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THE GOOD WILL

A STUDY IN THE COHERENCE THEORY OF GOODNESS

BY

H. J. PATON

Fellow of the Queen's College, Oxford

οἱ μὲν ἰππήων στρότον οἱ δὲ πέσδων
οἱ δὲ νάων φαῖσ' ἐπὶ γᾶν μέλαιναν
ἔμμεναι κάλλιστον, ἔγω δὲ κῆν' ὅττω τις ἔραται.
SAPPHO.

Es ist überall nichts in der Welt . . . was ohne Einschränkung für gut könnte gehalten werden, als allein ein *guter Wille*.
KANT.

E la Sua voluntate è nostra pace.
DANTE.

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IN MEMORY

OF

ROBERT GIBSON

WILLIAM KENNEDY

AND

JOHN RANKINE BROWN

PREFACE

THE late Dean of Carlisle, Dr. Hastings Rashdall, in his preface to *The Theory of Good and Evil*, which was published twenty years ago while its author was still a Fellow of New College, observed with justice that 'Oxford College Tutors are very far from possessing the leisure of a German or an American Professor'. Judging from my own experience during the greater part of the interval which has since elapsed, I should say that the burden which is laid upon an Oxford don, and not least if he is engaged in the teaching of philosophy, has continued to increase rather than to diminish. The danger of this to Oxford scholarship is very great, and it is all the greater because it is imposed by no external authority, but merely by the tradition of a community, by the conscientiousness of individuals, and perhaps—to mention a less favourable view—by the competition between colleges. Unless steps are taken to meet and to diminish the continually growing claims of teaching and administration, the University will suffer (it has indeed already suffered) both as a seat of learning and as a place of education. I must express my thanks to my own college, perhaps not the least distinguished in Oxford for its contribution to learning, for having taken the first steps, so far as I know, in this direction, by adopting as a recognised part of its policy, although under severe limitations, the American university institution known as 'the Sabbatical year'. If this example were generally and systematically followed, it would, in my opinion, do more to enlarge the production of Oxford than any single reform of which I can think. At any rate in my own case I believe that, without the liberty thus secured, this book would never have been written.

I must thank also the authorities of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, without whose subvention it would not have been written in California. I cannot indeed flatter myself that anything of that delightful country, with its great spaces, its sharp outlines, its brilliant colours, its bright

light and dark shadows, its equable temper and ever varying but never ceasing beauty, has imprinted itself upon these pages; but I hope that I have profited by the warm and generous friendship of its inhabitants and by their freshness and eagerness in the discovery of truth. I hope also that the results of my sojourn are not such as to discourage the authorities of the Memorial from appointing to their fellowships men who are relatively mature in years and in teaching experience.

It is a more difficult thing to acknowledge obligations of a philosophical character. I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. Expressions of indebtedness have in the main a merely biographical interest, but it would be ungracious to omit them altogether, especially as, in the course of my argument, I have not always found it convenient to mention the source of theories which I have expounded or criticised. No man can adequately acknowledge his debt to the past, but it will be obvious how much I owe to such writers as Kant and Aristotle, and above all to Plato; and in more recent times to the great tradition, written and unwritten, of English idealism, which has had its centre primarily in the University of Oxford.

I must speak of my debts to the living in slightly more detail, although even here I can mention only those to whom I owe most. Among foreign writers I am much indebted to Monsieur Bergson, and still more to Signor Croce and Signor Gentile, the two pioneers of modern Italian idealism. In many passages I am either consciously agreeing or consciously disagreeing with one or other of these two writers, and it may be that in some places this has made my thinking a little obscure; but I believe that much of what value my book may have is derived from them, and also that my agreement with them goes very much deeper than my disagreement. Of English philosophers I will name only three: Mr. Samuel Alexander, who will, I hope, forgive me, if I have distorted his doctrines in attempting to make use of them; Mr. J. A. Smith, Waynflete Professor of Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy in this University, who both as a tutor and as a friend has been a continual source of philosophical inspiration

to me, as he has been to so many others; and Mr. J. H. Muirhead, the editor of the Library of Philosophy, who has fortified me by his wise counsels and kindly sympathy during all the stages of the production of my book. But I should like to express also my deep sense of obligation to my philosophical colleagues in Oxford; to members of the department of philosophy in the University of California; and to all the men and women with whom I have discussed these and kindred matters in different quarters of the world. If I have fallen into philosophical error, it can only be through lack of capacity and not through lack of opportunity; for no one could possibly have received more help from his friends.

I have also to thank those who have read my work in typescript or in proof, and who have helped me by their suggestions. Mr. J. A. Smith and Mr. Muirhead I have already mentioned, and besides these my thanks are due to Mr. C. G. Stone, formerly Fellow of Balliol, whose ripe wisdom, in this as in many other matters, has been of the greatest possible service to me; to my colleague, Canon Streeter, wise in counsel and prudent in affairs; and to my sister, Miss D. A. Paton of the University of Reading, who has helped me with the index and encouraged me to remember the French ideals of clarity and precision in style.

I had hoped, when I began this book, to write it in such a way that it would profitably be read by any intelligent person who was prepared to take the necessary pains. Philosophy can never be popular, since thought is difficult and requires effort, but a philosophy which appeals only to the expert is, I think, failing in its proper task. A highly specialised jargon is a sign not of strength but of weakness. The English tradition of philosophical writing is on the whole in favour of a straightforward style which avoids unnecessary technicality; but I think it is true that the educated class in these islands, and I should judge also in America, has at the present time a certain prejudice against philosophy, and there is less general interest in the subject than there is in Germany or France or Italy. It is very desirable that such prejudice should be lessened and such interest increased, and the only way in which that end can be attained is by the avoidance

of unnecessary subtlety and the practice of simplicity in style. That at least was the goal which I had set before myself, but perhaps I have lived too long in the academic atmosphere to be able to speak consistently the language of the market-place. I have found the use of some technical terms inevitable, especially in the earlier chapters; but I have tried to explain the meaning of my terms in simpler language, although sometimes from the nature of the case they can become clear only in the course of the discussion. If any who are not specialists should deign to embark upon the study of my work, I could almost wish that they should read the chapters in the reverse order, but a more advisable course would be to start on a first reading with the seventh chapter, or perhaps even better with the tenth chapter, where I begin, as it were, to sail out into the open sea.

H. J. PATON

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, OXFORD,
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THE GOOD WILL

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE problem of ethics is as old as man. When we recognise the presence of good and evil in our own actions and those of others, and even when we recognise the same presence (or its shadow ?) in the instruments which we use or in the accidents which befall us, we are thinking ethically. To be altogether without the capacity of ethical judgement is to be less than human, and so far as men possess and exercise it they are already in their way philosophers. Ethical philosophy proper seeks, however, to make ethical thinking more systematic and more intelligible ; it seeks, not only to judge, but also to understand its judgements. In so doing it is bound to go beyond questions of good and evil, and to deal with other concepts like virtue and vice, right and wrong, duty and obligation. There are some who would even make duty or obligation the central problem in ethics, and would exclude questions concerned with a non-moral good or evil. Yet it is improbable that the words ' good ' and ' evil ' should be used in entirely unrelated senses, and if we begin with the widest sense, we may perhaps be able to speak more confidently when we come to deal with a definitely moral good and moral evil. Whether this be the best method or not, it is at any rate the method which is adopted in the present study.

The need for ethical thinking seems to be obvious enough, and the attempt to satisfy it should require no apology or defence. If the lives we lead are really good and evil, we, as intelligent beings, can hardly fail to have a theoretical interest in a matter which so closely concerns ourselves. It would not be a reasonable attitude, if we sought to understand everything in the world except what we ourselves are doing when we are leading good or evil lives. But in this matter we have

also a practical interest. It is possible that because of our ignorance or misunderstanding we may seek the good where it is not to be found; and even if we may find it without the aid of reflexion, it is hard to say that goodness is really found unless we ourselves know that we have found it. Yet we all desire to attain some sort of good in our lives, and a life which was in no sense good would presumably not be worth living. Hence there is something to be said for the view that the unexamined life is one which no wise man would wish to live.[1]

It may be thought, however, that we have enough guidance in the wisdom of our fathers and in the ordinary traditions of men. In this there is some truth, and I personally should have little confidence in any ethical thinking which did not have its roots both in the actual beliefs and practices of men, and also in the reflexions of those who have established themselves as the moral and intellectual leaders of the human race. It is only the ignorant and the superficial who learn nothing from past experience and past thought. But if we are to take the past as our guide, it is hard to see why we should follow past ages in everything except in the one thing which made them great, except, that is to say, in attempting like them to add something to human knowledge and human achievement. Mere imitation will contribute nothing to the sum of human values. Besides, it is by no means the case that past thinkers and past traditions are in complete agreement either about what goodness is or about what things are good. There is indeed, I believe, more agreement than is commonly recognised; and where many see only contradictions in the great thinkers, it may be possible to discover instead insistence on some special aspect of the same comprehensive truth. Certainly we may learn much from those with whom we disagree, yet obviously we must do so, not by blind acceptance, but by thinking for ourselves. Even where we accept and seek to follow an authority, we cannot avoid the necessity of independent thought The mere commentator may help others to understand, but he does not understand himself. To understand a past thinker, we must think again as he has thought, and to do so is not a matter of analysing arguments

[1] ὁ δὲ ἀνεξέταστος βίος οὐ βιωτὸς ἀνθρώπῳ. Plato, *Apology*, 38*a*.

and comparing texts, but of having the same experience and wrestling with the same problems. Without memory we cannot think, but we cannot make memory a substitute for thought

Every generation must face its own problems, although if it is wise, it will recognise that its problems are old problems in a new form, or new problems set by the solution of the old. This is true at all times, but it is especially true in an age of transition like the present. Knowledge is one and philosophy is one, and we cannot separate off ethical thinking from the rest of philosophy and the rest of knowledge. The present age is privileged to see the natural sciences advancing by leaps and bounds, even before it has had time to assimilate reflectively the discoveries of the last century. The new ideas in physics have disturbed the dogmatism of nineteenth century science and are forcing the scientists themselves to raise definitely philosophical questions. Psychology, while still in its infancy, is perhaps beginning to understand better the nature of instinct, desire, and will; and doctrines of the 'Unconscious' are already exercising a somewhat doubtful influence on modern practices and beliefs. All this has given a new impetus to philosophy, and men are trying once more 'to see things together', and to deal with their special problems in the light of a wider knowledge. In particular, there is a wide-spread recognition that the problem of moral values cannot be separated from the wider problem of value in general. The modern ferment of ideas means that we must reconsider all our problems, and the ethical problem certainly not less than the others.

It must not, however, be thought that ethical philosophy is a matter for specialists or is concerned with purely theoretical speculations. On the contrary, it arises out of our experience of life and is forced upon us by the nature of our practical problems. Here too the burden of thought is laid upon this generation, for we are faced with new practical problems, with the necessity of bringing order out of chaos and adjusting ourselves to new moral and political ideals. It is not for us to walk comfortably in the old paths, and it will require strenuous efforts both of thought and of will, if we are to discover new and better paths for ourselves. This is a time

of uncertainty and questioning, not only in regard to limited problems, but in regard to the very foundations of our social and moral life. The ethical beliefs of modern men and women are only too often consciously hesitating and painfully confused. The discoveries of modern science and of historical criticism have made even unlearned men more doubtful of the authority of religion and less ready to accept without question the moral code which it enjoins. A great war has given to us the spectacle of many men in all countries who were willing to die for a cause which they believed to be good, but it has also unleashed the baser of human passions, and both in itself and in its consequences it has disturbed the even tenor of our lives and shaken the comfortable conventions by which most men live. There are many who have lost all their beliefs and live merely from hand to mouth. There are some who deny all distinctions of good and evil and seek to gratify only their curiosity and their passions. Even among those who think little there is a sort of dumb dissatisfaction with existing practices and existing standards, while the more thoughtful are often acutely conscious that there is something lacking in their life and in the life of their generation, some more abiding and solid good which they seek but are unable to find.

It is precisely circumstances of this kind which make the greatest demands on, and are the greatest stimulus to, philosophy. If we believe that goodness has its roots in the will, we cannot indeed make exaggerated claims for philosophical speculation, since practical problems must be solved by practical means and by practical men. Mere thinking by itself will not produce good living any more than it will produce good art. Yet philosophy is more than an agreeable pastime for the intellectual or an efficient instrument for the education of the young. For although it is in the main by acting that we learn how to act well, yet reflexion upon our actions may make the process of learning easier and may prevent us from making the worst kinds of mistake. There is even a sense in which no action is good unless it is done in the light of the knowledge that it is good, unless it is done because we know it to be good. All good action is intelligent and some good action must be reflective. Philosophy is necessary to make that reflexion more clear and more coherent and more capable

of defending itself. We must not expect it to solve particular problems or to give us rules by which to act. Philosophy can never be a substitute for the effort to meet each situation as it arises, it cannot offer us a formula for dealing with disobedient children any more than it can offer us a formula for playing golf. If we seek such formulae, we must go to practical men who have experience of the particular field in which we are interested. But philosophy can at least try to show that goodness is a concept in which we may reasonably believe and an ideal by which we may reasonably live; and this was never more necessary than at the present time.

To some it may seem that even if success in this endeavour were attained, the result would be relatively empty and trivial and of little or no importance for purposes of action. There is a sense in which this is true, and it is perhaps better to expect too little from philosophy than too much. Those who expect too much are certain to be disappointed, and may come to distrust philosophy and to distrust thinking about goodness altogether. But understanding, even partial understanding, of goodness may be valuable for its own sake, and it would be something to convince ourselves that goodness is not a mere mirage, that we have as much reason to believe in it as we have to believe in physical bodies. Such a conviction would not be without its effect on our actions. And if I am right, to think about goodness is not to think about a mere abstraction, but to think about willing and about life so far as that is good or evil. If we have some general understanding of that, we may find it easier to think about practical problems; we may even find it easier to meet our practical problems as they arise. We want something more than the wider view of human life, but unless we can attain to some such wider view, our reflexions will be relatively haphazard and our actions relatively blind.

In any case the burden of action is laid upon us. We cannot cease from willing, even if we would. We must choose our course in life, and we cannot escape from choosing, even if what we choose is inaction or death itself. We may, if we will, act upon whim or upon impulse, or we may follow the conventions of our time, or we may try to make our own plan of

life. To some extent we are likely to do all three. But it is hard for us, being human, not to reflect a little on what it is that we are doing, and not to ask whether one course is better than another. Some of us may feel that we want to reflect more than a little, and that if we are going to reflect at all, we might try to reflect as well and as thoroughly as we can.

The present study makes no attempt to survey the whole field of modern ethical philosophy, and it avoids controversy except where controversy appears to be necessary in self-defence. This method may be in some ways a disadvantage, but it makes, I hope, for brevity and clearness, and it has certainly been adopted from no disrespect to modern writers on ethics and on kindred subjects. It would be mere folly not to make oneself acquainted with contemporary views, so far as one's time and capacity admit, but discussion of theories with which one agrees, and still more with which one disagrees, is apt to hinder the development of an argument, and even to distract attention from the reality which it is our business to understand. In any case, whether rightly or wrongly, I have undertaken only what I think is the more modest task of trying to put forward, as clearly as I can, a statement of the ethical theory which I believe to be true.

That theory has two main sides, indicated by the title and the sub-title respectively. The first is that goodness has its roots in the spiritual activity called willing; that it belongs to things, not in themselves, but as objects of some kind of willing; and that the apprehension of goodness is not merely an intellectual matter, but demands for its possibility the presence of a particular kind of will. The second is that goodness belongs to the coherent will; that different kinds of goodness, whether in actions or in things, are due to the different kinds of coherence in the will which wills them; and that moral goodness in particular belongs to a will which is coherent as a member of an all-inclusive society of coherent wills. Or—to put it more briefly—to be good is to will (or to be willed) coherently, and different kinds of goodness depend upon the different kinds of coherence and the different ways of willing or of being willed.

It is not to be supposed that a summary statement of this kind throws any light, when taken by itself, upon the nature of goodness; the meaning of the word 'coherence' in particular is only too apt to be misunderstood; and the exposition and justification of this theory—if it can be justified—must be looked for throughout the whole course of a long and, I fear, laborious argument. But it may not be amiss here to make a few observations with regard to both sides of the theory.

An attempt to understand goodness, not as a thing in itself, but in organic connexion with willing, must be part of a wider attempt to understand all values—such for example as truth and beauty—in organic connexion with some kind of spiritual activity. The possibility of such an understanding is at any rate definitely the presupposition of the present study, and it may be well to make this clearer by reference to what are called primary, secondary, and tertiary qualities.

The place and function of mind or spirit in the universe is at the present a subject of much controversy. There are some who think that apart from mind there would be no universe at all; it is however a common belief, especially among scientists, not merely that the universe exists independently of mind, but that in itself it is characterised by or possesses (and is known to be characterised by or to possess) what are called the primary qualities, i.e. the qualities which can be exactly measured or which are themselves quantitative. These primary qualities are probably thought of differently as science advances, but for the plain man the obvious examples are the shape and size of physical things. The secondary qualities, like colours and sounds, are very generally believed to belong to physical things only as related to minds—or at the least as related to living bodies possessed of sense organs. Yet even here there are some who hold that grass would be green if there were no eye to see it, and that the sea would moan if there were no ear to hear it. These secondary qualities are not themselves exactly measurable, although the physical stimuli which are said to be their cause are exactly measurable. The tertiary qualities are values like truth, beauty, and goodness; and many of those who hold that primary, and even that secondary, qualities belong to the physical world apart from

any mind which knows it, would yet deny that the tertiary qualities could belong to a mindless world or have any existence or reality apart from minds.

This last doctrine is the theory of value which I believe to be true, and seek to defend in the case of goodness. It implies that the understanding of every different kind of value must be sought in a different kind of spiritual activity. Beauty exists only for the mind which imagines or 'intuits', truth for the mind which thinks, and goodness for the mind which wills. This is not merely to say that for these values to be known they must be known by a mind. It means that the mind actually makes the value which it knows. There is no beauty until the mind intuits, no truth until it thinks, and no goodness until it wills.

It is impossible to discuss here the nature of these different activities, but we may note one general difficulty which applies to them all. Activities are not things in themselves, but are always and necessarily, it would seem, directed to an object. We think something, we intuit something, we will something. Truth, beauty, and goodness, cannot lie in the activity of the mind, if the activity is abstracted from the object to which it is directed. If we regard the objects of our activities as existing in their own right as parts of an independent world, then we must say that values arise from the cooperation of the world and the mind. I think, however, that for our present purposes, while we must recognise the distinction between mind and object, we need not attempt to discuss the difficult question whether either is independent of the other. It would still remain true that the activity of the mind was necessary for value to be, even if this activity were thought of as cooperation rather than as creation. Beauty belongs to a thing so far as the thing is an object of intuition. Truth belongs to a thing so far as it is thought. Goodness belongs to a thing so far as it is willed. The ultimate interpretation of such simple statements may be doubtful, but the necessity of making some distinction between subject and object is not, so far as I know, denied by any school of thought. Certainly when we speak of value as belonging to activity or of goodness as belonging to will, we must mean belonging to activity or will, not in abstraction from, but in union with, its object,

or perhaps better as the concrete whole within which the distinction of subject and object is made.

The view that value depends on the activity of mind (whether in creation or in cooperation) may be called the idealist view, and the opposing view that value exists independently of mind may be called the realist view. These terms are not entirely satisfactory, and would include a realist like Mr. Alexander on the side of the idealists, but other terms would tend to be question-begging on one side or the other. The antithesis of ' spiritual ' and ' un-spiritual ' could not be accepted by the realists, although the idealist view might more properly be called the spiritual view, and the realist would probably lay claim to the term ' objective '.

Both views have a certain initial plausibility, and all that need be maintained here is that we are justified in trying to work out the idealist hypothesis and to discover whether it can hold in the case of goodness. If there were any kind of value to which the idealist theory was obviously inapplicable, we might well hesitate before attempting to elaborate it in the case of goodness, but there seem to be no such grounds for hesitation. Curiously enough, beauty seems sometimes to be of all values the most obviously dependent upon mind, although it can also be thought of most easily as belonging to things in themselves. The reason for this ambiguity is perhaps that the beautiful seems to be complete in itself. We are hardly conscious of the context in which it is what it is, and the apprehension of it seems to be, although it really is not, just immediate, a sudden miracle or illumination which just happens. Hence we can regard beauty as the product of a special kind of creative vision, or on the contrary we may regard it as an objective and eternal excellence to which we were blind until it suddenly forced itself upon us. In the case of truth it is harder to believe that a thing, although it may be real, can be true in and by itself. Truth seems to arise when a real thing or fact is known. There are some who would maintain that truth belongs not to things but to propositions, and that propositions have truth and also some kind of reality whether they are known or not. It is difficult to be sure what a proposition is, but a mere form of words is surely not true except in so far as it has meaning, and it is not easy to believe

that the meaning exists in the words. It looks as if propositions had meaning, and therefore truth, only for a thinking mind. Moreover, propositions seem to derive their meaning, at least to some extent, from their context. Their meaning varies with their context, and here too their meaning seems to exist only for a mind which knows both them and their context. At first sight it is artificial to suppose that truth—and still more that error—belongs to propositions independently of the mind which thinks them in their context. And as to goodness, the goodness of things seems to be relative to their purpose, and purpose seems to imply some kind of will, it seems to demand a person who has the purpose. To say that a thing is good in itself apart from its purpose looks like saying that it is well made, or that somebody wants it to be, or that somebody likes it. All this would mean that the goodness of things was dependent upon will. Goodness however is applied mainly to men and to their actions, and it seems a little unnatural to say that men and actions are good in so far as they produce things which are in themselves good independently of any kind of desire or will.

The purely objective or realist view is tempting, because it must be wrong to say that whatever anyone thinks is true, whatever anyone imagines is beautiful, whatever anyone wills is good. If that were so, there could be no differences of opinion and no error or ugliness or evil. It will be necessary to consider whether we can avoid just this difficulty, and whether the idealist view can make an objective goodness and badness genuinely intelligible. The realist view on the other hand has still to explain how we can come to know these absolute values entirely external to and independent of ourselves, how things can be true or beautiful or good to us. It seems in the end to happen by a kind of miracle, a pure intuition; we just know and that is all about it. Different processes may lead up to our apprehension, but these are not the reasons for our apprehension, and our apprehensions have no reasons at all. I believe that if carried out logically any theory of value which ignores spiritual activity is bound to end in this. At any rate there are certainly modern exponents of this doctrine who affirm without shame or subterfuge that values must be apprehended in this purely intuitive way.

The result is obvious. They can only assert dogmatically that they know what goodness is, and that this thing, that thing, and the other thing, are good in themselves. The cynical observer can hardly fail to suggest that there is a curious resemblance between what they happen to like and what they assert to be absolutely good. They seem to be imposing their own purely subjective preferences on all other men. And they do not even profess to be able to offer reasons for their assertions, although they can perhaps point out a way by which they hope that others may share their vision. Their defence of the objectivity of value becomes itself dogmatic and apparently subjective, and produces the very scepticism which they set out to avoid.

Without denying that there is an intuitive element in all our apprehensions of value, we may still cherish the hope that it is within the power of human reason to give a better account and justification of value than this. It may be impossible to prove that any particular thing is good, and yet value seems to be more than a kind of flavour which we may or may not happen to recognise. Similarly the opposite of value, which we may call disvalue, seems to be more than another kind of flavour, and more than the absence of the special flavour called value. It seems as if value might be understood better, if we could consider it in its relation to its opposite, and in its relation to a mind which not only knows it, but may even create or help to create it. More particularly it seems as if we might understand goodness better, if we considered it in its relation to badness, and in its relation to a will which is commonly supposed to will both the evil and the good, and even to be itself both good and evil. Such an inquiry, if successful, might carry more conviction to an age sceptical of all value than can any assertions, however clear or confident, that value is and we know it and we know also where it is to be found. For we must not assume that if goodness is relative to human nature or human will, it is therefore merely subjective. Human nature is as real as any physical fact, and that which is relative to human nature does not necessarily cease to be real. Goodness may be, and I venture to believe must be, relative to a living subject, but it is not therefore merely subjective. We can make the subject itself an object,

and perhaps we may better grasp the objective nature of goodness, if we can see it in relation to the self and to its world.

Before leaving this side of the argument we must note that while truth, beauty, and goodness, are the ordinarily accepted values, it is not necessary that they should be the only ones. There are some who would claim for example that there is a specifically religious value and presumably a specifically religious activity. There is some difficulty in this, because religion, it might seem, seeks to include all values within itself rather than to establish a new kind of value. The relation between the different values lies, however, beyond the scope of this study, although I have ventured in the last chapter to say something on the relation between religion and morality.

What is more important for our purposes is the recognition that we habitually apply the term 'good' where there is involved no notion of moral goodness. Signor Benedetto Croce has in recent years insisted that the distinction between economic and moral good, as he calls them, is as marked as the distinction between beauty and truth. I have ventured to adopt his terminology, I hope without an undue alteration of meaning, and the phrase 'economic good' is used throughout for a good that cannot be called moral. When we speak of a good meal or a good ship, or again of a good cricketer or a good hater, we are using the word 'good' not in a moral but in an economic sense. The distinction is obvious enough, though it may be hard to define except negatively. The contrast of economic good and evil arises, on my view, wherever there is any kind of will, and therefore, since the moral will is a kind of will, moral goodness includes economic goodness under itself. Indeed it may be doubted whether any action of a moral being could be described simply as economically good and not also as either moral or immoral, and it may even be doubted whether in the last resort an immoral act could legitimately be described as economically good except by a kind of abstraction. The detailed exposition of this doctrine must however be postponed till later. What should be emphasised here is that in the earlier and more abstract chapters we are concerned only with economic and not with moral good.

A failure to recognise this fact will inevitably make many of the contentions in the earlier chapters appear to be false and, it may be, even preposterous. I do not suggest for a moment that the judgements therein set forth would hold in a moral world. What is good from a narrow point of view or for a narrow will is bad from a wider point of view and for a wider will. None the less on my view (which is by no means novel) the narrow good is still in its own way a kind of good, and there is some sort of goodness in the very heart of evil.

We must begin by judging from the point of view of the agent, and such judgements have a provisional truth which must be taken into account before we judge from the wider point of view, even if we hold that the wider point of view is always implicitly present in the agent's mind. To deny without qualification the economic goodness of an action because from the moral point of view it is evil is, I submit, a mistake. It is like denying the beauty of a poem because of its alleged inconsistency with historical fact.

The second side of my theory—the emphasis laid upon coherence—is obviously necessary as a completion of the other. To make goodness depend simply upon willing would mean that whatever was willed was therefore good, and this is only too clearly a doctrine which is at variance both with common-sense and with all sane philosophy. Goodness and badness in any but the most superficial sense must be relative, not merely to willing and rejecting, but to a special way of willing and rejecting. I have argued that even in the isolated individual taken abstractly the coherent will is the (economically) good will, and the incoherent will is the (economically) bad will; and further that what is willed is (economically) good so far as it is willed by the coherent will, and is (economically) bad so far as it is willed by the incoherent, and rejected by the coherent, will. To find a moral good and evil we must pass beyond the isolated and abstract individual to society, and ultimately to an all-inclusive society of all reasonable beings. Here too, I have maintained, moral good is to be found in the will which is not only coherent in itself, but is also coherent as a member of a society of similarly coherent wills; and moral evil is to be found in a will which

might be, and yet fails to be, coherent as a member of such a society.

I believe that this doctrine properly understood is not only compatible with our ordinary moral beliefs and practices, but is to be found (no doubt in a different form) in such diverse thinkers as Plato and Immanuel Kant. If the present study can claim any originality, it can only be in this, that an attempt has been made to work out the coherence theory of goodness in a new way and with some help from modern philosophical and psychological thinking. The defence of the theory must be found in the body of the book, but I would venture to claim here that such a defence is not to be dismissed at the outset as intrinsically impossible. The coherence theory, not merely of goodness, but also of truth, is, I would submit, often too hurriedly rejected because of a failure to understand what coherence means. Even those of us who accept the coherence theory must continually be on our guard against mistaking a false coherence for the true. If Plato and Kant could fall into error on this matter, as I believe they did, we may be sure that it contains dangerous pitfalls for lesser men. Certainly we do not have coherence where we have any unification of a manifold, for that is already present in anything whatsoever (whether object or activity), and is as necessary to evil and to error as it is to goodness and truth. And again coherence is neither mere formal consistency nor an external relation between independently existing realities.[1] It is a concrete and internal, not an abstract and external, coherence which, as present in spiritual activities, is the source of all value whatsoever. In the special case of goodness, that self or will is coherent and good which wills the momentary action as part of an all-inclusive whole of coherent willing, and, in willing the part, wills the whole. Such phrases indeed tell us nothing, and may even themselves suggest an abstract consistency, until we follow their application in experience. What is in essentials the same doctrine is expressed in the language of religion, when we are told to do all for the glory of God and in the service of mankind.

I would add that a concrete coherence, as I understand it, involves the view that the self as will is not less rational or

[1] Cf. H. H. Joachim, *The Nature of Truth*, pp. 69 ff.

reasonable than the self as thought. It involves also the view that a moral judgement is, and must be, the expression of a moral being which both reflects upon and, in Mr. Alexander's phrase, enjoys a moral will. For a purely intellectual being, if such a thing were possible, no moral judgement could have any meaning whatever. I hope that in my anxiety to make this clear, I have not made too little of the part played by reflexion in the moral life, but I have felt it necessary to protest against intellectualistic views, which speak as if the will had to wait upon the commands of a purely intellectual activity, before it can act morally or attain to any kind of goodness. Moral action certainly involves self-consciousness on the part of the agent, but it is utterly untrue to life to suggest that it involves as its precondition a comprehensive survey and evaluation of all possible lines of action and their effects. Such a view is in the end as absurd as it would be to suggest that we could not think truly until we had first thought out and evaluated all the different possible lines of thought.

I conclude with a brief note on the different chapters and their grouping. Chapters II, III, and IV, are all preliminary. In Chapter II an attempt is made to meet a criticism which holds that all progress along the present lines is impossible; in Chapter III the nature of the self as activity and the character of self-knowledge are discussed; while Chapter IV deals briefly with the kind of world in which our human lives have, it seems, to be lived. The remaining chapters discuss different kinds of willing with their correspondingly different kinds of good and evil. Chapters V and VI go together, and are concerned with the most elementary and abstract kind of willing and the thinnest and most shadowy kind of good. Their aim is in some ways negative rather than positive; they attempt to dispose of misconceptions and to clear the way for the later theories. In Chapters VII, VIII, and IX, I approach nearer to reality, but I am concerned only with the individual in abstraction from his society, with the merely individual aspect of willing and its correspondingly empty good. All these earlier chapters are concerned with economic and not with moral goodness, and it is only in Chapters X, XI, and XII, that moral goodness begins to emerge. The last

four chapters treat of different aspects and factors in the moral life, and conclude with some speculations on the ideal imperfectly realised in morality and on the possibilities suggested by such an ideal. I have grouped the chapters into five books in accordance with these divisions, and have given a separate title to each book; but the titles are only a rough indication of the contents, and the division into books does not imply that there are any sharp breaks in what is meant to be a continuously developing argument.

BOOK I

THE WILL AND ITS CONTEXT

CHAPTER II

GOODNESS IN ITSELF

IT has been assumed in the last chapter that we might be able to understand the nature of goodness in organic connexion with will and in particular with the coherent will. Unfortunately, if we wish to proceed upon this enterprise with an easy conscience, we are compelled to turn aside from the main argument in order to meet an extremely formidable attack. The very possibility of such an enterprise, unless I am mistaken, has been denied by one of the ablest of modern thinkers, Mr. G. E. Moore, the present professor of Mental Philosophy and Logic in the University of Cambridge. In his *Principia Ethica* he has, as he says, " endeavoured to write ' Prolegomena to any future Ethics that can possibly pretend to be scientific.' " [1] He is not content to put forward his own views and leave it to us to decide whether they are to be preferred to those of other people. He claims to have proved that his own method is the only scientific method ; that ethical discussion before his time has perhaps consisted chiefly in reasoning of a ' totally irrelevant kind ' ; and in particular that the present line of enquiry is quite valueless and is due to elementary confusions of thought.

It would be a pity to carry on and to develop old errors, if Mr. Moore has really disposed of them for ever ; and as his principles have found favour with other philosophers (although they have not, so far as I am aware, been particularly fertile in the field of ethics), it would perhaps be discourteous to ignore altogether the serious objections he has brought forward against the method of ethics which I have proposed to pursue.

If we are to answer his objections we must inevitably enter on a difficult discussion which can have little interest for general readers. He must be met on his own ground, and this, from my point of view, gives an unfortunate twist to the whole

[1] p. ix.

discussion. What we have to discuss is whether an account can be given of goodness as essentially bound up with coherent willing, and I think I am right in saying that Mr. Moore holds such an account to be impossible. If he does not hold that, the whole discussion is wasted. The form, however, in which he states his view, is that good is indefinable, and this produces a kind of complication which is very difficult to deal with simply. I have no desire to maintain that good is definable, nor should I have been inclined for my own purposes to discuss this question at all. I am however vitally concerned to maintain that good is not to be apprehended in isolation by a purely intellectual intuition, but can be understood and described in organic connexion with the coherent will.

I am afraid I must add that in approaching Mr. Moore's theory from this rather special angle, I can hardly do justice to the merits of his position ; and that consequently my criticism may appear too unsympathetic. In particular it may be thought that I attribute to him a logical atomism of which he is not really guilty. My contention, however, will be that his argument is conclusive on the basis of a logical atomism, and that if this logical atomism is rejected the argument breaks down. I think this contention holds, even if Mr. Moore, as a matter of fact, tempers his logical atomism with something a little more humane. More generally, I can only plead that even one who seeks to be a philosopher may be excused for being a little unsympathetic in defence of his young. When Mr. Moore is endeavouring, with extreme skill, to secure a strangle-hold upon all idealist ethics, it is no time for compliments. I have at least paid him the greatest compliment in my power—that of recognising how futile it would be to proceed farther, until his argument has been answered.

An adequate examination of Mr. Moore's views would be a lengthy affair, and it would have in the main to be concerned with questions of logic which are really inappropriate to a work on ethics. Such an examination would, I believe, be of the greatest value, and it is not from any disrespect to Mr. Moore that my own treatment must be summary and dogmatic. I have, I think, tried honestly to understand his position, and I hope to be able to state his views shortly without any gross misrepresentation. If I have failed, I

regret it, but my failure may perhaps be partly due to the fact that Mr. Moore's own exposition is not developed in any great detail, and is not wholly free from some of the obscurities which he finds so plentifully in his brother philosophers. The important thing for the present purpose is, however, the central doctrine suggested by the perusal of his work, and this has an interest for its own sake, even if it should be, as I hope it is not, a misunderstanding of what Mr. Moore himself thinks.

Mr. Moore's central principle may perhaps be stated in the words of Bishop Butler that 'Everything is what it is, and not another thing,' and what he is trying to do is to work out this principle in ethics. He seems to make the somewhat doubtful assumption that the word 'good' is always used in the same sense. The science of ethics then becomes a general enquiry into what is good.

We must however distinguish different senses of the question 'What is good?'. It may mean 'What is meant by good?', 'What is the definition of good?'; or it may mean 'What are the things which are good?'. The latter question itself splits up into two distinct questions, 'What things are good in themselves or as ends?' and 'What things are good as means, i.e. good as things which are means to things which are good in themselves?'.

The important distinction is that suggested by the first two questions. We must distinguish the nature of *goodness* from the nature of *the good*, i.e. of the things that are good. Mr. Moore seems himself to fight rather shy of the word 'goodness', but he does use it sometimes, and its use seems to make the position clearer and simpler. Goodness is one thing, and 'the good' or 'the goods' are another. We must distinguish sharply the goodness of good things from the things themselves. They are good, but they are not goodness, and it is a profound error to say that goodness is either one thing or many things which possess goodness. To say so is what he calls the naturalistic fallacy in ethics.

All this seems innocent and reasonable enough, but Mr. Moore manages to extract from it some surprising consequences. 'Everything is what it is' seems to be taken to

mean that everything is what it is in complete isolation from everything else, although it may be doubted whether he carries out this view consistently to its bitter end. Hence, not only is goodness goodness whether anybody knows it or not, but also good things are good in themselves whether anybody wants them or not. The goodness of things would apparently still belong to them just as much, if nobody had ever wanted any of them or even thought about them. Goodness is objective and absolute and in itself, and Mr. Moore's confidence in its objectivity is, in face of modern scepticism, at once unshaken and sublime. It hardly seems to occur to him that goodness might be an illusion, or that it could be in need of any justification or explanation or defence.

Further, since goodness and the good are quite distinct, each has to be known in itself. We must know goodness to know what things are good, but goodness is just a flavour which they have, something which is added to them and is recognised to belong to them, something which seems to be independent of and external to their other qualities. More seriously still, the nature of the things that are good seems to throw no light whatever on the nature of goodness. Knowing them may perhaps be a cause of our knowing goodness, but goodness when known is to be known entirely in itself, and apparently any increase in our knowledge of good things would add nothing whatever to our knowledge of goodness, except of course the knowledge that goodness, in addition to being itself, was also present in them.

These views have already a somewhat paradoxical character, but it must be remembered that somewhat similar doctrines have been advanced by so great a thinker as Plato, although Plato's treatment of ethical questions was extremely different from the methods advocated and practised by Mr. Moore. Plato however differs from Mr. Moore in holding that it is possible to give an account, and perhaps even a definition, of the ultimate universals or Forms, which Mr. Moore calls predicates or adjectives. It may indeed be said that for Plato also the Idea of the Good is beyond definition, but that is in so far as it is the ultimate universal, the basis and ground of all universals, and not in so far as it is for him, what it is for Mr. Moore, one of the many universals which

are. Plato certainly held that the universals were intelligible as parts of a system, and that it was the business of philosophy to give an account of them, and to understand them in relation to one another and to the Idea of the Good. For Mr. Moore there are many universals or adjectives which are what they are, and must be known to be what they are, in complete isolation from one another. Goodness he asserts to be such a universal. We cannot give an account of it in the Platonic sense. We can only say that it is what it is, and it is nothing other than it is. The first task of ethics is to say that goodness is goodness and nothing else. When this has been demonstrated, we may attempt to make a list of the things which are good and of the means by which they can be secured, but we must hold firmly to the truth that nothing more can be known of goodness in itself than that it is just goodness. All attempts to say what goodness is are necessarily futile, and can result only in the production of errors.

Mr. Moore, then, warns us at the outset that if we attempt to understand goodness and badness in their relation to the human will, we are simply wasting our time, and reintroducing past confusions into a branch of philosophy which should now confine its investigations to the programme which he has described. His contentions therefore demand examination in so far as they are directed against any such attempt. From this point of view they fall into three parts: (1) his theory of definition, (2) his application of this theory to 'good' or goodness, and (3) certain further arguments against those who would make goodness relative to will.

Mr. Moore's theory of definition may be put summarily, but I hope not incorrectly, as follows. Everything in the world is either simple and unanalysable, or it is a whole of parts which in the end are simple and unanalysable. Wholes can be defined by stating what are the parts—and ultimately, it may be supposed, the simple parts—of which they are composed. What is simple and unanalysable cannot be defined, because we cannot give its parts, and to give the parts of a thing is the only way in which it can be defined. If we try to define simples, we can only say that they are what they are—and this is tautologous; or that they are what they are not—

and this is false, at least as a definition. We may indeed ascribe certain predicates to them truly—he believes, although it is difficult to understand why, in the possibility of synthetic judgements—but such predicates can say only what they are *also* or *as well*, and curiously enough what they are also or as well has nothing to do with what they are.

Hence since goodness has no parts, it is unanalysable and simple and cannot be defined. It can, however, like yellow and innumerable other simple qualities, be immediately apprehended by some kind of intuition.

Now all this is the result of a very special system of metaphysics and logic, in regard to which it is impossible here to do more than state dogmatically a personal opinion. I do not believe that anything is simple in the sense in which Mr. Moore seems to use the word. A thing taken apart from its relations to everything else, and at the same time deprived of all internal differences, is just nothing at all, and the intuition which is alleged to apprehend it is also nothing at all. It is not surprising that it cannot be defined, since it cannot be, or be apprehended, or have anything said about it except that it is wholly destitute both of character and of reality. A doctrine which maintains that all wholes are composed of such simple elements seems to be a doctrine which is deceiving itself with its own abstractions. And it ought surely to end in a world of atomic entities, each of which is just itself and unrelated to anything else, or rather—if the doctrine is carried to its extreme limit—each of which is nothing, not even an abstract entity or an abstract one.

This however is perhaps a hard judgement, and stated without argument it has no philosophical value. What is important is the recognition that Mr. Moore's doctrine is bound up with presuppositions which are not generally accepted and are of extremely doubtful validity. The confidence of Mr. Moore's assertions is apt to conceal this from the eyes of the unwary.

Even apart from its presuppositions, Mr. Moore's theory of definition is one which it is by no means easy to accept. He assumes that we can define a whole by reference to its parts, but that we cannot define a part by reference to its whole. It is not necessary to discuss here what can or cannot

be properly called a logical definition. The subject of immediate concern is neither the nature of definition nor even the definition of goodness, but the kind of statements which Mr. Moore will and will not allow us to make about goodness. He will not allow us to say that it has parts, and although one would like from him a much fuller discussion of the question whether any universal has parts, whether for example a kind of goodness would or would not be a part of goodness, and whether there cannot be different kinds of goodness, most of us are probably not indisposed to accept his prohibition. On the other hand he will allow us to say of goodness more than that goodness is goodness; indeed he has told us quite a lot about it himself. Goodness is simple; it is unique; it is unanalysable; it is indefinable; it is or can be an object of thought or intuition; it is a quality; it is a property, but not a natural property; and it is found in innumerable things. All this is, however, not saying what goodness is, but what it is also or as well. We are informed [1] too that whenever anyone thinks of " ' intrinsic value,' or ' intrinsic worth,' or says that a thing ' ought to exist,' he has before his mind the unique object—the unique property of things—which I mean by ' good.' " I do not know whether these are definitions, but if ' to be good ' means ' ought to exist ', it is difficult to see how it is simple, for—on Mr. Moore's principles—surely ' ought ' is one thing, and ' to exist ' is quite another. In any case ethics seems able to say a good deal about goodness, and the question is where we are to draw the line, and whether on Mr. Moore's logical principles we must exclude any other than a purely external connexion between goodness and will.

We are considering the matter at present on purely general grounds derived from the nature of definition as such. Hence it is not irrelevant to observe that although beauty might seem to be just as simple and indefinable as goodness, although beauty might even seem to be indefinable if there is anything in the world which is indefinable, yet Mr. Moore feels himself compelled to assert the contrary. He is not only prepared to define beauty, but he is prepared to do so in a certain way. As he is not writing a treatise on æsthetics, and as the definition which he offers is only probable, it would be unfair to stress any

[1] *Princ. Eth.*, p. 17.

of the details of his definition, but it is perhaps not unfair to stress the kind of definition which he considers probable. I quote the passage at some length, as I think it shows clearly that we are not falling into error in supposing that he is offering us a definition of beauty and not merely of the beautiful. He is speaking of the naturalistic grounds for thinking judgements of taste to be merely subjective. He says:[1] 'The conclusions of this chapter suggest a definition of beauty, which may partially explain and entirely remove the difficulties which have led to this error. It appears probable that the beautiful should be *defined* as that of which the admiring contemplation is good in itself. That is to say: To assert that a thing is beautiful is to assert that the cognition of it is an essential element in one of the intrinsically valuable wholes we have been discussing; . . .' He adds that 'beautiful', though not identical with the one *unanalysable* predicate of value, namely 'good', 'is to be defined by reference to this'.

Clearly then 'beautiful' is to be defined by reference to something else, namely 'good'. It is unfortunate that he has not stated his definition of 'beautiful' or 'beauty' in logical form, but he appears to be suggesting a definition of it, not by reference to its parts, but by reference to a whole of which it is a part, or at the least by reference to a whole to which, or to part of which, it can be attributed. The details do not concern us, and if Mr. Moore assures us that this is not itself an example of the naturalistic fallacy, I am prepared to believe him. It is sufficient to note that 'beauty' may be defined, that it may be defined by reference to something else, and that it may be defined by some sort of reference to a whole which is at least other than it. And if beauty, why not goodness? It may of course be an error to do so—that we have still to discuss—but it is hard to resist the conclusion that there is nothing in the nature of definition to assure us, *a priori*, that the definition of goodness is impossible, unless we are to assume that Mr. Moore has himself forgotten the principles which he begs us to accept.

Lest this seem to be a mere *argumentum ad hominem*, let me say that I am not anxious to maintain that goodness can be defined by analysis into its parts or even that goodness can

[1] *Princ. Eth.*, p. 201.

be defined at all. I have no desire to quarrel about words or about the nature of definition. Traditionally, definition has been supposed to be *per genus et differentiam* and not by analysis into parts, but Mr. Moore's view of it may be as useful as any other. What I do believe is that goodness must be understood in reference to something going beyond it—as is recognised in the traditional view of definition—and there seems to be nothing, so far, in Mr. Moore's argument which forces us to think otherwise. In general I would deprecate the view that abstract logic by itself is sufficient ground for dismissing any ethical theory. Let us turn from these abstractions to Mr. Moore's treatment of goodness itself.

The central argument of Mr. Moore is that there are only two alternatives to his doctrine that 'good' or goodness is indefinable. The first is that 'good' is a complex to be analysed, and the second is that 'good' means nothing at all.

It is hardly necessary to say that I cannot accept the terms of this antithesis, but as enough has been said on mere matters of logic, let us turn to the ethical question which he raises. We may consider first the easier case, where 'good' is suggested to be meaningless.

The example which Mr. Moore suggests for our consideration is a particular variety of the doctrine of hedonism. This consists in saying that to be 'good' means to be 'pleasant'; and that therefore pleasure is good or is the only good. It goes on from this to suppose that we ought to pursue pleasure. We can convince ourselves [1] of the error of this argument by the simple process of attentively considering what is before our mind when we ask ourselves the question 'Is pleasure after all good?'. We can easily satisfy ourselves that this question has a meaning, and that we are not merely asking ourselves whether pleasure is pleasant, whether that which is pleasant is pleasant.

This argument does not touch the question with which we are primarily concerned—the relation of will to goodness—but it is worthy of a brief scrutiny. Most of us would agree with Mr. Moore that to be 'good' does not mean to be 'pleasant'; and he is certainly right in saying that hedonism has been supported by many ridiculous arguments. Of these

[1] *Princ. Eth.*, p. 16.

none could be more obviously fallacious than the argument that because 'good' means 'pleasant', therefore pleasure ought to be pursued or sought in action. As Mr. Moore points out clearly in another connexion, a man who argues thus—and many hedonists have argued thus—has 'arrived at an ethical conclusion, by denying that any ethical conclusion is possible'.[1] But surely it is a mistake to suggest that the confusions of John Stuart Mill follow necessarily from his attempt to define good, and it is also a mistake to dismiss the theory without a little more examination

The hedonistic doctrine that 'good' means 'pleasant' should be the explicit denial of anything in the nature of an 'ought', the explicit denial of ethical standards. The consistent hedonist of this type observes that men in the main apply the terms 'good' and 'pleasant' to the same things. He recognises that in some cases they do not, but he comes on reflexion to the conclusion that this is due to some kind of stupidity or error or mere association, and that if this error could be eliminated we should find that 'good' really meant nothing but 'pleasant'. If he then proceeds to prescribe some line of conduct as obligatory because of its pleasantness, he is falling into gross confusion and illustrating in himself how deeply rooted are the moral prejudices of the human race. His consistent course is to deny obligation, and to maintain that everything is good or bad simply in the sense in which strawberries and rice pudding are good or bad, i.e. pleasant or unpleasant to a particular individual. If so consistent a thinker, rare indeed among hedonists, is asked whether pleasure after all is good, he can only reply that to him the question means merely whether pleasure is pleasant. The only other meaning it can have is whether he is right in identifying 'good' and 'pleasant', that is it is asking him to reconsider his position. And if the appeal is to simple inspection he can say, and will say, that he is right in identifying 'good' and 'pleasant', and that Mr. Moore is simply asserting dogmatically, on the basis of an intuition, that the identification is an error. There is no real argument in this. For the consistent hedonist, to say that anything is good is to say that it is pleasant, and to say that pleasure is good is to say that it

[1] *Princ. Eth.*, p. 73.

is pleasant. There is no more difficulty about the one statement than about the other.

We now come to the real question at issue. It is this. Must we dismiss on mere inspection all views which assert that the good is that which is desired, or which satisfies desire, or is the object of our real will, or can be willed with our whole soul, or is that which we desire to desire? More briefly and accurately, must we simply dismiss any contention that to be good means to be connected in some way with some sort of will?

Mr. Moore discusses this question taking as his example the doctrine that to be good means to be that which we desire to desire.[1] He considers this view, rightly or wrongly, to mean that good is a complex whole, about the correct analysis of which there may be disagreement. For him it may be that the doctrine which identifies being good with being desired would fall under the head we have already discussed, namely that good is meaningless. There are many minor puzzles in regard to his terminology and classifications, but fortunately he uses exactly the same argument under both heads, so that his precise view of what constitutes a complex whole need not trouble us. He has only one argument for all cases, and this appears to be the only direct argument which he uses in order to establish his contention that 'good' is simple and unanalysable, to be apprehended in itself apart from internal differences and apart from any relations to anything other than itself.

It is here therefore that we must face the crux of the whole question.

Mr. Moore asserts that definitions of the kind he is examining can always be shown to be incorrect 'by consideration of the fact that, whatever definition be offered, it may always be asked, with significance, of the complex so defined, whether it itself is good.'[2] We may perhaps put Mr. Moore's whole position, without injustice, thus. 'Good' to be defined must be defined as x, or as xyz. But it is always a significant question 'Is x itself good?', or 'Is xyz itself good?', and this never means 'Is x x?' or 'Is xyz xyz?'.

[1] *Princ. Eth.*, p. 15. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

Now it is interesting that Mr. Moore regards this as proof. He declares[1]: "That the assertion 'This is good' is *not* identical with the assertion 'This is willed,' either by a supersensible will, or otherwise, nor with any other proposition, has been proved; nor can I add anything to that proof." I do not know what he makes of the proposition 'This ought to exist', but in any case his method of proof reduces itself to a matter of simple inspection or immediate intuition. And at a time when the Theory of Relativity appears to be making nonsense of what used to seem the most certain of our alleged immediate intuitions in regard to time and space, it is peculiarly difficult to share Mr. Moore's confidence in methods of this kind, when they are applied to matters in regard to which intuition has generally been thought to speak with a much more uncertain voice.

On the other hand, there is clearly a considerable degree of plausibility in his contention, and this is particularly evident in the example which he chooses. There may seem to be something attractive in the view that to be good means to be that which we desire to desire. But we can always ask whether it is good to desire to desire; and it certainly looks as if this question had meaning, and as if its meaning were not merely 'Do we desire to desire to desire to desire?'. If this is the only alternative to Mr. Moore's simple doctrine, then there would seem to be little doubt that Mr. Moore is in a very strong position. But we must not allow ourselves to be misled by merely verbal arguments or to be deterred from a closer scrutiny of what is meant.

Let us take first of all a simpler case, and see whether it is possible to use it as a clue. Let us suppose we are arguing for the view that to be good means to be desired. Such a view could obviously be refuted, if we were compelled to admit that some desired things were not good, but that is not Mr. Moore's argument here. The doctrine seems to have some truth in it, although in its simple form it apparently eliminates all distinction between what Signor Croce would call economic and moral good, and perhaps even between economic goods themselves except in so far as we can desire more or less. We are then met with the question whether it is good to desire.

[1] *Princ. Eth.*, p. 129.

Surely, as in the case of hedonism which has been already considered, there is no inconsistency, no additional impossibility, nothing but perfectly coherent thinking, if we reply that to desire is good just in so far as we desire it. More simply still, the question whether desire is good becomes the question whether desire is desired. Is there any more difficulty about this than about our original statement that to be good is to be desired? There may be ambiguities in the doctrine (and to these we shall have to return), but we are saying that it is desire which gives its value to anything, that nothing has any value except in relation to some sort of desire, and that this applies to desire itself as much as to anything else. Even if the only thing we desired was to be for ever free from desire, freedom from desire would be good for us, and our doctrine would still contain its measure of truth. Mr. Moore has every right to disagree with this doctrine, to bring forward arguments against it, to offer a better theory in its place. But surely it is entitled to something more than this merely casual inspection, it has a right not to be dismissed unheard. There seems at any rate to be some truth in saying that nothing can be good if it is never desired—not even desire itself.

When we return to the more complicated theory that to be good is to be that which we desire to desire, we are met with greater difficulties. The phrase is apparently meant to indicate that the seeming good is to be defined as that which we desire, while the real good is to be defined as that which we desire to desire. It is in some ways like the corresponding view which holds that truth is not just what we mean, but what we mean to mean. It is certainly over complicated and in some ways genuinely obscure, and it is peculiarly open to Mr. Moore's criticisms, because it tends to have a realist significance, to suggest that the good is what we don't desire but merely desire to desire, something out there, already existing, which we do not know nor will but towards which we are groping, something which we need rather than actually desire. In short it is a bad statement of the view that the good is always relative to will and the truly good is relative to a special kind of will. We should avoid the phrase altogether, and perhaps we may even doubt whether it is profitable to deal with the nature of

good in this epigrammatic way. But suppose we say that for a thing to be truly good, it must be such that it can be willed with a man's whole soul. As before, we set aside all other difficulties, and ask ourselves merely whether willing with the whole soul is itself good. And once more there seems to be nothing peculiarly difficult in the reply, that to will with one's whole soul is good just in so far as we can will with our whole soul to do so. Such a reply is neither inconsistent with, nor more difficult than, our original statement. We might even endeavour to carry out this more or less Platonic theory of moral goodness along Kantian lines, and suggest that what we really willed with our whole soul was always and necessarily just the willing with our whole souls, and that the goodness of anything else was merely derivative and abstract. There is nothing good except the good will, and what it wills is just itself. But this would raise many difficulties and demand many qualifications which must be passed over. All that I maintain here is that this type of view is not to be dismissed so lightly as Mr. Moore imagines, that it has a right to work itself out into a system and to demand our suffrages in the light of its success or failure. It is harsh and unjustifiable to try to strangle infant philosophies in their cradle. The objection to the statement that to be good is to be that which we desire to desire is simply that the statement is ambiguous and obscure. As far as the mere form is concerned, we need not regard it as an obviously fallacious statement to say that to desire to desire is good just in so far as we desire to desire it.

There are however two ambiguities in our contention, and to these we must return later. From Mr. Moore's point of view we are bound to ask in regard to the form of what we are defending—and we are concerned primarily with the form of a contention and not with its detailed application—we are bound to ask whether we mean to support doctrines of the form that to be good means to be desired, or merely doctrines of the form that the desired and the desired only is the good. That is the first ambiguity. And the second ambiguity in regard to which we must make some enquiry is whether desire can itself be the object of desire, or more generally whether we can be said to will our willing, as we can be said to will the object of our willing.

But before we consider these questions as part of a more general view, we must first notice what may be called Mr. Moore's supplementary arguments against the kind of theory we are considering. These are not intended to prove his own doctrine, but merely to show that a line of defence which might be used against him is unsound. The arguments are to be found in the latter part of the chapter on Metaphysical Ethics from page 129 of *Principia Ethica* onwards. Consideration of them must be brief and dogmatic.

In these arguments Mr. Moore points out rightly that philosophers in the past have felt justified in holding beliefs of the type that to be good is to be willed, because they also held beliefs of the type that to be true is to be thought. That is, they supported their beliefs about 'good' by the analogy of 'true'. He maintains two things: firstly that their doctrine of truth was in itself false, and secondly that whether it is true or false, the analogy between 'true' and 'good' is not a true analogy.

The falsity of the idealistic doctrine of truth it is not here our business to discuss. To those who differ from Mr. Moore his exposition seems to offer little but dogmatic assertion and personal prejudice together with the ingenuous belief that all idealism has been due mainly to a failure to observe the meaning of certain common words. His central argument[1] appears to be that 'to be true' and 'to be thought' must mean something different, because we can conceive that what we think may be false. Hence he concludes that 'to be true' cannot mean to be thought *in a certain way*. But we can hardly infer that because 'to be true' does not mean 'to be thought *anyhow*', it does not mean 'to be thought *in a certain way*'. It is easy enough to refute the idealism of Protagoras, if we are allowed to assume any sort of objectivity in truth. But we may require a little more argument to convince us that idealism has made no advance since the days of Protagoras, or that the obvious distinctions on which Mr. Moore rests his case are incompatible with any and every kind of idealism.

His second contention is both more subtle and more interesting, and I am not certain that I have grasped its full

[1] *Princ. Eth.*, p. 132.

significance and implications. The main truth which seems to be expressed in his arguments is that will cannot stand to ethical propositions as cognition stands to metaphysical propositions, and that the relation of goodness to willing is not precisely that of truth to thinking. Certainly to think a thing good and to will it cannot be the same, because even if they are inseparable—and Mr. Moore goes a surprisingly long way towards admitting that they are inseparable—there must be something purely volitional in willing which is not to be found in merely thinking that a thing is good.

But does not this fail to meet the real point of the analogy? If we may state the position simply (remembering that we must in all cases add to our statements 'in a certain way' and probably also many other qualifications), to will anything is not the same as to think it good. A thing is good in so far as it is willed, and to think it good is to think that it is willed. It may be that there is an immanent judgement of goodness in every volition—Mr. Moore seems to think there is—but surely the critical or reflective judgement of goodness succeeds the direct volition, and is due to, or is, reflexion upon the volition. Similarly there may be an immanent judgement of truth in every judgement, but the critical or reflective judgement of truth succeeds the direct judgement, and is due to, or is, reflexion upon the judgement. And *mutatis mutandis* the same is true in regard to beauty. We are poets before we are critics; we are thinkers before we are logicians; and we are good men before we are moral philosophers. It is surprising how many philosophers have failed to recognise that simple and obvious truth. The reflective apprehension of every value is always cognition, and it follows upon the activity which—shall we say?—creates the value. The analogy between truth and goodness is complete, except that in the case of truth the reflective activity is the same in kind as the activity which it judges, while in the case of goodness the reflective activity seems to be different in kind from the activity which it judges. Yet even there we must remember that thinking is also willing and may be good as well as true. And we must remember also that an activity may be modified in the light of reflexion upon it.

It may therefore be suggested that if properly understood,

the analogy between truth and goodness is both real and important. If the idealist theory of truth were sound, it would genuinely reinforce the corresponding theory of goodness; and if the theory of goodness were sound, it would genuinely reinforce the corresponding theory of truth. But we are not concerned with a theory of truth. The question before us is the soundness or unsoundness of a theory of goodness.

The conclusions suggested by an examination of Mr. Moore's doctrine have so far been mainly negative. An attempt has been made to indicate some of the weaknesses of his position, and to protest against the methods of infanticide by which he seeks to dispose of all philosophies other than his own. In particular it has been claimed that Mr. Moore has not succeeded in proving that any statement of the form 'to be good is to be willed' is incapable of being a starting-point for a system of ethics. Mr. Moore's proof, it has been suggested, offers little more than the confident assertion of a personal opinion, the plausibility of which depends upon a series of logical and metaphysical presuppositions which it is by no means necessary to accept. On the other hand it has been recognised that there were ambiguities in the defence put forward, and to these we must now return. In so doing we may perhaps be able to grapple more closely with the central point at issue between Mr. Moore's ethics and the type of ethics which seeks to understand goodness in organic connexion with the will.

For Mr. Moore goodness is just a simple and unique property. No account can be given of it. Once we have apprehended it in itself by a kind of intellectual intuition, we have apprehended its full nature, and there is nothing more for us to learn about it. All we can do is by a series of further intuitions to discover the things to which it happens to belong On the other view goodness is relative to will, and we can have a progressive understanding of it, as we understand better the nature of willing. This doctrine may be put in a more specific form, if we say that goodness belongs to willing in so far as it is coherent, and that there are as many different kinds of goodness as there are different kinds of coherent willing. Goodness is also attributed to things which are the

objects of willing, and the sense in which these are good is intelligible only as we understand their relation to willing and the kind of willing to which they are in relation. That is roughly the hypothesis which the present book seeks to establish, and which Mr. Moore wishes to rule out of court by considerations of a predominantly logical character.

The hypothesis to be examined is, then, that to be good is to be coherently willed. But Mr. Moore, if I have grasped his position, asserts that this is ambiguous, and presses upon us a very disagreeable dilemma. If we consider only the goodness of things, in order to avoid what he would regard as a further confusion between willing and its object, then what has been said is that subject to certain qualifications a thing is good in so far as it is coherently willed. The question which he presses upon us is this: 'Do you mean that everything which is coherently willed happens also to have the unique and indefinable quality called goodness, or do you mean that its goodness is nothing more and nothing other than just being coherently willed?'. If we mean the first, he assures us that the examination of will is practically superfluous, because we must already have a complete knowledge of goodness, and of its presence in things, independently of whether the thing is coherently willed or not. If we mean the second, then our conclusions are not ethical, and our examination of will is psychological and has nothing to do with ethics. Hence it is no use to proceed farther. We must either accept Mr. Moore's methods or give up ethics altogether.

Mr. Moore's argument appears to rest upon the principle that everything is just what it is and is nothing other than it is. This principle he takes to mean that the relations of a thing to other things have nothing whatever to do with the character of the thing itself. Those who accept that principle must, I believe, accept his conclusions and methods in the sphere of ethics. For my own part, I believe the principle, as he understands it, to be erroneous, and its consequences in ethics tend to confirm rather than to weaken this belief. To speak dogmatically—nothing is what it is except in its context and in its relation to a whole; and nothing is intelligible except in its context and in its relation to a

whole. To understand is not to understand a thing merely as a whole of parts, but to understand it also as part of a whole. And it must not be supposed that all wholes are wholes of a physical or mathematical kind.

Nothing short of a complete work on logic can either establish or refute Mr. Moore's doctrine, but when we understand its implications we shall be much less likely to be carried away by it; and we shall see more clearly that it is very far from being the only possible theory which has a claim to serious consideration. All that can be done here is to indicate very briefly what seem to be the presuppositions of the two questions which have been asked, and to call attention to the doubtful validity of these presuppositions.

If we say that to be good is to be willed coherently, Mr. Moore assumes that we must mean either that to be good is just the same as to be willed coherently or that it is just different. The relation between them is either one of absolute identity or of mere juxtaposition. The whole force of his dilemma seems to rest upon precisely such an assumption.

But is such an assumption legitimate, and if it were legitimate would it not make all judgements impossible? What do we mean in any judgement when we say that S is P? Might we not argue that P either is just the same as S or it is just different? If it is the same the statement is tautologous. If it is different the statement is false. On this view it would be impossible to make any kind of judgement at all, and *a fortiori* it would be impossible to define goodness.

Mr. Moore, however, does not press his principle to this extent. He believes in the possibility of synthetic judgements, in which apparently the predicate adds something to the subject; and he believes that we can give an analytical definition of a complex whole by stating what its parts are and what are their relations to one another. We could thus get something which we could substitute [1] for the whole, and it is this mathematical equivalence which he regards as definition, although, as has been seen, his suggested definition of beauty seems to proceed on very different lines.

It may be doubted whether an adequate or consistent logic can be built up on this basis, and I at least must refuse

[1] *Princ. Eth.*, p. 8.

to accept the view that when we say ' to be good ' is ' to be willed coherently ', we must be asserting either a bare difference or a bare identity ; just as I must refuse to accept the view that in any judgement we assert either a bare difference or a bare identity between the subject and the predicate. I cannot believe that it is possible to understand thinking on the supposition that some judgements are just analytical and others just synthetic. Every judgement is the apprehension of unity in difference. If the subject and the predicate out of the judgement are, and are known to be, precisely the same as they are in the judgement, what is the use of judging ? Yet is it not precisely because Mr. Moore makes suppositions of this kind that his whole difficulty arises ? And if these assumptions are pressed do they not make all thought impossible ?

I suggest then that the statement ' to be good is to be willed coherently ' is a perfectly intelligible statement (or may be as part of a system of philosophy), and that we can understand goodness as we see it in relation to coherent willing without supposing that to be good and to be coherently willed are either two separate things which can be apprehended in entire isolation from one another, or else merely different names for the same thing. The hypothesis which has to be examined is that to be good is to be coherently willed and to be coherently willed is to be good, and I believe that this hypothesis is sufficiently intelligible and sufficiently precise, and that those who accept it are under no obligation to interpret it in the terms of a logic which may appear to them to be erroneous.

Yet if we must choose one of the two horns of Mr. Moore's dilemma, I should be compelled to say that to be good and to be coherently willed are not merely different names for the same thing. In every significant statement there must be more than a bare identity of subject and predicate, and this is true even of the statements which alone are regarded by Mr. Moore as definitions. But I cannot admit for a moment that because to be good and to be coherently willed are not just the same thing, they are therefore just two different things each of which is and is knowable in entire isolation from the other. The hypothesis put forward is on the contrary that

goodness is and is intelligible only in relation to a coherent will, and it appears to me that all Mr. Moore does is to assert that this hypothesis must be false because of his general principle that everything is and is intelligible in itself and by itself entirely apart from its relations to anything else. Since I believe this general principle to be mistaken, I am compelled to ask for something more than the dogmatic assertion of its truth. If it is to be known by intuition, I can only say that I do not share this intuition, and see no reason to accept his principle as other than a hypothesis which may be worked out in the different branches of philosophy, and must be judged by its success or failure in rendering our experience intelligible. In this respect it is on precisely the same level as the hypothesis here propounded, which must be worked out and judged in exactly the same way. It is fortunate that so able a thinker as Mr. Moore should seek to elaborate the hypothesis in which he believes, although it may be that the more fully he attempts to work out his hypothesis, the more obvious will its inadequacy become. What one cannot admit to be reasonable is that he should attempt to veto the working out of all other hypotheses because of his affection for his own.

As regards the other horn of his dilemma, it may be observed that while we need not accept it, in the sense of asserting that ' to be good ' is merely another form of words which can be substituted for ' to be coherently willed ', we must on the other hand hope to understand goodness better by a better understanding of will. And unless I am mistaken, Mr. Moore would maintain that a better understanding of will must be purely psychological and can give us no help in the understanding of goodness. This has already been partially answered by the suggestion that one thing may be, and be intelligible, only in its relation to another thing, and that it is necessary to discover whether this is or is not so in the case of goodness. But there is a special plausibility in the contention that it is impossible to pass from fact to value, or from what is to what ought to be, and this contention demands a special answer. If willing were merely a fact, an event separate from and outside of other events, one of the many events or objects about which we think, this contention would be perfectly sound. But it may appear to some of

us that willing is something more than a fact or event or object about which we think. It is an activity which we enjoy, and which by its very nature imposes obligations upon itself and gives rise to the distinction between good and evil. That however is just the hypothesis which we have to explore, and all that need be claimed here is that we have the right to explore it.

We must notice also a further ambiguity which has already been pointed out in our hypothesis. When we say that to be good is to be coherently willed, we are suggesting that things are good in so far as they are the objects or the instruments of a coherent will, and that their goodness varies with the nature of the will whose objects or instruments they are. Strawberries are not good in themselves or because they 'ought to exist' in the abstract. They are good in so far as somebody wants them, or the taste of them, or the pleasure which the taste arouses, or the continuance of an animal life which is assured by the eating of them, and so on, and apart from this they are—on the hypothesis suggested—no good at all. We may speak of a knife as a good knife, but it is so only as an instrument for cutting, that is to say as an instrument which someone may will to use. We may abstract from the reference to will, but unless the reference is still somehow there, the goodness of things has no meaning at all. And we must remember that the goodness of things varies with our purpose. A knife which is generally called good might be a bad knife to give to a very small boy. This seems simple enough in regard to the goodness of things, but are we really justified in saying that goodness can be applied to will in the same way as it can be applied to things?

We have spoken provisionally as if it could, and this raises the question whether we can will to will, whether will can be its own object or its own instrument. Certainly we can will to think or to imagine, and the activities of the philosopher and of the artist can be judged by reference to their goodness and not merely by reference to their truth or beauty. And it might be maintained that we will to will in exactly the same way as we will to think. To talk of willing to will

is just a clumsy way of recognising the self-transcendence and self-mediation of volition which will have to be examined later. But at the present stage this view might lead to unprofitable subtleties, and it is simpler to say for the moment that goodness applies primarily to willing itself, and that its application to things is secondary, derivative, and abstract. Concretely it is the good will alone which is good ; and while we will our willing, we do not do so in the same sense as we will a thing. None the less we must not fall into the abstraction of supposing that willing is just an event different from and side by side with its object, or that one piece of willing is an event which just ends as another piece of willing begins. Willing is a self-transcendent activity. It is nothing apart from its object, and we may will our action, not merely in itself, but as part of a policy of life. All these questions must be discussed later. Here it is sufficient to say that the central hypothesis of this book is that goodness belongs to willing so far as willing is coherent with itself, and that the goodness of things is entirely subordinate to that of the will which wills them.

There are many puzzles in all this which it may be impossible to solve satisfactorily, but perhaps the right to proceed farther has been sufficiently established. I have no desire to criticise the way in which Mr. Moore works out his system, although I venture to doubt whether he can offer any account of the relation between good and evil or again of degrees of goodness, and to me his list of the things which are most valuable, with its depreciation alike of action and of knowledge, seems little more than the expression of his personal likings and dislikings. The most valuable part of his theory to those who disagree with his general position is the recognition that the value of a whole is not the sum of the value of its parts, although he adheres obstinately to the doctrine that the value of the part remains exactly what it is, whether it is or is not in its place in the whole. Broadly speaking, I think he has been misled by the analogy of ' yellow ' which seems to be given immediately to sense and to resist the mediation of thought. Even in the case of yellow there are other possible views ; it may be held that there is some kind

of mediate thinking even in the perception of yellow, and that for the proper understanding of it we must study the stimuli which cause it and the eye which sees it; perhaps even yellow is more intelligible because of its place in the spectrum, and it must be remembered that there are shades of yellow as well as shades of goodness. But goodness is not given to sense perception, and few things seem to be more certain than that the understanding of goodness is bound up with the understanding of human life. It is fair to say that Mr. Moore recognises [1] that there is a causal connexion between willing and goodness, that willing is a necessary condition for the cognition of goodness, although it is difficult to see on his theory why this should be so. He recognises also, as has already been pointed out, a remarkably close connexion between willing a thing and thinking it good. Yet in the end for him goodness is just goodness, to be apprehended immediately in itself, and to be found in things by a kind of immediate intuition which can do nothing whatever to justify or to defend itself. The result is an ethical theory which is merely subjective and so intellectualistic that it seems to bear no relation to the problems of human life. To the poor wretch who is torn asunder by the pressing problem of a conflict between his interests and those of society, between a good for him and a good for others, Mr. Moore, it seems, could only reply [2] that to be good at all is to be good absolutely, and that good for one and good for others has no meaning, or at any rate no meaning which has any sort of relation to the problem at issue. And his account [3] of the thinking necessary to show that any action is a duty seems to bear almost no relation to the kind of thinking by which men try to settle moral problems, and leads indeed among other conclusions to the view 'that we never have any reason to suppose that an action is our duty'.[4] It is not quite fair to Mr. Moore to consider thus what are only isolated points in his system, but I would suggest that weaknesses of this kind are inevitable in any intellectualistic ethics which chooses to examine into the nature of duty or goodness without any consideration of the nature of will. Yet even here it must be added that any philosophical account of morality

[1] *Princ. Eth.*, p. 131.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 99.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 169.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 149.

is bound to differ widely from the confused beliefs of common sense.

But the ethical problem is an ethical problem, and we must try to deal with it on its merits, modifying our conclusions, if we must, in the light of our logic and our metaphysics. Mr. Moore, in spite of his atomic intellectualism, has the synoptic vision of the true philosopher, but he carries the synoptic method too far, if he does not sin against his own principles, when he prescribes the methods and to some extent the conclusions for ethics by means of purely logical considerations. This discussion has, I hope, vindicated for the moral philosopher the right to examine into theories which Mr. Moore has attempted to exclude, and perhaps it has helped to make clearer the nature of these theories themselves. At the same time it has helped to show—if it needed any showing—that philosophers of all schools from Plato to Mr. F. H. Bradley were not merely stupid or merely irrelevant in the sort of things they have tried to say about goodness.

CHAPTER III

SELF AND SELF-KNOWLEDGE

If goodness is to be understood in relation to a self which wills, it is necessary, before entering upon an examination of the will, to say something more general about the nature of the self and the nature of self-knowledge. A full discussion is out of the question, and for the most part the ordinary conceptions of modern thought must simply be taken for granted without raising fundamental questions as to their ultimate validity. None the less, as there is in these matters a very considerable difference of opinion, the details of our special problem cannot be profitably investigated, until there has been at least a casual inspection of the surrounding territory.

It may perhaps be assumed that the self is what is to-day called a body-mind; but the troublesome questions of the relation between body and mind are too specialised for an ethical discussion, and must be avoided except when they force themselves upon our attention. An ethical enquiry is concerned primarily with the self as mind or spirit, and we may describe mind or spirit in ordinary common sense terms as that which knows and wills and feels. The term 'spirit' is in many ways to be preferred to the term 'mind', because mind tends to be thought of as purely intellectual or cognitive, while the self with which ethics is concerned is manifestly also a creature of emotion and desire.

It would, I think, be in accordance with ordinary usage to say that knowing and willing and feeling are activities of the self or spirit, and this is the language which I propose to use. It might however be thought from this that the self was not an activity, but something which had or possessed or perhaps exercised activities. This would make the self something, as it were, outside of its activities. It then becomes extremely difficult to say what the self is when considered apart from its activities, and it may even be doubted whether there is such a self at all. We may prefer to avoid the multiplication of

metaphysical entities, and to say simply that the self is activity,[1] that it is the whole activity within which the activities of knowing, willing, and feeling, are distinguished. The self will then become its own knowings and willings and feelings taken as (or actually forming) a unity.

There are some who would prefer to say that the self is a substance, and that its so-called activities are, I suppose, its attributes. They would maintain that there can be no activity unless there is something which acts. I do not wish to argue here that this is a mistaken view, but it seems to be bound up with a whole series of ideas to which, I think, we need not commit ourselves. The whole conception of substance and attribute is sometimes questioned to-day on the ground that it is useless for modern science; and it may perhaps seem to imply an abstract and static theory of reality. It is, however, at least doubtful whether a category which has survived for more than two thousand years in European philosophy can lightly be set aside because of some recent discoveries in science. None the less we may reasonably avoid its use in regard to the self, if by using other language we can still bring out some of the truth which it is intended to convey.

The main truth, I take it, which is conveyed in the doctrine of the self as substance, is that it is one and the same self which knows and wills and feels. Without this unity and identity there can be no knowing and willing and feeling at all. There are of course some philosophers who deny this, but without arguing the question I can only express the opinion that they have no justification for doing so, until they have disposed of the arguments of Immanuel Kant in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Their denial depends upon regarding *e.g.* knowing as a given object about which they think, instead of as being the knowing which it is. At any rate, I take it for granted that without unity and identity there is no possible kind of spiritual activity, but I express this, not by saying that the self is a substance, but by saying that it is an activity, or in more technical language that it is a self-transcendent, self-mediating activity. Strictly speaking every activity is a self-transcendent and self-mediating activity.

The meaning of these phrases—and also their justification

[1] Cf. the Aristotelian theory of *ἐνέργεια*.

—will, I hope, become clearer in the sequel, but it may be well here to give a summary account of them. Every knowing, willing, and, I think, feeling, transcends itself. Let us take willing as the example. Willing transcends itself, firstly, because it is directed to an object beyond itself: I always will something, for example I will to step forward. Secondly, it transcends itself in the sense that it goes beyond itself in time and is what it is as part of a wider whole of willing: my stepping forward is willed as part of a walking, and it is this which makes it what it is, and makes it intelligible; yet walking is nothing apart from a series of such steppings into which it can be analysed. In willing to step forward I am willing more than the actual step, I am willing it as part of a whole, and in a sense I am willing the whole of which it is a part. It is this second kind of self-transcendence which is specially important, and it has, if I am right, the further extension that I can will my action not merely as an element in my own policy or train of action, but also as an element in a whole policy or train of action in which other people share. I can will to step forward, not merely as part of a solitary walk, but as part of a game which is a whole of willing in which other people besides myself play a part.

We speak of self-transcendence when we think of a particular volition as straining beyond itself, as being what it is only in relation to a wider whole of volition. We speak of self-mediation, on the other hand, when we think of a continuing volition as made up of parts which are what they are only as parts of it. They are what they are through the medium or mediation of the wider whole. The two terms mean the same thing from different points of view, and as any volition, however brief, endures through some time, it is always both self-transcendent with reference to a wider whole and self-mediating with reference to the parts into which it can be analysed.

Hence by asserting that the self is a self-transcendent, self-mediating activity, or more simply is an activity, we imply its unity through time, and affirm that every partial activity is what it is as part of a wider activity, and ultimately as part of the wider activity which is the self. We affirm also that the part is what it is as part of the whole, and that the whole is

present in the part. It is because of this that we can say 'I will'.

There is a third sense of self-transcendence which implies self-consciousness. The self is a self-transcendent and self-mediating activity which reflects upon itself and makes itself its own object. I know that I am stepping forward in a game which I am playing together with others.

All these senses of self-transcendence are bound up with one another. Strictly speaking, my activity has no object until I distinguish the object from the activity, that is, until I reflect. And since to will anything or know anything takes time, there can be no object except for an activity as something which transcends itself and mediates itself in time. Furthermore, there can be no self-transcendence or self-mediation except by reference to an object, and *a fortiori* there can be no self-transcending and self-mediating reflexion except by reference to an object. More simply, 'I know this' implies (*a*) an object, (*b*) a subject enduring through time, and (*c*) a consciousness of the distinction between subject and object.

As we are dealing with these tiresome technicalities, perhaps it would be advisable to make clearer at the same time what is meant by 'mediate' and 'immediate'. Anything is mediate, if it is what it is through the medium or mediation of something else. It is immediate, if it is what it is, not through the medium or mediation of something else, but simply and solely in and by itself. Hence the immediate may be identified with the given, or with that which comes to us by a sort of brute or blind necessity.

In the case of objects, since the apprehension of anything takes time, the character of the object as apprehended could not be what it is, apart from the synthetic activity of mind in holding it together as an object lasting through time. This is a highly controversial matter, but I at least believe that any object as apprehended—and it must be apprehended to be an object—is what it is only as part of a wider whole of objects apprehended through the synthetic activity of mind. Hence, strictly speaking, every object is mediate and not immediate. On the other hand, while it is what it is only as part of a wider whole, in that whole it is itself and not anything else. In that sense every object is immediate, but it is never merely imme-

diate. It is immediate only through the mediation of its context and of the mind which knows it. If we choose to forget or to presuppose the necessary synthetic activity of mind, we may regard all objects whatever as immediate.

In the case of activities, from what has been said it will be seen that an immediate activity is a contradiction in terms. Every activity is what it is as an element in a wider activity, it is self-mediating and self-transcendent. None the less it also is itself and nothing other than itself, and in that sense it also is immediate, for in that sense ' immediate ' means just being what it is.

It is however more to our purpose to recognise that some activities and objects seem to be more immediate than others. A colour, for example, seems to be just given, and its apprehension to be immediate, in the sense of not being determined by previous thought or even by any thought at all. It is much less plausible to say that the conclusion of a syllogism is just given, or that its apprehension is immediate and independent of previous thinking. It is, I think, important to recognise this distinction, and I shall speak of sense perception and impulse and feeling as being relatively immediate in this sense, and sometimes—since one cannot cover a page with ' relatively's '—simply as immediate. But I believe that such immediacy is only relative, and that there is no activity, however fleeting, which would be what it is, were it not for the fact that it is an element in a wider activity. It is impossible to find in experience anything which is just given, and this, if true, is one of the great obstacles to a realist philosophy.

We have accepted the distinction between activity and object, and regarded it as an exhaustive division. It may however be suggested that the self cannot be regarded as an activity composed merely of activities, because there are in it what may be called ' passivities ' as well.

This is a difficult question, and there are many who will hold that the self is sometimes, for example in feeling, merely passive. I suggest however that we must have very strong reasons for postulating definite things—I do not know what else to call them—described as passivities in the soul. I prefer to regard them as what I have called relatively immediate activities. If they are not that, I cannot see how we

should be justified in saying ' I feel ' or ' I desire ' or ' I see '. As soon as we refer them to the ' I ', we seem to regard them as being what they are only in a whole of activity. If we do not refer them to the mind, they become merely objects of the mind, and it is interesting to observe that in the case of feeling it is sometimes difficult to be sure whether feeling is an object apprehended or a real activity of the self.

I propose then to consider the self, not as a substance, but as an activity ; not as being, but as becoming, as making itself and being, so to speak, its own making. I hope that, even if this be not the best language, it will at least serve to make clear, without undue distortion, the nature of the experience which we seek to understand.

We must, I think, simply accept without question the prevailing view that within the whole activity which is the self we can distinguish the three activities of knowing, willing, and feeling. The puzzles raised by such a distinction and the relations holding between these activities ought to be discussed, not in an ethical philosophy, but in a general philosophy of the spirit. I confess that the whole problem seems to me to bristle with unsolved difficulties, but I do not see how ethics can proceed, unless by accepting these distinctions on a common sense level. The difficulties are so formidable that I think it wiser not to attempt any account of the differences on which any such distinction must rest, but simply to suppose that we are all aware of what is meant by knowing and willing and feeling.

None the less we must recognise that willing is not confined to the willing of bodily movements. The activities of spirit are distinguishable but not separable. Thinking is voluntary, and willing is conscious. Feeling also is conscious and within certain limits is subject to voluntary control. Hence knowing and feeling are in one aspect of them also a kind of willing, and consequently, besides being true or pleasant, can have, as they obviously do have, something of that goodness which belongs to will. It would certainly be absurd for anyone writing about moral philosophy to forget that it may sometimes be a duty to think.

Our chief concern will be with the nature of willing, but it is

impossible to discuss this without considering to some extent the knowing which accompanies it and is the condition of its being what it is. We do not will in utter darkness, but in a situation which we know, and our knowledge of our own actions may be a condition, not only of knowing what is good, but of willing the good or willing well. There is less necessity for the examination of feeling. It is generally believed that neither knowing nor willing can be separated from feeling, and it is very clear that feeling, whether in the sense of emotion or in the sense of pleasure and pain, may be both a great help and a great hindrance to our practical, and also to our theoretical, activity. Yet perhaps it is possible to study the nature of the will and its relation to goodness without saying very much about the nature of the feelings which accompany every volition. We all feel, but there is something about feeling which is very hard to understand. It can hardly be said that there is any agreement among psychologists as to what feeling is, but perhaps the general trend of modern thought is to regard feeling as something secondary, as arising from the success or failure of impulses or instincts, as explicable in relation to other activities rather than as itself an explanation of them. If feeling is secondary and derivative, it may perhaps without any very great loss be disregarded by ethics, as it is normally disregarded by logic. To do so will greatly simplify our task without, I believe, vitiating our conclusions. Feeling is good in so far as it is one of the things which we want, and which can or must be fitted into our lives. We may believe that a life without feeling would not be good, but we need not believe that feeling alone is good, or that goodness is to be apprehended by immediate feeling. It is folly to make light of feeling, but it is not by the study of feeling that we can hope to understand either goodness or truth.

