intellectualism to imagine that because moral action is reasonable no immoral action is ever possible to a rational being.

Similarly, the necessary corollary of the Socratic theory, that all men always desire the good, and that voluntary action is invariably a choice of ends conceived as good, rests on the same abstract sense of the concept knowledge. The ana-
-lysis of behaviour which was suggested above is rather that the facts of Reality enforce a modification of the native pleasure-principle in men, and that in virtue of the capacity known as reason control of impulses is possible and conformity to the Reality-principle, that is, to moral regulations, is attainable. It cannot be maintained for a moment, in the face of ordinary every-day experience, that no conflict of im-
-pulses ever takes place, or that whatever is desired is in-
-variably good. Even the more subtle psychology which reads Green into Socrates, and finds in self-satisfaction the end behind all action, may fall into a very similar abstraction. For satisfaction as a fixed entity is misleading. The satisfaction of an impulse is coloured by the nature of the

impulse whose satisfaction it is. If the level of the ana-
-lysis be retained in its concrete form, as that of an organism with myriads of tensions or impulses seeking to resolve these tensions or to satisfy these impulses, the nature of reason or knowledge must also be expressed in con-
-crete terms. It is, in fact, simply not the case that all men always desire the good. They seek to satisfy their im-
-pulses, and can seek this in a more or less immediate way: and their resultant behaviour can be described as more or less reasonable or moral. But there is nothing in this psych-
-ological analysis of the springs of action which is in-
-compatible with the view that moral action is reasonable. The paradoxes of the Socratic position, in short, follow altogether from the abstract conceptions of knowledge and virtue which they imply.

With regard to the second criticism noted above, that there is no concrete indication of the kind of knowledge that Socratic virtue means, (Zeller's criticism, for instance), it is clear that on the view suggested here this defect can be remedied. Socratic knowledge may be admittedly a vague something, incapable of definition except in terms of what it is itself supposed to explain. But the knowledge which is morality is knowledge of the conditions of social life, knowledge of social Reality. The sphere in which reason

operates, from the moral standpoint, is the sphere of social and cultural conditions. Insight into these conditions, appreciation of what is essential to the possibility of social life and the ultimate survival of the species, constitutes the knowledge which is specifically moral.

Those commentators who have tried to reach the kernel of truth in the Socratic doctrine without sacrificing the shell of abstract intellectualism by which it is surrounded have been compelled to read into his view something of the kind just indicated. Socrates meant by knowledge, we are told, not a theoretical, intellectual process, but a comprehensive principle dominating the entire personality. Adam writes, for instance, of Socratic knowledge, that "It is a certain overmastering principle or power that lays hold primarily indeed of the intellect, but through the intellect of the entire personality, moulding and disciplining the will and the emotions into absolute union with itself." (Religious Teachers of Greece, p.329). This is simply to suggest the character of reason, in the sense used above. Or some more doubtful psychological analysis is ventured, to the effect that ideas are forces, not merely theoretical, passive entities: a creed which apparently has inspired much of the popular 'New Thought' in America. Again, Fouillée points out that knowledge for Socrates is "knowledge of the real and absolute worth of

things" (Quoted by Boutroux, Essays, p.54). This is what has been expressed above as social Reality, as that which a person is enabled by reason to grasp of those social or moral conditions which form an integral feature of Reality for members of civilized groups.

It is thus possible, if we place the Socratic doctrine in a modern psychological setting, to interpret it for what it is, namely, a statement of the fundamental nature of morality. Its formalism, its extravagance of expression, its narrow intellectualism, cannot wholly obscure the truth which it contains, namely, its emphasis on the place of reason or knowledge in morals.

2.

The Nature-Convention Antithesis.

Another feature of Greek Ethics on which some light can now be thrown is their antithesis between Nature and Con--vention. That antithesis goes back almost to the beginn--ings of Greek speculative thought. It was the problem of the earliest physicists to discover Nature in its primary elements, and the opposition of Nature to Convention appears as an integral part of the physics of Democritus. In Ethics the antithesis becomes specially prominent about the time of

the Sophists, and seems to have been part of the intellectual currency of that age. At a later period, Aristotle himself makes use of it, referring, in a well-known passage of the Fifth Book of the Nicomachean Ethics, to the distinction between 'natural' and 'conventional' justice. "Natural justice," he writes, "is that which has the same validity everywhere, and does not depend on our accepting or rejecting it" (Ethics, V.7.1).

The significance of this antithesis would seem to lie in a certain vague recognition which it implies of the two aspects of Reality, described above as physical and social. Moral regulations, or the conditions of social life, come to be interpreted as something superimposed on physical nature, or Reality proper. They seem to constitute an additional structure, bound up with the emergence, in the history of man, of group or common life. It becomes tempting and plausible to stress their difference from those features of Reality which seem to have been there from the beginning. It is in this way that the antithesis of Nature (that is, Reality which is independent of human agency) and Convention (that is, Reality which is the more complicated instrument of social life) should be interpreted. It points to an important dis-tinction, that between the physical and social aspects of Reality.

The inferences which the Sophists themselves seem to have drawn from their formulation of the antithesis are not warranted, it should be added. We may admit that there are two distinguishable aspects of Reality, physical and social, but this does not in the least imply that moral regulations are conventional, in the sense that they are mere arbitrary contrivances of human ingenuity, which perhaps subserve the interests of the ruling class, and could be quite well other than they are. It has been shown above that there are moral conditions of social life, which can be regarded as objective, universal, real, in the same sense as are physical laws. Moral laws are the conditions essential to the very possib--ility of social life, not mere capricious fiats of a part--icular tyrant or class. Convention, so far from being an arbitrary super-structure on Nature, is a more complex phase of Nature, a fuller, completer expression of it.

It was just to bring out this Reality in social life, the Reality of moral principles or regulations, that the whole argument of Plato in the Republic was directed. He is attempting to set out the nature of justice in itself, apart from all questions of rewards and consequences, and to show, by a detailed, logical analysis of what is implied in social life, that morality is the flowering, the consummation of man's being, and as such 'natural' or real.

Similarly, the form which the antithesis of Nature and Convention assumes in eighteenth century thought, and especially in Rousseau, with its implied contempt for conventional institutions and civilization, is evidently sheer extravagance. Not only does it rest on the historical fiction of a golden age in the past, but it glorifies instinctive impulses, which are the commonest possessions of human beings, as if they were the rarest and most unique treasures in all his heritage. Everything we know about humanity and its evolution runs counter to such a view. It seems indisputable that social life is itself the 'natural' condition of man, at a certain stage of development, and that moral regulations or conventions, which are the essentials of social life, are therefore as natural as physical laws. Man discovers both, we have argued, by the exercise of the same capacity, reason.

The whole antithesis, in short, between Nature and Convention can only be freed from its extravagant consequences if the exact basis on which it rests, the distinction between physical and social Reality, is made explicit. But that the antithesis <u>does</u> point to a fundamental distinction of this kind seems testified not only by the constant recurrence of the conceptions in the history of ethical and political thought, but by the extreme plausibility of the arguments to which they have prompted.

3.

Aristotle.

Some of the most important features of the view suggested in the present analysis can be read, too, into Aristotle's position without unwarranted or arbitrary interpretation. He seems, for instance, to have expounded a view of pleasure which suggests its biological significance. "The fact", he writes, "that all creatures, whether beasts or men, pursue pleasure is a proof that in some sense pleasure is the Chief Good.... There is a kind of instinct which all creatures possess by nature" (Nicomachean Ethics, Burnet's Text, VII. 13,1153b). Confirming one of the arguments of Eudoxus,(that an object at which all things aim is a good), Aristotle points out that it is not only irrational creatures who yearn for pleasure, but rational creatures have the same impulses. (X. 2. 1172b)

He shows, too, that 'pleasure' is not an entity in itself so much as an accompaniment or completion. Strictly, all creatures do not aim at pleasure, but at life, or activity, and the pleasure is the completion of the activity. "Pleasure follows in the train of every sensation, and similarly of every process of thought or perception, and the most pleas--urable activity is that which is most complete" (X.4.1174b).