We must now turn to consider the nature of self-knowledge.[1] There seem to be two ways of knowing the self and its activities, the way of reflexion and the way of what Mr. Alexander calls ' enjoyment '. The first may be called the external way, and the second the internal way. Both are necessary for a

[1] I have treated this a little more fully in *The Idea of Self*, University of California Publications in Philosophy, vol. viii. 1926.

human self to be known, and indeed to be at all. Here as always, the self makes itself, and is its own making. And both are necessary to the apprehension of value. It is the great error of the intellectualists to remember only reflexion and to forget enjoyment.

Reflexion must, I think, be regarded as something different from what is called introspection, if introspection is taken to be direct observation or relatively immediate apprehension of an object. It is perhaps generally admitted that the self is not known by direct observation, and this is not surprising if the self is just its activities or the unity of its activities. What is more remarkable is that it is as impossible to observe the activities of the self as it is to observe the self to which these activities are supposed to belong. There are, it is true, many who seem to think otherwise, and who believe that activities are apprehended by an inner sense or by some kind of introspection. They are, I think, sometimes hesitating and sometimes confused as to what their belief is, but in this matter everybody should be able to judge for himself. It seems to me that we can observe colours, but we cannot observe seeing; we can think, but we cannot observe thinking; we can will, but we cannot observe willing.

There is indeed a certain ambiguity in the word observation. Observation is presumably a relatively immediate or direct apprehension, and, strictly speaking, ought to be confined to the apprehension of colours, sounds, smells, and the like. Even here, at least in our developed experience, the apprehension of a colour involves comparison and distinction, and perhaps even the distinction of self from object. None the less a colour seems in a sense to be given and to be apprehended in relative isolation from other things. Often however we speak as if we could observe the things to which these sensible qualities belong, and yet it is hardly to be doubted that when we hear a fiddle or smell a rose or see a mountain, we are going beyond what is immediately given or observed, we are engaging in some kind of thinking or reflexion. We may describe this thinking or reflexion in different ways, and we may believe that it is instantaneous and not divisible into definite stages; but it certainly depends on previous experience and thinking, it is not just immediate, and its object is

not just given—unless we hold that everything is just given, even when our knowledge of it seems to depend on previous experience and previous thinking. If we reject this latter view, it is clear that the world of solid bodies relatively fixed in their shapes and measurements is not given as the changing objects of sense are given. We may speak loosely of observing men and stars and even electrons, and it would be pedantic to avoid this usage altogether, but observation as relatively immediate apprehension of the given is properly applied to colours and sounds, and is improperly applied to the world of physical bodies, which is explored by science on the basis of what is seen and heard and smelt and touched.

When we say that the activity of mind is not observed, we mean that it is not observed as colours or sounds are observed. We cannot observe seeing as we observe yellow. Seeing cannot be a relatively isolated object immediately given to direct observation. Our apprehension of seeing is reflective, though it need not take any considerable time. We know that we see when we have a colour before us ; we know that we hear when we have a sound before us. Similarly when we have a table before us, we know we are doing more than seeing ; and when we have a mathematical problem before us, we know we are thinking mathematically, and so on. In every case the apprehension of an activity is reflective, however instantaneous it may be, and it is always inseparable from apprehension of the object which we have before us. The activity itself is never an object which is given to immediate apprehension. It is just because of this that some men seem to think—by a curious contradiction—that there is no such thing as thinking, and no such thing as an activity of the spirit at all.

It is not our business to justify or to explain the reflexion by which we pass from the object to the activity, any more than it is our business to justify or explain the reflexion by which we pass from the changing objects of sense to a permanent physical world in space and time. The one problem seems to us as difficult as the other, and in both cases we seem to be making gradually explicit what was implicit from the first. The distinction of subject and object is on the same sort of level as that between particular and universal or between appearance and reality. We can hardly explain such

distinctions without assuming the very distinction we have to explain. In the particular case we are considering, when we say that the activity is apprehended through reflexion on what we have before us, we say that it is apprehended through reflexion on the object of our activity. That is, we are really assuming the distinction already made in the account which we give of how it is made. The same kind of assumption is, I believe, just as inevitable in any account of the other distinctions we have mentioned, and it is no objection to such distinctions that just because we cannot think without them, we cannot prove them by a thinking which makes no use of them. It is sufficient for us, without attempting to justify the distinction, to accept it and to see how it works out in the details of our thinking, and it may be that in this it will find the only justification it can have. At any rate—and this is the important point—the distinction between subject and object is a very different distinction from any which holds between two objects which are immediately observed.

It is clearly self-contradictory to suggest that there is no such thing as thinking, for the suggestion has no meaning unless it itself is, or professes to be, thinking. And I believe that the world in time and space, with its distinctions of appearance and reality, cause and effect, and so on, could not be what it is, except for a mind which thinks and is one throughout its thinking. But all statements of this kind, sound though they be, really assume the distinction which they seek to justify. In a sense the only proof of the distinction is that it must be assumed in any attempt either to prove or to disprove it.

There are special difficulties about willing into which we need not enter. It too is apprehended through reflexion on what is done, and it cannot be apprehended in any other way. Similarly we apprehend different kinds of willing in organic connexion with different kinds of thing done, but the inference, if it be an inference, to the character of the willing already assumes the distinction between willing and what is willed. It might seem plausible to identify willing with the imagining of a bodily movement followed by the knowing of a bodily movement, or more simply with the idea of a bodily movement followed by a bodily movement itself. This view (which

really abolishes willing in favour of knowing) is, I believe, held by some psychologists, and even Mr. Stout in his *Manual of Psychology* seems sometimes—although his account is very subtle—to reduce willing to various kinds of cognitions and anticipations plus something else about which he can say practically nothing. Yet when the doctor taps our knee we anticipate the resulting jerk without thinking that we will the movement, and in many cases we believe that we have willed, when we have not anticipated anything at all. Furthermore our anticipations are only abstract schemata—not always accurate—of what it is that we actually do. The plain man associates his willing with certain movements of his body and not with others, and the fact that some movements are anticipated is the roughest possible criterion of volition—indeed it is hardly a criterion at all. We cannot pretend to examine the principles on which he makes his distinctions, but in any event they clearly imply that a distinction between movement and willing has already been made. In the course of time he comes to realise that he can will to think as well as to move, and here perhaps the possibility of anticipation, however vague and however inaccurate, plays some part in determining his belief. Thinking and still more observing seem of course to be determined also by something other than will, but the same is true of our willed bodily movements themselves.

We make then the common sense assumption that there is willing as well as knowing, and that we can understand them both better by reflecting upon them in their inseparable connexion with their objects, that is, in the case of willing, by reflecting upon what was done and perhaps also upon what was anticipated. Such reflexion, as we have said, does not justify, but merely accepts and elaborates, the distinction between willing and what is willed, although such an elaboration may be itself a kind of justification.

We need not consider the further difficulties about feeling. What we are concerned with is willing and in a less degree knowing, and while we accept the common sense belief in these two activities without meeting the difficulties which it involves, we have committed ourselves to the view that these activities are known by reflexion, which is never the immediate apprehension of an activity either as an isolated object or as an

object lying as it were side by side with other objects. Reflexion appears rather—admittedly on very different levels—to work out the implications of having an object or of having this object or this kind of object.

None the less it might seem—at any rate on a common sense level—that if we know activities by reflexion they must somehow already be, if they are to be known by reflexion. In order to be, and to be what they are, they must be conscious; and this in turn seems to imply that they must be known—for we can hardly refuse to call it knowledge—by something other than mere reflexion. This something other cannot, however, unless our previous contention is erroneous, be introspection or observation of any kind. I would describe it by Mr. Alexander's term 'enjoyment', as I believe that in this matter I am in agreement with him, although it may be—and if so I regret it—that in using it for the present purpose I am distorting it from what he would regard as its true meaning. As I understand it, enjoyment is distinguished from other kinds of knowing, and particularly from observation, by the fact that in it there is no distinction between subject and object, between the knowing and what is known. In Mr. Alexander's language[1] 'I am aware of my awareness as I strike a stroke or wave a farewell. My awareness and my being aware of it are identical'. All spiritual activity is conscious, or is enjoyed, and this consciousness is and must be prior to our reflexions upon it. These reflexions are other than that upon which they reflect, while the enjoyment of our activity is the same as the activity itself.

Enjoyment on this view is something different from introspection, for introspection, however immediate, is supposed to be observation of something other than itself; and enjoyment is still more obviously something different from such reflexion as is found in any work of psychology or philosophy. In some ways it is the highest form of understanding, and all else is a mere shadow in comparison with it. There is a sense in which the only way to understand life is just to live it. We understand our own thinking, not in thinking about it, but in thinking it; and if the thinking we seek to understand is past

[1] Alexander, *Space, Time, and Deity*, p. 12

thinking, we understand it, not by remembering it or thinking of it as an object, but by re-thinking it, by thinking it again, by thinking it now. Similarly we understand the thoughts of others, not by thinking about their thoughts as objects, but by thinking again as they have thought. The same is obviously true of art and action. We understand the artistic experience by having or enjoying it, and we understand the practical life by living a life of action. We can re-live our past experiences, we can enter into the experience of others, and this is the only understanding which is not obviously inadequate to what it understands. It is just because of this that most men are impatient of reflexion upon experience, and feel that the richness of life is completely lost in the pale and abstract analyses of the philosopher or the psychologist. It is because of this also that the artist resents those who chatter about art, as the practical man resents those who chatter about action. We must not indeed claim too much for our powers of enjoyment or re-living. We cannot just re-live our past experience, because every experience or activity is what it is because of its place in a wider whole, and our present experience is necessarily different from our past. Still more must our present experience be different from the experience of others. It requires a greater effort of imagination to enter into the experience of others, and the more their circumstances and character differ from our own, the greater is the effort required, and the greater the necessity for the study of the environment in which they live or lived. None the less we could not understand one another at all, we could not even misunderstand one another, unless we could in some way and to some extent enter into and enjoy the experience of others, just as we can enter into and enjoy again the experiences of our own past.

Here again there are special difficulties in regard to willing. It might seem that we cannot will again our past actions or the actions of others, as we can re-think our past thoughts or the thoughts of others, or as we can re-create an æsthetic experience enjoyed by others or by our past selves. The difference is however not so great as it appears. Strictly speaking, neither thought nor action can ever be repeated, and on the other hand, just as we can re-think a proposition of Euclid, so we

can re-do the figure of a dance. The individual happening is gone for ever, the universal character may be indefinitely repeated. None the less action seems to depend more obviously on the attendant circumstances, and there are some circumstances which cannot occur again. It is impossible for example that Macbeth should kill Duncan a second time. Yet even in such cases it is possible to live our past, including our past actions, over again in imagination, and it is possible to some extent to live the lives of others also in imagination. This is not just thinking about an action externally and reflectively. Rather it is putting ourselves imaginatively into the same situation, facing the same circumstances, uttering the same words, feeling the same emotion, taking the same decision, and meeting with the same results. It is interesting to observe how human beings of a relatively primitive type will even execute the movements carried out by themselves and others as they narrate, and in narrating re-live, a past experience.

We cannot, I think, refrain from calling such enjoying or living through our experience a knowledge or understanding of the experience, although such knowledge is not distinct from that of which it is the knowledge, it is not an activity added to the activity which it understands, but is simply the conscious experience or activity itself.

How is such knowledge or enjoyment expressed? It is expressed in living, it is the activity itself, and the activity is nothing until it is expressed or made express. But we may regard such activities as having an external side. The enjoyment of willing is just willing itself, and like willing it is commonly expressed in physical movements. The enjoyment of imagination or thinking is also expressed in physical movements, but here the physical movement is unimportant in comparison with what it produces, the colours of the painter, the sounds of the musician, the words of the philosopher or the scientist. These are primarily the colours painted and seen, the sounds or words produced and heard, but with greater practice and experience we may be satisfied with colours and sounds and words, and in the case of action with physical movements, that are merely imagined. We have also adopted methods of designating sounds and words by a written notation, but this is only for the purpose of permanent record and

as a means of making actual or imaginative reproduction easy. It is not in itself the proper expression of our activity.

It should be noted that where we express ourselves or our activity or our enjoyment in words, the words are not necessarily words about ourselves or our activity or our enjoyment. We express our imagining, not in saying that we are imagining, but in a poem. We express our thinking, not in saying that we are thinking, but in a work of history or philosophy or science. Shakespeare expressed himself as an artist in *Hamlet*. Kant expressed himself as a thinker in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Everything that we say is an expression of our thinking, not as an object about which the subject thinks, but as an activity of the subject; not as thinking thought about, but as thought itself thinking. When we use words about ourselves, as when we say that we are angry, the words are an expression of some activity, of our reflective thinking or of our will to deceive, but they are not an expression of our anger, except in so far as they are themselves uttered in an angry tone. There is a genuine continuity between the exclamation of fear or of disgust and the poem in which we express our emotion or the treatise on psychology in which we express our thought. But it seems to me—and in this perhaps I differ from Mr. Alexander [1] unless I have misunderstood him—that while the words of the psychologist express his own thinking, as an exclamation of disgust expresses emotion, they do not in the same sense express the thought or the emotion about which he is thinking.

If we make ourselves and know ourselves and express both ourselves and our self-knowledge in our ordinary living, what is the need for reflexion upon ourselves with its dubious character, its uncertain premises, and its ambiguous results? The answer is, I think, that just as there is no self of any kind, except in so far as it is active and enjoys its activity, so there is no self in the human sense, until it makes itself and its activity an object to itself. Presumably even an animal is active and enjoys its activity, but although it may be a self to us, we have no reason to believe that it is, so to speak, a self to and for itself. To be ourselves as well as to know ourselves it is

[1] *Space, Time, and Deity*, p. 18.

not enough to feel the fever of life, to love and hate and struggle. We must sometimes stand apart from the battle, and ask ourselves what we are, and what it is that we are doing. It is the prerogative and essence of human nature to reflect upon itself, and we all do so reflect in various degrees and on different levels of experience. The child who says 'I see' has already ceased to be absorbed in colours, it has turned away from the world of objects, it has become conscious, however obscurely, that there is more in the world than colour, that there is also seeing, and this seeing is not merely something which is here and now, but is part of a self which is more than seeing here and now. Until this has been done there is no proper human self at all. We make ourselves in our activities, in knowing and willing and feeling. Our self is just as rich or as poor as what it does and what it knows and feels. But it becomes in a very special sense a genuine self, when it reflects upon itself and enjoys its own reflexions. Until it does so, it has not yet distinguished itself from its world or its world from itself. The more profoundly it reflects upon itself the more genuine a self it is. And I believe that it is only by such reflexion that it can give any account, or have any understanding, of the values which it itself creates.

The whole character of our experience is altered by such reflexion. Reflexion is itself an activity which we enjoy, and it is part of our whole activity. It itself is rendered possible only by other activities, and all subsequent activities take place in the light of it. We cannot, if we would, fall back merely to the animal level; we know and will and feel in a world which, however imperfectly, we distinguish from ourselves. Not merely do we understand more reflectively what it is that we are doing, but as we shall see later, we act differently in the light of such reflexion. The self-knowledge which is reflexion enriches the self-knowledge which is enjoyment. The activity which is reflexion enriches the whole activity which is the self, not merely by being a new or added activity, but like any other activity, and more than any other activity, by colouring all the activities of the self of which it is a part.

We must not however fall into the error of imagining that reflexion is the only self-knowledge or that it can be a substitute for life. It does not give us the full reality of the activities

upon which it reflects, because to it they are just objects, even although it seeks to remember that they are something more; they are dead and done with, mere shadows or ghosts of what was once alive. Hence to some men reflexion seems a mere distortion, when it seeks to analyse what was once a living and indivisible whole, and to see it coldly in its relations to other things of which it itself was unconscious. The poet, the lover, and the saint, have very little use for psychology. They may resent it as an intrusion or even as a sacrilege. They feel, and with some justification, that they have a better way of knowing. In the case of experiences which are themselves perhaps more intellectual or at any rate more reflective, we do not consider that we are disturbing them greatly in reflecting upon them, because they have in themselves a certain solidity and coherence and self-consciousness which enables them to maintain themselves in a wider whole. But in the case of something fragile and delicate and obscure, a touch of emotion, a vague desire, a glimpse of something beyond, we feel that to analyse them is to break them, just as to analyse a joke is to destroy its humour. It seems to be easier and more satisfactory to reflect upon thinking, and even upon willing, than it is to reflect upon feeling or upon any of our less differentiated or more intense experiences. But in all cases reflexion fails to give us in its completeness the full reality of that activity upon which we reflect. We can recover that only by giving ourselves up whole-heartedly to the activity itself after we have reflected upon it, and it may be sometimes that our reflexion has itself rendered this impossible, just as absorption in action may make us incapable of poetry. In the main however our enjoyment is enriched by reflexion, and it is the enjoyment following upon reflexion which is to be regarded as the most genuine understanding of life. He who understands living is not the mere philosopher, but the philosopher who also lives.

We are here occupied with a reflective knowledge of experience, and in particular of willing, in order that we may, if possible, secure some insight into the nature of good and evil. We must however note that, within the activity which is the self, there are many other distinctions besides the simple

although difficult distinctions of knowing, willing, and feeling. These lesser distinctions presuppose the more fundamental distinctions, especially the distinction of subject and object, and I believe they are made by reflexion of some sort upon the nature of the object and its implications. We make distinctions within the one activity which is the self, as we make distinctions within the one object which is the world. This seems to be clear enough in regard to seeing, hearing, smelling, and so on—a full account would of course be immensely more complicated than the account we have given—and also in regard to perception, memory, and imagination. There are many other distinctions, such as those between doubting, thinking, and knowing, which cannot be so simply explained; but we must pass them over, and assume that we have a common sense apprehension of their ordinary meaning. We must also, although reluctantly, refrain from any attempt to give an account of the various distinctions within willing, except in so far as these will be discussed in the course of our investigation.

It must however be noted here that our general doctrine commits us to certain consequences in regard to these subdivisions. When we say that the self is that which wills and knows and feels, we must suppose that knowing and willing and feeling cover all that the self is. Knowing, for example, must cover all cognitions, all imagining and intuiting and thinking and so on; and similarly willing must cover all conations, and include under itself all wanting or desiring or intending, everything in short that is ordinarily described as conative. We must try to avoid ambiguities when knowing and willing are used in a narrower sense, but the usage here adopted has good authority behind it, it avoids the continual use of words like conation which become offensive by repetition, and it serves to bring out the continuity of the different activities of the self.

The divisions or grades of willing recognised in the course of the argument have perhaps been unduly simplified. I have made no attempt, for example, to maintain a sharp distinction between impulse, desire, and wish, but have in the main considered them all as desire. I hope that this will not cause confusion to those who are addicted to finer shades, but I am

inclined to think that the multiplication of sub-divisions, however useful it may be in psychology, would produce unnecessary complications in a purely ethical discussion.

One other point may be added in this connexion. The distinctions within willing, if perhaps less numerous, are more difficult to describe adequately than the corresponding distinctions in knowing. To desire and to intend, for example, seem to be different from willing, in the narrower sense in which willing is identified with action (although that action may in some cases be thinking), and we seem to be perfectly aware when we are doing one and when we are doing the other. Yet it is hard to describe them except as the imagination of what we might do or the anticipation of what we are about to do, that is to say we are apt to treat them, just as we are apt to treat willing in the narrower sense, as some kind of cognition and not any kind of willing at all. This is surely a mistake, and it is a still greater mistake to speak of desire as if it were the knowing that we desire, or of intention as if it were the knowing that we intend. It is tempting to say that desire is a kind of imaginary willing or willing in imagination; and that intention (by which I mean an intention before, and not in, the act) is a similar kind of willing in imagination, but one which is placed more definitely in some anticipated situation continuous with our present situation, instead of being relatively isolated and absorbed in itself. This however would give rise to difficulties, and it is sufficient to note that there is a certain analogy between desiring and imagining. Our task would be much easier if we could assume some clear and generally accepted psychology of the will, but I fear we must proceed rather on the basis of common-sense beliefs, and try to make these a little more explicit as we go along.

There are other distinctions propounded by some psychologists, for example by Mr. McDougall, such as disposition, instinct, temperament, and so on. These are not the activities of spirit which we wish to understand, but some sort of entities or realities, permanent or changing, which are thought to lie behind the activities and to explain them. If we believe that men or animals, on apprehending a certain kind of object, are stirred by a certain emotion, and act in a certain way independently of previous experience or previous reflexion, we

say that they have an instinct to do so; and the more widespread we find this sort of occurrence in the animal kingdom, the more confident we are that it is due to instinct. It seems clear enough that this kind of theory offers nothing in the way of scientific explanation, it is rather fiction or mythology, and seems to do little more than group together under one term the various facts which it sometimes professes unguardedly to explain. It is in short, in spite of its protests, another form of the faculty psychology. None the less such fictions appear to be necessary in the present state of the science of mind; they have been in continuous use since the time of Plato and Aristotle; and ordinary thought with its views about capacity and habit and temperament and character is itself full of them. I shall make use of them as sparingly as I can, and shall try to remember that theories based upon them are mythological in the Platonic sense, but it is not possible wholly to avoid their use. They may serve to convey our meaning more vividly and simply, and they may at any rate indicate a problem, if they do not give a solution. In some cases they may genuinely increase our knowledge on its present level, but I think that Mr. McDougall abuses this method, when he postulates [1] a special disposition for every object and every class of objects that the mind is capable of conceiving.

It may be thought by some that we ought to study action in the light of the 'Unconscious'. I do not deny that a knowledge of modern theories of psycho-analysis may throw light on many of the details of our actions, but it is well in these matters to keep some sense of proportion, and not to be thrown off our balance by theories which are still imperfectly thought out and very far from being fitted into the rest of our knowledge of the human mind. We must remember that the 'Unconscious', whose reality and character is sufficiently obscure, is intelligible only in so far as it becomes conscious and is assimilated to the rest of our consciousness. And unless I am mistaken, unconscious desires seem to be very like conscious ones, even if they may be a little more unrestrained and a little less considerate of the ordinary conventions of life. They may perhaps be the explanation of some acts, as our conscious desires are the explanation of others, but this does not seriously

[1] McDougall, *An Outline of Psychology*, p. 379.

affect the nature of the general problem as to what action itself is.

On the whole, then, I propose to proceed, as far as possible, on the basis of a reasonably critical common sense, in the light of which action itself usually takes place. Yet we must remember that there are all sorts of metaphysical problems and difficulties which we are obliged by this method to ignore. I must confess that the distinction between subject and object, which is taken by so many as ultimate and indubitable, seems to me little more than a problem which is not yet solved. To speak of spiritual activities as if they existed side by side with their objects, as if they were just events like physical events, seems to be a convenience rather than a metaphysical truth, and it is possible to doubt whether the angelic visitor of Mr. Alexander would be justified in so regarding them. I am not certain that we are entitled to speak of enjoying our activities as if they were something separate from the world to which they are directed, and perhaps it would be truer to say that what we enjoy is the whole within which we make our reflective distinctions of subject and object. But action is a highly empirical matter, in which we accept all sorts of distinctions which we cannot justify, and perhaps it is better to study it as it appears before us in the ordinary world of men, rather than to begin with a metaphysical universe in which there might seem to be no action at all. Philosophical thinking is an attempt to make our ordinary thinking more clear, and to understand better our ordinary world. We must always begin with our everyday experience, and this is just as true when we are thinking about action, as when we are thinking about thought or about art or about what is called the real world. We may not be able to go very far without greatly altering our ordinary conceptions, but I believe that we should try to go as far as we can.

CHAPTER IV

THE WORLD AND THE SELF

To reflect upon the self is to make the self an object, and in so doing to distinguish it from, and set it side by side with, other objects. Reflexion distinguishes the self and the world as subject and object, but at the same time it makes the self and the world both objects to itself. The self must be more than an object, but as an object it is part of a world of objects, and like any other object it is intelligible in its relation to the world of which it is a part. When we reflect upon the self as willing, willing, whatever else it is, becomes one of the events in time about which we think, and it is preceded, accompanied, and succeeded, by events in the physical world. We have all reflected, and we live and act in the light of our reflexions. Our actions therefore ordinarily seem to us to take place in a world which is what it is independently of our actions. In this world we distinguish empirically many different objects, and in particular we distinguish other selves or spirits. These other selves or spirits are objects, although they are more than mere objects or events about which we think, and although we can not only think about them, but can to some extent enter into and enjoy their experience, as we can enter into and enjoy our own past experience. Whatever be the ultimate truth in these matters, it seems that morality, as ordinarily understood, arises in a world which is wider than myself, and contains other selves distinct from myself and yet capable of sharing my experience as I am capable of sharing their experience. Apart from this it is hard to see how there could be such a thing as morality at all.

All reflexion upon the self is a part or activity of the active self upon which it reflects, but it is external to the self as an object in the same sense as it is external to any other object upon which it reflects. It should however be observed that it is possible to reflect upon the self in two ways, one of which may be regarded as more external than the other.

We may reflect upon the self as an experience developing in time, without regard to anything which is not an object of its experience. We may also reflect upon it as an experience developing in time within a world of which we are conscious, but it is not. In the first case we, so to speak, keep within the experience on which we reflect, and describe how the self, for example, passes from colours and sounds which it knows to a physical world which it also knows. In the second case we begin with the physical world which we know, and describe how stimuli of which the self knows nothing produce or cause the colours and sounds which it knows. Both methods of reflexion are external to, and other than, that upon which they reflect; but the first method tries to describe a developing experience from within, while the second does not merely describe it from within, but describes it in a setting which is external to it. The first method indeed describes the experience as involving subject and object, the experiencing and the experienced; but the second method describes also a world which need not be an object at all to the self which is reflected upon. In that sense the second method may be considered more external than the first.

Both methods are valuable and necessary, but it seems unfortunate that the first method is, so far as I am aware, seldom attempted by modern psychology. It is, however, difficult to keep the two methods apart, and although I shall seek in the main to describe willing from within, I shall not attempt to adhere exclusively to the one method as distinct from the other. But it is necessary, at the outset, to say something of the world in which willing arises, and in which we must act whether we are aware of the real character of that world or not. Yet even here, it is because we are aware of the character of the world, that we must consider the problems which it presses upon us. The world has always been the same world, but modern science has made us aware of certain facts which were ignored by our forefathers alike in their reflexions and in their actions. It is these facts which we must consider as the setting for our actions, and although an account of them is in itself of relatively little value, unless it is given by those who are steeped in the methods and conclusions of modern science, yet since these facts have become

commonplaces, it is impossible to avoid dealing with them on a commonplace level.

Ever since the beginning of philosophy and science men have been aware that their self or soul was bound up, at any rate for a time, with a body, and that this body was a part of the physical world, and was subject to physical laws like any other physical body. We have learned more fully the nature of these physical laws, and have grasped more completely that all physical events are governed by cause and effect, and that there are no physical events which are not so governed. Our knowledge has also extended greatly in detail, and we are aware, as our fathers were not, of the immensities of interstellar space and of geological time, immensities which stagger the imagination, and in making us realise the smallness of our bodies and of our world and the brevity of human life, tend to make us regard our human ideals and values as of little or no importance. We are aware also that our familiar world and our own bodies are very different in reality from what they are to our ordinary common-sense reflexion, and are composed of what we may regard as a large number of incredibly small solar systems, in which planets called electrons revolve round suns called nuclei in accordance with laws which are as indifferent to human fate as the laws which govern the motions of the stars themselves. The fact that these suns and planets are not even, properly speaking, very small solid bodies, like those among which we live in comfort and confidence, serves only to accentuate the strangeness of the universe. And whether we consider the unimaginably small or the unimaginably great, we seem in either case to be faced with something mechanical and necessary and devoid alike of understanding and of purpose.

The most startling and far-reaching achievement of modern science, so far at least as it has direct bearing on human life, is, however, the discovery of the evolution by which our animal life, and even our thoughts and actions, seem to have been themselves produced by the same mechanical processes which we find at work throughout the physical world. The physical seems to have become the organic, the organic the conscious, and the conscious the self-conscious. It is hard to

interpret the nature of this process, and we may speak of certain characteristics as emergent, as new, as incapable of deduction and so on, but there appears to be a genuine and unbroken continuity throughout the process of change or development; the higher or more developed seems to be dependent upon the lower, and the higher never ceases to be also the lower. The living body does not cease to be a physical body governed by physical laws, and consciousness and self-consciousness alike seem to depend upon organic processes in the living body which are also physical processes of a peculiarly complicated kind.

The process of evolution is, it would seem, not a moral nor even a purposive process. The chief factors in evolution are heredity, variation, and the struggle for existence. Heredity, like evolution itself, is not the cause of anything: it is merely a name for the fact that characteristics found in the ancestor reappear in the offspring. Similarly variation is merely a name for the fact that different characteristics appear in related organisms. We are beginning to learn something of the actual causes which produce in the offspring resemblances to, and differences from, its ancestors, but on the whole the causal factors at work are still relatively obscure. What is clear is simply that in the unending struggle for existence organisms with certain characteristics tend to survive, and organisms with other characteristics tend not to survive. This process, the process of natural selection, does not account for variations, but it acts like a sieve by which the variations less useful in the battle for life are eliminated, inasmuch as the organisms which possess these characteristics are eliminated. Hence natural selection leads to what is called the survival of the fittest, that is of the fittest to survive, or more simply to the survival of the survivors. There is in all this no hint of a preference on the part of nature for anything which we might consider to be specially valuable.

It is true that in the process of evolution organisms of a more and more complex type have been produced and have survived, and that the most complex type of all is man. It is probably true that, with certain qualifications, greater complexity means a greater capacity for adaptation to environ-

ment and therefore a better chance of survival. But the simpler organisms have always kept their place by the side of the more complex, and indeed are necessary to the survival of the more complex. Without the less developed forms of life to provide him with food, man would inevitably perish. Hence it is not true that nature shows a preference for the more complex, and still less for what is in our eyes the higher, type, and it is more than probable that the time will come when the more complex organisms will fail to survive and the less complex will succeed. The common limpet was securely established on this planet ages before man made his appearance, and it will probably continue to be securely established long after he has ceased to be. It is conceivable that by the progress of science men may gain such control over nature as to be able to survive indefinitely, but so far as natural events by themselves are concerned, there is no reason to anticipate any such result, and every reason to anticipate exactly the opposite.

Further, the process of evolution is a ceaseless and unrelenting struggle in which races live by preying upon one another. For every line of development that has succeeded there are a hundred that have failed. Nature is a scene of destruction, bringing untimely death to countless individuals and final extinction to entire races of living things. We modern men are shocked and horrified, when any considerable part of a community is swept away by pestilence or war. We have partially eliminated the former type of calamity, and we seek to mitigate or even to remove the latter; but catastrophe is so to speak normal in the evolutionary process, and it is to the evolutionary process that we owe what may be described as the first materials of our human action.

From the point of view of science spiritual activity is merely a variation like any other, which survives or disappears according as it helps or hinders in the unending struggle for life. It is just a product of the evolutionary process like any other product, and nature has no special regard or affection for one product rather than another.

Such is the world in which we live, and it is in that world that we have to explain and justify morality, if it is to be explained and justified at all. The enterprise does not seem

any too easy, for the world so described seems to be alien to the human spirit, and hostile, or at least indifferent, to human values. It is out of that alien world that all spiritual activity arises by a continuous process of evolution, which cares nothing for our standards or for any standards, and every spiritual activity seems to be correlated with, and even caused by, physical processes, which are determined, not by any purpose or ideal, but merely by the mechanical laws of cause and effect.

We must not, however, allow ourselves to be unduly intimidated. The ultimate nature of the world is a metaphysical question into which we cannot here enter; but on the common-sense level there is more in the world than atoms and electrons, and more than the cold reaches of interstellar space. We live in a friendly and familiar world, where we enjoy the warmth of the sun, and look upon green hills and blue skies and the faces of friends. It is idle to tell us that these things are unreal, and to press upon us in their stead the cold abstractions of science. It is idle also to tell us that it is folly to forget the perils and horrors by which we are surrounded. The world is the same world that we have always lived in. We have succeeded in the battle, and we have all of us performed the miracle of being born and of being alive. If anyone has a right to feel at home in the world, it is the members of the human race. We can still flatter ourselves that we are the fine flower of the world, the aristocracy of nature, the most complicated and the most subtly contrived of all the products of the evolutionary process. We have more knowledge and greater powers than our ancestors, and if we have come so far, there is no reason why we should not go farther. If the theory of evolution is true, it means that we, whatever we are, are well adapted to our world.

Our morality, if we have it, has not been a factor fatal to us in the struggle; it has rather been an outcome of the struggle and a help in the struggle. Whatever be the case in the earlier stages of evolution, in the distinctively human stage we have established our position at least partly by greater intelligence, by cooperation and discipline and self-

sacrifice. Even the lower animals, so far as they exhibit, however blindly, some rough anticipation or foreshadowing of these human qualities, have become more efficient in the struggle. Brute force and selfish cunning are not always the most effective weapons, and nature itself is not purely individualistic. The parental and gregarious instincts make for survival, just as much as the instinct for battle and the instinct for escape. The morality of which we seek to give an account has survived and been useful in the world which is supposed to be so alien to morality, and there is no reason to think that it is any less real or less solid because of that. The nature of the world may be incompatible with many of the things that have been thought about morality, but it is obviously not incompatible with the existence of the morality about which we think.

Further, the nature of the world is not incompatible with thinking and with thinking truly. We may assert as much as we please the littleness of man and his complete determination by forces other than himself, but when we do so, we assert also that he is great enough to apprehend his own littleness, and to know truly the character of the world which is thought to be so alien to himself. It is absurd to speak as if the truth were the private property of an impersonal entity called science. The science which apprehends the greatness of the universe and the littleness of man is itself only a particular kind of human thinking, a particular achievement of the human race. And the universe is not merely an aggregate of atoms governed by necessary laws. It is also a universe which, in what seems to be only a part of itself, yet claims to know the whole.

Whatever be our view of the continuity present in the evolutionary process, that continuity does not warrant us in denying the existence of consciousness and of spiritual activity, or in asserting that matter or movement alone is real. To assert that there is no consciounsess, but only movement, is self-contradictory; for the assertion, if it has any meaning, is itself more than movement, and is in fact the very consciousness which it denies. And if it has no meaning, it is not an assertion, and it cannot even pretend to be true. The very continuity of evolution lends itself as

much to the theory that all matter must be conscious, as to the theory that all consciousness must be matter.

The advance of modern science offers no reason whatever for the acceptance of a crude materialism, or of a Behaviourism which turns aside from the profitable study of bodily movements in their environment, and offers itself light-heartedly as a philosophical theory of the self and the world. It is only the short-sighted or the wilfully blind, who can think that there is nothing in the world but physical movement, and forget the thinking which thinks so and is supposed to think so truly. What is much more plausible is the view, not that there is no such thing as spiritual activity, but that all spiritual activity is merely epiphenomenal. The word 'epiphenomenal,' however, is more remarkable for charm than for clarity, and it is hard to ascertain precisely what delicate shade of ambiguous existence it is intended to convey. Perhaps we may take it to mean at least that all spiritual activity is determined through and through by the physical movements which it is supposed to accompany. Knowing and willing are really caused by physical movements, and perhaps we may add that they themselves are not in turn the cause of anything. We may observe that such causation seems to be very different from the causation believed to prevail in the physical world, where every effect is the cause of new effects, and where every effect is supposed to be measurably equivalent to its cause. Yet it may be legitimate to extend the meaning of causation in this way, provided we make clear to ourselves exactly what it is that we are doing. All that need be maintained here is this, that it cannot be a complete account of spiritual activity to say that it is determined by physical movements outside itself; and it must be false to assert that it has no inner coherence or principle of development in itself. This is very clear in regard to thinking. If conclusions follow from premises, and inferences arise out of judgement, for no other reason than that certain physical movements have taken place, then it is obvious that no thinking can possibly claim to be true. To assert that the only necessity in thinking is that it is caused by physical movements, which have already physical effects, is to make nonsense of all our experience and to deny all

truth, including the truth which it asserts. The only reason for such an assertion would be the existence of a physical movement, that is to say it would be a very bad reason indeed. If epiphenomenalism asserts less than this; if it recognises that, whatever be the physical facts involved, one judgement may lead necessarily and coherently and intelligibly to another; if it recognises in short that there may be true thinking (and to deny this is to stultify itself); then it offers no obstacle to the view that consciousness as conscious thinking has a character of its own, and may be intelligible by and in and for itself.

If this is true of thinking, it must also be true of willing; for thinking itself is always willing. To think is always to take responsibilities and make decisions and follow one line of thought in preference to another. To deny the existence of thinking is itself to think; and to deny the existence of willing is itself to will. It has indeed been recognised earlier that all this is not so simple as it seems, and there is no need to deny that willing like thinking is bound up with physical movements. Still less is there need to deny that in willing, as in thinking, there must be a kind of necessity, if it is to be what it is. What is here maintained is that willing can and must be studied dispassionately in itself; and that this must be so, even if our aim were to correlate all willing with purely physical movements. Such a study may, I hope, find in willing itself some internal necessity, some principle of coherence, in the light of which the distinctions of good and evil will become intelligible, and without which they could never become intelligible. And there seems to be nothing in the scientific view of the world which could at the outset legitimately bar us from this attempt. Even if it be thought that there is no such thing as willing, no man can doubt that there is at least something in our experience which has led men to believe that willing is something real. It is that something which is the subject of the present study. There is enough ground for a belief in will to justify us in trying to learn more about what it really is.

The scientific theories of the world and of evolution, while they might throw doubt upon an absolute good appre-

hended by an unreasoning intuition, cannot, without stultifying themselves, deny the reality of spiritual activity, or negate the possibility of values which are real in their relation to spiritual activities which are also real. We must however consider briefly a view which would attempt to establish a conception of value on the basis of these scientific theories themselves. There are some scientific thinkers who assert that the only value is what is called survival value. So far as they deny the possible existence of other values, I have already suggested that such a denial has no adequate grounds in the ordinary scientific view of the world, but we must examine the conception of survival value itself, and consider whether it offers any additional grounds which may have been overlooked.

To say that anything has survival value is to say merely that it is a cause of survival; that it causes the individual who possesses it, or the race, or both the individual and the race, to survive. The instinct of pugnacity, for example, may help the individual to survive, and to have offspring who are like himself in possessing various qualities, including the instinct of pugnacity. If we assume abstractly that animals or men behaving in certain ways are moved by instincts or desires, then there can be little doubt that most of the instincts or desires which we find in living races have been among the causes which enabled them to survive; or more strictly that the presence of similar instincts or desires in the ancestors is among the causes which have led to the existence, or secured the survival, of their present descendants. But we do not ordinarily say that a cause has an effect value, and to say that anything has a survival value because survival is its effect is liable to produce great confusion of thought. Desire is not valuable because it is a cause of survival. Rather it is survival which is valuable because it is an object of desire. To say that a certain cause has a certain effect is not to say that the cause has a value, unless we know independently that the effect has a value. And to say that survival value is the only kind of value is simply to say that there is no kind of value at all.

Everything that has survival value would no doubt have a genuine value, if we assume that survival is good. But to

say that survival alone is good, or that it alone ought to be desired, is to make a purely dogmatic statement which is hardly even plausible. Death may sometimes be good, and it may not be good to survive in continuous pain. In any case it is not survival or mere life that is good. The whole problem of goodness is whether one kind of life is better than another, and to say that all life, the life of the saint and the life of the limpet, is equally good is to deprive goodness of all its meaning. The absurdity is not avoided but increased, if we say that it is not the life of the individual with which we are concerned, and that the life of the individual is good, not in itself, but only in so far as it produces other individual lives which in turn are good only as producing still others. If we are talking merely about cause and effect, let us talk about cause and effect, and not delude ourselves and others with meaningless phrases about value.

It would be still more obviously false—for here we are dealing with facts and not with mere pious opinions—to say that survival is good in the sense of being always and everywhere desired. It is not hard to find men who do not desire their own survival, and who do not desire the survival of their species. And it is not true that a desire which has survival value is necessarily a desire for survival. The desire for food has no doubt survival value, yet it is not a desire for survival, but simply a desire for food. We may add that not all desires have survival value. A race which survives may presumably carry with it some useless lumber in the way of desires; and to say that desires have survival value is to contrast them with other things, including presumably desires, which have none. The desire for opium is not a desire for survival; nor, so far as I am aware, has it any survival value worth speaking about.

It is however true that a desire for survival is widespread among men; and that this desire and other desires and instincts, and indeed thought and will themselves, have been among the causes which have made for the survival of the human race. Survival or life, and therefore the causes of survival or life, are the conditions of there being any value at all. But the conditions of value are neither the value itself nor the measure of the value. An artist cannot paint

without food, but eating is not painting, and we do not estimate the value of his painting by the amount of food he has eaten. We do not even speak of the painting value of food. So far from measuring the value of things by their causes or conditions, we measure the value of the causes or the conditions by reference to the value which through them it has been possible to produce. A way of life has value if it leads to the continuance of the life of the race, but only in so far as the life of the race has value in itself. And the life of the race is the life of the individuals who compose it. If we cannot find value in the life of individuals, we cannot find it anywhere. If there is any value at all, there must be more value in the life of the individual than the mere fact that he produces offspring like himself. If the individual's life has a survival value which is really valuable, then there must be more than survival value in the life of beings like himself, and that means there must be more than survival value in his own individual life.

None the less the desires and instincts, the thinkings and willings, of men have been at least partially the cause of the survival of the human race, and unless they had had survival value in this sense, the human race would not be what it is or would not be at all. That is to say, the desires and instincts and activities of men would not be what they are now, unless such desires and instincts and activities had had a survival value. If our activities create values now, they do so only because similar activities had a survival value in the past, or were at any rate not great obstacles in the way of survival. If value were relative to activities and if activities were merely immediate given facts, then clearly the survival value of an activity would be the complete explanation why its objects are now good; for the objects would be good only as the objects of the activity, and the activity would be at all only because of its survival value. The goodness of anything would be wholly due to the survival value of certain desires or instincts manifesting themselves in activities which are just facts and nothing more than facts. This, I take it, though I have put it with perhaps an excessive simplicity, is the really plausible doctrine which lies behind the belief in survival value. If activities were mere facts or events, I

believe that this doctrine would be sound, and I believe also that it would mean the denial of anything in the nature of value, of truth, beauty, and goodness. But what we have to consider is just whether an activity is not more than a mere fact or event, whose character has been completely explained when we have determined what are believed to be its causes. To assume that it is a mere fact or event is simply to beg the question which it is our business to discuss; and incidentally, as has been said, it is not merely dogmatic but definitely self-contradictory. Here again we are compelled to ask whether there is not an internal necessity in the activity itself, which is not to be accounted for by any external necessity whatever. It may be that no one would ever have thought that the sum of the interior angles of a triangle was equal to two right angles, unless this thought or similar thoughts had a survival value. But its survival value is not the reason why the thought is true. And it is at least possible that survival value is not the reason why any action is good.

The doctrine of survival value acquires an additional plausibility because we all believe that good actions make for the continuance of the race, and that actions likely to lead to the extinction of the race could not be good. The believer in survival value may, like other confused thinkers, be moved by a genuinely moral motive. Yet it would be folly to approach the would-be suicide with the argument that suicide is bad because it has no survival value. It is precisely because it has no survival value that it is good to him; it relieves him of his troubles, and prevents him from producing other beings who may be as wretched as himself. It is absurd to elevate a causal connexion into a moral law. What is true is that in order to live the good life we must live; and if a man believes that life may be good, he may aim at securing life for his kind in order that they may have at least the opportunity of living well. And if any kind of life is good, perhaps we may say about it that it must be a kind of life which it is possible for men to live. In that sense also the good life must have a survival value, and survival value is itself a good. Indeed life itself as an object of desire is so far good; and anything which produces a life so desired, and has in that sense survival value, is also so far good.

Hitherto this examination of the nature of the world in which will arises has been mainly negative in its results. I have been maintaining merely that there may be something in will which has a certain intelligibility in itself and cannot be reduced to, or explained by, purely physical processes. I am in short suggesting that willing like thinking may be governed by some sort of rational necessity, and therefore cannot be understood merely as a series of effects produced by a series of physical causes. There seems to be nothing in the nature of the world to show that such a possibility is meaningless. But before this possibility can be examined in detail it is necessary to touch more positively on the way in which the world does actually enter into and effect willing.

In so far as willing is also a bodily movement, and in so far as it effects changes in the physical world, it is and must be subject to the ordinary laws of nature. Willing, to be effective and consistent, must take into account the nature of the world and the laws in accordance with which it moves. In a sense, of course, it cannot do otherwise. No man can leap twenty feet in the air. But a man might hurl himself from a tower in the belief that he could fly, and the result would certainly be something very different from, and very inconsistent with, what he intended. Coherence or consistency in willing is possible only if we have knowledge of our actual world; and the increase of our knowledge of that world and especially of the actual working of the laws of cause and effect, not only extends the range of our action, but enables us to carry out successfully what we will to do. Knowledge of the world is the condition of a consistent willing which extends through time. Not all knowledge is equally useful in this sense, and it is possible to shoot and kill without knowing much of the theory of ballistics or the precise effects of bullets on the human body. We can all move our bodies, although we may know little or nothing of the physiological facts through which alone this is possible. To say this, however, is not to deny the immense importance of physiological knowledge, and broadly speaking the more we know about causes and effects, the more control we have over our circumstances, and the more efficiently and coherently we can act. The study of cause and effect is not an ethical study

and belongs entirely to the natural sciences, but a certain amount of knowledge of this kind is the condition of our willing well. It is not easy to say what knowledge is practically useful and what is not, but it may be noted that the knowledge which is a sympathetic understanding of other people is often more useful than science in any practical activity which involves cooperation.

All this is mere commonplace. What is more important for our purpose is to consider the way in which the body is, as it were, prepared for action. In the course of evolution physical matter seems to blossom into life, life into consciousness, and consciousness into self-consciousness. And the whole process of evolution seems to be repeated in each individual human body, except in so far as the human body does not arise out of dead matter. We are a physical body which is also alive and conscious, and we are aware of what we are. There are great differences in these characteristics of every human self, and also, if I am right, in the way in which these characteristics are known. Yet everything that we are seems to be bound up into one whole, and there is a curious continuity between what is called the lower and the higher. In particular we seem to get something like purposive action in the body, so far as it is merely alive; and certain elements in our consciousness, such as sense and desire, seem to be determined less by their place in our conscious experience than by some sort of causal relation to a purely physical condition.

Our body is a physical body, subject like any other to the laws of physical causation. It is carried along on the surface of the earth; it can be broken by external pressure; its movements produce movements in other bodies; and it is by these that it can change the world. Further, there take place in it processes of metabolism of a physico-chemical character, automatic and not under control, but apparently not found in inorganic bodies. The activities of the glands and of the main internal organs are for the most part of this type, and we are coming to realise more and more their importance even for our spiritual life. The processes of metabolism involve what is called irritability or a power of responding to external stimuli. As we ascend in the scale

of evolution response becomes more and more complicated, until we come, in the case of animals with a nervous system, to what are called reflex actions, as, for example, when we ourselves involuntarily contract a muscle on the application of a pin. We may or we may not be conscious of such reflex actions—they can take place when the connexion between the brain and the spinal chord is severed and there is presumably no consciousness at all—but so far as they are reflex, they are not actions; they are not willed, although we are aware of, and may even anticipate, what is happening. From such simple reflex actions we can pass by gradual transition to the complicated responses which are said to be due to instinct, as for example the elaborate activities of bees and other insects. These instinctive activities appear to be the first germs of our human action.

We have, then, an ever more complicated system of processes and responses which are continuous with, and presumably explicable in the same way as, the ordinary processes of dead matter. Yet on the other hand these processes of life look as if they were purposive; they are what a rational creature would do, if it were able to will with some knowledge of its body and of its environment. To take the simplest example, all living things absorb food, and this is precisely what they would do, if they were anxious to keep alive. Yet even conscious beings may eat, not because they seek to keep alive, but simply because they desire food; and in the humblest animals and plants, where presumably there is no consciousness or desire at all, the process of absorbing the nourishment necessary to life is already taking place. If a rational human being were suddenly to come into existence with full knowledge of the nature of life and of his body and of the world, we may suppose that, even without a desire for food, he would choose to eat in order to prolong his interesting and unique experience. But it seems that human beings eat first of all just because they desire to do so; and the desire itself seems to spring out of some kind of physical condition which, without any kind of desire at all, acted—if we may use the term—in the same sort of way and produced exactly the same sort of result. Some of the actions of living men and of ourselves, perhaps all the actions properly so

called, appear to be purposive and rational, yet the physical processes involved are continuous with those in the humblest living thing; and on the other hand all the processes of life look as if they were purposive, although apparently they are not. If our understanding of human beings were purely external, if we did not enjoy experience as well as infer it from the observed motions of bodies—although this is an impossible hypothesis—we should probably be unable to say whether or not there was any such thing as purposive or voluntary action at all. The presence or absence of consciousness and purpose in animals we really infer from the likeness or unlikeness of their movements to our own when we are conscious and purposive.

We do not know, and perhaps we cannot know, when or how consciousness and will arise. If we were entitled to accept the views of Mr. McDougall, we should say that they arose on the level of instinct. He defines an instinct[1] as 'an innate disposition which determines the organism to perceive (to pay attention to) any object of a certain class, and to experience in its presence a certain emotional excitement and an impulse to action which find expression in a specific mode of behaviour in relation to that object'. I do not know how far we are justified in accepting Mr. McDougall's somewhat romantic account of animal behaviour. It may be that instinctive processes in animals are better studied merely as very complicated reflex actions. It may even be that they are nothing more than reflex actions, and reflex actions which are not accompanied by any kind of consciousness. But however late or however early be the appearance of consciousness and will, we cannot doubt that it is present in human beings. And we may accept it as a fact for which we have grounds in our own experience, that we sometimes, on perceiving things of a certain kind, feel and behave in a certain way without previous reflexion or instruction and without having learned to do so by previous experience. Even if this never takes place in its complete simplicity in our developed life, we do experience something sufficiently like this to justify the belief that something approaching so simple an experience possibly may occur. As

[1] McDougall, *Outline of Psychology*, p. 110.

soon as it occurs, we have—to say so is merely to repeat the statement—what may be reasonably called genuine action or volition of the most elementary kind. It would be difficult to set forth the reasons by which we distinguish this from mere conscious reflex action, but in practice we have little difficulty in making the distinction. We cannot say more than that when we have willing we have willing, but it is important to recognise that the most elementary willing is bound up with knowing and feeling, that it has a certain regularity in its response to certain classes of observed objects, and that this regularity is not due to previous learning or previous experience or previous thought.

We may attribute this regularity, if we will, to our bodily constitution; but this tells us nothing, since all our spiritual activities are equally supposed to be due in some sense to our bodily constitution, and it is no use to call in bodily conditions only when we come to something otherwise unintelligible in our spiritual activities. If we consider instinctive action as it is within our experience, what strikes us about it is its relative regularity on the one hand, and its relative immediacy or givenness on the other. We need not exaggerate either the regularity or the immediacy in our voluntary responses, but we must recognise at the outset that man is a creature which wills and wills inevitably—if that is not a contradiction—along certain lines, which can be described. Man has a certain spiritual nature whether he wills to have it or not, and whether he thinks about it or not. His spiritual nature is to be a being which knows and wills and feels, and which does so in quite definite directions. We must not suppose, when we use the word nature, that his nature is a real thing which causes him to know and will and feel in certain ways; it is merely an abstract term to indicate the fact that he does, and apparently must, know and will and feel in these ways. Man as a spiritual being is simply willing and knowing and feeling, and he makes himself in his willing and knowing and feeling. Yet while we may not believe that there is anything in his experience which is merely given or immediate, we cannot fail to recognise that just as he sees colours and hears sounds whatever be his general theory of the universe, so too he desires food and drink whatever be the nature of his

general aims in life. It may be true that he could not see colours and hear sounds without an experience going beyond the individual colour or sound and involving comparison and interpretation, and that these colours and sounds are in his wider experience other than they would be in a narrower experience. It may be true similarly that the simplest volition as we have it now is what it is as an element in a wider life, and would be something other as an element in a narrower life. But if these beliefs are true, as I think they are, they must nevertheless be compatible with a certain compulsion—I know no better word—as regards the objects of sense, which at any rate at first sight does not appear to be the compulsion of necessary reasoning. And they must be compatible with the fact that we as men have, and must have, certain desires which we do not choose to have as a result of adopting an attitude towards the universe in general. The object of sense must be capable of being given a place in our thought of what the universe is, and the natural desires of man must be capable of being given a place in the whole of a good life. Simply to ignore sense and desire is to fill our souls with empty abstractions instead of reality. If the good is, as I believe it is, relative to the willing nature of man, then as it is in the nature of man to will certain things, we know at once that these things must be in some sense and to some extent good for him. And even as regards the moral good, which can hardly be simply the object of any desire, however universal, in the life of men, it would seem folly to attempt to determine that good without reference to the fact that man is a fighting and a sexual animal, with instincts, or more simply with desires and aversions, which belong to the proper heritage of the race.

BOOK II

THE WILL AS IMMEDIATE

CHAPTER V

ELEMENTARY WILLING

IT was suggested in the last chapter that the most elementary willing which can properly be called willing involves an apprehended object, some sort of feeling, and a response to the object apprehended. This is a circular description, because the word 'response' means a voluntary response or in short willing itself. The importance of the description consists only in its recognition that there is no such thing as willing by itself.

We must now set aside questions of the origin or the external conditions of willing, and try to make clearer what willing itself is even in its most elementary form. In so doing we depend inevitably upon analysis of our own experience, because even if we are trying to understand some animal or infantile experience, we can apprehend it as an experience only on the analogy of our own. We must take elementary willing to be effective, to be something more than mere desire or intention, because desire and intention, as distinct from effective willing, probably arise only as willing becomes more developed. And while we may abstract from the particular nature of what is willed in an act of volition, we cannot abstract from the fact that something is willed. If we attempt to abstract an act of willing from any kind of object, we could at the most speak only of the time during which it took place, and even this we could hardly know except by considering what was done. All willing wills something, and that something may be called an object, although it might be better to use a less ambiguous word. The object of willing is simply what is willed.

Willing and knowing cannot exist apart from one another, but there is no need at this level to subordinate one to the other. Knowing seems to involve selection and discrimination and attention, that is to say it involves will. The more developed it is, the more manifest is the presence of will in

this sense. It is only in such experiences as hearing a loud sound suddenly that we are inclined to doubt whether there is any voluntary effort of attention. The experience is painful and obscure, and attention seems to be forced upon us. But it need not for that reason be involuntary. There are other painful and obscure experiences in which volition appears to be forced upon us, as in the immediate effort to avoid a fall or a sudden danger. As our experience approximates to pure immediacy, mere feeling seems to increase, while cognition and volition alike seem to diminish; but so long as there is consciousness at all, there is no reason to deny that both cognition and volition are and must be present. Yet in spite of this intimate connexion between knowing and willing, it would be quite untrue to say that we first of all willed to know a definite thing in its concreteness and then proceeded to know it. Such a statement would seem to be perilously near nonsense. Cognition may be preceded by a vague and abstract will to know, to look at a particular flower, to think of a particular problem; but it would be absurd to maintain that the precedent will in some way had the flower before it exactly as we afterwards saw it, or had the problem before it exactly as it is when we have solved it. There may be a previous volition as well as an immanent volition when we think or know, but it does not determine our thinking or knowing. Or if it does so, its only effect is to distort our thinking.

It is the same with the relation of willing to knowing. We cannot will without some kind of knowledge. Willing is preceded and accompanied by knowledge of an object, which perhaps should be called knowledge of the situation; and without knowledge of a situation it is difficult to believe that there could be anything like willing as we know it. And again, as we have seen, there is an immanent knowing in volition, since volition is a conscious or enjoyed activity. But it is untrue to say that we know what we will, and then come to will it. In the elementary consciousness the will goes direct to its object. We have no reason to believe that the child is moved to suck by an anticipation of the pleasures of repletion. When we raise our arm to ward off a blow, we have certainly not thought the matter out, and have no clear anticipation of the relative positions in which we and our

adversary shall be at the end of our action. As consciousness develops we do of course anticipate in imagination and deliberation courses of action which we ultimately carry out; just as, on the other hand, our knowing, *e.g.* our thinking out of a problem in moral philosophy, becomes part of a willed plan of life. But the anticipation of our action is always something vague and abstract. It may apprehend a symbol or schema of what we afterwards will, but it never knows beforehand in its full concreteness what we afterwards will. I may know that I am about to play a game of golf; but it is ridiculous to imagine that so vague and shadowy a conception as that of a game of golf has in it more than a fragment of the concrete reality, with its elation and depression, its successes and its failures, which is the subsequent and actual game as it is concretely willed. We never know beforehand what we will. The most we can know is a sort of abstract outline or sketch which corresponds to the reality only because it is so vague. The more detailed we attempted to make it, the more certain it would be to be false; and the more certainly should we feel hampered, if we tried to carry out in detail the outline we had anticipated. The will is spontaneous and autonomous, and we must not ignore its spontaneity either in theory or in practice. It is sometimes in doing the very opposite of what we had anticipated or intended that we are most conscious of willing, and it may be even of willing well.

Elementary willing goes straight to its object without waiting for the commands of reason, and even in developed action it is only when the action is completed that we can know what it is and judge adequately of its value. It is a mistake to imagine that every action is preceded by a judgement of value—such as 'This is good' or 'This is pleasant'. Even when such judgements do precede action, they are concerned with a vague image or abstract schema of the action; for the action itself is not yet real and is not yet known. And if we reduce things to their simplest elements, to their hard bony structure, the judgement of value succeeds action and does not precede it. The judgement of value has of course its effect on subsequent actions, but in the last resort criticism succeeds creation—in action as well as in the

other activities of the spirit. This is fatal to all intellectualistic theories of action, and even to hedonism so far as that is an intellectualistic theory. It is only the refined voluptuary—if it is anyone—who distinguishes the pleasures of things from the things themselves, and seeks the things for the sake of the pleasure. It is only the highly academic person—if it is anyone—who makes a list of the things which he considers good in themselves, examines the possible courses open to him in all their consequences, and then adopts the course which it seems to him will on the whole be likely to produce the greatest possible number of the things which he considers good. Ordinary human nature is very different from all this. Children and simple men, and I believe also heroes and saints, go very directly to the objects that they will. What they know is the situation, and in that situation the will—which may be of very different kinds—moves directly and surely to its own ends. And that is one reason why it is possible to be a good man without being a moral philosopher, just as it is possible to be a good poet and a poor critic, and even to be an acute thinker and a bad logician.

The next point that must be made is this. A volition is my volition, and it is my volition here and now. This statement is not intended to convey anything subtle, or to suggest that the individual is more than his activities. It presumes indeed, as common sense does, that the individual is the same in all his volitions, continually the same and continually different, but it does not seek to separate the sameness from the differences or to elevate it above the differences. It expresses merely the simple, obvious, and indeed almost tautologous truth, that I will what I will, I want what I want, I do what I do; or again, with even more emphasis, that it is always I who will what I will, want what I want, and do what I do.

Why should it be necessary to lay so much stress on this seemingly unimportant truth? For the reason that some philosophers, and following them many simple men, have imagined it to imply that all willing is selfish. The hedonists go farther still and, by a curious confusion of thought, pass —it has been noticed often—from 'I will what I will' to 'I will what pleases me', and from that to 'I always will my

own pleasure'. Nothing could be more preposterous as a piece of reasoning, and it is necessary only to state the argument to show its absurdity. 'I will what I will' is a statement so thin in meaning that we cannot derive any important conclusion from it. It is compatible with anything whatever being what I will, and it is ridiculous to infer from it that I can will only a certain type of thing. Even if it were true that my will is always selfish or always directed to my own pleasure, we could not infer that from the fact that my will is my will. And it is not true that my will is always selfish, and still less that it is always directed to my own pleasure. One might imagine that will began by being selfish, and became unselfish as it became moralised, but even that is not true. On the most elementary level the will, although it is not properly to be described as either selfish or unselfish, must be characterised as both, if we apply such categories at all. It may be self-regarding or it may be other-regarding. I desire food for myself—that may be called selfish. I also desire food for my children—that may be called unselfish. The will goes direct to its object, and that object may be food for myself or it may be food for other people. The desire for the safety of my offspring is as primitive and as instinctive as the desire for my own safety, and it is not true to say that it is always the latter which is the stronger.

It may be maintained that nevertheless what we desire is the pleasure which we anticipate from the safety of our offspring, and that this is true of all other-regarding desires and actions. But this is a theory which finds no justification whatever in the facts. It is the product of confused philosophical thinking. To imagine that the elemental man makes a distinction between the safety of his offspring and the pleasure he will derive from it, and that he pursues the former merely for the sake of the latter, is to credit him with intellectual activities of which he is entirely incapable. It is only a philosopher who could adopt so ridiculous a policy; and even a philosopher, if he could choose between the safety of his offspring and the pleasure he derives from it, would willingly sacrifice the pleasure to secure the safety. What we want as simple men is just certain things, things to eat, safety for ourselves and our friends, and we cannot say in

defiance of the facts that what we really want is the pleasure to be derived from these things. Still less can we rest such a preposterous conclusion on the bare and empty premiss that we always will what we will.

It would be equally possible and equally futile to show by an analysis of the simple act of will that it is necessarily and always unselfish, that it has in it all the qualities which are usually attributed to moral action. An action is no doubt my action, but what must it be to be an action? It is dissatisfaction with ourselves as we are; it is giving up ourselves to an ideal; it is in a sense self-denial and self-sacrifice. In every action we give up, we deny, we reject our actual self in favour of an ideal which is not yet real. All action is the realisation of an ideal which is not just myself as I am now. We abolish our actual self that a new self may come to be. We die in order that we may live. My action is mine, but the object of my action is never myself as I am now, it is always something other than myself. The one thing that cannot be the object of my will is my actual self, and my will is always unselfish in the sense that it seeks to produce something which is not I, something which I am not.

Such phrases are the very language of self-sacrifice, the very shibboleths of morality, and yet they describe every action so far as it is an action. But just because they describe every action, they do not say anything about any action which could distinguish it from any other. I will what I will—but my will is not selfish because it is my will. It is *what* I will which determines whether my action is selfish or unselfish, and the fact that I will it is compatible with my action being either one or the other. Similarly what I will is not myself as I am; I do not will what is but what is not, and what I will is consequently something other than my self. I always give myself up to an ideal, but this does not mean that my action is unselfish. Once again it is the nature of my ideal, it is *what* I will that determines whether my action is selfish or unselfish. It is just stupid to argue either for or against morality on the ground of characteristics which must be present in any action whatsoever.

We must remember that in an account of the simplest characteristics of action we have no right to use the words

'moral' and 'immoral' or even the words 'selfish' and 'unselfish' at all. It is not true that what I will, taken by itself, determines whether my action is selfish or unselfish. It is not merely what I will, but the spirit in which I will it, that determines the selfishness or the unselfishness of my action. And while we may truly regard what I will as different according to the spirit in which it is willed, we are at present considering what I will simply and abstractly without regard to the spirit in which it is willed. At the most elementary level of action there is no question of willing a thing in one spirit or another; and there is no question of selfishness or unselfishness. The use of these words is purely metaphorical and anticipates distinctions which arise only at a higher level. The selfishness or unselfishness of an animal or even of a child is only a shadow or image or anticipation of the developed distinctions within human action.

Our account is deficient in another respect as well. It suggests that what is willed is an ideal, a something not yet real and simply other than the actual self which wills. Yet the ideal is willed—subject to certain qualifications—only in so far as it is realised or made real. And while we may speak in a common-sense way as if what we willed were things, states and conditions of the external world and so on, yet strictly speaking what we will is an action which brings about (or itself is also) a state or condition of the external world. We do not will food. What we will is to eat food, and the eating is an action. Further, since we are assuming the self to be its own activities, the ideal which we will and realise may be said to be our self. It may perhaps be thought to be more than our self, but it is at least our self so far as it is our action. We give up or deny our actual self in favour of an ideal self which we make real. But the self which is denied and the self which is asserted or affirmed or realised are not merely different, for they are the same self. It is in this sense that all our life is a dying in order to live.

I do not think we can avoid this by saying that what we will are movements of our own body, and that a movement of our body is not an activity of our mind. The movement is not any movement, it is a willed movement, a willed movement which incidentally need not be confined to our own

bodies. And just as I cannot separate my self from my willings and knowings, so I cannot separate my willing from the willed movement which is its object. To will to move my arm is simply to move my arm. The willing does not precede the moving; it *is* the moving, although it is not the movement taken in abstraction as a purely physical event, and although in some cases of failure we may perhaps distinguish between what is willed and what is actually done. There may be another kind of willing which precedes the moving, I may desire or intend or get ready to move my arm without moving it—the interest of Messieurs Coué and Baudouin in this kind of willing produces grave defects in their theories, although not necessarily in their practice—but if we try to separate the actual willing to move from the moving, we find we are left with just nothing at all. We can no more separate our selves from our willed movements than we can separate our selves from our willings and knowings. And what we will is always our self, not our self as a thing or substance, but our self as an activity which is nothing apart from its object.

Whatever be the difficulties involved, it seems clear enough that willing is always self-denial and self-realisation, a giving up of the old self and a going on to the new. This is what is meant by saying that the self or spirit is a process or, better, an activity. It is not something which is, but something which becomes. It is not something given, but something which makes itself and is its own making. If it does not will in this double movement of self-denial and self-realisation, it is just nothing. To cease from willing—including that willing which is also thinking—is to cease to be. It is in activity alone that the self is and enjoys its being. And this activity is a continual being and not being, a continual becoming other than it is, a continual manifestation of sameness in and through differences. We maintain our life by effort, and there is no cessation of that effort. We cannot will not to will. We can be more or less active; we can will to wait upon life rather than to direct it; we can make our lives relatively full or relatively empty; but we cannot cease to will without also ceasing to be. We can no doubt will to destroy ourselves,

but even suicide is an action, and so long as we are at all we are always willing.

It is this double movement of self-denial and self-realisation which is the self-mediation or self-transcendence of the will. Volition is not a simple entity, nor is it made up of simple entities. However simple an action may be, it is never just immediate, nor is it a sum of bare immediates, which are what they are in isolation from one another. It always has a direction. It strains out of the past into the future. It turns away from an old self in favour of a new. It is a one in many, a sameness in difference, a synthesis of past and future into a living present. Every volition is a response to a given situation—a situation given relatively to it—and a changing response to a changing situation, but it is never a succession of merely momentary acts. The simplest volition is already a policy, adapting itself at every moment to the changing situation, but none the less a whole of which the parts are not merely external to one another. Its unity lies in itself, and is not derived from the fact that we anticipate it beforehand, or reflect upon it afterwards. If it is true of our human selves that 'we look before and after and pine for what is not', this transcendence of the moment is true not only of thought or of mere desire but of action or volition itself. A stroke at tennis, if regarded externally, may be resolved into a series of physical movements each of which ends as the next begins. But the same stroke as a conscious experience is one and indivisible, it is intelligible as a whole, and it is not intelligible as a sum of parts. Its unity does not depend upon an intellectual anticipation of its end at, or before, its beginning. Its unity lies deeper than that, in the very nature of the action itself. And the same is true not only of a separate stroke, it is true also of the game as a whole, and it may be true even of a human life. In human activity more than in anything else we can see that there is no antagonism between unity and multiplicity, between sameness and difference. There are many who deceive themselves by making these abstract distinctions, and then regarding them as separate entities whose relation to one another is wholly unintelligible. Even the assertion in abstract logic that every one must also be a many, and every many also

a one, is a little thin and unsatisfying, and seems sometimes to contain in itself a minimum of truth. It states one of those abstract principles which, just because they are relatively self-evident, are also relatively unimportant—if they are separated from the living experience in which alone they have meaning. But it is possible to see very clearly and vividly how unity manifests itself, and must manifest itself, in difference or multiplicity, when we follow intimately the unfolding of a great drama or a great argument, or again when we enter however imperfectly into the experience of a saintly life.

No doubt human life may fall into fragments, may become a victim to that multiplicity or incoherence which is the enemy of a unified life. Simon Peter alternately confesses and denies his Lord. The unity in difference is not something which is given to us; it must be won and maintained by a continual effort. Without effort we have something which is continuity rather than coherence. Yet in the humblest action effort is already present, and victory is already achieved. Action is not something given ready-made and whole, as the things of the physical world are supposed to be given. It is a self-creation, a synthesis of differences maintaining its oneness through time.

We may suppose also that as we sink in the scale of conscious life the unity becomes impoverished, although not disrupted; the differences diminish; consciousness becomes more and more of the moment merely; it transcends itself less and less; it contains in itself less memory of the past and less promise of the future. We can go a little way along this path in our experience of drowsiness or dreams. Beyond that and below that there is for us nothing but darkness; yet there may be below that a kind of consciousness which is relatively immediate, incapable alike of memory or anticipation as understood by us, and still more incapable of reflexion upon itself. It might perhaps be that such consciousness was a vivid and rich experience within a shorter time, and that we failed to apprehend or to remember it because of our slower rhythm, just as a wireless set can receive only those wave-lengths to which it is attuned. But that is speculation, and all we can say is that if there be such a consciousness, it is not impossible that we should enjoy it in

dreamless sleep,—and it is not impossible that such a consciousness might be found in low forms of life, or perhaps even below the level of life itself. Yet we as developed beings cannot bring such an experience into our waking consciousness, or remember its objects, or reflect upon it in the light of such a memory. If psycho-analysts give us any knowledge of what is unconscious relatively to our waking life, and not merely of something which was once conscious but is now forgotten, then it might be said that the unconscious which they explore is really a consciousness of this relatively immediate type. Yet even so they interpret it only by re-creating it as an ordinary conscious experience, or by reflexion upon it on the analogy of such an experience. And it may be wiser to reject all such speculations, and to recognise that such a fitful light is to us indistinguishable from darkness. The philosopher may enter into the mind of a philosopher, but he cannot enter into the conscious life of his dog. He may observe its movements, and classify them, and give them labels, and even predict their future course; but that is not to understand. He may have with it a sort of animal sympathy, for he too is an animal, but that is too dim and vague for analysis even in himself. And if we talk of entering into the experience of a cabbage, we are moving in the world of imagination rather than in the world of truth. The study of humbler forms of consciousness, whether in animals or in our own unconscious life, may have a value and interest in itself, and may throw some light upon our conscious life; but in the main it is speculative and uncertain, intelligible if at all only on the analogy of our conscious experience. We understand our developed experience only by enjoying and reflecting upon it, and the more developed and coherent it is, the more easy it is to understand. We do not understand it better, but worse, as it becomes incoherent and ineffective, or as it subsides into the empty unity of immediate feeling. It is intelligible as a coherent whole, and not as a sum of parts into which it can be analysed, or as the product of some undifferentiated experience out of which it is said to arise.

The unity in diversity of willing is very different from the unity in diversity of a physical process; and the physical

analysis of a willed movement is curiously irrelevant to the nature of the act of willing. I will to close my hand, or I close my hand—these are two ways of describing the same action, and distinguish it from a mere reflex action, which we should describe by saying that my hand closes. If we view the willed movement from without merely as a movement, we may say truly that it involves the movement of each of my fingers, that it involves the movement of the muscles of my arm, even that it involves certain physico-chemical processes—perhaps ultimately themselves a kind of movement—in my brain and nerves. The whole movement may be regarded as a sum of movements, but the volition cannot be regarded as a sum of corresponding volitions. I do not will to move this finger and that finger, I do not will to move this muscle and that muscle, and still less do I will the physico-chemical processes of my brain and nerves. Men could close their hands successfully long before they were aware of the existence of such processes. What I will is simply to close my hand, and that volition has no spatial parts, nor can it be divided up in any way corresponding to separate physical movements. It is an indivisible whole, intelligible as a whole and not as a sum of parts. To analyse the volition into separate physical movements is like analysing a thought into the words in which it is expressed, or the letters in which these words are written down. The analysis may be perfectly legitimate, but it is not an analysis of the thought in the one case or of the volition in the other. The same is equally true if we attempt to analyse thought itself, as is sometimes done, into the series of movements in the throat by means of which the words are or may be uttered.

The will to close my hand is one in spite of the spatial differences of what is willed: and it is one in spite of the fact that it may be considered as made up of separate volitions succeeding one another in time. I do not ordinarily will to close my hand a little bit, and then another little bit, and then another little bit. What I will I will as a whole, and the volition is itself one through time. So far as we can speak of the volition as divided up at all, the parts are intelligible as parts of the whole, and the whole is not intelligible as a sum of parts. It is not made one because we choose to think

of a series of things together as a whole. It is one in itself, and all differences within it spring from its own unity. We are almost tempted to say that time is irrelevant to it, at any rate the time whose parts are supposed to be external to one another. The volition always extends beyond what is being done at any moment, and we understand it, not by dividing it up into separate parts, but by considering it as itself an element in a wider volition, as the vehicle of a more extensive purpose. The closing of my hand is intelligible as part of an argument about the nature of goodness.

This does not mean that all analysis of the kind we have considered is merely worthless. A stroke at tennis is not intelligible as a sum of either spatial or temporal parts, but an analysis of these—external and abstract as it is—may help us to discover our errors and to improve our game. Indeed all reflexion is, as we have seen, external to that on which it reflects, even when it concerns itself—as spatial analysis does not—only with consciousness and its objects ; and all reflexion, by making spiritual activities into objects, distinguishes them from one another, and so places them outside one another. It thinks of them as occurring at a particular time, and it may be said perhaps that as it considers all times to be present before it, it tends to make time spatial ; and in regarding spiritual activities as objects it makes them external to one another and to their objects in something which may almost be called space, or at least in a time which is thought of as all present at once. Reflexion is ordinarily analysis into parts, and this is perfectly legitimate, if we do not substitute these abstractions for the reality which by them we seek to understand. The beauty of a piece of music is not capable of analysis, but if we analyse the music we can hear it again with a juster appreciation of its beauty. In a similar way, and subject to similar limitations, our most abstract analysis may be a help to the understanding of the life which we actually live. An act of will as an object reflected upon may seem to be made up of parts which are outside one another, but that is because it has ceased to be an act of will. If we wish to complete our understanding we must enter into the act of will in willing it, and in so doing we shall understand how all the diversities flow inevitably from the unity of the whole.

Yet even to say this is to speak abstractly. We do not have first the unity and then the diversity. The unity is not a blank or empty unity, but one which is rich in diversity. The unity is nothing apart from the diversity, it lives only in the diversity, and is the synthesis of the diversity. Perhaps it is truer to say that willing as a spiritual activity is an indivisible whole.

We are tempted to speak as if the unity of willing, or the diversity, or both, existed somehow outside of and apart from the action in which they live and are. We are tempted to speak of mind as somehow outside of all its processes, having them, holding them together, being the timeless condition of their being in time. Or at the least we are tempted to speak of it as a power or potentiality which somehow becomes manifest in actual living. Again, we find it difficult not to think that this power is more than a vague power of synthesis, that it has as it were a bias in a particular direction. When we say this we are already attributing to it its diversity, and making that diversity itself precede its manifestation in actual willing. We observe—as we say loosely—our own activities and those of others; and finding in them all a peculiar colouring, we speak of a man's native disposition or temper or temperament, as if it were a pre-existing thing which somehow issued in his thoughts and actions. We may indeed attribute that to his bodily constitution—which explains nothing—but even so we suppose such disposition or temper to exist perhaps before, and certainly outside, his actions. Similarly we speak of his habits or his character, and seem to imply that although these are somehow made by the man's life itself, and are capable of being changed by the same process as that which made them, yet at any time they have a definite existence outside his volitions and a determining influence upon them. Lastly, we speak of man as a creature of instincts and desires, as if he contained in himself and outside of his own actions an infinite mass of possible tendencies, having a separate existence of their own and capable of entering into his actions, being as it were the material upon which his will has to work and out of which his actions are made.

Such statements, as we have suggested, have their value so long as we remember that they are mythology and not science. They deal, not with real entities outside of action, but with characteristics of action itself. The timeless self is a name for that special unity or self-transcendence which is present in all action and in all thought. Instinct and temperament and character are names for what we may call regularities in action. So far as these regularities are common to all men and at least partially independent of experience, we ascribe them to human instincts or instinctive dispositions. So far as they are distinctive of individual men or types of men, we ascribe them to a special disposition or temper or temperament. So far as they are thought to be due to past activities, we ascribe them to acquired character or habit.

Regularity in action seems to be of two kinds, the natural and the acquired. If we try to put ourselves at the point of view of the experience which is being reflected upon, we find a genuine difference of this type. In both cases there seems to be an element of immediacy in the form of a kind of compulsion, or inevitableness, in the activity itself. In the natural regularity—that is in the activities ascribed to instinct or to natural disposition—this compulsion or inevitableness seems to have no sufficient explanation in the context of our spiritual life; it appears to be thrust upon us as the objects of sense are thrust upon us. We seem to have here an element of brute compulsion, which we cannot resolve wholly into an intelligible necessity like the intelligible necessity of thinking. In the acquired regularity—that is in the activities ascribed to habit or character—we find something rather different. The element of compulsion is becoming more like an intelligible necessity. The immediacy is being overcome. We do things more easily—we may even find it difficult not to do them—because of our previous efforts and our previous experience. This increased facility—like everything else in our spiritual life—is no doubt connected with bodily factors, but it seems to be due to something more than these. We are already faced with the characteristic of spiritual activity, that in it there is no repetition, the present is coloured by the past, and the whole is not a sum of parts, but is one throughout its parts and is somehow present in every part. There is

indeed a higher stage, a more intelligible necessity, when we have reflected upon our life, and will deliberately in the light of such reflexions; when the regularity of our activity is no longer due, as we say, to mere habit, but is part of a life which, besides being a whole, is conscious of itself as a whole and wills itself as a whole. It is then that the necessity of our action ceases to seem immediate, and in being mediated becomes an intelligible or rational necessity. The lower levels persist into the higher, and finite experience is perhaps never wholly intelligible or rational even in the best of men; but nevertheless the relatively immediate or brute necessity develops and expands into a relatively mediate or intelligible necessity. And we may note that from the beginning this necessity is felt, not merely as necessity, but as power or facility of action in a special direction; and as the necessity, by becoming mediated and intelligible, becomes more definitely necessity, it is also felt or enjoyed more definitely as power or facility of action, or in a word as freedom.

But these theories are carrying us too far. It is enough for the present to recognise this developing necessity, and to recognise also, as I think we must, that it is never merely immediate, never merely brute compulsion, since at any stage there is continuance through time, there is direction, there is rational synthesis of differences in response to a known situation. What we must add at the moment is that not only is there an internal diversity of volition inseparable from its unity, but there seems to be also what may be called an external diversity as well.

To will is also to reject. We have already seen that in willing we reject our actual self or our actual situation in favour of an ideal, and this rejection may even be violent, as for instance when we seek to get rid of something which is causing us discomfort or pain. But perhaps we may say that in any situation there are various possibilities, and that always as we will we are affirming our will against a background of possibilities which we might will and don't. It is not necessary to suppose that we are acutely conscious of these possibilities in detail, or that we distinguish them sharply from one another. Even when we will most intently and most

systematically, we may be all concentrated on what we will, and care little or nothing for what we might but do not will. It is often in such an experience that we have a special sense of mastery. And in instinctive action there is the same kind of experience although at a much lower level. Yet there seems to be always a vague consciousness of other possibilities which in willing this we reject, and in some developed experiences such consciousness is very definite and sometimes even painful. A willing which was not also, however vaguely, a rejecting would seem to be less than willing; just as a thinking which was not also a denying would seem to be less than thinking.

It may be that as we descend to more elementary levels of action this contrast tends to disappear. There can be no doubt that the possibilities before an agent vary both with the character of the agent and with the nature of the situation. A brutish nature may seem to be limited almost to the satisfaction of brute desires as they arise, and sometimes under the stress of great pain or intense desire man may become little better than a brute, blind to all things save one. Even then perhaps so long as there is consciousness, there is always a not-this as well as a this. And when we speak of any normal human life, even in very narrow circumstances, the possibilities open at any moment may be called manifold and even infinite. If it is not possible for me to do anything except sit and think, yet how many are the ways of thinking! Even when a particular action is, as we say, forced upon us, even if we are facing a firing party or lying down and awaiting death, the very simplest of acts may take an infinity of forms. The differences may be unimportant to a man who is punishing crimes or collecting statistics, but this does not alter the fact that they are there.

Perhaps we may say, not merely that we are, however vaguely, conscious of possible actions which in willing we reject, but also that any moment there are in us actual desires or impulses which are inhibited in our act of willing. These desires may be of all degrees of vagueness, and they need not be sharply distinguished from one another, although at times they may become very definite and their inhibition a matter of effort and conflict. Desires seem to be mere

desires because they are prevented from being realised in action, and it is ordinarily by willing something else that they are so prevented. The possibilities open to us depend, not merely on the nature of the situation, but upon the nature of our actual desires. The world stimulates us in many ways; it seems to call to us with many voices, and these voices are the echo of our own desires. To give ear to that clamorous multitude would be to run in all directions at once. We sometimes almost do so in the face of either a practical or a theoretical difficulty, when we have the experience which is popularly known as 'dithering'. But normally we close our ears, we take a decision, we pursue a line, we think and we will. There are all sorts and degrees of this concentration, which is the condition of success alike in thought and will. In the highest forms it involves consciousness of anything which is likely to interfere with our advance and readiness to adapt ourselves to changing circumstances, but even in the idlest fancies of our waking dreams and in the most casual of our trivial actions we seem to be rejecting other possibilities and inhibiting other desires.

There is a danger that statements of this kind may become mythological, and we must return to this question when we discuss the elementary nature of goodness and badness in our next chapter. Such statements are, however, not intended to advocate determinism or indeterminism, to set an arbitrary and unmoved will against desire, or to suggest that what we reject is a series of different possibilities clearly envisaged and separately desired. What is rejected is perhaps normally vague and confused and ill-defined, but there seems to be present some sort of desire, or desires, whether vague or determinate, which in our willing we reject.

It is this that we have called the external diversity of action. But it is not really external. It falls within the one experience, and, so far as it is desire, within the one will. The externality exists only for an abstract reflexion. Willing like every spiritual activity is what it is within a wider activity which is not the sum of its parts and whose differences are within itself.

CHAPTER VI

THE IMMEDIATE GOOD

If we were able to conceive of a spiritual being whose activities were just immediate, and if we attempted to understand the good and the bad as these would be for so narrow an experience, it might seem that for such a being whatever it willed was good and that to be good was to be willed. At any moment it would apprehend a momentary situation, it would feel towards it in a certain way, and it would act in a momentary response. At the next moment it would have the same kind of experience, but there would be no connexion, and certainly no connexion of which it was aware, between any one experience and any other. It would have no memory of the past and no anticipation of the future. There would be in its experience no distinction between memory and perception and imagination, between artistic contemplation and philosophical or historical thinking. Similarly there would be no distinction between desire and intention and volition, or between economic and moral willing. Its whole experience would be a this-here-now in which all the distinctions of our conscious life would be eliminated. We could say of it merely that it knew, felt, and willed. It would live entirely in the moment, and what it willed in the moment would at the moment be its good.

Such a conception is the conception of a limit, and is intelligible only if we take it as the conception of a limit. All activity however brief has a duration in time, and there can be no activity at a point of time any more than there can be a colour in a point of space. No activity is merely immediate; it has a direction, and it has differences within itself. A this-here-now is a this-here-now only in relation to, and in distinction from, a that-there-then. A simple or immediate activity is not an activity, and a simple or immediate experience would not be experience. In order to retain in the conception any sort of plausibility at all, we

have to speak of a hypothetically immediate experience as containing in itself the differences of knowing, willing, and feeling, and to regard it as directed to an object or objects.

In the case of such a simple being it would seem difficult and arbitrary to say that its activity was good, since the activity would have no other characteristic than that of being directed to an object. The goodness would fall on the side of the object as being the object of that activity. When we try to think about a merely immediate activity, we find ourselves thinking of its object, and its object alone, as good. This seems to be because goodness demands contrast, and the activity, since we think of it as immediate, is something merely in itself and cannot be contrasted with any other activity. Its object is, however, thought of as one among many objects which can be thought; and this particular object, as the only one which is also the object of the immediate will, is thought of as therefore good.

It is certainly plausible to regard the object of the immediate will as good just because it is the object of the immediate will. What we desire—to speak the language of common sense—is the apparent good, and it is an apparent good just because we desire it. It is, I believe, an error to regard such an apparent good as the really good, to consider it as beyond criticism, to regard all goods as goods only because they happen to be the object of a momentary or contingent desire. To hold such a view is to go to the opposite extreme from the doctrine of Mr. Moore, and is in some ways, if I may speak dogmatically, an even worse form of error. Mr. Moore, in his passion for the objectivity of goodness, seeks to divorce it altogether from human nature and from human will. The opposite view would identify it with whatever anyone happened to want, and so would completely banish any pretence of objectivity altogether. In the first case the good is the object of an immediate intuition, and in the second the object of an immediate will. Both views agree in accepting some sort of immediacy, and on the level of immediacy they are irreconcilable; but the problem of ethics, with which we are concerned is just this: whether the view that goodness is objective, and the view that it is relative to human will, can be reconciled, by recognising that

willing—and indeed all spiritual activity—is not immediate but self-mediating and self-transcendent, that it is in short a spiritual activity and not a thing. Yet whatever be our belief in the objectivity of goodness, it seems at the outset a little inhuman to deny that if a thing is desired it is so far good, and it seems also at any rate plausible to say that in the first instance men think things good because they desire them, and do not desire them because they think them good. Hence if all experience were purely immediate, it might seem that whatever was at the moment willed would at the moment be good.

Yet it would be truer to say that for such an experience nothing would be good at all. Good and evil are polar opposites, neither of which has any meaning apart from the other. For a being to whom nothing was false, nothing would be true; and for a being to whom nothing was bad, nothing would be good. Contrast and opposition is the essence of spiritual experience and of human value. From the very beginning we must have the opposition of good and evil, and this implies differentiation and the overcoming of mere immediacy. If the good is what is willed, the evil must be what is rejected; and there can be no good or evil, except for a will which does not merely will the object positively, but in willing also rejects. It is only for the thought which denies as well as affirms, that there can be a distinction between the true and the false. And it is only for the will which rejects as well as wills, that there can be a distinction between the good and the bad. Such a will is not merely immediate; it contains differences and contrasts within itself.

We have seen already that willing cannot be merely immediate; that it is always both self-affirmation and self-denial; that in willing now we do not will what is but what is not, we reject an actual and affirm an ideal self. And it might be thought that what in willing we reject is just the actual, as opposed to the ideal, self. The present self or the present situation as actual would then be evil, and the future self or the future situation would then be good. This is to some extent true when our will is primarily negative, as when we seek to rid ourselves of present discomfort or pain. But

it would be difficult to believe that the present is always evil and the future always good. Even if we say that the present in being rejected becomes the past, and it is the present as rejected, and therefore as past, that is evil, it is hard to believe that the past is necessarily evil. The present which in being rejected becomes past is not to be conceived as something static and given; it is itself activity, and as such it may be good. The present is not a competitor with the future which is to be, but rather its parent and its friend; and we do not look back upon our past as necessarily evil, but rather as one with our present good. Evil is not merely past good. Good and evil alike must be in and through the present, and must be, if they are to be at all, in the present activity itself. We cannot separate them off by making one past and the other present, or one present and the other future. To do so is to look upon activities just as given objects each of which is outside the other in time. But an activity is more than an object or series of objects, it transcends the moment and is one through time, and as an activity it is capable of having antagonisms and conflicts within itself. It is this alone which can give rise to the opposition of good and evil, and there could be no such opposition, if good were at one time and evil at another.

Good and evil arise in so far as the one will can be divided against itself. The good will overcomes this division or antagonism or incoherence, and is the synthesis of differences in one coherent whole. Yet there must be some sort of unity even in the evil will—and here, as throughout the earlier chapters, we are considering only economic good and evil—there must be genuine continuity or oneness for the will to be divided or incoherent, and therefore so far bad. The conflict cannot be a conflict of two wills which are just different wills. If they were just different wills there would be no such conflict. The possibility of such conflict depends on the possibility of differences within the one will; it depends, that is to say, upon the character of the will as an activity which is not immediate or simple but admits of differences within itself.

The conflict forces itself upon our attention by the presence of actual desires opposed to what we actually will. I am

tired and desire to rest, but I go on working. Both the desire to rest and the will to work are mine. It is only because I am one throughout my activities that there can be this conflict at all. And while it is hard to say what such a desire is, it seems to be a kind of willing. It is more than a consciousness of our physical condition; it is more than a consciousness of what is desired; and nothing could be more ridiculous than to say that it was a consciousness that we desired. It seems to be conative and not merely cognitive, and although it might appear to be the most simple of all conations, it involves a contrast between the ideal and the actual, between what is desired and what is. It could not be what it is except as an element in a wider experience which is not simple. It does not issue in action (if it is expressed in movements, these are not the movements desired); and it is merely a desire as opposed to an actual volition, just because it does not issue in action. But what prevents it from issuing in action, what makes it mere desire, is that it is an element in a wider activity which at the moment wills something else. It is inhibited or restrained by a wider will which in willing rejects. It may indeed remain a mere desire because of the situation—I am thirsty, but there is no water to drink. But even here, at least in men, our consciousness transcends the moment, and it is because of our knowledge of the wider situation that we will something else, and refuse to give ourselves up to mere desire. The contrast between mere desire and actual volition arises within an experience which is not just immediate. It may be that in some special experiences like very intense thirst, desire might, as it were, become the whole soul, or at least the whole will; but, ordinarily speaking, if desire is to be present, desire and actual volition must both be present in the one experience at the same time. And this is probably true, if we examine it closely enough, even in experiences where desire seems to blot out everything else.

In this sense desire stands to willing as imagining does to knowing. Imagining is a kind of knowing and is actual, but its object is an unreal object, and this distinguishes it from the knowing (in a narrower sense) whose object must be real. Similarly, desiring is a kind of willing and is actual,

but its object is an unreal object, and this distinguishes it from the willing (in a narrower sense) whose object must be real. Desire, it may be thought, can be directed towards something real; it may be desire for water actually seen as well as for water merely imagined. But if we consider it strictly, desire is desire to do something, desire for example to drink, and so long as it remains desire its object is unreal. Similarly, we may imagine something about something real, *e.g.* we may imagine the Thames flowing uphill, but the object strictly is the whole thing imagined, and that is unreal. That is why we may be tempted to speak of desire as a kind of willing in imagination.

There seems to be little doubt that we may refrain from drinking in spite of the presence of a conscious desire to drink; and that conscious desire, just because it is mere desire, is accompanied in our ordinary experience by a will to do something else. The presence of such a desire as a desire may be compatible with our actual willing, just as we may will two things at once. It may be compatible with our actual willing—although the compatibility is somewhat perilous—even when the realisation of the desire in action would be incompatible with our actual willing. But so soon as our desire begins, as it undoubtedly may, to thwart or hamper or weaken our actual will to do, then it becomes evil relatively to our willing. Or more truly the whole willing, including the desiring, is bad or incoherent in so far as there is this conflict, and it is good in so far as this conflict is overcome. It is in this elementary conflict that we must find the germ of good and evil. Badness belongs to the divided will; and if we attribute it to the desire, we do so only in so far as the desire is, or may be, a source of division and incoherence in our willing.

Can we say that desire is always present in an actual volition and that desire is always overcome so far as there is actual volition? Desire would seem to be present in all volition in so far as all volition goes beyond the moment towards that which is not yet real. And in some cases desire definitely precedes the volition; we desire to do something and then we do it. Here there seems to be a transition from desire to action. The desire itself may be very indefinite,

and there are moments when we brood upon a situation, when we feel emotions and experience impulses of a vague and confused kind which ultimately flower into action, as at other times they may flower into creative imagination or thinking. This is the experience so well described by Signor Croce in his writings on æsthetics. It is relatively immediate and chaotic, and we are inclined to describe it as mere feeling or mere desire. But one action may develop into another without necessarily or even ordinarily sinking back into this relative immediacy of mere desire, and even in this relative immediacy there would seem to be some sort of direction, some sort or kind of willing. We must distinguish conscious desire, which is some kind of volition and is in some way definite and actual, from desire in Signor Croce's sense of a possible volition, which is merely possible and not actual at all. When we speak of desire as merely possible volition, we seem to be going behind an actual experience to some sort of limit. And a limit of this kind is not anything real.

On the other hand willing seems always, like thought, to have a negative as well as a positive side. When there is a conflict with desire, this negative side becomes very marked; in doing what we will we at the same time prevent the desire from being realised in action, even although the desire itself may persist. This seems to be a conspicuous example of what is involved in all volition. Our experience is never simple. Even when there is nothing that would ordinarily be called a conflict, other desires seem to be present in the penumbra of consciousness, and they remain desires because we will something else. If this is true, will (in the narrower sense) is the overcoming of desire, even when the conflict is negligible and the victory complete. Here we might find the beginning of goodness in the triumph of will over mere desire, and at least the possibility of badness in the desires which are prevented from developing into action and introducing an actual incoherence into the act of will.

Perhaps we may say that there are always present actual vague desires which in willing are rejected or prevented from issuing in action. If that is so, willing is always to some extent a conflict, and so far as in willing we reject or inhibit, we may say that willing is always so far the triumph of good

over evil. But such considerations may seem a trifle academic, so long as we are barely conscious of the conflict. It is when the conflict becomes acute that the difference between good and evil is forced upon our attention. Good and evil arise only from a will which is not immediate, which admits of differences and of divisions within itself. For the desire which opposes the will and the will which overcomes the desire are not merely external to one another; and the conflict is a conflict within a will which is essentially one.

The will which overcomes desire is not to be thought of as something just different from, or opposed to, desires. It is the same will which is present in all desires and in all actions. To desire is itself in some way to will. As we have already recognised, there seems to be a kind of brute compulsion in some desires; but this is true also of some actions, although as consciousness develops we may be able to prevent desires from becoming actions, even if we cannot abolish them as desires. Actual willing is neither the victory of the strongest desire nor the arbitrary preference of one desire by a will which is itself without desire. We are always tempted to regard an activity as made up of little bits which are just external to one another, whether we regard these bits merely as desires one of which prevails, or whether we regard will as a bit of a special kind which is set over against and controls the desires. We are always in danger of being misled by mechanical and spatial metaphors, but we must endeavour to keep clear before us the principle that the will must be one throughout all its different manifestations, and that if we forget this our account will be of something quite unreal.

The will is bad or incoherent so far as it is divided against itself, and it is good or coherent so far as this division is overcome. The object of will is good in so far as it is set against something else which we do not will, something which at the moment of willing this we cannot will and must reject. And this something is bad only in so far as it is either forced upon us by circumstances or is itself the object of will or desire, and is thus a genuine rival to the object of our actual will. The goodness or badness of things is dependent on the nature of the will which wills them.

We are in all this considering a relatively momentary con-

sciousness; and we are ignoring the fact that the situation stretches beyond the momentary situation, and that an observer, knowing the wider situation, might judge the consequences of what was willed to be disastrous to the agent who willed. We are restricting ourselves arbitrarily to the simple willing in the simple situation as that is known to the agent, and we are attempting, here or elsewhere, to understand value by reference to the agent's own will and knowledge. Within these narrow limits we may say that the good is what is willed and the bad what is rejected; and that the will is bad so far as it is divided against itself, and is good so far as the division is overcome, and the willing, whatever be the differences within it, becomes a coherent whole.

Such a judgement is the reflective judgement of an external critic. It is concerned with what is good and bad for or in the agent. In order that there may be good or bad, not merely for or in the agent, but to the agent, there must be some sort of reflective judgement in the agent himself. To recognise the goodness or badness, the coherence or incoherence, of his own will, he must turn back and reflect upon his own willing. In order to recognise the goodness of what he wills, he must contrast what he wills with that which in willing he rejects.

Sharp distinctions of this kind would not indeed be present in an elementary consciousness. The division of the will is recognised presumably in what we may call feeling, a feeling of discomfort and inefficiency, and its triumph over divisions in a feeling of comfort and efficiency. It is this which renders plausible the view that the good is the pleasant and the bad the painful. In an elementary consciousness there is presumably no clear distinction between the object and the activity, the willing and what is willed. The goodness of the object as distinct from the activity is probably first realised only when we desire something which owing to the circumstances we cannot will, *e.g.* when we desire to drink and there is no water. Here we have a distinction between desire and will, a consciousness of desire, and a contrast between the object desired and something else, the pain or inconvenience which we seek to reject. It is better

however to avoid complications, and to recognise simply that the good and the bad are apprehended as what we consciously will and consciously reject, and that this apprehension is far from being a matter of clear distinctions and reflective analysis. It is difficult—and within our present limits it is impossible—to give an adequate account of the first confused processes of reflexion by which we sort out good from bad, just as it is difficult to give an account of the first confused processes of reflexion by which we sort out subject and object, appearance and reality, and so on. Nevertheless it would appear that as soon as there is a judgement of value there is something more than mere willing, and that the judgement of value, so far as it is a judgement, succeeds the willing and does not precede it. This judgement of value must be some kind of reflexion, just as much as the judgement which distinguishes appearance from reality and subject from object. And it must be continuous with the later reflexion by which we try to make clear to ourselves what it is that we really think.

In this respect the judgement of goodness or badness is not unique, but is on the same level as judgements of beauty and even of truth. When we judge something to be beautiful, we are not merely exercising the creative imagination but we have begun to reflect; and when we judge something to be true, we are not merely thinking but thinking about thinking, recognising for example a difference between what we think and the real world. Yet elementary judgements of truth and beauty are much more simple and confused and relatively immediate than any account of them which we offer in our logic or æsthetic. It is this fact which tempts men to reduce them all to immediate intuition, to regard them as ultimate, and to maintain that no further account of their nature can be given. Yet even this is itself an account of their nature; it states what they are to further reflexion and not what they are to themselves. The nature of the judgement of value, like that of any judgement, is not transparent to any casual reflexion upon it, although it has a certain intelligibility in itself as thinking, and although reflexion upon any judgement is imperfect understanding of that judgement, until the judgement itself is re-thought in the light of reflexion. Mr.

Moore believes that the judgement of goodness is an immediate apprehension of an unanalysable quality present in or belonging to the objects which we judge, but even he does not maintain that this is obvious to every one at the first glance. On the contrary he appears to believe that all previous philosophers failed to apprehend this even as a possibility. It is not to be supposed that men who make true judgements of value are aware of the nature of what they are doing, and the fact that they are not so aware is no objection to any philosophical account of the judgement of value, whether it be an account like that of Mr. Moore or like that which is accepted here. A physicist or a physiologist, in describing what took place in riding a bicycle, would describe something of which the rider himself might be wholly unaware. And every philosopher, whatever be his theory, must, in describing judgements of value or indeed any judgements, find in them distinctions which were not consciously present to the mind of the person who judged.

It may be that there is an immanent judgement of value in all our imagining and thinking and willing. It would certainly be hard to maintain that the artist as an artist had no notion of beauty, that the thinker as a thinker had no notion of truth, that the practical man as practical had no notion of goodness. Imagining and thinking and willing, each of these is striving to be itself and enjoys its striving. It is conscious of success or failure in what we may call some kind of feeling. In striving to be itself it is guided by some sort of immanent ideal, the ideal of beauty or truth or goodness. Yet the reflective or critical judgement of value is different from the creative act, it follows upon it, and it could have no content apart from previous activity. It brings an already present ideal into reflective consciousness. The judgements of the mere abstract theorist are wholly worthless. Criticism is dependent on creation, and creation is curiously independent of criticism. Words like ' implicit ' and ' explicit ' tell us very little, but if we are justified at all in using them, we may say that the critic, even in simple judgements of value, makes explicit what was only implicit in the creative act. We make and then we judge. Even if there was some sort of judgement present in the making, it was not clear to

itself as judgement. It was when God had made the world that He saw that it was good.

Similarly a philosophical account of the judgement of value is a sort of double reflexion, a turning back upon the judgement which was itself a turning back upon the creative activity which it judged. And the philosophical theory is also making explicit what was only implicit in the judgement of value, as the judgement of value made explicit what was only implicit in the creative act. Yet the philosophical theory may none the less be a true account of the judgement of value, as the judgement of value may be a true judgement of the activity which it judges. Here as always we find in spirit, not a succession of immediate events each of which is complete within itself, but a living and developing activity, whose parts—if we may call them so—are what they are in and for the whole.

The distinction of good and evil, while due to the nature of the will which wills them, is, I suggest, apprehended only in a reflective judgement which follows upon action, and arises properly only for a being which transcends itself and is capable of reflecting upon its own activity, of making itself an object to itself. We have discussed this on an elementary level for the sake of simplicity, and we have found that in mere immediacy there is no goodness or badness, that goodness and badness can arise only when one spirit manifests itself in a divided will and in a thinking which can turn back upon its own willing. This is the minimum without which goodness and badness cannot genuinely be, even if it be possible to find something analogous to them at still lower levels. But philosophical reflexion on this sort of experience must necessarily make sharp and definite what in the experience itself is vague and confused. Such an experience as we have tried to describe would be wholly incapable of understanding any philosophical or psychological account of itself. Hence it is necessary to regard our account as an arbitrary simplification of our developed experience rather than as an account of an actual and elementary experience which is perhaps indescribable. And we must remember that even the relatively immediate experience which we have tried to describe could not be what it is except as an element in a

wider experience. To regard it as something self-contained is to mistake an abstraction for the reality. Yet we may perhaps hope to find in our concrete experience the principles which we have tried to make clear by a preliminary simplification. Even on this elementary level we have found that activity and value can be only for a spirit which is self-transcendent, which goes beyond the mere moment, and which turns back and reflects upon itself. The question before us is whether as this process develops and becomes enriched, as the activity becomes consciously one through time, and as we reflect on an ever wider self and wider world, we shall find the character of the good more intelligible, and discover that although it is always relative to actual will, it is more than the activity of the moment and more than the object of a contingent and momentary desire or will.

Every theory of goodness necessarily transcends immediacy. It is an endeavour to escape from the merely momentary experience, and in a very special and conspicuous way it stands back from life and reflects upon it as a whole. A theory of goodness is possible only for a creature which is more than a simple momentary experience or a sum of simple momentary experiences. And it seems that for such a creature goodness cannot be found in anything that is just momentary or immediate. If it could be so found it must be found in immediate volition or in immediate feeling or in some sort of object apprehended by immediate intuition. We cannot leave the question of the immediate good without at least a summary discussion of these different possibilities.

We have already discussed immediate volition, and we have found theoretically that volition cannot be immediate, and that good and bad can arise only in a volition which has differences within itself, and in a self which is capable of some sort of reflexion upon itself. The same thing is true in practice. As human beings we cannot rest in the moment, we live in a time which is more than a mere present. Time will not wait for us, and we cannot ignore time by forgetting our past and refusing to anticipate our future. It is a matter of the most elementary experience that to follow mere impulse is for man, even in so far as he can approximate to doing so,

to involve himself in disaster. We live in a world which stretches beyond the moment and is known to do so, and we cannot in acting ignore the consequences of our present action. In the world as we know it we are moved by different and conflicting impulses and desires, and it is because we are so moved that we reflect upon the nature of what is good. The mere fact that we consider whether or not we should be guided by mere impulse, puts us forever out of the class of beings who can be so guided. We can indeed refrain from thinking and from planning, and can attempt to satisfy our merely passing desires. But no man can do this completely, and even in so far as he decides to avoid reflexion and to live by impulse, he has already ceased to do so. For the man who is following impulse on principle is no longer moved by impulse but by principle. His will transcends the moment, he has already a plan of life, and in the fulfilling of that plan he is hoping to find his good. Whatever value we attach to momentary spontaneity we attach to it as consistent with a wider willing which extends beyond the moment. Our immediate impulse is the expression of a transcendent will.

The theory which seeks to find goodness in immediate feeling is the theory of hedonism in its various forms. The good and the only good is pleasure. The bad and the only bad is pain.

We need not attempt to examine hedonism in detail, partly because the theory has been argued to death, and partly because it lacks serious support in philosophy at the present time. It has a certain plausibility which will always secure for it support among those who reflect superficially, and it can hardly be doubted that it expresses some sort of truth in a confused way. There is a great deal of obscurity about the nature of pleasure, but if pleasure is merely a feeling, most men would admit that they desire and consider good, not merely the feeling, but the things which arouse the feeling, and the feeling itself seems to vary in quality and in value with the things which arouse it. It is hard to separate even such a pleasure as the pleasure of eating chocolate from the taste of the chocolate and the sensations which accompany it ; and in general it is at least as true to say that

we get pleasure in things because we desire them, as to say that we desire things solely because we desire the pleasure to be got from them. The desire for food is an elementary desire, present long before we distinguish between food and the pleasure which it gives, and it is highly artificial to say that food is never desired except as a means to pleasure. It is only the few who are genuine voluptuaries; and though many men may seek what are called pleasures, though they may be interested mainly in wine, women, and song, it is because they have a healthy desire for these things that they find pleasure in them. If a man really cares for nothing but pleasure, if he is sufficiently sophisticated to consider at every moment whether he is having pleasure or not, he is practically certain to be of all men the most miserable. On this level the happy men are the men who want some thing or things very intensely, and who are able to get, and to go on getting, what they want. The pursuit of pleasure is not the way to either success or happiness, and is altogether too cold and calculating for the average man. He prefers even at the lowest to follow his impulses and to let his emotions take their course, without enquiring too closely into the pleasure which they may be supposed to bring.

Perhaps all activity so far as unimpeded or successful or coherent is also pleasant, but even if the pleasure can be distinguished from the activity, it is a ludicrously intellectualistic account of action to suppose that we always distinguish between the activity and the pleasure, and pursue the activity for the sake of the pleasure. If we do not make this distinction in practice, it is very hard to see how hedonism can be justified. As soon as hedonism becomes explicit, it begins to get into difficulties.

What we are concerned with here is, however, not the refutation of hedonism, but simply the question of how far it is possible for hedonism to maintain that the only good is the immediate feeling of pleasure. The theory seems to hold that pleasure either is or ought to be a guide to our actions. But pleasure as immediate feeling, as actually felt, is so far from stimulating us to action that it rather inclines us to remain just as we are. Yet it disappears, if we seek to rest in it or to enjoy it. It is present pain rather than present

pleasure which stimulates us to action, yet to say that all action is merely an attempt to get rid of present pain would be a very one-sided account of action. It seems rather to be the future pleasure as imagined which stimulates us to action. I have already suggested that such a view is intellectualistic, one-sided, and even false, but such as it is, it has already given up the idea that the good is just something which can be immediately felt. The pleasure which we seek is not now, it is not immediate, and it is not felt. It is a pleasure about which we think. No doubt our thinking about it may itself be pleasant, but that is not a reason for action, it is rather a reason for continuing to think. And if the pleasure which we seek, and which is the motive of our action, is a pleasure which is not present but future, and not felt but thought about, why should we suppose that we are moved by a momentary pleasure at all? It is obvious that the enjoyment of a momentary pleasure may lead to increase of pain. I may enjoy the pleasure of hitting a stronger man, but the painful consequences may far outweigh the momentary pleasure. Hence if I am already going beyond momentary feeling and thinking of a future pleasure, why should I confine my thinking to the pleasure of a moment? It is only reasonable to contemplate a greater stretch of future time, to set this pleasure against other pleasures and this pain against other pains. When this happens, we are already seeking not a momentary pleasure but a sum of pleasures, pleasure as it is spread through a whole life, or it may be even a sort of happiness which seems to be something more than a sum of momentary pleasures. At any rate what we seek is not something which is just felt and just now, it is something which we apprehend in thought and seek to realise in action, which we grasp as reasonable beings and not as mere creatures of feeling. And we find historically that the theory of hedonism develops, by a kind of internal and unconscious dialectic, into the view that the happiness which we should seek, not because it is felt, but because it is thought of as good, cannot be restricted to our own lives, that we should seek the happiness of others, the greatest happiness of the greatest number, and so on. If reason is to be the judge and not momentary feeling, why should reason prefer our own

happiness to that of another simply because it is ours? Whether such an advance is legitimate it is not here necessary to enquire. It is enough for us to observe that hedonism, which is from the first a thought and not an immediate feeling, cannot make mere immediate feeling the only guide of life. As it seeks to make itself more explicit and to adjust itself to the facts of experience, it moves farther and farther away from its original starting-point. The advances which it makes are certainly often supported by the grossest confusions of thought, but perhaps it is the inherent logic of experience which drives it towards the truth. We may be able to move in our own way along a similar path with, it is to be hoped, a greater consistency and a clearer understanding of what it is that we are doing.

It may be added that hedonism has not always distinguished between the theory that men always pursue pleasure and the theory that it is reasonable always to pursue pleasure. The first theory is one of fact, and as a statement of fact appears to be false. The second theory seems to rest—although its supporters were not always aware of this—on some kind of intuition which may almost be called moral. It seems to maintain that it is good, or right, or reasonable, or a duty, or an obligation, to pursue pleasure—whether momentary or lasting pleasure, whether our own pleasure or that of another, does not greatly matter. If hedonism does not mean this, it is hard to see what it does mean. And if this is a moral intuition, there are other moral intuitions which have at least as much right to be heard.

Intuitionism as a theory of goodness seems, like hedonism, to start from something immediate, something which we may almost call feeling, but it recognises that men have moral feelings which are distinct from feelings of pleasure or pain. We feel that a thing is right or wrong, just as we feel that it is pleasant or unpleasant. For the hedonist this distinction between two kinds of feeling is something to be explained away; yet in so far as he asserts that it is good to seek pleasure, he seems himself to be making just such a distinction, he seems to be appealing to some sort of moral intuition which is not itself a feeling of pleasure. Of this however

he was apparently unconscious until it was made clear by Mr. Sidgwick, who sought to combine the two theories into one. In any case the theory of the hedonist was concerned to show, not so much that the good was immediately apprehended, as that it was itself an immediate feeling. The theory of the intuitionist, while maintaining that goodness is unique and not to be confused with pleasantness, was vitally concerned to show that it was apprehended by an immediate intuition. In the one case the emphasis is on the immediacy of what is apprehended. In the other it is on the immediacy of the apprehension.

Here again we need not spend time either on the general plausibility or the general weakness of the theory. An insistence on immediate intuition may strengthen moral fervour, but by its very nature it can hardly develop moral insight, and the hedonists had at least the practical advantage of being more interested in what was good than in how it was apprehended. It may be maintained that hedonism by departing from its narrow starting-point, and by insisting on the utilitarian watchword 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number', succeeded in improving human action, if not in advancing human thought. And it is doubtful how far such a contention could be maintained in regard to intuitionism, which lends itself rather to the preservation of an existing morality than to the discovery of new moral truths.

What we are concerned with here is the alleged immediacy of the moral judgement. We do not ask whether there are true moral judgements, but whether, if there are true moral judgements, we can be satisfied to regard them as merely immediate or intuitive. We think it fair to regard intuitionism as being concerned with moral good, because even when it departs widely from the simple view of conscience with which it starts, it still regards the good as something which 'ought to exist'. Hence in this context we may use 'right' and 'wrong' as a substitute for 'good' and 'bad'.

The view in its simple form is that we know actions to be good or bad, right or wrong, by a direct and immediate intuition. But this may mean three different things. Firstly, it may mean that we know separate individual actions to be right or wrong. Secondly, it may mean that we know certain

kinds of action to be right or wrong. And thirdly, it may mean that we know some sort of principle of goodness by which we must judge all actions to be right or wrong. There might therefore be three kinds of intuition, which we may call individual intuitions, general intuitions, and universal intuitions.

I confess that of the three I regard the first type or the individual intuition as having the most plausibility. In a sense the judgement of the individual action is ultimate. This action like every other action is unique, it is different from every other action, it occurs in its own individual context, in its own place in the history of a life. We cannot judge it by mere rules or principles; we cannot prove that it is right or wrong; we must judge it by a judgement as unique and individual as the individual action itself. The moral judgement is just as intuitional as the æsthetic judgement, and moral intuitionism of this type, in spite of the disfavour into which it has fallen, is clearly endeavouring to express something which is genuinely true.

Where it is in error is in taking such judgements as merely immediate, as immune from criticism, as isolated from the rest of our judgements and the rest of our experience. To maintain this seriously is to destroy the possibility of progress in moral understanding, and to fall into a welter of chaos and of contradictions. It is easy for the opponents of the theory to show that men have quite different intuitions in regard to what seem to be the same acts. The same men have different intuitions at different times. If they have been brought up strictly, they may even feel that certain actions are wrong which to the best of their belief they really think to be right. It certainly seems to be possible to have a greater and a less insight into the rightness and the wrongness of moral actions, and to attain to a greater insight by a wider experience and by some kind of reflective thought. Otherwise we shall be bound to accept the view that the barbarous, cruel, and indecent practices of savages, which they believe to be right, are just as right as everything which we consider to be the mark of the morally good man in our more highly developed and gentler civilisation. The person who has actually done or is actually doing the action is presumably the person best fitted to intuit its moral value. If

this be so, then we shall be compelled to accept as moral many actions which seem to us to be wholly evil. If it be not so, then we have contradictory intuitions of the same act and no possibility of trying to reconcile them.

However much we may, on a common sense level, believe in intuition or conscience, we do not believe that one man's intuition is just as good as another's. In practice, we believe that the man who has led a good life, who has had a wide experience, who has a knowledge of men and things and a wide human sympathy, who has full knowledge of the particular circumstances and personages involved and no particular interest or grudge likely to affect his judgement—we believe that the judgement of such a man is better than that of a man of lower type, of narrower experience, and of less knowledge and sympathy, especially if the latter is himself directly interested in the situation in question. We do not really regard intuition as a miraculous gift which is simply born with us, and is completely independent of our experience, our thinking, our knowledge, and our character. Our intuition, like every other activity, has its value, and indeed its character, from its place in a wider life. It is valuable by reference to the richness and worth of the person who has it, by the amount of wisdom which is concentrated within its narrow borders. It is immediate and unique as is every activity, it is what it is here and now. But it is also mediate, it has its character from its place in a wider whole. It is not enough to follow conscience. We must follow an enlightened conscience. The same is true—with the necessary modifications —of æsthetic judgements.

And further, there must be consistency between our intuitions. It is mainly by this that we criticise and endeavour to modify the intuitions of others and of ourselves. We say: 'How can you hold *this* to be right, when you hold *that* (which is like it) to be wrong?'. We ask for a principle by which the two can be distinguished. Again we say: 'You think this as regards the attitude you adopt to other people. Can you think the same as regards the attitude they adopt to you?'. It is by arguments like this that we do as a matter of fact persuade people that their intuition is false, and is determined by personal interest, or perseverance in tradition, or false

analogy, or something of that sort. To be true it must be capable of becoming part of a system of coherent judgements, and this means that whatever importance we may attach to the intuitional element, its truth does not really belong to it merely as a miraculous something taken in isolation from the rest of our experience.

It is true that a man may persist in his intuition, and maintain that the particular case he is discussing is just different from any other. But every case is just different from every other, although in another sense it is never just different from every other. It is only when things have a certain resemblance that we call them different. We say that blue is different from red, because they are both colours, but we do not ordinarily say that blue is different from virtue. Hence we become highly suspicious of a man who has an intuition—though such intuitions are not uncommon —that it is right for him to kill his enemy and wrong for his enemy to kill him. It may be that there is a genuine difference in the two cases, but the difference is apt to be merely that the man who is judging is himself and not his enemy, and that is a difference which is irrelevant. We always ask a man who insists on a difference which he simply intuits to specify exactly what the difference is. We should then proceed as before, by asking him whether the same difference could be found in the relation of two other cases, and whether its presence would have the same effect on his intuitions in these cases also. All the way through there is implied this necessary consistency of judgement, and it is not ordinarily denied to be necessary, even by the man who relies upon his intuition as ultimate and refuses to be shaken by the other cases which are brought against him.

The individual intuition cannot, then, be accepted as an isolated and miraculous and merely immediate insight which has to be accepted unquestioningly and obeyed uncritically. Its value depends on the experience behind it and on its capacity for being expanded into a system of judgements, each of like character and like value with itself.

The second kind of intuition, that is, the general intuition, is sometimes regarded as more plausible than the individual

intuition. In it the object judged is a class of actions. We apprehend immediately that killing is wrong, that is to say that all acts of killing are wrong.

I must confess that this theory seems to me extremely improbable. It has all the disadvantages of the previous type and others of its own as well. It produces equal chaos and contradiction when we examine the views held by different societies at different times, and such intuitions depend for their value on the experience behind them and on their capacity for fitting into a system of coherent judgements. There are those in America at the present time who have the intuition that cigarette smoking is a sin, but such intuitions are of the slightest possible value.

The further difficulty about intuitions of this sort is that in certain conditions, and as applied to particular cases, they are all manifestly false. All killing is wrong, but is it wrong to kill as a soldier or as a hangman or in self-defence? Is it wrong to kill a friend who is about to be captured and tortured by savages? Is it wrong to kill a lunatic, if that is the only way to prevent him from torturing and killing a child? Is it wrong to kill a man whose action is such that it will lead inevitably to his own death and that of many other people? It is needless to multiply instances. However obstinate a man may be against killing, we could always by piling up special circumstances bring him to a particular case, where it would be felt as impossible, certainly by most men and probably even by himself, to maintain that in this case killing was wrong. His rule then becomes liable to exceptions, it is merely a generalisation, true for the most part, and not an intuition at all. If he tries to save its universality, by saying that the killing which he condemned was not killing in general but immoral killing, he cannot save his theory by that. For now he is simply saying that wrong killing is wrong killing, and that is not an intuition but a tautology.

Further, a generalisation of that kind inevitably includes under it many things which are very different from one another. Actions differ alike in their spirit and in their consequences, and both of these are ignored. It is the latter which offer perhaps the greatest difficulty to the intuitionist.

A lie may save a patient's life or prevent a murder. But if we take this into account, what happens to the immediate intuition which simply condemns lying as such? It has been maintained, in order to bolster up such intuitions, that consequences have nothing to do with the morality or immorality of an action. If it comes to that, we might reasonably put forward a counter-intuition that consequences have, and must have, a very great deal to do with the morality or immorality of an action. The intended consequences are surely part of the action itself, and a theory of intuition such as has been described is not considering life as it is actually lived, but some remote and empty abstractions by which it would be mere folly to guide our conduct. To advocate this sort of stuff may be intended as a support to morality, but its inevitable effect is to undermine the ordinary man's faith in morality altogether.

I suggest that such intuitions are not intuitions at all, but generalisations which could have no meaning, except as dependent on what we have called individual intuitions of life as it is actually lived. They represent a stage in advance, so far as they recognise that there must be consistency in our intuitions, but it is a crude error to imagine that living consistency is to be replaced by the wooden generalisations and the little pigeon-holes by which the unintelligent endeavour to avoid the task of thinking. These general intuitions cannot supersede or override individual intuitions, for they are founded upon individual intuitions and have no value apart from individual intuitions.

It might be of course that these intuitions were bringing out universal connexions which are to be found in individual intuitions. The statement that two and two are four, for example, while it depends upon intuition of an individual two and two being four, is more than a mere induction or generalisation. It states a universal truth which no subsequent individual intuition can overthrow. But this is not true of intuitions that a certain class of actions is wrong, because we continually find an action coming under the class-label which does not share in the general condemnation, which is emphatically not wrong but right. There is a very great difference between life and mathematics.

It is possible to maintain that a particular type of action is always wrong, but that in certain circumstances it is less wrong than any other possible action. By such means we might attempt to save the remnants of our intuitionism, but I venture to think that this is highly abstract and artificial. It is also valueless practically, because it means that our intuition is no longer an infallible guide to action. We have always to act in an imperfect world, and perhaps in a perfect world none of the things we think are right would really be so. But in this imperfect world in which we live and act, the command of intuition, if there is such a thing, is that we must lie here and now if we are to save an innocent life. It is our duty to do so, and it is immoral and cowardly to refuse. In this matter the simplest account of the situation is the best. While therefore we do not deny the value of general moral judgements, we must hold that they are abstract and external, in so far as they ignore alike the consequences of an action and the spirit in which it is done; that they are true only as a general rule and are liable to exceptions in the actual conduct of life; and that, far from being intuitions, they are really generalisations from experience, and have their value in so far as we find them true in our actual experience of concrete cases. They are not immune from criticism, and their value varies with the experience and the understanding of those who make them.

The third kind of intuition of which we have spoken is the universal intuition, by which we are supposed to grasp the ultimate principle of morality. The discussion of this belongs more properly to an enquiry into the nature of thought than into the nature of goodness. A belief in such intuitions is attractive to those who hold that philosophy is deductive, and it makes a strong appeal to ordinary common sense. It is so convenient to begin with abstract principles intuitively apprehended, and if we cannot begin with such principles how can we begin at all? The only alternative appears to be that there are no ultimate principles, and we must fall back upon mere empiricism, which can never tell us what must be or what ought to be, but only what probably and for the most part is.

I do not think that we need accept these simple antitheses. An ultimate principle of thinking, like the law of contradiction, is illustrated and embodied necessarily in every act of thought and in the whole system of thought, and its meaning is concretely apprehended only in relation to such a system. It is not arrived at by induction or deduction, for it itself must be at work in every induction and in every deduction, nor is it apprehended in isolation as a solid self-subsistent reality, a sort of peg on which we can hang all our thinking. It is justified and understood, like any other principle, by its capacity to render our experience intelligible, but taken in itself it is barren and empty, almost devoid of significance, and perhaps hardly more true than false. Philosophy must indeed endeavour to make clear the ultimate principles of thought and action, but to accept such principles as intuitively apprehended, and to build up a system on such a foundation, is, I believe, to delude men with abstractions, and to substitute the individual insight of the philosopher for the coherent and systematic thinking which alone can claim truth. In practice, however, all philosophers understand such principles in the light of their whole system, and the principles are justified by the system, just as much as the system is justified by the principles.

In the case of goodness it would seem that the universal intuition—if there is one—must be either an ultimate intuition such as that happiness and happiness alone is good, or the still more ultimate intuition that goodness is goodness, that goodness is a simple unanalysable quality which is just itself. In the first case it appears to me obvious that such a belief must be tested by reference to particular instances, and is acceptable only in so far as it can give a coherent account of our whole moral experience. It is an interesting hypothesis to be examined, and not a truth to be apprehended by an immediate intuition. The intuition is intelligible only as part of a coherent system of thought. In the case of goodness being just goodness, we must recognise that everything is itself, but we need not admit that anything is just itself by and for and in itself. And a goodness which is just goodness seems to me at least to be the most empty of abstractions mistaken for a reality, something which can neither be by

itself nor be apprehended either by intuition or in any other way. As is natural, we cannot use it in inference, but must supplement the intuition of it by other intuitions which recognise its presence in a variety of things. These intuitions, if we are to follow Mr. Moore's guidance, are themselves apparently of a universal character—their universality is of course due to the fact that the things in question are considered abstractly—and Mr. Moore asserts confidently[1] that certain states of consciousness, *e.g.* roughly 'the pleasures of human intercourse and the enjoyment of beautiful objects' are not only good, but are 'by far the most valuable things that we can know or imagine'. He does this without any attempt to marshal instances, although in this respect he appears to impose more severe conditions upon his opponents than upon himself. He will not allow[2] us to assert that the objects of a certain kind of will are also good, unless we show that the objects in separation are good in a great number of instances. It seems to me as legitimate to have an intuition that to be the object of a coherent will is to be good, as it is to have an intuition that the enjoyment of beautiful objects is good. But in this I may be wrong, and no doubt I am wrong, if we must accept Mr. Moore's distinctions. What seems to be clear is that the ultimate intuition is useless unless supplemented by other intuitions, and, being wholly unable to agree with Mr. Moore's scale of values, I am driven to believe that here, as in other instances, to fall back upon the method of intuition is to substitute personal predilections for consistent thought. We may recognise that Mr. Moore's ethical theory is an intellectual advance upon older and cruder forms of intuitionism, although it may be suggested that the advance is made, only by misunderstanding the peculiarly moral value which the older forms at least attempted to justify. But his theory cannot in any case escape the fundamental weakness of all intuitionism, that in attempting to justify an objective value it can offer us nothing but an isolated and subjective intuition, whose assertions it is only too easy to explain away.

In the case of intuitionism as in the case of hedonism, we seem to be compelled by the logic of things to pass away

[1] *Princ. Eth.*, p. 188. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 137.

from the immediate feeling aroused by the presence of the object to some sort of general or universal judgements. Such general or universal judgements are inevitably judgements made in relation to life as a whole, and they recognise the necessity of consistency in our individual judgements. But in themselves they are abstract and inadequate, and when they set themselves up as true in isolation, they are no better but rather worse than the individual judgements from which they are an attempt to escape. It is valuable and necessary to separate out the universal elements in our individual judgements, to make explicit the principles which are the source of their consistency, and if it were not so there could be no such thing as philosophy at all. It may also be useful and desirable to consider the way in which such ultimate principles work out in special spheres of thought and action. But we must avoid, or so it seems to me, the error of imagining that such principles or their general applications are apprehended in their bare immediacy, instead of being, as they are, intelligible only in the light of our whole experience, and justified, not by an immediate intuition, but by the extent to which they are consistent with one another and with the rest of our thinking.

BOOK III

THE WILL AS INDIVIDUAL

CHAPTER VII

POLICY

ALL willing is more than something immediate, and it is more than an aggregate of immediates. It is one through time, and it is one in differences. Its unity belongs to it in itself, and is not imposed upon it or thought into it by anything external to itself. It is in short a spiritual activity.

We have considered an abstract or minimum willing in its relation to goodness, and while it is not necessary to suppose that what we have described is more than an abstraction from, or simplification of, any act of will, we must recognise that as will develops in men, or perhaps better that as men develop, will passes from being something relatively immediate to being something relatively less immediate. We gradually come to live in a wider world, and our lives become more coherent wholes, which are to some extent willed as coherent wholes. I propose now to examine the development of will in the individual. In so doing I shall still be dealing with something relatively abstract, not only because such an enquiry is concerned with the most general characters of willing, but also because it ignores the fact that all individual willing and individual life develops only in society.

Every volition, as we have seen, is a response to an apprehended object or a known situation. The more developed volition—which I shall call a 'policy'—takes place in a more developed self, and its first and most obvious characteristic is that it is a response to a wider situation. All willing no doubt takes place in the same world, yet elementary willing is a response, not to the whole world, but to that part of it which is apprehended as an object directly before us. In a sense this never ceases to be true, but as cognition develops it provides us with a wider object. We come to know and respond to a wider world, which stretches far beyond anything that could with any plausibility be said

to be immediately given at any particular moment. The development of will depends in the first instance on the development of the cognitive activity.

This point is so obvious that it is unnecessary to insist upon it in any detail. Everyone must admit that increase of knowledge makes a very great difference to human will. The child—if we suppose it to exercise genuine volition—acts, as we all act, in the situation which it knows. But the situation as known is so very limited and so very inadequately understood. A loud sound arouses a feeling of fear, and the child turns for protection to its mother. It has little idea of what the situation really is, whether it is dangerous or not, and what kind of protection is possible and desirable in the situation. While such irrational elements no doubt persist into the most developed human life, a man hearing a loud sound endeavours at once to understand what it is, to put it in its place in a wider whole of experience, and the action which he takes in regard to it is intelligent and not merely instinctive. If it is the sound of thunder, he ignores it as trivial; if it is the sound of dropping bombs, he may retire to a safer place, if such there be, or he may decide that no action of his is likely to make much difference, and go on quietly with his conversation or his work. And even such an example is typical of experience at a rather low level. The sound, as it were, forces itself into his life unasked and unsought, and when there is genuine danger, there may also be an element of irrational emotion, which demands more vigorous efforts to control than are required in the more ordinary events of life. Yet even so, while he is acting in or through the moment, the situation to which he responds stretches far beyond the moment, and although tense emotion or desire may make us less conscious of the wider background, it is rarely if at all that the known situation can be said to be even approximately a momentary situation. In the normal human experience we respond to a situation which we understand and which is much wider than the situation of the moment. When we take afternoon tea, we are not responding merely to the food which we see before us, but to the whole fabric of civilised English society.

Further the known situation to which we respond is far

too complicated to be apprehended in a merely momentary cognition. We are too apt to think of the whole situation, however wide and complicated, however extended in space and time, as immediately given to knowledge at any moment, so far as it is known at all. Yet although we must act in the light of knowledge which is in and through the moment, as our action itself is, no policy is willed in the light of a merely momentary cognition. The situation to which we respond in our ordinary actions is one which cannot be known in its fullness by a momentary cognition. Indeed the knowing which knows the situation in which we act is neither a momentary knowing nor a sum of momentary knowings external to one another, but it is a single knowing which is one through time and is not simply the sum of its parts. The man who pores obstinately over books on the most perfect golfing day, is not simply reacting to the pages which he has in front of him. He is reacting to a complicated world of men and things which—to put it at its lowest—offers a greater pecuniary reward to knowledge than to bad golf. His action is intelligible only in the light of such a knowledge, only as a response to such a known situation, and yet it would be foolish to suppose that at every moment he was thinking about that wider world, as well as about the problem which is immediately engrossing his attention. He is reacting, and reacting in the moment, to the world as he knows it, a world of which the momentary situation is only a part; but that world is emphatically not known in a momentary act of cognition, and it is from his cognition as a whole, or from his momentary cognition not as isolated but as a part of a much wider cognition, that he starts in any normal action whatever. We render our experience quite unintelligible, if we attempt to chop it up into isolated bits or merely separate events. We could never know our world as we do, if knowledge were merely a sum of momentary cognitions; and we could never act as we do, if we possessed only this kind of knowledge.

Similarly, it is no use to pretend that our volition is merely a momentary response to the world we know, and that the next moment will see a new momentary response. Every volition is in the moment, and as it were adjusts itself

momentarily to its changing world. But willing is never a sum of little bits, a mere aggregate of momentary volitions. Renewed and refreshed at every moment, it is yet something which is one through time. Our action at the moment is intelligible as part of a wider whole, and it is what it is only as part of a wider whole. When I move my feet and arms in a particular way, it is not because I have suddenly seen a ball and wanted to hit it, it is not even because I know that the ball I see is being moved in a game of tennis which stretches beyond the moment. My momentary volition is what it is because I am playing tennis, and playing tennis is an action which is one through time, and is neither a sum of isolated actions, nor a sum of isolated actions to which there is added some sort of external unity by previous anticipations or subsequent reflexions or even by a previous abstract intention to play tennis. The volition is as continuous and as varying as the knowledge which apprehends the changing situation. Each is in and through the moment, but neither is merely in the moment, for each transcends the moment and is a whole diversifying itself through time.

It is impossible to believe that the continuity belongs only to knowing, and that willing is merely a sum of momentary responses made separately in the light of a continually changing knowledge. Knowing always knows more than the momentary situation, and such knowing, to be what it is, must be more than a sum of momentary cognitions. Apart from such a continuous knowing our willing is unintelligible, but such knowing itself depends in turn on a continuity of willing. It is the concentration upon the situation for purposes of action which enables us to grasp that situation continuously, and the attainment of wider knowledge is always a product of the will to know. Wider knowledge demands greater powers of concentration, and that is a matter of will as well as of merely intellectual power. The truth of this is not really rendered doubtful by the fact that in some men the will to know is stronger than the will to act. They may fail in action through timidity (the consequences of action are generally more serious than those of thinking), or through lack of interest in practical affairs, or through lack of the skill which comes from practice. Every teacher knows that

for some men weakness of will is a greater hindrance to success in study than is weakness of intellect. And most men know in their own experience that the effort necessary to concentrate upon thinking is often more difficult than the thinking itself, once that effort has been successfully made.

Before considering the development of will we must consider shortly the character of that knowing which is as necessary to developed willing as developed willing is necessary to it.

The knowledge which is necessary to willing is knowledge of the situation in which we act or of the world in which we live. As such it is knowledge of fact, if we include under knowledge of fact the generalisations of science as well as historical knowledge of individual events. The generalisations of science are in themselves practically valueless, unless we have knowledge of individual things and events. It is no use knowing all about bears, unless we know that this is a bear. But if we presume a knowledge of the actual situation as it has evolved or is evolving through time, the kind of knowledge which is of most importance for action is knowledge of the laws of cause and effect. Knowledge of cause and effect is one of the most important ways by which we transcend the moment, and is as essential to the development of action as it is to the understanding of the world. By it the range of our activity is enormously increased. By it alone we can control our environment, we can will results which extend far beyond our own bodily movements, and we can often avoid effects which would be certain to result from our environment if we did not interfere. If our knowledge of cause and effect is inadequate, we may produce results very different from what we anticipate, and so admit a kind of incoherence into our willing, a complete discrepancy between what is willed or intended and what is actually done. A similar discrepancy may be caused by our ignorance of the actual facts of the situation, as for example in the story of Oedipus.

It is perhaps superfluous to say that the knowledge necessary to action is not merely knowledge of the physical world. The knowledge of our selves and of others is in some ways of almost greater importance. Such knowledge is partly reflective and psychological, but it is also what is commonly

called intuition, and depends upon our power to enter by sympathetic imagination into the experience of ourselves and others in situations which have actually arisen or are likely to arise. Merely reflective knowledge is as inadequate in practice as we have already seen it to be in theory, but a knowledge of scientific psychology may have its utility in action, and as the science develops we may expect that utility to increase almost indefinitely. That utility depends, as in the case of physical science, mainly on the establishment of laws of cause and effect, which we can take into account in avoiding some effects, and securing others, in the lives of other people and of ourselves. It is of course to be presumed that such knowledge is useful only when we are aware of the actual experience of ourselves and others, and, as we have said, no reflective knowledge however complete, and *a fortiori* no knowledge of cause and effect, could by itself be adequate either in theory or in practice, unless supplemented by that other kind of knowledge which we have called enjoyment.

Knowledge of fact, in the sense which we have described, makes clear both the situation as it has been and is, and the situation as it may become; it tells us what is actual and what is possible, but it does not tell us what is good. It gives us only the background against which we will, but it is not itself a judgement of value, except in so far as a judgement of how and what we will may be also a judgement of goodness or badness.

The knowledge which we use in action is not itself unpractical. Purely scientific knowledge is itself largely experimental, and experiment is a kind of action. We may even say that all action is a kind of experiment, and the practical knowledge which is most useful to us is very often the knowledge of our own practical success or failure. We learn what we can do and what we cannot do very largely by trying, and sometimes we cannot learn it in any other way. This is one of the reasons why men rightly distrust the mere theorist or doctrinaire. Even when it might seem that we could learn something by a purely intellectual process, by attending to the generalisations of science or the experience of others, it is too often the case that we can be convinced only by our own experience. Knowledge from experience is really worth

more than any knowledge derived from books or from the reflexions of other people, and it is not wholly unreasonable that each generation should wish to make experiments in life for itself.

Moreover not all knowledge is practically useful. We must act in the situation as known, but the situation as known is to some extent determined by our practical purposes. The knowledge which is practically useful is the knowledge which is relevant to our purposes, and it may be that the man who has the wider general knowledge, and even the man who has the most detailed knowledge of the actual situation, is less able to act successfully than the man who can grasp quickly what is practically relevant and act upon that. Abundance of knowledge may be an actual inconvenience in action, it may make a man confused and hesitating, and distract him from the matter in hand, unless he has the capacity for grasping the practically relevant and making a quick decision. The man of action has really a special way of knowing the world, and development of skill in action is at the same time development of this special way of knowing. None the less it is hard to say beforehand what knowledge may be practically useful, and it is easy for the man of action to become unpractical through a lack of the wider vision. The more knowledge we have the wider is our range of action, provided we retain our capacity for grasping what is practically relevant, and do not suffer our interest in knowledge to debar us from acting at the precise moment when successful action is possible. We can come back again and again to a merely intellectual problem, but in action it may be that if we do not do this now, we shall never be able to do it again. Action depends largely upon the moment, and the knowledge upon which we act is the knowledge relevant to our action at the moment, and is as it were selected for practical purposes by a practical act; yet that selection, however momentary it may be, is a selection from a wider knowledge which goes far beyond the moment and is not made explicit in the actual moment at all. And the selection is also relevant not merely to a momentary volition but to a wider will. The man of action does not ignore all circumstances save those which are relevant to the momentary act. To do so is to be guilty

of what is called absent-mindedness, which curiously enough is supposed to belong peculiarly to the thinker rather than to the man of action. When a man catches a rare butterfly by flinging himself over a precipice or under the wheels of a racing car, we regard him as unpractical, even if he succeeds for the moment in accomplishing his aims.

The practical selection of knowledge, the concentration upon the elements in the situation which are relevant to our purpose, is not, however, peculiar to action; it is as necessary to thinking as it is to winning battles, although when we are just thinking the purpose which determines what is relevant and what is not is a different kind of purpose—the purpose for example of getting at the truth—and it is a purpose which does not demand quick decisions, but can ordinarily be realised in a leisurely manner. Knowing ceases to be subordinate to willing, only as we develop the will to know. Yet knowing is not governed by willing, we cannot simply know what we will to know; for knowing is governed by its own necessity, whether it be the brute necessity of sense or the intelligible necessity of demonstration. So far as our will is able to override such necessity, it is simply a source of error; and error, as we have seen, may lead to a corresponding failure in willing itself, which in turn may awaken us to the nature of our error. Knowing must be itself and be subject to its own laws, and without knowing which is a knowing of the real we could not will at all. Knowing and willing are equally necessary to one another, and they are elements in an activity which is essentially one. They are activities of a self which is and must be one throughout its different activities, and they cannot be a sum of events which are simply external to one another.

It may be thought that the knowledge which precedes action is a knowledge of means and ends, but it is clear that, so far as knowledge is concerned, this is merely a knowledge of cause and effect. We consider what causes will produce a particular effect, until we can find a cause or causes which are in our power. The fact that such thinking is relevant to our purposes does not make it a special kind of thinking, for all thinking is relevant to a purpose. And a

judgement of cause and effect is clearly not a judgement of value.

The thinking or knowing which precedes action is then a judgement or judgements of fact. It is itself a kind of willing, and willing and knowing develop together, or, more accurately, the development of the one self is a development both of will and knowledge. The development of the self is at the same time the development of its world, that is of the world as it is known to, and willed by, the self.

The part which is played in the development of willing by judgements of value can be made clear only in the light of our theory as to the nature of goodness. Here we can only touch upon their importance as we consider the development of willing itself.

We have already maintained that in instinctive actions willing goes direct to its object without depending upon experience or theory. A similar independence of theory, although not of experience, is found in all elementary or impulsive actions, in all actions which we may call immediate or relatively immediate actions. A burglar in the actual pursuit of his profession—and such an actual pursuit as opposed to an abstract plan we have called a ' policy '—may be thwarted by his inability to resist the attractions of a decanter found upon the sideboard of the house which he has entered. In such a case his action in drinking cannot be instinctive, for whisky is an acquired taste, but it resembles instinctive action in being immediate or impulsive. Drinking has become second nature to him. In this case also the will goes direct to its object. It may be that the taste and effects of whisky are imagined before drinking, that is to say there is knowledge of the situation, but it can hardly be maintained that the desire for whisky arises only because of a previous judgement that it is good to drink whisky. Still less can it be maintained that the incontinent burglar reflects upon the difference between the whisky and the pleasure to be derived from it, and decides to drink the whisky for the sake of the pleasure. He knows the situation, and he acts in the situation. He sees the whisky, and he drinks. That is the truest as well as the simplest account of his action.

In contrast with the relatively immediate action which is drinking, his burgling may be regarded as a policy, as adjusted to a wider situation, as springing from a wider knowledge, as pursued in a more systematic way. I have chosen this example of a policy in order to avoid the unconscious introduction of moral considerations; and the question to be considered is the nature of the process by which such policies arise.

This is a much more complicated question, and as we have seen, the development of willing is conditioned and accompanied by a development of knowing. The professional burglar has some sort of view of the world, and he does not ordinarily react, like an animal, only to what comes within the range of his senses. He has probably reflected upon his own actions, and recognised that some things were the objects of his desire and were so far good. It is even possible that a man, after due consideration of his talents and his opportunities, may deliberately come to the conclusion that the best life for him is the life of a burglar, with its genuine excitement, its considerable gains, and its real dangers. But in the main it is probable that reflexion plays a relatively small part in the determination of this and other policies. Ordinarily we should say that men simply drift into a policy and even into a career. In more mythological language the impulses and desires of men find a channel for themselves which is determined partly by their circumstances and partly by their character.

Even in the case where a man decides after cool reflexion to take up a particular career—and this is at a very high level of action indeed—I believe that it is the will which is primary and the judgement of value which is secondary. In so far as a man recognises that his talents and circumstances are adapted to a particular career, he is still in a purely theoretical attitude. Even when he recognises that certain things to be gained from the career are good—and this depends on my view upon the presence of some sort of desire or will—he is still very far from having chosen the career. We may perhaps admit that such judgements of value precede any deliberate policy, and are involved in his reflexions on the desires and actions of himself and others. But the recognition of the goodness for him of the career itself, so far as the recognition

is genuine, seems to depend on the presence of a definite will to pursue the career. In more elementary cases this is still more obvious. A child plays with toys because he wants to, and it is because he wants to that the playing with toys is good to him. Similarly, a man becomes a burglar because he wants to, and the thinking it good to do so is in the first instance the recognition of that fact. With experience of it he likes it better or worse, and what he likes is it in its concreteness, with its actual successes and failures and pleasures and pains. But in the end we must always come back to the attitude of the will, and it is the attitude of the will which determines whether or not the thing is good to the particular person concerned. The will is arbitrary, if it is arbitrary to act without having considered all possible courses, and without attempting to assess all possible courses in terms of some purely objective and intellectual standard. Men adopt different policies, not because they argue from different premises, but because they happen to be different sorts of persons and to want different sorts of things.

Action may begin on a merely instinctive level, where we have simply a series of relatively momentary situations and meet them by a series of relatively momentary responses. Yet even relatively momentary action is itself a policy, it is one in differences, and it is one through time. And instinctive action has a certain rationality, in so far as it is the product of the struggle for existence and is likely to lead to the survival of the individual and of the race. It has also a certain regularity. We tend to respond to the same kind of situation in the same kind of way. There is from the first a kind of coherence in our actions, and this coherence would be manifest to an external spectator. Our action changes with, and adapts itself to, the changing situation, just as it would do if we were acting by intelligence and not by instinct. There is even something analogous to this below the level of what seems to be conscious life. And as we live and grow, this regularity and coherence increase by what is called the influence of habit. That is to say we do more easily what we have done before, we move more readily along the lines which we have previously followed. Such habit may be a disadvantage if it diminishes spontaneity, if it

makes our actions more mechanical and prevents us from adjusting ourselves to new situations. Yet on the whole it helps us to adjust ourselves to slightly different situations. When we practise playing notes on the piano in a certain order, it becomes more easy, not only to play these notes in that order, but also to play them in a different order. In all this, and indeed in instinctive action itself, it seems that there is some genuine intelligence, but it is a practical and not a reflective or a philosophical intelligence. In any case it is clear that we fall into some sort of routine, we get into a kind of groove, and this would be obvious to a spectator, as it is obvious to ourselves when we begin to reflect upon our world and our actions. As we develop, and as our consciousness extends beyond the moment, we recognise the continuity of the situations and the continuity of our responses. We apprehend the situations as resembling one another, and we apprehend the similarity in our own responses. This gradual development of consciousness is complicated and difficult to describe, and it itself involves the development of the will, but if we speak abstractly we may say that as we come to see the situations in a different way as parts of a whole (and to see them as situations in the plural really involves this), we come also to will our responses in a different way as parts of a whole. The continuity and the coherence becomes transparent to itself. As we know more coherently what we will, our will itself becomes more coherent. It becomes a response to a wider and more continuous situation, and it becomes a wider and more continuous response. In short it becomes a policy, but although in this thinking plays a part, it is not true that the policy is adopted as a result of thinking it good.

In all this there seems to be a development of the process by which an animal adjusts itself to its environment. We may be conscious of a similar experience on a higher level, if we are living in an unusual environment, and in particular if we have to change from the theoretical to the practical life. We find ourselves becoming different persons, we develop new attitudes and new methods by a process which is not due to reflexion. It is true no doubt that our past habits may cling to us and thwart us, and this is one reason

why philosophers are generally incompetent in action and attempt to deal with practical matters as if they were problems in metaphysics. But so far as there is adjustment and adaptability, it is not due to a thought-out scheme, to a considered judgement of what is best in the situation. The adjustment arises in practice, and it is the adjustment of the will to the new situation, although reflexion upon what we are doing may facilitate that adjustment and help to render it more effective in the future. The will has its own rationality which is relatively independent of the rationality of thinking.

A policy is established, not only as we become aware of the coherence of our immediate actions, but also as we discover the incoherence between different actions or different desires. As we begin to transcend the moment, we learn that we cannot eat our cake and have it. Our immediate actions do not all fit in nicely together, and as we become aware of the clash between them, we are in a different situation and we will in a different way. We are aware of the clash only because we already transcend the moment in our knowledge, and indeed the clash is a clash only because we already have a sort of policy, because our will is already more than a momentary action. Similarly in thinking there is no contradiction between isolated momentary thoughts, we become aware of the contradiction only by transcending the moment, but our awareness of the contradiction drives us to overcome it and so to transcend the moment in more coherent thinking. Awareness of the incoherence of our actions means that we already have some sort of policy, some sort of will for coherence, but our awareness of the incoherence drives us to overcome it in a more coherent willing.

The incoherence of our actions does not arise merely from conflicting wills or from a conflict within the will, from the desire at once to eat and to have our cake. It arises also from lack of power, from lack of skill, and from lack of knowledge. We fail to hurt our enemy, we fall off our bicycle, we touch a flame and find that it burns. All such experiences tend to the establishment of a policy which is more than a response to the immediate situation. The burnt child for example dreads the fire. We begin to will within

the limits of our power, we seek to acquire a greater skill, we act with reference to the effects of our action. And this is a new kind of willing in a new kind of situation, it involves a better understanding of the situation, but it is not due to a purely theoretical consideration of how we can realise something which is objectively good.

It has been suggested that in the main we drift into our policies, but although the process of drifting is not due to ratiocination, we must not suppose that it is either irrational or unintelligent. We have seen that it depends upon a wider knowledge of the situation and upon some sort of apprehension of what we are doing. But, apart from this, willing has its own rationality just as much as thought. It is no more irrational to desire chocolate than it is to see yellow, and it is no more irrational to eat too much chocolate than it is to think that a straight stick in water is really bent. Theoretical reason is that which organises our sensings and thinkings into a coherent whole, and practical reason or reasonable will is that which organises our desires and actions into a coherent whole. It is the same reason, or rather it is the same self, which does both. In both thought and action there is the same will to unity, the same striving for coherence. The will does not wait for theoretical reason to assure it that coherence is good. On the contrary, a theoretical judgement of this kind is possible only for a self which has a will for coherence, and in particular for coherence of thought. It is equally true that a coherent will is possible only for a self which thinks coherently. It is one self which wills and thinks, and its character is to seek unity in thought and unity in action. It is only in so far as it attains such unity that it is really a self.

We must add, as always, that the self as practical reason is not to be set over against its immediate desires or actions. It is not an abstract unity, and they are not an abstract multiplicity. Every action is an action of the self, and has its own coherence which is the coherence of a self. Every volition must have its own coherence, must be some sort of policy if it is to be at all. Its incoherence is possible only because it is itself an element in an actual policy which is wider than itself.

A successful policy like any and every action is in and through the moment. It is of the same character as immediate action, and it gradually develops out of a series of immediate actions. But the so-called immediate actions are only relatively immediate, they have differences within themselves. And they are never really cut off or isolated from one another, there is some sort of continuity in any experience, and to divide it up into little bits merely external to one another is to offer us something which never is, and never was, real. As the self develops, the relatively undifferentiated continuousness of relatively immediate actions becomes a differentiated willing or policy. Self-development is a gradual substitution of coherence for mere continuity. Policy is not something quite different from immediate action; it is rather an expansion of immediate action into a wider and more differentiated action, or again it is the introduction of momentary differences into a relatively undifferentiated continuum. A policy is realised in the moment, and we may say that it is just immediate actions organised into a whole, if we remember that such organisation is not a mere adding of one to one in a certain order, but that every one is different because of its position in the whole, and that the whole is present in every part. In willing this stroke I am willing it as part of a game of tennis, and a game of tennis is not merely a sum of such volitions considered in isolation, nor is it a sum of such volitions plus a general will to play tennis. In willing this stroke and in willing every stroke I am not only willing *it*, but I am willing to play tennis. The whole volition to play tennis is present in every stroke, although it is not exhausted in any. The stroke is one volition and not two, and it is a part of a volition which has as much right to be called one as any of the parts which we distinguish within it.

A policy has the double characteristic of momentary spontaneity and consistency through time. The will must be living and active and creative in the moment, it is not a response to a situation outside of time, nor is it the mechanical realisation of an abstract plan. Continuous with itself and enjoying its own continuity, it faces the actual situation, which, while it is continuous with and similar to past situations,

is yet unique and demands a unique response. The unique situation, the actual now, is all important for action. We do not respond to the universe but to part of the universe as it is for us here and now. But the part here and now is, and is known to be, only a part of the whole; we respond to it as to a part of the whole, and the volition by which we respond here and now is not merely here and now, but is an element in a wider whole which is coherent with itself.

We are all intimately acquainted with the character of a policy, and with the difference between an action which is an element in or expression of a policy, and an action which is the expression of a sudden and irrelevant desire. Each action is in the moment and has its own immediate spontaneity, and neither action is merely the realisation of an abstract plan or the product of a desire for abstract consistency; but there is a real difference between (*a*) the acts which together constitute a policy of burglary and (*b*) the act of drinking which makes our previous proceedings ineffective and meaningless. And the difference is in the acts themselves and not in anything external to them, not in what we think about them, or do before or after or at the same time. It seems to be expressed by saying that a momentary action, without ceasing to be momentary, may yet be adjusted to a wider situation and be the manifestation of a wider and more lasting will.

Yet while I think we are justified in assuming that there is such a thing as a policy, and that men generally recognise both what it is and what are its parts, it is difficult to describe it in a satisfactory way. We make use of spatial and temporal terms like 'wider' and 'more lasting', but the difference appears to be one of quality rather than of space or time. The wider situation is the wider situation as known, and as known to be not merely in space but also in time, but an action is not part of a policy merely because we act with a wider knowledge. And adjustment to the situation does not mean, as it does in the case of animals or plants, that what is done enables us to continue living, it means that it enables us to get what we want. Further, it is not enough that it should enable us to get what we want, for to be part

of a policy it must be willed as part of a policy of getting what we want. And what we want is not merely what we want at the moment (the merely impulsive action may secure that); it is rather what is the object of our wider and more lasting will.

Yet to describe the will as wider and more lasting is to describe it under the inadequate categories of space and time. To say that the will is wider seems to be a metaphorical way of saying that it is more lasting, except in so far as it suggests also that it is adjusted to a wider situation. To say that it is more lasting looks like a literal statement, but the will of a man, however incoherent, lasts just as long as his life—and he never wills the same thing twice. All these statements are ways of asserting, not merely that an immediate action can be a part of a whole of coherent actions, but that it can be willed as such a part. It is the willing of separate actions as part of such a whole, it is this special kind or quality of willing, which may be more lasting than the separate actions, and may endure in and through the separate actions themselves. And it is because it endures, because we continue to will the whole in its present part or form, that we look back upon our past action with approval and judge it good.

There is a certain difficulty in the fact that for an act to be genuinely part of a policy, the policy must be continued so long as the circumstances remain as they were anticipated to be. A child may play a stroke at tennis and then petulantly throw away its racket. In a sense the stroke was part of a policy—and is otherwise unintelligible—but the policy was of hardly any duration, and the quality of the act we realise afterwards to have been different from what it seemed. The same thing may happen in the case of our own actions. This however serves only to show that there are all sorts and degrees of policies, and that a developed policy is more than an abstract intention, and more than an isolated act done with an abstract intention. None the less an action may be a policy, even if it is brief and has no further manifestations. Suicide may be the expression of a deliberate policy and not merely of a momentary desire.

In some ways we are tempted to say that an act which

is a developed policy is the product of a formed character or permanent disposition. Such would be the Aristotelian view, and we must recognise that it expresses a certain truth. But such statements have only a mythological truth, in so far as they postulate entities outside of the actual process of living. I prefer to say that in some acts there is more of the will or more of the self, and this has nothing to do with mere intensity of emotion or desire. To some this will seem still more mythological, and even downright self-contradictory, in so far as it supposes that the whole can be in the part. But it seems to me to be true alike in art and in thought and in action. Some men seem to be more of a self than others, and there seems to be more of the self in some spiritual activities than in others. We all of us identify ourselves with some acts more than with others, and this may be the expression not merely of vanity but of truth. But in any case it is when our acts are genuinely policies that we say we are truly ourselves.

Again it is difficult to make precise what is meant by the coherence of a policy and by willing an action as part of a coherent whole. Yet there is in practice little difficulty in determining whether a coherent policy is or is not being pursued, if we have sufficient information about the circumstances and details of the action. A man may be acting so incoherently that we imagine him to be mad, but his actions may be perfectly coherent if he is a prisoner of war who is shamming madness in order to increase his chances of escape. The practical difficulty does not arise from uncertainty as to what is meant by coherence, but simply from uncertainty as to what the individual really is doing.

It is perfectly clear that a policy to be a policy need be neither continuous in time nor homogeneous in its parts. It may be just as much of a policy to get up at seven o'clock every morning as it is to play a game of tennis. And if one has adopted the policy of making money, that policy may be pursued at different intervals of time, and may be manifested in different actions which bear no external resemblance to one another It may easily be part of a consistent military policy to retreat at one time and to advance at another. A policy, like any other action, is relative to a situation,

and to be consistent it must change as the situation changes. Even apart from this there can be no genuine repetition in human affairs. We may say that the same note or the same chord occurs twice in a piece of music, but it is also different because it has a different place in the whole. The difference is not merely a difference of time, it is a real difference in the note or chord itself.

These principles are true not only of action but of all spiritual activity. A mathematical proof is not coherent because it is thought continuously, and still less because it consists in a repetition of the same statements. If we had exactly the same step twice in a mathematical argument, the first step might be sound mathematics, but the second—unless repeated to impress itself on our pupils or ourselves —would be entirely futile. Even the repetition of a refrain in poetry is always adding something new and different to the whole.

Perhaps we may say that a policy is continuous, although it is not manifested in actions which are continuous with one another. If the policy is manifested in actions whenever suitable circumstances arise, it is hard to say that it is not continuous, even although we are not conscious of the policy as a policy except when the circumstances arise. Although a policy must be manifested in action in order to be a policy, yet it transcends the momentary action and even the series of momentary actions. This is one of the reasons why we are tempted to speak of it as an entity outside of actions altogether. But it is better to say simply that spiritual activity is more than a series of objects thought about as external to one another in time. It is itself as an activity one throughout time. It is not something timeless which is set over against its objects in time. Rather the time in which it is is not spatialised time, time thought of under the image of a line in space, but is real time, the time whose parts are not external to one another. Or if this is to treat time as a thing in itself (which it is not), all that we need say is that the time in and through which there is activity must be such that the activity can be present as a whole in each of its parts, and that each of its parts is what it is only as part of the whole.

It may be thought that it is simple to describe coherence by reference to an end, actions being coherent in so far as they are means to the same end.

This raises however the very difficult question of the distinction between means and end in action. We may apprehend intellectually that certain causes produce a certain effect, but it does not follow from this that it is possible to will one thing as a means and to will another thing as an end. These distinctions look like intellectual abstractions which we make when we reflect on our actions after they have been performed (or for the matter of that before they have been performed), but it is by no means clear that they are distinctions between different kinds or ways of willing. We know that a safe may be opened by turning a handle in certain ways, and wishing to open the safe we proceed to turn the handle in these ways. We then describe the turning of the handle as the means and the opening of the safe as the end. This is a perfectly legitimate common-sense description which we have no desire to renounce, but it seems to be a very doubtful basis for a philosophical description of action. We will the whole action in all its parts, and we will all the parts including the end as parts of the whole. But no part is exclusively at the service of other parts, and no part is willed by itself without reference to the others. If we really dislike turning handles sufficiently, we do not open the safe.

The distinction of means and end has the same kind of utility and the same kind of abstraction as the distinction of premises and conclusion. Every premise is also a conclusion, and every conclusion is also a premise. The act of thinking or inferring is continuous throughout the whole, and is of the same character throughout the whole. Neither premises nor conclusion are what they are in isolation from one another, and the conclusion is as necessary to the understanding of the premises as the premises are to the understanding of the conclusion.

Apart from these general considerations, the reduction of coherence to a relation between means and end seems to presuppose that the end of an action is to produce something. But this is surely false in the case of friendly conversation or playing games, and many men have thought that moral

action must be done for its own sake. We must not prejudge this question by a hurried acceptance of the category of means and end. At least some coherent actions seem to be ends as a whole or all the way through.

Even where the end—if we accept the term—is to produce something, an action is not necessarily coherent because it actually produces the end. If the householder returns during the burglar's drunken sleep, deposits a pearl necklace in the next room, and retires to rest in complete ignorance of the presence of his visitor, it does not follow that the burglar's action was coherent, even although he may waken in time to get off with his booty and with the pearl necklace as well. To be genuinely coherent the actions must be willed with knowledge of the relevant circumstances and as part of the whole policy.

Further, we cannot judge the coherence of an action by reference to something external to the action itself. If a man builds a house which falls down, we may be inclined to think that his action was incoherent, and we may be right in thinking so. But this is true, only if he made the house as an instrument for further action, that is as a place to live in. It is not at all true, if he sells the house to an enemy or has a general grudge against the human race. This last point brings out the possibility that we may be forced to consider our so-called ends as themselves means to further ends, or perhaps to one ultimate end which is likely to be outside of all human actions whatsoever. This would be unfortunate if we identified the end with the good, and Aristotle escapes this difficulty—though not without confusion—only by regarding the good as an ἐνέργεια ψυχῆς, that is, as spiritual activity which is an end through and through and has no parts which are merely means to other parts.

If it be said that the end of an action is something more general, like the fulfilling of an abstract plan, we have already suggested that coherent action may not be preceded by a plan at all, and that it is always more than the fulfilling of an abstract plan. The so-called plan, if regarded as present in all coherent action, is merely an abstraction from the concrete action, it is a mere name for the consistency of the action, and to say that actions are coherent if they

are means to such an end, is merely to say that they are coherent if they are coherent.

There are two conclusions which we may venture to draw from this discussion. The first is that we cannot define the coherence of a policy by the category of means and end. To say that a policy is coherent if the separate acts of which it is composed are means to one end is at the best a one-sided and inadequate way of describing it. It is better to say that a policy is coherent if the separate actions are all willed as parts of a whole. And the second conclusion is that we cannot understand the coherence of a policy either by reference to the willing in abstraction from what is willed or by reference to what is willed in abstraction from the willing. The willing in abstraction from its object has no character or coherence at all, and the object in abstraction from the willing—we suppose the object not to be a spiritual activity—is presumably a physical object or movement, which has just as much or as little coherence as any other physical object or movement in isolation from willing.

We must however note briefly that there seem to be two different kinds of incoherence in action. The first kind of incoherence is that of the burglar who gets drunk in the practice of his profession, and this seems to be a kind of incoherence within the will itself. The incoherence arises from the irruption of a narrower desire or will into the wider policy. The policy, as we saw, must have both coherence and spontaneity or coherence in spontaneity, but here the spontaneity seems to disrupt the coherence. The second kind of incoherence seems rather to be an incoherence between what is willed and what is actually done or what actually happens. This kind of incoherence seems to depend either on lack of knowledge, *e.g.* of knowledge about facts or causal relations, or on lack of power or skill. We may say that knowledge was lacking if we did not know that the man we killed was our friend, or if we did not know that what we gave him was poisonous; and that power or skill was lacking, if we failed in an attempt to leap across a stream. This second kind of incoherence we may call generally lack of skill—for skill shades off into power and generally involves knowledge

of the relevant. The first kind of incoherence is lack rather of perseverance than of skill, although generally we cannot have skill without perseverance.

The two kinds of incoherence seem to be equally real. In the first we do what we will, but not what we will as a policy. In the second we seem to do something other than we will. It is difficult, if not impossible, to maintain that we always do what we will. If we maintained this, we should have to make a sharp separation between our action and the consequences of our action, and say that our action was just the product of our will while the consequences were the product of the whole or of the universe. But although such a distinction can and must be made in practice, it will hardly explain the contrast between what we will and what we do, unless we suppose that willing never issues in physical movements at all. The consequences seem sometimes to be part of our action and to be genuinely willed. We cannot say that what we willed was merely to move a finger or to pull a trigger, and that God did the rest. What we willed was to kill a man, and the killing is quite definitely our action. On the other hand we cannot move a finger or close an eyelid without the cooperation of the universe. There is nothing which is just our action, and while our action may have consequences which we neither know nor will, our action includes willed consequences when we pull a trigger and kill a man. The fact that even the willed consequences are not wholly dependent upon us is sometimes the source of incoherence between what we will and what we do.

Both kinds of incoherence may be described as doing something other than we will, for St. Paul[1] referred to the first kind when he said 'The evil which I would not, that I do'. But there seems to be a difference between the two kinds of incoherence which it would be unwise to forget.

It may be added that there seems to be also a kind of coherence which is genuinely internal—a coherence of emotion. Coherent action is generally if not always accompanied by some kind of emotional balance or equilibrium, we meet danger with the right amount of fear and confidence when

[1] Rom. vii. 19.

we meet it skilfully and successfully by something more than a happy accident. And those who live a good life sometimes experience what is called the peace of God. This doctrine was expressed imperfectly by Aristotle, and has since then been generally neglected and misunderstood. It deserves careful examination for its own sake, but I do not believe that we can understand goodness by examining the emotions which accompany good action and are at once the product of, and the stimulus to, good action. We secure the emotions by acting well, but we do not act well by trying to secure the emotions. Hence it is unnecessary to discuss this aspect of the matter in any detail, although the emotional side of action has both practical and theoretical importance. We can help to produce the right emotional attitude, as every soldier knows, by practice and discipline, and the right emotional attitude is as necessary to efficiency in winning wars as it is to efficiency in playing golf.

An action is coherent or is a policy, so far as its parts are willed as parts of a whole. All action has some coherence if it is action at all, but in developed action there is greater unity and richer diversity. The abstract description of coherence is difficult and inadequate, but we have enough understanding of coherence to be able to judge whether or not a man is acting coherently, if we know his circumstances and point of view. The abstract analysis of coherence attempts only to bring out the nature of concepts which we already use. It will not enable us to apply these concepts mechanically, nor will it offer us any criterion of coherence. It helps us only to understand better what we do when we judge an action to be coherent. We have found that coherence must have the three characteristics of spontaneity, perseverance and efficiency. Spontaneity is the moment of immediacy, of impulse, of difference, of adjustment to the unique situation here and now. Perseverance is the moment of mediation or transcendence, of steadfastness or continence or unity of will. Efficiency or effectiveness is the unity of what is willed and what is done, of the subjective and objective sides of action. An absence of any of these characteristics means a disruption of the coherence of action, although none of these characteristics can ever be wholly absent and a complete disruption

of coherence is impossible. But we do not understand coherence as a sum of these characteristics. We understand these characteristics because we already know what coherence is.

We have discussed policy on an elementary level and have considered the simple ways in which volition organises itself as in playing tennis or in early rising. All these are the manifestation of reason as practical, reason as organising our willings and not merely our knowings. But just as the theoretical reason which organises our knowings is itself a knowing, so the practical reason which organises our willings is itself a willing. If it were not so it could not organise them, and reason would be merely the slave of the passions. But it is not a volition added to, or outside of, other volitions. It is in all volitions from the first and even in desires that seem merely momentary and merely brutal—what they are they are as organised and so far as reasonable. And practical reason does not organise them from without. It is in them, and they are in it. And the organisation or development is a difference in quality and not in mere quantity. Every volition, however momentary, and however like an animal impulse, becomes different in quality, as it takes its place in a wider policy and ceases to be something which is in and for itself. This difference seems to be best expressed by saying that there is in it a richer self.

But the theoretical reason which seeks to establish unity in diversity within our cognitive experience is not satisfied with the partial completion of its task. Its aims, if not its achievements, are infinite, it seeks the unity behind its partial theories, it cannot be satisfied by anything short of a complete system of coherent knowledge. Such is its very essence and nature as theoretical reason, and in the realisation of that nature it produces science and history and above all philosophy, which, however it may fail in the pursuit of its ideal, is always acutely conscious that no limited coherence, no partial whole, can satisfy the claims of thought. And the practical reason, which is another name for will, as the theoretical reason is another name for thought, works on precisely the same lines and towards the same kind of goal. It is the one self—the one reason and the one will—which

does both. The process of development is the same in kind as the process by which the immediate actions become developed policies. The self pursues at first not one policy but many, and these may be found by experience either to support one another, to work with one another into a whole, or to clash with one another in such a way that if one is realised the other cannot be realised, and so on. The will by its own inherent nature seeks ever a wider policy, a more coherent life, in which the different desires and policies may find their place. It may be a man's policy to earn his living, to win a lady's favour, to establish a reputation, to lead a life of amusement, and just because his will is a unity and his life is a whole, some of these policies may be consistent with one another and some may not. He comes to recognise gradually that what he seeks is not just one thing plus another thing or one thing after another thing, but a whole of which these may be parts, and he begins to will more coherently, so that in a wider willing these partial willings may find their place. The partial willings, the limited policies, were always elements in a wider and continuous whole, and it is because of this alone that any antagonism between them is possible, and because of this alone that the antagonism can be overcome. But the willing in which they are overcome is a unity in a richer and more profound sense than the willing in which they remain antagonistic. Similarly the contradiction of two theories exists only for one mind which comprehends them both, but the mind which has solved the contradiction has established its unity in a fuller sense, it has replaced the unity which may be called continuity by the unity which may be called coherence.