"All men strive after pleasure, because all are eager simply to live. Life is, so to speak, an activity, or exercise of faculties... and in every case it is pleasure which makes perfect the exercise of the faculties, and therefore life. It is natural that men should strive after pleasure, because it perfects a man's life, which is the object of desire" (X. 4.1175a). These quotations show clearly that Aristotle accepts the biological significance of pleasure, and that the analysis suggested above corresponds in essetials to the position of Aristotle in this respect.

Similarly, the main doctrine of Aristotle is that the Chief Good, which can be popularly described as Happiness, consists in the activity appropriate to man as a rational being. The activity of <u>reason</u>, in other words, is Virtue. 'Right Reason', he says, determines on each occasion the mean, that is, the ideal in action. In Book VI of the Ethics the nature of this Right Reason is defined more exactly. The psychological background from which Aristotle proceeds is of course different from that outlined above, but it is at least significant that the specific characteristics of Right Reason which he enumerates are (a) Good Counsel, that is, deliberation with regard to the adjustment of means to end, (b) Intelligence or Discrimination, that is, literally, the knack of putting things together, and (c) Judgment, or Common

Sense, or Considerateness, which means, as Muirhead points out, the recognition that life is social, that one's own individual or personal detachment should be subordinated to a common end, "the power", to quote Muirhead, "of instinct-ively perceiving what is required in the interests of the community" (Chapters from Aristotle's Ethics). It is just exactly these characteristics of reason which have been shown above to mark the capacity of conforming to Reality, in its social as well as its physical aspect, and to constitute the essence of moral behaviour.

The view of Aristotle, too, that the data of Ethics are not capable of the same rigorous treatment as, say, the data of mathematical science, does not mean that no social science is possible. It means that the conclusions reached in this sphere are to be regarded as merely probable, general rules, liable to exceptions as knowledge increases and experience is enriched. In other words, Aristotle points to what has been represented above as the distinction between the actual moral currency of an age and the real, or ideal, social con-ditions which form the ultimate content of morality. Again, the broad distinction in the Ethics between moral and in-tellectual excellences corresponds to the different spheres of reasonableness, social and physical Reality, suggested above. Aristotle himself is conscious of the analogy

between the two spheres, for he indicates in a general way that the development of moral excellence from appetition or desire is parallel to the development of knowledge from the senses.

But, apart from points of detailed correspondence, the empirical tone of the classical treatise on Ethics amply vindicates the concrete standpoint maintained throughout. The insight and sanity of Greek Ethics, the implicit ident--ification in Plato and Aristotle of social and personal wellbeing, the correlation of moral excellence or virtue with the specific function of man's nature as a rational being, stand out as permanent landmarks in the history of moral speculation: and no view of morals is likely to withstand for long critical analysis or scrutiny if it departs wholly from the Greek tradition, or if it fails to incorporate in itself the fundamental truths which are the legacy of Greek philosophy.

4.

Spinoza.

With the philosophy of the Renaissance the new conception of the world and the new science are at first more prominent than speculation on morals. Mention may perhaps be made,

however, of the martyr Bruno,(1548-1600), who has left two symbolical works, "The Expulsion of the Beast Triumphant", and "On the Heroic Affects", which have considerable ethical interest. Bruno emphasises the place of striving in the moral life, and the constant disproportion between attainment and ideal or absolute satisfaction. He suggests, too, that complexity is the criterion by which the life of feeling is to be measured, a view which, in a rather different sense, was elaborated above. But it is in Spinoza that the funda--mental importance of Ethics is first clearly emphasised in modern speculation. It is in this thinker, indeed, that the relation between Ethics and Metaphysics is logically and ruthlessly carried out in its deepest implication.