There are all sorts of degrees and gradations in the unity which men attain in their willing, and this unity is dependent alike on their powers of reflexion and on their powers of will, or rather this unity is nothing more and nothing less than their actual willing itself, which depends partly on their thinking as their thinking depends on it. Men drift into a policy of life, just as they drift into a limited policy like wearing an overcoat or carrying an umbrella. But the more developed policy demands a greater amount of intelligence and a greater activity of thought. Perhaps even in the

meanest of men there is some awareness of what they are doing, and some conscious search after a kind of unity in life. Or if that is rating human nature too high, if just as the thoughts of men tend to be confined within watertight compartments so their willings tend to be concerned with a number of different policies, yet there is generally worked out some sort of practical compromise, such that the different elements can remain in some sort of a whole, without a too glaring contradiction or a too palpable inconsistency. We may pursue relatively unrelated and unreconciled policies, yet in general while we pursue now fame and now pleasure and now affection, in a way that is somewhat haphazard and impulsive, we tend not to pursue any one policy in such a way that it makes the pursuit of our other policies impossible. Mark Antony may follow Cleopatra in her flight from the battle, a man or a woman may give up all for love, or imperil reputation and fortune by yielding to some sudden wild desire, but on the whole there is a good deal of prudence and worldly wisdom among men. And so far as there is this, there is an attempt to consider life as a whole, there is a will for a unified life—although we may be satisfied with a low form of unity, with a relatively poor achievement, and we may and do fail to live our lives with our whole heart. The very consciousness of failure is itself an indication that will is directed, if only partially and ineffectively, to a wider whole—not only when failure is due to our undertaking a task beyond our strength, but also when it is due to a too successful pursuit of some limited and minor policy.

Here again it is necessary to insist that the will to coherence need not be the realisation of a carefully thought-out plan, and need not attempt to produce a blank kind of uniformity or to establish a neat and logical system. On the contrary it may be most conspicuously present in practical people like the Romans or the English, who prefer momentary adjustments and working compromises to a cut and dried system which admits of no elasticity. English foreign policy, which is often thought by the English themselves to be merely a succession of muddles, is commonly regarded by continental critics as inspired by an almost diabolical clever-

ness and as manifesting an almost unbroken continuity. If the latter view were true, there could be no better illustration, both of the way in which coherence must contain within itself spontaneity, and of the difference between the false coherence, which is an abstract consistency prepared by an abstract thought, and the true coherence, which is the product of a genuinely coherent and yet spontaneous will.

Human life is rarely manifested in merely immediate momentary actions. No doubt if we are starving we may be conscious of little but the food before us, though a starving man may remember that he should eat slowly, and may even share his food with his friends. And again, if we are fleeing from a wild animal, we are unlikely to consider social conventions or to be conscious that the attempt to escape coheres —as it does—with a general policy of life. But moments of acute desire and overwhelming danger are comparatively rare. Eating and drinking are not usually the satisfying of mere brute desires, but are part of a general routine, necessary to our efficiency in life, offering us an agreeable pleasure and a background to social intercourse. The animal basis is always there, but the animal desire has become an element in an organised human life. If this is true as regards the satisfaction of merely animal desires, how much more true is it in regard to other things. The doctor who is visiting his patients, the soldier who is fighting for his country, the shopkeeper who is selling his goods—all these are acting in pursuit of a highly complicated policy which is a response to a highly complicated world.

Men, so far as they are men, will their actions as elements in a policy, they will their policies as elements in a wider policy, and they at least tend to have some sort of general policy of life in which all minor policies may have their place or part. And if we cared to speak of pleasure, we might say that the pleasure which accompanies all successful activity is altered in quality, as it accompanies a successful activity which is an element in a wider whole.

The last thing I wish to say in regard to policy is this. On the one hand it is characterised by a striving towards

a whole which cannot be satisfied short of the unification of a whole life. On the other hand its stuff comes to it from what seems to be blind desire, or if you prefer it from instinct, that is from blind desire which seems to be found also in the lower animals and is apparently independent of thought and even of experience. Most of our policies in life might be regarded as developments of particular instincts, the sexual instinct, the fighting instinct, the acquisitive instinct, and so on. But everything which has been said has been either misunderstood or disbelieved, if any impression remains that a policy is merely the gratification of an instinct, and that a policy of life is merely an attempt to gratify as many instincts as possible. The striving towards unity profoundly alters the stuff which it unites. There is no stuff at all except in so far as it is united, and the satisfaction of an animal instinct —which is even at its lowest a kind of policy—is worlds apart from a genuine human policy. Every manifestation of so-called instinct, however momentary, is willed differently when it is willed as an element in a policy, and still more when it is willed as an element in a policy of life. The instincts are not solid little bits which we fit into a whole like a picture puzzle. Rather they are the paints with which we have to paint our picture of life. The paints do indeed set us our limitations, for some of us have to paint with few colours and some with many, but there is never any question of laying the colours side by side in solid masses, as they lie side by side in a child's box of paints. The picture which we paint is a whole which determines the place of the colours, which gives to them a unique value in the whole, which enables them to give a unique value to the whole itself. The colours are profoundly affected by their place in the whole. Even as colours they are altered, both by being mixed with one another to produce new colours, and by deriving a certain quality from their relation to one another in the whole. And further, in the picture they are not merely colours, but contribute to a whole which has a meaning, which is a landscape or a portrait or an interior; and in so doing their character is transformed. The red colour becomes a flower, and the blue colour becomes a sky. The beauty which they have in themselves as they lie in the paint-box is nothing at all

in comparison with the beauty which they have in the picture And the picture is not a sum of colours, but is a picture or a work of art or a thing of beauty, whose beauty cannot be analysed into a sum of the beauty of its parts. The separate colours of which it is composed have lost their separateness, and have found a new character and value in the whole, a character and value which belongs to the whole rather than to them as parts. We may analyse the whole into its parts, and this may help us later to see the whole as a whole, but in the actual analysis we do not find or analyse the beauty. Even if the part may have a beauty in itself, that is a different beauty from its beauty in the whole, which is the beauty not of it but of the whole.

The analogy of music might be even more appropriate, for there the sounds with which we are to make our song do not exist anywhere, and are not to be found lying in a receptacle like a paint-box or contained within the walls of a piano. They are possibilities rather than actual things like paints, possibilities of some sort of musical instrument, and in this they are like the possibilities of action before we will.. And it is very manifest that in the actual sounding concrete music which we make and hear, their beauty is not that of isolated notes, but of notes in relation to one another and to a whole, so that they cease to be mere sounds, and become the vehicle and expression of human joy and human sorrow. Our desires are only the sounds which constitute the music of our life. Without them there would be no music, but music is not a sum of sounds, and still less a sum of previously given sounds which are merely arranged in a particular order. Similarly, our life is not a sum of momentary desires, and still less a sum of momentary desires which already existed before they were given a place and order in our actual living. Above all, the value or goodness of our life as willing, like the value or beauty of a piece of music, is not to be found in its parts taken as momentary and separate from one another, but in the whole which is not present at any moment, and yet is present in every moment. A painted picture may seem—although this is an illusion—to be a whole which is extended in space only, a whole whose character and value can exist in a moment of time, or can be indifferent to time. Our life

as willing cannot be thought of as a collection of pictures, but must be regarded rather on the analogy of a series of musical pieces actually performed, or, ideally, as one great and continuous piece of music retaining its identity in and through the different movements into which it is, and must be, divided.

CHAPTER VIII

THE INDIVIDUAL GOOD

THE goodness which we have discussed somewhat academically in its relation to relatively immediate action begins to take concrete shape in what we have called policies and especially in a policy of life. If we make a distinction between volition and its objects, there seem to be three kinds of goodness, firstly the goodness of objects or things, secondly the goodness which is the unity of volition and object and may be called efficiency or effectiveness, and thirdly the goodness which is the unity or consistency of volition and may be called continence or perseverance or perhaps better simply coherence. The last, which is inadequately described by the terms we have used, is the subject of our principal concern. The coherent will alone is concretely good. It is the source of the goodness of objects or things. Efficiency itself is present only in and through a coherent willing, and its goodness belongs to it only in relation to coherent willing. Coherent willing is genuinely concrete, it is not anything in abstraction from its object, and although we may feel obliged to recognise that it may produce results different from, and even opposed to, what it willed, it cannot be deprived of some measure of efficiency.

We are here examining goodness in relation to the individual taken by himself, and we are considering it only from the individual's own point of view. So far it is still relatively abstract, and is economic rather than moral goodness. Moral goodness seems to arise in the relations of individuals to one another, although perhaps it may be manifested also in the individual's relations to himself. Yet moral goodness must have in itself all the characteristics of economic goodness, since to be at all it must be willed by the individual. The continuity which we have found in all the development of will does not cease with morality. The more developed takes up the less developed into its own essential nature.

This remains true even where the moral will may override the merely economic will, and where what in a non-moral being would be economic good is to be condemned as moral evil.

The goodness of objects, which seems to be all-important when we consider a supposedly immediate willing, becomes at once less prominent as we reflect upon a self-transcendent or self-mediating will, such as is found in a policy and especially in a policy of life. The goodness of objects depends upon the kind of will which wills them.

Our subject is the goodness of the will, and we must touch rather lightly upon the many questions which are raised by the goodness of objects or things. It should be observed that objects or things have a richer and deeper goodness in relation to a social, and still more in relation to a moral will; but this further goodness will not be discussed in the present book since it can be worked out very easily by those who accept our general principles, and its exposition would carry no additional conviction to those who reject them.

The goodness which is supposed to belong to things in themselves is attributed for the most part to instruments or machines made by man, such as knives or motor-cars or ships. It is clear that this abstract goodness is relative to a purpose or will; it ceases to be abstract and becomes concrete, only as the instrument or machine is used in action. Concretely its goodness is relative to all the circumstances of its use. A ship is no good to us, if we have no water or do not wish to sail. If we are out to secure insurance money, the ship which is concretely good for us is the ship which is abstractly bad. Things are good for a purpose and good for a person, and it is in relation to the will of the individual that they are good or bad. Even their abstract goodness belongs to them in relation to some imagined abstract will.

The abstract goodness of instruments may be extended by analogy to other things. We speak of an animal as a good specimen of its kind, and this goodness is supposed to belong to it in itself. But here we seem to be postulating some sort of purpose either in it or in its creator, a certain ideal towards which it is striving or being directed. If we are not supposing

that it was made for a purpose, and if we are not unconsciously judging it in relation to some purpose of our own, such a usage is justifiable, only in so far as there is a certain analogy between organic life and genuine action. We have already observed that the processes of life look as if they were purposive and, if our view is right, just in so far as such processes seem to be policies, they must also seem to be good.

We sometimes call a thing good when it is well made, when more care has been taken in producing it than was necessary to make it an efficient instrument. An aeroplane or motor-car may have labour expended on its parts which is not necessary to the efficient running of it as a machine. Here perhaps we judge the goodness of the product by the thoroughness of the producer, or judge the whole process of production and product as one. It may be, however, that what we are judging in such cases is rather some sort of æsthetic value, and it is of beautiful things that we are most ready to believe they are good in themselves. This however raises questions about the nature of beauty. Here it can only be suggested that the goodness of beautiful things belongs to them as objects or instruments of æsthetic contemplation or imagination or intuition, which is itself also a kind of willing.

Generally speaking the goodness which seems to belong to things in themselves belongs to them, only in so far as we are justified in supposing that there is some sort of will whose objects or instruments they may be. A ship may be said to be good in itself, so far as someone could use it for sailing and might want to do so. But such a goodness is abstract. A ship is good concretely so far as it is actually used for sailing, so far as it is an instrument of a policy.

We must consider more closely the goodness of things which belongs to them as objects of an actual will or desire.

Anything which is an object of desire is so far good to the person who desires it, and it is good just as the object of desire. The word ' object ' is ambiguous, since it may apply either to the object to which the desire is directed, or to the whole action which would be the fulfilment of the desire. A child desires the moon, and the moon is so far good to the child. The object may be regarded either as the moon, or it may be regarded as the having or possessing or holding or touching

or even the eating of the moon, according as we interpret the nature of the child's desire. In actual willing as opposed to mere desiring, we may say that the object is always the whole action, including of course its willed consequences. But mere desiring like mere imagination may have an object which is curiously unrelated to the rest of life and seems to be shut up within its own confines. I may desire that my college should continue to be a self-governing, self-perpetuating society of scholars five hundred years after I am dead, as it was five hundred years before I was born. Such a desire may be directed to a state of affairs which has little or no relation to any contemplated action of mine, or to any consequences of that action.

Hence the goodness of a thing may belong to it either as the actual object of my desire or as the instrument of my desire. If I simply desire something to be, it is the object of my desire. If I desire to make it or to keep it in being, it is part of the object of my desire. If I desire to use it, it is rather the instrument of my desire, although it must be in order to be used, and so far perhaps it must be desired to be, and therefore must be part of the object of my desire. To say this is however to suppose that we may desire a thing to be when it already is, and perhaps we do so only by transporting ourselves in imagination into a world in which it is not.

If a thing is good as the object or instrument of my desire, this does not mean that its goodness is beyond criticism, as it would be if desire were something complete in itself instead of being an element in a spiritual life. Criticism judges the real, as opposed to the apparent, goodness of the thing by considering whether the thing can be or is the instrument of an actual policy or policy of life. The moon as desired seems good, but as it is impossible either to hold or to eat the moon, its goodness is only apparent, and desire for the moon is taken as typical of all vain and impossible desires. The desire, it would seem, must be capable of realisation, if its object is to be good. A thing cannot be good to eat, unless it is at least eatable. And furthermore, the desire must be capable of persisting, we must be able to look back upon its realisation with approval and to experience it again when suitable conditions arise. It is in this sense that strawberries, for

example, are good to most human beings. It may be thought that their goodness is simply their pleasantness, and we have no objection to this language provided it is realised that if strawberries are good as giving us a certain pleasure, this pleasure is good as a thing which we desire and desire with persistence. Even on this level strawberries are really good as the instruments of a policy, and the same applies to all food and drink. But good food and good drink means not merely food and drink which is pleasant. It means also, and perhaps even more, food and drink which is wholesome, which may be the instrument of a whole policy of living. It is by reference to the wider policy that we judge—even from the merely individual point of view—what we may call the real goodness or badness of food. Some might attach more importance to the pleasantness of food, but that would be because eating pleasant food was one of their chief policies in life. Opinions may vary, and do vary, on this matter according to our different policies; but no one would say that poisoned food was really good, however well it tasted, and most of us would regard absinthe as bad, however pleasant may be its taste or after-effects. It may be good as the instrument of a policy of pursuing unique sensations, but it is bad as the instrument of a policy of leading a coherent life.

It seems then that although the goodness of things is relative to will in the widest sense (which includes desire), yet it does not follow that the object of immediate desire or will is really good. Its real goodness or badness depends upon the character of the will which wills or rejects it. A thing may seem good because it is desired, but may be really bad because the satisfaction of the desire would introduce confusion into our whole policy of life. It may seem bad, as when we shrink from pain, and yet be really good when we submit to an operation in order to preserve our health and activity. A thing is really good or bad, not by its relation to a momentary whim, but by relation to a firm policy and especially to a policy of life. That is one of the reasons why those who have no real policy of life are apt to find nothing very good.

The goodness of things, as it were, comes out in actual willing, and this we have called concrete goodness. Good food is no good to me if I cannot eat, indeed the best of food

may be positively bad if I am sick. Yet if we know something of the desires of men, the functions of their bodies, the composition of meat and fruit and so on, we can make general statements as to what food is good or bad in various senses, or again as to the food which is good for infants of six months old, or even as to the food which is good for a particular individual in a particular state of health. All this is a sort of abstract goodness which is apprehended independently of the actual presence of a desire or volition for the thing or class of things which is thought good. But this does not mean that goodness belongs to things independently of willing altogether. We may indeed say that a thing is good for a particular kind of body in a particular kind of stage, *e.g.* grass is good for a sick cat ; but this is a mere statement of the cause which will produce health as an effect, unless we suppose, either literally or metaphorically, that there is some sort of will to health either in the cat or in ourselves. All these judgements of value have, I believe, no meaning whatever except in relation to some sort of will. No doubt in the light of them we may will differently, but they are in essence posterior and not prior to actual volition, so far as they are genuine judgements of value and not merely of cause and effect. And as we have said such abstract goodness has to come out in actual volition, if it is to be real and concrete.

The abstract goodness of things depends on whether they can be willed as elements in, or instruments of, a policy, whether they can be willed with more or less of the self. Their concrete goodness depends on whether or not they are so willed. It is our will which makes things good or bad, although our will is not arbitrary and must act in accordance with the physical laws of the universe and especially the laws of cause and effect.

Broadly speaking we determine the goodness or badness of an object of desire by reference to actions which, if not actual, are at least possible. And perhaps we cannot judge safely except by reference to actual actions, since experience is often very different from what we expect it to be. But although there must always be some sort of reference to actual volition, it may be possible in some degree to judge the goodness or badness of objects of desire within the realm of desire itself.

There may be more or less of the self in a desire. The desire for the moon is a childish whim, the desire of a shallow, ignorant, and momentary self. The love of Dante for Beatrice, if it was desire and not simply worship, was the desire of his whole soul. It was the expression of one of the greatest and richest of human selves. It would be folly to say that the object of such a desire was not good, because the satisfaction of the desire was impossible. What Dante desired was good, even if the satisfaction of the desire was impossible, and even if its satisfaction would have brought bitter disillusion. And if we turn to criticise the desire itself, there may be a place in life for desire of the unattainable, and such desire may itself be good. Desires are in some ways like things, they come to us whether we will or no, and we can control them only within narrow limits, although we may prevent almost any desire from issuing in action. We can judge desires, as we can judge things, by the place which they have in our whole life. Perhaps we should all seek to be free from desires which we can never satisfy, but it may be that without them we should not be ourselves. Such desires may warp our natures, and to some extent they always do warp our natures. Superficial critics have expressed surprise that the poet of ideal love could be a victim of sensual and trivial passions. But perhaps this was the price he had to pay for his endless longing, although he could gain from it nothing but self-contempt. And perhaps Dante himself would not have been willing to lose his desire, even although its presence brought him only pain. There is a kind of suffering which is more precious than easy pleasure. And desire of this kind may, if we are worthy of it,—and perhaps we cannot have it without some sort of worthiness—deepen our experience, and sting us into life. So great a desire is bound to have some sort of outlet, and in the case of Dante it has enriched the world.

In the main however we judge the goodness of things by reference to an actual willing or a coherent policy. Even a thing which we make is not judged good primarily because we will to make it, but because we can use it in our further living. The goodness of a ship lies in sailing, although it may also be good just because it is fun to make it And the goodness of things is judged in the main from the standpoint

of efficiency. Things are good as enabling us to do what we will to do. But they may be judged also by reference to what we have called coherence. Whisky is good to a man who wants to get drunk, but it is bad to the man whose incapacity to resist its attractions is a source of incoherence in his life.

If a thing is good perhaps its causes must also be good, and in a sense when we do anything we make use of the whole universe, which is so far good for us. But on the whole we might think it a little disrespectful to the universe to call it good in this sense, and we speak rather of the goodness of those parts of it which we directly use or desire or make. Nevertheless the coherent will seeks to build up a world which is the object of desire and the instrument of further life. In so far as it succeeds, we may say that the world it makes is good, and even that the world in general is good from our point of view, so far as such an achievement is possible. If we are in a situation where achievement of this kind is impossible, we regard such a situation as bad, and may even attribute this badness to the universe as a whole. We do so especially when it seems to us, rightly or wrongly, that the bad situation is unnecessary, that it might have been otherwise. Few of us blame the universe because we suffer from the limitations of men, but a man who is born a cripple may be very bitter against the world. Yet we must always adjust ourselves to our situation if there is no way of changing it, and even in suffering we may find some sort of good. No wise man can contemplate the problem of pain with equanimity and still less with indifference, but there is a limit even to human pain, and there is release in death.

The goodness of spiritual activities like intuiting and thinking may to some extent be judged like that of things, in so far as spiritual activities are desired or willed. But it is perhaps better to regard them rather as willing than as willed, as it is better to regard willing itself as just willing, although it also may be desired and willed in the same kind of way as thinking or intuiting.

In order to avoid misunderstanding it must again be explicitly stated that here, as throughout this chapter, we are taking the individual policy as ultimate, and seeing how

even on this level there is a difference between the good and the bad, a difference which depends on the character of the will which wills them. This statement must be made subject to two qualifications. The first is that we will differently in different circumstances and with different knowledge, and that therefore from one point of view it is necessary to recognise the contribution made by the environment to the goodness of a thing. Every will works, or seems to work, against a background of nature, and the possibility of its endurance depends partly on that background. I cannot, humanly speaking, keep on willing to hit somebody, if he is very much stronger than I am, and can hurt me very much more than I can hurt him; and again a small boy cannot will to keep on smoking, if smoking always makes him sick. This however does not make goodness and badness independent of the will, and there is still a real difference between goodness and badness which arises in relation to the will of an isolated individual, although perhaps social intercourse would be necessary to bring even this difference into consciousness. The second qualification, and the more important of the two, is this: just as what is good for a relatively impulsive being becomes bad for a being which takes longer views and has a steady policy, so too what is good for a merely isolated will may become bad for a social, and above all for a moral, being. Perhaps this kind of badness—when applied to actions—should alone be called evil. It is a richer kind of badness, because it is opposed to moral good. Yet it must retain something of its old goodness, and it is the goodness of evil (even if this goodness is only, as it were, the shadow of our desires) which makes it so terrible a rival to the moral good.

We need say little of the second kind of goodness which arises not from the coherence within our will, but from a coherence between what we will and what we effect. We call it, perhaps inadequately, efficiency or effectiveness. Our action is not merely our own, but involves the cooperation of the universe. And this fact is borne in upon us by the experience of failure, which may be due, not to lack of coherence in our willing, but to lack of knowledge, to lack of power, or to lack of skill.

In some ways the lack of knowledge may be itself regarded as a lack of power or skill. Knowledge is power, and as we have seen, skill in action means a special way of knowing, a power of grasping what is relevant to action, and of distinguishing between the possible and the impossible. Yet in another way failure of the kind we are considering may be thought to be due always to lack of knowledge rather than to lack of skill or power. If we really knew what was within our power, whether natural or acquired, we should will within our limitations. And any failure which was not due to lack of knowledge would then be due to the incoherence of our will. For although we might still play bad golf, we should do so deliberately as part of our policy of life, and in this there would be neither failure nor incoherence of any kind. In such a case abstractly bad golf would become concretely good.

It is hard to say whether failure of the kind we are considering is due to ignorance or error. We may step upon the ice thinking it will bear, or we may step upon it not knowing whether it will bear or not. In the latter case perhaps our volition itself is indeterminate. We are prepared for, and in a sense will, either result, although it may be that we desire only one result. However, the most obvious case is where we will something which turns out contrary to what we expected. We will to walk on the ice, and we fall in. In this case the incoherence is due to a mistake about the strength of the ice. Even when we did not explicitly deny the possibility that the ice was too thin, we may perhaps say that the incoherence of our action implies and is the product of an intellectual error.

If there were no such thing as genuinely intellectual error, then the only incoherence in our actions would be incoherence in our willing. This is the view definitely maintained by Signor Croce, who has amended, and in my opinion improved, the doctrine of Descartes. He holds that it is impossible to err in good faith, that error is always practical, that it is due ultimately to the incursion of the will itself into the sphere of theory, that it is the substitution of willing for thinking, and that in the end all error is deliberate lying, the repetition of a form of words which we do not genuinely think. The

theory is ingenious and attractive, and we must all recognise that much error is due to the predominance of practical over theoretical interests, and looks like the mere repetition of words in the place of thinking. How for example could we really think that two plus two are equal to five ? Is not such an error due to the fact that we are not really thinking ? And may we not say that instead of thinking we are merely doing something, perhaps repeating words without meaning ? It is impossible to do justice to the theory in this connexion, but the manifest difficulty of it is that to substitute action for thought or to repeat a form of words is not an error at all, unless at the same time we think that what we are doing is to think the truth. It may seem that we cannot be thinking if we are thinking erroneously, but equally it seems that we cannot be in error if we are not thinking at all, or even that we cannot be in error unless we think that our error is the truth. But whatever be the ultimate truth in this matter, we are justified in saying on a common sense level that incoherence in our action may be due to some theoretical mistake.

We are obliged to recognise empirically that we act and must act with limited powers and limited knowledge. This involves the possibility of failure and of error. Nor can we avoid our limitations by recognising them. We cannot escape error by recognising in all our thinking that our thinking may be erroneous. However much we do so, we must still consider the error involved in thinking two plus two equal to five very different from the error that may be involved in thinking two plus two equal to four. Incoherence may be introduced into our willing by a world which we misunderstand and cannot adequately master. We have called coherence or incoherence of this kind 'efficiency' and 'inefficiency', or 'effectiveness' and 'ineffectiveness'. But in a way it is more like an event, something that happens to us and is beyond our control. So far its goodness or badness is like the goodness or badness of things, and we might almost describe it as good or bad luck.

Yet it shades into that coherence or incoherence which we have described as belonging to the will itself. If men are really subject to irresistible impulses, then although this may

seem incoherence within the will itself, it is an event like an earthquake which may hurl the structure that we are building into dust. And if there are irresistible impulses, there are presumably degrees of resistibility in the impulses which can be resisted. This must be the view even of the determinist who does not regard all impulses as equally irresistible. On the other hand the knowledge and skill—if not the power—by which we secure coherence between what we will and what we effect may themselves be increased and developed by the coherent will. If in a situation which we knew was likely or certain to arise, we fail to act effectively through lack of knowledge or skill which we could easily have acquired, then our failure is due to incoherence of will, just as much as if we yield to a sudden temptation. There can be no clearer example of improvidence or imprudence or inconsequence of will. Efficiency or effectiveness of action seems to be a mixture of good luck and what the Scots call 'good guidance'. It is largely the product of the coherent will, it is itself a coherent willing, but it is also the product of circumstances. It is good as desired, good as willed, and it is also good as willing. The coherent will has always some effectiveness, yet we must distinguish effectiveness from coherence of willing.

Perhaps we should also distinguish efficiency from effectiveness. A man may be efficient when he is doing nothing, but he can be effective only when he acts. Efficiency is an abstract quality which we postulate on the basis of actual effectiveness. An efficient man has the requisite knowledge, power and skill, but he need not be using them. An effective man is actually using them, and securing the results at which he aims.

All willing effects something, and the coherent will always effects something. The coherent will has also efficiency, and efficiency is itself a product of the coherent will. But it is possible to have a coherent will, and yet to be inefficient in certain spheres through lack of knowledge or power or skill. It is also possible to be ineffective either through lack of general efficiency or through sheer bad luck in a particular situation. But the greater our efficiency the less place is left to mere luck.

Hence although coherent willing is always good, it need not have all the goodness which it would have in a being not subject to limitations. The man who fights in order to save

himself or his children from death is acting coherently, he is fulfilling his policy, his willing is good. But clearly he may fail because he is an inefficient fighter, through lack of physical strength or acquired skill or scientific knowledge. Even if he is an efficient fighter, he may fail through sheer bad luck, although the odds may be fairly even. In real life the hero as well as the villain may slip at the critical moment of the fight. The goodness of the coherent will does not mean that it is always effective, and this is important when we come to deal with the moral will. A man may be moral, although he is stupid and incompetent and unlucky.

None the less the coherent will aims at being effective, and its coherence is the chief condition of its being effective. Stupidity and incompetence may be diminished by coherent willing, and they are often more immoral than deliberate crimes. Being moral is not an excuse for being inefficient.

It need only be added that all men recognise efficiency as a kind of goodness. We say that a thing is well or efficiently done, that a man is a good or effective speaker, a good or efficient craftsman. We sometimes even apply the phrase 'a good man' to a generally competent or efficient person. If we want to know what efficiency is in any particular sphere, we must go to the experts in the subject, to the masters of the craft. It certainly means more than happening to secure a good result, and it means more than being consistently industrious or persevering. Moreover, efficiency is never merely the fulfilling of an abstract plan or the putting into action of what is thought theoretically to be good. Anyone who has learned to dance or to drive a motor-car with reasonable competence is perfectly well aware that, so far from efficient action being dominated by thinking or preceded by a clear and detailed apprehension of what we are about to do, we are not really efficient until we can act without thinking. This does not mean that we are ignorant of the situation, or of what we are doing, or even that we may not increase our efficiency as the result of analysis. It does mean that our intellectual account of efficiency is abstract. It is in the ultimate resort subordinate to, and derived from, the efficient action, as the efficient action is not subordinate to, or derived from, it. We acquire a kind of feeling for action, we have

some sort of practical insight in our hands or in our feet. As Aristotle well said: the ultimate decision depends upon intuition.[1]

We may now turn to discuss that goodness which is found in willing as coherent. This is the fundamental or ultimate goodness, since the goodness of things, and even that of efficiency itself, is dependent upon the coherent or good will. Efficiency itself is bad, if we can carry out our policy of life better by being inefficient. And this may easily happen within some limited field. Efficiency at drinking or at making love may wreck a whole life. But broadly speaking the coherent will aims at and secures efficiency, and we must now set aside the problems of efficiency and inefficiency, effectiveness and ineffectiveness, and suppose that the willing we are about to examine is both efficient and effective.

The possibility of incoherence or disruption appears to be contained within the very character of will as a policy lasting through time. It has in it a moment of unity or consistency, it seeks to be one with itself in its continual adjustments to a continually changing situation. It has in it also a moment of impulse or difference, it is not only one through time, it is also and necessarily this unique volition here and now. The two moments are necessary to one another. A policy without the impulse of the moment would become a mere formal consistency without content of any kind. It would be a mere will to be consistent. On the other hand pure impulse, if we may speak of such a thing, would have no consistency and no duration, it would be merely immediate, and as we have seen it would be nothing. Without impulse policy is empty unity. Without policy impulse is unorganised diversity. The one is empty form, the other is blind matter. Neither has any reality apart from the other. The only reality is actual volition which is always policy and impulse, or rather is policy which is both policy and impulse through and through.

It is this double character of volition which enables it to break up into antagonistic elements, and gives rise to the opposition between good and bad wills. Impulsiveness may prevail over consistency, the momentary over the abiding

[1] *ἐντῇ αἰσθήσει ἡ κρίσις. Eth. Nic.* 1109 *b*24.

will. This is perhaps the typical or normal example of the bad will, although we must observe here, for later consideration, that a wooden consistency may prevail over spontaneity, and that this is a possible though a rarer kind of bad willing. In the more ordinary case—and this applies to all policies but especially to a policy of life—we know the wider situation, and yet in spite of our knowledge we react to the narrower situation, because of something not organised or rationalised in our will. We are actively engaged in our life policy of burglary, but the sight of a decanter arouses in us the desire to drink. Drinking is perfectly adjusted to the narrower situation, to the immediate presence of the decanter. We can drink if we want to, there is no doubt about that. But it is ill adjusted to the wider situation in which drunken men make poor burglars and are liable to find themselves in prison. To the willing of our policy drinking is evil and is to be rejected. If we reject it consciously and deliberately, that is evil overcome. If we fail to reject it, the momentary volition overcomes the more abiding volition, and prudence is overwhelmed by folly. This is the most elementary instance of the victory of evil, a victory which is difficult to understand—so much so that men have attributed it to a failure in knowledge, and have sought to transfer the defects of willing to the theoretical activity, just as others have sought to transfer the defects of thinking to the practical activity. But however unintelligible it may seem, it appears none the less to be the victory of a blind and irrational and momentary will over a will which is intelligent and rational and more abiding than it. When the momentary situation has ceased to be, when we wake up to find ourselves in prison, when the decanter is no longer present to stimulate desire, our more abiding will reasserts itself, and we say that we were not ourselves, that the will which asserted itself was not our genuine will but an intruder and a tyrant, that our lower self prevailed over our higher, our temporary over our permanent self, or that passion prevailed over our will. We were carried away by the impulse of the moment, we failed to repress something that was not ourselves.

This does not mean, and cannot mean, that what we did was merely something that happened to us and not an action of our own. If it were merely an unfortunate accident like

happening to be seen by a policeman, we should regret it, but not in the same way. We should not blame ourselves and charge ourselves with folly. Our action was still our own, and it was a policy and not mere impulse or passion. But in such an experience it seems as if a self or a will which transcends the moment as it were contracted itself, brought itself within narrower limits, sank back again into that relative immediacy out of which it arose and out of which it will arise again. However active or intense a bad action may be, it is always on this level the action of a narrower or a lesser self, a self with a narrower vision and a more limited will. And it is evil precisely because it is the activity of a narrower self. This is still true even if it happens to produce good results. We do not judge the goodness even of the economic or individual will merely by the results which it happens to produce.

This failure of the will must be sharply distinguished from a mere alternation of willings each of which is good to itself and evil to the other. There is such a thing as genuine change of will and genuine alternation between willings which are on the same level. But such change and such alternation we do not mistake for the triumph of the relatively good over the relatively evil, and of the relatively evil over the relatively good. If there were a mere alternation of volitions, we could not say that either was bad, unless we said simply that each was bad relatively to the other, or that each was good when present and bad when absent. We might indeed say, from an external point of view, that it was bad to alternate in this way, and that such alternation should be condemned. But if a being were wholly absorbed in one action and then wholly absorbed in another, we should not call such a being bad, it would simply be what it was. It is bad and its willing is bad, only if there is in it a higher will to unity, which transcends the moment and is opposed to the alternation even in the moment of alternation itself. We cannot blame a butterfly for being a butterfly and not a human being. When the moth flies into the candle, that is—so far as we can tell—its misfortune and not its fault.

Hence there can be no evil apart from the presence of a wider or higher or richer self. The evil action is willed, it is perfectly adjusted to its own situation, it is within its own

limits a perfectly organised whole. We cannot speak of a narrower self unless there is a wider self, nor of a narrower willing unless there is a wider willing. But a will cannot be except in willing. How can there be a wider will which yet does not will? Surely the only will is the narrower will, the only willing is the narrower willing. And if that is so, there is no evil but only good. At the time when it was done, what was done was willed by the only will there was, and as such it was good. It may not be willed later, and it may not have been willed earlier, but this merely means that it was willed at the time it was willed and not at any other time. And this may be said of any action whatsoever.

There is a sense in which this is true, as it is true that an error is not an error for the person who falls into the error. So far as there is willing there is good, and the evil is evil only in relation to another, and a wider or higher, will. Yet this does not mean that there is no evil but only a succession of different goods. There is no insuperable difficulty in the fact that the higher will is at the moment inactive and therefore so far unreal. The difficulty arises only from our habit of regarding spiritual activities as if they were merely things, or objects, made out of solid bits which are just outside one another, so that one ceases when another begins. Such a view renders coherent willing as unintelligible as incoherent willing, it makes goodness and badness alike disappear from the world. Coherence is possible only because one and the same will can be manifested in and through differences, and it is possible only because one and the same will can be manifested in and through time. Time does not break up a policy into a series of policies which are just different. We can will our minor policies as parts of a whole policy, precisely because we will them at different times. And just as consistency is possible between willings at different times, so inconsistency is possible between willings at different times. As the consistency is internal to the one continuous willing, so the inconsistency is internal to the one continuous willing. The higher will must be manifested before there can be a lower will, but, when once it is manifested, the fact that it is not manifested now does not mean that it has just ceased to be. It lives in the present. It may slumber but it does not die.

Coherence, as here understood, does not lie in something external that precedes or accompanies or follows a volition, and it does not lie in any kind of cognition of our volition, but in the volition itself. The same is true of the incoherence of volition. Our impulsive action is not incoherent merely because we remember a previous and wider volition at the moment when we yield to impulse. We can make clearer to ourselves by reflexion the coherence or incoherence of our volition, but the coherence or incoherence must lie in the volition itself at the actual moment of willing. And we seem to have an awareness of coherence and incoherence in the actual enjoyment of willing. This is possible only because willing as well as knowing transcends the moment, and without this there would be no sense in talking about a partial or narrow or weak or bad will. The bad will, like the good will, is the will of a self which transcends the moment, which is one through time, which establishes or fails to establish the coherence made possible by its continuity, by the fact that it is not a sum of parts.

When we say that the higher self may slumber but does not die, we are speaking only of the ordinary human experience. Such a statement would not apply to irresistible impulses, if there are such, nor to moments of madness. And it may be that a long course of drugs or drink may smother our higher self and reduce us to the level of brutes. When that is so, we may speak of the will which produced this condition as evil, but we cannot speak in the same way of the volitions which are the outcome of this condition. The will of a madman is no more evil than the will of a tiger, and some courses of action may result in madness. We judge a man's will only by reference to the higher self which has been actually present in his life, and is still present, although it is not at the moment manifested in his action. In all this there may be degrees and gradations, but the general principle is sufficiently clear.

It is not our business to explain how it is possible for the impulsive to prevail over the coherent will. Incoherent willing has not the intelligibility which belongs to coherent willing, just as false or erroneous thinking has not the intelligibility which belongs to true thinking. But incoherent willing has some intelligibility, just in so far as it has some coherence,

and if it had no coherence at all it would not be an action. Similarly if error were completely incoherent, it would not be error but just nonsense—unless we hold that complete incoherence is below even the level of nonsense. But incoherence seems to arise inevitably as we struggle or evolve from the coherence of physical things or objects to the coherence of a rational spirit or subject. We are neither animals nor gods but men. That is to say we are animals becoming divine, and sometimes we seem to arise into what we shall perhaps be to-morrow. But except when we are mad or imbecile, we do not cease to be men, and the impulsive or semi-animal will prevails over a human will which does not cease to be real because it is conquered, which could not be conquered unless it were real.

Good and evil must lie in the present will, but not in the present will taken as something merely immediate or shut up within itself. The good will is not just another impulsive or immediate will side by side with the evil will. There is a genuine difference in the character of the willings. We judge all willing by its place in the whole, but not in the whole as it exists merely for an external observer. The whole must somehow exist for and in the present willing. The good action, taken as relatively momentary, is that in which a wider willing is manifested, as well as that which fits into a wider willing. The bad action is that in which a wider willing is suppressed, as well as that which is incapable of fitting into a wider willing.

The presence of a policy, of a coherent willing or richer self, is necessary before we can say that an action is bad, is a fault and not merely a misfortune. A fault is our own badness, a misfortune is merely something that happens to us. Even the badness of misfortune implies a spirit which dislikes what happens, or at the least would dislike it if it had sufficient knowledge. We think it a misfortune that the moth should fly into the flame of the candle, because we assume that the moth does not want to be burned. We do not think it a misfortune that ice should melt in the sun, because we do not think that ice has any kind of will one way or the other; and we do not attribute badness of any kind to a thing except in relation to some sort of will.

Perhaps we can say that for a policy to be present in a life it must have been actually willed or manifested in action. A policy which is never willed at all is an intellectual abstraction, something formulated in words, conceived in imagination, an object perhaps of some momentary impulse or desire. We can hardly be said to judge ourselves by such a policy, though it may easily be our policy to indulge in such vain aspirations, and even to enjoy the luxury of self-condemnation by reference to such unreal standards. To do this is to live in a world of romantic imagination, it is poetry rather than life, it may be good or bad as poetry, and it may be good or bad as it furthers or hinders our policy or policies of life. But a policy which is a policy of action, and not of merely contemplating action, is not our policy until we have willed it, although it may be our policy even if we have willed it but seldom. Even to have willed it once is to have made a genuine difference to our lives, and supplies us with a concrete standard by which we judge ourselves, so long as we do not genuinely substitute for it another policy and another standard. If we have once attained a greater fullness or richness or coherence of living, we are conscious later of something lacking in our more impulsive and incoherent and superficial volitions. If our more fundamental willing were never manifested at all, the trivial series of actions would be good, good, that is, for a creature of such a trivial nature.

It is true that even in our triviality we may be able to conceive a more fundamental willing, especially if we can enter in imagination into the experience of stronger men. But the conception of such a willing would tend to be for us relatively empty of content, like the artist's conception of better pictures than he can paint, or the philosopher's conception of a better philosophy than he can think. And such a conception, empty and fruitless as it is, is the conception of a being which transcends its own temporary actions or imaginings or thinkings. The goodness at which we aim, and by which we judge ourselves, is a goodness which it is possible for us to attain. And while we may hope and struggle to achieve something better than anything we know, its possibility and character alike have meaning for us only by reference to goods which we have actually achieved.

What characterises a policy as distinct from a merely impulsive action is not the time through which it lasts, but rather the extent to which a wider self is manifested in it. And the same is true of the goodness of an action. A thing is not whiter because it lasts for a long time, and an action is not better because it, or the policy of which it is a part, lasts for a long time. Yet the richness of the self is shown by the endurance of its policies, and the continuation of a policy is a rough empirical test of the goodness of the actions in which the policy is manifested. Similarly, although a judgement is not truer because it is part of a chain of reasoning, but because of the amount of thought which is concentrated within its borders, yet a judgement which is part of a train of thought is apt to contain more truth than a judgement which exists in relative isolation from the rest of experience.

Again, it is an empirical test of the goodness of an action whether we can come back upon it afterwards and approve of it, and a similar test applies to the truth of a judgement. But that is very manifestly an external sign of goodness or truth and not the essence of it. It serves however to bring out a certain timelessness, a certain transcendence of the moment, in the nature of value. So far as a judgement is true its truth is permanent, and so far as an action is good its goodness is permanent. But we cannot always re-do our actions in quite the same way that we can re-think our thoughts. Even as regards thought we may become unable to re-think what we thought once, and a man may still more easily become incapable of a steadfastness of will which once was his. We may fall permanently below our highest achievements in thought and action, we may even fall so far below them as to misunderstand them and to despise them, but this does not mean that our previous estimate of them was necessarily untrue. If we degenerate enough we may become unconscious of our own degeneration. The case is the same in principle as that in which madness descends upon us either through our misfortune or through our fault.

But here we are beginning to trench upon a discussion of the judgement of value, and before we enter upon this we must

say something of the badness of a will in which wooden consistency prevails over spontaneity of action.

The crudest case of this is when a man engaged in carrying out a policy persists in what he is doing through a kind of blind doggedness, although the circumstances have changed and success is impossible. This kind of weakness is comparatively rare, it has it in a certain strength or condition of strength, but it is none the less weakness. It belongs to men who lack creative genius in action, who meet like situations in the same wooden way without regard to finer shades of difference. It is particularly conspicuous in those who try to guide their actions by mechanical rules.

Sometimes this way of proceeding may be due to mere lack of skill or lack of knowledge, but then it is a misfortune and not a fault, except in so far as some sort of effort might remedy the lack. We are concerned however with the case which we feel to be our own fault, and it looks as if we might have too much consistency as well as too much spontaneity in action.

This is however an illusion. Spontaneity and consistency are not opposed to one another, but each is necessary for the full realisation of the other. The spontaneity which has less of a consistent self in it is a lesser spontaneity, and the consistency which has less spontaneity in it is a lesser consistency. We are indeed describing a real difference between men, when we say that one man has too much consistency and another too much spontaneity, but we are describing it rather superficially. In particular the apparent excess of consistency is really a failure in consistency. Consistency or coherence, as we have seen, must be manifested in differences, and not in a blind repetition of the same act. A consistent policy, while adjusted to a situation going beyond that of the moment, is nevertheless consistent in being differently adjusted to each changing state of the situation as it is manifested here and now. That is to say it is consistent in and through different actions adjusted to the momentary changes of a more than momentary situation. When a new factor intervenes and a man fails to adjust himself to the change, he is failing to carry out his policy consistently; he is letting a blind sort of momentum carry him on; he is acting not rationally but irrationally;

he is manifesting not a wider will but a narrower will; he is acting in a narrower situation, although he is aware that the real situation is wider than that to which his response is adjusted. His action is the product of impulse rather than of coherent will, although the impulse is not, as it usually is, adjusted to the momentary situation, but is adjusted rather to the situation as it was or as he expected it to be. The impulse is the kind of impulse which is possible only to a being which transcends the moment, but it is none the less a kind of incoherent impulse, just as much as the yielding to a sudden temptation.

We may ask in this case also where we are to find the wider or richer will which is overcome. We must find it, as ever, in the actual policies which are willed differently as the situation changes, and we must remember that these are still alive in the activity which is one throughout its differences and even throughout its failures. If a man had never willed such a policy he would not blame himself for his present action, or consider it bad in the sense of being a fault. But this kind of fault is possible only for a being which has genuine policies, and such a being has always a standard by which its present actions are felt to be deficient. It is possible to be a butterfly and not to know any better, but it is not possible to will a policy incoherently without knowing any better. Some men may indeed be so obtuse as to fail to see the finer shades of a situation even after they have acted in it, but in that case the judgement of badness is an external judgement. To themselves their action was good, and it continues to be good even although it seems by some incalculable accident to have had unfortunate results. This happens especially to men who are guided by intentions, and try to get their willing over before the actual situation arises. Successful action always means that we must not follow a plan too rigidly, but must wait for inspiration from what we may call the feel of the actual situation. This is especially true when we are dealing with our fellow men.

We may be glad that we acted upon a spontaneous impulse inconsistent with our policy, simply because it happened to have good results, but this we regard as good fortune rather than as good willing. And even in this case we regard it as

good fortune, because it fits in with a policy although it was not willed to do so. When we approve our spontaneous and seemingly inconsistent action as itself good, we are not really preferring spontaneity to consistency. When we say that organisation is interfering with spontaneity, we may seem to be preferring momentary impulse to coherent willing, but we are really doing exactly the reverse. What we are doing is to approve as good a policy of spontaneity, and although it may be our policy to be spontaneous, that does not make it any less of a policy. Indeed it makes it more of a policy, for every policy seeks to include differences in its unity, and this policy seeks to include richer differences within its unity. It may of course fail to do so, as any policy may fail, but in that case we have to seek another and a more successful policy. None the less the approval of spontaneity is not the disapproval of policy. It means rather that we regard spontaneity as good in so far as it is the expression of a policy which we will and in willing approve.

Hence we identify the goodness of willing with its coherence. Willing is good—we are considering only the isolated individual and trying to judge things from his point of view—in so far as it is the manifestation of a coherent policy, and especially of a coherent policy of life. It is bad in so far as it is, in spite of its internal coherence, opposed to a wider and more coherent policy, and especially to a coherent policy of life.

CHAPTER IX

THE INDIVIDUAL GOOD (*continued*)

We are now in a better position to understand the way in which judgements of goodness and badness have their meaning only in relation to some sort of willing. Willing as we have seen varies greatly in its character even when we consider it abstractly in the isolated individual, and in this we may perhaps find both the explanation of the different meanings which may be expressed in different judgements of goodness, and also the justification for applying the one concept of goodness in so many different contexts and relations.

In the case of things (and of spiritual activities treated as things) the goodness which we attribute to them in judgement seems always to imply some sort of relation to willing, but it need not refer to a willing which is actively manifested here and now. Judgements of goodness may range from what is little more than a cold recognition of cause and effect—*e.g.* sunshine is good (for health), or this knife is good (for cutting) —to the passionate expression of admiration for that which is the object of our actual desire or the instrument of our actual policy. We are not yet concerned with a social or a moral world, but even at this stage actual desire or policy seems to make a claim upon the world, and to produce a much warmer conviction that some things ought to exist, than is ever produced by the more academic recognition that something is good as the object or instrument of a will which it is possible might at some time be ours. The man who really understands the goodness of horses or motor-cars or musical instruments is a man who has a passion for these things, and whose passion is expressed as part of his policy of life. We recognise that toys have a value because children like to play with them, but what that value really is, is known only to the child. And if we think, perhaps foolishly, that the value of toys is comparatively slight, it is only because we think of the child as a comparatively undeveloped self, as likely one day to

become a higher will and to put away childish things. But this does not diminish the real value of the toy, and it may be that many of the goods which appeal to us as men are also baubles which will one day be put aside.

We can criticise the goodness or badness of things and distinguish what we call the apparent from the real goodness or badness, only in so far as we can criticise the will in relation to which alone they are good or bad. This we can do in relation to our individual will or in relation to the individual wills which in cooperation constitute a society. Those things are really good to me which are not only the objects of a momentary desire but are also the instruments of a coherent life. Those things are really good for society which are not only the objects of momentary desires but are also the instruments of a coherent social life. Really good things are the objects or instruments of a really good will, and if we are to have any objective judgements of the goodness of things we must have objective judgements of the goodness of the will which wills them.

It is true that we may judge things to be good for a person, and even for ourselves, when they are not actually willed and have never been actually willed by the person for whom they are judged to be good. Such judgements are generally perilous and often mistaken, and the world is far too full of people who know what is good for others better than they do themselves. But such judgements are always in relation to what may be called a need, and a need is a sort of potential will. We need a thing, although we may not know it, when if we knew ourselves and our circumstances better we should will the thing which we are said to need. Young people who want to marry are always told that they do not know their own mind (which really means their own will) and hence they do not know what is really good for them. Such judgements are justifiable in so far as we have all to find ourselves in the actual practice of life, and we may mistake an intense momentary desire for the expression of a permanent self. The observed similarities in human development suggest doubts as to whether every boy who wants to be an engine-driver is likely to find in that his permanent satisfaction, or whether every young man who is infatuated with a chorus

girl has really discovered his perfect affinity for all time and eternity. Hence it is not unreasonable, in dealing with the immature, to press upon them such lines of action as will keep open for them possibilities which a more developed self may one day desire. A wise man may sometimes be able to suggest even to those who are definitely formed (so far as we are ever definitely formed) that incoherence and unhappiness is being produced by the lack of something which is not definitely willed and may even be definitely repudiated. But in all these cases we are suggesting that something is good as the object or instrument of what will be, or at least might be, the policy of the self as it develops. If this policy cannot become actual, our judgement is simply mistaken, and this policy as actual must be judged like any other by its place in a whole policy of life. Except in the case of children—and even this exception has very great limitations—the wise man hesitates to impose his own ideals on other people, and remembers that the good is always relative to the self which wills it. The moral good is no doubt something more, but we are not yet considering the moral good.

The question which is really fundamental is the question of the character and validity of judgements of value as they are applied to the will itself. And while our discussion is hampered by the fact that we are still considering the individual will in isolation, it is all-important to recognise that such judgements take place far below the level of what is ordinarily called morality and altogether apart from any consciousness of social obligation. They are to be found for example in our bibulous burglar who wakes up to find himself in prison. He makes a perfectly clear distinction between prudence and imprudence, between consequence and inconsequence, between policy and passion, between the good burglarious will and the evil impulse which opposed it, between the lost booty which was his good and the absorbed whisky which was his bane. And his judgement is clearly not determined by any conventional standards of morality. From the conventional point of view there need be in all this no glimmering of moral reflexion and no shadow of moral repentance.

None the less we must recognise the passionate or voli-

tional character of the judgement of goodness, which is quite distinct from a merely intellectual judgement. The burglar is not judging merely that two lines of action are incompatible with one another. He is not simply recognising that a particular cause has a particular effect. To describe his attitude in this way is to offer us a purely intellectual judgement in place of the passionate judgement which he actually makes. He recognises and condemns his own folly as something opposed to his wider will, to the will which was his even at the moment of his folly, and is still his, even although it cannot at the moment be manifested in action. There is all the difference in the world between this genuine judgement of value and the empty forms in which we pay lip-service to goodness, when we express our general acquiescence in some abstract principle or social convention which has no immediate relation to our actual will and our actual life. The judgement of goodness which has real significance and real influence is the judgement which is the expression and the recognition of an actual will. To turn it into something purely intellectual is to deprive it of its character altogether. And although some may believe that it is a purely intellectual judgement, which just happens to accompany an actual volition without being in any way affected thereby, it seems to me that such a suggestion is completely falsified by our whole experience. The judgement of value has its meaning only in its place in our whole life, and we are most of us acutely aware of the emptiness and inefficacy of purely intellectual and abstract judgements of goodness. They neither stir our emotions nor affect our lives, and to suggest that men should determine their policies by abstract ratiocination is to suggest that they should do something which no man has ever done. Or if any man has done it, he has done it—or rather he has done something that may be mistaken for it—because he was a little ingenuous and a little mad, because he had some queer sort of impulse to follow the instructions of philosophers instead of trying to lead his own life.

Impersonal, dispassionate, and abstract judgements of value, small as is their meaning and influence, owe what meaning and influence they have to the fact that they are made in relation to some sort of will, and that into that will we

are able to enter however imperfectly or inadequately in some sort of imagination. Even when they are reduced to something like mere statements of cause and effect, such statements, as we have seen, are of vital importance to us for the life of action. They are of still more importance to us when they rise above mere statements of cause and effect and are really abstract judgements of value, that is when they are the recognition that a certain procedure has been willed as part of a policy of life by beings like ourselves, who have policies as we have policies and whose policies might some day become ours. Here already we are concerned with something more than mere facts, and understand at least that something might be valuable to someone else in the same sort of way as other things are valuable to ourselves. If I have a passion for poetry but no ear for music, I can grasp dimly by analogy what another man means, when he asserts that music is to him one of the greatest goods in life. I may even be tempted to make experiments in order to discover whether it might not also become good to me. In this sense we are all guided by abstract judgements of good even on the purely individual level. Yet even here we are more liable to take fire from another's enthusiasm than from a purely intellectual judgement. Example is better than precept, and religion and morality win converts by passion more readily than by reason.

It may be thought that on this view the concrete, personal, and passionate judgement of goodness is of all judgements the most valueless, because it arises only when our will is definitely set upon a particular object. This might be partially true, if the value of a judgement depended only on its utility and not also on its truth. Thinking by itself cannot dictate to our will in matters of goodness, any more than it can dictate to our imagination in matters of beauty. But it is a great thing in itself to understand the difference between our abiding and our merely momentary will; and we must not forget that our willing may itself become more coherent in the light of such understanding. Just because the will is primary in action, the moral actions, and even the moral beliefs of men, do not differ nearly so much as the theories of the moral philosophers. Yet understanding has its own value

for men who have the will to understand, and the judgement of value has its own value in the truth which it contains. It makes clear to us reflectively what our will actually is; it makes sharper and more definite the distinction between impulse and passion, between the will of the wider, and the will of the narrower, self: it brings into the full light of consciousness the ideal at which we aim. And while that ideal cannot be an abstract plan to be slavishly followed by the will, it may well set us limits within which we may safely act, and from which if we depart we know that we do so at our peril. Indeed it is only as we realise clearly what is the policy or policy of life which we have been pursuing, that we are able to pursue it with greater coherence and with greater effect. It is truer to regard judgement as the mere spectator of will than to regard judgement as its master; but, in the continuous activity which is spiritual life, the will works differently when illumined by judgements of value, which could never have been made unless there was already an actual will for them to judge. Such judgements, although they would mean little or nothing unless the will were already present, may in turn be a source of strength and inspiration to a will which is not altogether sure of itself, which is perhaps even in danger of being overcome by a momentary impulse or a superficial policy. The difficulty is only a special instance of the ordinary difficulty of spiritual growth. Self-knowledge implies that the self already is; but it is also the condition of the new self that is to be.

It is obvious that just as it is difficult to describe what is meant by the coherence and incoherence of the will, so it is difficult to describe what are the principles by which we judge the particular action to be good or bad, coherent or incoherent, relatively to its place in a policy or a policy of life. We have said enough to show that our judgements do not set an abstract consistency against an abstract spontaneity, and approve the former at the expense of the latter. It is sufficient for us here that we all make such judgements and believe in their truth. They must be criticised by their consistency and inconsistency with one another, and we can make them with more confidence as we have more knowledge of ourselves and of the world. In some cases we have no shadow of doubt

upon the matter, and our only difficulty is so to discipline our wills that we may be able to avoid the evil and realise the good. In other cases the uncertainty of our will may produce an equal uncertainty in our judgements. But broadly speaking the concrete judgement of the goodness or badness of actions is, on this merely individual and economic level, the judgement of coherence or incoherence within a will which is actual and is our own. The very demand for consistency in our judgements of goodness, if they are to be true, is itself —unless our view is wholly mistaken—an indication of the necessary coherence of a will which can properly be called good.

Such partial judgements are commonly made about individual actions, and they are a kind of foreshadowing of moral judgements. To consider the various implications of such judgements and the different puzzles to which they give rise would be an almost endless task, but the general principle appears to be at once sufficiently clear and sufficiently reasonable. It is a more difficult matter to be sure whether on this basis, besides judging different actions as parts of policies, and especially as parts of a policy of life, we can also judge a life as a whole.

We can, I think, even on this level, judge the coherence or incoherence, and so far the goodness or badness, of our own life as a whole. Such a judgement seems to imply that we have a steady will towards coherence such as may be manifested for at least a brief space of time, although we may fall back from it as a general rule. It may even imply that on the basis of the coherence and incoherence manifested in our lives we can construct the idea of a coherence, of a richness of life, greater than anything actually present in our experience; but such an idea seems to be relatively abstract and empty, although, if we have some actual aspiration towards it, it may become a potent element in our lives. We may judge that our life as a whole has been a failure because of 'the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin'. But such a judgement has no real meaning, unless we have in ourselves a will to an intenser life. It may be the mere contemplation of a poetic ideal which we have no abiding will to realise.

From one point of view every life is a failure. No man can be all that he might have been. But perhaps we can distinguish in practice between the apparent failure which is imposed upon us and the real failure which we impose upon ourselves. Mythologically speaking—and surely there is some truth behind the mythology—we may say that men have different gifts or different powers, they have different materials to work upon. The man whose powers are small may yet lead a coherent life, organising his limited world in the way suitable to himself. A man with greater gifts can do no more, although his life will have a greater richness within itself. Both men may lead good lives considered on the merely individual level. Each gets what he wants out of life, each gets what he is capable of getting. There is no real failure in the narrower life. The life of a lance-corporal, if he is by nature a lance-corporal, may be as coherent and as good as the life of a Cæsar or a Napoleon. Greatness is not the same as goodness. Goodness—that is to say economic goodness—is the coherence of a life within its own limitations. It is compatible with limited abilities and limited energy. The good life manifests in a relatively coherent way such spontaneity as belongs to the self. Greatness in action seems to lie in doing the same thing with richer materials. A man may be good without being a genius, but he cannot be a great man of action without having that coherence of will which is necessary to be a good burglar or a good craftsman. A great man of action stands to a good man of action rather as an epic stands to a ballad. Both the epic and the ballad may be good, or even perfect, as what they are, but as a rule it is only the epic which can be great. It is important to remember this when we come to morality. For even if any man may be a morally good man, it is only a great man who can be a great saint. The morally good man must have the goodness we are now describing, and the morally great man must have the greatness we are now describing, although we are at present concerned with a goodness and a greatness which are not necessarily moral.

The distinction between goodness and badness on this economic level is not the same as the distinction between greatness and mere goodness. We might even say that

greatness is compatible with some sort of badness, as in the case when a great man is also a great failure, not through the accident of circumstances, but because a greater incoherence is made possible by the very richness of his powers. Badness is always the falling short of the self that we might have been and that to some extent we are. It is manifested in a failure which we seem to have imposed upon ourselves. The burglar does not blame himself because he is not Napoleon. He does blame himself because he drinks the whisky now which he might have drunk at a later time and in a safer place. And he may consider his whole life a failure, if a weakness for whisky has prevented him from leading coherently any kind of life on which his heart was set. In this sense he may judge his whole life to have been bad and not good.

We must pass over the questions which this raises in regard to determinism and indeterminism. Such judgements as are here described are incompatible with determinism in its cruder forms, and the fact that we all make such judgements suggests certain difficulties which the determinist must attempt to meet. On the other hand we have spoken of an increase of coherence or reasonableness or goodness as also an increase of freedom, and it is an empirical fact that in falling a victim to incoherence we feel ourselves to be slaves. Yet in spite of this our judgement of the incoherent will is very different from our judgement of some misfortune which has happened to us without, or against, our own will. And it is difficult to maintain that our judgements of our own actions and our own life are distorted by merely conventional standards. They look much more like a first-hand acquaintance with the facts, although all so-called facts are subject to alteration with the further development of theory.

Goodness on the level we are considering consists in finding out what we really want and seeing that we get it. This means adjusting ourselves to circumstances, for it is idle to pursue the impossible, unless indeed what we want is the pursuit and not the achievement. The pursuit itself is something that can be achieved, and for some men the good life may be a consistent tilting at windmills. The kind of goodness we are considering involves a sense of vocation, and it

has no standard outside itself. Even if we have other standards, it is hard to say that a man or a woman who has got out of life what he or she wants, without doing positive harm to others, has not really led a good life—at least of its own kind. The thing that is wrong with so many people nowadays—for example with the characters of Aldous Huxley's novels—is that they do not want anything or do not know what they want. Such people can find no good in anything. They are barren leaves, and all things to them are barren. The only good thing in them is their cleverness—a cleverness which occupies itself mainly with seeing the futility of human desires. And they affect to despise even their own cleverness—which perhaps is really a little despicable; they do not even want to be clever, and consequently even cleverness is no good. All this is the inevitable consequence of trying to make intellect a substitute for life; and it is quite different from having a genuine passion for thought.

The condition of good life on the individual and economic level is that we should want something possible, and—since we are men—that we should at least partly know what we want. And what we want must be realised, not only as something isolated, but as part of a coherent life. Every kind of good life demands sacrifice, because we cannot be all that we have in us to be. Some men of strong and limited interests may organise their whole life around some one definite thing, whether it be sport or religion or making money. But for most men there is no dominant interest, and the good life is an attempt to fit in various interests, so that each may be satisfied as far as is compatible with the satisfaction of the others. Yet whatever be the way that we choose, there must always be sacrifice. As we grow older we become more conscious of our limitations, although we may also become more successful within these limitations. This is obviously true if we devote ourselves whole-heartedly to one profession or to one branch of art. It is equally true if we decide to be versatile and to pursue many policies. To do so is to become a dilettante, to achieve great success in nothing, to subject ourselves to the limitations of being expert in dilettantism, which may be just as narrow as those of being

expert at anything else. We cannot avoid sacrifice even when we achieve success.

There are some men who regard sacrifice as the only good, and who seek to attain goodness by the elimination of desire. This is rather like trying to attain truth by the elimination of thought. We can indeed eliminate the possibility of error by ceasing to think, but to eliminate error is not to attain truth. We can also eliminate evil by ceasing to will, but to eliminate evil is not to realise goodness. Indeed while we live we cannot cease to think or to will, and we cannot escape from value or its opposite. On a more practical level asceticism is the attempt to realise coherence in willing by reducing the part of impulse, and within limits this may be necessary as a kind of discipline or self-control. But to carry it out to its ultimate end is to empty willing of all content, to cease to will altogether. To some men who are oppressed by the pain of life and shrink from the conflict of living such an end may seem good, but this does not mean that goodness is to be found in the absence of desire or will. This kind of goodness also is good only as the object of desire, the desire to be free from desire. Its realisation would have no value at all, for in its realisation even the desire for such freedom would cease to be. It would be simply an event, and an event has no value except to a will. Perhaps it would not even be an event, but just be nothing, and nothing cannot have either value or disvalue of any kind at all.

It must not be thought that because the economically good life is coherent it must necessarily be a life of prudence. Its character for each man depends upon what he is and what he wants. There are some men who, like Mr. Hobbes, are mainly interested in comfort, who desire to slip agreeably through life with the minimum of terrifying experiences. For such men the best policy is safety first, and in this as in all cases we cannot quarrel with a choice of the soul. But it must be a genuine choice of the soul, and if some men render their lives incoherent by yielding, and by yielding often, to a momentary passion, there are others who produce another kind of incoherence by yielding, and by yielding often, to a momentary timidity. Many men can look back on empty and unsatisfying lives, because they had not the courage of

their convictions, because they failed to realise what was in them, through lack of energy or excess of fear. For some men the good life may be to live dangerously, and there is always a certain wildness in men who are truly great. When Achilles chose the life that was short and glorious, there was nothing incoherent in his action, and the life that he chose was good for him. Any life is good which can be carried through consistently, which is a genuine choice of the whole soul. And the unbridled passions of youth are perhaps less hostile to goodness than the petty timidities of middle-age.

The difficulty of judging life as a whole rests largely on our vanity when we judge ourselves, and on our ignorance when we judge others. But if we could lay aside our prejudices and understand our own lives and those of others, we could judge them to be good or bad by the standard which the will imposes on itself. Such a standard is on this abstract level perhaps the best to which we can attain. Yet we are tempted to speak also of needs which we have not clearly apprehended and of a standard which is never manifested in action. We seem sometimes to be seeking something which we cannot find, to be haunted by an ideal which is better than anything we know. Some men appear to have a richer coherence in their lives, something which is at once passionate and yet at peace, and it may be that there is something which we are all seeking, although we cannot say exactly what it is. If we are right, it must be continuous with that life in which we do find goodness, it must itself be a coherent life, or a coherent will, expanded and enriched beyond our ordinary experience. Yet such an ideal can be of little use unless it is somehow manifested in experience. There are some who believe that it is actually manifested, at least sometimes, in the lives of those who are called saints. But perhaps we cannot all be saints, and some of us must be content with such a goodness as belongs to ordinary men.

If we set aside such diviner goodness, it may be thought we are reducing goodness to something wholly contingent and irrational. In a sense we are doing so, both inasmuch as we are at present considering the individual in isolation, and also inasmuch as we are recognising that goodness is relative to the will of men. Yet it would surely be far more irrational

to determine our ideas of goodness and our policy of life b pure reason, without any reference to the things we actuall want, the desires we actually have, the policies we actuall pursue. And our most irrational and contingent desires ar never merely irrational; they are always adjusted to a actual situation, and, so far as they can be accounted for a all, they are the product of a long process of evolution, an have proved themselves to be at least partly useful for th continuance of life, without which there could be no good lif at all. They have at least a lower rationality, and the carry that lower rationality into the wider will of which the become a part. And while the wider will has in it something of the arbitrariness of merely momentary desires, yet it coherence is not arbitrary, but necessary and intelligible. I is not a mere sum of irrational parts, and however much w may regard the whole as irrational, the parts at least ar rational, or become rational, relatively to the whole. The whole which rationalises its parts is surely so far rational itself. To condemn this kind of goodness as irrational is possible only if we have an idea of something more rational, and it is very hard to know what this could be. There seems to be no reason for thinking that goodness would be more rational, if we could deduce what was good from some immediately apprehended principle of goodness. We do not condemn thinking as irrational, because we seem to begin with arbitrary sense perceptions, possible only to a special kind of organism, and to pass from these to a coherent theory of the world. There is no more reason to condemn willing as irrational, because we seem to begin with arbitrary desires, possible only to a special kind of organism, and to pass from these to a coherent life. If human desires must find their place in our human life, surely the colours and sounds of sense must equally find their place in the universe which we know. It may be irrational to begin where we do, although we can understand to some extent why that is necessary, and in any case we must begin somewhere. But the arbitrariness of our starting point does not mean arbitrariness in our goal.

It is true of course that we can imagine a diviner understanding and a diviner will. Perhaps if we could attain to a divine stature all time would be our specious present, our

world would be present to us as one intelligible and transparent whole, and our life would no longer strain out of chaotic impulses to a dimly apprehended ideal. But our life seems to be a stage between being a mere sum of relatively immediate experiences—the life of an animal—and being a whole completely and consciously present in every part—the life of a god. Our thinking aims at a coherence which it can never completely attain, there is in it something relatively opaque, something which we take as fact not yet understood. Our willing suffers inevitably from the same limitations, and has in it something of the same obscurity. But to say this is merely to recognise that we are finite and mortal men, and to recognise this is surely the beginning of philosophy, although perhaps it need not be the end. What we are discussing is human goodness, and it is no objection to such goodness that it is human and not divine.

It is very important to observe that although we are considering the individual will without any regard for morality, yet shadows or images of the accompaniments, or supposed accompaniments, of morality arise, and must arise, on the level of the individual policy of life. The importance of habit and the necessity of discipline are perfectly obvious for any policy whatever. Even the policy of avoiding the formation of habits and escaping the necessity of discipline is no exception ; for the habit of not forming habits is itself a habit, and the policy of being consistently inconsequent demands the strictest discipline and self-control. It is very hard, since we are human, to avoid manifesting the human qualities and even something like the human virtues. The very existence of policy implies something like temperance, for it implies the suppression of the momentary volition or impulse in favour of the more abiding will. It implies something like wisdom, that is, speaking intellectually, the taking thought for the whole life, or, speaking practically, the organisation of life into a whole. And it implies something like justice, for it involves the due satisfaction of our separate impulses, so far as their satisfaction is not incompatible with the satisfaction of other impulses in a coherent life. If these forecasts of human virtues did not appear on the individual level, it is hard to see how they could appear on the moral

level (supposing there is a moral level); and the fact that they appear intimately and necessarily on every level shows how fundamental they are to human nature. Virtue is not something artificial imposed on men by priests or rulers. It is rather an expression and manifestation of human nature itself.

We must also recognise here some of the characteristics of duty, the feeling of obligation to follow out our policy and of shame if we fail to do so, the coldness and unattractiveness of the ideal in contrast with the warmth and attraction of the object of immediate impulse. We can distinguish between the momentary pleasure which accompanies the one and the lasting happiness which accompanies the other. Perhaps we can even distinguish something like right from goodness, and regard an action as right if it, as a matter of fact, fits in with our policy, and as good if it is willed to do so. But these things will perhaps become clearer when we consider the individual, not as he is in isolation, but as he is as part of a wider whole.

I have striven, perhaps unsuccessfully, to avoid mythology in this account of individual action and individual goodness, and the result may be a little difficult to understand. It may become more intelligible if I attempt to state it briefly in an intellectualistic and mythological form.

There is an impulsive and there is a reasonable self. The impulsive self exists as a collection of unconscious desires or as a collection of potentialities and dispositions—the one kind of mythology will do just as well as the other. The impulsive self may be different at different times through our different experience, but at any moment, if we knew enough, we could know exactly what it is. Over against this impulsive self there is a reasonable self, which determines its course in the light of its knowledge of the impulsive self. It recognises that all desires or dispositions are clamouring to be satisfied or realised, have some sort of right to be satisfied or realised; and it works out a plan by which as many of them as possible can be satisfied or realised within the span of an individual life. It takes into account their relative strength, permanence, and feasibility, in the making of the plan, and it

endeavours to do justice to all. To work out this plan is a theoretical problem which could be solved by any reasonable being, whether the individual in question or an expert with sufficient knowledge. To execute the plan is to lead the good life, and the good is relative to the impulsive self, it varies according to the desires and dispositions, the tendencies and powers, of each individual. It is also an ideal which the individual as a reasonable self can accept, on the supposition that it is reasonable to fulfil his own desires and to realise his own possibilities to the fullest extent. To be good is to realise the impulsive self to the fullest extent, instead of satisfying one impulse at the expense of all the others; and it is also to realise the reasonable self, which can be realised only in securing the fullest possible realisation of the impulsive self. The reasonable self is impartial as between the different desires and dispositions; it acts as a judge between them, and arranges for the satisfaction of each so far as that is compatible with the satisfaction of others. It gives to each its due, and it does not prefer one desire simply because it happens to be strong at a particular moment. The reasonable self, in seeking to satisfy the natural desires, will no doubt try to do so as far as possible at the time when each happens to be most active; but it will take a wider view, and remember that a whole series of desires, which may be expected to manifest themselves later, will be thwarted, if the present desire is allowed to be satisfied. The proceedings of the reasonable self would be highly complicated; it would have to take into account many factors, such as the uncertainty of life, the danger of losing a certain present good in the vain pursuit of a future one, and so on; but it could at least secure more satisfaction than could be obtained by satisfying any and every desire just as it arose. And it would be more efficient according as it had more knowledge both of the self and of the world, so far as that was relevant to the satisfaction of desire.

The objection to such an account—which might be indefinitely elaborated—is not merely that the two selves are alike fictions, invented to explain the actual activities manifested through time which alone are real. It is not even that the organic character of life is reduced to a relation between fixed

and separate entities. It is rather this, that the conduct of our life is very far from being the solution of a purely theoretical problem, like arranging the doors and times at which people with differently coloured tickets may be allowed to enter a building. A musician never sits down and considers how he can arrange a set of given notes in such a way as to make a symphony. A poet never makes a collection of words, and then tries to arrange them in a poem. And we poor creatures of men cannot sit down opposite our desires, and in complete cold-bloodedness and impartiality arrange for their satisfaction at different prearranged times. Life is a warmer and more spontaneous thing than that, and it is more interesting as it is. We cannot eliminate time from our living, we cannot arrange our lives beforehand, and we cannot neglect the element of spontaneous creation at every moment, without which life would be destitute of interest and charm. It is well no doubt to know ourselves even mythologically, to take thought for the morrow, and within limits to make out a schedule by which we shall be guided. But our impulsive self—if we accept the myth—is not composed merely of objects intellectually apprehended, and our reasonable self is not a theoretical reason dealing with an intellectual problem. For life is nothing if it is not passion, passion alike in the moment and in what we have called the wider will. If there were no passion in the wider will, how could it prevail over the momentary impulse? The victory of practical reason is not a victory over passion, so much as the filling of the moment with a fuller and a richer passion. When a man flings himself into an action which is the outcome and embodiment of his whole life, when his whole life seems to throb and palpitate in this one action in which he is wholly himself, we have here no carrying out of a plan intellectually apprehended and abstractly willed, but passionate creation in the moment, the finding of the right word, the striking of the perfect harmony, something unexpected and surprising, absolutely inevitable and absolutely new.

Mythology is not however without its uses. Some desires seem to be common to men, to be almost necessary parts of human nature, and their satisfaction may be said to be necessary to the good life. We can also generalise from

experience and say something of the way in which desires can be successfully satisfied, can find their place in a coherent life. Proverbs and adages are full of wisdom of this general type. 'Honesty is the best policy', for example, seems to presume that most men want money or success or comfort, and asserts that these things can be obtained most easily by acting honestly rather than dishonestly. Such statements are not universally true, although they are very sound advice for commonplace people. They have no applicability at all to a man whose ruling passion is for adventure or for playing upon the weaknesses of human nature.

It is much more difficult to make rules for the individual so far as he is individual. No man can know what he is except by living; it seems as if the same man might develop successfully along different lines, as if we all had possibilities which must be more or less arbitrarily restrained from becoming real. But a certain amount of useful advice could be given by a greater understanding. It is obvious that a man is unlikely to be a good painter if he is colour-blind, and a competent psychologist might be able to judge a man's potentialities in a much subtler way than that. But none of us would really entrust his life to the decision of any psychologist however subtle, and generally we prefer to find out things for ourselves. Passionate desire for excellence may overcome grave natural defects. Yet perhaps we may hope that a better understanding of human nature and of our own nature may help us to develop more skill in the art of living.

One other thing must be added on this mythological level. The impulsive self of each man, while no doubt it is similar to the impulsive selves of others, is yet peculiarly his own, it is his individual self. The reasonable self, on the other hand, so far as it is reasonable, is not individual; for we have placed all that is individual on the side of the impulsive self. It is pure or universal reason, completely impartial, solving a problem in which it has no bias because of any particular or individual desire of its own, other than the desire to be impartial or reasonable. Such a reasonable self—no matter in what individual it might be embodied—would always come to the same solution or solutions of the

same problem, so far as the same problem may be considered by different individuals. It is therefore the same self in all men, standing outside the different and individual selves of individual men. And we may ask two questions which have at least a mythological importance. The first is this. Can it be that the reasonable self, the reason which is present in each self, demands no other satisfaction than to judge impartially, and to secure the satisfaction of as many natural desires as possible? Has it no satisfaction of its own? In being responsible may it not reasonably judge that the satisfaction of reason, as well as of natural desire, is a reasonable satisfaction? Is it to render justice to all and not to itself? It seeks satisfaction for the parts as parts of the whole, and is it not itself also a part of the whole?

It may be said that reason seeks no such satisfaction, that the reasonable self set up by our mythology was set up solely to judge impartially between different desires, and its whole *raison d'être* is just to do so. We must not twist our given mythology for other and quite different purposes of our own. Besides, reason has as a matter of fact no desire and no satisfaction other than the desire and satisfaction which we have described. If it has any such desire or satisfaction, it is simply the desire to think and the satisfaction of thinking, and these of course it would judge impartially along with the other desires and satisfactions of our human nature.

It may be so, and it is hard to see what satisfaction could be demanded by a purely reasonable self, beyond the satisfaction of judging impartially between given desires. But if it be so (and here we come to our second mythological question), if the reasonable self is that which judges impartially between desires, without undue regard to such considerations as the fact that a desire is present and active here and now, may it not also as a reasonable self judge impartially between desires, without undue regard to such considerations as the fact that this is my desire and that is somebody else's? For a purely reasonable self, the same, as we have seen, in all men, there seems to be no reason why it *quâ* reason should prefer the satisfaction of my desires to the satisfaction of your desires merely because they are my desires and not yours. If it does so it ceases to be reasonable, it is not guided by reason

ut by desire; that is to say, it is no longer universal reason ut just individual desire, it ceases to be itself, it is being iassed, and it is not being impartial. If we are using mythology, we must make it consistent with itself, and the reasonable elf *quâ* reasonable and impartial cannot, without ceasing to e reasonable, prefer the satisfaction of my desires to the atisfaction of your desires merely because they are my lesires. If it does so, it does so, not because it is reason, but ecause it is my reason and not yours, because it is individual nd not because it is universal, because, in fact, it is desire nd not reason.

We have said 'without undue regard' to the fact that ne desire is mine and the other belongs to some one else. This is necessary, because in determining an action reason nust take into account the fact that desires are what they are, hat is, they are my desires or your desires; just as it must take nto account the fact that one desire can be satisfied here and ow and another may never be satisfied at all. A bird in the and may be worth two in the bush, and my own desires are, so to speak, in the hand. It is unreasonable to prefer the satisfaction of a future desire whose existence may be doubtful to the satisfaction of a desire which is present and can be satisfied here and now. It is equally unreasonable to refuse the satisfaction of my present desire because by so doing I might be able to secure the satisfaction of some desire of some gentleman in China of whose very existence I know nothing. I have to lead my own life, and he has to lead his; and my desires have a claim on me which his have not, just as my present desires have a claim on me which my future desires have not. Such would presumably be the judgement of a purely impersonal reason. But if two men ask me to judge between them, one of whom asserts that he has built up through his whole life a complicated apparatus which is certain to lead to the cure of cancer, and the other that he happens to have a desire to see what the apparatus would look like if it were smashed up, I have no hesitation in saying that it is reasonable to prefer one man's desire to that of the other. There is only one decision which would be made by any reasonable man without prejudice. If that be so, and mythologically it clearly is so, it makes no

difference to me *quâ* reasonable, if the man who happens to desire to smash the apparatus happens also to be myself. If it makes a difference to me, it does so, not because I am reasonable, but just because I happen to have this desire; that is to say, the difference is not due to my reasonable but to my impulsive self.

Hence while the reasonable self, in order to be reasonable, must pay due regard to the fact that one desire is mine and another yours, it must not pay undue regard to that fact. The difference between due and undue regard would, indeed, be as difficult to state in this case as it would be in the case of considering present as opposed to future desires. To say that due regard is reasonable and undue regard is unreasonable is merely circular. But it seems that just as we judge between our desires by reference to our whole life, so we could judge between our desires and those of others by reference to a wider life of which our life is only a part. While we may not desire to do so, it is a mere prejudice to suppose —as many do—that to do so would be unreasonable.

This is perhaps a sufficient answer on the level of mythology, but it is taking us beyond the question of the individual good. We must add, however, that the present doctrine could be stated in terms of a philosophy which believes that goodness is an unanalysable quality immediately apprehended by intuition. We may say to those who believe in this philosophy that we also have our intuitions. We too have seen or tasted or intuited your unanalysable flavour, and we know what it is. And like you we claim that we find it at this level in our actual life. What we have found is this. The genuine good is the coherent will. It alone has the flavour which we call goodness, and the flavour is stronger as the coherence is more marked. And while we cannot admit that this flavour is present in things out of their relation to a human will, it seems that the will can give to them something of its own perfume, and that things are good in so far as they are, or can be, objects of a coherent willing. If it seems to some that this is to lay too much stress upon will, and that we must distinguish sharply between the willing and what is willed, then we would say that the flavour called goodness appears when the object is brought into contact with the coherent

will, just as a flame arises when a match is struck against some sort of rough surface. There seems to be nothing in our doctrine which need be meaningless even to the most extreme of realists. And we may claim that we have as much right as others to this kind of intuition, which does not rest upon induction, although we find it everywhere confirmed in all the judgements of our ordinary experience.

BOOK IV

THE WILL AS SOCIAL

CHAPTER X

THE SOCIAL WILL

We have dealt hitherto with the will as an abstraction. We have indeed reminded ourselves that the will grew up in a world and was in some sense a product of an evolutionary process. We have recognised that it is bound up with the body and with bodily movements. We have argued that it is, as it were, a strand of mental activity in general and not to be separated from knowing and feeling. We have attempted to make clear that the will cannot be a mere object or known event, that it is an activity and is enjoyed as well as contemplated. Further we have maintained that it is not a momentary something or an aggregate of momentary somethings, it is a self-mediating activity which multiplies itself internally and not externally. We have sought to understand how this mere continuity can become coherence, how the empty oneness of the will in continuous willings may become a richer oneness in a policy or series of policies, and how this development can complete itself only in a policy of life. This development, we have endeavoured to show, is due, not merely to a wider knowledge of the world, but also to a more reflective knowledge of the will itself, by which the will can so to speak will itself as it is, and in so doing make itself what it is. Its unity as a life policy lies in itself as will, but is impossible apart from some reflective understanding of itself. Finally we have sought to show that it is by reference to such a self-mediating will that good and evil have meaning at different stages of this development. Throughout the whole course of our exposition we have attempted to overcome abstractions. But we have still failed to do so, inasmuch as we have considered the will as belonging to an individual taken in isolation from the society of which he is a part.

None the less even in this abstract exposition we have seen incidentally what are the roots of the social will. Biological science itself, unless I am mistaken, recognises more and

more that the individual is what he is only in a given environment and as a member of a given species. It may be that in taking this view science is, for its own legitimate purposes, ignoring or making little of the proper individuality of each member of the species, but while it may not be offering us the whole account, there is truth in the account which it offers. We can recognise, as past generations could not, our unity with lower forms of life, and even with the inorganic world out of which all living things arise. This world is not wholly alien to us. We have developed in it and with it, and it is no wonder that it seems to us sometimes like a friend. And if in the lower animals we see too often only our baser selves, yet a man has also a sense of kinship with his horse and his dog, with the animals which have helped him on his way, and also with those which, being harmless, have interested him by their beauty, by the subtle workings of their bodies and the complicated machinery of their lives. Children especially seem quite often to be attracted by all sorts of animals and insects, and to play freely with creatures like worms and spiders whose touch and presence may become distasteful in adult life. There is inevitably a still closer instinctive attraction between man and the other members of his own species. We are what we are by the long struggle of humbler things, and above all by the efforts, the successes and failures, of our own kind and our own race. We are drawn from the first to our brethren who are like us, who are products of the same life and who help to make us what we are.

Human instincts, as we have seen, are from the first social as well as individual. If our argument has been sound, we must reject any attempt to explain our lives as merely the satisfaction of instinct, and we must reject *a fortiori* any attempt to explain our social and moral life as merely the satisfaction of some one instinct, like the so-called herd instinct of which we have heard too much from the ignorant and the superficial. But as the various instincts are the soil out of which our life arises or even the raw material for our creative effort, so too the social instincts are part and parcel of our being and a necessary element in our lives. From the first we are interested in others and desire their interest in

us. We are affected intimately by their joys and their sorrows, their pains and their fears. We are stirred to emulation by their achievements, we desire their admiration and we offer them our own. If we accept Mr. McDougall's list [1] of major instincts, at least six out of the fourteen which he gives are definitely social—the gregarious instinct, the protective and mating instincts, the instincts of submission and assertion, and the instinct of appeal. In addition, there is nothing more social than the instinct of laughter, and the other instincts he describes are not only infectious, but are manifested more easily and effectively when they are shared by others. All the instincts seem at least partly to depend upon others and to demand something from others. Even the instincts which are manifested primarily in conflict rather than in cooperation have their social aspect; for conflict is also a kind of cooperation. Without our instincts we should not be human, and as our instincts are manifested for the most part in our relations to others, it is certain that without relations to others, without some sort or kind of society, we should be very different from what we are. And if practical reason demands and wills at least the development of our own nature and the realisation of our own several possibilities, it demands and wills quite clearly, even from a narrowly individual point of view, that the manifestation of our instincts as directed to and affected by others should be made to fit into our whole reasonable policy of life. No one who is not utterly blind can deny this obvious, and indeed almost too obvious, truth. By some kink or flaw or passion we may try to shut ourselves into ourselves and to satisfy only what are called the self-regarding instincts, but there is in this nothing reasonable, and a life of this kind is palpably straitened and impoverished. We should merely impoverish and straiten our lives still more, if we attempted to satisfy even the self-regarding instincts in complete isolation from other men. There may indeed be times when we can secure food and wealth and safety by being entirely indifferent to others, but generally speaking the exact reverse of this is the truth. It is well to recognise at this level that the satisfaction of instinct may bring us into conflict with others, but we must recognise also,

[1] McDougall, *Outline of Psychology*, p. 324.

not only that some instincts are directed to the interests of others, but that all instincts may be, and some must be, satisfied in cooperation with others, perhaps even that the satisfaction of all instincts may be greater precisely because such satisfaction is not confined to ourselves. Whatever be the case with animals, human beings definitely, and apart from any theories, like to eat and drink in company with others, to make and to spend money in cooperation with others, to share with others in the joys of creation, in the pains and fears of combat, in the excitement of triumphs won and of perils escaped.

The hopeless abstraction of treating the individual as if he could be what he is in isolation from the rest of the species is manifest as soon as we begin to reflect on human life even in its humblest forms. It becomes still clearer when we reflect on the civilised life which we actually lead and know. We are ushered into the world, and nurtured, with the aid of modern science. We are cared for and helped and guided and instructed and educated by others. We enter upon the heritage of our race and time. Through and through we are moulded and formed by the thought and action of our family, of our country, and of our world. The language by which we express our emotions and think our thoughts is rich and flexible and subtle through the efforts of genius, through the writings of poets and philosophers, and also through its everyday use in the common speech of common men. Unconsciously we take the thoughts and ideals of the past into our very being, and but for that we should be, at the most, a shadow of what we are. We all of us grow and expand into something which we could never have become by our own unaided efforts, but for those who have the privilege of education this process becomes as it were self-conscious. We go to the moulders of our language and thought, and learn from them directly and consciously what is more confusedly assimilated by others through the imperfect medium of inferior minds. And some of us learn to expand our boundaries beyond the limits of our race and tongue, to explore and to make our own the new world which is opened up by a new language. We can enter, however imperfectly, into the common civilisation of Europe in its different and vital forms,

and we can, if we will, make ourselves at home in the older civilisations of Greece and Rome and Palestine out of which all our modern civilisation has arisen. It is only the weakness of our powers and the shortness of our time which sets limits to the possible enrichment of our lives. And this enrichment is not a relatively external filling, as it is in the case of the specialist who studies civilisations like those of India and China which have had little effect on our western life. Such a study is never indeed wholly external, for what we learn we work into the essential fabric of our life, and contact with the East may mean much for our further development; but when we are concerned with our own civilisation in its different stages and varying manifestations, we are as it were living again consciously through the very process which has made us and is making us what we are. We are claiming our birthright and entering upon our inheritance.

And this inheritance is not merely intellectual. It is also moral. Our actions are moulded from the first in the light of ideals. We all begin by accepting the standards and conventions of our time, as these come to us through the medium of our individual environment. No doubt there is a certain amount of recalcitrance, by no means always unfortunate, even in the very young, but generally speaking men are rather like sheep, and it is only the few who rebel against or rise above the conventions with which they are surrounded. From the very first we are affected by the precepts and example of others. Hence the evolution which has been described as if it were manifested in the individual will alone never takes place in so simple a form. It is from the very beginning complicated by a practical compliance with certain rules imposed upon us and an intellectual acceptance of certain ideals set before us. In volition as well as in thought we do not, and we cannot, start absolutely afresh. We all meet the world with the ingrained prejudices of our race and class—prejudices which are embodied in practice and enshrined in precept. We are dependent not merely on our own experience but on the experience of the race.

This is not to say that our acceptance of tradition must be uncritical, although no doubt in the earliest stages it must be uncritical. Tradition has to be accepted before it can be

understood, but a continuous tradition is of limited value, unless it be understood as well as accepted. Mere imitation or repetition of the past is the way, not to success, but to certain failure. It adds nothing to the sum of human values. We begin as children by accepting alike the thought and the actions of our environment. As men, we must if possible enter into the history which has made our environment what it is, but in any case, however narrow or however wide be the basis from which we start, whether we begin merely with our own narrow environment or with the wide environment which comes from an understanding of other races and of other times, we must always move forward to new creation in art or in thinking or in the various spheres of action Yet creation is not opposed to, but rather is made possible by, tradition, especially if it be a tradition which is genuinely understood.

There are indeed special difficulties in regard to action. Genuine understanding demands always the re-enacting of an activity in our own experience, but—although, as we have already seen, this difference may be exaggerated—we cannot always do over again the actions of others as we can re-think their thoughts or re-create their æsthetic experience. We can however understand the actions of others externally by tracing out their consequences, and we can, although imperfectly, enter by an exercise of the historical imagination into their practical problems and the spirit in which they were solved. We can be genuinely fired by the example of others, and we can follow in our own way the rules which are the intellectual expression of their practical experience. We share in the same human nature, and we can seek to manifest or to direct it in the same sort of way. Yet all this is relatively external till we act ourselves in similar situations and live again as others have lived. Books are never a substitute for life, nor can we learn from the actions of others as we can learn from actions of our own. But it is easier to learn a game, if we study and imitate those who play it well, and if we pay some attention to their theories of how it should be played. We may even say that we are more likely to make progress, if we begin by learning from such indifferent players as we know, than if we attempt to proceed without any regard to what anyone has

ever done before. And all this is equally true of the more difficult game of life.

As we learn to act we may develop special excellencies of our own, and become entitled to criticise and to condemn the methods of others. But to begin with we learn by following the example and obeying the precepts of others, and not merely by manifesting our own impulses as they arise from moment to moment. The wisdom of such a course appears to be justified by subsequent reflexion on our experience, even although we may have to unlearn much that we have learned. But we follow such a course, not because we think it wise, but because it is in our nature to imitate others, and because it is in the nature of others to insist upon our doing so. We must recognise that we do as a matter of fact learn to act in this way, and also, I think, that on the whole it is the best way to learn. If by it the spontaneity of impulse were completely repressed, this way would indeed be thoroughly bad, but fortunately the spontaneity of the average child is difficult to repress, and many modern educators err if anything on the side of too little rather than of too much repression. We must also remember that there is a spontaneous impulse to imitate, and that there is much room for spontaneity even in following out a rule, as in our example of learning a game. Hence there is every justification for our learning to act as we all do learn to act. The justification of what we learn depends, not upon its likeness to something else, but upon the possibility of its being willed as part of a coherent policy of life.

So far we have seen that our instincts are not merely individual but social, and that society as a source of conscious and unconscious education helps us to be what we are, helps us to learn how to think and act. The influences of society go indeed much deeper than this, as we shall see when we come to consider social activity as itself an object of the individual's interest and a life of which the individual's life becomes a part. At present however we are still considering society as something relatively external to the individual, as a sort of force which acts upon him and makes him what he is, rather than as a life into which his life expands. The antithesis between the two points of view is of course not

ultimate, and we have already seen that society as an educator is the condition of the individual's attaining to success in any kind of spiritual activity, is indeed the condition of his becoming what he has it in him to be. Yet even the help of others may appear to the child to be merely an obstacle to his will, and it is necessary to recognise explicitly that we learn to live, not merely by the assistance, but also by the antagonism, of members of the society in which we grow up. We find ourselves in a world of men who have other ideals than ours, who are by no means primarily interested in helping us to live, who consider in the main not our convenience but their own. We have got to adapt ourselves to their ideals and to their convenience, or otherwise we are likely to suffer. We cannot always get our own way, and we must early show a certain adaptability to and consideration for others, if we are not to be very unhappy and very unsuccessful. The world in which we live happens to be that kind of place, and we do well to learn in youth the lesson that we must adjust our actions to the actions and desires of other people. As we have said, there are certain instincts in us which make already in that direction, sometimes perhaps only too much. But the lesson is impressed upon us by a stern discipline which is not always or mainly founded upon a deliberate intention, but is quite often a mere matter of self-defence. The most indulgent of parents are sometimes compelled to exercise restraint upon their children, simply because otherwise their own lives would not be worth living. The lesson is generally driven home by less indulgent playmates, who do not always act from a theory as to what is for our good. Small boys sometimes justify their discipline of other small boys on the ground that it is deserved or is for their good, but in the main the action proceeds out of the natural instincts of man, and in this again we find the series of relatively momentary reactions which are seen afterwards to constitute a coherent whole, and can be willed, no longer as a series of momentary reactions, but as a conscious and deliberate policy. And on the side of the child who is subjected to the discipline of others the momentary yielding to external pressure or to the fear of consequences may tend to establish a habit of self-control which is to the interest of others and also to

the interest of himself, a habit which may develop into a definite policy either for the securing of individual ends or for the furtherance of what we afterwards come to recognise as a social good.

Society acting, whether in friendliness or in antagonism, upon a being endowed with social instincts is the most potent of all influences in making the individual what he is. To ignore society is as foolish as to ignore environment, and indeed society is by far the most important part of the individual's environment. His physical environment supplies him with the conditions of his animal life, and he can live only by directing his actions in accordance with natural law. His social environment, which also within certain limits controls his physical environment, supplies him with the condition of his spiritual life; and to live successfully he must direct his actions, or at least seem to direct his actions, in accordance with its wishes and its laws. He must adjust himself to the social environment as well as to the physical, and it is only by so doing that he can develop the powers which he has in him as a man, and lead a life in which he is able to get what he wants. But society must not be considered as just something which has an influence upon him and to which he must adjust his actions. Rather he, as an individual with social instincts, pursues ends which he can attain only in so far as he can assure the cooperation of others and of society as a whole. Society is not just an obstacle to his will, it is not even just an external condition to which his will must adjust itself. It is also something without which he cannot get what he wants or be what he is—something whose cooperation he demands and needs. A society indeed in its simplest form is simply a body of men cooperating with one another, and that cooperation which a man may desire—to speak abstractly—as a means to his individual ends comes to be desired, and often is desired from the first, as an end for its own sake, an end which is still individual in the sense of being the object of his desire, but no longer individual in the sense of being peculiar to himself or being desired for himself alone.

The most obvious example of such a society is the family.

It is manifestly a way of satisfying instincts which are present in all normal men and women. It is based, that is to say, on desires which are native to the individual, and are certainly not forced upon him from without or acquired by education or learned by theory. And like any healthy society it rests upon the different natures and the different needs of its component parts. It is what it is, not because its members are alike, but because they are different. It is these differences which make its unity and its strength. And these differences are not confined to the begetting and bearing of children. The whole family has to live, and this normally means a division of function according to the capacities of its members. In a primitive society the man has perhaps to fight and to hunt, while the woman has to prepare the food and look after the home. The children as they grow up have to do what they can in order to help the common life. Each member has to perform the task for which he or she is best fitted, and it is only so that the group as a whole can be truly efficient and can get what it wants. With the advance of civilisation its members may come to want more than a mere livelihood, may aim, in Aristotle's phrase, not merely at living but at living well. But the principle of cooperation, of difference of function according to difference of nature or difference of capacity, must hold throughout. When it ceases to hold, as in an artificial society it may partly cease to hold, the family begins to break up. If the income is supplied by inherited wealth, and if many functions necessary to the family are performed by servants and governesses, it is possible for the parents to develop entirely independent lives of their own, and they may very well do so. They may of course cooperate in something else, and such cooperation will again be closer if they bring different and necessary capacities to their common task, but such cooperation is rather a cooperation between individuals as members of some society other than the family. It does not depend primarily on their difference as a man and a woman, while the family, so long as it exists at all, is based precisely upon that difference with all that it implies. We may perhaps from a wider point of view regard even such seemingly external cooperation as a development of family cooperation, when we include living

well, and not merely living, as a family activity. The family however has its roots in the natural instincts and natural differences of men and women, and develops in and through a cooperation based on these instincts and differences. Such cooperation is willed as a policy and is fitted into an organised life, a life not of individuals taken in isolation but of individuals as members of a group.

The family is very clearly a society which we both find and make. We are born into a family as children, in it we develop, and from it we acquire our first experience of co-operation as members of a group. But every family is founded by the volition of a man and a woman, and is sustained by such volition. From the point of view of the child the family is something given, but it is also something which he needs and wants. From the point of view of the parents it is not only something which they need and want, but something which they have definitely created. Natural relationships cannot indeed be altered, what has been done has been done, but the family as a living society of self-conscious beings is sustained by the action of human wills. And this is true of every social group, whether the individual actually takes part in founding it, or whether he joins it deliberately after it has been founded, or whether he is born into it as he is born into a family or into a state. We must not think that because we find a society already in existence it is not sustained as a living society by the individual wills of its individual members.

Now in the case of the family it is surely a mistake to suppose that the individuals composing it are seeking merely individual ends. Each member of it no doubt gets something out of it for himself, it is the satisfaction of his desires, it is something that he needs and wants. But each member wants something for the others as well as for himself. It is a wholly false view of human nature to deny that the average individual is keenly concerned to seek the interests of his family as a whole. He may have interests opposed to those of his family, and he may interpret the family interest in a selfish way; he may sacrifice the family interest to his own, or again he may sacrifice his own interest to that of the family; but it is quite untrue to say that he does not make the family interest

his own. It is also clear that by making the family interest his own he expands and enriches his own life. This is a matter of ordinary experience. We need not hold that this is always so, but the desires for the welfare of one's family do demand satisfaction like any other desires, and may, like them, be fitted into the texture of a whole policy of life. Indeed for most men such desires are among the most vital and the most persistent that they have, and their frustration brings a feeling of emptiness just as much as the frustration of any other vital and persistent desire. But it would be a complete error to suppose that a man's desire for the welfare of his own family was merely a desire to avoid a feeling of emptiness in his own life. On the contrary the feeling of emptiness arises because of the frustration of a desire which he already has.

What is true of the family is true with certain qualifications of all societies or social groups. So far as they are alive and not dead they are the outcome of individuals' needs and desires, they are sustained by individuals' wills, they are founded upon the fact that individuals are not self-sufficient but have need of one another. In some cases no doubt, as for example in joint-stock companies, each individual may be a member only for the sake of what he can get for himself, and he may desire the welfare of the society only because otherwise he will fail to get the individual end which he seeks. But on the whole the remarkable thing about human nature is that the members of social groups begin as a matter of fact to desire the welfare of the group as a whole. Anything like active cooperation seems to beget a bond of sympathy between man and man, and patriotism is one of the most deeply rooted of human tendencies. A man has a seemingly irrational pride in his village, his school, his college, his university, and even in his tennis club, just as he has in his wife or his child or his motor-car. He is thrilled by the success of his group whatever it may be, and he is depressed by its failures. If this is not so in the case of business organisations, that would suggest something wrong in modern industrial society.

There are indeed men who are without this feeling for institutions, as there are men who take no interest in poetry or religion. But on the whole such men appear to be abnormal

or even a little diseased, although they may have other gifts as a sort of compensation. The danger with the average man is not that he takes no interest in anything beyond himself, but that his interest in his special group may be so intense that he wholly fails to appreciate or do justice to the achievements and the claims of any other. This tendency to make the interest of the group one's own is a natural tendency which is not based upon, although it may be reinforced by, the example and exhortation of others. It exists in its own right and with at least as much justification as any other desire. It is a mistake to explain it, and still more to justify it, on the ground that its presence in us and in others helps us and them to realise aims which are exclusively individual. There is no reason to suppose that it is based on self-interest in any narrow sense, and its place in life must be justified in the same way as the place in life of any other desires whatever.

Cooperation is not normally just a case of my helping you with your job if you help me with mine. It is rather the pursuit of a common end in different ways, the willing of different elements in the same coherent policy. Sometimes of course we may do for another something which we should not otherwise be interested in doing, because only so can we secure his help for something in which we are interested and he is not. It is this fact which leads to the view that the state rests upon mutual concessions, upon a giving up of liberties or so-called rights in order to secure something which we cannot otherwise obtain. But this, although sometimes it may have an element of truth, is at the best a very one-sided and inadequate account of human cooperation. It wholly ignores the fact that most of us like cooperation with others, and have a genuine interest not merely in what we are ourselves doing but in the whole thing which is being done.

This is very clear in the case of games. One of the first things we want is someone to play with, and that may even mean someone to play against. In a game of football we obviously cooperate with our side and share a common desire, the desire that our side should win. That is one thing which

we all want, and that desire is a fundamental factor in deter mining our policy for the game. It would be stupid to imagin that A simply wanted to be a wing-three-quarter and B wante to be full-back, and it happened accidentally that A's doin what he wanted helped B to do what he wanted. It woul be still more stupid to suppose that part of what A did wa not really wanted by A, but was done in order to get B t do something which was not really wanted by B. The polic followed is determined by the fact that we all want one thin which involves cooperation, or better *is* cooperation, of particular kind. That is the aspect of unity. But the differen part played by different individuals is determined by th different natural capacities which they have for securing th common end. And it is precisely in so far as the players ar different and can each do something better than the other that they all become essential to their side. No doubt a ma may want to do something which he does badly or whic does not really help his side to win, but that means merel that he wills incoherently in cooperation as he may wil incoherently in his own life. He is simply another case o the man who wishes to eat his cake and to have it, *i.e.* he i a man who is willing inconsistently. The discipline and ever the suppression of individual desires are necessary in a game but that is not because the game is social and involves co operation with others. Such discipline is just as necessar in doing anything that we want to do, although others ar likely to express their annoyance at inconsistency in a co operative activity, while they may be prepared to ignore i in an activity which may seem purely individual. We cannot avoid discipline if we wish for success in any kind of activity and it is quite untrue to say that social discipline involve the suppression of individuality. So far as it is reasonable so far as it is part of a coherent attempt to do what we ar doing, social discipline is actually insisting that each ma shall do that which for this purpose he is able to do best and as a general rule men realise their most fundamental desires and express their own personality when they are doing what they can do best. Any discipline and any repression may be harmful in itself, *i.e.* a desire for discipline or repression, like any other desire, may play a part in life which disturbs

or weakens the whole. And it may be that circumstances are unfavourable to us or that other people are unfair. But discipline, whether for purposes of securing a social or an individual end, is not opposed to the satisfaction of personal desires, but is its condition. This is not to deny the reality of sacrifice. It is merely to assert that it is preposterous to consider discipline just sacrifice and nothing else. The individual may get most of what he wants both for his side and for himself by performing for his side just that special function which his special gifts fit him to perform.

The same thing is true not only of the individual's relation to his own side but also of his relation to the other side. We need people to play against as well as to play with. We all want the game of football; it is even supposed to be the part of sportsmanship to want the best side to win. In whatever position or on whatever side we play we are seeking in our different ways to secure the same end. Nothing could be farther from the truth than to suppose that a certain number of individuals were pursuing merely private ends, and within certain limits were making concessions to each other in order to secure these merely private ends. The least we can say is that we all want a game of football, and can have what we want only if other people want it too. We may even go farther and say that we want the other people to play and they want us to play. Man is by nature a political animal, and there are certain things which we want to do together. The individual and social sides are blended long before the stage of reflexion or the emergence of a considered morality.

I have used as examples of social cooperation the activity of members of a family and the activity of players of a game. The first example has been chosen because the family is so manifestly founded upon natural instincts and natural differences, the second because games are generally believed to lie outside the sphere of morality and because they are life or action in miniature. They mirror life in a practical way as art mirrors it in a contemplative way, and indeed in some of the games of childhood it is hard to say whether the children are playing a game or practising a kind of art. But

the principles which have been expounded appear to be manifested in a greater or less degree in all forms of social cooperation, even in that cooperation which is called economic in the narrow sense in which that word is commonly employed.

The necessity of cooperation arises from the differences of the cooperators, and cooperation is intimate or accidental according as these differences are profound or trivial, and according as they lead or fail to lead to cooperation being wanted and pursued for its own sake. So external a bond as the cash nexus, and even the very law of supply and demand itself, depend upon differences, upon the fact that you have something that I want and I have something that you want. The very complication and success of economic relations in the modern world blinds us to its intimate character, but all economic relations, even the most external, depend upon some sort of difference in men and the different needs to which that difference gives rise. In a primitive community it is quite clear that there is a reason for dividing up the necessary economic tasks according to differences of capacity. The community will tend to get more of the necessities of life, if one man hunts and another tills the soil and another builds the houses and so on. The degree of specialisation which produces the greatest efficiency can be learned only in practice, and will vary with different conditions and with different types of men.

We may then lay down the general rule that within limits men do better that to which they give their whole attention, but this is more conspicuously true if each man does that for which he has a special aptitude. Specialisation is enormously more efficient if it is based on the natural differences among men; and it is worse than useless, if from some wrong-headedness it puts each man to the task for which he is least fitted. But there is a limit to the wrong-headedness of men, and on the whole men tend in a simple community to get the job for which they are best fitted. Further, so far as this ideal is realised, the individual is likely to be contented, as most men like doing what they can do well and dislike doing what they do badly. Hence the cooperation based on natural differences not only tends to make the community more efficient in getting what it wants, but it tends also to help

the individual to get what he wants, and to realise his own individual desires and powers.

Again, such a common life of cooperation tends to arouse a general desire for the welfare of the whole, not only because each man is getting what he wants out of it, but because each man is serving the whole in his own way and becomes conscious of his need of other men and their need of him. There is in any case a natural attraction of man to man, a natural desire to work side by side with others even when each is doing the same kind of thing, but the ties are infinitely closer in a community where each individual, instead of doing everything for himself, does some special thing for himself and for the others. Where each man supplies all his own needs he is independent of the community, and the community is independent of him. He can leave it and lead his own life without making any very great difference either to the community or to himself. He may miss the sight of his friends at work and the conversation over the camp-fire at night, and in a less degree some of them may miss him, but his departure makes no more difference than that. It is far otherwise if he fulfils a necessary function in the community. The loss of the best or the only hunter is a genuine loss to the community, and means a reorganisation of the common life. And for him it means that all the things which were formerly done for him he must now do for himself. It means also a very great narrowing of his interests and of his life. It is in such circumstances that men are conscious of the ties which bind them to their fellows, and take a passionate interest in the welfare of the community which they are conscious that they both serve and in their way adorn. The relations between men are still economic, but they are very much more intimate and social than when we pass a coin across a counter and receive in return a loaf of bread or a pound of cheese.

The principles of cooperation which we have seen manifested in the family, in games, and in simple economic cooperation, are equally present in that conspicuous society which is called the state. The state like any other society is sustained by human wills and grows out of human needs.

The elementary economic society which we have considered would be manifestly incomplete. Men demand not merely food and clothes but also security, and without security they cannot adequately satisfy their purely economic needs. And the security which they desire has an external and an internal side. They demand protection against external enemies and against internal dissension. It is manifest that such protection is in the interests of the whole community, for war and internal disorder are equally disastrous to economic cooperation and economic efficiency. And such protection is also as a rule in the interests of the individual, not only in so far as he is performing his special task, but perhaps even in so far as he is concerned with purely private ends. He cannot do what he wants if he is liable at any moment to be assaulted and killed, whether by external enemies or by his fellow-members in the same society.

Such statements are not indeed true without qualification. It is just possible that the whole community may gain economically as the result of a successful war, but this fact merely emphasises the necessity of military organisation as long as war is possible. It is extremely improbable that the community as a whole will gain economically by civil strife or even by ordinary crime, but it is quite possible that some individuals may do so. The individual may also gain by a successful war and even by an unsuccessful, if for example he is a traitor to his country or if he is what is called a war profiteer. It is possible to fish in troubled waters. We need not deny that an individual may pursue, and pursue successfully, ends which are to the detriment of the whole community. But it is not possible that all the members should pursue such ends with success, and those who do so are able to do so because on the whole there is cooperation among men, and because there is some sort of organisation making for security.

We are not here concerned with the question of the clash between the interest of the whole and the interest of the individual. We must recognise that there often is such a clash and that the individual may oppose himself to the state. But states do not exist because they oppose the interests of their members. They exist for precisely the opposite reason. They exist like other societies precisely because their members

find that through the existence of the state they are able to get what they want. And what the members want is not only something private to themselves. They as a rule desire also the welfare and the success of the state as a whole.

It is true that in a complicated modern state individuals may fail to recognise the extent to which their private enterprises are made possible by the state. It may even be true that their support of the state is mere acquiescence rather than active will. Men are often selfish and brutal and greedy, seeking their own narrow ends in blind indifference to the welfare of the whole. But once more a state does not exist or flourish because of such an attitude on the part of its members. And on the whole the surprising thing about men is the depth and strength of the passion which they feel towards their country. We are not attempting to justify such a passion, but only to understand it. The seemingly irrational pride, as we have called it, which men feel in the various groups to which they belong, is manifested in a supreme degree in their attitude toward their country. They thrill at its success, they are wretched through its failure. Their attitude depends comparatively little on what it has done for them. It is often the most insignificant nations which are the most patriotic—at least in words. The passion of patriotism seems to be felt most keenly, if not acted upon most consistently, by nations which are downtrodden and oppressed. This passion is directed to the community not merely as organised for the security of itself and its members. There is indeed nothing that rouses men's ardour so much as the story of their country's struggle for independence, of the courage displayed in a battle against odds. But their country is far more to them than an organisation for security. It stands to them for the spiritual efforts of those with whom they are at one, of the men of their own blood speaking their own language and governed by their own ideals. And it stands to them for all that they have achieved, not only in war and in government or again in industry or trade, but also in the founding of a special civilisation or culture, and in the manifestation of a special genius which they are proud to call their own.

It is not for us here to note the exceptions to these principles, to observe that there may be states composed of different races and speaking different tongues. In general a state is strengthened by having a common race and speaking a common language, but the fundamental thing is a common history and a common tradition. Until that is established and definite a nation is still in its infancy. And that common history and common tradition is in the main a history and tradition of cooperation, not merely for purposes of security, but for all the multifarious activities of national and of individual life. It is the history and tradition of something like a common will.

It may be objected that we are confusing the nation or the country with the state. It is customary to distinguish between society and its government, and there are those who would attempt to identify the state with the government. No doubt these distinctions have their value, and in writing a treatise on political philosophy it would be necessary to consider what precisely that value is. But for our broader purposes such distinctions are irrelevant. As a general rule patriotism is felt, not towards the government as opposed to the society or towards the society as opposed to the government, but towards the concrete society organised and governed as a political unit and manifesting all sorts of activities other than political. We may call it the commonwealth or the state, but the important point is that, however men may criticise it in detail, their loyalty and patriotism are directed to it as a whole, and generally speaking as a whole in which government is an essential part. Our attitude to the government may vary very greatly, but we are loyal to it in the main because our country must have a government to be a country in the full sense, and because this whatever its faults is still the government of our country. The King's government, as we say, must be carried on. What we are here considering however is our attitude not to a special part but to the whole.

We must observe further that our cooperation in and with any society, including that wide society which we have called the state, is a policy like any other of our coherent activities.

It grows out of impulses and desires, it is manifested in relatively momentary actions, and these momentary actions are willed as elements in a wider whole. It is an expression of the individual's nature—if we may use that concept—and it is an activity of the individual's will. But it may be and often is something more. It may be willed definitely as a cooperative policy, as a policy of cooperation. Its special character lies essentially in the nature of the will. We have seen that the general character of a policy, as a policy, does not lie in the fact that a series of momentary actions happen to exhibit a certain consistency of response, or even that they are recognised to do so by the person who is the agent. It does not lie in the fact that they are accompanied by a vague aspiration towards an ideal, or even that they are preceded by an abstract idea of a plan or an abstract intention to carry out such a plan. All these things may be, and some of them must be, concomitants of a policy, but they are not its essence. If we genuinely have a policy, we will momentary actions as part of a whole which goes beyond our momentary actions. That is to say there is a real difference in the character of our actual momentary volition. There must be a similar difference in the actual momentary volition, if we are carrying out a policy which is properly cooperative. A policy is not cooperative because a series of momentary actions do as a matter of fact fit in consistently with the actions of other members of the society, or even because the agent himself is intellectually aware of such consistency. And it is not cooperative because the agent has an isolated and vague aspiration towards the welfare or activity of the whole. In order to be cooperative it need not always be preceded by the intellectual apprehension of an abstract plan or by an abstract intention to carry out such a plan. If we genuinely pursue a policy of cooperation, we will our momentary actions not only as a part of a whole which goes beyond our momentary action—that is true of every policy—but as part of a whole which goes beyond our own actions altogether, as part of a whole which is the activity of the society and not merely of the individual. There is a genuine difference—as all plain men recognise—between the action done in a purely selfish, and the action done in a truly social, spirit. And that

difference is not something external to the action. It is the very essence of the action itself.

The view which is here put forward is not a theory of something miraculous which enters into social action and distinguishes it from any other. It is simply the theory which has been expounded all along, which recognises the difference between a relatively momentary action and a policy, just in the same way as it recognises the difference between a merely individual policy and a policy which is also social. Willing is simply unintelligible unless it transcends itself, unless the relatively momentary action can be willed as an element in a wider whole, and can be determined through and through in being so willed.

None the less it is very remarkable that the human spirit in willing not only goes beyond what is done at the moment and wills it as a part of a whole, and so wills the whole in willing this as its part; but also goes so far beyond it as to will it as part of a whole which includes the willing of others, and so wills the whole in willing this as its part. Yet this has been recognised from the very beginning of our discussion. We will a stroke at tennis, not only as an element in our individual policy of taking exercise, but as an element in a policy of cooperating in a game. The whole game is our policy just as much as our particular part, and each stroke is willed, not merely as an element in our whole activity, but as an element in the game which is the activity of the whole. We do not understand our action except by understanding it in this way; and we do not will our action except by willing it in this way.

I have tried to describe a social or cooperative action, but I am only too conscious that although here there is some quite special fact to describe, its description is by no means an easy matter. If we apply the sharp distinction of subject and object to social willing, we cannot say that in willing our part in what is done we are willing in detail the parts which are willed by other people. We may disapprove of what other people are doing, and even where we suppose an ideal or perfect cooperation we may be wholly unaware of what is being actually willed by our collaborators. None the less what we will cannot be sharply marked off from the whole

which is willed, and we must say that we will our part as a part of a whole, and in willing the part we in some way will the whole.

The same difficulty arises to some extent even in our relation with the physical universe, although it does not cooperate with us in the same way as our fellow men. The movement that we will is a part of the physical universe, and could not be at all unless the physical universe were what it is. What we will is not merely a movement, but a change in the universe as a whole, and we may be said in some sense to will the whole universe as that is changed by our volition, although it cannot be said for example that the stars are moved by our volition. However, we operate rather than cooperate with the universe (or with parts of it), and a better analogy for social cooperation is rather the relation between one act of our own and the other acts which go to make up a policy. In the momentary volition we do not will our whole policy in all its details, but what we will is willed as part of a whole policy, the other parts of which are willed at different times. And we may say that in willing the part we are in some sense willing the whole.

It seems to be true, in spite of the difficulties, that coherence lies in the activity considered concretely as a unity of subject and object, and that this is true, not merely of the coherent willing of the individual, but also of the coherent willing which is social cooperation. And this cooperation is not something which is due from the first to reflexion, although it may be made more coherent and more transparent to itself by reflexion. Reflective cooperation depends upon the recognition that other selves are spirits like ourselves and will their bodily movements in the same kind of way as we do. But Mr. Alexander [1] is surely right in saying that we cannot arrive at knowledge of other selves simply by analogy from what we know of our own selves, because we become conscious of ourselves only as we become conscious of other selves. The consciousness of other selves seems to arise only because we cooperate with other selves, and have a sense—which I at least should wish to call enjoyment—of our cooperation. Our cooperation and our sense of cooperation seem not to depend

[1] Alexander, *Space, Time, and Deity*, vol. ii, pp. 31–37.

so much on our reflective distinctions of self and others, or even of self and not-self, as these reflective distinctions depend upon it. All these distinctions seem to sort themselves out within something which is already a whole.

These are difficult matters, and while I seek to express the truth as it appears to me, I am anxious not to tie down the theory to a special interpretation of the facts which may not find general acceptance. But I am convinced that here are facts which are palpable to all men, and that, whatever be the right interpretation of them, they are the facts which lie at the root of what is called morality. I describe them in my own terms by saying that in cooperation we will our momentary actions, not only as parts of a whole which goes beyond our own momentary action, but as parts of a whole which goes beyond our own actions altogether and is the activity, not only of the isolated individual, but of the individuals who go to make up the society. In this description activity is regarded as a union of willing and what is willed, something which can be circumscribed in time and it may be even in space, but is none the less not external to the whole of which it is a part, as one movement is external to another movement or one body to another body.

It is surely needless to add that men fail to cooperate just as they fail to carry out any other policy. A man may be moved by a momentary impulse which is inconsistent with his wider policy; he may, and he often does, act inconsistently; and even where his acts are relatively consistent he may be willing each separately, without any consciousness of what he is doing as a whole, and without willing them as consistent parts of a whole. Similarly it is only too obvious that although all men do cooperate with others, they may act in ways quite inconsistent with such cooperation; and even when their acts do fit in with a cooperative activity, they may be quite unconscious of such fitting in, and they may not will them as consistent elements in such an activity. This is particularly true of that wider cooperation which we have called the activity of society organised as a state. Perhaps most men have a certain feeling for their country and do sometimes will their actions definitely as citizens. This

applies, not only to definitely political activities, but to the ordinary work of the world. Some men are glad to work for their country, not merely in governing, but in teaching, in thinking, or in adding to its material wealth. But the state is so organised that men may in a sense cooperate with it unconsciously. It pays its officials to administer, its teachers to teach, and so on; and it is so constructed that most men are unable to live, unless they do something which is necessary to others and to some extent to the whole. There must be cooperation of a kind, even if it is not willed as cooperation. Many men may will only their selfish interests, and yet their action may be of advantage to the state, and may fit in with a general scheme of cooperation, although it is not willed as such. But the state is efficient only when there is cooperation according to natural capacity, and it is strong when such cooperation is genuinely willed as cooperation, that is as an element in a wider activity which is the activity of the whole.

It is of course untrue to say that a state or any society is strong in so far as its members will in a spirit of actual loyalty or devotion to the state, if we abstract the spirit from the action itself. It would be equally untrue to say that a policy was efficiently carried out because a man willed every part as a part of the whole, if in saying this we abstract his willing in the spirit of the whole from his natural or acquired capacity to do what he is trying to do. A man is not a good golfer because he wills every stroke in the spirit of the game, but because the spirit of the game is so strong in him that he makes the most of a natural capacity to play. It is not enough that a bricklayer should lay bricks to the glory of God or as a service to his country. He must also be able to lay bricks as part of a coherent policy of building a house with the materials available. There is no more pathetic picture than that of the man who is so imbued with the spirit of loyalty to an institution that he insists on undertaking tasks for which he is unfitted. Life is a highly complicated affair, and actions are not economically successful merely because they are willed as abstractly consistent with a policy. They must also be adjusted to the actual situation and must be genuinely consistent with the policy. In short, they must be willed as concretely consistent with the policy, as really consistent

elements in the whole. This is equally true if the policy is a policy of social cooperation. We may genuinely respect a man for his public spirit, but he may be a positive menace to society, if he is so public-spirited that he neglects alike to render himself efficient in what he is doing and to consider the wills of those with whom he is cooperating. Such a man is really incoherent in his willing. A genuine public spirit is shown as a rule in cooperating efficiently with one's society, even if it may be shown at times by trying to smash a society which is considered rotten.

CHAPTER XI

THE SOCIAL WILL (*continued*)

MEN cooperate with or in many societies. Sometimes the cooperation is trivial; sometimes it is the most important thing in an individual's life. Without his bridge club he might have to devise a new way of spending his evenings. Without his family or his church he might feel that his life was over or that his soul was lost. Yet every kind of cooperation which is admitted into his life, whether it seem accidental or of the very fabric of his being, must find its place in his one policy of life. And in so far as his cooperation with different societies is not merely a using of them for private ends, but is genuine cooperation; in so far as in willing his part in the cooperative activity he wills the whole; just in so far is it his need and his demand that the different societies in which he cooperates should also cooperate with one another, or at the least that their different activities should be capable of being parts of one coherent whole. To be a loyal member at once of a church which condemns socialism and of a socialist party which condemns churches is to introduce incoherence into his own life. Devotion to a cause may be incompatible with his service to his family and *vice versa*. It may be impossible wholly to remove such antagonisms and conflicts, and he may have to choose one form of cooperation and to reject another; but the coherence of his life, as a being who cooperates with others in societies, demands as its condition a coherent society of societies, such that all the different societies in which he is interested may function as its coherent parts.

The same thing is true when we consider the societies themselves. Cooperation for a limited purpose demands a background of wider cooperation. In particular it demands that kind of organisation for society which we have seen to be necessary for the pursuit of an individual policy. All our limited societies are rendered possible only through the

prevalence of law and order in the community at large; and since the policies of different societies, like that of different individuals, may clash, it is necessary that there should be some sort of adjustment, alike for the efficiency of the separate societies and for the efficiency of the whole. It is true that society as a whole may gain because there are different points of view represented within it, and a healthy conflict of interests may work itself out into an arrangement which in the circumstances is the best for all the parties concerned. But the clash of wills is likely to settle down most easily into a reasonably coherent working arrangement, if the different conflicting societies have some regard for the cooperation of society as a whole, and are not exclusively concerned with realising their own particular policy. This is especially true of political parties. A healthy opposition is often the condition of satisfactory government, and in a sound political society this is often recognised both by those in power and by their opponents. It seems for example to be recognised in the phrase 'His Majesty's Opposition'. Such an attitude is possible only when men are conscious that others are pursuing in different ways what they believe to be the welfare of their country, and when there are certain ideals of cooperation which all parties hold in common. The same truth applies to economic as well as to political conflicts.

Generally speaking, conflicts between societies make for a wider cooperation only where they take place within the limits imposed by law. If differences of opinion between societies are not to be settled merely by force, there must be a higher authority to judge between them when their wills are irreconcilable. This is obviously the only way to secure the efficient cooperation of society as a whole; and when the strength of the opposing societies is fairly equally balanced, such an authority probably secures for both of them more of what they want than could be secured by civil war. When on the other hand the strength of the opposing societies is not equally balanced, it is only an impartial authority which can secure anything like fair play for the weak. Even an authority which is not wholly impartial may secure for each party more of what it wants than could be secured by a conflict in which they both suffered and one was defeated.

In the case of political parties there can be no higher authority than that which is the government of the country, but, just for this reason, it is especially incumbent upon a government to act only within the constitution and not to press too hardly upon its opponents. In a healthy political society this is generally accepted, and a government remembers that some day it too will be in opposition. It remembers also that one day it must appeal to constituents who have a belief in fair play and a desire to give the other fellow a chance. The electorate is in some way the higher authority to which in the end it must appeal; and while it may be a bad thing that a government should keep its eye too closely upon the next election, it is a good thing that it should consider the interests of its opponents, and above all that it should consider the interests of the whole.

Hence we see that cooperation in societies itself demands a wider whole of cooperation within which it may find its place, just as any individual policy demands that it should find its place in a whole policy of life. Societies are completed and perfected within a society of societies, as policies are completed and perfected within a policy of policies or what we have called a policy of life. But just as a policy of life is seldom if ever adequately established, so too the society of societies is always inadequately realised. The nearest approach to it in some ways is what we have called the state or commonwealth, and while this is something much wider than a government, government is its necessary instrument or mouthpiece. The supreme claim of a government, and especially of a democratic government, is that it is the only organ or organisation by which the whole society can take action, not merely for a limited kind of cooperation, but for its cooperation as a whole.

This does not mean that it is the business of government as government to perform the functions of the different societies or the different individuals within the state. It may be that its main function is to secure the conditions which enable different societies and different individuals to fulfil their policies and to realise their wills. But in so doing it must consider these societies and individuals as cooperating in a wider whole which is the state or commonwealth, and it

must see to it that these activities do not disrupt the wider cooperation which is the condition of the effective willing, not of one society or individual, but as far as may be of all societies and individuals within the whole. In a healthy society in which societies and individuals do not readily molest one another or pursue their own ends entirely without regard to those of others, it may perform its function best by interfering as little as possible. But it must always be there to interfere, if interference is necessary, and nowadays most of us recognise that state action is an empirical matter which must be justified, like any other, by its success or failure in securing that wider cooperation, and not by any prejudice either for or against state action as such. The day is long past when men could regard state interference with individual competition as something immoral or even as wholly futile. Perhaps we may say also that the day is past, or very nearly past, when men could regard bureaucratic control of all the means of production, distribution, and exchange, as inevitably the prelude to a new heaven and a new earth.

We are not concerned, however, with the special problems of political philosophy. We seek only to understand how the will for coherence in the individual life, the will which is a policy of life and in which social as well as other desires must find their place, expands into a will for cooperation with other men in societies, and demands for its completion the coherent willing of a society of societies. The will for coherence cannot be adequately satisfied except by expanding into a wider cooperation which is itself a coherent whole. As other societies seem to lack self-sufficiency and to be concerned with more limited purposes, and as the state seems to offer the first approximation to a coherent whole of the kind we have described, we must consider very briefly the nature of its coherence. And in so doing—since we cannot discuss separately the goodness of the state—it may be well to assert summarily at the outset (though this requires qualification) that on our theory a state is good in so far as it is a whole whose members cooperate coherently with one another, and are able in it to organise their own lives into coherent wholes.

The coherence of cooperation in a state as in any other

society depends upon the principle enunciated by Plato that difference of function should depend upon natural differences in individuals. Plato himself argued with great plausibility that on this principle rulers and soldiers should be selected by their special ability, and should be given a special, although not a specialised, training to fit them for their tasks. If the business of a doctor or navigator, and even of a carpenter or cobbler, should be entrusted only to those who have special gifts and special training and have devoted their lives to their special function, it would seem almost the limit of human folly to entrust the defence and direction of the state, either to men selected by the accident of birth or wealth, or to a popular assembly which necessarily includes the most incompetent and the most unscrupulous of citizens. Other tasks are in the main matters of comfort and convenience, but government and defence are matters of life and death.

Without criticising Plato's proposals in detail, it may be suggested that he gave to his ideal a certain stiffness and inflexibility which few of us would accept to-day. We have only too much reason to know that mere numbers count very greatly in war, and it may be that while our officers must have special abilities and special training, we shall find ourselves compelled none the less to give some military training to all our citizens, or at least to summon all fit men to play their part in a defensive war. If we do so, it will certainly be difficult to refuse them a voice in deciding issues which may bring them to wounds and death. If a man is good enough to die for his country, there is something to be said for the view that he is good enough to vote in the election of Members of Parliament. When men are asked to cooperate with a whole heart in the activity which is the life of their country, it is hard, at least in a politically developed community, to give them no say in determining what the general lines of that activity shall be. Even if they are certain to make mistakes, it may well be that mistakes which are due to lack of political wisdom are more than balanced by an increased interest in, and identification with, the activity of the whole. At any rate there can be no doubt that, in states where there has been a long history of parliamentary institutions, men are determined to take some part in deciding the

policy of their country, and any proposal to deprive them of the right to do so is the merest moonshine, and has no relation at all to our actual everyday life.

It is the fashion at the moment to decry democracy. The war which was to make the world safe for democracy has been followed by a succession of dictatorships. We are asked on all sides to choose between being dictated to by the proletariat and being dictated to by the patriotic—as if we were not all patriotic, and as if the proletariat who became dictators continued to be the proletariat. On the one hand we are faced by the reactionary whose only policy is to ' shoot 'em down ', and on the other by the revolutionary whose only policy is to ' string 'em up ' ; and many men of more limited, if less bloodthirsty, ideas, having awakened to the somewhat obvious fact that democracy is compatible with inefficiency and corruption, and that exactly the same institutions are not suited to peoples of different temperament and different levels of political education, are dinning into our ears the futility of parliamentary institutions, and appear to regard such empty negations as the last word in political wisdom. It is, we may admit, a good thing that the exaggerated claims of democracy in the nineteenth century should be subjected to searching criticism. Democracy will not by itself bring on the golden age, and it demands a high degree of political education in the masses, such as can be attained only by years and it may be by centuries of political experience. Some peoples may be politically so undeveloped that nothing can save them except the strong hand of the dictator, but their weaknesses should not be elevated into an ideal for the world. The issue between dictatorship and democracy is in its essence an issue between deciding policies by force and deciding them by discussion. Men who are politically educated—whether in the state or in any other society—try to persuade one another by argument, and then abide loyally by the decision which commends itself to the majority. They may claim the right to continue the argument and to try to amend the decision in the light of fuller experience, but until the decision is reversed they accept it, and it may even be that they help to carry it out. In England at least it is a rare thing for one

government simply to undo what was done by a previous government, and it is recognised to be politically unwise to do so, although of course previous measures may be modified in the direction which is thought desirable. In this way all parties contribute to the efficient cooperation of the state. But men of less political education, when they are defeated at the polls, begin to reach for their clubs and daggers. This is not normally political wisdom but political folly. It means giving up all belief in the wisdom and disinterestedness of their fellow-countrymen; and even if it be temporarily successful, even if it be temporarily justifiable, it introduces the idea of deciding things by force and not by reason. It is an inferior method of securing whole-hearted cooperation among men of any spirit or of any character. It is likely to lead to a succession of tyrannies and a succession of civil wars, and it is a poor ideal to offer to men who have proved their competence in using more reasonable methods.

If the modern system of representative government is worked by men of reasonable honesty and competence, seeking the interest of their country as well as the interest of their party, and recognising that their opponents in their own way and with their less perfect wisdom are trying to do the same, it is by far the best way of securing that general willingness to cooperate intelligently in the activity of society which constitutes the goodness of the state. It is perfectly possible to criticise its working in detail, without condemning the system as a whole. It may be that some points of view are inadequately represented, and it may or may not be possible to remedy this defect without falling into that chaos of innumerable conflicting parties which makes government so difficult in many continental states. It may be argued that representatives should be chosen by trades and professions and not by local constituencies as at present. It has for example been maintained [1] that no representative can represent all a man's interests, and that we should have one man to represent our interests as residents in a particular locality, and another to represent our interests as members of a particular trade union or a particular profession and so on. There is undoubtedly a danger under the present system that the chief

[1] Mr. G. D. H. Cole, *Social Theory*, chapter vi.

interest of a body of men may be unrepresented because they are distributed as minorities in different areas, or again that the general interests of a particular community may be unrepresented because the majority in it are, for example, miners and choose their representative rather to speak for the whole body of miners throughout the country. These dangers however tend to counteract one another, and they could be met by having two Houses of Parliament elected by different methods. Such questions are questions of detail, although the details may be of great importance in making adjustments to new conditions. We must remember, however, that the business of representatives is to consider the interests not only of their own supporters, or even of their own constituency, but of the country as a whole. In this sense representatives must under any system try to represent the whole of a man's interests, because they must seek to reconcile men's conflicting interests within an all-inclusive whole. The local representative has in many ways an advantage over the trade representative just because he represents, not a sectional or limited interest, but the common interests of different men contributing differently to the welfare of a particular community. It is important that no side of life should be unrepresented, but it is still more important that representatives should be chosen to consider primarily the interests of the whole.

Further, the theory of representative government is not incompatible with the principle laid down by Plato, that men must function in the state according to their diverse and individual gifts. The justification of an educated democracy in the modern sense is that it is capable of choosing the best men directly or indirectly for the task of government. That ideal is no doubt imperfectly attained, but men do decide upon broad lines of policy after different views have been put before them by practical politicians, and at the same time they decide which group of practical politicians are to have the right of controlling the policy and carrying on the administration of the country. With all the weaknesses of the present system—and some of them are due to defects of human nature which would have the same results in any system—we may say that it actually

functions with some measure of success, and has proved competent by slight adjustments to withstand even the tremendous strain of war.

The method by which political functions are divided between the people and different kinds of expert in government—the statesman, the judge, the civil servant, and so on —must vary with the different history and the different genius of different peoples. We may believe that an educated democracy is best fitted to secure honest and competent government combined with a general keenness on the part of all men to perform their special function in cooperation with the whole, but what is good for individual nations as for individual men is relative to their special temperament and their individual will. There is nothing in what has been said inconsistent with the goodness of an autocracy, provided that there is, as there may be, a widespread acquiescence of the people in such an autocracy. Some of us may believe that mere acquiescence, however general, means a relatively empty kind of coherence and a relatively inferior political development, that some kind of political activity is a necessary part of the good life, and that every autocracy ought to educate for its own demise. Yet there are others who hold that some men and some races are permanently incapable of rising beyond the condition of tutelage, and even that democracy is the special privilege (or defect) of the so-called Anglo-Saxon peoples. It is impossible to discuss the matter here, and for the purposes of the present argument it is unnecessary to do so. We need insist here upon one thing only, that every state which is not on the edge of anarchy rests upon the cooperation of men who have some sort of special aptitude for their special job (whatever it may be), and some sort of interest in the whole cooperative activity, or at the least some sort of acquiescence in the existing scheme of cooperation. A state which is without this tends to disappear as a state altogether.

It may be added that the principles of coherence which were found in the individual life are, with certain modifications, also present in the life of the state. In particular, the coherence described is not the coherence of merely momentary wills. States like individuals have a life which endures

through time, and indeed they are a partnership between the living and the dead and the yet unborn. It is not enough to constitute coherence that a community should be swept by a passion for hanging the Kaiser or putting the Melians to death. The coherent will is that which is manifested in abiding policies on which the heart of the nation is set. It is that abiding will which a statesman must at once foster and obey, and it is only the demagogue who will devote his energies merely to the pleasing of the Great Beast. Such truth as there is in the doctrine of the general will lies in its recognition that there is in men an abiding will to cooperation which is distinct alike from the selfish policies of individuals and the momentary passions of the mob.

The political cooperation of the state, then, demands that special functions should be performed according to differences of nature and of training, but it is a mistake to imagine that this principle is confined to purely political tasks. Modern society is based upon specialisation; and this is a great advance from the point of view of the individual, so far as he finds himself able to pursue policies congenial, or as we say natural, to him, instead of having to procure with his own hands all that he requires in the way of food, clothes, and shelter. It is a disadvantage, in so far as he may be forced into an occupation for which he is unfitted alike by taste and talent. Yet we must remember that the poet who is forced by modern society to devote his life to making shoes would have no opportunity of being a poet at all were it not for the existence of society. It is society and society alone which makes specialisation possible; and even if some men may be compelled to specialise in ways which are unsuitable, it cannot be maintained that this is invariably the case. Men do sometimes follow the career which they prefer and for which they are adapted, and they do so only through the organisation of society It is the political organisation of the state which gives them that security without which a specialised activity is impossible. It is the economic organisation of society which supplies them with necessities and with such luxuries as they can obtain. Even a scavenger has a multitude of men working to supply his needs and to help

him to discharge his special function. And modern society has been able by its organisation, not only to provide for its material needs, but even to separate off some men for the pursuit of philosophy and science and the various forms of art. No man could be a spectroscopist without the collaboration of his fellows. The world may in many ways be ill-organised, but the spectacle of modern civilisation with its infinitely varied activities all fitting in, to a certain extent, although no one really apprehends or wills the whole in detail, is one which would, I imagine, fill an inexperienced but intelligent observer from another planet with a considerable measure of respect. Each man is in the main seeking his own livelihood, yet many men seem able to follow their own special bent and to do at the same time some service which is wanted for society as a whole. And nearly all of them are able except in abnormal times to obtain, although in too many cases inadequately, food and clothes and shelter for their families and for themselves. We do well to criticise our society, but we should not forget the miracle by which the inhabitants of a great city are enabled to be clothed and fed.

This miracle of cooperation—if we neglect the political activities which we have already discussed—is in the main effected by the prosaic working of the laws of supply and demand. It is possible only in so far as each has something which others want. Our way is rendered easy just in so far as we have something to offer to other men which they desire, and in which they need our cooperation. Apart from special circumstances a man can be a philosopher or a miner, or, more generally, can earn his living in the way he prefers, only if other men are willing to pay him sufficient sums in order to maintain him in that occupation. And in the end this means that many men serve us in different ways in return for the service which we render to some men and to the community as a whole. It is possible that our greatest service may be something for which we are not paid, as when a philosopher has private means or lives by polishing optical glasses, like Spinoza. We need not forget that most men do for others something for which they may get no return, but in the main most men serve their fellows in carrying out the task by which they are enabled to live.

In our present society this mutual service or cooperation is, as we have said, secured mainly, although by no means entirely, by the working of mere economic laws, and in particular by the law of supply and demand. In some cases it may be effected by unpaid or voluntary endeavour on the part of individuals or societies, and in others it may be achieved by the deliberate action of the government. How far such a system is the best system we are not here concerned to ask. But we can say that it works, and that it works well in so far as it secures differentiation of function according to natural capacity and not contrary to natural capacity. That is indeed not the only criterion, as we may presume that a man wants to develop many of his capacities, to realise many of his desires and not only those which are manifested in his special business or function. And perhaps that state would be the best and the most contented in which most men were able to do both. It is by such considerations that we might criticise the present organisation of society. We may consider the present methods to be unnecessarily rough and ready. If we hold either that certain services ought to have certain rewards or, less abstractly and more wisely, that that remuneration is just which enables a man to fulfil his function and otherwise to lead as full a life as is possible in the circumstances, we may believe that in our present system some men, like company promoters, get far more than they should, and others, like poets, get far less. Yet this difference seems to arise because men want the services of company promoters more than they want the services of poets. And perhaps there is a certain rough justice in it all, because poets are sometimes thought to be more efficient when they are poor, while probably at least the appearance of affluence is necessary for the successful promotion of companies. It may be that the socialist could devise a better system for securing cooperation. It may be that his system would have to be tempered with the present seemingly casual methods, which at least offer a spur to ambition and an impediment to idleness and incompetence. We are far from suggesting that the present organisation of society is ideal. We are suggesting only that such as it is it is based on mutual cooperation, on differentiation of function, and that to some

extent this differentiation enables men to realise their desires, to pursue their own particular bent, and to render services both to their fellow men and to society as a whole.

These elementary aspects of cooperation are hidden from our eyes partly by the very success of modern society and partly by its failure. It is easy to see the immense army of the unemployed, the unhappy men and women who are inadequately fed and clothed, whose lives are thwarted and twisted by their circumstances and not merely by their own folly or their own weakness. It is easy to see the greed and extravagance of the rich, and the bitter and senseless conflicts of employers and employed which produce loss alike to individuals and to the society of which they are members. It is plausible to say that all men seek their own interest, for even the best of men are inclined to think that the public good lies along the line which is most advantageous to themselves. But these are not the things which hold a society together. Our society is held together by the genuine good will between man and man, a good will which is never wholly lacking in our country in spite of denunciations of men by masters and of masters by men. If there were not some sense of the whole and of its interest in all classes of our people, our country would be something far other than it is. And it is well sometimes to remember the success which we have actually achieved and which in the vast modern community we are apt to overlook. Our cooperation is so elaborate and so complicated and in a way so impersonal that we fail to see the simple lines upon which it works or the principles upon which it rests. We think of individuals as merely separate and merely selfish, each struggling for his own hand, and we fail to see that the particular form of the struggle is possible only because a kind of cooperation lies behind it. We take society as if it were merely nature, as the natural environment in which each separate individual lives. In a more primitive society or even in a small society like the city states of Greece it is more easy to see the truth. The state is a product of human wills, a way in which these wills are manifested. It lives not by antagonism but by cooperation. It rests upon mutual need and mutual service. It is efficient as men find in it the special function which is the manifestation of their own special gifts.

It is strong in so far as they perform that function consciously in the service of the whole.

It is necessary to add two things. The first is that the state, like the individual, is set against a background of nature. Its organisation depends on the character of that background as well as on the nature of men. We can do only what is possible in the circumstances. A society of a few hundred souls battling for a livelihood in a barren and savage land would probably be unable to afford the luxury of a spectroscopist. But in such circumstances a man with the greatest genius for spectroscopy could not blame the state because he had to function as perhaps an inferior hunter or soldier or agricultural labourer. All he can ask is that he should be able to undertake that for which he is most fitted among all the tasks rendered necessary at the time. Indeed a man brought up in such a society, while he might be dimly conscious that something was lacking to his life, would certainly not be able to conceive that science of spectroscopy in which his life might profitably have been spent. In the state as out of it we must adjust ourselves to our circumstances. The great achievement of the modern state is that it has brought our circumstances more thoroughly under our control. It is the state which makes us free.

The second thing to be added is that the modern state—as has already been suggested—is a society of societies and not merely of individuals. It is this which makes our ties with it so close. As a mere individual it is hard enough, indeed it is impossible, for me to lead an ordinary civilised life unless there is security in the world and honesty and hard work among my fellow men. I am bound to, and dependent upon, my countrymen for the satisfaction of my individual wants. But a man who is the father of a family demands with still greater urgency a world in which there are teachers and policemen and decent living and respect for youth. It is because the state makes it possible for him to carry out that cooperative activity which is family life that he is bound to the state by closer ties. It is because he seeks to found a family that he has special need of that cooperative activity which is the life of the state. And in modern times, just because the state is so large, he is in need of other societies,

and these in their various degrees, churches and trade unions, political parties and tennis clubs, are the most conspicuous features of the modern state. They bind him to his fellow men and to different men in different ways on the very principles of cooperation which we have discussed. And they bind him also to his state, for his state, although to him it may seem relatively remote and distant, is yet the condition of them all. It provides that security without which they could not be, and it judges between them when they come into conflict with one another. Here again there may be antagonism between the state and the societies which are within it, especially if, as may well be, these societies are international and have interests going beyond the state. It may be that in the future we shall have to seek different methods of organisation, and that the modern state as we know it will disappear. But we shall always require some sort of supreme authority to judge between the warring interests of societies as well as of individuals, and we shall always have to seek an inclusive society within which more limited societies can function coherently. It is at present the state which fulfils, however inadequately, these functions, and it is to it that at present most men feel the greatest loyalty. Let us recognise the clash of interests as much as we will. It is none the less a fact that the state exists and is strong to-day, not because it is in antagonism to the interests of societies or of individuals, but because it is the condition by which alone they can do what they seek to do. In certain ways the state stands to other societies as it stands to individuals and the same kind of principles apply. But in the end the state and every other society depends upon and is the manifestation of the wills of individual men.

We may suggest, then, that societies do, as a matter of fact, cooperate; that sometimes cooperation in societies enables different individuals to discharge different functions according to their different capacities; and that sometimes they may consciously discharge such different functions as elements in the cooperative activity of the whole. We have recognised that such cooperative activity, like any other, is relative, not only to the nature and wishes of the individuals, but also to the situation in which they are. The cooperation

of society is different in peace and in war, and it is different in Greenland and in Equatorial Africa. We have recognised also that the world is full of all sorts of failures to cooperate, even of hatreds and injustices and antagonisms which are the very antithesis of cooperation. It is unfortunately true that even good men may suppose themselves to be seeking to further social cooperation, when they are merely playing for their own hand; but perhaps we ought to set against this that some men affect to be playing for their own hand, when they are genuinely aiming at social cooperation. Perhaps it should be added that even when a man seems to be pursuing his special bent in what he does for the whole, he may really be thwarted by an artificial society; but on the other hand some men who appear to be in the wrong groove through the force of social pressure would possibly be found to be in the wrong groove in any conceivable state of society. Qualifications of all sorts might be made indefinitely, but I do not think there is anything in what has been said which need be denied by those who hold that there is an immense amount of selfishness and hostility and rottenness in society, or who believe that most men are grossly incompetent in living their own individual lives. All that we need insist upon is that there is a certain amount of coherence in individual lives, and a certain amount of what we have called genuine cooperation in the life of society. It is a matter of indifference for our present purpose whether that amount be very great or very small. But if anyone tells us that no man ever willed consistently from one moment to another, or again that no man ever willed to do that for which he was suited as an element in a whole cooperative activity, we can only reply as politely as possible that he does not know what he is talking about. If he will consider the work of almost any orchestra or almost any football team, he will acquire some quite necessary and quite elementary wisdom. And he will acquire it also by considering dispassionately the history of almost any country—not excluding his own.

It is useless to enquire how the habit of cooperating in human society has arisen, or to ask what is the origin of society. It is of course possible to explain the origin of the

Standard Oil Company, or of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, or again of the United States of America; that is to say, it is possible to explain the origin of a particular society within a state, or to explain the origin of a particular independent state which grows out of and separates itself from another, but it is not possible to give an account of the origin of the first state or the first society. Even where there is a comparatively fresh start every society grows out of another society or societies, just as every family grows out of other families, and every language grows out of other languages. The new society, adjusting itself to its new situation and its new experiences, carries with it the traditions, good and bad, of the society from which it sprang, and it is guided by these traditions even when it seeks to modify or to reverse them. We may even say that it carries on traditions of which it is not reflectively conscious. The same is still more true in the continuous development of a state. However much it may modify itself for better or for worse, it is what it is in virtue of its past history. It has a unity through time in a way which bears a certain resemblance to the unity of an individual's life. Whatever we may say of the origin of an existing state, whether we consider it as growing out of a past stage of itself, or as making a fresh start such as was made by the Greek Colonies or the United States of America, always and everywhere it springs out of a society or societies already organised as some kind of state.

The state is evolved and not created. It is indeed hard to say what exactly are the marks which distinguish a state from other societies, but if we interpret it widely enough we may say that the state as such is as old as man. Always we find human beings living together, cooperating in a common life, following some sort of common customs or laws, and recognising some sort of authority. The forms taken by the laws or customs, the character of the authority, may vary very greatly; and it may be difficult in some primitive communities, as it is in some developed communities, to say exactly where the authority resides. There may be degrees of independence; it may be difficult to determine what is to be regarded as a state and what is not. We may, if we will, define a state in such a way that we should refuse the

title to some organised societies and grant it to others, but this would not alter the fact that our state developed from something more primitive and was continuous with that out of which it developed. If we knew enough we could doubtless follow the origins of the state back to the instinctive practices and organisation of the non-human ancestors from whom we have sprung.

Hence any account of the origin of the state is merely an analysis of the factors which are at work, or are supposed to be at work, in some or all of the states with which we are acquainted either by historical information or by precarious inference or it may be by untutored imagination. It is not uninteresting or unilluminating to arrange these factors in a temporal order by what we regard as their relative simplicity or by some other criterion. To do so may make our analysis more vivid and more intelligible, so long as we remember that the temporal order is mythological. We may even say that it is hard sometimes to make an analysis clear and intelligible, without something like a temporal order of this mythological kind. It is the sort of thing which Plato did rather well in the *Republic*, and which Mr. Hobbes did rather badly in the *Leviathan*.

It is far from our present purpose to attempt such a task. But it may be said generally that inasmuch as the state is sustained by human willing, is indeed a particular kind of cooperation, it must originate and develop in the same sort of way as any human policy originates and develops. Men drift into that policy of cooperation which constitutes a state, just as they drift into any other policy. This is manifestly true of the individual who finds the state already in existence—and every individual finds the state already in existence. It exercises pressure of all kinds upon him, it instructs him, it affects him alike by precept and by example. It is a sort of machine in which he must find his place or perish. The pressure may be, and to some extent is, blind and inconsistent; it may tend to produce narrow aims and inefficiency in the individual, it may encourage him to take as much and give as little as he can. Yet it tends to produce a width of aim and an efficiency which would be quite impossible for the individual in isolation, and it would be absurd

to deny that it encourages and even forces him to do his part in cooperating with the whole. And the individual seeking satisfaction for his own desires, desires directed sometimes towards purely private ends and sometimes towards the activities of others, drifts into an attitude towards the whole, a policy of cooperating in certain ways with the whole. Such a policy is not merely, as we have seen, an adjustment to external circumstances, but is also a sharing in a wider life. It is not caused merely by external pressure. We learn something of the history of our country, something of what it is now attempting to do, and sometimes at least we will our own task definitely as a part of that greater whole, and in so doing definitely will the whole. In all this there is much momentary impulse, much that is mere drifting. But there is also reflexion which has recognised the consistency or inconsistency of momentary actions, which has apprehended the wider situation; and in the light of such reflexion we have come to will our momentary actions as parts of a policy which goes beyond the momentary action, to will them as parts of the activity of the state itself. It is folly to suppose that man is pure reason. It is equal folly to suppose that his reason, theoretical and practical, is not aiming both at consistency of thought and at consistency of action. Our impulses are social as well as individual, but man is not merely a creature of impulse. His practical reason, his will towards consistency of action, is shown not merely in organising his actions that he may live, but in organising his actions that he may live with others and that others may live with him.

It is the same, we may believe, with the development of the state as a whole. Indeed how could it be otherwise, for what is the state, if it is not a body of men acting together? It grows and develops as cooperation develops, as the policies of men become more coherent with one another. And this—although it is made easier by consideration for the interests of others and of the whole—is not a matter merely of sweet reasonableness and understanding; it is not a matter of all men being more interested in the welfare of the whole than in their own; it is not even a matter of recognising intellectually the best plan for efficiency or the necessity of mutual concessions. The cooperation which is the state is determined

largely through the clash of policies. Men drift into, or settle down into, cooperating in a particular way, partly at least because they have tried other ways and failed. Every man has indeed found some sort of cooperation already in existence, he is affected alike by its power and by the attitude of others towards it, but he may resist it or modify it or try to use it for his own ends. He can do this only by force or persuasion, two methods which fade into one another. For some men there is nothing so persuasive as force. For others —although these are fewer—there is nothing which has so much force as persuasion. It is the clash of policies on the background of tradition which determines the development of the state. As the state develops persuasion becomes more, and force less, prominent; but the two things are always there. And we have no reason to regard the clashing policies as ever directed only to private ends. Men do not obey a chief simply because they are afraid of him. If they obey him because of his birth, they are obviously seeking to carry out a traditional policy of cooperation. But in general there is more even than tradition and fear. The strength of a chief lies mainly in his capacity as a ruler. It depends on his power to defend his people from external attack and internal strife. And amid much that is merely traditional and stupid and cruel and selfish, there is always some sense of the whole, and there is always something more than a will to use it for merely private ends. Modern civilisation in the West has developed on the whole towards democracy, and the cynic may see in this nothing except the gradual expansion of the will to power. But the leaders of such movements, as well as their opponents, have been seeking what they believed to be the interests of the state as well as the interests of themselves and their own kind. Indeed it might be argued that such movements were due to a deeper and a more widespread understanding of that cooperation which is the state, and a will to make it more rich and more conscious and more reasonable than it is. But human motives are always mixed. It is enough for us to recognise that all development depends alike upon cooperation and a clash of policies, and amid much that is pure force and pure selfishness there is also an element of persuasion and a genuine will for cooperation. Impulsive

and blind as human nature is, it is also social; and while some cooperation is impulsive, and some is traditional, and some is selfish and calculating, there is in the state some cooperation which is deliberate and genuine and within limits intelligent. Some cooperation is based on an understanding that we as men can live our lives only in a cooperating whole. Some cooperation is willed as an element in a whole which we therein also will. And while it always seems artificial to describe human action and especially primitive human action in highly philosophic terms, we are justified in believing that no human state has ever existed for long in which this was not to some extent true.

It may seem curious perhaps that cooperation should result from a clash of policies and even from a clash of selfish policies, but it can hardly be denied that such is sometimes the case. Some people have even optimistically believed that each man in seeking his own individual interest was necessarily contributing to the welfare of the state. Such a view can be held only by those who are extremely blind and unusually fortunate, but there are probably some facts which can be brought forward even in defence of so false a theory. Cooperation is effective according as men perform functions for which they are naturally fitted; and as men very often have an unconscious drive in the direction of the tasks especially suited to them, as indeed it is this unconscious drive which at least partly fits them for their tasks, it is perfectly possible that in struggling to do what they want without much regard for other people, they may, by means of conflict, gradually settle down to do just what would be prescribed to them by an impartial authority who understood the situation as a whole. In this way what is willed first of all in conflict against a narrow situation may come to be willed in cooperation against a wider situation, as men reflect upon the nature of their own action. Similarly, as we have seen, the conflict of momentary impulses may lead to a relatively, though externally, coherent series of actions, and reflexion upon this may in turn lead to willing a similar series of actions as part of a definite policy. In both cases alike we may modify our actions in the light of such reflexion; but there need be no great difference in the mere externals of what is subsequently

done, although there may be all the difference in the world when we consider the spirit of our action and not merely its outer form.

It is facts of this sort which have led men to believe that human folly and human selfishness are overruled and directed to wise ends by a beneficent Providence. It is certain that men sometimes build better than they know, but it may be that the Providence which guides them is that rational will which is present in all their actions. The most momentary action is still adjusted towards some sort of situation, and is in its own degree and within its own limits a rational and consistent policy. Practical reason, the coherent will, is present in some degree at all stages; and it is not so surprising that what it does within a narrow sphere and with limited understanding may still stand as the sphere becomes wider and the understanding more profound. The same principle is at work at all levels of action. Men may do first blindly what they afterwards do with deeper insight. This is true of the life both of the individual and the state. A child may follow some limited interest like the study of beetles or the study of books with a sort of blind passion. The man may recognise later that what was done blindly was the best possible preparation for the life of a scientist or a scholar which he now willingly pursues, understanding more fully his own powers and the place of what he does in the world. Similarly a will to personal power or wealth, a blind anger against a wrong inflicted upon oneself or one's class, an effort to escape from an intolerable situation, may lead men into a struggle and bring them to a victory which, if they possess good will and intelligence and a capacity for learning, may be judged by them to have been the best preparation for a change in the life of the state. This change may subsequently be willed alike by themselves and by their former opponents, no longer merely as the private end of an individual or class, but as a necessary part of the cooperation of the state as a whole. The development of the trade unions may be regarded as a case in point. Progress is not so much the victory of reason over passion, as the development of that reason which is already present in passion, and the purification of that passion which can never be separated from reason.

We must add that the development of the state is not only the development of a wider and more coherent will. It means not only more cooperation, and less conflict, among men who come to will their actions more and more as part of a whole of intelligent cooperation. It involves also more understanding and more knowledge. The will indeed we believe to be primary in social as in individual action, but consistent and effective willing is possible only in the light of wider knowledge. Development cannot be entirely one-sided. The organised state itself makes the growth of knowledge possible, and the growth of knowledge makes it more possible to organise the state. The life of the modern state is made possible only by our greater knowledge of nature. Our knowledge of nature increases by leaps and bounds, and the development of invention is daily making it possible for us to do things which we could not do before. Our knowledge of human nature increases much more slowly, and therein lies a genuine danger to our society. But no increase of knowledge can ever be a substitute for the cooperative will. Cooperation helps us to increase our knowledge, and knowledge helps us to develop new methods of cooperation. Yet if the modern world is to develop and not to destroy itself, it must have, not merely knowledge, but the will to cooperation rather than to conflict. If knowledge helps to make cooperation more effective, it helps also to make conflict more deadly. The progress of society depends not on mere knowledge but on the coherent will.

And this brings us to our last point. We have recognised that the same will and the same principles are at work in determining individual actions and individual policies, and also in determining social organisation and the organisation of the state. We have treated the state as one among many societies, and yet as being in some ways more fundamental and more ultimate, as standing to other societies in the same sort of relation as that in which a policy of life stands to other and more limited policies. I believe that we are justified in doing so in the light of past history and of actual human experience. But a merely individual policy of life is, as we saw, an abstraction. It always involves, at least in some

degree, cooperation with others and with the state; it is only a part of a wider whole; it is not self-sufficient; it requires something beyond itself. And this is true of the state also. It was the great defect of Greek political philosophy that, in face of all the facts, it took the state as practically ultimate and self-sufficient. Curiously enough, it tended to regard all action as something inferior, and to seek the highest good in a purely intellectual activity in which action had no place. It recognised that beyond the world of men there was a real world in relation to which alone men could realise their true nature and find their real happiness. But on the side of action itself it had the audacity to regard the city-state as something ultimate, and hardly considered the possibility of a cooperation going beyond the state. So far as such a possibility is considered at all, it tends to be limited to the Hellenic world. There is no general attempt to treat international relations as a part of political philosophy. This tendency has in the main persisted through all modern thought. But as the world becomes smaller with the progress of invention, it is fatal to confine our actions within the limits of the state, as if the state constituted a universe by itself. We live by trading with other countries. We live or die according as our relations with them are relations of cooperation or of conflict. If the state is the condition of the free activity of subordinate societies and of individuals, the peace of the world is the condition of the free activity of the state.

There are indeed men who recognise in this wider world nothing but conflict and jealousy, nothing but a struggle for survival, no limit to human action except the limit of pure force. But even here there is at least the external cooperation of commerce, the cash nexus, the inadequate ties determined by the law of supply and demand. There is also a limited but spiritual cooperation among the great nations of the world, an organised cooperation in the advance of science, a sharing in the great tradition of human art and thought which we have all in our separate ways enriched. The German who shares with me in the thought of Kant and Hegel is so far (even in the bitterness of conflict) not my enemy but my brother and my friend. There is a common tradition of culture in Europe and America by which we have all learned

and in which we can all play our part. And this tradition is not merely intellectual or æsthetic; it is also practical and moral. The culture of the East has indeed been hitherto relatively isolated from us as ours from them, but manifestly such isolation is coming to an end; and in time we may perhaps have a world culture, in which even primitive Africa may come to take its share and to offer its contribution. Even now, we are learning something of the wisdom of India and China; and most races are beginning to learn from Europe and America, although perhaps they do not always get from us the best that we have to give. Amid all our differences we share in a common humanity, we face similar problems, we live in the same universe, and we are subject to the same inexorable doom. There is in us at least the possibility of cooperation; and without cooperation we are in danger of destroying the civilisation which our fathers have built up.

There is no difference in principle between international cooperation and cooperation within the state. At present the aspect of conflict and antagonism is by far the most striking, but there is still some reason among men. There is already an organisation for, and symbol of, world cooperation in the League of Nations, and the hope of the future lies not merely in conflict but in this already manifested will. We cannot say how it will develop, and even to suggest the hope that after centuries there may be some sort of world confederation is to tie down the future methods of cooperation to our own imperfect models. But the contrast between the Athens of Pericles and the British Commonwealth of Nations is hardly more remarkable than would be the contrast between the British Commonwealth and a Commonwealth of all the nations of the world. At present all nations are jealous for their sovereignty. They see very clearly what they may lose, and very obscurely what they may gain. They care more for their private interests than for the general welfare of the world. The predominant opinion, although not perhaps the most intelligent opinion, in the United States seems almost to shiver at the idea of being bound by an agreement to cooperate with other nations in certain strictly defined cases of defensive war. Russia appears to imagine that security for peace can arise only if the town proletariat is able to

dictate to all other classes in every country—as if artisans were immune from all the weaknesses of human nature. All such hesitation has a certain narrow wisdom, and can certainly justify itself as against a policy of treating faithless neighbours as if they were wholly disinterested or under the control of a higher authority. But to set up an impartial authority and obey its decisions is in the end the only way to avoid warfare among nations, as it is the only way to avoid strife among individual men. It is much more difficult to do so in the case of nations, because of the differences of race and language and tradition which make it hard for us to understand each other's point of view; and it is only fair to add that a super-state, if it meant the crushing out of all national differences, might be even worse than the disease which it was intended to cure. None the less our present methods are as barbarous as the blood-feud or the trial by ordeal. In the present temper of men it is folly to hope that this greatest of practical problems will be soon or easily solved. It seems that enough blood has not yet been shed to convince the world. But it is not folly to believe that it will be solved in the end, whether by conflict or by persuasion, as other problems have been solved in the past. Peace and justice may come by conquest, as it came to Western Europe through the Roman Empire, or it may perhaps come by the voluntary cooperation of free peoples like the peoples of the British Commonwealth. On questions of method there may be legitimate differences of opinion between men of good will; but the vital fact for us to-day is that the problem is now clearly presented to us as a world problem which affects us all equally, a world interest which we all share. We may wrap ourselves in the cloak of complacency, and reflect that we are able to defend ourselves come what may. We may be satisfied that we have a good chance to maintain our position in a world of storm and change, and be willing that the weakest should go to the wall. But for good or evil we must now act with our whole world either in cooperation or in antagonism, and we have no longer any excuse for believing that the practical activities of man can be confined within the narrow limits of a single state.

CHAPTER XII

THE GOOD MAN

MORAL goodness develops in society, and, if we are to understand it, we must consider the morally good man as he functions in some sort of society. But clearly a man may be a good member of a limited society without being a morally good man. There seem indeed to be already shadows or anticipations[1] of moral excellence even in the man who carries out coherently an individual policy of life; and we begin to find something which we may almost mistake for virtue itself, when we consider the man who is a loyal member of any society, even of a gang of thieves. Yet although there must be honour among thieves, a thief is not therefore an honourable man. The morally good man seems to be the man who is good as a member not of a limited society but of an unlimited society—of a society of societies whose purpose includes all purposes, and beyond which there is no other society to be a source of conflicting claims or duties. It is clear from what we have said that the state is not genuinely such a society, but that it looks a little like such a society, if we close our eyes to everything which goes beyond it. In many, if not in most, of our actions we men determine what we think to be our duty without looking beyond the state as a society of societies of which we feel ourselves to be a part. And since we require to have an actual world before us when we are considering what moral goodness is, we may take the existing state as the symbol or anticipation of an ultimate society, if we remember that we are only using some sort of mythology as a help in the difficult work of thought.

In doing so we must make the assumption that some sort of goodness is realised in the existing state, just as in discussing truth we should have to make the assumption that some sort of truth was actually attained in science or history or philosophy as these exist at the present time. We have suggested that the goodness of the state bears some kind of

[1] Cf. p. 217.

resemblance to the goodness of an individual life considered as merely individual, and that a state is good in so far as its members are enabled, through it, to perform in the whole special functions determined by their own nature and capacities, and in so doing to lead coherent lives. Even if this happens by some sort of external accident or compulsion the state would have some claim to be a good state, but perhaps we may say that a state is properly speaking good, according as the cooperation of its members is genuinely willed as cooperation, that is according as the citizens in performing their own functions and living their own lives are doing so consciously as part of a wider cooperative activity. This wider cooperative activity seems to stand to their policies of life in somewhat the same relation as their policies of life stand to more limited policies. The state is not a person, but it is like a person. The examination of this likeness and of the difference which it involves belongs to political philosophy. Here we can only say roughly that the state is coherent and good as a whole of societies and persons living together, in somewhat the same way that an individual life is coherent and good as a whole of policies and of the actions in which these are manifested.

On this view one society may be better than another according as it realises a greater degree of coherence, but (as in the case of an individual) its goodness is relative both to the circumstances in which it is placed and to the material of which it is composed. A society is good so far as it has that coherence which is possible to it. A society of untutored savages on a Pacific Island may be good or bad, although it is far poorer in complexity than France or England; just as a savage himself (even as an individual taken in abstraction from society) may be good or bad, although his life may lack the complexity possible to men like Socrates or Julius Caesar. We go too far when we say that it is impossible to draw an indictment against a nation, if by that we mean that we cannot call a country a failure in so far as it is a prey to perpetual anarchy. But a state which secures some degree of coherence of the kind we have described is not to be set down as bad simply because it is unable or unwilling to reconstruct itself on the model of modern democracy.

We must begin, then, by taking society as we find it and by supposing that within its own limitations it has attained to some degree of coherence or goodness. It may be thought that this is an easy and altogether too obvious way to justify the conservative attitude and to offer a circular defence of conventional morality. We must however postpone for later consideration the problem of the man who is better than his society, who wishes to give more to his society than it demands, and demands more from his society than it is prepared to give. The first problem of morality, and for most men the only practical problem, is the problem of standards which are already recognised to exist. To consider morality without any regard to what is already achieved would be about as valuable as the speculations of an African savage on the ideal of scientific truth. In our thinking about morality we must consider primarily our own society, although if we think truly our most ultimate principles should be applicable to all societies. Perhaps we may say that our thinking about even the ultimate principles of morality will be more likely to attain truth, if we are familiar with a society which has attained a high degree of coherence together with a high degree of complexity. Those who expect to gain a clear vision of the true nature of morality by devoting themselves exclusively to the study of savages ought consistently to seek for the true nature of science in the same obscure and twilight region. If they do not do so, it is presumably because they believe in science and do not believe in morality. And if we are considering not the principles of morality but the practice of goodness, a knowledge of the life of African savages is as illuminating to a bank-manager as a knowledge of the life of bank-managers would be to an African savage.

Any and every society is at the least a number of human beings living and acting together; and this offers us a unique kind of relation which can be found nowhere else. The relation between a man and his fellows or between one man and another is different from the relation of two things or objects, and it is different from the relation between subject and object. We may indeed regard other men merely as objects or things, and we may make use of them as if they were things or machines. We saw however at the outset of

our enquiry that self-knowledge was not merely reflexion upon ourselves as objects, but was also enjoyment of ourselves as subjects; and we saw too that we could know others, not merely by regarding them as objects, but by sharing their experiences and entering into their lives. There is at least a resemblance between our knowing of others and our knowing our own past selves. And just as our knowing of others is different from our knowing of things, so too our willing towards others is different from our willing towards things. The willing of ourselves and of other men may be in the same sort of relation as the relation between our own willings at different times. It may be a relation of subjects or activities, and not a relation of things or a relation of subject and object. When this takes place we have what is called cooperation. And this cooperation gives rise to a new kind of goodness. All goodness is due to the will of a self-transcendent being, a being which not only transcends its momentary activity in time, but also gives itself up to something which is not itself and finds in that its good. The goodness of things and the goodness of an isolated individual self are alike impossible apart from this. But we have a new kind of goodness when we do not merely give ourselves up to the making of a change in the world, and find in that our good, but when we give ourselves up to a cooperative activity in which we will together with other selves, in which together with other selves we seek to make changes in the world, and in so doing find our own good in the whole of which we are a part.