Spinoza assumes at the outset, it may perhaps be useful to recall, that the conception of Reality can best be treated as analogous to the conception of Space, and that moral questions can in this way be discussed with the same cogency and logical certainty of result as can questions of physical or mathematical science. He never imagines for a moment that he is straining his material into an unnatural form. It is assumed throughout that questions such as those of freedom, immortality, the Chief Good, can be expounded acc--ording to the method of geometry, with definitions, axioms, propositions, and corollaries. Now, however extravagant

this assumption may at first sight seem, there is a certain truth, it has been argued above, in the view that there are moral laws, as objective and necessary as the laws of physical science, and a certain fruitfulness in the distinction of two aspects of Reality, one physical and one social. It seems best, therefore, to try and reach the substance of Spinoza's ethical doctrine, behind its curious form, without stopping to criticise his method of exposition.

The world, as it presents itself to Spinoza's vision, is shot through and through with Necessity. It is the express--ion of order, law, system: and everything is what it is, not as the result of chance, or to serve some special purpose or design of an external creator, but simply because of its nature. The end of human life, therefore, for Spinoza is the development of the active side of a man's nature. "All things which are made", he writes in an early work, "are made according to the eternal order and the fixed laws of nature". But human knowledge is incomplete, and the conception of a human nature "more firm than one's own" leads to striving after such a nature. The Chief Good, then, is simply know--ledge which has grasped the ultimate truth of things, "the union of the mind with the whole of nature" (On the Correct--ion of the Understanding, II.12).

The completion of the self is thus for Spinoza a process

of knowledge. Knowledge and morality are indeed for him aspects of one movement. In his system there is the closest correspondence between the successive stages of knowledge and the successive stages of the moral life. Just as a person passes from 'vague experience', or the stage of accidental and arbitrary associations, through Reason, the stage where objects are perceived to express permanent and necessary laws, up to Intuition, when the whole universe is glimpsed as the expression of one immanent Being: so, in the moral struggle, the individual passes from slavery or bondage, the bondage of impulse and passion, through Reason, where the trammels of sense and passion are first overcome, up to true Freedom, where the identity of the self with the one Reality or God is intuitively grasped. Adequate knowledge and the con--summation of the moral life are, in the last analysis, one and the same ideal, the harmony and identity of the self with God.

Indeed knowledge and morality are virtually the same, according to one phase of Spinoza's view. "Will and under--standing", he writes, "are one and the same... A particular volition and a particular idea are one and the same" (Ethics, ii. 49, corollary). There is sufficient testimony, then, in Spinoza's system for the analogy, and virtual identity, of moral and intellectual progress maintained above.

The foundation of Ethics, too, is for Spinoza "the en--deavour wherewith a thing perseveres in its own being", that is, a self-realising impulse which in the next sentence is identified with the "actual essence of a thing" (Ethics, iii. 6). It seems legitimate to interpret Spinoza's view in the sense maintained above, that social life, where morality emerges and where alone it has meaning, is the natural, the inevitable expression of the life-impulse, and that moral laws are therefore formulations of Reality.

Further, in Book Three of the Ethics, Spinoza definitely suggests the biological significance of feelings, and of pleasure and pain, which forms almost the basis of the pre--sent theory. "The mind", he writes, "can suffer great changes, and can pass now to a state of greater or less per--fection; these passions explain to us the emotions of pleasure and pain. In the following propositions I shall understand by pleasure the passion by which the mind passes to a higher state of perfection, and by pain the passion by which it passes to a lower state of perfection" (Ethics, iii. prop. XI,note). The function of the mind is to imagine "those things which increase or help its power of acting" (prop.XII). It is clear, too, that Spinoza does not argue from an abstract conception of pleasure, but recognises its adjectival character. "There are", he writes, "as many

species of pleasure, pain... as there are species of objects by which we are affected" (prop.LVI). "The pleasure which arises from the object, e.g.A, involves the nature of the object A, and the pleasure which arises from the object, B, involves the nature of that object B" (ibid.).