Cooperation gives rise to something that is new in our lives. We expect something from others, we count upon them, we make certain claims upon them. They in turn count upon us and make certain claims upon us. We can indeed find analogies to this in other activities which are not cooperative. When we step upon a bridge we expect it to bear us, we count upon its strength, we may perhaps be said metaphorically to make a claim upon it; but when we say this we are personifying it or transferring our claim from it to the men who made it. If it fails us, we do not blame it. We blame its makers or we blame ourselves. And *it* makes no claim upon us. The relation is a one-sided relation. We

operate, but we do not cooperate, with it. The analogy of cooperation is incomplete. We get something more like cooperation in our relation with ourselves, our own thoughts and actions standing to one another in a relation similar to the relation between different individuals. We may embark upon a difficult line of action, as for instance a quarrel, and we count upon ourselves to carry it through, we make a claim upon our future actions. And we may fail not merely through lack of power but through lack of perseverance. We may disappoint ourselves. We may condemn ourselves. But here it is rather the incoherence of the whole which we condemn. We hardly consider one action to have a claim upon another, and we hardly speak of different actions as bound to one another by rights and duties. If we change our mind and give up one line of action in favour of another, we do not think that our past actions have a right to blame us.

It is far otherwise with cooperation. Here the expectations and claims are mutual, and they depend on the fact that different individual centres of action can join in one enterprise and yet retain their different individualities. The small boy who declines to take any further part in a game of cricket after he has had his turn at batting arouses a kind of fury in the breasts of his young companions. He has embarked upon a joint enterprise, he has enjoyed the part of that enterprise which is most interesting to himself, and he has enjoyed that part solely because others have cooperated with him in the expectation that he would cooperate with them in a similar way. To refuse to do so is to disturb the very basis of society and to make cricket impossible. To decline to take part in a game at all may be churlish and little calculated to lead to popularity. It may even in the world of small boys produce unpleasant consequences. But to commit oneself to the game, to use others for one's own ends, and then to refuse further cooperation, that is simple treachery, and is quite certain to arouse hatred and very probably to result in punishment. In this there is already the germ of ordinary morality. It is social as well as selfish desires which lead the players into the game, but if the selfish desires prevail over the social, both the social and the selfish desires of others will burst out into condemnation and

punishment. And this in turn may lead to acting socially for a selfish reason—the fear of condemnation and punishment—which again may give the social desires a chance to develop, since social action pursued selfishly may come to be liked for itself and pursued in a social spirit. The clash of desires, settling down gradually into a coherent working whole, may produce just that type of action which an abstract reason would lay down as just and right for people in these circumstances and with these desires. This can take place only in the cooperation of different willing selves, and, in all this, will is quite fundamental, although even on this level there is also some element of reflexion, some conscious apprehension of the ideal which is at work in our willing. This reflexion is of course assisted by the teaching of others, by a conscious tradition, and so on, but its strength is not just intellectual or even emotional. Its strength comes to it from the fact that it is in accord with the tendencies of the will itself; and it is only because there are such tendencies that reflexion has been able to apprehend this ideal, and that the emotions are liable to be aroused by the mere ideal of sportsmanlike conduct, even apart from the situation in which such conduct arises.

I have chosen the childish example of a game at cricket, but I believe it is just such forces which, underneath the external trappings which disguise them, underneath the accidents of blind tradition and the coercions of superior power, are always at work in determining the nature and the unity of any society whatever. We have seen how cooperation arises out of the nature of men and the circumstances in which they live, and how such cooperation is necessary for the development and fulfilment of policies of life. But as soon as we have cooperation we have expectations from, and claims upon, one another, and we have entered at once into a world of praise and blame, honour and disgrace, rewards and punishments, duties and rights. We may say that we have here something less than morality as we know it, but if we have not here morality, we have at least the shadow or image of morality. We may say that our obligations are still merely hypothetical, and so they are. If we are to bat we must also field, but when we have batted others will assert

that it is our duty to field, and will certainly blame us, and probably punish us, if we refuse to do so. We ourselves take up precisely the same attitude to other people, and unite with all the others in enforcing our views upon the recalcitrant. We assent to the principle as a universal principle, and others will refuse to allow us to make an exception in our own case, as we refuse to allow them to make an exception in theirs. However much we may be tempted to consider ourselves exceptions to the rule, we do as a matter of fact recognise that the ideal is incumbent on ourselves as well as on others, and our claim upon others really rests upon such a recognition. Our claim upon others is quite preposterous, unless we regard it also and equally as a claim upon ourselves.

The nature of this claim depends upon the nature of the cooperation. Cricket is a relatively external type of cooperation which we may share in or not, more or less as we please. But the security which is provided by the state is something which we all require and which is vital to all our policies. Our cooperation with others for security and for the satisfaction of our economic needs is only relatively hypothetical. We must cooperate in order to live, and still more in order to live as men. The obligation arises if we are what we are, and in that sense the obligation is already absolute. At any rate it is easy to see that in practice the obligation will be treated as absolute. We do not argue nice points of philosophy with the man who takes advantage of the cooperation of society and then betrays it to its foes. We brand him as a traitor, and we kill him without mercy. In this there is more than a mere policy of rational self-defence. There is hot and fierce and passionate condemnation. The fierceness of the condemnation is no doubt partly because the treachery is treachery to *me*, it is endangering *my* security and threatening *my* life. But it is foolish not to recognise that my condemnation of the traitor is hot also with my passion for the whole. Treachery is treachery not only to me but also to my friends and to my country, and it is this which gives to it its peculiar shamefulness. However much codes of morals may differ, all simple men unite in condemning the traitor. Treachery is something horrible to them, even when they are tempted to it themselves.

Such condemnation is always fierce, but it need not be always rational. Incompetence may arouse something of the same hostility as treachery, even where a man is not really responsible for his incompetence. And no doubt generals have been condemned and punished not only for incompetence but even for mere bad luck. This proceeding has at least the advantage that it makes men less likely to cease from effort when the luck is against them, and more likely to get rid of an incompetence which is not inevitable. But as society becomes more civilised we begin to draw finer distinctions. We distinguish between bad luck and incompetence and treachery, and while we never get rid of our natural irritation against the consistently incompetent and the invariably unlucky, we reserve our moral judgements for treachery or carelessness, and in general punish actions which were intentional and could have been avoided.

Our praise or approval or admiration is of the same passionate and whole-hearted character as our condemnation. Hero-worship seems natural to men. We admire devotion to the cause of our side, not merely because it helps us as individuals, but because it helps us as a society. Indeed it almost seems to be the fine flower of our society, so that our society is great because of the devotion it inspires, rather than our devotion worthy because of the greatness of our society. Men thrill at the names of the heroes of an old battle, although the battle was long ago and arouses no sense of personal danger. When they think on the greatness of their country, they judge it more readily by the men who have died in its cause than by the makers of its laws or the singers of its songs. They feel that a country for which men were ready to die is a great country, and never greater than in producing just such men. Our judgements of value are not judgements that things or persons are useful to us as individuals. We esteem highly those who have given themselves whole-heartedly to a cooperative activity in which we also share, though their work may have been finished centuries before our work began. And while we feel most warmly towards the men of our race and our own society, we have the same sort of attitude towards men of other societies and races, because we all belong to the same human

family and share in the same human nature. The three hundred who fell at Thermopylae were not only Spartans but also men, and every boy in his dreams feels himself akin to the brave of all the earth.

Our approval, like our condemnation, is not always rational. We approve those who have met the claim of the society with which we identify ourselves in fact or in imagination, but we do not always scrutinise closely the way in which that claim has been met. We may fail to distinguish between devotion and skill, or even between skill and luck. Not all our heroes are worthy of the admiration they have received. Reflexion may alter our scale of values and our individual judgements. But luck and skill and devotion do none the less arouse our admiration, not merely in themselves or in their relation to us as individuals, but in the contribution which they offer, or are supposed to offer, to the activity of the whole. The same fundamental principle is always at work, although it may take time and thought before we learn to pardon ill-luck or genuine incapacity while we condemn inactivity and condemn treachery still more. In this development of our judgement we clearly cease to consider only whether what is done secures or fails to secure our aims, and consider more and more whether it was willed in the service of the whole.

It is a mistake to imagine that approval and condemnation have at any stage a merely artificial or arbitrary basis or are due to a blind tradition, to the power of kings or the cajolery of priests. Men do not just happen to admire or condemn certain things as they happen to like or dislike apple tart or rice pudding. Even their likings and dislikings are grounded upon their experience and their physical constitution, but their approval and condemnation of other men rests upon something more intimate, upon their nature not merely as animals but as rational animals. It grows inevitably out of that cooperation which is at once the product and the fulfilment of their spiritual nature, and it is intelligible in the light of that nature and that cooperation. The blindest and stupidest of traditions itself grew out of such cooperation, however inadequate and however misunderstood, and it is blind and stupid only in relation to a more intelligent and adequate system

of cooperation. The power of kings rested not upon mere physical strength, but on the necessity of having an absolute ruler under conditions of perpetual warfare. Priests like kings may use their authority for the purposes of self-aggrandisement rather than in the interests of the whole, but their authority like that of kings has always rested on the services they were supposed to render to the whole society against the background of an actual or a ghostly world. It is easy enough to see the irrationality in the traditions of past societies. It is much more difficult to see that traditions are never merely irrational, although like other human things they may have been always cumbrous and confused, and may outlast the utility which at one time they possessed. We are trying to understand the rationality of human action, and until we have understood it our judgements of irrationality are themselves without meaning.

What is suggested here is not only that cooperation springs out of the nature of men and is the condition of its realisation, but also that our judgements of good and evil are relative primarily to such willed cooperation or cooperative willing, and only secondarily relative to what we have called an individual policy or policy of life. A policy of life is itself judged good or bad in relation to such cooperation. Indeed it is not just a part of such cooperation judged from without, but the whole cooperation may be in a sense our individual policy of life. It is in so far as our individual policies are genuine policies of cooperation that such judgements arise and have their peculiar force and their special intelligibility. Concrete volition lies behind, and is the basis of, our moral judgements. The great error of intellectualism is to forget the concrete volition, and to consider only the moral judgements which in the end are based upon it. Such judgements taken in abstraction become external and arbitrary and irrational, and as a result many men deny morality altogether, or reduce it to a purely arbitrary will or to the satisfaction of isolated desires. But the most immoral of men are more rational in their actions than some philosophers are in their account of morality.

We must however guard against the danger that by insisting on the primacy of the will we may be thought to

elevate the merely individual will into the only standard of judgement. It is obviously a mistake to call a man good merely because he is useful to my policy, or even because he cooperates with me in my policy. Men do indeed habitually make such judgements, and such judgements are not without their limited truth. They describe an economic and not a moral good. I have insisted upon this in the earlier chapters, but it must be recognised that we live in a moral world, and when we pass judgement upon men as opposed to things we normally imply that we do so in a moral sense. Hence it becomes sheer error to call men good because of their relation to our will as something merely individual and isolated. It is a still greater error to speak of God as good for the same reason, though this also is a tendency of primitive man, and of the primitive man who survives in us all. The goodness of God is a question which goes beyond the scope of this book, but in regard to the goodness of men it cannot be too strongly insisted that we judge this, not by reference to our will as individual, but by reference to the moral will which is manifested in ourselves and also in others.

Goodness is for us beginning gradually to emerge from the ordinary judgements of men. We have seen the good all along as a coherent willing in which each act is coherent with itself and with a policy of life. We now seem to see that we actually judge goodness as a wider coherence, as a coherence with the wills of others in a whole, and not merely an internal coherence within the individual's life. While goodness seems to arise in any cooperative willing, however limited in object or in the number of people cooperating, it takes a more profound character as its object becomes wider, and as our whole life becomes intertwined with the lives of others. The most striking historical example of such cooperation is society organised as a state, and it is in relation to this that most of our judgements of goodness are intelligible. We do indeed judge a man a good husband and father, though he may be a traitor or a thief or a murderer, but in such circumstances we should hardly call him a good man. If however a man is loyal in his cooperation both with the state and with the smaller societies of which the state is composed, most people

would call him rightly or wrongly a good man, even although he recognised no obligations beyond the limits of his country. We may believe that such goodness would still be imperfect, but it is beginning to look like a kind of moral goodness which we attribute to him as a whole. We shall recognise later that a good man may be (or at least seem to be) a bad citizen if he lives in a bad state; but most men would consider that a good citizen was by any ordinary standards a good man, if to be a good citizen meant to cooperate loyally with one's country not merely as a political unit but as a society of societies. For this would mean that a man was not merely patriotic, but was good as a husband and father, as a trade unionist or churchman, and so on, good in short as a member of the various societies of which he was a member; and it would mean that all these various goodnesses fitted together, and were deliberately fitted together, in some sort of coherent whole. It is obvious that this is possible (so far as it is possible) only in a good state, that is in a state which is free from anarchy, and in which societies as well as individuals are able consistently to pursue their special policies as parts of a wider and relatively inclusive whole.

Such an account would seem to offer a reasonably fair description of what the plain man would mean by calling anyone good, good that is to say, not in a particular relation, but as a whole, or in other words as a man. He might indeed hesitate before he would say that to be good in this sense was to be morally good, and he might allow to his good man a certain number of moral weaknesses. In so doing he might still regard the object of his estimation as good, while admitting that he fell short of the demands of morality as laid down by the strictest moralists. In many cases, however, this might mean that he himself was a little half-hearted in believing that the strictest standards were really good. He might indeed pay lip-service to them, but hold in his heart that a good man should not be without some human weakness. If our description does not portray adequately the highest moral goodness, it is perhaps just for that reason a better description of the standard in which the average man believes. And he shows his belief in the only way men can show their belief in moral values—by trying to act up to

this standard, and by feeling genuine shame when he and his friends fall short of it.

But if we are to understand the will which lies at the root of such judgements, we must consider more closely the ways in which the individual will stands to a society like the state, and the various senses in which such a society may be good to the individual. To the individual, society is at least one of the most practically important things which go to make up his environment or his world. However much he may regard it as something external to himself, it is always something with which he has to reckon, and to which he has to adjust his actions. He can no more ignore it than he can ignore the climate or the natural products of the country in which he lives. It has at the very least the goodness or badness which belongs to things. It may be the object of his desire and the instrument of his will. We may even say that it is necessarily a good to him, it is something like food and drink which he cannot do without. Food and drink are necessary if he is to live, but society is necessary if he is to live as a man. No doubt food may be relatively bad, but any food which is genuine food and not poison is better than no food at all. Similarly any society which is a genuine society to him and not merely a band of hostile savages is better to him than no society at all.

Yet, even on this level, society is more than a part of external nature to which we must adjust our actions. It makes our policies possible in quite a different way from the way in which nature, by supplying us with food, makes our policies possible. It is more intelligent, if more variable in its actions, than nature. Its actions and its life are like our own. It offers us its cooperation, and it demands ours in return. It lays down conditions or laws which we must keep, or seem to keep, if we are to make use of it. And it is difficult to seem to keep these laws without actually keeping them. We can sometimes indeed successfully transgress the laws of the state, as we cannot transgress the law of gravitation, but the law of gravitation will not feel any resentment or modify its actions, if we use it for our own purposes; it will merely go on acting mechanically as it always does. It will not

pry into our motives or be interested in our moral character. It is not concerned to make use of us, as we make use of it. But we stand to other men as they stand to us; and they, alike as individuals and as an organised society, will alter their attitude to us as we alter our attitude to them. We cannot pursue our policy as if they were dead things and not living men. Our policy of life must be adjusted to these actual facts or it will inevitably fail. This would be true even if we sought nothing but food and drink and clothing and shelter for ourselves. And it means that we must make concessions to the wills of others, and must to some extent obey the laws of the state and the conventions of our immediate circle. We must at least pretend to obey laws and conventions. Perhaps for success we must even pretend to care for others; and pure pretence will not always succeed.

Hence even when we regard society as something relatively external, the mere fact that we are men seeking security and the satisfaction of our economic needs means that we find certain things good, and impose upon ourselves certain obligations which may be called the obligations of prudence. Some men have even thought that such obligations constitute the whole of what is ordinarily called morality. Morality which pretends to go beyond this is for them due to mere confusion of thought or blind superstition.

We ought perhaps to recognise that there is, in prudential action, a kind of obligation which is due to something more in us than a mere contingent desire for safety or comfort or success. We have seen this already at a lower level. The reasonable will, the systematic will, which seeks the fullest satisfaction of the individual's desires, is something more than one desire among others. It seems already to bring with it a kind of ought, a kind of obligation. We cannot say merely that in addition to the desires which we happen to have, desires for food and drink, for wine, women, and song, we happen also to have a desire to get as much of these as possible. The desire for systematic fulfilment of one's whole nature is on a different footing from a momentary desire like the desire for opium. We cannot admit that each is just something that happens to be, and that they

are on the same level. The man who lives by the one is wise; the man who lives by the other is a fool. To deny this is to be a fool oneself. And we have seen that this is not merely a theoretical matter, a matter of reason standing by coldly and judging externally. We can will to be reasonable rather than to be foolish, but we cannot in the same way will folly at the expense of wisdom. Folly is the narrow will which does not see, which does not understand, which is confined to the movement, and is foolish because it is so confined. It cannot set itself up against the reasonable will, for to do that it must be reasonable itself, it must itself be a higher reason. It may sometimes actually be a higher reason as against a lower, when for example it criticises the puritan who condemns the careless joy of a child as folly or sin. Yet there is a genuine folly which cannot be sought with open eyes, but only by falling below the human level to mere animal desire or momentary impulse. Our human nature seems to cry out upon us, so long as we are human at all, that this thing ought not to be. And this looks very like morality.

It looks still more like morality in the circumstances we are now considering. The reasonable will seeking to establish a policy of life necessarily imposes upon us some concessions to others and some obedience to the laws of society. If we choose to grab all the food we want, and to hit everybody who annoys us, we are descending to the animal level, or rather we are acting like fools, we are showing that folly which like wisdom is the monopoly of man. If the will which seeks to impose coherence on our lives is to prevail, we must within certain limits pretend to be honest and just and loyal; and that means we must often act in what is externally an honest and just and loyal way. We must keep our contracts, for otherwise we shall have no contracts to keep. All such action, so far as it fits into our policy of life, is good. It is in this sense that honesty is the best policy.

When we take into account the skill and perseverance which are necessary to success in rascality, the danger of being found out, and the unhappy results of failure, we may say that a good deal of ordinary morality or so-called morality

may be explained on the hypothesis that men act honestly and justly, only in so far as honest and just action is necessary to ensure success in prosecuting purely individual and selfish policies. Men may act unselfishly for selfish reasons and display courage from a kind of fear. Even then we must suppose, with Mr. Hobbes, that men have had sufficient wit to see that they can secure their individual ends, only by setting up a government which will make laws and punish all transgressions against these laws. It is impossible to explain how the state could have been set up, if men pursued only selfish interests, and this abstract individualism finds no support in history; but if we suppose that the miracle has been accomplished, the rest of the doctrine is not without its plausibility. The so-called morality of self-interest and fear is a real thing and it is never likely to perish, although owing to the incompetence of men it may take more or less incoherent forms. Men are often too stupid or too passionate or generally too inconsequent to act always in the way which can best carry out their own policies. They do not always prize comfort or security so highly as Mr. Hobbes imagined, and the state, like the individual, is liable to fall into anarchy because of human weakness and human passion. Yet very clearly some of our so-called moral action is quite intelligible on the basis of this narrow view. As so understood we are entitled to call it the individual's good in the situation in which he is.

But this carries us a very little way. Injustice may be difficult but it is not impossible. Some justice, some honesty of a purely external kind, is necessary to success in life, but it need not be very great, and it has no value beyond that of fitting in with an individual policy of life. The necessary amount of it will vary with our position and capacities. Petty crime may be unprofitable, but rascality on a great scale may be just the reverse. It is still true that if we attain a great success by unscrupulous means, men will remember the success and forget the unscrupulousness or even admire it. Indeed on this view we are all rascals at heart and not unlikely to admire rascality. There may perhaps be an undercurrent of disapproval, a distrust which may injure us at some critical or desperate moment, but after all life is full of risks

and some risks must be taken. If we are adventurous, the risk may even add to our pleasure, and be an element which is thoroughly consistent with our policy of life.

The objection to the individualistic view is not, however, that it fails to do justice to the commonly accepted obligations of ordinary morality. After all, the whole question is whether or not ordinary morality is a mistake. The objection is rather that to regard the individual as possessed only of self-regarding desires is to do violence to the most palpable facts of experience. The average individual is full of social desires. Men desire food for their children as well as for themselves, and as we have abundantly seen many of their desires are actually directed to cooperative activities, to the success of their family or their cricket club or their orchestra or their state. Desires of this kind go as directly to their objects as any other, and in their elementary forms they are products of the struggle for existence, just as much as the desire for food itself. It is at least as rational to desire to give one's money to the poor as it is to squander it on riotous living. We must be fair even to the most generous of our desires. Our social desires exist and claim satisfaction in the same way as non-social desires, and it is a matter of experience that their satisfaction is compatible with a coherent policy of life.

Hence social and cooperative action is good both as satisfying human desires and as capable of being fitted into a policy of life. But as in the case of desires for food and drink, the social desires contribute to this policy and enrich it with something more than themselves. A rational being with a human body would eat and drink even if he had no desire to do so, because it is only by eating and drinking that he can think, or satisfy any of the desires which belong to him as a rational being. What we do at first blindly, as it is thought, from mere desire, we should still do intelligently even apart from desire. I venture to think this is true also of social desires. These desires may begin blindly and develop into a policy and claim their own place in a policy of life, but the policy in turn not only admits them because they happen to be there, but itself demands and justifies them from its

wider point of view. Man emphatically does not have social desires, or act as if he had them, because he recognises that without them it would be impossible to carry out even the most selfish and merely individual policy. His social actions are as spontaneous and direct as any of his actions, and have the same kind of justification. But when a man reflects upon his life, he can see clearly enough that the pursuit of a purely individual policy would be impossible apart from the satisfaction of social desires. It is obvious that the cooperation of society is necessary to any kind of civilised life and even to so private a policy as pure thinking. Society is itself impossible apart from the social desires and actions of men, but even if we accept it simply as a fact, we could never make use of it unless we had social desires in ourselves. It is fundamentally by love and friendship that we develop as human beings, and this not in any high or mystical sense, but in the sense in which any child learns to speak and think, to enjoy games and art and history and politics and business, by sharing in the activities of its parents and companions, its teachers and friends. Every ordinary individual policy of life is a justification of the social desires, just as much as it is a justification of the desires to eat and drink. What seems at first to be contingent and irrational in isolation finds its deeper rationality in the whole.

It is impossible to exaggerate the richness which is added to my life by the presence of my social desires and the satisfaction of my social will. As my will develops and expands beyond the satisfaction of momentary desires, I come into living contact with a wider range of goods. My good is no longer just this food or drink which I see before me, but is diffused throughout the world in which I live and the society of which I am a part. And this is not merely a matter of adding one good to another, but a process which intensifies and enriches the goodness of everything as it finds its place in the whole. Eating and drinking themselves become good, not merely as the satisfaction of brute desires, not merely as the satisfaction of a will to live, but as the satisfaction of a social self, as social functions which we enjoy together with others, as elements in a spiritual cooperation, as an occasion for agreeable conversation and a vehicle of friend-

ship and hospitality. Animal satisfaction becomes enriched as an organ of a coherent spiritual life. The same is true of our more specifically spiritual activities themselves. Not only do we enter into the worlds of art and thought and action through our sympathy and cooperation with others, but our enjoyment is intensified, and our consciousness of value increased, because we can share in these worlds with others and others can share with us. We are part of a conquering army, and the little that we do is dignified and ennobled because it is a contribution to a greater and more glorious achievement. In playing our little part we make the whole achievement our own, and find our good not merely in what we ourselves have done but in the whole.

Men find this true in a greater or less degree of all the various societies in which they successfully cooperate, and generally speaking they find it true not least in regard to their own country. It is not merely that the efforts of my fellows have helped to make me what I am, and that therefore my thoughts and actions are the expression of an activity going far beyond myself. I speak with an authority which is more than personal, because I am the embodiment, however imperfect, of a great and living tradition. Yet even so the goodness of my world would be incredibly insignificant, if I could find it only in my own poor thoughts and actions. We who are small are made great by the greatness of our country, by the fact that we are of the same blood and the same race as heroes and martyrs, as poets and philosophers, as statesmen and soldiers, as great gentlemen and great saints. The achievement of my country is my achievement, and the glory of my country is my glory. Yet it is so, not merely because the same blood runs in my veins, but because my will is set to play a part, however humble, in that achievement, and because my will is thus one with the men of many centuries that are past and perhaps of many centuries that are yet to be. All this imposes obligations upon me, if that greater good is to be genuinely my own. If the glory of my country is besmirched through me, I can no longer claim in it any lot or part.[1] That glory and that good is ours only if we

[1] But compare the frantic cry of John de Stogumber in Mr. Shaw's *St. Joan*, sc. vi: 'There was only one Englishman there that disgraced his country.'

can with sincerity echo in our own language the words of Roland when he said:

> Ne placet Damnedeu ne ses angles
> Que ja pur mei perdet sa valur France![1]

There are some who would confine this within the limits of their own country, but as we cooperate with men of many countries and of many ages their achievement also becomes ours, and our good expands far beyond the limits of our narrow life. The greatest spiritual achievements are not confined to any race, and have been won through the cooperation of many men of many nations. This can be forgotten least of all by anyone who makes any pretence to be a student of philosophy. But in this place we are concerned only with the general principle that the satisfaction of the social desires, and the cooperation with others in our different activities, produce an almost indefinite extension and an almost infinite intensification of the range of goods to the individual. And of this most men are most clearly conscious when they consider the history and achievements of their own country.

In all this we have a continuation and expansion of the process in which, as we saw, goodness was widened and deepened by the development of the coherent will in the isolated individual considered as possessing merely individual desires. Our good becomes wider when we will more, and it becomes deeper when we will more as a whole. That which was good as the object of a momentary desire developed a richer goodness, as it became also the instrument of a whole policy of life and received a new value from its place in a coherently willed whole. The goodness of a volition ceased to be its bare existence as this volition and became its cooperation in a wider whole of volition. The momentary volition aimed no longer merely at the satisfaction of a momentary desire but at the satisfaction of an enduring self. All this remains true when we consider the self as a member of society sharing in activities along with other selves. All its actions, social and otherwise, are good as parts of a coherent individual

[1] *La Chanson de Roland, 1089–1090.* Translation of Monsieur Bédier: 'Ne plaise au seigneur Dieu ni à ses anges qu'à cause de moi France perde son prix.'

life; and, as we have seen, the social actions are necessary to that life and enrich it as a whole and in every part. Any society with which we cooperate is good, not only as the instrument of our policies, but also as the object of our social desires, as something which we want to exist and which we further with our whole heart. Yet it is more than that, because it is not merely an object of our thought and will, but is also the activity of subjects other than ourselves. It is a whole of life in which our life finds a place and into which our life expands, just as our life as a whole is something in which momentary desires find a place, and in which the momentary will seems to will not merely its satisfaction but the satisfaction of the whole. The momentary will of a coherent self cannot in the moment will the whole of which it is a part, but it wills what it wills as part of a whole, trusting as it were to other momentary willings to complete the whole. In that sense it wills the whole in willing the part. Similarly I cannot will in detail what is willed by my society, when I will my part in the cooperative whole. I trust to others of like will and of like intelligence to complete the whole of which I will the part, and in that sense also I will the whole in willing the part. My action has its goodness as part of the whole cooperative activity, just as my momentary activity has its goodness as part of my individual coherent life.

There are in this view two quite separate contentions which we must distinguish from one another. The first is that my social actions and the social actions of others, are good to me, in so far as they cohere with and enrich my individual policy of life. The second is that my social actions, or perhaps better my whole life, is good, in so far as it coheres with and enriches the cooperative activity of a society of societies, which includes others as well as myself and is for the present considered to be partially realised in what we have called the state. We must consider each of these contentions a little more closely.

The first point is already sufficiently clear so far as it concerns my own social or cooperative actions. These are good as satisfying my desires; good as fitting into my policy of life; and good as enriching my policy of life with some-

thing more than themselves, as necessary to my policy of life as a whole, as making possible many activities which are part of my policy, and as adding to many and perhaps to all of my activities a value which merely in themselves they would not possess. Because of their presence in me it is a bigger and fuller and richer self which is manifested in my different activities, even in those which are not in themselves social.

It is a little more difficult to be certain of the way in which the activities of other men and of different societies, including the state, can be said to be good to me on this level. Even on this level we have ceased to regard other men as purely external to us, as mere things of which we make use as we make use of inanimate objects. The state for example is no longer good or bad to us merely as the climate is good or bad. Just because we regard other men as beings like ourselves, we consider that they also can attain to goods and can be good in exactly the same way as we can ourselves. Our social desires are such that we definitely want others to attain some goods and to manifest some kinds of goodness. Their attainment of goods adds to ours, their pleasure increases ours, their excellence is an object of our admiration, especially when it is displayed in a cooperative activity in which we also share. We feel that our own individual value is increased because we are members of a good football team or citizens of a great country. The goodness of others and of the whole is a good to us, and it is something which we struggle to achieve. Yet its value seems to depend not merely on the fact that it is something which we seek. It has a value for others as well as for ourselves, and it is just because of this that it is the object of our social will. Already what is good seems to depend on something more than my own will, and we are moving more than half-way towards our second and more difficult contention. Even a game would lose its value, if we thought that other people were playing merely to please us and not also to please themselves. If we had all the resources of the universe at our command, and if we could enjoy all the treasures of art and knowledge, we should still sometimes feel lost and lonely, so long as we had no one to play with and no one to share our life.

We must remember that an action is not selfish because it is my action, and that in every action we give ourselves up to something that is not ourselves and endeavour to make it real. This is particularly clear when we consider the social desires and actions which are necessary to us all. These do not lose their spontaneity and generosity merely because we recognise that they contribute to our policies and enrich our lives. It is largely because we are spontaneous and generous that they do enrich our lives, and if we lacked that spontaneity and generosity they would cease to do so. To pursue social ends for the pleasure they give is to lose that pleasure altogether. And although the social activities of others are on this level good to us only as contributing to and cohering with our policy of life, that is in the full sense true only so far as our policy of life has some sort of generosity in its very heart. It is because we give ourselves to others that their good becomes our own.

The antithesis between individual and social desires is possible only in an individual who is definitely social. It arises only as we become conscious that our will is cooperating or conflicting with that of others. Our will does not begin by being individual and then by some miracle become social. It is always both, as soon at least as there is any distinction at all. A selfish will could have no meaning except for a social being, and a social will could have no meaning except for a selfish being. Indeed it is probable that we become aware of ourselves only as we become aware of others. It is at least questionable whether there could be a self, that is a self-conscious self, except in a society. What we begin with must be a whole within which self and world, myself and other selves, become gradually discriminated. And as we develop, there is still a sense in which we are the whole within which we make the distinctions of subject and object, of myself and other selves. But these high matters are not here our concern. It is enough for us to recognise that a goodness which is still relative to my policy of life is not a narrow or selfish goodness in which others have no share. My policy of life is rich, not merely because it goes out beyond itself in action, but because it goes out beyond itself in love.

On this level we must already sacrifice some selfish desires

that we may realise our social desires, just as even on the purely individual level we must give up some things that we may secure others. Sometimes also social desires must be sacrificed that we may fulfil others: if I have to earn my living I cannot always amuse myself with my friends. The criterion of goodness is still the coherence of the individual's own life and of the world which is being built up by his will for his own satisfaction. And on this basis we could explain very much of what is ordinarily called morality. This would be a more human morality than that of mere fear or narrow self-interest, although the latter would be included within it, for fear and self-interest are also human. The man who lived thus would live a human life, perhaps the kind of life that most of us actually live. But its goodness would still be individual, though it would not be wholly selfish. It would still be relatively contingent and relatively capricious. We should love our friends and hate our enemies. Social morality would be due partly to generous impulses and partly to necessary compromises, so far as all these are the conditions of a coherent life for a being made as man is made. But we could never in the name of morality make an absolute claim either upon ourselves or upon others, and the man who died for his country would seem to be acting almost as unreasonably as the man who died from a love of danger or even from an addiction to drugs. In either case one desire would happen to triumph over all the others, and its victory would mean the impoverishment or destruction of the individual life. A coherence which was manifested in what we may call different kinds of love, love of food and drink, love of amusement and pleasure, love of thought and action, love of friends and family and country, would be suddenly disrupted by what would seem to be some sort of arbitrary passion seeking its own satisfaction at the expense of the whole.

It is precisely at this point that we reach at once the crisis of our moral theory and the touchstone of moral goodness. Is self-sacrifice rational or irrational, coherent or incoherent, good or bad? The question arises not merely in the extreme case of dying for a country or a cause, it arises wherever a man chooses a definite impoverishment of his life in order that the life of others may be fuller and richer. It does not

arise so long as he merely prefers to satisfy a social desire at the expense of a purely personal desire. In all action we repress some desires and satisfy others in our effort to make our own life as coherent and as rich as possible. It is quite another matter when what we sacrifice is not this or that desire but our whole self. All genuine sacrifice is *self*-sacrifice. It is not easy to know even in our own lives whether there is genuine self-sacrifice or not. But perhaps there is a presumption of self-sacrifice when a man chooses to die in order that others may live; and we may take this as the most striking, although it is by no means the only, example of what is called self-sacrifice.

There can be no doubt at all that most of us, sinners as we are, regard self-sacrifice of this kind as sometimes a good act and the man who does it as a good man. And there can be no doubt at all that many men have been ready to sacrifice themselves in this way believing that what they did was good. We are not considering something in which men do not really believe or which they do not really practise. Men's motives are always mixed, but a man who has gone through a great war without discovering that men sometimes believe in, and actually practise, self-sacrifice is either a fool or a cad, or more probably both.

We have already seen that my act is always my act, and this is as true of acts of self-sacrifice as it is of any others. But this truism is wholly irrelevant to the question whether or not my act is an act of self-sacrifice. It does not mean that my act is selfish or that it is due to momentary impulse. On the other hand a man may undoubtedly throw himself over a precipice because of a sudden impulse, or again he may drink himself to death. Such actions we all regard as manifesting a kind of incoherence, a badness of one sort or another. They are acts of self-sacrifice only as all badness is self-sacrifice, the sacrifice of a higher or more coherent to a lower or more incoherent self. It is more important to notice that there seems to be in men some sort of natural impulse to what looks more like genuine self-sacrifice. Even an animal may be careless of its life in the defence of its young, and generous impulses of this kind belong to human beings just as much as impulses of fear and self-preservation. Self-

sacrifice is at the very least the satisfaction of such an impulse, however much it may be supported by a desire for fame or notoriety. But what we seek to understand is why we approve of such actions and impulses. It is a very inadequate explanation to say that we approve of them because they may be of advantage to ourselves, or because we find in ourselves impulses of a similar kind. Self-sacrifice as the satisfaction of a momentary generous or reckless impulse may be useful to us, but, on the view we have hitherto considered, it is merely one among many impulses which may produce incoherence in the individual's life, and as such it is irrational, something which on the level of merely individual goodness we are wise to repress and to condemn. We might be glad that it is present in others, but it is the last thing which we should want in ourselves. And the idea that self-sacrifice was a duty or obligation would merely be ridiculous.

It ceases to be ridiculous only when we consider the second theory which we have been attempting to propound. The life of society is a life into which our life expands. My life is to the life of the whole society what a limited policy or a momentary action is to my life as a whole. The goodness of the part is to be judged by its place in the whole. The goodness of my society and of my own social actions is no longer to be determined by their coherence with my policy of life. Rather the goodness of my actions and of my life, and also the goodness of the actions and lives of others, is to be determined by its coherence with the whole life of a society of which my life is only a part.

This is exactly the same reversal which we have already seen in the life of the isolated individual. A policy of life seemed at first to be good merely because it assured the satisfaction of momentary desires. But gradually it became clear to us that the satisfaction of momentary desires was good in so far as it was the fulfilment of a policy of life. In this way some momentary actions became filled with a goodness which could never belong to them in themselves, while others came to have a badness which could not belong to themselves as isolated, and the reasonable self was under a

self-imposed obligation to repress them if it was to be a reasonable self.

The analogy is only an analogy and as such it is imperfect, but even as an analogy it does not mean that the individual is merely an instrument of the whole and to be judged only as such. We have never suggested that the goodness of a momentary action is due to something outside itself and external to itself, to a mere abstract policy or to the separate actions in which that was manifested. A policy is entirely made up of actions, and their goodness belongs to themselves, but to themselves as parts of a wider whole. Similarly the state is made up of individuals, their goodness belongs to themselves, and the goodness of the state lives only in the individuals which compose it. But the goodness of an individual seems to belong to him primarily when he wills to make himself a vehicle of the goodness of the whole, when he wills his actions and determines his life as an element in the wider cooperative activity of the whole. The individual is not just the instrument of the state, and the state is not just the instrument of the individual. The external relation of user to instrument or of subject to object is not the relation of different cooperating subjects to one another. The goodness of the state lies in the whole coherent cooperative activity of the individuals which compose it; and the goodness of the individual lies in his whole coherent activity so far as that is coherent, not merely with itself, but with the cooperative activities of others in the whole, or with the cooperative activity of the whole. The goodness of a man does not belong to him in isolation, but equally it does not belong to him merely through an external relation to other people than himself. He is a good man, not in so far as he is good to or for others or to or for the whole, but in so far as he himself is good in the whole.

The good man is not merely the man who makes use of society, he is not even the man who cooperates with society so far as society fits in with an individual policy of life which is the expression of naturally generous, as well as of naturally selfish, impulses. Rather he is the man who makes the point of view of the whole his own point of view, and judges himself and others from that wider point of view. This is what is

involved in a genuinely social will and in a genuine cooperation. And it means that I regard a man as good, not because he cooperates with me or with you considered as isolated individuals, but because he cooperates with a whole of which you and he and I are organic parts. The judgements which I pass upon others I pass also upon myself; I am no longer good as cooperating with myself, that is I am no longer good merely as a coherent individual; and I am not good as cooperating with you who are just different from myself; but I am good as cooperating with *us*, that is with a whole of which I am only a part. I cease to be merely myself, and become as it were the expression of both the will and the judgement of the whole society. If I were a perfectly good man in a perfectly good society, I and all other men should attain to that level in all our thoughts and actions.

This may seem to some a difficult or even an impossible conception, but surely it is only stating in philosophical terms the principles on which we act and judge. It is only too obvious that we do not act always in this way, but when we judge our own actions, or those of others, to be good, we judge that the actions are performed in this spirit. This is true even of the goodness which we saw was relative to every society. A good husband and father is the man who has the interests of his family at heart; a good citizen is the man who has the interests of his country at heart; a good European is the man who has the interests of Europe at heart. We might even say that a man was a good member of a tennis club so far as he has the interests of the club at heart. In so saying we presume of course in all cases that when a man has the interests of anything at heart, this is not a matter of words or of emotional enjoyment, but serves to make him as efficient as he can be in furthering these interests and in playing his part in the service of the whole.

It is not suggested that a man is good if he surrenders his own judgement and his own will to those of others. Subjection is not the same thing as cooperation. A man does not become a good husband or a good anything by becoming a nonentity. The man who always votes with the majority adds no additional wisdom to the whole. I am a part of that to which I surrender myself, and the whole is composed

of parts like myself. The goodness of the whole lies in the development and coherence of the parts as parts in the whole. If the whole is to be effective the parts must be themselves, must contribute their thoughts and actions, yet their will must be a will to further not their own private interests but the interests of the whole, and that means to further their private interests only in so far as these are to the interest of the whole. In a good state the furtherance of our own interests, or better the living that life which is the fullest possible realisation of our personality, is often the greatest service which we can render to the whole, but if we are genuinely good we live that life consciously in the service of the whole. Most men serve their country best by earning their living, by being competent at their own work, by bringing up and supporting their family and so on. It is not only the politicians or the philanthropists who serve their country. But one day the men who seem to be wholly wrapped up in their family and in their work may feel called upon to give up this pleasant and useful life, and to prepare themselves for wounds and death. And it is then we know that they are really good, because they are seeking not their own narrow good but the wider good of the whole, a good which they have made their own.

A good man's policy of life is still *his* policy of life. It could not be otherwise. His individuality lies in the coherence of his will, and his individuality is the greatest thing that he can give to his country. But his individual policy is now to seek the coherence of the whole cooperative activity, and his life is now coherent only in so far as it is coherent with the whole. It is this which makes it rational for him to give up even his own life, if thereby he can help to realise the coherence or goodness of the whole which he has made his own good. The good which is directly realised through or in him is only part of the good which is his.

Yet the best of men is not himself the whole but only a part of the whole. He seeks to make the whole speak and act through him, but he knows that it speaks and acts through all good men, and it is his desire and will that this should be so. And if he is wise he does not imagine that all the wisdom of the whole is present in him. When he takes part, if he

does take part, in the councils of his society, he will advocate his view of what is good for the whole with all the energy at his command. It is only so that he can be of value as a councillor. But he will recognise—and that society is happy in which he can and does recognise—that other men are equally intelligent and equally disinterested, and he will be prepared to abide by the decision of his society, even when that decision clashes with his own.

It is essential to recognise that the goodness of which we speak arises in our relations to others considered not merely as others, but as members of the same society, as cooperating in a common activity and sharing in a common good. The flabbiness of much that passes for modern thought is never shown more clearly than in an attempt to identify goodness with altruism. The very word 'altruism' is an offence. To satisfy the whim of a second or other is in no way better than to satisfy the whim of myself. I satisfy the whim of another only because I myself have a whim to do so, and altruism is merely a particular case of egotism. It may be either good or bad, and to identify it with morality is simply ludicrous. If Joseph had acceded to the desires of Potiphar's wife, his action would have been altruistic, but it would not therefore have been moral. Nor does an action become moral, because we satisfy the whim of many or even of a whole nation, as for example when Pilate freed Barabbas and condemned Jesus. A good act satisfies, not the whims of others, but rather their will so far as it is good. That is to say it satisfies them, not as mere others or mere individuals or even as a mob, which is just a conglomeration of mere individuals, but as members of a good society and organs of a coherent cooperation. An act is not good because it satisfies others than myself, but because it satisfies a social will which is manifested not only in others but equally in myself.

The principles which we have considered are at work in any society however limited in scope or purpose. A man is a good member of any society, in so far as in acting with that society he determines his actions with a view to the coherent activity of the society as a whole. But where the purpose of the society is limited, the goodness of the whole society and the goodness of the man who is its member must be determined

by reference to a wider and more inclusive whole. Similarly, on the level of the isolated individual, while an action may be good as coherent with a limited policy, its goodness and the goodness of the limited policy must be determined with reference to a whole policy of life. A tennis club organises only a fraction of the lives of its members, and no one would think it a good act if a man were to die in order that his tennis club might win a match. Nor would anyone consider a man good who was willing to let his country be conquered rather than that the record of his club should be broken. The goodness of a man is his goodness as a whole man in a society composed of whole men and not so to speak of bits of men. The coherence which is goodness must be realised in a complete or universal coherence, and that is why it must be judged by reference to the state as including within itself the whole life of all the individuals and all the societies of which it is composed. But the state, even when taken at its widest, is itself an incomplete and limited society, and goodness must be judged in the end by reference to a complete society including within itself all reasonable beings—or at any rate all reasonable beings who have any sort of relations with one another. The fact that we are members of a state does not exclude us from the brotherhood of man or from the communion of saints. The will which is the source of so many different kinds of goodness at different levels cannot be satisfied with anything short of a completely coherent whole. And the good man is the man who is good as a member not of *a*, but of *the*, good whole.

BOOK V

THE WILL AS MORAL

CHAPTER XIII

ASPECTS OF GOODNESS

THE good man is good as a member of a good society, and the good society is good as a society of good men. For abstract logic this statement is merely circular, and it would convey no information whatever to a man who had never lived. Yet in concrete experience it is easy enough to find goodness in that coherence which is actually realised in the life of ourselves and our society. We may indeed be doubtful in regard to details, we may recognise that in a more profoundly coherent whole much to which we attach value would have to be altered, but we know that such alteration would be due to that principle which has been and is our guide, the principle of coherence in the cooperating will of reasonable men.

It is the same way in regard to truth. We recognise the truth of our thinking by its coherence with the thinking of ourselves and others; and if we had never thought, this would tell us nothing of the nature of truth. But we have in our living and growing thinking, in our science and history and philosophy, a body of truth which lives through the principle of coherence. Further thinking may alter any or all of the details, a new discovery like that of Einstein may modify all our scientific judgements, but it does so only through the activity of the same principle which has been at work all along. Even the discovery of what is alleged to be a new fact is itself an illustration of the principle in question. Every new fact is a new theory to be judged by its coherence with itself and with the whole. When the spiritualist offers us what he calls new facts, we must judge whether his so-called facts have sufficient coherence with themselves, and whether by modifications of our existing beliefs we can with them construct a more coherent whole, or whether on the other hand they are incoherent in themselves and to be rejected (like the observations of a drunkard or the ravings of a lunatic) as incapable of finding their place in a body of living truth.

The practical difficulty arises solely from the partial incoherence of our thoughts and actions alike, and there are some questions which we must be content to leave open. But there is no reason to believe—as so many do—that there is more ground for being doubtful about goodness than there is about truth. The existence of people called fundamentalists does not suggest to the scientist that the theory of evolution may be false, nor does the existence of Chicago gangsters or Indian Thugs suggest to any reasonably good man that the practice of murder may be right. We judge our theories by their coherence with the thinking of those who are making a serious effort to think coherently with all thinking men, and we judge our actions by their coherence with the actions of those who are making a serious effort to will coherently with all good men. There is as much opportunity for cheap scepticism in the one case as in the other. But there is no more.

The parallel might be developed indefinitely, and there could be no more profitable subject of reflexion for those intellectualists who are inclined to moral scepticism. But for our present purpose we need insist only upon this. We must exercise our own judgement in thinking, for only so can we contribute to knowledge, but we seek to harmonise our thinking in any subject with the thinking of those who have a genuine devotion to truth and are actually trying to attain truth in that subject. Similarly, while we must take the responsibility alike for our good acts and our thoughts about goodness, we seek to harmonise our willing with the willing of those who have a genuine devotion to goodness and are trying to realise it in their own lives and in those of others. Ultimately we are seeking a truth which all men would accept so far as their thoughts became coherent, and we are seeking a good which all men would will so far as their wills became coherent, but more immediately we seek to think with our better thinkers and to act with our better men.

If no truth had ever been thought we should not know what to think, and if no goodness had ever been enacted we should not know what to do. We are compelled to take the achievements of the past as our starting-point alike in thought and action, and we have assumed a certain goodness in our society as the necessary condition of further advance. But

we must recognise, if we are not to get into an altogether fanciful world, that there is both coherence and incoherence in our society, both goodness and badness, and that the cooperation of a good man is a cooperation with the good men in his society. In a sense he cooperates with all men in so far as they are good. He may even claim—although in this there is a danger of priggishness—that, in handing the criminal over to justice, he is endeavouring to help the good will in the criminal himself which has been blinded or overcome by incoherent passion. But he cooperates in a special sense with those who are genuinely seeking to further the cooperative activity of the whole and who, even when they differ from him, recognise a fellow-worker in him as he also does in them.

We have seen the same principle even in the life of the isolated or abstract individual. There too we found a standard in the action willed by the whole soul, and coherence both external and internal was realised between and in such actions. The good action was that in which was manifested not a momentary whim but a policy of life. Good actions, we might say metaphorically, cooperated with one another and with the whole, and bad actions did not. This principle was not to be doubted because of the presence of bad and incoherent actions. Indeed it was only through the contrast that we became conscious of the principle. The same principle is at work in society. The good man is the man in whom the will of the whole is manifested, and he cooperates with the whole and with other good men in the whole. The principle is not vitiated by the presence of bad citizens. It is just by this principle that we judge the difference between a man who is good and a man who is bad. All men, just because they are men, are parts of the whole, and the whole is nothing except in its parts, yet the wholeness of the whole in the deeper sense is manifested only in those who seek to serve not themselves but the whole.

This distinction is similar to the distinction already found in our earlier discussions of the difference between coherence and continuity. A bad man is bad only because he is a part of the whole, and he is judged to be bad as a part of the whole. His relation to the whole is not merely an external relation, and his badness is not just the badness of a thing. A thing or

event, as for example an earthquake, may be bad to the whole because it is an impediment to social activity; but the badness of a man is quite different, unless indeed he is a lunatic or an imbecile, or in other words unless he has ceased to be, or has never been, a man. A bad man must be capable of goodness, capable of willing to play a part in the service of the whole. In that sense the wholeness of the whole must be present in him, and its presence is the condition of his badness; just as in the isolated self an action cannot have the badness of an action unless it is my action, that is to say unless it is part of the whole self-mediating continuum which is my life, and unless it has my whole self somehow present in it. None the less the presence of the whole self which means a kind of continuity is different from the presence of the whole self which constitutes coherence and makes an action good and not bad; although without this continuity there could be no coherence, and apart from the presence of this coherence there could be no incoherence and no badness. Similarly, the wholeness of the whole society is present in the good man in the sense that the coherence of the whole, and not merely the possibility of its coherence, is manifested in him. More simply, the good man is aiming at, and to some extent securing, the realisation of the whole as coherent, and not just producing an incoherence which would be impossible unless he were somehow part of the whole. The fact that the whole may often fall back into incoherence in the lives of others, may become simply a sort of continuum of people with like capacities and like activities not yet harmonised, makes no difference to this. The wholeness of the whole is more truly present in the man who is seeking to make that wholeness a real coherence, than in the man who recognises the whole only by struggling against it and its claims. And the whole itself is more truly a whole, when its wholeness is realised in coherence and not merely in continuity.

Hence we may still say that the good man is good as cooperating coherently with the coherent will of his whole society, or more simply as cooperating with the whole, but this does not mean that there is no incoherence or no bad men in the whole. It is only in an ideal society that the will of all men would constitute a perfectly coherent whole. In

a sense there is an appeal to an ideal society when we speak of the good man as cooperating with the whole. But, as in the case of the isolated individual, the ideal to which we refer must be, to some extent at least, actually realised, and otherwise would seem to have no meaning. If it were not so we should not be cooperating with an actual society at all. The actual incoherence of society may produce doubts as to when we are cooperating with the whole, just as the actual incoherence of the individual may produce doubts as to when we are realising our whole policy of life. But in most cases we have no doubt. Speaking broadly we cooperate with our whole society not only when we become soldiers in a war of which all approve, but also when we prevent a murderer from committing a crime. When we assist a murderer we are not cooperating with the whole society, but with a part which is setting itself against the whole.

The difficulty of finding the ideally coherent will actually realised in our society is always with us. There is the same difficulty in finding the ideally coherent thinking in the actual thoughts of men. In both cases we may, if we are sufficiently sure of ourselves, feel compelled to set ourselves against the existing machinery as it actually works. But this is a problem for men who feel themselves to be in some degree leaders. The fault of the ordinary man is that he is too apt to accept the standards, the beliefs and practices, which are actually existent. Like other people he may have his doubts in regard to details, but in the main he has no doubts either about what are the generally accepted standards or what is their value. His difficulty is to live up to the standards he accepts.

We must assume therefore, as we have hitherto done, that there is some coherence and some goodness in society, and that we are able to distinguish in the main where that goodness chiefly resides and wherein it is manifested.. It is not difficult to distinguish those who exploit their society from those who serve it. We know in most cases what is cooperation with the whole and what is not, even although there is genuine incoherence in our society. All our standards may be imperfect by reference to an ideal society, as all our truths may be imperfect by reference to an ideal knowledge. But their imperfection is due to their failure to embody in themselves

a principle of coherence which is the principle of value, and we are able to recognise that principle at work in them to a greater or less degree. The truths we have to seek are those made possible by the present state of knowledge, and the good we have to seek is that made possible by the present conditions of society. There may be a more ideal cooperation than we know, but generally speaking we can distinguish between a genuine cooperation and a genuine absence of cooperation. We know when we are at least trying to serve the whole and when we are not. Our present object is to understand the nature of certain ethical conceptions on the basis of this assumption, an assumption which in practice we all make and by which we all judge the goodness both of others and of ourselves.

There may indeed be some men who believe that no man and no action is better or worse than another, but these, if they are not deluding themselves by some half-baked philosophy which has no influence on their actual living, are simply villains trying to find excuses for their villainy. The fact that they find excuses necessary is merely the last relic of a lingering will toward goodness. There may be others who believe that goodness is wholly irrational, and consists for example in believing certain theological doctrines without reference to their working out in practical life. Such a belief is no more a contribution to moral philosophy than the belief that the earth is flat is a contribution to modern science. In trying to understand moral goodness we need not appeal either to villains or to cranks. If a man is to think about thinking he must have some experience of thinking; if he is to think about art he must have some experience of art; and if he is to think about goodness he must have some experience of goodness in his own life and in that of others. He may indeed be what is called a sinner, and he may be doubtful about some moral standards, but he must be conscious of a difference between goodness and badness, at least in very extreme cases, and must be willing to make clearer to himself wherein that goodness or badness consists. We must assume that a man who earns his living and does his work thoroughly at a useful trade, who loves and supports his wife and children, who endeavours to secure for them reasonable comfort and

some sort of pleasure and interest in life, who is loyal to his friends and helpful to those in misfortune, and who is willing to risk his life if he can serve his country in a just cause, has some sort of claim to be called a good man. And we must assume that a man who lives by robbery and blackmail, who forces his wife to earn money by an immoral life, who beats his children, delights in cruelty for its own sake, and is generally a bully and a coward and a traitor, has some sort of claim to be called a bad man. If any man says that he can see no difference whatever between the two, or that the first is bad and the second good, it is useless to argue with him. It would be more reasonable to argue about truth with a man who believed that two and two were equal to five, or about poetry with a man who believed that 'Yes, sir, she's my baby' was the highest achievement of the poetic art.

We must assume then that it is possible sometimes to distinguish those who genuinely cooperate with a genuinely cooperating society from those who do not, and we must ask those who are able to make some distinction of goodness and badness to consider whether or not the principle of the coherent will is the clue to the judgements that they already make; whether or not it helps to organise their moral judgements into a more coherent whole; whether or not it offers some sort of basis upon which they can criticise the merely isolated judgements of themselves and others; and whether or not it enables them to understand the nature of the actions which they believe to be good and bad. The proof of any moral theory must depend upon its power to give a coherent and intelligible account of our actual experience. That proof cannot be supplied within the limits of any ordinary book, but an attempt can be made to articulate the theory in such a way as to face some of the problems raised by our moral judgements and our experience of life.

It is not altogether an objection to our theory that it may be used to justify very different acts in different kinds and stages of society. On the contrary, it is precisely this which enables it to offer a rational account of the development of the moral ideal. In some stages of society, it may be thought right for a man to eat his enemies, and in so doing he cooperates with his society and is thought to be a good man.

We may criticise his action on the ground that such a society is not genuinely cooperative, and above all on the ground that the principle of coherence has not yet extended itself and completed itself in the cooperation of all men as reasonable beings. But this must not blind us to the fact that we can judge a man, not only from a more developed point of view, but also from the point of view of himself and his own society. We may regard Archimedes as a very great scientist, although his thinking may be almost childish in comparison with that of Einstein. And even a cannibal may be a good man according to his lights. His light may indeed be almost darkness beside our greater illumination, but such as it is, with all its irrationality and arbitrariness and ignorance and superstition, it is none the less a faint glimmering of that light by which we are all illumined—the light of the coherent will. If a man cannot find the distinction of good and evil working itself out in a society of savages, he must be blind indeed. He might as well suggest that there was no distinction of true and false where men were unacquainted with modern science and modern philosophy.

The principles of true thinking are however manifested most clearly in the achievements of scientists, historians, and philosophers, and in a similar way the principles of good action are most clearly manifested in civilised men and in a civilised society.

If we consider the good man in the good society we find him cooperating, not with robbers in their robberies or murderers in their murders, but with societies and individuals who are, like himself, cooperating in and with a wider whole. And it should be observed that he carries with him into this higher goodness all the goodness which we found in him in abstraction from society. His own life is still a coherent whole so far as he is good, although its coherence is no longer determined merely in itself but as part of a wider coherent whole. He still displays the same perseverance or persistence, although it is now the vehicle of a still greater good. He still unites in himself spontaneity and consistency, although both are now what they are in the service of the whole. His coherent will still produces efficiency, so far as that is within his power, in the situations to which he knows he must adapt himself.

And all his ancient weaknesses become obstacles to his wider goodness. Avoidable inefficiency, blind passion and blind obstinacy, and general incoherence of will, still introduce evils into his life. But these evils are no longer merely individual. They have become offences against the whole.

Yet his goodness is still relative to his own capacities. We saw that it was possible to have a wider and a narrower coherence, and that a man of few endowments might be good although he could not be great. This is still true of him as the vehicle of a wider goodness. He may be incapable of directing governments or of commanding armies. He may be innocent of art and literature, and impotent to add anything to the treasures of human knowledge. He may be a poor man leading a hard life and performing a humble task. He may even be a cripple lying upon a bed of pain. Yet it is still possible for him to establish some sort of coherence in his own life, and to lead that life in the service of the whole. This is true even when he can only set an example of fortitude and of consideration for others, but most men are able to do more than that. The only man who can do nothing is the man who has lost his reason, and he has ceased to be a man and ceased to be himself.

It should be observed—if a brief digression may be pardoned—that while moral goodness is manifested only by rational beings who are cooperating with one another, it may be manifested in relation to beings who are not rational. We have a duty to men who have lost their reason, and we have also a duty to the lower animals, at the very least the duty of not causing them unnecessary pain. The character of such a duty is still determined mainly by relation to the whole society of rational beings—the discovery of a cure for cancer would seem to most of us a justification for the practice of vivisection—but it is determined by something more. We insist upon the necessity of legal restrictions even in the case of scientific experiments, and this implies that an animal has some sort of claim upon us, just because it shares with us in sentience, although not in reason. We feel this claim with the greatest force when we are concerned with our own domestic pets. We do so because these seem to share in our fortunes and to cooperate in our activities, and even to

manifest something like human affection and human virtue. There are all sorts of degrees in moral relations. Some of us feel a kind of affection and almost a sense of duty to an old coat, or a house in which we have been happy, or a car which has served us well, and the attitude of every decent man towards his dog is very different from his attitude to stocks and stones. But in all this we seem to be imagining—or perhaps discovering ?—some shadow of human personality in things below the human level. We cannot however discuss the different aspects of this question and must return to our main argument.

Goodness is no excuse for incompetence and inefficiency, and the good man knows that he has to make himself as efficient as possible in the discharge of his duty to society. If he does not do so he fails so far to be a good man. But a man may have great skill without being good, and he may be a good man although he has little skill. Those thinkers who would find goodness merely in things or objects are bound to estimate the goodness of a man and of his actions by reference to results, and if they attach any value to goodness of will, they necessarily do so only as a means to some external end. But the unsophisticated moral consciousness cries out against them. It knows that there is a unique and incomparable preciousness, not indeed in the good will which issues in nothing and is only a name for sentimental self-indulgence, but in the good will which performs even the meanest action in the service of the whole. We can set the humblest good man beside the greatest artists and thinkers and feel that his special lustre is undimmed. The excellence of the human spirit has spoken through him also, and it is a small matter that his results are paltry, or even that he has failed to achieve his end. When Captain Oates staggered out into the Antarctic storm his sacrifice happened to be useless, but that takes away nothing from the splendour of what he did.

The life of society and the life of the individual are always changing and always developing, always adjusting themselves to new circumstances, but if we take a society as relatively stable it is possible to consider the lives of its good citizens in a relatively external and a relatively internal way. We

may consider an action as it is concretely, as something willed in a certain spirit. Or we may consider it more abstractly simply as something done. We cannot say that it is good unless we know that it is willed in a spirit of service as a contribution to a wider cooperative life. But we can perhaps say that what was done was right, if it as a matter of fact fits in with the activity of the whole society. We can perhaps say that a man has done what is right if he has paid his debt. But we should not say that his action was good, and still less that he was a good man, if he has paid it only because he was afraid of being sent to prison.

Even in this case we cannot take a completely external view. What we are judging is still an action and not merely a physical movement. The coherence of physical movements consists merely in being part of a physical world governed throughout by the laws of cause and effect. In that sense every physical movement is coherent. When we say that an action is right or that a man did the right thing, the coherence of which we speak is a coherence not of physical movements but of actions. Yet the actions that we are considering are taken in abstraction from the motives which inspired them. We consider only a part of them and not the whole.

The distinction between good and right is not an absolute one, and there are many who would use the two words in exactly the same sense. But we may use ' right ' to describe the content of moral action, and ' good ' to describe its spirit or, better, the concrete unity of spirit and content. We do not say that a man is a right man. We say that he is a good man, and he does the right thing. We do indeed say that he does it in a right spirit, but the spirit as well as the action must be right before we can say that the action is really good. An action is good when a man not only does the right thing, but does it because it is the right thing to do. That at least is the abstract way of describing an act done in the spirit of service. And there is a world of difference between being genuinely good and being right, or correct, in what one does.

It is the good or the coherent or the cooperating will which is the source of all rightness. Apart from this we could have no notion of what was meant by saying that anything was right or wrong. But if we have the will to goodness in us,

it is useful to determine what is abstractly right and wrong in different sets of relations. This is in a sense a purely intellectual task when we have accepted any particular piece of cooperation as good. It is rather like determining the right size of the piston relatively to the cylinder, and of the cylinder relatively to the piston, in the engine of a motor-car. If we begin with a type of machine which actually works, we can modify it in various directions, all of which may be right relatively to the desired end, if they do not destroy the efficiency of the whole. We cannot however modify the cylinder so much that it ceases to be a cylinder, or the piston so much that it ceases to be a piston. It is just because judgements of right and wrong may be made in this intellectual and abstract way, that the acknowledged rightness of a thing can leave us completely cold. It becomes warm to us only when our heart and soul are involved in the cooperation upon which the judgement of rightness is based. When the rightness springs out of a life of others in which we have no share, it has no meaning for us except as an inscrutable command.

What are called rights and duties are equally based upon cooperation, and are equally meaningless if it is a cooperation in which we have no share. Genuine cooperation means that we as cooperators have a claim on others, and they as cooperators have a claim on us. Their claim on us is our duty to them, and our duty to them is their claim on us. Claims and duties alike are intelligible only in their relation to the whole and to individuals as organs of the whole. Our claim on others is that they should play their part in the whole, and this may mean in turn that they should help us to play our part in the whole, so far as such help is genuinely consonant with the coherence of the whole. We have a genuine right to expect that they should do their duty in the whole, but our special right is that we should be helped, and above all not hindered, in playing our own part in the whole. Our fundamental right is the right to do our duty, as in some ways our most fundamental duty is to recognise the rights of others.

It is our place in the cooperative whole which gives rise

to our specific rights and to our specific obligations. The rights to life, to free speech, to the vote, to property, to a decent standard of life, to work, and so on, all depend on whether or not they are necessary to enable me to play my part in the cooperative whole. And the duty of others to secure these rights depends upon exactly the same consideration. There are no such things as abstract or so-called natural rights, and no such things as abstract or natural duties. On the other hand the cooperation of the whole is the cooperation of its members leading coherent lives as part of a coherent whole of living. So far as the whole is producing narrowness or incoherence in the lives of its members it is failing in cooperation and falling short in goodness. Its excuse for doing so can lie only in the difficulty of its circumstances or the permanent or temporary weaknesses of its members. Men have a right to life—except when some must die in order that the whole may live. They have a right to vote and to agitate—provided that the voting and the agitation are not going to be a source of anarchy. They have a right to property—in so far as property is necessary to the cooperation of the whole and to their efficiency in that cooperation. They have certainly a right to work if that means to serve the whole, and the state which fails to make use of all its willing members is failing as a state, but it does not follow that the government must directly organise work for them in their own trade or pay them for being idle. It cannot indeed let its citizens starve, and continued unemployment means that the state must reorganise itself in some way or other, but whether this is best done by government action or by individual enterprise is a matter of expediency and not of abstract principle. The right to a decent standard of life depends upon what is possible in the circumstances. In no case can a man have any right at all to have things done for him and to do nothing in return. But all these things are rights so far as they make for the greater coherence of the whole, and a whole which fails to secure these rights, except through unfortunate circumstances or through the weaknesses of its members, is failing to make the most of itself as a coherent whole.

It is sometimes said that men have rights only because

their rights are recognised. A right is so to speak made by its own recognition. This however is strictly true only of legal rights. There are moral rights, and these are not made by being recognised, they are dependent on the nature of the cooperation in which men share, and are dependent on recognition only in so far as cooperation itself depends on recognition, that is to say, in so far as genuine cooperation must be self-conscious. And it is no undue extension of the idea of rights to say that all reasonable beings have their moral rights, so far as they are willing to cooperate with us in any whole of which we are a part. We cannot restrict rights merely to legal rights, for a man who has a legal right comes thereby also to have a moral right—that the rights recognised by law as his should not be lightly or arbitrarily taken away.

Generally speaking it is more important that men should lay stress upon their duties rather than upon their rights. They would have no rights if they had no duties. The necessity to insist upon their rights arises from the badness of others, but the necessity to insist upon their duties springs from their own badness which is a matter more peculiarly their own concern. None the less it may be a duty that a man should insist upon his rights, because only by being assured of his rights can he perform his special duty in the whole.

Our right is that which is right in the whole considered as our claim upon others or upon the whole. Our duty is that which is right in the whole considered as the claim of others or of the whole upon us. It is our duty to do the right thing, to play our special part in the wider whole, and here again our action, looked at in this relatively external way, is good, only if we do it because it is our duty to do so. We saw how shadows or images of duty seemed to manifest themselves even in the life of the abstract individual, and again in the life of the individual considered as more or less external to his society. And there the shadow of duty appeared only because of a coherence actually willed in our life and a falling short of that coherence through momentary passion or weakness. Hence even on this level, while duty is imposed by nothing other than the individual coherent will itself, it appears cold and external and tyrannical beside the warmth of passion, through whose presence alone it begins to appear

as duty. The same thing is true on the higher level. Duty could have no meaning whatever to us, unless we had willed to make our lives coherent with a coherent whole whose good was therein made our good. And it could have no meaning to us as duty, unless our will sank back to a lower level at which duty appears cold and tyrannical, and even an invention of others, in comparison with our warm desire for a purely personal satisfaction. Yet if our will sank back altogether, if the higher will were not somehow active in our present will, what appears as duty would be at the most mere external necessity. We must recognise that as men live more coherently and reflect more upon their life, in some cases they come to love duty, for the cold majesty with which it confronts the tumult of the passions. In following duty they enjoy the special satisfaction which comes from mastering difficulties and triumphing over weakness. Duty itself is only a shadow, the shadow that is cast by the intrusion of our passions between us and the light of goodness. But there are some men who, like the Spartans, seem to fight better in the shade.

The concept of duty is inevitable for a self-transcendent being which looks before and after and yet may be swept away by its own momentary passions. The same conception of an ideal which we must seek but cannot attain is forced also upon the thinker and the artist. The path of excellence is never easy, although we acquire a certain mastery through effort and there is a sort of passionate ease in the greatest achievements of men. Yet we must struggle over dusty and difficult paths before we attain facility, and no artist who is a genuine artist can avoid the pangs of hell. But the special character of duty comes from its connexion with a work which is not merely our own but is shared by others. Duty is in some ways almost a military conception, but it is not merely obedience to a command. Rather it is what is due to others in a common enterprise which is difficult and, it may be, dangerous. The soldier is in some ways the special embodiment of the sense of duty. He may not like or even understand his duty, but it must not be through him that the battle is lost. Most of us look upon duty as difficult and unpleasant and relatively external, something which we would rather be without. We feel that those in whom

devotion to duty is very prominent are apt to be rather cold and inhuman. But we recognise in them also a certain fineness and a certain strength, and when a man follows his duty in pain or danger, we begin to feel for him a warmth of admiration such as is aroused ordinarily by a more spontaneous and whole-hearted goodness. Yet the triumph of goodness is the death of duty.

It may be thought that duty is not confined to social relationships, but can be manifested in the individual life by itself. We have recognised a sort of shadow of duty in the isolated individual, but the isolated individual is only an abstraction. Duty as we know it could show itself only in society, and it becomes a duty to oneself, only as our conception of cooperation becomes more profound, and as we begin to regard fineness of character in the individual as also a contribution to the cooperating whole. This conception no doubt might remain if a man were lost on a desert island; he might still feel it his duty not to indulge in useless whimpering. But such a conception could grow up only in a social setting, and would still have a social background even if there were no men at hand to be affected by his actions. He would still feel, if he felt any sense of duty at all, that he was discharging a duty to his fellows, or to his God, in not falling below the level of his kind. He could not show himself unworthy of an ideal he shared with others, even if there were none to know his shame. His society is still embodied in him. But perhaps many if not most men would feel that the idea of duty did not apply at all.

As rights and duties are relative to cooperation, it is obvious that they are bound to vary with the nature of the cooperation. Membership of any society confers upon us at once certain rights and duties, but these do not become genuinely moral rights and duties except by reference to some sort of inclusive cooperating whole. This does not mean however that our duties—we may ignore the less important question of rights—are only to the whole as a blank whole not differentiated into societies and individuals. It means that our duty to the whole is manifested in our duty to the different societies and individuals within it, and that our duties to other individuals and societies become genuine or

moral duties so far as they are also duties to the whole, or duties to these individuals and societies as elements in the whole.

All sensible men know that they owe different duties to different people. It is our duty to welcome a guest, but we do not therefore feel obliged to accord the same show of hospitality to a burglar or even to a pedlar of sewing-machines. Many men think it right to kill that they may secure the victory of their country, but only a fool would think it right to kill in order that he might secure the victory of his tennis club. All our duties arise in definite relationships and in definite kinds of cooperation. To deduce our duties from some universal principle of moral action, without paying any attention to the actual desires and wills of men, is in the end as absurd as to deduce scientific laws from the empty principle of the uniformity of nature, without paying any attention to observed facts.

We saw long ago that coherence of willing, which is the essence of any kind of goodness, is not manifested in blindly repeating the same action in all circumstances, but in willing different actions in different circumstances as part of one coherent whole of action. The same is true of moral goodness, and this determines the duties into which moral goodness is articulated by a relatively abstract understanding. Duties are always relative to circumstances and to all the circumstances, so far as these are present to the mind of the agent. We stand in different relations to different individuals and different societies, and hence our duties to them are different duties. But our duties to them are genuine moral duties, only in so far as these individuals and societies are parts of an all-inclusive whole, and in so far as our actions towards and with them make for an all-inclusive cooperation. Hence not only do we owe different duties to different people, and different duties to the same people at different times and in different circumstances, but we also owe different duties to them even although the immediate circumstances of our cooperation remain the same. A man's wife and family may still need his society and support, but his duty may summon him to the field of battle.

Hence there is an infinite variety in duty, and no duty can be absolute in the sense of being obligatory in all cir-

cumstances whatsoever. Yet every duty is absolute in so far as it is the claim of the coherent whole in just this situation. In a sense it is duty which is absolute and not duties. The duty of being dutiful has no exceptions, but there are times when any particular duty may have to be set aside.

None the less there are certain recurring situations, and for these we may make general rules, that is we may describe the appropriate duties in general terms and give to our description the form of a command. In so doing we ignore the fact that every situation is unique, and that a general rule is never obeyed twice in exactly the same way. In spite of this such rules may offer us a useful kind of practical guidance. By their assistance we can at least help ourselves by the experience of others, if we have not sufficient experience of our own. Some situations are so all-pervasive that they arise nearly always when human beings come together, and the rules which apply to them have a general claim upon all men. Such a rule is found for example in the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill'. Murder is a crime against the co-operative activity of any society whatsoever. Some rules are more essential to the working of a society than others, and their breach is a correspondingly greater evil. Hence, speaking broadly, murder may be worse than stealing, and stealing may be worse than telling lies. The extent to which the breach of a rule disturbs the cooperative activity, and the nature of the cooperative activity which is disturbed, are the main factors in our determination of the wrongness of an act and of the greatness of the wrong committed. The conscientious man may feel it his duty to play his part loyally in any cooperation in which he shares, but most of us would regard the man who betrays his country for gain as a bad man, while we consider that the man who talks at a concert is merely a nuisance, and is offending against good manners rather than against morals. He is not making an assault upon the very foundations of society.

This suggests that there may be limitations to the sphere of duty. A man has certain duties to perform, according to his various relationships in life, and when they are performed he is free to amuse himself. Such a view shows how abstract

and external the concept of duty may become. It has been reduced to a kind of wooden and empty consistency, and the spontaneity of life has to claim a place elsewhere. Yet even so the pale spectre of duty seems to lurk in the background ready to pounce upon us if we go astray. When we consider the more concrete concept of goodness, we know that it is a light which may illumine every nook and cranny of our lives.

This does not mean that at every moment we must be thinking of our acts as part of a greater whole or as a service to our country. We saw on a lower level that an act is not the expression of a policy because we think of it in relation to a policy. It is the expression of the policy only when the policy as it were flowers into this act. No doubt we must know what we are doing, but my policy of playing golf is fulfilled mainly by concentrating on just this and that shot, not in letting my attention wander to other parts of the game. The spirit of the truly good man flowers into play as easily and as spontaneously as into sacrifice, just as the intelligence of the thinker may express itself as easily in an epigram as in a treatise. The goodness of a whole will and the richness of a whole mind can be concentrated in the moment without priggishness or intellectual pride, and it would be foolish to marshal all the elaborate machinery of logic, or all the efforts of conscious virtue, to produce something which, if it is to be at all, must be as spontaneous as the laughter of a child.

We have to think about rules and duties and right and wrong, only as we come up against difficulties, or feel compelled to restrain the impulses which are likely to produce incoherence in our lives and in the life of the whole. The fact that we have to use these conceptions is a sign that we are imperfectly moralised and not merely that we are thinking abstractly. The value of these conceptions as well as the source of their unattractiveness is that they are impersonal. The good will seeks to produce a coherent whole of goodness which is in a way impersonal, which is not determined merely by my contingent desires or confined to my momentary willings; just as thought seeks to produce a coherent whole of truth which is not determined by my prejudices or confined within the narrow range of my sense perceptions. My desires and

their satisfaction no doubt find a place in the good whole—as my sense perceptions find a place in the true whole—but the reason why they do so is no longer merely that they are mine. They are necessary elements in the whole, good for any one in just that situation and with just these characteristics. The impersonality of goodness comes out in the absoluteness of the rule. The rule is no respecter of persons, and I cannot make an exception in my own favour merely because I am myself. Although the rule has, and must have, its exceptions as the circumstances change, the exceptions are just as impersonal and just as absolute as the rule itself. The rare duty of lying may be as absolute as the common duty of not lying, but neither can depend simply and solely on a merely contingent or purely personal desire.

Even where the rule actually applies, it is abstract, and tends to indicate merely the general character of what in a certain kind of situation we ought to do. The spirit which alone makes the action good slips through its meshes, and it is possible for a man to keep all the commandments and yet to be a villain. Adhering to the rules will never make a man a good man any more than it will make him a good poet. Yet by keeping the rules and so forming habits he may acquire a certain sort of technique, and may come in time to enter into the spirit behind the rules. This is true of art and even of thinking as well as of morality, but attention to rules seems to be more important in morality than in either art or thought. The reason for this is that morality is in a special sense a cooperative activity. The success of an army cannot depend merely on the courage and initiative of individual soldiers. Certain rules or commands are necessary, if we are to know what we may expect of others, and if they are to know what they may expect of us. Here too there are exceptions, and the excellence of a soldier may be shown sometimes in disobeying, although it is generally shown in obeying, a command. Perhaps the rules of morality should be regarded not as the rules of an art, which we may sometimes disregard for purposes of experiment, but rather as the orders of a soldier, which we must transgress at our peril. But analogies of this kind are not arguments, and the difficulties and dangers of war give to rules an importance which they do not have in ordinary

life. Sticking to the rule and refusing to exercise initiative is in many men a weakness and not a virtue. Observance of rule plays a relatively small part in the life of a really good man, and the saints are sometimes inclined to lawlessness. The great advance of Christian as opposed to Jewish ethics is that goodness becomes the manifestation of a spirit of love rather than obedience to an external law. To the eye of love the law appears as altogether paltry and irrelevant. Yet we must remember that the law is often slighted by men, not because they are better than the law, but because they are worse. It is better to be frankly bad, than to justify our weakness by a smug appeal to a superior morality. The necessity of discipline means the necessity of rules—especially when we consider others as well as ourselves. And while our best acts are more than obedience to discipline, there are few men so good that they can safely eliminate discipline altogether.

Rules are necessary to the efficiency of any kind of society and of almost any kind of individual life. We must have some sort of regularity and order, and rules state explicitly what the general outline of this is to be. Even infants are subjected to rules, and from the cradle to the grave rules press upon us in some form or other. They are of many kinds, and range from written laws legally enacted and deliberately enforced to all sorts of customs and conventions of which we are just conscious and no more. They express not only the nature of our will but also the nature of our knowledge, and irrational views of the world are mirrored in irrational rules of action. The irrational and complicated taboos by which the life of a savage is circumscribed spring from his irrational beliefs about a complicated world. The confused nature of his thinking prevents him from being fully aware of the connexion between his thoughts and actions, but there is a certain rationality within the whole which would be within limits intelligible if we could sink to the level of his experience. And here as always there may even be a rationality in his rules and actions, of which he himself is unaware. On the other hand the fact that men cling to rules whose utility is gone is a source of inefficiency and incoherence in human life. Yet even this may mean that

we avoid sudden transitions, and unconsciously modify or re-interpret the rule to meet changing conditions.

In so far as a rule is not merely individual or collective caprice, it derives its rationality from the coherent cooperation of which it is an abstract or general expression. It becomes a moral obligation in so far as its fulfilment is necessary to the coherence of something like an all-inclusive whole. The laws of a country are only a special kind of rule, but they derive their majesty from the fact that they are directly relative to a kind of all-inclusive whole, and are the only organised and explicit general expression of the will of the country as a whole. Hence they have a special claim on our allegiance, and one of the most distinguishing marks of a good man is that he obeys the laws. The use of force is justified only in their defence, and offences against them are regarded as crimes which may be rightly punished by depriving the criminal of his liberty and even in some cases of his life. There may be a gradual transition between force and persuasion, and any society may apply something like punishment to its members and in particular may exclude them from the society; but broadly speaking the right use of force and the recognised authority to punish belong and belong only to a nation which is organised as a state.

We cannot discuss the many qualifications which must be made to this doctrine, but it should be observed that the qualifications, like the doctrine itself, are to be justified by reference to the principle of the coherent will. The very majesty of law itself is relative to the rational coherence of the cooperating whole. Not all crimes are equal, and the law itself makes a distinction between a felony and a misdemeanour. Laws themselves may be unjust and may impose irrationality and incoherence upon the life of the community. None the less they have still a claim to our obedience, unless we are convinced that the incoherence which they impose is greater than the incoherence which springs inevitably from rebellion. To disobey the law merely because we can think of a better law is an offence against society, and if it becomes widespread may lead to anarchy. We must not indeed lose our sense of humour even in the presence of the law, and the

man who transgresses the speed-limit is not the precursor of revolution. In some countries at least the state is so strong that it may not be imperilled by organised disobedience to the law in the interests of some particular cause; and those who object to a particular law may justify passive disobedience and even active law-breaking on that ground. But in doing so they are gambling with enormous stakes. The strength of the state comes from the fact that the people are law-abiding, and disobedience tends to produce a spirit of lawlessness which may spread through a country like a prairie fire.

It is particularly hard to justify lawlessness in a democracy. In other forms of government there may be no alternative between submission and rebellion, but democracy provides channels for the expression of the individual's will and opportunities to persuade others that the law is unjust or inexpedient. Yet at some stages of political development democracies are peculiarly liable to lawlessness, for freedom is to some men a very heady wine. On the side of government democracy is liable to gusts of passion, to lack of consideration for the rights of others, and this is never more so than when democracy is idolised and worshipped for its own sake. To believe that the people can do no wrong is almost invariably the harbinger of wrong-doing. Unless we take trouble to see that our laws are practicable, coherent with one another and with the spirit of the people, we bring all law into contempt. If democracy seeks the interest of the majority rather than the interests of the whole, there may arise extreme cases where it is right to resist it even by force. But except where men are genuinely incapable of self-government this must be regarded as a necessary stage to a saner democracy. Broadly speaking, it is always wrong to resist a democratic government, and if men do so even from the best of motives they must be prepared to take their punishment without whining. Their action is bound to cause suffering to the whole, and they show a lack of good faith if they complain of the suffering which happens to themselves. Their action can be justified only if the wrong assailed is so great that the suffering of themselves and others is in comparison with it a very little thing. And it is often by suffering that victories are won.

None the less our duty is to the concrete whole, and only

through that to the whole as organised under and expressing itself in a government. There are no simple rules by which we can determine our duty at all times. A man has his duty to his family as well as to his government, and when these clash his duty is determined by their relation to one another in a wider whole. Most of us would agree that when Antigone buried her brother's body in defiance of the command of Kreon she was appealing to something wider than the laws of any ruler or of any state. She made her contribution to the good living of her country and perhaps of all countries, and she accepted the penalty of death.

All these abstract conceptions of right and wrong, rights and duties, rules and laws, are derived from the living activity of the coherent will in men and in society, and they are unintelligible except in relation to it. Their appearance of obligatoriness is merely alien and external, if we forget the coherent will which in willing thus and thus is imposing obligations upon itself. It is only in so far as men identify themselves in loyalty and love with a particular society that these dead bones of things seem suddenly to spring to life. It is largely through the imperfections of our willing and the inadequacy of our love that these conceptions are forced upon us, but without the presence of the good will in us they would be altogether meaningless, and indeed the imperfection of our willing which forces them upon us would itself be meaningless. So far as we consider their content in abstraction from what lies behind them, they become merely abstract generalisations about the way in which different people do as a matter of fact behave. And that to us must and often does seem alien and irrelevant, as little entitled to our approval or disapprobation as the difference between perpendicular and horizontal lines. But if any man has ever worked passionately to achieve something along with others, he knows that these conceptions must inevitably arise in any kind of active cooperation, and he understands, at any rate in an image, why men approve some acts as right and condemn others as wrong, why they believe that they and others have rights and duties, and why they subject themselves to rules and laws. He understands also how these abstractions must be filled with a life which is not their own and he apprehends

at once their absoluteness and their relativity, and the concrete principle by which they are sometimes to be set aside.

The same thing is true in regard to the virtues. We classify certain good acts together by reference to the circumstances, and we say that the man who habitually performs good acts of this kind has a special virtue. To act well in danger is to have courage and so on. We may make as many virtues as we please, for circumstances are infinite and may be classified in various ways ; but there are some circumstances in which the good will is especially liable to break down, and men tend on the whole to make similar classifications by reference to these. Courage and justice and temperance, for example, would be likely to appear upon any list, but we have only to glance through Aristotle's account of the virtues to see how relative these divisions often are to the circumstances and practices of a particular society. As our understanding of the moral life becomes more profound, we begin to distinguish finer shades, and to recognise as virtues qualities which had been overlooked or even despised. And in this process we begin to take more account of the spirit of an action and lay less emphasis merely on what is done. The virtues become as it were more internal. We cease perhaps to lay stress on temperance and begin to insist on purity of heart. We assume that a good man will be just and demand that he be also humble. It is interesting to attempt definitions of the various virtues, although they inevitably overlap one another, but any attempt to regard a classification of the virtues as on the same level with those of natural science is apt to produce a pretentious affectation of scientific method, which throws more light upon the mental incapacities of the author than upon the subject with which he deals. Here too the virtues are intelligible in so far as we identify ourselves with the good will which is at work within a particular society. If we fail to do so, the virtues appear as something opposed to the warmth and spontaneity of life, and the virtuous man appears merely as a prig—the very term ' virtuous man ' smacks of priggishness. But almost all men have some admiration for courage—it is bound up with the fighting instinct and is essential to many sorts of cooperation. A virtue like humility,

however, is looked upon doubtfully by many men, because for the most part they do not even understand what it means.

Vices can be classified in similar ways, and seem to be departures from the virtues which are displayed in the same circumstances. Aristotle was however carried away either by a mistaken tradition or by his love of neatness, when he suggested that the vices fell away from the corresponding virtues only in two directions—in the ways of excess and defect. There are, as he knew well, an infinity of ways of going wrong—occasionally he himself suggests something like a constellation of vices for one virtue—and it may easily become artificial to classify the vices in a particular situation merely under two opposing heads. But perhaps it is true that as we become conscious of new virtues we become conscious also of new vices which may be dealt with in the Aristotelian manner. Thus purity makes us conscious not only of impurity but also of prudery, and humility is set not only against arrogance and vanity and conceit but also against the cringing sliminess of Uriah Heep. Yet the vices are really intelligible, not by relation to some abstract virtue, but by relation to the concrete good will which produces them when it falls into incoherence and ceases to be itself.

It is clear that all these abstract conceptions we have considered hover uneasily between earth and heaven; sometimes they seem to be concerned only with the matter or content of moral action, but any vitality they have is due to the form or spirit which can never be completely ignored. Thus virtue is a property not of the man who happens to do good things, but of the man who has a habitual tendency to do them, or more profoundly whose habitual tendency to act in this way is the product of more than mechanical habituation and is the expression of a certain spirit. Even for Aristotle the virtuous man must act 'in a certain spirit' [1] and also 'for the sake of the good'. [2] In Immanuel Kant the spirit has swamped everything else, and the natural desires of men seem to play no part in the good life. The only moral motive becomes respect for law as law. It might seem that this would mean

[1] πῶς ἔχων. *Eth. Nic.* 1105 *a*31.
[2] τοῦ καλοῦ ἕνεκα. *Ibid.*, 1115 *b*13.

the reduction of moral goodness to a purely empty principle of coherence, but because Kant falls into the error of believing that absolute rules can be derived from the mere principle of the universality of law as such, he sometimes seems—although no simple criticism like this can do justice to his many-sided contribution to ethics—to make morality a matter of obedience to rules and to glorify the moral attitude of the soldier rather than of the saint.

What we may call the military attitude to morality is indeed infinitely less subtle and intellectual, not to say intellectualistic, than that of Immanuel Kant. But it has risen above the idea of goodness as merely the satisfaction of contingent desires—whether our own or those of other people—and finds goodness in obedience, and almost in blind obedience, to the rule. There is in it a certain stiffness or formalism, but it is not without a fineness of spirit and an element of understanding. For while the soldier's attitude may be lacking in reason, he knows that discipline and obedience are necessary to the victory of the whole, and he obeys his orders in the face of death. Yet his morality is the morality of the code, and it has the limitations of the code. It may tend to admit mere spontaneity or unbridled passion in matters supposed to lie outside of the code, or on the other hand it may attempt to extend the code to cover the whole of life and so to make life a sort of perpetual warfare. In the latter case it becomes harsh and puritanical, it forgets the spontaneity and charm of life, and it neglects the higher goodness which springs from love.

In its extreme form this attitude degenerates into pharisaism which is the greatest enemy of a living morality. It may be called formalism, but it deals with dead forms and not with the living form or spirit of goodness. It observes the letter and it forgets the spirit of the law. It is the temptation of respectable people and the danger of religion in its hour of triumph. The pharisee is a narrow stickler for the law. He is at watch for the slightest breach of it in others, and is complacent in the consciousness of his own superior integrity. He lays upon us burdens grievous to be borne. He glorifies himself, and hates and denounces the sinner. But a truer insight loves the sinner and denounces

the pharisee. For the pharisee is a whited sepulchre within which there are dead men's bones. The dead men may have been good men once, but their bones are rotten. The sinner is at least alive; he has generous impulses and is conscious sometimes of a good beyond himself. But the pharisee is the grave of a tradition which once was living and now is dead. He has chosen death rather than life, and he hates alike the old life of the sinner and the new life of the saint. He degrades goodness in the eyes of the multitude, and he persecutes it—so far as he may—in the persons of those who seek for new ideals. He is the enemy of all progress and of all life. And he still loves the chief places in the synagogue and delights in the quibbles of the law, while all around him men are perishing for the lack of a goodness which they seek but are unable to find.

This is the fate of those who find goodness in dead forms, which always turn out in the end to be dead matter. But it is a mistake to suppose that we can avoid this only by falling back upon a spirit of goodness whose sole characteristic is that it is completely vague. A general sloppiness of mind produces neither truth nor goodness. All beautiful things are difficult, and the good man and the thinker alike have to work hard at definite problems. The spirit of morality may be taken in abstraction just as much as the matter, and the result is almost equally disastrous. The cultivation of a general good will may give us a glow of personal satisfaction, but otherwise it is of singularly little use in the world. It is apt to produce inefficiency and even chaos. It results in the tolerance not of understanding but of indifference, or else in the vague enthusiasms which serve merely to distract attention from the real work of the world. Clear vision is so much more important than empty good will that we come to regard the good man in this sense as almost a menace to society.

But the good will of which we speak is not a vague abstraction. It is actually at work in our every-day world. To separate the form from the content is to deceive ourselves. Goodness means neither blind obedience to unintelligible laws nor the cultivation of a vague and sickly spirit of love. It means playing our part in the work of the world, and so making the goodness of the whole our own. It means loyalty

and love in all the definite and different relationships of life. It means the attempt to make our own lives coherent parts of a coherent whole.

It is inevitable that we should miss the goodness of the world if we rest in our empty abstractions of form and matter, of spirit and content. Goodness becomes merely the satisfaction of contingent desires, although some people may erroneously identify it with the satisfaction of certain contingent desires to obey traditional rules. If it is not the satisfaction of contingent desires then it is a chimera, because a close investigation of the actions of mankind is incapable of detecting anything beyond the satisfaction of contingent desires. But to speak thus is like regarding music merely as a collection of noises and nothing more. It is quite true that the good man is concerned with the satisfaction of the natural desires of himself and other people. He feeds the hungry and clothes the naked, and one is sometimes tempted to think that when the natural wants of a society are satisfied there is nothing more for goodness to do. When civilisation has achieved its aim of securing food and comfort easily for everyone, there seem to be no further obligations, and a man is free to give himself up to amusement and generally to go to the devil in his own way. There can certainly be no doubt that this is often the result of material success. The finer spirits will seek their amusement in the pursuit of beauty or in the extension of knowledge, but even there it may be thought that we are concerned only with the satisfaction of contingent desires. There is no occupation which is peculiarly moral and no special subject matter for the good will. But the same is equally true of thought and imagination. Anything whatever may be the object of thought or of the artistic imagination, and anything whatever may be the object of the good will. Every activity of the spirit claims for itself the whole of life and the whole of reality. If we seek for value in the abstract object we shall never find it. Science which deals with the abstract object has rightly no use for value. For the value lies not in the object but in the science.

Goodness is not to be found in objects but in the coherence of the will which wills them, which organises life into a coherent whole of actions and, as we have seen throughout,

enables merely contingent desires to become the vehicle of a richer good.

The principle of coherence itself may seem also to be a cold and abstract principle, wholly unable to arouse the emotions and to win the approbation of men. And so it is, when it is taken in abstraction as an isolated object of contemplation. No contemplation of abstract coherence will arouse the desire for goodness any more than it will arouse the desire for beauty or truth. The artist is in love with concrete coherent imaginings, the thinker with concrete coherent thinkings, and the good man with concrete coherent willings. It may seem that all that the good man seeks is merely certain things on which his heart is set, a seat in Parliament, a comfortable income, a wife and family. But if that were so, it would be unintelligible why he should feel obliged to become a soldier, or to sacrifice his position in order to further a cause which he deemed just. To say that he happens suddenly to be seized by some quite different desire is to give up the attempt at explanation altogether. It would be as sensible to say that a man who had happened to like the physics of Newton happened suddenly to like the physics of Einstein. The physicist knows that in giving up much of what he formerly believed to be true and regarding it as false he is seeking the same truth that he was always seeking, and he is seeking it in precisely the same way. He is not interested in abstract principles of coherence but in concrete truths, and yet he will set aside the truths he has formerly accepted, in deference to the very same principles by which they were originally attained. He knows that in so doing he is thinking consistently, even if he has no use for reflexion on the ultimate principles of logic. And the good man knows equally well that he too is acting consistently in sacrificing his former goods when a new duty is laid upon him. What he seeks is embodied or concrete goodness, and not the embodiment when it is no longer good nor the goodness when it is embodied in nothing. And, while he may not understand our philosophical descriptions of what he is doing, he is none the less aiming at coherence of will as the physicist is aiming at coherence of thought. Each is false to the ideal which is

actually at work in his life, if he clings blindly to a past good or a past truth which can no longer find its place in a coherent whole.

We might describe the principle of coherence as a principle of loyalty or even of love. But it is not a blind loyalty or a merely personal love. It is loyalty to a society of persons as animated by the spirit of loyalty or love itself. The good man has loyalty, and in a sense love, for those with whom he collaborates; his will is set on working with them, but it may be that he has to cease from working with them and even to oppose them, if this is necessary for the coherence of the whole. In this he is not disloyal but more loyal, and he claims to be collaborating with their will as it would be if the ideals by which he and they alike live were genuinely to prevail. What he loves as a good man is the good will in them which is also in him, and what he seeks to further is not their accidental likings which he happens also to like, but his and their accidental likings so far as these cease to be merely accidental and become the vehicle of a richer and a more coherent life.

It may seem again that this is merely circular, but it is so only if we look at it as an abstract principle instead of seeing it as it is in the context of our own lives. It is by the same principles that thought and action alike advance. From the very first there is in both a nisus towards wholeness or coherence. There are some who think that thought can escape from itself and have direct contact with the world in observation, and that coherence is not the only aim and criterion of truth. But the principle of coherence is at work in observation also, as it is in what we have described as impulsive or instinctive or relatively immediate action. The existence of such impulses and actions is to the will what sense and observation are to thought. And neither sense nor impulse can be taken as something hard and ultimate which in its bare immediacy can and must be worked into the whole. The one and the other have to find their place in the whole by reference to the principle of coherence which, in the case of desire, we have sought to understand. I have attempted to study this coherence, which is not an abstraction but simply will itself, as it appeared in impulsive actions, in policies of

individual life, and in the organised life of a whole community. In so doing I have consistently rejected the theory that this development and expansion of the will was due to the *a priori* apprehension of an abstract principle in complete isolation from actual willing itself, but I have tried to show that the same principle was at work throughout the whole process and gradually obtained explicit recognition. All the rationality that there is in our judgements of goodness and badness is derived solely from this principle as it is consciously or unconsciously applied. I believe that an internal as opposed to an external view of life and history will confirm this theory, although it must be recognised that full confirmation and full understanding can come only from a study as rich and detailed as life itself. I may have failed in the attempt to trace the general outline of such a study, but such an attempt must be made if we are to attain to moral truth, and it must be accepted or rejected by reference to a view of life as a whole. In so far as we insist upon regarding goodness as an abstract thing in itself we are inevitably reduced, however we may attempt to disguise the fact, to the empty circular statement that goodness is goodness. This seems to me to be not the beginning but the death of moral philosophy. But whatever it may be, it is certainly not my philosophy, and if I have failed I have failed, not in an attempt to define an abstract conception, but in an attempt to describe and to understand the good life as it is actually lived.

CHAPTER XIV

THE MORAL JUDGEMENT

THE judgement of goodness must be as varied as the nature of goodness itself. While objects or things may be judged good in their relations, direct or indirect, with some sort of will, the judgement of goodness is primarily an understanding of the will itself, considered, not as something apart from what it wills, but as a concrete unity of subject and object. And the will itself cannot be understood merely as an object of reflexion, as something external to the person who reflects. I must will and enjoy my willing, if my reflexion is to penetrate into the living heart of willing, and not merely to anatomise a dead body from which the breath of life has been expelled. The full understanding of an act of will which is no longer present demands the re-doing or the re-living of that act either in actual fact or in some sort of imaginative enjoyment. The difficulty of re-living an experience, whether of ourselves or of other people, warns us against the danger of judging hurriedly and superficially our own actions and still more those of others.

The moral judgement is the understanding of the moral will, and we cannot understand a moral will which we do not in some degree possess or enjoy. It is only because all men do in some degree will morally that they make and understand moral judgements. It may be doubted whether any one outside of a madhouse is wholly destitute of what is called a moral sense. Probably all men have some sense of good and evil—although it may be confined within a very small area—just as they have some sense of truth and falsehood, of beauty and ugliness. But there are some men who seem to be almost amoral, just as there are some who seem to be almost without imagination. In their case it may almost be said that they simply do not understand what morality can be—except perhaps a curious prejudice which they do not happen to share. To convince such men by argument is an impossible

task. We can only endeavour either to stimulate or to discover in them something like a moral will in some special situation, and to make of that the basis for a further understanding.

The moral judgement attains its clearest expression and its fullest nature in judging something concrete and individual and actual. This is a good action, this is a good man, this is a good society—it is in judgements such as these that we get a grip upon moral truth. But when such judgements are genuine moral judgements and not recollections of what we or other people once thought, or perhaps only said, we are in imagination willing that action, we are sharing in that good man's life, we are making ourselves active members of that society. Imaginative willing is indeed a poor substitute for actual willing, and judgements of goodness may be sentimental and unreal. Perhaps the full judgement of moral goodness is made only when we are actually cooperating with the man and the society which we judge, and are thus making the goodness of that action, that man, and that society, also our own. But none the less we cannot enter into the lives of others without some sort of imaginative willing, and the good man in his actual willing feels himself to be cooperating, not merely with men of his own time and his own society, but with the good men of all times and of all societies. He is, as it were, a member of the Church Militant, a Church whose membership is not determined by theological creeds and from which no goodness of any kind can be excluded. With all the members of that Church living and dead he is actually cooperating here and now. It is this alone which makes his judgements genuine and real.

The moral judgement is in some ways like the æsthetic judgement. We cannot judge that any work of art is beautiful unless we are entering into the experience of the artist here and now. We can indeed remember our past enjoyment and our past judgement, and in repeating the past judgement believe that what we are saying is the truth. But what we say is lacking in conviction, and is at the best an imperfect apprehension of the beauty of which we speak. The same applies also to judgements of truth, although this is less commonly recognised. We may believe that the theories of

Darwin and Einstein are true, but our grip upon that truth depends upon our having re-thought their theories and being genuinely capable of doing so again. In the same way we may remember and believe in our past judgements of goodness, but if we are to have a full and living judgement of the goodness of any action, we must re-enact it in imagination—and we must also be conscious of its coherence with our actual will.

Hence it is true in a sense that if we know the good we cannot will the evil. But this means that to know the good, the good will must be actually present. Unfortunately our good will may sink again into incoherence, and while the memory of our past judgement may still influence us, it has no longer a compelling power. Yet the past is not dead, and it is only because it is still in some way alive that our present action may be evil and not good. But neither our past good will nor the full apprehension of goodness can be present as they were before, because, if they were, evil would be for us impossible.

The full and clear judgement of goodness is unique and direct. It cannot be deduced from anything or demonstrated by anybody. It demands a direct vision of a unique and individual reality. In this respect also it is like the æsthetic judgement and may be considered, not without some show of reason, to be intuitive. Even the æsthetic judgement is not just intuitive, it is the outcome of a wider experience, it is furthered and assisted by knowledge of technique and of many things which have nothing to do directly with art. This is true of the moral judgement also, but the moral judgement is less intuitive than the æsthetic judgement and in some ways comes closer to the judgement of truth. The work of art is ostensibly just individual, it is a world in itself aiming at internal coherence without any seeming regard for the coherence of a wider world. This is not wholly true even of the work of art, but it is not true at all of moral action. Every moral action is willed as a coherent part of a coherent whole, and the moral judgement cannot be satisfied to judge it as if it were a complete world in itself. Moral judgements claim to be true as parts of a system of moral judgements. Every judgement does indeed *quâ* judgement, claim coherence with a wider system, and

even æsthetic judgements cannot exempt themselves from this claim. But the claim for a wider coherence intrudes itself more conspicuously in our moral judgements because of the character of what is judged. In this respect our moral judgements resemble more closely our judgements as to the truth of thinking, whether that thinking be science or history or philosophy.

If we can be satisfied of the goodness of a man's intentions, if we are confident that he acted well according to his lights, we can indeed say that the action was good without further ado. Even for such a judgement we must know something of the judgements and actions both of himself and of his society, unless we feel that we can fall back upon a general rule, or be sure that the situation was a broad human situation in which the special circumstances of the individual and his society were unimportant. But the judgement of goodness may aim at something more profound than this, and seek to determine, not whether the action was good according to the lights of the agent, but whether it remains good in all the light we have. We may seek to do so in regard to our own past actions in order that we may act better in the future. The full judgement of goodness is concerned not merely with the excellence of the intention but also with the rightness of the act. It seeks to judge the action in its full reality, which includes the whole circumstances in which it took place. If St. Paul before his conversion ever asked himself whether his action was good in persecuting the Christians, he was asking not merely whether his motives were sincere, whether he was willing his actions as a contribution to the whole good living of his time; he was asking whether they really made that contribution which they were intended to make. The coherence which makes an action genuinely good is not merely an intended coherence but an actual coherence, so far as that actual coherence is under our own control.

Hence the full judgement of goodness includes within itself a judgement of rightness, unless we are to be satisfied with making goodness merely subjective. In a sense it is always right to do what we think right, but there may be an error in our thinking. A man has a kind of goodness if he does what he does because he thinks it right, but this does

not mean that his goodness is exempt from criticism either by others or by himself. He himself is seeking to realise an objective goodness in his actions, and there would be no point in his doing so unless there could be an objective goodness to realise. He knows that his aim is to make his willing coherent with a wider whole of coherent willing, and that although there is a kind of goodness merely in acting with this general aim, objective goodness can be realised only if that aim is genuinely fulfilled in what he concretely intends and does. He seeks to attain to a true judgement not merely as to his aim but as to its fulfilment. He cannot indeed escape from his own thinking and his own responsibility in this or in any kind of judgement, but it is this very fact which spurs him on to further efforts of thinking, if he is either to attain truth or to be a good man.

The judgement of rightness can have no meaning to a man, apart from his own good will and the consciousness that his good will is one with that of others in a society of good men. But he may assume the presence of this good will in himself and in his society, both as a general spirit and as having actually established some sort of good life. He may then in relative abstraction consider the question of rightness in regard either to a past or to a future action. He assumes that what was done (or will be done) was (or will be) well-meant, and he asks how far it was (or will be) right. The judgement of a future action is in a sense more abstract than that of a past action, because we cannot really know an action in its fullness until it is actually performed, but there is some degree of abstraction in both cases. Our judgement of a past action is also more confident, because we can know the actual working out of its effects. What is however abundantly clear in both cases is that the judgement of rightness may demand an immense knowledge not only of our self and our society but also of our world. We seek to determine whether an action is coherent as a matter of fact with the actions of a coherent society in which the good will is expressed. Accepting a society as good we may treat it as a machine, and ask what does or does not fit the machine, taken as generally good in doing what it does. And to treat society as a machine the parts of which are external to one another is already to

consider it in abstraction, not so much under the category of rightness (and still less of goodness), as under the category of cause and effect. I ask for example whether my present action is likely to produce a breach of the peace, and that is merely a question of fact which I must judge before I can determine the rightness or wrongness of my action. Further than that, the parts of the machine are men acting in a physical world, and to judge of rightness we must know the effects of our and their actions in that world. We cannot discuss the rightness of compulsory vaccination until we know whether or not vaccination produces immunity from smallpox. Hence even if we assume, as we do, that smallpox is detrimental to the coherent working of society, and if we convince ourselves that compulsory vaccination would, under certain conditions, be supported by the good will actually present in our society, we have still to determine what is merely a matter of cause and effect in the physical world, before we can come to any conclusion about rightness in this particular matter, and before we can say that a man who advocated or enforced compulsory vaccination with the best of intentions was doing an objectively good action.

Hence in some cases, if we are asked why an action is right, we may give an answer which is merely a statement of fact—such for example as a statement of cause and effect. The action was right because vaccination does give immunity from smallpox. But when we speak thus we assume a great deal which is unexpressed, and we assume still more when we assert that an action was good for similar reasons. If we did not do so, our answer would be ludicrously irrelevant.

In this way the concrete judgement of moral goodness is bound up with all sorts of judgements of a more abstract character. Not only is society regarded as something like a machine, but it is regarded as itself making use of the machinery of the physical world. The judgements involved are, at least in regard to the physical world, not moral judgements at all, and are relevant to morality only because we are considering them with reference to a special purpose. But if we begin by making certain moral assumptions, judgements of cause and effect may be the only judgements necessary to the determination of the concrete moral judgement

which we seek. Hence to some it may seem that all moral thinking so-called is nothing other than the determination fo the actual nature of the world and especially its relations of cause and effect. Apart from this there is no moral judgement, and the moral will is arbitrary except in one respect, that it acts in the light of the fullest knowledge. I submit however that our whole account of the will in its different stages has already sufficiently demonstrated that such a theory is an illusion; that the will has its own coherence as much as thought; that this coherence does not depend on coherence of thought more than coherence of thought depends on it; and that the judgement of the coherence or goodness of willing is not merely a judgement with regard to the knowledge of fact by whose light an action was done. We cannot make a judgement of goodness merely by a study of the actual working of the laws of cause and effect in the physical world, nor can we make it merely by a study of the knowledge actually present to the mind of the agent.

It is inevitable that the good will should seek for knowledge of the world, and that the judgement of moral goodness should be possible only in the light of such knowledge. A good action is still action, and therefore all that we have said of action remains true when the action is good. We cannot act without knowledge of the world, and the wider knowledge of fact which is necessary for a policy of life is still more necessary for a policy of social life. Even for a policy of life we require an understanding of our own willing as well as understanding of the world, and for a moral policy we require understanding of the wills of others as well as of our own. But the understanding of our own will and that of others must be an understanding of wills as they really are, that is as coherent or incoherent, as good or bad. The judgement of goodness cannot treat the wills of men merely as facts, and every judgement of goodness is part of a system of similar judgements. But a knowledge of fact is also necessarily involved, although even here what is wanted above all is a knowledge of the relevant facts and a knowledge of what facts are relevant. This demands scientific knowledge, but it demands more than scientific knowledge. The practical man has a special practical way of knowing the world, and

this is true of the practically good man. He must be able to make quick decisions in the light of his knowledge, and he must have that fineness of touch, that quick grasp of what is possible and what is impossible, which is the characteristic of men of action.

It is folly to overlook the importance of scientific knowledge for some kinds of good action. The man who can help us in economic difficulties is the economist rather than the man who means well. One objection to the church taking part in politics is that expert knowledge is necessary in order to determine what is the right thing to do in difficult and complicated circumstances. Good will cannot be a substitute for expert knowledge, although good actions on the basis of expert knowledge can be performed only by men of good will. Good men who, confident in the consciousness of their own good will, seek to impose their ignorant and superficial judgements upon others, sometimes induce the real expert to wish he could get rid of them altogether. Good will must be shown, not, as it sometimes is, in arrogant disregard for other men and even for facts, but in the demand for sincere and hard thinking, and in a willingness to act without prejudice or passion in the light of the best thinking we can find. This is obvious when we are making slight adjustments within the framework of a given society. When our aim is to produce a new framework, as in the case of socialism, it is often an advantage to have enthusiasts for an idea even if it is ill thought out. But as soon as we pass from the realm of theory to that of practice, we require again to depend on exact knowledge and careful thinking, and to further the ideal not merely with a generous enthusiasm but with all the practical virtues of common sense and ordinary tact.

We must not however exaggerate the necessity of knowledge, or suggest that we have to know all the possible consequences of all possible actions to all eternity before we can say that any action is right or good. Moral action like any action is here and now, and we must act in the light of such knowledge as we have. Sometimes no doubt the right action is simply to seek more knowledge and otherwise to go on as we have always done; but all our actions must be based on inadequate knowledge, and we must decide by practical

insight not merely what knowledge is relevant to our purposes, but also when we must act on such knowledge as we possess if we are to secure practical coherence in our lives. A sharp separation between willing and knowing is untenable, but if we make it, we may say that the will decides these matters for itself, it sees its opportunity and takes it in the light of the knowledge it has. It does not wait for elaborate processes of ratiocination to work out conclusions which cannot be reached by such methods, or can be reached if at all only too late. Nowhere is incapacity for action shown more clearly than in the man who goes on fumbling with theoretical problems when the moment for action is here and now. And what is true of all actions is true of good actions.

When we seek to judge the objective and not merely the subjective goodness of an action, we judge it in the light of the knowledge which the man possesses or could reasonably be expected to acquire in the time at his disposal. It becomes a bad action to neglect vaccination, only when there is evidence available that vaccination produces the desired effect. If I refuse to study the evidence or to accept the testimony of experts, then my neglect of vaccination is culpable. But to say that my action was bad, because I saved the life of a child who ultimately inflicted great evils on society, would merely indicate a complete misunderstanding of what moral goodness is.

When we say that a man's action was bad and not good, although it was well and sincerely meant, we make such a judgement by reference to the knowledge which he could and ought to have had. St. Paul ought to have enquired into the nature of the religion he was persecuting, and all persecutors who persecute in the name of faith ought to know enough about faith to realise that it cannot be secured by persecution. We cannot indeed condemn the persecutor as we can condemn the man who seeks cruelty for its own sake, and we must always take into account the standards and beliefs of his time; but so far as we do condemn him, we assert that the good will which was undoubtedly working in him was not working with complete coherence but was mingled with prejudice and passion. A man may pass a judgement of this kind upon himself, and this is a different judgement from

the judgement that his action would now be thought wrong in the light of a further knowledge which was not available at the time.

We can never be completely certain that we have all the relevant knowledge or that our own motives are completely pure. But this is no reason for not acting vigorously in the light of the knowledge that we have. We can be relatively sure, it may be by self-examination, that on the whole we are seeking to manifest good will, and we have the faith that an action inspired by genuine good will, and not by a false good will which makes itself an excuse for superficiality in thinking and incompetence in action, will contribute at least more good than harm to our society. This is not an unreasonable faith when we know that there is good will not merely in us but in society, that others will penetrate to the good will in our action, and will do their best to correct any unfortunate results. They may differ from us, but they will oppose us without bitterness, if our action itself is without bitterness. Even if the results are such as no good man would have willed, we take these as an event of nature or of fate, to be overcome if possible, and failing that to be endured without complaining. And we still treasure the good will which produced the results, and recognise that its presence in society is a good beside which the goods and ills of mere nature are relatively slight.

It is not necessary for the good man to be a genius or an intellectual giant. Special gifts are indeed necessary for the pioneers of goodness as for the pioneers of anything else. It is only great men who are able to raise the moral level of their kind. But for most men the problems of life are relatively simple, and the way of goodness lies in doing the job which they have found, and in being kind to their wives and children, their friends and neighbours. This requires some thought, but not thought which is beyond the average reach. A man must find a job for which he is competent, and he must make himself as competent as he can. It requires no great ability to do simple kindnesses, and although some men are born tactless, good will will produce a certain amount of insight, and even ingrained tactlessness may sometimes be pardoned for the sake of the good will which lies

behind it. It is only the leaders of men who require something more, and here too we have a special competence which finds a way to its special task.

We have now considered the moral judgement so far as it is concerned with actual or possible individual actions. The judgement of actual actions is more concrete than that of merely possible actions, for we cannot apprehend the full nature of an action unless it is actually willed. And after the fullest thought and the most careful judgements, we may find ourselves acting quite differently when we face the actual situation in its concreteness, and sometimes at least we may know that it is the action actually done which is good and that our previous judgement was an error. But even in such a case our previous thinking was not wasted, and in our actual action we will with a clearer consciousness of what it is that we are doing.

We need say no more about general moral judgements, about the apprehension of the general rules of conduct. These are all based upon insight into actual situations, and they apply only in certain kinds of situation and not in others. We may guide ourselves by rules, perhaps sometimes we must guide ourselves by rules, but this does not absolve us from the necessity of mastering each situation as it uniquely is and of meeting it with a unique response. And it does not absolve us from the duty of going against the rule in circumstances where we judge the rule to be inapplicable. But the rule is, at least in some cases, a little more than a mere generalisation based on the similarity of individual moral judgements. It is really bringing out a principle which was at work in these individual judgements. When our will is genuinely set on willing coherently with a coherent society, it is clear that murder is wrong, for it is a manifest and profound disturbance of the coherent working of society and is based upon the satisfaction of some purely personal passion. But to kill in self-defence is a very different matter. In such a case the person killed has given up all claim as a cooperator with his intended victim, and his death is the death of a man who is making war on society, while the death of the victim is the death of an organ of society's life. Society must indeed normally be left to restrain and punish, in accordance with the

law, those who make war upon it in the person of its members, but self-defence is a special case where the machinery of the law cannot work until it is too late, and the intended victim has in the circumstances to make himself the agent of his society, and to preserve his own life even at the expense of his assailant's death.

The moral judgement which is concerned with the universal nature of goodness is simply moral philosophy or ethics, and as such it is just philosophy working out a special problem and seeking—on our view—to understand the nature of the will as the concrete embodiment of goodness and the ultimate source of obligation.

Such then I take to be the nature of the moral judgement. Our next task must be to consider its value.

Here as in every other case the nature of a spiritual activity and its value are the same. Its nature is to be itself, and that is to be coherent with itself. The coherence of the activity is at once its nature and its value and the source of all the value which is supposed to belong to its objects. But the coherence of any activity is its coherence in and with a whole spiritual life, and its value does not belong to it merely as a thing in isolation. It has its value in the whole life of the spirit, and its value is more than the value that can be attributed to it in itself.

Hence the first and primary value of the moral judgement is that it is the attainment of truth. It is by it alone that we understand the life of man as willing. Without it we are not considering real life but merely empty abstractions.

The moral judgement has however further values. It may be, and in fact it is, a duty to think about morality. Any thinking may be a morally good action, but moral thinking is so in a special sense, because it is actually necessary to morality itself. It is so, not merely in the sense that in order to act morally we must understand our moral world of men and societies, but in the sense that morality itself is self-conscious, and that in order to act morally we must know that we are doing so.

Here again we have one of those circles so alien to abstract logic and yet so familiar in actual life. We have seen this

already on the level of the isolated individual. The clash of impulses produced some sort of external coherence, and the apprehension of this led to an internal coherence in subsequent actions. But the same principle was at work throughout, and the gradual apprehension of it led to its further development in action. Willing is a conscious activity, but in order to be fully itself it must understand itself reflectively, or rather the self which is manifested in willing must understand its willing reflectively. The self which wills the coherence of its own actions must know what it is doing, and only by knowing what it is doing can it be truly said to do what it knows. If this is a paradox, it is just the ordinary paradox of life. We may put it more simply by saying that the growth of the will and the understanding of the will develop together, and each is the necessary condition of the other.

It is the same with moral action. It is not enough that men's actions should as a matter of fact fit in together. They must definitely be willed to do so. And if they are genuinely willed to do so, we must know that they are genuinely willed to do so. Indeed, for complete and full understanding of morality, we must know that our actions are willed as a coherent part of a whole of coherent willing to which all beings contribute in so far as they act reasonably, that is in so far as they also will their actions as coherent parts of such a coherent whole. And to know this about an action is to know that it is good.

It is of course obvious that we do not require to bring up the whole paraphernalia of moral philosophy in order either to perform or to judge a moral act. As we have said, the good will may flower into spontaneous play as easily as into deliberate sacrifice. Spiritual life does not consist in the futile attempt to live the whole of our life at every moment, but in living every moment in the spirit of the whole. A good man is not congratulating himself on his goodness when he is playing with his children, but he is perfectly well aware that what he does is good and not evil. It is however only too obvious that our description of the moral judgement is one which the plain man would not find altogether easy to understand. He might reasonably say that if

no action is good unless it is willed with a conscious understanding, and if to understand it is to think of it in the way we have attempted to describe, then there are very few people who are capable of performing a good action. We can reply that, while we believe our description of the moral judgement to be a true description, we are not suggesting that those who make true moral judgements have, and still less that they must have, full philosophical insight into the nature of what a moral judgement is. The judgement is made long before it is understood. None the less the criticism raises difficult questions in regard to the stage at which we can say that a judgement is genuinely a moral judgement, and that the action which it approves as good is genuinely a moral action.

In a sense morality is present all along. It is the distinguishing characteristic of all human action and indeed of all action which is genuine action. It, or at least its germ, appears as soon as we have a human self which ceases to live in the moment and endeavours consciously to establish coherence enduring through time. As soon as this happens (if we ignore the fact that it probably happens only in a self which is in some degree social) we are already faced with the contrasts of good and evil, of obligation and desire, of reason and passion. We have traced what we have called these shadows of goodness and its accompaniments at different stages and on different levels of human action. But what we have at first seems to be only an anticipation of moral action, just as art seems to be an anticipation of thought. The artist is cognitive and aims at that coherence which is beauty, but he appears to confine it within the individual work of art and not to demand, as does the thinker, that his activity should not only be coherent with itself but should be coherent with all similar activity wheresoever it may be manifested. Similarly the morally good man aims, not merely at making his life coherent with itself, but at making it coherent with all good willing wheresoever it may be manifested. The thinker is of course not considering whether his views on thermo-dynamics cohere with the truth about the conquests of Alexander, but none the less he believes (and acts upon the belief) that there can be no genuine contradiction between his present thinking,

so far as it is true, and any true thinking whatsoever. And the good man is not considering whether in giving a cup of cold water his action coheres with the life of Aristides. He may indeed consider whether he is acting in the spirit of Christ, just as the modern philosopher may ask himself how far his philosophy is coherent with that of Plato or of Kant; but the essential point is that he believes his act, so far as it is good, to be such that it can be willed consistently with the willing of all good men everywhere and so can lay claim to their approval as a good act. If there is inconsistency between two thinkers there is somewhere a failure in truth; and if there is inconsistency between two good men there is somewhere a failure in goodness. This does not mean that every thinker must deal with the same problems, and it does not mean that every good man must perform the same acts. It does mean that the thinker is endeavouring to contribute his part to a coherent whole of thinking, and the good man is endeavouring to contribute his part to a coherent whole of willing. Each is aiming at something that is more than personal and more than individual. The one is seeking to attain a universal truth and the other to realise a universal goodness. What is true or good must be true or good for all, so far as they think or act well. But it is true as part of a concrete whole of thinking, and good as part of a concrete whole of willing. Or, in more technical language, every true thought and every good act is not merely an embodiment of an abstract universal which is supposed to be the common element present in its different instances. It is an embodiment of the concrete universal which is also individual, of the whole which lives in its parts. And this too is precisely what we have found from the beginning, whether we considered a policy with reference to the actions in which it was manifested, or the self which lives in all its policies and in all its acts.

Such is the claim of every thought which is judged to be true, and it is the claim of every action which is judged to be good. But we judge thoughts to be true long before we reflect upon what we mean by true, and we judge acts to be good long before we reflect on what we mean by goodness. There must be some claim to truth, some sort of judgement

that we are thinking truly, before we can say there is true thinking; and there must be some claim to morality, some sort of judgement that we are acting morally, before we can say that there is moral willing. But even setting aside the difficulty of how far such judgements are immanent in all thinking and acting and how far they must be reflective, it is hard to say what is the earliest judgement of truth and what is its nature, and it is perhaps even harder to say what is the earliest judgement of moral goodness and what is its nature. At what level can the simple judgement 'This is good' be reasonably said to have passed beyond reference to a merely subjective standard, and to have laid hold on the principle which we believe to be implied, however vaguely, by any genuine moral judgement whatsoever?

Perhaps we may assert that in the judgement of moral goodness, as in that of truth, there must be some consciousness however dim of a whole going beyond the individual's own life. To be true is to be true, not only for me, but for others, and to be good is to be good, not only for me, but for others. The child appeals to the observations of its playmates in support of its statements of fact, and it appeals also to their fairness in justification of its actions.

We may, however, ask others to share in our fancies, and we may ask others to share in our likes and dislikes. The merely individual, the merely subjective, is to be found neither in art nor in what we call economic action, and it may well be that there is no philosophic distinction between these and the levels of true thinking and moral action. But if we may be satisfied with empirical distinctions which are to some extent arbitrary, it would seem that a man is morally good, in so far as he wills to live his life in the service of the most all-inclusive whole of which he feels himself to be a member, and in so far as he judges his actions to be good or evil by reference to that standard and not by reference to his merely individual life. This as we have said does not mean that I am at your service, you being just another individual like myself, but that I live my life and you live your life in the service of *us*, in the service of a whole of which we are both parts.

This implies that morality is more than a mere collective

caprice in which I happen to share. It is aiming, not only at the coherence of my whole life, but at the coherence of my society and of all its members, including myself. This, as we have seen, elevates it above the momentary passion even of all the members of my society, as abstract individual goodness is elevated above the momentary passions of an abstract or isolated self. The whole of which my will seeks to be a part is more than the sum of its parts; and the good which is the coherence of the whole, while it must have been actually willed to have definite content, yet stands over against all our momentary willings, as a definite, objective, and, it may almost be said, eternal standard by which they must be judged.

It is not hard to recognise the good man in the man who serves his society, and judges such service to be good absolutely and not merely good for him, although he is quite unable to give any satisfactory account of goodness. He does recognise both in action and in theory that such service is a matter of something more than personal caprice. He calls it good, but it is for him more than what he happens to want, and it is incumbent upon others as well as on himself. The man who has attained to this is surely already on the level of morality, and his actions are to himself and others either morally good or morally evil. The fact that he would offer a completely childish and even contradictory explanation of his own judgements does not greatly matter. A man may be a good man, although he is an incredibly bad philosopher.

The society however must be the most all-inclusive society of which he feels himself to be a member. If he prefers his family or his party to the whole, his action is a bad action, just as it is when he sets his individual interest against the whole of which he is a part. This also is recognised by the good man, and when he justifies his bad actions—as he sometimes does—he tries to deceive himself by arguing that he is really seeking the interest of the whole, something which all the members of the whole ought to want, and not merely something which happens to be wanted by himself or by his friends.

We have spoken of this all-inclusive society as one of which he feels himself to be a member. We must say this

because it is hard to refuse the name of goodness to a man who serves his country and is conscious of no obligation beyond it. Morality does not suddenly appear full-grown and self-conscious in the world. Like a human body it both expands in area and articulates itself gradually into its coherent parts. Morality is at first concerned only with the tribe, as religion is at first directed to a God who is merely a tribal God. We can hardly avoid regarding such tribal religion as a low but genuine religion, and we can hardly avoid regarding tribal morality as a low but genuine morality.

None the less there is a real incoherence in such religion and in such morality. Religion cannot continue to worship a God who capriciously supports a particular tribe, and the good man who is seeking a coherence of willing beyond himself must seek it also beyond his brothers, he must love and honour and cherish it wherever it may be found. The morality which begins by loving our neighbour comes to regard all men as neighbours, so far as they also are seeking the same good, and perhaps so far as they are even capable of seeking the same good. To do otherwise is to restrict the moral will by a mere caprice, and the whole development of morality from the very beginning is to rise above mere caprice and to establish a will which is good as a perfectly coherent whole.

Perhaps we should seek morality at an even lower level, where moral action and above all the moral judgement fails to rationalise itself even to the extent we have described. Morality may be said to appear on the level of taboo, a wholly mysterious prohibition which it is horrible to break. This level certainly persists into our higher morality, and it involves at least something which is taken to be more than individual or collective caprice. The horror of breaking the taboo may lie partly in the evil character of such an action, and partly perhaps in the dreadful punishment which is likely to follow. This confusion also persists on a higher level. Yet when we consider morality, or indeed anything else, on this humble level, we are coming into an obscure region where all our distinctions are confounded with one another, and we may regard taboo as the beginning of morality, the beginning of religion, or even the beginning of science. It certainly is

a beginning, but perhaps it is better to leave it an open question what it is the beginning of—unless our main object is to establish a shady ancestry for one of our pet aversions. Such as it is, it has no doubt its own rationality, a shadowy rationality in a world of shadows. And some at least of the higher taboos have a social utility even to our modern eyes, which look upon a rational world and not upon a world of unknown forces and nameless fears. Where there is any consciousness of this, we may hesitate to deny the presence of some kind of primitive moral judgement, but on the whole it is better to seek morality in something which approximates to the light of day.

The good man of to-day, however uninstructed in philosophy, has not only attained to a relatively high level of morality, but has also profited by the efforts of past thinkers, and he would perhaps express the moral judgement in the simple terms of the Golden Rule 'Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you'. At this level we have clearly a genuine moral judgement, and indeed we may even say that this expresses in the form of an apothegm the very doctrine we are attempting so laboriously to describe. But like any apothegm it has meaning only in its context, it might easily be perverted by fools and knaves, and it demands a more philosophical expansion or explanation. At its face value it is wholly individualistic, and taken literally would be a justification of gambling with the gambler, and of drinking with the drunkard. But the good man interprets it in a wider spirit which he would no doubt find it difficult to put into words. It is this which we seek to express, when we say that he is appealing from the merely personal will in himself or others to a coherent social will which may be, but is not always, manifested alike in others and in himself. It is that wider will which he seeks to manifest in his own life. We might express his meaning in terms which he would perhaps better understand, if we said that he was appealing to a divine will which men might make their own. And for him it would be clear enough that a good action was more than acting in accordance with even a divine command. He recognises that it must be willed in a spirit of love to God and to men who are made in His image, and that the man

who possesses that spirit must be aware of his possession. When we say this we are perhaps describing a religious rather than a merely moral attitude, but the moral attitude also interprets the rule in a genuinely moral way. The moral theory which we propound does little more than attempt to make that interpretation explicit in more philosophical terms.

The moral judgement seems then to arise and to develop along with the moral will. But philosophical insight into the nature of the moral judgement lags far behind. Here as always there are principles at work in our life and thinking which we can bring only gradually into full self-consciousness. And philosophical insight into the nature of the moral judgement is at the same time insight into the nature of the moral will, for to understand the moral judgement is to understand what it judges the will to be when it judges it to be good. Moral philosophy is just the moral judgement becoming more coherent and more self-conscious, and like any other moral judgement it remains relatively abstract and meaningless, unless it is at once the fulfilment and the interpreter, the creation and the creator, of a moral will. There is a genuine continuity between the ordinary moral judgement and the more elaborate judgement of a self-conscious and critical philosophy.

The moral judgement has then value as truth, it has value as an understanding of the world in which we all, good and bad alike, must act, it has value as itself a voluntary and a moral activity, and it has value as being essential to the very existence of the moral will itself.

We need add little on the special value which belongs to moral judgements in the abstract form of general rules. They have the value of abstract truth in general, and are a necessary help in moral training and even in moral living. But we cannot judge an action to be good merely because it is in accordance with the rule, and we cannot really act well simply by adopting rules as our guide. The rules are in some ways like the rules of grammar and of verse composition, and the insufficiency of rules may be seen even in an activity which is relatively imitative and artificial. Anyone who writes Latin Alcaics must use Latin words, Latin constructions, and Latin terminations, and his verses must adhere to certain

rules of quantity. If the verse fails in any of these respects, it is so far bad verse. The critic can condemn it because of a failure to keep the rules, and the writer can know beforehand what rules he ought to keep. If we see the first three lines of a stanza, we can say what the abstract form of the fourth line has got to be. But we cannot judge the value of the verse as poetry merely by rules, and to write verse well demands something more than the most competent and consistent avoidance of bad grammar and false quantities. We must have creative imagination and critical insight, which are concerned with the concrete reality and not with the abstract rule; and the true poet writing in his own language may devise new metrical forms and even new grammatical constructions, which cannot be criticised by rules, but in time are made the basis of new rules. In moral action also we require creative will and critical insight as well as abstract rules, and while we may be good men without genius, we must none the less cultivate something more than the mechanical fulfilment of our duties. And those who are morally great must have great creative powers. This remains true even when we recognise that since morality is a social achievement, we cannot invent an entirely new kind of morality without some reference to the lives of other men and to the rules in accordance with which they live.

Rules then, however useful they may be, cannot offer us a criterion of morality. And we must now ask whether there is an external criterion of morality, and whether that can be apprehended and described by moral philosophy.

If the criterion of morality is not to be found in rules which are general and abstract, it must be something which is universal, which is always and everywhere a mark of moral action. If there were such a universal mark which was merely external, it is clear that we should have to know what good actions were, independently of the mark. The mark would have no essential place in our moral judgements, and its connexion with moral actions would apparently be some sort of accident. We should apprehend the goodness of moral actions and their accompanying mark in entire independence of one another, and the assertion that they were

inseparable would be an empirical generalisation based on observed facts and in no sense the apprehension of a necessary and intelligible connexion. The existence of such a mark is perhaps theoretically not impossible, but its utility would be slight. We should be perfectly able to get on without it. It would be at the best a labour-saving device to escape the necessity of thought. And if what we have said of morality has any truth, if moral action must be something which understands itself, the absence of thought would be fatal to morality itself, and the so-called criterion would be worse than useless. It would tend to be a temptation rather than a help.

In any case it is clear enough that no such criterion exists. Good things have no common characteristic beyond their goodness, and good actions have no common characteristic beyond that of being good actions. This is for us not merely a generalisation based on taking our judgements of goodness as intuitive, and scrutinising empirically the objects or actions which we judge to be good. It arises, or seems to arise for us, from our understanding of goodness itself. For we have seen that goodness belongs to things only as objects or instruments of a good will, and the good will is capable of making anything an instrument which it may use. All things may be the object of the good will as they may be the object of the thinking mind. And the goodness of the moral will lies not in its abstract objects but in itself, and a mark which is other than the will itself is presumably some sort of object to be apprehended among other objects. To look for a criterion is to look away from the will to its objects taken in abstraction, and it is a search which on our view of goodness is foredoomed to failure.

The demand for a criterion of goodness is unintelligent, and is the expression of some sort of misunderstanding of what morality is. Can anyone seriously imagine that it is possible to state some simple principle, some mark obvious to the untrained mind, by which a man could decide without further ado whether the theories of Einstein are true or false? The only conceivable judge is the man who is able to re-think Einstein's thoughts in the light of an acquaintance with other scientific, and perhaps also philosophical, theories, and to

apprehend the coherence or incoherence of such thinking. There neither is nor can be any other way, and the more a theory is a rich and coherent whole the more obvious does this become. The so-called correspondence with facts is merely a special case of coherence, and a fact cannot be the criterion of truth, because we have to decide by thinking what the facts are. The zoologist wisely declines to admit into his classifications the breed of pink rats which is said to have been not infrequently observed by those who suffer from *delirium tremens*. Again how can anyone who has any taste in poetry entertain for a moment the idea that some mark might be described by which those destitute of poetic taste could infallibly distinguish between a good poem and a bad? A poem is not a good poem because it is written about shepherdesses or in heroic couplets or even in *vers libres*. A mark must be at the best a part of a living whole torn from its context and considered in isolation, but the value of any spiritual creation lies in the creation itself as a coherent and living whole. We must enter, so far as we may, into the mind of the artist, the thinker, and the moral agent; we must make his imaginings, his thinkings, and his actions in some degree our own; and we must be able to make conscious to ourselves to a greater or less degree what it is that we are doing. In other words we must be possessed at once of some creative power and of some critical understanding. Any attempt to employ some mechanical substitute for the judgement of value is like trying to catch birds by putting salt on their tails.

None the less this does not mean that our judgement is reduced to mere intuition, to isolated and unrelated apprehensions of indefinable flavours. It is not so with truth, and it is not so with morality. For truth must be coherent with itself, and goodness also must be coherent with itself. We judge the truth of a theory by asking whether it can be coherently thought, and we judge the goodness of an action by asking whether it can be coherently willed. We must just touch upon some of the consequences of, and objections to, such a view in the light of ordinary moral judgements.

It may be thought that there can be many different kinds of coherent willing. If that be so, there can also be many

different kinds of goodness. Any society in which each member sought to realise in his own life the coherent will of the whole would be a society of morally good beings, even if their actions were such as have never been performed by mortal men. But what concerns us is human goodness, and while it is true that the principle of coherence as an abstract principle will tell us nothing of what we ought to do, it is precisely by it that we can distinguish goodness and badness in our actual life. We are in the world as men with definite needs and desires, and no society can be a good society which does not aim at providing food and drink and shelter and order and safety for its members. As soon as we have this, we must have a coherent whole of men performing their own tasks in accordance with their own natures, and all our fundamental conceptions of good and evil, right and wrong, rights and duties, virtue and vice, are bound to appear as men seek to make themselves organs of the cooperative life in which they share, instead of following their impulses or satisfying their merely individual desires. No doubt men may eat fish in one place and meat in another, but a fishmonger may do his duty just as much as a butcher. We can decide only by reference to special circumstances and particular desires whether a man should or should not be a butcher, but in any society of men it must be somebody's duty to provide food, and the man who serves the whole in this way is so far a good man. The services of the artist, the scientist, and the philosopher, may not be possible at some stages of civilisation—although this may be doubted if we take a wide enough view of these activities—but whether the pursuit of such things is morally good or bad depends upon whether they can be followed by a man who is not merely satisfying his personal predilections, but is genuinely leading a coherent life in the service of a coherent whole. We all recognise that it is a bad action to fiddle while Rome is burning, no matter how excellent be the kind of music which we are able to produce. It is easy enough to find good things to do, and to know when it is right and when it is wrong to do them. And it is absurd to suppose that we never attain to reasonable certainty about any moral action. There are enough doubts and difficulties in morality already, and it is quite unnecessary to

invent difficulties which do not exist. It is just as certain that deliberate cruelty is wrong, as it is that grass is green or that two and two make four. Cruelty cannot be consistently willed by men who are trying to live coherent lives in the service of a coherent society. Indeed there is no conceivable society in which it could be so willed, for if it were, each man would will that others should be cruel to himself, and in that case cruelty would not be cruelty at all but simply kindness, and the pain in which we all found our satisfaction would be not pain but pleasure.

It is however perfectly true that if circumstances altered greatly, and still more that if human nature itself were transformed, many things which are now wrong might become right and *vice versa*. This is merely stating what we all recognise—in practice, at least—in our own lives. What is wrong for me as a private soldier may be right for me as a general, and conversely what is wrong for me as a general may be right for me as a private soldier. It may be wrong for the general to expose himself to danger and wrong for the private not to do so. Similarly there could be no stealing if there were no private property, and—to take an instance with which more men would disagree—it would be difficult to find a rational justification for insisting that the only right form of marriage was monogamy, if by some freak of nature the proportion of women to men became fixed permanently at the ratio of four to one. But it is difficult enough to settle our own moral problems, and we need not deliberate about matters which have no relation to the life of our own society.

It is not our purpose either to criticise or to defend conventional morality as it exists to-day. We do indeed insist that there is some goodness and some genuine coherence in our society, and if there were none at all we should perhaps be well-advised to give up morality altogether as something which had obviously no meaning or value for the human race. On the other hand we may surely hope that some of our present moral beliefs and practices will in time seem to be childish and even barbarous to a more developed and better civilisation. Yet we may still believe that further advance will be based upon the same principle of coherence which is actually at work already, and that our more fortunate

successors may be conscious that they are only developing what we have achieved in morality, just as they will be conscious that they are only developing what we have achieved in science.

Some at least of our present moral beliefs and practices could be justified, and it seems to us illumined, by the principles which we have sought to expound. Some of them perhaps would have to be condemned. Our general scale of values might certainly be rendered a little less arbitrary. There are still some men who seem to regard morality merely as the refraining from some of the more conspicuous human sins, and consider coldness of heart and meanness of spirit as little more than venial offences. They judge themselves and their fellows by what they have not done instead of by what they do. Their virtue may be little better than cowardice, they may be destitute of any generous emotion, they may contribute nothing to the welfare of the world, their whole life may be centred round the most petty and selfish interests, yet they are puffed up with spiritual pride, they thank God that they are not as other men, and with an egregious lack of humour they condemn as outcast the man who indulges in an occasional oath, an occasional drink, or even—in some cases—an occasional cigarette. Their malice may stalk abroad under the cloak of religious zeal, but they are among those whom Christ condemned and among those who condemned Christ.

On the whole however when we consider men who, whatever be their personal weaknesses, are definitely men of good will, it is surprising how restricted are genuine differences of opinion as to what is right and wrong under the conditions of our own society. The main differences among men who are not obviously foolish or disingenuous, and whose opinions are entitled to respect even from their opponents, seem to centre round questions like socialism, prohibition, marriage and divorce, and war. There are of course some who approach these problems in the manner of frenzied savages whose taboos have been broken or insulted, and they contribute nothing to the discussion beyond denunciations of their opponents as fundamentally immoral and hopelessly corrupt. But it is very clear that the first three questions are concerned with the working of society and its organs as a

coherent whole, and that the same principles are appealed to on either side. A discussion of these special problems would be valueless unless it were undertaken in more detail than is here possible, and I would say only that I believe the present theory can offer some explanation of why such differences of opinion have come to exist.

The question of war is a somewhat different question, and raises certain general difficulties in regard to our position which demand some consideration. The man who advocates war as itself a good thing is simply a bad man, for war, unless waged against an aggressor, is nothing but wholesale murder. The fire-eater of this type is a greater menace to society than would be a man who founded a society for the propagation and practice of murder as a fine art. The moral will must seek to make war impossible, just as it seeks to make murder impossible. The glorification of war is infamous, and wars arise simply through the wickedness and stupidity and passions of men.

None the less it does not follow that it is a wrong thing to fight in defence of one's country. Life is unfortunately not so simple as that. We have already seen that it may be a duty to kill in self-defence, and it may be still more a duty to kill in defence of one's family or one's country. The difficulty arises solely from the presence of badness in the world, but the good man has to act in the world as it is, not as he would like it to be. If all men were good the use of force would be unthinkable, but when force is used in an assault upon goodness the good man may have to use force in its defence. There are those who believe that goodness cannot be defended or furthered by any use of force even in self-defence, and we may respect their belief. But to be consistent they ought to abolish the police, and to use the force neither of themselves nor of others against any assault of any kind upon their persons or property or even upon their wives and children. When they do this their views will be entitled to still greater respect, and they will no longer be in the unhappy position of enjoying through the efforts and the sacrifices of others a security to which they themselves contribute nothing.

It is true that when men enter a fight even from the purest of motives, the time must come when both sides alike seem

to be fighting for their lives, when they employ the same methods, and appear equally to be moved merely by the desire to conquer their opponents. The neutral critic standing aloof from the battle can always find good reasons for treating the two parties as equally culpable, if he is content to regard only the superficial aspects of the conflict. Their pleas of justification may be put down lightly as on a par with the meaningless squabble of two boys about who it was that began it. None the less, however difficult it may be to determine the issues of a particular struggle, and however much some struggles may be due to stupidity and malevolence on both sides, it is possible to wage an unjust war of aggression and it is possible to wage a just war of defence. Historically, force as well as good will has been necessary to establish in society that law and order without which morality could never have developed as it has. The good man who is willing to give his life for the establishment of justice is acting consistently when he demands the same sacrifice of others, and if the will to evil can be restrained only under the threat of death, he is willing if need be to carry out that threat even at the risk of his own life. In so doing he may claim—although the claim can be made only by a man who is very sure of his own motives—that he seeks to realise in the world the good will which is present in his opponent as well as in himself, and beside which the life or death either of himself or of his enemy is a very little thing.

Certainly there can be no defence of war on the ground that the state is not under any moral obligation, and although this view has been defended by philosophers, it is not the view upon which the plain man ordinarily acts. The most unscrupulous of statesmen find it necessary to foster a belief in the justice of their cause. The state is nothing except a body of men acting together in a particular way, and the good will which claims for itself the whole life of men cannot admit that there is any department of human life from which it can be excluded. It is idle to say that within the state there is a supreme authority and without it there is no supreme authority, and that therefore there can be no question of obligations as between states. The supreme authority of the state is derived from the moral will, and the moral will is determined by no

authority other than its own. Theories of the kind we are considering are merely confused recognitions of the fact that duties vary with different circumstances, and that the absence of a supreme authority among states, as among the miners in some camp beyond the reach of law, inevitably gives rise to a different code of duty. We may have to fight for our rights when we cannot call in the police. But a cruel and treacherous attack upon a man who is willing to mind his own business, and to let us mind ours, is still a flagrant piece of immorality. This is equally true of the relation between independent states. To deny it is either confusion of thought or a sophistical defence of some premeditated crime.

The question of war raises the more general question of the relation between the bad man and the good, and most of our moral difficulties arise from the actual incoherence of society because of the presence of bad men who seek not to serve but to exploit their neighbours. It is obvious that the coherent moral will displays its coherence not by treating a bad man in the same way as a good but by treating him differently. I have a different duty to my family and to other families, to my king and to my servant, to my friend and to a stranger; and equally I have a different duty to a good man and to a bad. Here as always these differences are not determined by ratiocination, but spring from the development of the will itself, as it gradually establishes and becomes conscious of its own coherence. From the very first I treat differently the man who comes to help and the man who comes to kill me. But as morality advances I penetrate more deeply both into my own will and into his, I cease to regard all who oppose my wishes as bad men, and I may come to regard as bad those who are only too ready to cooperate with my baser self. I become conscious that even the badness of my enemies is no excuse for personal spite or the spirit of revenge, and the very punishment of the criminal tends to be regarded as aiming at his own good, as seeking to collaborate with and to stimulate the good will which is latent in him. The fact that I may pretend, or even believe, that I am trying to benefit my enemy when I am merely gratifying a personal dislike, throws no doubt upon the possible genuineness of such an

attitude. The very pretence is itself a sign that I recognise such an attitude to be both good and possible. My duty is to all men and not merely to the good, or rather it is a duty to cooperate with the goodness of all men, even of the depraved. The less goodness there is in a man, the more such cooperation appears in the form of opposition to his manifested will, but if there were no possibility of goodness in a man at all we should treat him differently. He would merely be a dangerous animal whom it was our duty to kill, or perhaps better a lunatic whom we felt obliged to restrain but to keep alive, because he was once, or at the least might have been, a man.

I venture then to suggest—and necessarily it can be no more than a suggestion—that the theory of the moral judgement as the recognition of the coherence of the will itself is not in palpable contradiction with the ordinary judgements of men. I believe indeed that it alone can offer at once a criticism and a defence of our moral judgements, and some sort of basis for making them coherent with one another and intelligible as a systematic whole. But it is necessary to insist that neither it nor any other moral theory can tell us what to do in independence of the actual working out of the moral will. You may analyse the artistic coherence, but to make a beautiful work of art you must have more than analysis—you must have vision. Similarly you may analyse logical coherence, but to think out a theory of relativity or a critique of pure reason, you must have a thinking power quite different from the power of analysis. And you may analyse practical coherence, but that will never enable you to do a moral action—you must act.

We are familiar enough with this in ordinary life. In our practical difficulties, we try to get clear about the situation and about our own condition of mind, we consider the probable consequences of various lines of action, we discuss perhaps with friends the advantages and the rightness of the various possibilities before us, we try to get rid of mere prejudices and passions and to consider the question from a more objective and social point of view; but when all this is done, we have simply to await the hour and the decision of our active will. The moral self which has thought hard and willed well must simply flower into action as the æsthetic self

must flower into art. And in doubtful matters it is only after we have willed that we can judge whether our action is good or not. This is true both on the higher and lower levels of action, and while we may continue to deceive ourselves, it is then and then alone that our desire for objective moral truth can be most surely satisfied.

We must just mention one last difficulty. There may be a kind of coherence attained in society if men are satisfied with low ambitions and with poor achievements. Can we be content to call the members of such a society genuinely good, if according to their various capacities they seek to play their part in this relatively humble whole? The answer is, I think, that we must. We may consider such a society and such individuals as low in the scale of goodness, we may think that they are depriving themselves of some of the greatest things in life, but if they are content to lead the life of simple peasants, or to dream away their days on lotus beaches, it is hard to say that there is in this anything which can be called morally wrong. They may care nothing for the comforts of civilisation or for the strenuous life of business, and they may have no interest in the achievements of art and literature and science. But that is surely their own affair, they may have found the life that is best for them, and we cannot quarrel with a choice of the soul. It is only when men are conscious of higher things, when the will to greater achievements has stirred within them, and when they have fallen back through weakness on a narrower life, that we can begin to pass judgement upon them. Even then in a world which is so full of evil our judgement will probably not be harsh, so long as they serve their narrower whole in their own way and live in kindness and friendliness with one another.

There is still a further question which may be asked in regard to the moral judgement. It is this. Can the moral judgement in the shape of moral philosophy, which is simply the most reflective and universal moral judgement in an abstract form, offer to us any ultimate justification of morality? In more simple terms can it give an answer to the question 'Why should I be moral?'?

In a sense the present study is nothing other than an

attempt to give an answer to this question so far as it is a question which has genuine meaning. But the attempt to answer it more specifically must be left over to our next chapter, which is concerned with the special problem of sacrifice, a problem in regard to which men are apt to feel most acutely that there is something in morality which is incapable of any rational defence.

CHAPTER XIV

ACCEPTANCE AND SACRIFICE

THE aim of philosophy is the discovery of truth: The philosopher who palters with the truth in the interests even of morality is falling not only into error but into deadly sin. If duty were founded upon a lie, it would—paradoxically enough—be the duty of the philosopher to expose that lie. The philosopher who preaches casts doubt upon his own philosophy, and suggests that he cares less about the truth of his doctrines than about their effect on the characters of men Philosophy cannot be of value if it puts itself at the service of anything else, whether religion or morality or science. The philosopher must indeed know something in his own person of these spiritual activities of which his philosophy professes to be an account, and a moral philosophy is not likely to be of any great value unless its author has occasionally felt within himself some vague stirrings of the moral will. Yet perhaps the moral philosopher, unlike the preacher, may be content to reckon himself as one of the sinners among men, and to hope that in this he secures a wider sympathy and a more dispassionate point of view. It was said indeed by Plato that the good man could understand both goodness and badness, while the bad man could understand only badness. In this perhaps he spoke the truth, if we add that the good man must have badness in himself, in the sense that badness must be to him a genuine temptation. But Plato knew well that the philosopher should seek out every argument against goodness and do justice to the truth that it contains. It is only so that his account of goodness can have any value to those who seek the truth. It is only so that goodness can be defended as well as understood; and the philosopher, like the artist, may perhaps be pardoned for all other failings except the failing of being half-hearted or slip-shod in the performance of his own peculiar task.

Hence it is not the business of philosophy to defend morality

or to make men moral. Still less is it the business of any philosopher to defend a particular morality which prevails at a particular time. In performing his task he may even help to smash such a morality, so far as a morality can be smashed by criticism. Such criticism is welcomed by the good man of the highest type; for he seeks to get behind the old forms to a living goodness which may create new forms. The advance of morality sometimes demands new bottles as well as new wine, and the development of Christian morality meant the destruction of the Jewish code. Genuine belief in morality is shown in welcoming all criticisms, and not in an effort to conceal the truth; and although not all good men are obliged to think philosophically, morality itself demands that those whose special business it is to think should carry out their thinking with the single aim and the undivided purpose of making clear the truth wherever it may be found.

To the question 'Why should I be moral?' philosophy can supply no answer. There is no reason why any one should be moral. The question is a meaningless question like 'Why is truth true?' or 'Why is beauty beautiful?'. It is just asking 'Why is goodness good?'. A childish question demands a childish answer, and the best answer in this case is 'Just because'. This is not a philosophical answer, but philosophical answers can be given only to philosophical questions.

What kind of answer does the questioner really expect? He is not asking for reasons why some definite action should be a duty. Such reasons, as we saw in our last chapter, could be given to a man who recognised that goodness lay in the service of society, although even here the statement of reasons would be abstract and unconvincing to a man who had not made the goodness of his society his own. But we have here a question about all goodness, all duty, all obligation whatsoever. The good life must be good because it is the good life. To suggest that there could be a reason for the good life being good is to suggest that it is good because of something outside itself, that it is good as a means to something else. It is hard to imagine what this something else could be, but even if we knew what it was, we should still have to ask why it in turn was good, and we should be only at the beginning of an indefinite series of questions, unless we could come to something which was good

in itself. But the only thing which can be good in itself is just the good life, and if there is any difficulty in believing this, it is only a difficulty about anything being good in itself. Yet if nothing is good in itself, there can obviously be nothing good at all. If the question is put more abstractly in the form ' Why is goodness goodness ? ', the external reason—if there were one —for goodness being goodness would just be goodness again, and about this we should have to ask the same meaningless question. And if we ask ' Why is duty duty ? ' or ' Why is duty an obligation ? ', the only answer can be that duty is the ultimate obligation, and that to suppose a more ultimate obligation is merely to make duty cease to be duty by inventing a new duty which differs in no respect whatever from the old.

The answer to the question ' Why should I be moral ? ' is ' Because it is moral to be so ', or more simply ' Just because you should '. The only other possible answer seems to be ' Because it is to your interest to be so '. But this is clearly not an answer. It is ludicrous to suppose that we ought to be unselfish because it will pay us to be so, or that we ought to be brave because of the terrible things that will happen to us if we are not. If there is such a thing as morality it must be good in itself, and it must be different from self-interest. To say that it is good as a means to something else, or that it is good because it gives us pleasure or anything else which we just happen to want, is simply to say that there is no such thing as morality. If the question implies an answer of this kind it would be fairer to ask ' Why is morality not morality ? '. If that is what our question means, we have something which manifestly contradicts itself, and is as unreasonable as ' Why is a circle not a circle ? '. It is a childish conundrum and not a philosophical question. It shows complete misunderstanding of the matter under discussion. It is nonsensical and demands a nonsensical answer, as for example ' Because the moon is made of green cheese '.

Hence the answer to the question is either tautologous or nonsensical. There may of course be varying forms of the answer. Mr. G. E. Moore's answer would be, if I understand aright, ' Because being moral is a means to the production of things which are good, that is which ought to exist '. This answer depends on an intuition which does not find what is

called morality to be a good in itself, but it does find things which are good in themselves and which contain in themselves an 'ought' behind which it is impossible to go. If we ask why they ought to exist, the answer is simply because they ought to exist. That is what goodness means—so far as we may venture to say that goodness means anything. If we seek to be perfectly safe, we say simply that men should be moral because, and in so far as, morality produces good things; and that things are good just because they are good. To ask why a thing that is good in itself is good in itself is meaningless and self-contradictory. For it implies that a thing both is and is not good in itself.

All such answers are, I believe, true answers to the question asked in the form in which it is asked. The form implies that there is an absolute obligation which is external to the individual, and it asks on this basis for some justification of the absoluteness, that is for something else to explain the absoluteness. To do so is at once, as we have said, to deny the absoluteness which it asserts, and to ask for another absolute which would be just as much open to objection as the first. But answers of this kind are not altogether convincing. They seem to leave us with the unpleasant alternative of either supposing that the obligations which most of us sometimes feel are illusory, or else falling back upon a pure intuition which in face of doubts and scepticism can offer no rational account of itself whatever. Most men have an uneasy consciousness that the latter alternative carries no very great conviction, and that whatever be the faults of the question asked, it is trying to get at something which we want to know and which could be stated in some more satisfactory way.

Perhaps the difficulty which the questioner is trying to express is something like this. Can I really find no rational account of morality? Must I simply accept it without further question or deeper understanding? Above all, how am I to bridge the gap between this absolute and external obligation and my own limited and finite, but none the less eager and passionate, self? I have desires which are opposed to your cold morality. If your duty and your goodness, or whatever you like to call it, is something absolute and in itself, what has that got to do with me?

It may be said that these questions also are meaningless, and on the extreme realist view—although not perhaps on a view like that of Mr. Alexander—that is perhaps the only answer that can be given. But we may believe that some more systematic and intelligible account of goodness can be attempted, and that there is something lacking in a view which makes goodness and duty merely external to the individual's will; although we must recognise that in saying this there is a danger that we may fall into a different and perhaps an even worse kind of error. An attempt has been made in our exposition of the development of the coherent will, at once to offer an account which brings out the coherence of our seemingly very different judgements of goodness, and to indicate the way in which morality is the development of a principle present in the will from the very first, and the realisation of the very nature of the will itself as a self-transcendent and self-coherent whole.

Little can be added here to what has already been said. The difficulty which we are considering arises at a lower level than that of conscious morality. There are many men who go about asking what is the good of anything and why is anything to be regarded as good. To such men there is no answer which can be given. A will which—if such a thing were possible—refuses to transcend itself, in the double sense of giving itself up to its object and endeavouring to establish a coherence going beyond the moment, can find no good in anything. And indeed just because it cannot wholly refuse to transcend itself, it gives itself to its object in a half-hearted way, it yearns vaguely for something which it is without, and so introduces incoherence into itself, and finds evil and not good. Goodness is not something which is a mere fact set over against us, but is the creation of the will itself. If a man wills nothing, he will find no good; if he wills trivially, he will find a trivial good; and if he wills greatly, he will find a great good. Men are so slow to learn this, although it seems to be one of the most obvious facts of experience. And it is not contradicted by the fact that some men seem to find their good in wanting little and in being content with what little they have. For this too means that they have given themselves up to something, even if it be merely freedom from the tyranny of desire, and they have been able to establish a genuine coherence

within their lives. They have willed positively although within a narrow range, and they have succeeded in establishing a positive coherence, and so in finding a positive good.

The moral will gives itself up to a wider object and seeks to establish a wider coherence, which is no longer confined within its own life or within its own individual world, but is manifested in the lives of different men and different societies, and ultimately in the society of all good men who live in the same world and use it in the same way. To will thus is to find a more precious good, and to find it by a whole-hearted giving up of the self to an ideal which one makes one's own. But this good is enriched by being shared by others like myself; it is broad-based and solid because it rests, not merely upon my more solid and coherent will, but also upon the solid and coherent wills of others whom I love and with whom I work. Unless I give myself to it, it means nothing to me; but once I have given myself to it, however much I fall back upon something smaller, I know that my will for that is my veritable will and attains my veritable good, just as, even on a merely individual level, my coherent will, once manifested, is the standard by which my trivial impulses must be judged. But on the moral level, just because my good is shared by others than myself, because the good which I seek is no longer either just mine or just yours but is rather ours, it may still be, and it may still be sought by me, even although its attainment may be won only by my sacrifice and even by my death. And this is something which is no longer alien or strange or meaningless, but is sometimes the very essence of human experience and the very breath of human life. It is felt by any man who takes any interest in the welfare of others, or who tries to plan a future for his children when he is gone. Where this wider will has attained to any strength, where it has become habitually manifested, any considerable falling back from this to a lower level, not only disturbs the wider coherence we have sought, but is felt to be irrational as directly as is the yielding to a momentary impulse which may wreck the whole efforts of a life.

Here as always the will has it own rationality and must solve its own problems, however much it may be helped by an intellectual understanding of the world and of itself. Thinking

can no more prove to the good man that he ought to be good than it can prove to the artist that beauty is something precious. Still less can it prove anything to the bad man or the man without the æsthetic imagination. What it can do is to apprehend reflectively something which is already manifested in some form of spiritual activity and already grasped in some sort of vague feeling or intuition. If thinking can bring this to the light of day and affirm it intellectually and dogmatically, it has perhaps added a little, but its work seems almost a superfluous and cold repetition of something warmer and more convincing. And it is apt to turn back upon itself and to question its own decisions, which are indeed in their abstraction unconvincing and relatively unilluminating. But it does so because thinking cannot remain content with mere dogmatism, and seeks to perform the greater service which is more peculiarly its own. It can offer as it were an added justification of the moral will or of the æsthetic activity, by understanding it as a coherent whole and an element in a wider life. It is precisely this which in the case of the moral will, I have endeavoured, however imperfectly, to do. While thinking does not and cannot offer some external reason for morality, it offers the only possible justification for morality, by attempting to understand systematically the very rationality of the moral will itself. This is, I believe, the only answer to our question which does not leave us with the feeling that we have been cheated by some ingenious sophistry.

It is perhaps unnecessary to add that if we are allowed to assume that a man is guided by self-interest and seeks his good within the confines of his own life, we can offer many reasons, not why he should be moral, but why he should, from his own point of view, do many of the things which are ordinarily considered right. It is only by doing so that he can avoid punishment, and secure reciprocal services from others; and indeed the satisfaction of his own generous impulses and affections for others will add greatly to the richness of his own individual good. But all this we have already discussed, and it has nothing to do with morality. We may perhaps affirm also that, if his glands are in good working order, the morally good man will attain a certain happiness and peace which cannot be attained by a man who seeks to confine his good within

the narrow circumference of his own individual life. But no man can attain this happiness even if he is willing to be moral for the sake of attaining it, because to be moral for the sake of something else is not to be moral, and to seek what we may call the happiness of the wider life, and not the wider life itself, is just to circumscribe oneself by the narrow circumference, and to make sure of losing the happiness which one seeks. It would be an ill service both to truth and to morality to deny that if we follow moral goodness we must at the least be ready to walk in the ways of pain and of self-sacrifice, and it may be that that readiness will be tested to the uttermost.

There could be no task more hopeless and more unprofitable than an attempt to argue into morality men in whom the moral will had not developed through the actual living and working with their kind in a moral society. A brilliant but erratic thinker, carried away no doubt by the fervour of an argument, but speaking not altogether in a spirit of paradox, once endeavoured to persuade the writer to give up his other avocations and devote the remainder of his years to the task of teaching rabbits to be moral. He maintained that in this respect the lower animals had not yet received fair treatment; but perhaps it is not unreasonable to reply that one cannot make an appeal except to something which is already there. And the same is true of men. If some men are born as rabbits, then the only thing for them to do is to lead the rabbit life; and if they are harmless, the best thing that we others can do is to leave them alone. All that thinking can ever attempt is to explain to men the rationality of the moral will which they already possess.

If our attempt to do so has failed, it is not likely that at this late stage we shall be able to remedy the defect. But we may supplement our account by considering more clearly than we have hitherto attempted to do the place of sacrifice in our life and especially in our moral life. There is nothing peculiarly moral about sacrifice, and the triumph of goodness in the world would greatly diminish the necessity of sacrifice. Yet sacrifice is a kind of test of moral goodness, because we can generally get so much for ourselves out of being good that it is difficult to be sure whether our actions are morally good or

not, whether we are seeking to serve the whole or aiming at the satisfaction of our own individual desires. In the case of sacrifice the issue is clear cut, and we stand revealed for what we are. Hence some are tempted to find moral goodness in sacrifice alone; while others, accepting perhaps the same assumption, are inclined to believe that sacrifice is wholly irrational, instead of being, as it is, a necessary and consistent development of the rational moral will.

There are many kinds of sacrifice, and sacrifice of a kind is found far below the level of morality. It has its inevitable place in human life, and we cannot avoid it even if we would.

There is first of all the sacrifice which may be said to be imposed upon us by nature, and our attitude towards it may be called acceptance. This is not so much a sacrifice as a loss or limitation to which we must submit, and over which we must triumph in the sense of making it, so far as we can, the instrument of a good life. It is what is called in religious language the cross which we must carry, and it is found in narrow circumstances, in ill-health, and above all in pain. It seems at first simply an obstacle and an impediment. But it is there, and we gain nothing if we whine or whimper. We need not be harsh with those whose circumstances are too much for them, and we must recognise that perhaps there comes a time when any man will break. That time comes later for some men than for others and perhaps for some races than for others, and these are fortunate. There are some men who seem able to endure almost anything and to keep their self-control. Men can stand more if they have subjected themselves to discipline, have thought out their ideals, and have sought to follow them consistently. To regard the situation with clear eyes and seek to understand it dispassionately is often a way of recovering the peace which we have lost. But the matter is partly determined by our physical constitution, and a man may be at the mercy of his nerves. Our intelligence must be directed to the removal of natural evils, and we must seek out and employ the best means to preserve or to restore our health. As a society we must organise ourselves in the great war against disease, which is perhaps even now about to enter on a period of victory, and we must also endeavour to remove unnecessary hardships and straitened circumstances

from the lives of our fellow citizens. The good will is never shown more clearly than in an attempt to remove the obstacles to the good life of ourselves and others, and an attitude of mere submission may be the mark of nothing but cowardice and ineptitude. None the less there may come to the individual misfortunes and impediments which can be removed by no effort of his. In such a case he must accept his circumstances and make the best of them. He must seek to build up his good life in just these circumstances, and make obstacles themselves the vehicles and instruments of goodness. It is folly not to do so, if we can, even although we seek only our individual good, and it is wrong not to do so, if we seek a good beyond ourselves of which we may be the channel and the manifestation. It is just in this that we may find, and indeed must find, our service to the whole. It is in this too that we may sometimes see the excellence of the individual and the flower of human goodness. '*Si libenter crucem portas*,' says Thomas a Kempis '*portabit te*'.[1] There may be fruit even from that bitter tree.

It is surely idle to say that the good man can be happy on the rack, and it is somewhat harsh to hold that if he is not happy, it must be because he is not a sufficiently good man. There is enough difficulty in being good on the rack without asking us to be happy as well. The best that we can say of pain—and it is a poor best—is that there is a limit beyond which we simply die. Extreme pain, wrecking and destroying a useful life, is nothing other than horrible, and part of its horror is that it seems to be so meaningless. We can only hope that the good will and hard thinking of men may, with the advance of modern medicine, defeat, or at the least render less powerful, this enemy of the human race. For pain has too often rendered impotent the finest intelligence, and has overcome even the good will itself. The struggle against pain may have called forth heroism, but even heroism can be bought at too great a price.

The same problems arise in connexion with the ill-will of our neighbours, with the lack of friends and the loss of the friends we have. Nothing could be more wretched than an unloved child, and some children have been unloved. There

[1] *Imitatio Christi*, II, xii. 5.

are things in life which are terrible to contemplate, and there are human beings who have never had even a sporting chance. Yet here also there is perhaps a limit set to our sorrow, and in some degree our grief is proportionate to our strength.

> La douleur est un fruit; Dieu ne le fait pas croître
> Sur la branche trop faible encor pour le porter.[1]

The goodness, whether moral or otherwise, which is shown in facing obstacles and difficulties and misfortunes, is just the same goodness as is shown in happier circumstances. Always and everywhere the mark of a good man is that he faces and accepts his circumstances as they are, and uses them as the basis of his actions, as the setting and the instrument of a coherent life. It is the feeble and the foolish who rebel against their circumstances, and think how splendidly they might act if only things were different. The strong man may show his strength by making things different in order that he may have greater opportunities for further advance; but he always begins by accepting his circumstances as they are, and when they are beyond his power to alter, he accepts them none the less without wavering or repining, and seeks such goodness as it is possible to attain. It may sometimes be hard to do so, but it is in this alone that the will can realise its coherence and be genuinely good.

All these things are easier if men can believe that their circumstances, and even their difficulties and pains and sorrows, are arranged for them by an all-wise Providence which is seeking to further human goodness. But such a faith can hardly pretend to be reason. It believes; but it does not understand. That man speaks with extraordinary levity who says that he can see and understand the working of a rational will in all the calamities and sufferings which fall upon men. No doubt they are all governed by the iron laws of cause and effect, and some day we may trace their causes and perhaps remove some of their effects, but they are ordered by no simple and obvious principles of justice. Catastrophes are not the punishment of sin, nor so far as we can see are they necessary for the advancement of human excellence. But whether or not such things are the working of a plan too deep for us to comprehend, all

[1] Victor Hugo, *L'Enfance.*

men must bow to the inevitable; and except where reason is lost or there is pain too great to be borne, it is possible for goodness to show itself even amid the ruins of a world or the wreckage of a human life.

Sacrifice is however not so much something which is imposed upon us as something which we impose upon ourselves. The loss or limitation which comes to us from without is like sacrifice, only because we accept it with our will and make of it the instrument of good. Strictly speaking sacrifice means the giving up of something which we might have had, rather than acquiescence in the lack of something which we cannot have. It is essentially something voluntary, and, what is more, as soon as we have any kind of will, there we must also have some kind of sacrifice. Sacrifice is not the product of a curious whim which some people by another curious whim assert to be a moral duty or obligation. It is part and parcel of all willing, and it is a necessary element in any kind of goodness whatever.

There is no need to elaborate this truth, since it has been the principle of our exposition from the very beginning. All willing is also a rejecting or a giving up. We cannot do all things at once. We cannot satisfy all our desires. We cannot accept two invitations to dinner for the same night. We cannot eat our cake and have it. Even the impulsive or momentary will sacrifices all other possibilities to the one possibility which is made real, all other desires to the one desire which is satisfied. Even the momentary good is won by a kind of sacrifice. And the coherent will which seeks to realise the individual good, while it realises many desires and makes them vehicles of a richer good, lives, not only by rejecting at each moment the desires which are incompatible with its coherent life, but also by making the satisfaction of some desires for ever impossible. No life can be lived, and no excellence can be attained, without some sacrifice. All success involves some kind of discipline and some kind of self-denial. The sacrifice involved is not a temporary but a permanent sacrifice. Under the conditions of a finite life we cannot realise all the possibilities that are in us. In order to achieve any success in life we must give up much that we might have been.

We cannot escape sacrifice by adopting a policy of badness,

whether it be moral badness or any other kind of badness. We are still limiting ourselves and limiting our good. We are not only failing to realise, but making for ever unrealisable, the possibilities that are within us. We cannot be both pirates and pillars of society, and if we are determined to be ruffians we cannot also be saints. We must specialise even in ruffianism, and to be a really successful ruffian requires self-denial and self-discipline as well as very unusual gifts. As for mere economic badness, or incoherence even within the individual's life, that is not a genuine policy but rather the absence of a policy. If it is a genuine policy, the incoherence is really a special kind of coherence, and the man who practises it only an unusually subtle voluptuary or villain. The man whose life is genuinely incoherent or economically bad is merely a poor, weak, ineffective creature who is unable to get out of life what he really wants. So far from escaping sacrifice he succeeds only in making his sacrifice more conspicuous and more ineffectual. Like everybody else he is realising some possibilities at the expense of others; but what he is doing is to realise, and to realise inadequately and confusedly, mere momentary possibilities, while he is giving up the possibility of leading a coherent life and attaining any kind of permanent good. He is simply sacrificing his higher to his lower self, while any man who has any kind of goodness, even the goodness of a successful ruffian, is sacrificing a relatively lower to a relatively higher self. The successful ruffian and every man who has attained a kind of economic goodness may be said to sacrifice the lower to the higher, although he may be giving up other lives equally good which would have involved the same kind of sacrifice, and although he may be giving up a still better kind of life and sacrificing a still higher kind of self.