The general standpoint of Spinoza's system is thus seen to be in harmony with the view which equates reason and morals, in the above sense, and finds the ultimate end of morality in the concrete working of life itself. Although Spinoza's exposition is so abstract, he admits that within the actual context of human striving there is a concrete 'type' of ideal human nature, by which more or less in goodness can be estim--ated. This perfection, which he calls Reality, corresponds to what was called above social Reality, or the essential conditions of social life. His final statement of the nature of morality, that "Virtue is the essence itself of man in so far as it has the power of effecting certain things which can be understood through the laws of its nature alone", (Ethics, IV.def.8), points simply to the view that social life involves morality, and that since social life expresses the nature of man, morality likewise is in the nature or order of things. This is the view which has been urged above, if from a rather different approach, and from perhaps a different set of data.

5.

Kant.

The rational or intellectual view of morality culminates in Kant. For Kant's ethical doctrine is not an isolated one, but, as Caird says, "the final and most explicit ex--pression of a view of the moral life which, in some form or other, has held the balance with Hedonism through the whole history of ethical philosophy" (Caird, Philosophy of Kant, II.p.160). The thesis advanced above, that to be moral is to be reasonable, offers a new interpretation of Kant, and frees his doctrine from the supposed abstractness or austerity it is often held to exhibit. Kant's view is, briefly, that the moral law is the law of our own nature, in so far as we are rational beings. He holds that it is reason which in--flexibly ordains the precepts of morality, and that the command of duty is binding on all rational creatures as such, categorically or unconditionally. The moral law is neither the product of experience nor the reflection of some model or pattern. It issues from reason itself, and is implied in the very conception of a rational being. (Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals, sect.2).

The fact that Kant attributes moral worth only to actions done from a sense of duty, and into which no inclination

enters, simply suggests the fundamental sway of the Pleasure--principle in man, and the importance of that effort to con--form to social Reality which is the essential feature of the moral struggle. Kant recognised the universal force of the pleasure-principle. "It is", he writes, "one and the same vital force expressing itself in the desires, which is affected by all objects that cause pleasure" (Works, viii.p. 131). Kant would agree, in short, that to follow the pleasure-principle is a fundamental tendency of the human mind, that it is, in a sense, a physical or biological law. But he does not regard the Reality-principle, and the moral behaviour to which it prompts, as a development from the pleasure-principle so much as an entirely distinct, new type of activity, quite unrelated to the other, pleasure-seeking side of man, and springing from a radically different phase of human nature. It is in this that the distinctive dualism of Kant's whole system is clearly seen, with all its con--sequences of formalism and harshness.

But the analysis of the facts which Kant offers is funda--mentally the same as that attempted above. He points out, for instance, that "all material practical principles as such are of one and the same kind, and fall under the universal principle of self-love or our own happiness"(Critique of Practical Reason, Second Theorem). This is just another

description of the pleasure-principle. Kant opposes the notion that pleasures differ in kind. "As it is all one to him, who uses gold to pay his expenses, whether the gold he uses was dug up in the mountains or washed out of the sand, so no man who cares solely for the pleasantness of life asks whether the pleasant consciousness is due to objects of sense or objects of understanding, but only how much pleasure they produce and how long it will last" (Quoted in Caird, op.cit. II.p.166). All practical principles, therefore, that is, all principles of conduct based on personal desire or exper--ience of pleasure, are not objectively necessary, Kant holds. This, again, is simply to say that the pleasure-principle is the very antithesis of morality, and that the essence of the moral life is to be found only in what springs from reason, that is, from what is real, objective, universal.

Even the famous opening sentence of the Metaphysic of Morals, to the effect that there is nothing good in itself save the good will, is most simply interpreted as referring to what was called above the capacity of being reasonable, of following the Reality-principle, of postponing or denying the immediate gratification of impulses. For it is in this that the 'good will' consists, and it is natural therefore that Kant should endow it with such supreme worth. To be reasonable, in the sphere of social conditions, is, we have

seen, the ultimate basis of the very possibility of moral conduct. It is only the abstract conception of Reason which Kant uses that makes it necessary for him to leave the good will without content, except for the bare notion of moral obligation.

Kant's view, then, is that moral behaviour expresses reason, but he regards reason as an abstract faculty, and rigidly severs moral or rational behaviour from activity which is in the least tainted with sensuous or pleasurable elements. The formalism of his view may be admitted. As Hegel showed, if the content of the moral principle, that is, of reason, is merely the abstract notion of self-consistency, no <u>particular</u> rules of action can ever be deduced from it. A formal criterion of 'universality' cannot in itself afford the key to moral rightness, because any particular rule at all can be universalised without formal contradiction. It is only if social life, with rights of life and property and all the rest, are presupposed, that Kant's criterion of universal--isation becomes valid.

It may be admitted, too, that Kant is logically unjust--ified in drawing, as he does, on experience at all for his illustrations. If reason and experience be opposed in the absolute fashion required by Kant's system, the rational, in morals as in knowledge, becomes a mere empty form, and the

moral principle lacks content. But Kant's vision was deeper than his surface logic enabled him to express, for, while granting that on his own premisses the moral end cannot be realised in the sensible or natural world, he shows that we must use this natural world as a 'type'. "Not", Caird says, "as though moral laws could be realised in the natural world as such, but because it is only in this way that we can re--present them as realised at all" (op.cit.pp.179-180).

Kant's analysis, in fact, leads to a view of morals which only his initial dualism prevents him recognising. His view appears in its real nature if it is freed from the logical fetters which it struggles to break. The conceptions of reason and experience are in truth not incompatible. The rational and the actual are not separate worlds which cannot be related, but phases of a single process. It is in the world of actual practice, or experience, that reason can alone function and find its material. What reason indicates as the moral end is not a bare principle of self-consistency, but concrete conditions of social Reality, the conditions essential to the realisation of life in social order. From this standpoint, and on this view of reason, Kant's doctrine is freed from its formal contradictions, and the fundamental truth of his analysis appears through the clouds of his self-erected obscurities both of logic and of language.

6.

Conclusion.

Even from such a brief glimpse as this, then, at the history of Greek and modern Ethics, it is clear that the rational tradition represents one of the main elements in moral theory. The present analysis has been designed to uphold that tradition, and to vindicate the Idealism with which that tradition has been so long associated. It is an Idealism which has emerged from a background of mixed psychological elements, from Psycho-analysis and Behaviorism in particular. Taking these for what they are, and even straining their results, the analysis has not found it nec--essary to relinquish anything of the essential truth in Idealism. Freedom has been maintained at the root of the moral life, the supreme worth of the moral struggle has been vindicated, and the history of man's cultural development has been viewed not as the product of blind physical or economic forces, but as the surging of the free, creative spirit of man towards the fuller and completer expression of its power.

The relation between the rational tradition in morals and the Happiness tradition to which it has always been opposed can now be viewed in a new light. Emphasis on the fact of

the pleasure-principle, on the fundamental significance, biologically, of pleasurable tone, tends to throw into one--sided relief the aspect of Happiness, until it monopolises the entire field of analysis. Emphasis on what is implied by the Reality-principle, on the other hand, tends to bring into relief the function of Reason in the moral struggle, and tends to overshadow or even displace altogether the actual impulses and passions and conflicts out of which the moral life is built. A purely empirical emphasis and an abstract concept of Reason fail to reveal all that is in--volved in the moral situation. The solution must lie in an attempt to reconcile the opposed traditions by retaining the analysis on that concrete level on which the facts them--selves are found, and by making explicit the postulates which these very facts require. Granted that what we are dealing with is living organism responding to environmental situation, that life itself supplies the clue to morality and to values, analysis has shown that the moral struggle loses nothing of its fundamental character, and that no amount of psychological probings or explanations can interpret the significance of the very existence of duty and morality.

What has emerged, finally, is the conviction that moral theory must guard against excessive intellectualism, and that, if Ethics is to be a progressive science, it must be

in the closest relation to the actual setting of the moral life. It must absorb into its own analysis the results of psychology and the relevant physical or biological sciences. For in this way alone, not by the pure theorising which recks of nothing save the implications of logical concepts, can the significance of morals be adequately or sanely envisaged.