Sacrifice then is the very law and essence of willing from the first, the inevitable concomitant of a finite will. Against all the achievements of life we must set unrealised possibilities and unsatisfied desires. But since this also is inevitable, it must be accepted as the condition under which we work and the basis upon which all human goodness rests. To rebel against our limitations is mere folly. The business of life is to secure what good we can, and not to miss it because we think we might have had a better. We need waste no sympathy on

those whose complaint is merely that they are men. We may give our sympathy to those men who cannot bring themselves to accept and make the most of their fate, when the world presses harder on them than on others: but we can hardly refrain from regarding as rather ridiculous, and even as rather contemptible, those who bemoan themselves because they share in the common lot of men, and who make their lives miserable and inefficient because they are men and not God.

Yet the way of escape lies at least partially open before them if they will only walk in it. Their weakness lies not in their theory but in their will itself. They are for the most part pampered products of a society which has made things too easy for them. When men were battling against cold and hunger and sabre-toothed tigers, they did not lie awake at night bewailing the emptiness of human life. They had more serious things to grumble at and more important things to do. Life is sweet when we have to fight for it, and we taste its sweetness not by thinking about sacrifice, but by walking in the way of sacrifice itself. We may produce an artificial misery by reflecting that to do anything we must give up something else; but when we actually give up vague possibilities and will with our whole heart something which demands all our efforts, we find not artificial misery but real happiness. If we will carry our cross, our cross will carry us. And if we can find nothing in the wide world that we want to do, there are others who are not in the same fortunate or unfortunate position. If we cease to think of ourselves and try to do something which other men so desperately want and need, we can at least secure some kind of good, even if it be not good for us. Here also the way of sacrifice may be the way of happiness, and we may find that a good which seemed to us external has become our own good and the source of our own satisfaction. By sacrifice we as it were overcome sacrifice. By giving ourselves up to something we find in that our good, and what might in other circumstances have been willed, and so have been our good, becomes of little moment. By giving ourselves up to a social ideal beyond ourselves, by sharing in the efforts of others and in the work of the world, we make that wider social good also our own. If in so doing we limit

ourselves and leave many possibilities unrealised, we at least make it easier for similar possibilities to be realised by other people. And if we are not thinking of ourselves, but of the goodness which is the coherent realisation of human possibilities or of human wills, that goodness is also ours, and these achievements are realised in part by us. The rich life of our society is made our own in so far as we also have helped to make it what it is, and even in our limitations we have made a goodness ours which is far richer than the greatest conceivable realisation of our own individual possibilities. If we think it hard that we should have to give up some kinds of good life in order that we may lead the good life which we choose, we may perhaps console ourselves a little by the reflexion that, in leading our own limited good life in the service of the whole, we are enabling others to lead other kinds of good life, and so are taking part in the realisation of a goodness which is more than could be attained merely through us. The man who feels that if he could have had a different life he might have contributed to literature or science or statesmanship, must remember that he serves in a great army so organised that these special things may be pursued by men who are perhaps better qualified than himself. And if his desire is the big desire that victory should be won and not the petty desire that it should be won through him, then he is conscious, even in the execution of his modest task, that he is helping to win that victory, and that the victory is not merely another's good but is also his own. It is his precisely because he is thinking of it and not of himself, because he is seeking it and not seeking it for himself. Always and everywhere it is by disinterested devotion to an ideal that we enrich our lives, but the devotion must be disinterested. And we have seen already that this is true both of the merely individual will and of the individual will which is also social, even on levels of action which we might hesitate to call genuinely moral.

We would not however be taken to suggest that we can escape sacrifice in social any more than in individual action. There must always be some sort of giving up, if we are to attain to any kind of good. We must give ourselves up to our ideal—to what we will—with a whole heart. We must give up indefinite possibilities in favour of the one thing which we

definitely will. Above all we must give up mere momentary impulses in favour of actions which can be elements in a coherent life, and manifestations of a coherent will. The more wide and the more coherent is that ideal to which we give ourselves up, that life which we seek to realise through the medium of our momentary actions, the greater and the richer is our good. We extend our territory beyond the narrow limits of our individual life, in so far as we give ourselves up to social ideals in which others share; but we do not escape, and we cannot escape, from the essential character of action and the inevitable presence of sacrifice. If we satisfy our genuinely social desires as part of our coherent life, we fill our life with a richer and a wider goodness; but in order to do so we may have to restrain some individual impulses, and even to subdue a considerable part of our individual nature, as for example our tendencies to cruelty or anger. It is absurd to imagine that the development of the social will does not bring an immense enrichment to the individual; and it is also absurd to imagine that the thwarting of impulses and the subduing of natural tendencies are not necessary to the attainment of even the most narrowly individual good. But different sacrifices are necessary for different kinds of life, and the social life demands special sacrifices if we are to attain its special good.

This would be true even in an ideal society. It is doubly true in a society which is not ideal. Our imperfect knowledge and our imperfect goodness mean that the wills of even good men may clash. We may labour for a cause which we believe to be just, and the wills of others may prevail over our own. We cannot get all our own way, as a perfect will in a perfect society conceivably might. Where the society is a thoroughly bad society of thoroughly bad men, our efforts may be rendered nugatory, the social good we seek may never be realised. We may have to be like Plato's philosopher and shelter behind a wall in a storm of wind and rain. Or perhaps we may be able to find an umbrella and someone to share it. Even at the worst we may be able to do a little more than look after our own safety and cultivate our own souls. In a society where there is genuine good will we may do much more than that. We contribute of our best to its social life, we struggle for the success of a particular ideal, but although our ideal be never

realised, or realised if at all in a distorted form, we recognise that we also are imperfect, and hope that out of the clash of ideals to which we have contributed our part, there may arise a better life than anything that could have been devised by us or by any of those other individuals who are at once our opponents and our friends.

It may be said that even in society, even in a good society, there are endless possibilities unrealised, and so far endless sacrifice is necessary to the realisation of actual good. But this too is a crying for the moon, a demand that we should be as God. If it is a hardship not to be divine, then we suffer from that hardship. A society in which all possibilities are made actual would be a divine and not a human society. We must on the ordinary human level be content with a finite satisfaction, although even that finite satisfaction may be almost infinitely rich. And perhaps we should remember that a thing is good only in so far as it may be fitted into a coherent life; and it is the presence of our vague desires which makes these vague possibilities seem good to us, although, since we must reject them, they are actually evil, and the harbouring of these vague desires is simply the introduction of evil and incoherence into our lives. Whatever be our views about another and a better world, there can be no doubt that we disrupt our lives by a failure to concentrate upon some actual achievement, and an aimless tendency to flounder vaguely in all directions at once. The presence of real hardships has at any rate the advantage that it makes this sort of thing impossible.

The other activities of the spirit are also subject to the same kind of finite limitations. It is obviously impossible that all beauty should be enjoyed in the life of any individual or of any society. And the same is really true of thought. No doubt all our sense perceptions are capable of being fitted into a whole of truth; but all of them have to be interpreted in the light of the whole, and some of them have to be dismissed as mere illusions. The drunkard only seems to see the walls going round, and even a sober man may seem to see a ghost. Every perception must contain some truth, for otherwise it could not be false; but similarly every desire must contain some good, for otherwise it could not be evil. And we cannot see everything any more than we can desire everything. Even

in thinking itself we must concentrate on our special problem, and so only can we attain truth; just as we can attain good only by concentrating on our special practical problem. Thinking seeks to go beyond the merely individual experience and to establish a truth for all men, but equally morality seeks to go beyond the merely individual willing and establish a good which is good for all men—that is in both cases for all men so far as they are reasonable. We contribute our quota to the whole of thought as we contribute our quota to the whole of goodness, and in thought and action alike we trust to others to complete and develop the whole to which we offer our contribution. We cannot think the whole any more than we can will the whole; and if it be said, and said truly, that in thinking the part we are also thinking the whole, it can be said with equal truth on the level of morality that in willing the part we are also willing the whole. Men are apt to forget that truth lives only in thinking, and to believe that all truth once attained, or even unattained, lives somehow by itself out there in some sort of eternal self-complacency. But if they believe that, they may also believe that all goodness once attained is attained for ever, and exists out there, either through its attainment or independently of its attainment, to all eternity.

We would not suggest that either truth or goodness lives only in the moment, which is nothing. Rather they live in the life of a spiritual being which transcends the moment, and only so can they live at all. But the spirit which creates truth and goodness cannot rest from its achievement or retire upon its laurels. A past truth may become false and a past good may become evil, if we seek to rest in them, if we merely remember or repeat instead of thinking or acting. Our past truth must live in the living truth of the present and our past good must live in the living goodness of the present. We must either go on to fresh victories or sink back into defeat. Memory may be sweet, but it cannot be a substitute for life. We must go forward or perish. And this too is a kind of sacrifice, but it is a sacrifice which is the law of life, at least of our finite life.[1]

[1] Nobis cum pereant amorum
Et dulcedines et decor,
Tu nostrorum praeteritorum,
Anima mundi, sis memor.

We have discussed sacrifice so far as it is a part of all life and a condition of all goodness, but every goodness has its own special kind of sacrifice, and moral goodness is no exception to the universal rule. In a sense the sacrifice we have been considering is not genuine sacrifice but merely an acceptance of the inevitable, a making the most of things, a giving up of the part for the whole or of the possible for the actual, and a giving up of the self to an ideal whose realisation we can enjoy. The sacrifice of badness on the other hand is a giving up of the whole for the part. If we set aside the latter sacrifice as simply evil, we really gain by our so-called sacrifices, and all our giving is an enriching of our own individual life. Genuine sacrifice is *self*-sacrifice, the sacrifice not of a part but of the whole. And self-sacrifice is at once the condition and the outcome of the moral good and of it alone. For in morality we give ourselves up to a good which is not confined within the boundaries of our individual life, and we do so with our whole heart. There can be no holding back; and if we are to be genuinely moral, we cannot seek the moral good only in so far as it is something which we can enjoy, something which is to be manifested in and through the medium of our individual life. Morality is the complete surrender of the individual self to the ideal which is manifested in, and indeed is, the coherent willing of all good men, that is of all men living coherent lives as a service to, and element in, a coherent whole. The good that the good man seeks is not his own good but the good of the whole. He seeks to make the life of the whole coherent, and to make his own life coherent only as an organ of the whole. He may serve the whole best by the realisation of his own possibilities and the expansion of his own life in the service of the whole. And then perhaps we may say that he is fortunate, and also that every whole as good must aim at such an expansion of the life of all its members. But none the less his life is good only as a part of a whole which goes far beyond himself. The good of the whole is indeed his, but it is his not as his exclusive property or personal possession. It is his only because he has given himself to it. It is his because he belongs to it, rather than because it belongs to him. All morality is a genuine giving up of the whole self to a wider good, and while the wider good may be realised by the expan-

sion of the individual's life, it may be realised also in some circumstances by the impoverishment of his life and even by his death. All morality without exception is self-sacrifice, a disinterested giving up of the self to the whole. And although the moral life is ordinarily also an enrichment of the life of the individual as an individual, it is not always so. Just because the good man is the man who gives himself disinterestedly to the whole, he acts with perfect rationality and complete consistency, when he dies in order that the whole may live His death manifests the same goodness as his life. He sacrifices his whole life and his whole self, but he is not sacrificing the whole to a part or yielding to an irrational impulse which means the wrecking of his life. To do so would merely be a special, although perhaps a useful, kind of folly. What he is doing is to sacrifice his whole life to the wider whole of which his life is merely a part. He does so because the same principle of goodness, the same good will, which is in him is also in the whole. His death, like his life, is the manifestation and the instrument of a good will which goes beyond himself but which is also his. And in his sacrifice we find the supreme realisation of goodness, and the manifest triumph of a rational and universal will over, or rather in, a will which is contingent and impulsive and individual.

It must not be thought however that there is no basis in ordinary human nature for the rational and clear-eyed self-sacrifice of a good man. Morality is not an alien intruder into a human world. It has grown and developed in men as they have fought their way up out of the slime, and have come to understand better their own nature and the principles by which they live. The impulse to self-sacrifice is as real in modern men as any other, and who can tell how far back it goes into the dim beginnings of the human race? Its origin is to be found perhaps already in the impulse of an animal to defend its young, and such an impulse, whether in an instinctive or a more intelligent form, has an obvious survival value and must have helped us greatly at all the stages of our struggle for existence. In civilised men it is illumined by intelligence and coloured by our past traditions both of life and thought. The man who cannot see its presence in modern society must be blind indeed, and the man who cannot feel it stirring some-

times, however vaguely, in his own heart must be exceptionally cold or exceptionally unreflective. Poetry is no evidence of truth, but it is evidence of an impulse or a mood, and it is noteworthy that one of the bitterest of poets, he who can use 'one spoilt spring' as an occasion, if not a cause, for cursing 'Whatever brute and blackguard made the world', can speak thus simply [1] of a boy's impulse to self-sacrifice:

When I would muse in boyhood
The wild green woods among,
And nurse resolves and fancies
Because the world was young,
It was not foes to conquer,
Nor sweethearts to be kind,
But it was friends to die for
That I would seek and find.

And these are not the fancies of mere boys but impulses upon which grown men act. Nearly all of us who live to-day can echo quite simply and literally and, if we are wise, without bitterness, the concluding words:

I sought them far and found them,
The sure, the straight, the brave,
The hearts I lost my own to,
The souls I could not save.
They braced their belts about them,
They crossed in ships the sea,
They sought and found six feet of ground
And there they died for me.

The three men whose names are recorded with piety and affection on the first page of this volume, while they were outstanding, although not unique, in their intellectual promise, and perhaps also in their clear comprehension of what it was that they were doing, were only a part of a great multitude of all nations and languages who, with various degrees of understanding and of devotion to duty, felt the same impulse, obeyed the same call, and were willing to face the certainty of hardship and to run the risk of death in order that something which was greater than themselves might live. None of us alive to-day

[1] A. E. Housman, *Last Poems*.

can forget the men who won security for their friends and lovers, for their culture and institutions, but for themselves discomfort and wounds and fear and pain and the sleep of death. Whatever be our opinion about the nature of men and their motives, we cannot, if we are honest, fail to recognise that there is in man a willingness for self-sacrifice which may manifest itself at the fitting time and on the fitting occasion.

The impulses which make for self-sacrifice may be abused like any others. They may lead to a silly sentimentality, and be a disruptive and evil influence in life. They may also be mixed up with other motives good and bad, with desires for notoriety or fame or the respect of others. Men may display on the most frivolous grounds a contempt for death which would have graced the best of causes. Rolling down Niagara in a barrel or committing suicide in a fit of pique is silly as well as bad. But it is a far cry from this to the man who is willing to die for the advancement of science or for the establishment of justice in the world. It is folly to glorify self-sacrifice for its own sake, and the good society seeks to diminish and not to increase self-sacrifice; it aims at securing for its members fullness of life in the service of the whole and not impoverishment or death. But complete self-sacrifice in the service of the whole is not irrational or evil but rational and good. It is simply a special instance of that loyalty in cooperation with others which is manifested in every morally good act. It is a loyalty in life which remains loyalty in the face of death. If to be moral is to be whole-hearted in the service of a wider whole of coherent living, then genuine self-sacrifice is not a strange and inexplicable excrescence upon morality, but is an inevitable manifestation in difficult circumstances of the rational and coherent and moral will.

Self-sacrifice however is not confined to dying. It might be easier if it were. It is possible to sacrifice part of the self as well as the whole, and to go through life permanently maimed. This is not the unreal kind of sacrifice made by a man who gives up politics in order to be a painter, but the real sacrifice of the woman who gives up the hope of love and children that she may secure the comfort and happiness of a parent, perhaps of an unworthy, fretful, and unreasonable parent, who is

battling against ill-health and poverty. Such an action may produce a permanent and real loss without any corresponding compensation. It may be comparatively easy to make the generous decision, and such decisions may be made, as any sudden misfortunes may be faced, with a glow of satisfaction at the rightness of one's attitude and the courage of one's act. But to follow out the decision without complaint through many weary years is quite another matter, and many who have gone bravely enough into the desert have faltered and failed upon their way. The glow of satisfaction passes quickly enough and life becomes very parched and dusty. It is easier to face defeat or death than to live in a drab world without hope. No man need judge harshly those who are unable to live the life of sacrifice with constancy and courage, but here also it is half-heartedness and the divided will which is the source of evil. The permanent loss is real enough in any case, but it is incomparably greater when it fills a life with bitterness and vain regrets.

It is not for us to say when such sacrifice is right and good. Each case must be judged by itself with a clear view of all the issues involved. If men are tempted to say that when there is any doubt the way of sacrifice should be chosen, that is only because we know we are too apt to make unwarranted exceptions in favour of ourselves. It is not to be thought that one individual should sacrifice himself in favour of another merely as an individual, still less that he should give up a useful life in order to gratify an unreasonable whim. Each man or woman has to lead his or her own life, and it is wrong to sacrifice one generation to another. The sacrifices should not be all on one side. There is room no doubt for impulses of pity and affection, for these also claim their part in a coherent life; and there is room too for feelings of gratitude, and for the willingness to carry on a common life which was once a mutual service, but is now something in which one gives and the other simply receives. As we penetrate more deeply into the nature of morality, and attach more importance to the spirit of a life than to the actual results achieved, we may come to regard things as good which formerly seemed to us evil or at any rate comparatively meaningless. But, speaking broadly, we must judge by reference to the life of a wider whole, even

while we remember that an example of sacrifice may be a genuine contribution to that whole. It may be wrong to give up a public duty in order to satisfy a personal affection or to meet a family claim. And sometimes the plea of duty has been urged as an excuse for lack of initiative in building up one's own life, and for lack of courage in resisting an unreasonable demand. It may sometimes be necessary to hate father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters in order that we may realise a greater good.

This raises in turn the question whether it can be right to sacrifice others as well as ourselves. The phrase which we have just borrowed from the Gospels [1] can mean nothing, unless it means an affirmative answer to that question. Here again we have to remember that we are only too ready to sacrifice others, and we may be guilty of using high moral sentiments to cover over our moral defects. The complacent hypocrite is always worse than the open sinner who makes no attempt to gloss over his sins. If it is wrong to sacrifice ourselves to other individuals as individuals, it is still more wrong to sacrifice others to our purely individual selves, to make them merely the instruments of our personal desires. Indeed that is precisely what moral wrongness is. But to the good man the concrete whole of goodness which he serves is greater than the desires, and even than the life, of any individual, whether that individual be himself or another. And there are many ways in which we have to sacrifice others as well as ourselves. Our duty to our country may mean the breaking up of family life and the setting aside of domestic duties. The wife who gives her husband, and the mother who gives her son, to the army is willing to sacrifice him as well as herself. And the rightness of sacrifice, whether of self or of another, is the same rightness as that which is present in any kind of good act. It is right if in all the circumstances it can be willed as a necessary contribution to the wider whole, and it is good if it is actually so willed.

In the cases we have considered, the sacrifice is willed by all those whom it affects, in so far as they are good. The wife wills the husband's sacrifice both of her and of himself, and the

[1] St. Luke xiv. 26.

husband wills the wife's sacrifice both of him and of herself. The goodness manifested in the individual's life, which makes the goodness of others also in a way his own, is present in sacrifice as in any other moral action. But the good will may have to work against the will of others so far as they are evil and not good. It may still be right for a man to leave his wife, although it is harder to do so, when her will is set on keeping him instead of giving him to something greater than himself. As we have seen, it is on the same principle that the good man is willing when he demands punishment for the criminal or seeks to kill others in a war of defence. If a punishment is just, it must be that the criminal, if his will were purified, would acquiesce in the justice of his own punishment. And a good man would rather be killed than secure the triumph of evil by killing others. This does not mean that a good man believes that the enemies of his country are acting against their own conscience. They also may believe that their cause is right, and they also may be doing what they think to be a hard and dreadful duty. But no good man can kill others except when he believes that his cause is just and theirs is unjust, and to believe that is to believe that if they were not blinded by passion or ignorance they would also share in his belief. He may still claim that he loves his enemies and seeks their good, and that although he seeks their death he is seeking through their death, not the gratification of his personal desires or the attainment of a national ambition, but the triumph of a universal goodness which, if they saw and willed aright, would be theirs as well as his. He honours even his enemies in so far as they act in the same spirit and display the same virtues as his own. When all men act in this spirit there will be no more war. But this spirit is still weak in the world, and is overcome by national passion and by lack of understanding. The good man must seek to foster this spirit in others as well as in himself, but where selfishness and passion prevail in an incoherent world, his coherent will may be manifested in a struggle for goodness which demands, as in a saner world it never could, the sacrifice alike of himself, and of his friends, and of his enemies, in the service of something which is greater even than his country or any country, and claims the allegiance of all men and of all countries alike. It is only

because of evil that goodness may have to be sought through the shedding of blood, and even a just peace—still more an unjust peace—is a poor result for the death of millions. The evil spirit in man can never be destroyed by mere force. It may be tamed by force in the service of goodness, but only if the goodness is a genuine goodness which seeks in the end cooperation with its enemies in the common living of a good life. A 'war to end war' is not a contradiction in terms. It fails of its purpose in the main because that is not the primary and sole purpose for which men fight. It may in the actual world be hopelessly idealistic to believe that men as a mass will come to fight with that purpose alone, but it is mere common sense that until they are ready to do so there will never be an end of war.

There is another sense in which the genuinely moral life involves sacrifice. The good man is as it were a soldier in a great army, which may be thought of under the image of the Church Militant, and he is obedient to a duty which springs from love. The love is neither the love of abstract victory or of abstract virtue, nor is it the love of individuals, or even of the whole, in abstraction from the qualities which they display or the goal at which they aim. Rather it is a love of the army victorious and courageous, and of its members as working for that victory and manifesting that courage. It is not something cold and calculating, and it admits of nearer and remoter loyalties and loves, so long as these do not mean disloyalty to the whole. The individual soldier takes the risk of wounds and death in the service of what he loves, and of this kind of sacrifice we have already spoken. But beyond all that he may be wounded through his love itself. He must share the pain of love as well as its triumph. His life is at the service of the whole, and in playing his little part he shares the glory of the achievement even in his own suffering and by his own death. But he makes the defeat of the whole his own defeat also, and so increases in himself the possibility of pain. To love another is to face at least the possibility of death and bereavement, and it may be to face the indifference, the contempt, and, what is worse, the unworthiness of the one we love. The lover gives pledges to fortune, he takes off his armour and exposes himself

to the blows of fate. No one can wound us like a lover, and yet surely this is the rich life even if it is full of pain. No man could glorify pain or seek it for himself except through folly, but it is not the part of wisdom to avoid pain by the expedient of avoiding love or avoiding life. *Αἰὶ δ' ἀριδάκρυες ἄνερες ἐσθλοί* was a Greek proverb,[1] and the Greeks were not kill-joys or ascetics. Tears are a part of the human inheritance, and it is not the best man who can escape them. The ideally good man must inevitably in his own person bear the sins and carry the sorrows of the world.

No doubt in this also there may be folly and self-deception. It is not the business of a good man to gloat over his own misery or the misery of others, but rather to play his part with courage and cheerfulness. Every virtue has vice as its shadow, and to feel too consciously the sins and sorrows of the world may be a sign of affectation and conceit and of an unhealthy concern with our emotions. To take pleasure in contemplating pain or evil would nowadays be put down to Sadism, but whatever be its origin it is simply damnable. The good man is not proud of his pain. He cares nothing for his pain, or seeks to care nothing for his pain, because he is not thinking of himself at all. And his pain is at least partially healed by a wide sympathy and toleration, by a finding of good in all men, and above all by a consciousness that he is doing something to diminish the suffering and to save the sinners. We must harden our hearts—although for most of us this is unnecessary—and go on with our job without indulging in sickly and futile sentimentality. It is idle to suppose that the whole pain of the world presses even upon the best of us; we could not bear it if it did. None the less it remains true that greater love means greater pain, and the moral goodness which may be called holy love is inevitably bound up with pain in the actual world, although it would not be so in the world which it seeks to build.

Hence happiness is not the prerogative of the good man in this world. Happiness is largely a matter of health and temperament and even of luck, and there have been many happy old ruffians and sensualists like Mr. Doolittle in Mr. Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, or—to take a greater example

[1] Schol. Ven. A. Hom. Il. i. 349.

—like Sir John Falstaff.[1] Happiness does indeed ordinarily demand a certain competence in the conduct of life, the power of shaping and adhering to a definite policy and not wasting time in futile efforts or in useless regrets. In general it demands also a certain adaptability and a capacity for getting on with others. But there is no simple recipe for happiness. If other things are equal the good man also has his happiness, and perhaps it is a richer and more stable happiness, a happiness which may remain even in the midst of suffering itself. But many of the best men, and indeed even of those who are called saints, have been most unhappy, and although this may be put down harshly to some special flaw, their unhappiness is quite disproportionate to their moral weakness. The good life may be lived in unhappiness, and the good man is not seeking his own happiness but something much more precious. It is just because he does so, that happiness when it comes to him may be so fine a thing. But to urge men to be moral in order that they may be happy is seldom convincing, and it defeats the very aim of morality itself. The good man like any other wishes happiness for himself as well as for others, but happiness cannot be the main object of his life.

There are some who would regard the good life as seeking and finding a salvation which means freedom from all the pains of love as well as from those of individual desire. Great religions have taught this, especially in the East, and it is hardly becoming to dismiss such views as negligible without long and careful examination. But if such a doctrine is true, then it would seem that everything which has been said here is false. However valuable may be the perfection of an individual soul within itself, that perfection must on our view be also a service to others and the manifestation of a wider and perhaps a diviner life. The saint like the artist may have, and indeed must have, a special function to perform, and that special function may absolve him from the ordinary duties and affections of life; but such a special function is none the

[1] Compare Browning, *Confessions*:

> What is he buzzing in my ears?
> 'Now that I come to die,
> Do I view the world as a vale of tears?'
> Ah, reverend sir, not I!

less an element in, and a contribution to, a wider whole. If it is not so, then it may have a value which is either above or below or at any rate different from moral value, but it has in it no kind of moral value at all.

We have described sacrifice as a rational and consistent manifestation of a rational and consistent morality, but we need not deny that in all human activity there is an element of irrationality or at any rate of something which is still relatively opaque to the reflective eye. Courage is not the product of thinking, nor is it wholly transparent to the thought even of those in whom it is displayed. It may be manifested when all a man's powers are at their lowest ebb and all his energies are concentrated on adhering blindly to his purpose. It may come like a sudden inspiration and almost, it would seem, without any kind of thought. And the same is true of sacrifice, which may be a special kind of courage. We must not forget the element of spontaneity which is present in all action and therefore in moral action, nor suppose that moral goodness is merely a kind of wooden and self-conscious consistency. Perhaps the highest kind of human goodness is inseparable from a kind of wildness. None the less a moral act is what we have called the flowering of a whole life, and there is in it nothing more irrational than there is in art or even in thought. The vision simply comes to the artist; and it may be in a sudden flash that the thinker finds the clue to many of his problems. Yet the artist's vision and the expression of it—which are indeed the same—are coherent in themselves and the fruit of a life of imagination and of labour. The sudden insight which comes to the thinker cannot come to those who have not worked long at the problems which seem thus suddenly and easily to be solved. And we all know how the goodness of an act which may be done almost unconsciously may seem to the intelligent observer to be the outcome of a life of service.

The same principles are at work throughout all spiritual life, for all spiritual life is one, and our distinctions of different activities are not distinctions into different selves or souls. We must emphasise again the fact that all goodness is attained only by giving ourselves up to something which may be thought of as other than ourselves. It is because the child gives him-

self up to play that he enjoys it. When he begins to consider whether he is amused, his former occupations become stale and unprofitable. To concentrate on self—which is quite a different thing from concentrating on things we happen to want—is to destroy the good which we might otherwise find. There are many men who cannot be artists because their thought is not on their art but on what wonderful artists they are.[1] And the same is true of thinkers also. We falter and fail when we become self-conscious in the bad sense, and vanity is the enemy of achievement. The life of men is rich through nothing other than their capacity to give themselves up, and the man who is interested in nothing, neither in ideas nor in actions nor in people, has a thin and probably an unhappy life. To seek the narrow self is to make life empty, or rather it is to pursue a mirage. For the self is nothing but what it does, and to seek it in abstraction from its life is to come at the most to some vague and momentary feeling which is of all things the most unsatisfying. The only way for the self to find itself is to look for itself not in itself but in its world. For its world, in Mr. Collingwood's phrase, is the mirror of the mind. And this is at least as true of action as of thought. We must give up ourself in order to find ourself. We must lose our soul in order to save it. We must die in order to live. But while this is true of all action and of all spiritual activity whatsoever, it is true in a special sense of moral action. For then what we give ourselves up to is not a thing nor an object, but a life like our own in which we share, a good will which is at least partly manifested in the world of men. For this reason there is no limit set to our self-denial in the way of duty. It is folly to die for something that is dead, to give up all our life in order to do something which is merely the object of a momentary desire. If it is right to run the risk of death in order to climb a mountain or to discover a pole, that can only be because the practice of courage and the triumph over nature enriches something which is wider than ourselves. There is a difference between dying to gratify an idle curiosity and dying in order to extend the bounds of human knowledge. There is a difference also between dying for the victory of a football team and dying in a war against disease. The only place where it is

[1] Compare Nero: 'Qualis artifex pereo'.

right to die is at one's post, and the ultimate sacrifice can be justified only in the name of morality. We find the moral good as we find every good by giving ourselves up to it with a whole heart. But it is only for a good which lives in others as well as in ourselves, it is only for a good which is richer than any individual life, that a man may reasonably be content to die.

It is not for nothing that the cross has been made the symbol of goodness in our western world. For the cross is the symbol of sacrifice. It is the symbol not merely of service nor even of death for others, but of a shameful death, the death of a criminal and malefactor. To some this may appear unreasonable, and they may demand some emblem of a nobler death or a higher service. But if there could be such an emblem it would be an emblem of lower value, for it would be the emblem of something less than the uttermost sacrifice.

As we have said already, it is not the business of philosophy to preach or to make men moral, but only to understand. Each man must follow his own business and generally knows his own business best, but it is sometimes difficult not to criticise those preachers who waste their time on trivialities and on trying to prove things which can never be proved. Learning and thought are necessary to preaching as well as to anything else, but if I am right it is an impossible task to argue men into goodness, and still more to frighten or cajole them into it. The truth lies open for any man who has eyes to see. There is only one kind of preaching that is of value, and it is the preaching of anyone, however humble, who goes before us carrying his cross, and who in the spirit not of condemnation but of love can ask us to take up our cross and to follow him.

CHAPTER XVI

THE SAINT AND THE DIVINE SOCIETY

We have still to consider the man who is better than his society. If there were no such men it would be difficult for society to improve. The man whose goodness is in advance of his time may render a service to society simply in being what he is; but he renders a greater service if he can carry others along with him, and so set a genuine standard for a new society which may in time be able to make a still further advance.

We have already recognised that the good man cooperates in the full sense with the best elements in his society and not with the worst, and we have assumed that it is as easy —and also as difficult—to distinguish a good man from a bad as it is to distinguish a genuine scientist from a professional quack. The good man of the type we have considered certainly adds to the moral goodness of his society, because that goodness receives a new and original embodiment in him. To be an ordinary good man is not a mechanical job, and every good man may be said to contribute something new to goodness. We may compare him to the plodding scientist without any special genius who works honestly at his own problems, who transmits the discoveries and standards of others, and himself helps to fill up the gaps in established theories and to discover new facts either for their modification or for their support. But it is not through men of this type that a revolution takes place either in science or in society.

Even on this level there is an appeal to a standard which is actual, but is something more than actual, because not all the actual is good. The economically good man, even as isolated, seeks to realise a permanent self, a coherent will, rather than a series of momentary impulses, and he as it were cooperates with his better actions rather than with his worse. The same is true of the morally good man; but in addition to all this he seeks also to cooperate with the better men in his society rather than with the worse, and to realise what

may be called the permanent self or the coherent will of his society. This is very clear of the good man's political actions; for he seeks neither to further the interests of a mere individual or class nor to gratify the momentary appetites even of the whole, but rather to assure the realisation of what has been called, perhaps a little unhappily, the general will of his society; or, more simply, he seeks to secure the triumph of policies, and the achievement of results, which will offer some kind of permanent satisfaction to the members of the society in so far as they are sincerely attempting to lead coherent lives as parts of a coherent whole. The same principle holds in the case of good actions which are less obviously political. The good man is seeking to realise his permanent or higher self which has now become the organ of what may be called the permanent or higher self of his society. What he seeks always and everywhere is the manifestation of coherent willing as an element in a society of coherent wills. In his own coherent willing he makes himself one with all coherent willing; not however merely in the sense that he and others may as individuals have the same kind of coherence in their separate individual lives, but rather in the sense that he and others may in their coherent willings lead, or at least attempt to lead, coherent lives as members of a single coherent whole, that is, as seeking, and seeking with some success, to realise the coherence of the whole in and through their own lives and the lives of their fellow members.

We may assert nowadays with confidence that the coherent whole which the good man seeks to realise and to express through and in his life is a wider whole than that of the nation state. If we make every allowance for the fact that we may have to deal with unscrupulous and aggressive opponents; that there may be no higher court of justice to whose authority and force we can make appeal; and that in such circumstances our duties must be different from those that prevail within a community governed by law; it remains none the less true that we still have duties which go far beyond the limits of our country. Cruelty to any man or to any body of men remains a genuine evil, even if the victims are the citizens of another state. It is not justified because it may

further some real or fancied interest of our own country, any more than gladiatorial shows are justified because they give pleasure to large bodies of men and women. The will to coherence cannot arbitrarily exclude from its scope any will which is capable of willing in the same way and on the same principles as itself. Broadly speaking this is recognised to-day, at least in part, by the ordinary moral consciousness, and many men have given us the example of living in this spirit. To ignore this is to narrow ourselves and to restrict our morality in spite of wider understanding. It is a sin against the light.

To suggest that we must choose between the virile national morality which has made us what we are and some vague form of watery cosmopolitanism is to suggest something which is very far indeed from the present theory. No one could believe in the necessity of such a choice except by a confusion of thought which is almost childish. All that has been said of moral goodness within a state remains true when we consider the wider community. We need not attempt to go over the same ground again, but the community to whom the good man owes allegiance is not a collection of isolated individuals to each of whom he owes exactly the same duty. If it were, the expansion of the moral ideal would simply mean its emptying; for a duty which we owe, and could actually pay, to every isolated individual in the world would be a duty which was not worth paying to any. Our duty is to a society of societies and not merely of individuals. What is due from a man to his wife and family is not due to all women and all families. What is due from him to his country is not due to all countries. As a man usually serves his country best by earning his living and providing for his family, so he usually serves the world best in exactly the same way. But as he may have to set aside the wishes and even the interests of his family in the service of his country, so too he may have to set aside the wishes and even the interests of his country in the service of the world. The principles are the same in both cases, and they require no further elucidation. In the twentieth century it should be unnecessary to insist on such elementary moral truths.

The realisation of such a wider ideal may then, in special cases, set a man against even the considered will of his countrymen, and such a man may perhaps be called better than his society. In opposing his country he may of course be puffed up with ignorance and conceit, or he may be pursuing merely private interests under the cloak of a superior morality. Yet even self-conceit and hypocrisy of this kind are a tribute to, and an evidence of, the very morality which they parody and degrade. All goodness may produce a new kind of badness as its shadow, and this is true both of the lower and of the higher kinds of goodness.

The case however which we are considering is only a special example, and perhaps not a very important one, of the man who is better than his society. The man who opposes the will of his fellow citizens in the interests of a wider whole may be carrying on a tradition which is already present in his world, and following the lead of men who were better and more original than himself. All development of morality as of thought is indeed the continuation and outcome of something that went before, but there are some men who genuinely start a revolutionary movement in the one sphere or the other. And so far from it being true that our doctrine is merely a defence of conventional or at any rate of conservative morality, it would be far truer to describe it as an expression of precisely the opposite point of view. The coherent will cannot be satisfied with a dead or static coherence. Actual revolutionaries may be ignorant, unbalanced, and self-seeking—that is a matter for history and not for philosophy—but the best men, the men who lead rather than follow, the men who are in the profoundest sense better than their society, are, and in general must be, of a revolutionary temperament. That is to say their business is not just to fit in with the existing scheme of things, but rather to alter, and to alter fundamentally, the existing scheme of things in order that they may establish a better.

The political revolutionary is only a minor embodiment of the revolutionary spirit. He is as a rule concerned primarily with the machinery of government and nowadays with the economic organisation of society, two things which do not penetrate very deeply into the nature of men. None the less

to him the social mechanism is instinct with the life of angels or of devils, and, to do him justice, he is not usually aware of the fact that what he is concerned with is the scaffolding rather than the palace of life itself. The scaffolding after all does make a great difference to the kind of edifice which we can build, and although subsequent generations may come to esteem the scaffolding less highly—men have died for ideals which their successors think commonplace or even delusive—those who have built the scaffolding with zeal and constancy have contributed something more than the mere external results of their labour. Political revolutionaries have further a kind of a faith, even if it be a fanatical one, for which they are ready to sacrifice themselves and others. The genuine revolutionary faces real dangers, and is the less likely to deceive himself with sentimental imaginings. He has his feet upon the earth. The methods of the political revolutionary have however already been discussed, and all that can be done here is to reiterate the opinion that in a healthy democracy even revolutionary changes can be best produced, and rendered permanent, by the slow and sure processes of persuasion rather than by the swifter and more uncertain methods of force. The growth of the Labour Party in recent years is a remarkable example of what can be done by unremitting efforts; and if, as appears to be inevitable, a Labour government should succeed in making great changes in the structure of our society, these changes will have a far better chance of success, because there are many opponents of Labour doctrines who respect the Labour Party for its adherence to constitutional methods, and are prepared, like it, to abide by the considered decisions of a politically educated and law-abiding community. Such changes will no doubt be less sudden than the violent changes made in a country like Russia, but perhaps to the eye of the historian they may attain more solid results.

What interests us in this place however is that the revolutionary spirit, which is by no means confined to politics and still less bound up with violence, makes an appeal from the existing society with its actual if imperfect coherence to a more ideal society and a more perfect coherence. The line between it and the spirit of the ordinary good man may

be hard to draw, but there is a real difference between living up to the standards of even the best elements in our society and seeking to establish a new society with new ideals. This difference is not really obscured by the fact that in seeking to bring about a better and more coherent society we work as a rule with others and persuade others to work with us. Nor is it obscured by the fact that we are making an appeal to a good will which is thought to be at least potentially present in our society. Even the believer in bloody revolution imagines that when he has got rid of the obnoxious aristocracy or *bourgeoisie*, the people will have their eyes opened and will follow him with a glad heart. All this may be admitted, but none the less every genuine revolutionary believes that he is preaching a new gospel and is about to establish a new kind of life. This attitude is something very different from the attitude of the average good man.

The revolutionary may be in error both as to the novelty and as to the merits of his gospel. Even when he is sincere he is certain to be surrounded by charlatans and mischief-makers and by those who blame society for the results of their own incompetence. If he is successful he will find it hard to refuse the eager support of hypocrites and time-servers. But it is not impossible for a man or a body of men to make a genuine moral advance, and if it were impossible there could hardly have been such a thing as the progress of any given society—except perhaps by sheer accident or a happy change in circumstances.

Revolutions in action are similar to revolutions in thought. Normally we test truth by whether it fits into the rest of our knowledge, but sometimes we must fit the rest of our knowledge into it. So too normally we can test the goodness of our actions by their coherence with the good life of our existing society, but sometimes we may be asked to rearrange the whole life of society in order that it may accommodate itself to a new ideal. What we have to consider is whether by doing so we can secure a richer and more coherent whole, and while we may sometimes arrive by a reflexion on past experience at the view that this is impossible, we can hardly be confident of the success of our new ideal until we have put it into operation and tested it by the actual experience of life.

In all cases however our appeal is to the coherence of a whole which may at the moment be ideal but is thought capable of becoming real.

The thinker may also be mistaken about the novelty as well as about the truth of his ideas. Those who proclaim most loudly the complete futility of all past thinking are rightly looked upon with suspicion. Their confidence is sometimes the measure of their ignorance, and what they imagine to be new truths are sometimes little more than hoary errors, which win converts rather by the art of the salesman than by the laborious effort of thought. Yet some great thinkers have been acutely conscious of the novelty of their own doctrine, and have not hesitated to prefer a claim that they were making a genuine revolution in philosophy. Such a claim was made for example by Immanuel Kant, and in his case it would be difficult to deny that the claim was just. Even in such instances the historian of philosophy can often see an affinity between the revolutionary philosopher and his predecessors which was not obvious to the philosopher himself, but this does not detract from the genuineness of his achievement. The same thing, we may presume, is true of the great scientists like Darwin or Newton. Not all thinkers who claim novelty for their views are genuinely great, but a great man may mark a turning-point in the development of science or philosophy.

We are concerned primarily not with revolutions in thought or even in politics, but with revolutions in morality itself. Here as in the other cases we may trace a continuity between the ordinary and the extraordinary achievements of men, and we must seek in studying the extraordinary to understand more clearly the principles which are at work everywhere although in a less conspicuous way. The circumstances of society are always changing, and the society as a whole adjusts itself to new circumstances by a series of gradual changes of whose nature it may be almost unconscious, even although they are something more than the mechanical continuation of an already established coherence. And striking moral changes are often occasioned by conspicuous changes in circumstances, which necessitate more heroic and

more self-conscious measures. The excuse for the intelligent political revolutionist is often that his society has failed to adapt itself to new conditions, and is making use of a machinery which may once have been a help but is now a hindrance. The same may be true of the moral reformer, although since he is interested in the things that enter most deeply into human nature, he may be inspired by an increased delicacy of feeling and a profounder understanding of the human heart, rather than by a consciousness of changed circumstances which demand a changed mode of life. All these influences may, however, be at work in the ordinary good man, to whom we do an injustice if we regard him as merely conventional, but they are most conspicuously at work in the lives of those whom we may describe as heroes or saints.

Every moral advance is based upon an existing society. It may be stimulated by a recognition, perhaps sudden, of the actual incoherence of society; but it arises out of past efforts to lead the good life, and it inevitably assumes the genuine goodness of much that is already part of an accepted tradition of living. It does so even when its advocates and supporters are acutely aware of the evils in the society which they seek to reform, and almost unconscious of the beliefs and practices which they have derived from it and continue to accept as good. In this also there is a parallel to the establishment of goodness in the isolated individual self as it becomes conscious of the clashes and jars within a life which is already seeking, and to some extent securing, a coherence which goes beyond the moment. Such consciousness may in some cases —for example in cases of what is called conversion—lead to a sudden and seemingly revolutionary change of policy, but inevitably a great deal of the coherence of the old life survives into the new. If this were not characteristic of every kind of advance the new ideals would be almost wholly arbitrary or entirely empty.

Sometimes a moral advance may be consciously concerned with one definite aspect of life and may otherwise accept unquestioningly the existing standards of its society. Men become conscious of the wrongness of gladiatorial shows or slavery or drunkenness, and begin to set up new standards both for themselves and others. In such cases they are con-

cerned only with a particular source of incoherence in a society which they otherwise accept as good. Naturally enough they may attach undue importance to the particular sphere of action with which they are specially concerned, and judge men to be good or bad, as if rightness in this matter were the only virtue and wrongness in this matter the only vice. On the other hand a big change in any considerable part of life is apt both to make the conscience generally more active, and to entail other and consequent changes which may go far beyond the original object of interest and profoundly affect the character of society as a whole. None the less advances of this kind, while they may be revolutionary enough in their own sphere, are felt to be something less than a complete reversal of all the accepted standards.

Sometimes perhaps an advance may be made by a man who takes more seriously the existing morality, and seeks to carry it out with a greater moral earnestness and a greater delicacy of feeling. Such a change of spirit may be almost unconscious, and the little differences which inevitably follow in the details of good action may pass unnoticed, they grow so naturally and easily out of what went before. Yet the result may sometimes be an added grace and beauty in living, which comes to others as a sudden revelation like a sunset or a great work of art. Goodness in such cases seems to rise altogether above our ordinary world of duties and rights, to be an act of supreme generosity to which we have no claim whatever. It may be found for example in a mercy which is greater than justice and yet in all the circumstances is not unjust. Lives which display this quality have the sweetness and facility of natural growth rather than the harshness and suddenness of revolution, but none the less such lives set for their society a new standard by which the other actions of men are judged.

Lives of this kind may be said to be the natural flowering of a passion or love for the whole, which manifests itself easily and almost unconsciously in all the details of moral action. But sometimes the passion for the whole may take a more conscious and a more violent form. It demands the creation of a new heaven and a new earth, and it meets its actual society with unmeasured and thorough-going con-

demnation. To it the spirit of goodness seems to be wholly lacking in society. Society is rotten through and through, not merely in its parts but as a whole. Root and branch it deserves only the consuming fire. Nothing can save it except utter repentance and an entirely new way of life. The world is simply bad, and we must set over against it an entirely new society which may be called the Church or the Kingdom of God.

This attitude is more intellectual or reflective than the one we have just considered, although it may be bound up with a passion for goodness which is not due to reflection or capable of giving a coherent account of itself. Those who originate such a view, however much they may seem to depend on sudden insight or inspiration, must have tried to stand apart from their society and to look at it as a whole. Their followers of course may be moved more by an infectious enthusiasm or by an appeal to passion than by genuine understanding of the issues which are involved. But wherever such an attitude appears it is inevitably regarded as a menace to an existing society. Those who take this attitude still consider that goodness belongs to men in so far as they function as loyal members of a coherent whole, but the whole of which they are members is a city in the heavens which is not yet established upon the earth. The good man is exempt from all earthly allegiance, and he may attempt to ignore, or if he is thwarted to overturn, all the established institutions of that human society in which his life is set.

There was a good deal of reason for the persecution of the early Christians. They were indeed bidden to render unto Caesar the things that were Caesar's as well as to render unto God the things that were God's; but however humbly they might submit themselves to existing laws which did not impinge upon their faith, they were none the less a revolutionary force in the ancient world. The reason why modern Christians are seldom persecuted to-day is that they have ceased to be exponents of a revolutionary religion and have made a compromise with the world. They accept a society which is at the best only half Christianised as something with which they can genuinely cooperate. In this they may be wise, for there is good in our existing societies, and a

permanently revolutionary attitude may be hard to maintain and unlikely to secure results. But a religion which becomes respectable is in danger of ceasing to be a religion altogether. Mere convention is far more fatal to religion than it is to morality. It is because so much Christianity to-day is conventional, and not merely because of the new intellectual problems which it has hardly yet ventured to face, that it seems to be losing rather than gaining the allegiance of men. When we say this we must not forget that such strength as it has is due to the spirit which may live even within the bonds of a convention and manifest itself in genuinely sincere and religious lives.

The most revolutionary morality or religion cannot altogether ignore the past achievements and ideals of men. If it does so, it results largely in an emptying of life and is in danger of becoming merely grotesque. The empty life tends to become filled with wild and unreasonable passion, and this produces all sorts of absurd sects, ranging from those whose procedure is arbitrary and meaningless to those which sink back into worshipping downright immorality. The coherent whole which is the existing society has worked out some kind of actual coherence which may be improved upon and remodelled, but if we set it aside altogether, and give ourselves to a new whole which contains nothing of the old, the new whole will be devoid of content. The intellectual man may regard it as at the best an empty principle of coherence, while the practical man fills it up with some kind of passion for something he knows not what. The filling of such a whole tends to be merely arbitrary, and so far from being genuinely coherent such a whole may be at the mercy of the strongest passions. Religious ardour may easily degenerate into sexual excess.

We need not attempt here to discuss the conditions under which men may be justified in cutting themselves off from the world, and in seeking to establish a relatively new way of life either for themselves or for society as a whole. It is possible that a society may become so degenerate, a morality or religion so formal and petrified, as to necessitate heroic measures of this kind. The severance is not likely to be so complete as its advocates and supporters imagine, but

we need not doubt that there may be a real change, and even a genuine advance, by these methods, although as in all revolutions there is always the risk of losing more than we gain. What I should wish however to suggest is this, that movements of this kind indicate what may be called the infinite demands of morality, by which morality itself passes over into something which may perhaps more properly be called religion—although it may be wiser to regard it as simply the highest expression of the moral will itself. The appeal to an entirely new and perfect society is generally accompanied by the belief that the perfect society is already somehow real.

The moral will, as it becomes conscious of its own nature, seems to seek and to demand for its completion a coherent whole of coherent wills such as is not realised in any existing society and perhaps cannot be realised in any possible society upon this earth. The very discontent of the whiners and the whimperers at human fate seems to spring from some immortal longings, some desire for a solider and more perfect good than anything that is within our grasp. The genuine moral revolutionaries, in comparison with whom mere political revolutionaries are stolid and *bourgeois* citizens of our earthly commonwealth, seem sometimes to despise all possible human societies alike, and to behave as if they were citizens of another country altogether. They cannot be satisfied with what they consider to be mere compromises with evil. They expect all men to be saints. They demand that all men should be perfect organs of one all-inclusive and all-perfect coherent will.

The moral will, as we have already seen, appears to be aiming at just such a goal under the finite conditions and limitations of human life. It accepts as its setting a physical world which moves mechanically by the laws of cause and effect, and it seeks to use that world as an instrument of the moral life. It accepts also the continuity between its own spiritual life and that physical world out of which it appears to have sprung; and, what is most noteworthy, it accepts something like the intrusion of nature into spirit in the form of desires and instincts deter-

mined by the natural evolution and the bodily structure of men. These desires and instincts are not indeed just ordinary nature, and the causality—if it be causality—by which they are produced is not just ordinary causality. There is in them something of the nature of spirit which seeks to establish an intelligible coherence within itself; and they are not dead stones which have to be fitted somehow into the edifice of life, but rather organic parts of an organic whole in whose developing life their very nature and function is transformed and determined. All the desires of men come to have a new meaning and value in a wider whole, as the lives of men themselves have a new meaning and value in the wider whole of which they feel themselves and will themselves to be parts. None the less this wider society itself not only attains to a very imperfect kind of coherence, but, even if it could attain to a greater coherence than any society which we can conceive, would none the less be set against a background of nature to which it is alien; would be at the mercy of chances over which it has no control; and would still contain within its own life an element, at the best imperfectly rationalised, which springs, not out of the intelligible necessity imposed by a will seeking only to realise its own coherence, but partly at least out of the blind working of our human bodies, which are insignificant fragments of a physical universe as well as the instruments and vehicles of what we call our reasonable souls. And in all this it would seem to fall short of the ideal implicit in the moral will.

We are now considering the moral life, not in its imperfect strivings, but rather as what it might be if its efforts were to meet with complete success. We are seeking to extract from it the ideal which appears to be implied in all its struggles, an ideal which alone can render its progress fully intelligible. There is obviously a danger of flying off to a realm which is wholly fanciful, if we attempt to separate the ideal from its actual manifestations in ordinary life, and it cannot be said that such an ideal can be apprehended in its fullness by a reflective understanding. To be understood it must be lived. Yet reflexion upon it may not be unprofitable, and I venture to say that the complete realisation of a coherent moral will could not be attained on the view of the world and the spirit

which we have hitherto accepted. It could be attained only if the physical world which seems so alien to spirit, and the obscure desires which seem to be so intimately involved with the physical world, were themselves nothing other than the expression of a coherent will, such as we seek to realise in our own moral life. The triumph of morality would seem to involve the reality of a society of spirits, beyond and apart from which there was no alien reality governed by other laws than that of the coherent will itself. Such a society would not include within its own life any intractable element such as the obscure working of natural desires, and the mutual externality of its members which comes from the presence of merely individual desires would be overcome. One coherent and rational will would be manifested in all its members, and they would together constitute one society of wills which was rational through and through, which formed one whole such as may be conceived on the analogy of a single and perfectly coherent life, and which had over against it no alien world which was genuinely other than itself.

We must pass over, or rather admit freely, the obvious objection that such a view is a too hurried conclusion from our study of the good will, and the further and equally obvious objection that an ideal of this kind must be to our human eyes almost empty of content, even if it be not in itself an essentially empty ideal. We have sought hitherto to keep our feet planted on the solid earth of actual experience, and we may perhaps claim at the end a modest licence to speculate for a little on the more ultimate questions which are raised by the nature of the moral life. It would be unwise to suggest that the assured presence of such an ideal as has been described in the very texture of the moral will is itself satisfactory evidence that the moral will is capable of realising in the world that ideal at which it seems to aim. It would be still more unwise to suggest that because men who seek to realise the ideal of a perfect society have boldly asserted the reality of the society which they seek, their assertions may therefore be accepted as true. Such a claim must meet the obvious answer that the wish is father to the thought. What we may reasonably suggest is that our doctrine, or rather the nature of the moral will as we understand it, raises the question

whether the actual experience with which we have ordinarily to be content is as solid as it seems; whether or not the real world, if it were fully understood, might be itself in accordance with the demands of the moral will; whether or not the externality of the world and the relative opaqueness of desire may themselves be some sort of illusion and the product of some kind of misunderstanding. Must I regard myself as a trembling stranger in an alien world, or may I look upon my life as part of a coherent and reasonable and all-inclusive whole of life, in a way which is foreshadowed by the way in which a moral action may be a part of my own coherent and reasonable life and of the coherent and reasonable life of my society?

This is a question which cannot be settled by moral philosophy in any restricted sense. It is a matter for metaphysics or perhaps better for philosophy as a whole. But it may be observed that the same sort of ideal appears to be present also in our search for truth. The theoretical activity seeks to construct a coherent and reasonable and all-inclusive whole of truth such as cannot be realised in a finite life or even in an indefinite series of finite lives. It seems from the very first to be moved by such an ideal, although it is only as it approaches, however inadequately, to that ideal that it begins to be conscious of what its ideal is. It too is faced with an external world set over against it and moved in accordance with the laws of cause and effect which are other than its own intelligible laws of thinking. It too seems to admit into its own citadel, and as the very condition of its own life, the obscure deliverances of sense, which, in spite of their spiritual character as aiming at some kind of coherence which goes beyond the moment, seem also to be bound up with a bodily constitution and even continuous with a purely physical life. And it too, because of the purely individual character of sense perception, seems to be thwarted by the invincible externality of finite minds to one another. Yet under such conditions it would seem to be only imperfectly itself, and however great might be its triumphs, it would still yearn dissatisfied for a more complete realisation of itself in the knowledge of a world in which this externality and obscurity was wholly overcome.

Here again the demand of the theoretical spirit—if such be its demand—is not to be urged as a reason for believing anything about a world which is admittedly external to the spirit by which the demand is made. By that method we can make no advance at all. Still less is an advance to be made by shutting our eyes to the discoveries of science and contenting ourselves with some vague world of emotion and imagination. Of all expedients this is the most pitiful. It is disloyalty alike to our ideals of truth and of goodness. It is to show the spirit of an ostrich rather than of a man. Thinking, to discover truth, must first of all be true to itself, and so far from turning its back upon its greatest achievements, it must seek to penetrate more deeply into the nature of its own scientific methods and of the world which through these methods is becoming slowly more transparent to our understanding.

It is difficult for the scientist, whose whole life is concerned with the facts of nature and the laws of cause and effect, to admit that there may be in reality more than natural facts and causal laws. He accepts the fact of their apprehension as if that required no explanation at all. And it is difficult for the philosopher, who concerns himself mainly with reflexion upon spiritual activities and is ordinarily without experience of the detailed practices of the scientist, to take the world of the scientist with that seriousness which it deserves. He accepts it, if he is wise, with his head, but he may not altogether accept it with his heart. It is something which he admits, but it is not part and parcel of his thinking nor woven into the very fabric of his life. These are however in both cases merely psychological considerations. They suggest dangers against which each type of man must be on his guard, but they are irrelevant to the ultimate truth about the nature of the world.

If we are to get beyond the scientific point of view, we must do so only by understanding better what the scientific point of view is, and by assuming that the scientific method may be pursued with ever greater and greater success. Such an understanding and assumption must not be superficial or hurried, and it is very easy for inadequate reflexion to arrive

at wholly unwarranted results. Yet while we may regard this as still in many ways a debatable question, it is dangerous to set limits beforehand to the march of science or to exclude any possible object of reflexion from the working of causal law. The nature of causality as we understand it may indeed, and perhaps must, come to be modified as it brings ever new territory under its jurisdiction, but none the less we may be prepared to admit the possibility that our whole world, including not only the life of organic bodies but even the desires and perceptions, the actions and thoughts, of men, may come to be apprehended as a coherent whole of objects which is obedient in some way to the laws of cause and effect. If we decline to entertain this even as a possibility, we may be putting ourselves in the position of Canute and making a wholly futile effort to stop the advancing tide.

Yet to suppose that such a possibility were actually realised—and it is at present very far from being realised—would be only the beginning of other and more serious questions. It is not possible here even to outline and still less to debate such questions, but it is not to be believed that a world so apprehended would through this alone be a genuinely intelligible world. It would be riddled through and through with manifest contradictions, and in the end it would be unintelligible as a whole, as it admittedly is in its isolated parts. The parts are in themselves unintelligible, and demand for their explanation that they should be caused by other parts which are equally unintelligible and so on *ad infinitum*. Nor would this difficulty be surmounted by the substitution of other scientific categories for the category of causation. The whole would be merely another given fact, no more intelligible than any isolated given fact; and in some ways it would be peculiarly unintelligible, because it would not even seem, as do other isolated facts, to be given as a whole at all. Strictly speaking neither it nor any of its parts would be genuinely given or genuinely intelligible, and the question which we should have to raise would be whether, admitting that the scientific explanation was true so far as it went, it yet remained a superficial and abstract way of understanding the universe, just as the Behaviourist philosophy—we say nothing of it as a useful psychological

method—is a superficial and abstract way of understanding our human experience.

These are high matters to which no adequate answer can be offered here. If science is to be regarded as superficial and abstract, it must be so only from a more ultimate point of view which can take over all the working and the results of science and see them in their place as elements in a wider and more intelligible whole. And it is only too manifest that the comprehension of such a whole must be for us necessarily imperfect, and may be charged with a greater degree of abstractness and superficiality than the science which it so easily condemns. The most that can be done here is to assert the belief that no view can be adequate or complete which seeks to regard the world merely as a thing, which is so content with its own abstractness as to regard objects as if they were things in themselves wholly unaffected by the nature of the mind which knows them. Such a view if it is honest with itself must cease in the end to be dogmatic, and will inevitably find that the thing in itself is not only unaffected by our knowing but is something which we can never know. It reaches the climax of misunderstanding when it regards the knowing self merely as one of the many objects which it knows, and it appears to me that the inevitable consequence of such a train of thought is to regard the knowing self, by a curious sort of paradox, as something which neither is known nor even is in any sense at all.

I submit then that however much truth may be attained by a method which is content to accept the world simply as an object to be investigated, that truth must remain abstract and incomplete, and that method ultimately dogmatic and uncritical. And I venture to suggest that many of the weaknesses of modern philosophy can be traced to no other source. The method as an all-sufficient method becomes almost grotesque and its limitations leap to the eye, when it is applied, as is only natural and right, not only to the bodies of living organisms and of man but to the life of mind itself. Such a method cannot give a complete account of reality, because it cannot give any account of itself. The account which the mind can give of itself both as thinking about the world and as thinking about its own thinking is, on our view,

a matter of the most vital importance in the determination of the nature of reality. To ignore that question is simply to evade an issue which having once been clearly raised cannot be passed over in silence without treason to the cause of truth itself. To attempt to answer it on the basis of regarding the mind as a series of observed objects is surely a doubtful procedure even as a means to abstract truth, and an almost ludicrous procedure if we demand something more than even the most valuable of abstractions. And while it would be foolish to ignore the great difficulties involved and to dispose of such a question offhand in a spirit of foolish dogmatism, I cannot exclude as a possible, and perhaps as the only possible, answer the doctrine that reality is nothing other than spirit itself, which overcomes the abstract antithesis of subject and object and is able alike to enjoy and to reflect upon its own spiritual life.

Even to touch upon the difficulties of such a conception would carry us far beyond our proper task, and I have throughout attempted to carry on the discussion on more common-sense lines, accepting as far as possible the ordinary beliefs upon which good men normally act. I believe that such a procedure is the safest and most convincing in any introduction to moral philosophy, and, as far as the theory of the world is concerned, it is enough if we can establish the doctrine which was propounded at the beginning—that in good actions and true thoughts we can find, and must find, something more than causal relations between objects of contemplation or reflexion. The present study has, I hope, shown in the case of will that there is in it more than a series of contemplated events causally related; that it is a self-mediating and self-transcendent activity which is aiming at its own coherence; and that it is to be understood by a reflexion which differs from scientific reflexion on the external world, inasmuch as it presupposes, and necessarily presupposes, another kind of knowledge which may be called enjoyment. Beyond that we need only affirm again that those who are complacently satisfied with a hurried extension of their unexamined causal principles to spiritual life, and imagine that they can in this way forecast and circumscribe the advance of knowledge, are throwing doubt upon the truth

of their own theories, and falling into contradictions which are clamorous in their demand for a solution. If their views are true, there is no truth in any science or in any thinking, the whole of the laborious efforts of the human race are vain and empty, and the whole choir of heaven and furniture of earth are something less than the dream of a shadow. For if these doctrines are true, neither these nor any other doctrines can be true at all.

We must therefore refuse to be intimidated by any *a priori* dogmatism which asserts the impossibility of either thought or action, and in particular of that moral action of which we have attempted to give a rational account. Yet we must recognise that such an account demands in the end for its defence a theory of the nature of something which, in opposition to mere causality, we may call freedom. Such a theory must necessarily be a part of a wider theory of the world, and cannot be considered except at much greater length than is here possible. All that can be said here is that such freedom is not a negative conception nor does it mean absence of causality. Old-fashioned indeterminism had no other merit than that of being a natural protest of the human mind against a doctrine which seemed to threaten its very existence. It met the threatened attack with little more than bare denials incapable of bearing serious scrutiny. We cannot to-day be satisfied with mere negation, but must pass on to the more positive view that freedom is to be found in spiritual life so far as that is spiritual, that is, so far as it is rational or good or coherent in the senses which we have attempted to describe. It may be that freedom is a spiritual or intelligible necessity, but to say this is to indicate the nature of the problem rather than to suggest even the first sketch of the solution.

It is enough for our purposes that the nature of the world should be such as to make it not impossible for morality to develop within it. The description of that morality, if it be true, inevitably throws light upon the nature of the world, but it is difficult to believe that our moral judgements are by themselves so sure as simply to override all judgements whatsoever whenever there happens to be any sort of clash or contradiction. It is also difficult to be satisfied with the

Kantian view that our practical reason entitles us to a faith in the character of the real which can at the most be considered as not impossible by the theoretical reason. Such a divorce between the practical and the theoretical reason seems to be indefensible. The same principles are at work in the practical and the theoretical reason alike, and the same kinds of error and misunderstanding are possible in regard to both of them. If we make a sharp separation between the two, it is only the theoretical reason which in view of all the facts of experience, including of course experience itself, is entitled to pass judgement upon the nature of a reality which at the very least admits within itself the spiritual activities of thought and action.

None the less our brief and inadequate notice of these ultimate problems is not unnecessary, for the possibilities therein considered appear to be ideals which are not only implicit in the moral life, but are explicitly present and consciously accepted in a development of the moral life itself, or more precisely in what we may call religious morality or the morality of the saint. The religious consciousness is something more than a theoretical attitude. It involves a way of life which must be called moral, even if it be something more; and that way of life, at least in some aspects of it, appears to be a higher manifestation of the principles of morality. In it the moral consciousness seems to attain, or at least to anticipate, its triumph, to become fully aware of its own nature, and to grasp at once in thought and action its mastery over itself and over the world. And while this may be true even of the ordinary religious man who has taken fire from those who are greater than himself, it is most conspicuously true of the great leaders and religious geniuses who may be described as saints in the more restricted meaning of that word.

The paradox of the religious consciousness is that it is engaged in a life and death struggle of which the issue is not doubtful. For it the battle is already fought and the victory already won. However much it may insist on the reality of sin, on the pains of death and on the pangs of hell, it recognises in God an omnipotent and all-holy will which has

created and governs the world, and has nothing outside it which could be a genuine obstacle to itself. Such a divine will does all things wisely and well, and on the practical side the religious man surrenders his finite and individual will so that it may become the vehicle of an infinite and divine will which is already real. The good man in this high sense cooperates in and with a divine society, which has no mechanical and alien world set over against it, and is always and everywhere coherent with itself. In this way he achieves a higher goodness which may be called holiness, and treachery to this ideal is inevitably that darker kind of wrong-doing which goes by the name of sin.

The puzzles and difficulties and paradoxes and even the seeming contradictions of such an attitude need not here concern us. It is certainly difficult to reconcile with the observed facts of experience, with the blind mechanism of the world and all the seemingly chaotic accidents and wanton cruelties of life. Like any other spiritual attitude it is liable to misunderstand itself, and passing over into the sphere of theory to insist dogmatically upon conceptions which are incapable of rational justification and inconsistent with its own nature. And again, like any other spiritual attitude it is capable of degeneration and distortion, and it may fall more disastrously because of the greater heights to which it may ascend. But in some ways we can describe most clearly and simply the nature of morality at its best, by saying that to be good is to do the will of God, or that it is to love God with all one's heart and one's neighbour as oneself. Such a view is indeed abstract and false, if it makes God external to His universe and to His creatures, and so regards Him merely as a finite and individual person; and it becomes positively immoral, if it regards the will of God as an arbitrary and irrational and all-powerful will. But in our western world we have refused to profit by the actual manifestations of the religious spirit, if we fail to recognise that the God who is the object of love and obedience is the God who is incarnate in man, that is in man so far as he is good. God's truth is no use to us unless in a way it is also ours, and it may be thought of as our truth made completely coherent with itself, or as the actual realisation of that coherent

whole of thinking toward which we strive. And God's goodness is also no use to us unless it is also ours. His will may be thought of as our will made coherent with itself, or as the actual realisation of that completely coherent whole of willing which the moral will is always seeking to attain. This conception remains a rational, and perhaps also a necessary, conception, whether we regard it as a mere idea of reason or as a genuine knowing of the ultimate reality. The religious consciousness certainly accepts God not as ideal but as the ultimately real; and it makes the whole goodness of God's universe its own, by what we may call, in our more prosaic language, a cooperation with the divine will, which is more than a merely external cooperation and is rather the manifestation of the divine will itself within the narrow limits of a finite life.

Such a conception, full as it is of difficulties, is none the less merely a continuation and expansion of the doctrines which have been expounded throughout this book. In the light of it we can understand better what is meant by the love of one's neighbour. For love of one's neighbour is what we may call a holy and universal rather than a merely personal and arbitrary love; and one's neighbour is to be loved not simply as another and external and finite will, to which, as in the foolish language of altruism, one arbitrarily surrenders one's own finite and personal will, but rather as equally with ourselves a manifestation of the divine and perfect will of God. Hence the love of our neighbour is a particular manifestation of the love of God, and we love him not more than, but simply as, we love ourselves. Yet it need not be thought that in this again we fall back upon an abstract individualism, setting God as one individual over against individual men who are related in exactly the same way to each other and to Him. Rather, if we understand it aright, the divine society is a communion of saints in which each man has his peculiar place and his individual relations with the different individuals and societies which comprise the whole.

It is impossible here to consider how far all this is to be regarded as mythology and how far it is sober truth. Without doubt it has the value of mythology in the Platonic sense,

that is to say it is at least a symbolic and imaginative statement of something which is capable of being stated and defended in more philosophical terms. But whatever it may be, it is at any rate an ideal which is actually fruitful in the lives of men. It is and has been the background and the inspiration of the saintly life. Saints may be troublesome and difficult and inclined to condemn existing societies. They have in many ways more kinship with the rebels than with the conventional pillars of society, and that is why they tend to consort with sinners. It has even been said that while mediocrities walk comfortably along the highway the saint and the sinner meet in gaol. We persecute the saints when they are alive, and we canonise them only when they are dead. Yet even if we regard them as inspired by a kind of divine madness, we must none the less recognise that we owe to them much in the way of moral advance. We adore them for that which by their aid we have won, however much we may resent them when they press upon us the necessity for further progress. Not all men can be saints, but we need the saints to remind us of the higher life and the unattained ideal, of a whole-hearted and unrestricted devotion to the welfare of the whole, which cares nothing for the narrow interests of self or class and nothing for the mechanical conventions and blind stupidities of men. To say this is to justify the saints on a level which they themselves would not accept, but such justification may have at least its lower truth.

If however we accept the saintly life as something more than an inspired madness which, like the equally inspired madness of the poet, may be of value to society when kept within reasonable bounds, if we regard it as the highest expression of morality and the triumph of that love which is divine reason, we have still other problems to face. The theoretical problem we have already touched upon, and we would only add that an acceptance of the supreme excellence of the saints need not mean an acceptance of the orthodox theology in which many of them may have believed, for there is no reason to suppose that a saint is necessarily a coherent thinker, or even that he is capable of supplying an adequate theory of his own experience. It does not even mean an

acceptance of an unorthodox theology, which too often clings pathetically and blindly to a few poor remnants of the old theology it has rejected, or lets itself sink into vague and sloppy sentimentality which can hardly be dignified by the name of thought at all. The old theology was at the least a genuine and hard-headed attempt to understand its own world and its own experience in the light of all contemporary knowledge, and no theology can be of any value if it is content with a lower ideal. Genuine thought must be living and not dead, and a thought which lives only by rejecting the greater part of past thinking and accepting the remainder has to be satisfied with the fragments of a dead whole, although the fragments must so to speak be doubly dead, when they are separated even from the dead whole in which they were once alive. Men must think out their problems as a whole in the light of new knowledge and new experience, and they cannot be satisfied with fragments of an old theology, supplemented though it be by a little second-hand science, by a half-hearted adaptation of modern philosophy, or even by the most liberal use of the jargon of the new psychology. Methods of this latter kind may offer a temporary support to a wavering faith, but they will never lead a faith onward to new triumphs. Such a statement no doubt requires qualifications into which we cannot enter. Our present concern is rather with the practical problems raised by accepting the saintly life as the highest kind of goodness in action.

To accept the ideal of the saintly life as the highest expression of the moral will is not to say that all men should be saints. Religious genius, like any other kind of genius, is rare, and even apart from that the work of the world must be carried on. It would be impossible, even if it were desirable, for all men to cultivate the religious life as their main concern in the world. The specialisation of men with natural gifts and an appropriate training is as necessary to the saintly life as it is to any other supreme achievement of the human spirit. Even the saint, citizen though he be of a heavenly commonwealth, cannot wholly forget the earthly kingdom in which his life is set. If he demands that all men be saints and nothing but saints, he would seem, at least to the eye of common sense, not only to be a menace to society, but also to be in

danger of narrowing and emptying the moral life itself. The world requires all sorts of people for the development of the coherent good life, and it is a narrow point of view which would ignore the necessity of having good doctors and good poets and even good engineers. To accept a doctrine of this kind would be to turn our backs on all that we have learned. This is the way of fanaticism and not of wisdom. It is all very well to live in Heaven, but we could not get along at all unless most men were content to play a part in the ordinary work of the world.

None the less if we accept saintliness as an ideal, we set up a standard by which all our acts are to be judged, and we recognise at least the possibility of a higher type of coherence even in our human society. What the saint actually does may belong to himself alone, but the spirit in which he does it should be manifested in a different way in all the various avocations and pursuits of men. In that sense the saint does demand, and rightly demand, that all men should be saints. If he be genuinely understood and accepted as a standard or ideal, then to fall away from that ideal is to be conscious of unworthiness, just as a coherence once manifested in action within the individual life makes merely impulsive actions seem to be unworthy. The saint demands, not that we should be like him, but that we should cooperate with him in his holy task. And here as always genuine cooperation means a willing in the same spirit, even although we are leading a totally different kind of life. The true saint does not ask all men to give up the world in order to lead the specifically religious life, but he does ask them to live their lives not merely in the service of their country or of mankind. He asks them to lead their different lives as he leads his, both as a service to others and—if we may borrow the language of religion—to the glory of God.

A change in spirit would seem to show itself also as a change in the character of what is done. We cannot say *a priori* what this latter change is likely to be. It will appear partly perhaps as an added grace and charm in all our living, because of the richer self which is manifested in even the most insignificant of our actions. In this respect we may

perhaps compare it, in the language which Aristotle used of pleasure, to the bloom upon the cheeks of youth. But it may show itself also more definitely, and perhaps more conspicuously, in doing some things which otherwise would not have been done.

The most obvious of such actions are probably those which are directed to the cultivation of the religious spirit itself. Actions of this kind are present at all levels of goodness. Even the isolated individual would have to practise acts of self-control and discipline, merely in order that he might strengthen his will to establish coherence within his own life. As we penetrate more deeply into the nature of goodness we attach more and more importance to the spirit of an action, and it is inevitable that we should also attach more and more importance to actions which are specially calculated to exercise and strengthen that spirit. This is familiar to every schoolboy and to every soldier, and is the main reason for the scrupulousness of the good man in matters which may seem to be comparatively insignificant. He may seek to live in such a way as to strengthen in himself not merely courage or self-control but even humility or purity of heart. And most if not all religions seem to insist upon rites and practices which are at least partly intended to foster the spirit of religion, although they may be conceived as also a duty to God and a means of receiving His grace.

It is possible to attach undue value to such rites and practices, at any rate in the case of those who are not devoted to what is called specifically the religious life. Church-going is a poor substitute for that divine service which consists in living the whole life in the spirit of love to God and man. None the less it may well be that those who seek to lead ordinary lives in a religious way will perform special acts for the strengthening of the religious spirit. It has been so in the past and is likely to be so in the future. And in this some men may be satisfied to cultivate the religious life in isolation in such ways as seem to them best. Even men who have given their lives entirely to the pursuit of religion have done so as hermits rather than as members of a community. In so doing they also may have performed their function in society, but if we are right, if religion like morality has a

definitely social aspect, then the normal way of cultivating either the religious or the moral spirit would seem to be partly at least of a social character. The church in heaven seems to demand a church on earth, and the special practice of religion, not only in the case of the saint, but also in the case of the ordinary religious man, seems as a matter of experience to be carried on most naturally and easily within the walls of a special social institution which is known as a church.

We need not discuss the dangers which arise from such institutions, dangers not only to society but to religion itself. Social institutions demand organisation, and organisation tends to destroy the living spirit for whose sake alone it exists. It tends also to be captured and used by a spirit of vain-glory and a desire for power in those who perform the chief functions and exercise the chief authority within the institution itself. The vanity and turbulence of priests has often been, and still is, one of the main obstacles to the religious life. But such things may be looked upon as the darker shadows inevitably produced as the light of goodness becomes more intense. The problem for the ordinary religious man is not the organisation of the church, but the kind of instrument by which he may best strengthen the religious attitude in himself and in others. Sometimes a man may make use of the traditional rites and practices of his forefathers. In this he may do wisely, for he walks in a way that is hallowed by centuries of experience and found satisfying by men of his own type and blood. Sometimes he may believe that the old methods are no longer adequate in the light of fuller knowledge and profounder insight. In such cases he may seek to build up a new religious society altogether. To do so, however, demands great spiritual power and a religious genius which is given to few, and for most men at most times it may be better to remain within existing institutions, so long as these are genuine channels of the spiritual life. For religion is not a matter of theory, and men may be united in a cooperative effort to cultivate and strengthen the religious spirit, even while they differ widely about the intellectual implications of what they are doing.

None the less great divergence of theory may make

practical cooperation impossible. The ideal of religion is to unite intellectual agreement with spiritual communion, and if a man is to get any benefit from connexion with a church, he must be able to regard its doctrine as the expression, even if it be an imaginative and imperfect expression, of a profounder philosophical truth. Every great religion has however something of this character, except to a man who regards all religion as superstition and self-delusion; and no religion could retain its hold over men unless it appealed to something deeper than mere emotion. It is only the blind who can fail to see the philosophical truths which are embodied and expressed in the Christian tradition, in spite of all the narrowness and misunderstanding of the warring sects. Men who have something of this deeper vision may, without hypocrisy, claim a place in the service of a church whose traditional doctrines are expressed in language very different from their own. To such men the bitter antagonisms and the petty quarrels of the different sects are a mockery of religion, and even the conscientious scruples by which one church will rigidly exclude the members of another from its sacraments are a pitiful product of spiritual blindness, and an unmitigated misfortune in a world of scepticism and sin. We may respect, even if we must repudiate, the coherent fanaticism of those who are ready to condemn their fellows to eternal perdition on a subtlety of doctrine or a particular point of ritual; but it is difficult not to think that men, who, while they do not regard heretics as irretrievably lost, would in all circumstances exclude from their worship and from their sacraments those who hold in the main the same doctrines and seek to realise the same ideals, are adopting an attitude which is the very antithesis of the spirit of Christ. Every church must have its own discipline and order, but the width of its sympathy is the measure of its greatness, and a man belonging to another church, or to no church at all, may feel that he is united on a wider view with the real source of inspiration, and with the essence of what is genuinely religious, even in those by whom he is narrowly condemned.

The main point with which we are concerned is, however, not the specifically religious practices but rather the ordinary

moral actions which are the outcome of the religious attitude to life. On this we need say little. It is hardly necessary to remind ourselves that we speak, not of the saints who are a law to themselves, but of their humbler followers in an imperfect world. And in view of all that has been said, we may omit any discussion of a view which seeks to find the stimulus to moral action in the desire for heaven or in the fear of hell. Such a view is a kind of theological utilitarianism which has nothing to do with genuine morality, and still less with genuine religion as we understand it. It may have induced some of the lower type of men to perform some right actions which otherwise would not have been performed, and to avoid some wrong actions which otherwise would not have been avoided, but it has been, not only the outcome of a gross philosophical error, but also the source of incalculable moral harm.

The religious spirit at its best gives men new strength for the battle and an added sweetness and grace in all the ways of life; but it may be doubted whether it very greatly alters the character of the actions which are already the expression of the moral will. To it prayer and worship and communion with the divine may become a new manifestation of goodness and a new kind of duty. For duty will continue to exist even on the level of religion, so long as men are liable to fall below the level of their higher selves. But such duties are definitely religious duties, and even in so far as they are cooperation with men they are cooperation with men in the worship of the divine. All the cooperation of the religious man with others may indeed be said to be religious cooperation; he cooperates with them as manifestations of the divine will, as seeking to realise the Kingdom of God on the earth; but in cooperating with them in the ordinary affairs of life he is only doing, although perhaps in a richer and fuller way, what has been done by the morally good man from the beginning. For moral cooperation is already cooperation with men as divine, as seeking to realise in themselves and in others that coherent and reasonable will which is their highest selves. We need not deny that an attitude which finds this coherent and reasonable will, not merely in imperfect humanity, but also as the all-inclusive reality of which human lives are

only a part, may produce a greater scrupulousness in action, which in turn may lead to new kinds of good action and to the consciousness of new duties. This is the way of all advance; but it is theoretically false, and also practically unwise, to speak as if morality were merely a derivative of religion, or even to exaggerate, as the religious man is apt to do, the practical difference which is made by religion in the world. I have tried to show that morality, as it exists to-day, is, just as much as science, or history, or philosophy, a rational product of the human spirit working under its own finite limitations, even in a world which it accepts as alien to itself. All the different activities of the spirit may be said to develop together out of one relatively undifferentiated whole, but it is truer to say that religion at its best is the most supreme development of the moral will, and perhaps even, if we interpret it widely enough, of the theoretical activity, rather than to say that religion is the foundation upon which morality is built. The latter view has truth, only if we take it in the sense that in spiritual things the higher is the explanation of the lower, rather than the lower the explanation of the higher. It has the same sort of truth and the same sort of error as the statement that science or history is founded upon philosophy. If understood in the way in which it would normally be understood by simple men, it is altogether false, and would lead to neglect of the laborious methods of morality, just as a similar statement similarly understood about philosophy would lead to neglect of the laborious methods of history and science.

'Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die' is not the inevitable alternative to a morality founded upon a particular religion, or even to a morality founded upon a religion which demands a belief in a personal God and a personal immortality. To say so is special pleading; it is false to the facts of history; it shows a lack of philosophical understanding and a failure to appreciate some of the highest achievements of the human race. It may indeed make some difference whether we regard men as immortal citizens of a divine kingdom or as mere creatures of a day, as sons of God and temples of the Holy Ghost or as the miraculous appearance of something half divine springing up for a few brief centuries out of a mechanical

or animal world. On the latter view we need not deny that some men, perhaps not the best, may be tempted to play a little more in the sunshine while they have it, to give freer rein to their animal impulses, to be a little less careful of preserving intact that diviner spirit which is so miraculously theirs. Some men may consider it not altogether reasonable that a finite and temporal spirit should claim, for a fleeting moment, an infinite and eternal good, when time, as they think, will bring to them not only their own ending but the ending of their race, and the destruction of humanity will be the destruction of all spirit and of all value, leaving behind it only

> The wide, gray, lampless, deep, unpeopled world.[1]

Such an attitude may indeed be pardoned, but goodness does not cease to be goodness because of the shortness of the time through which it appears. And some men may rather ask themselves how they can best help their brothers in the brief light of sunshine which precedes their eternal night. Religion may be the completion of morality, and may assure us of that victory which we seek in the world, but it cannot make good evil or evil good. It is not less moral to fight for a victory whose issue is in doubt and whose attainment may be forgotten; and in so doing men at least cannot be accused of fighting in order to win any external reward.

It is not our business to discuss the truth of the two opposing views, or to examine the arguments for personal immortality or for the spiritual character of the universe. The question of personal immortality is one of less importance than the question whether the universe is in its real nature a blind mechanism, or something akin to ourselves of which we are a part. And the former question, intimately as it may touch our more tender feelings, is not only subordinate to the latter in theory, but has a less immediate and direct bearing upon the nature of the moral will. If we are right, the good man, and still more the religious man, is aiming at the realisation of a divine goodness, and only as it were incidentally at its realisation through him or through any finite creature whom he loves with a personal affection. Men who possess

[1] Shelley, *The Cenci*, V. iv. 59.

the religious spirit demand a personal immortality for themselves and others, only in so far as that may be necessary for the realisation of a divine goodness, and not in so far as it is thought to be the satisfaction of a merely individual desire. The most that we can say here is that no finite manifestation of goodness could ever be wasted, or be genuinely external to such an infinite and all-inclusive spiritual life as is asserted by the religious spirit and, it may be, implied in all our thinking and all our actions. But the nature of the relations between finite centres and the whole, and the sense in which the finite may be said to be eternal, are matters too difficult for any brief discussion, and are perhaps at best beyond our present powers of understanding.

We have strayed somewhat from our proper sphere. If we are to understand the nature of human goodness, we must examine it as it seems to spring out of a lower life, and above all as it is in its actual achievements in our human world. That is what I have attempted to the best of my ability to do. Yet we must remember that the full understanding of it must be a part of a wider understanding of the universe as a whole, and also that the progress and development of the moral will itself may be at present only in its earliest stages, and may point forward to something higher. It may perhaps not be unprofitable to have reflected for a little on the possible lines of further advance, and on the way in which that advance may seem to be partially realised or anticipated in the actual activities of men.

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